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Example Candidate Responses (Standards Booklet)

**Cambridge International AS and A Level
Hinduism**

8058 and 9014

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(Standards Booklet)

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Hinduism

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Cambridge International AS and A Level

Hinduism

Syllabus code 8058 and 9014

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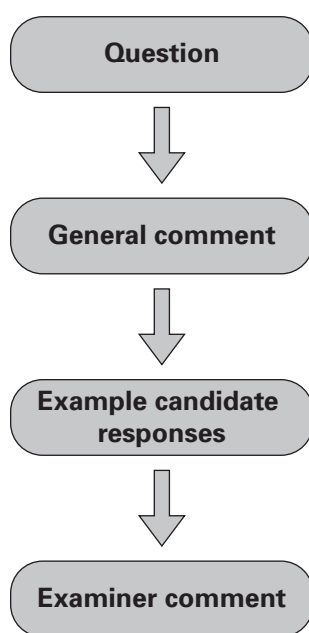
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INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this booklet is to exemplify standards for those teaching Cambridge International AS and A Level Hinduism (8058 and 9014), and to show how different levels of candidates' performance relate to the subject's curriculum and assessment objectives.

In this booklet a range of candidate responses has been chosen. Each response is accompanied by a brief commentary explaining the strengths and weaknesses of the answers.

For ease of reference the following format for each paper has been adopted:



Each question is followed by a general comment which explains what the Examiners are looking for. This, in turn, is followed by examples of marked candidate responses, each with an examiner comment on performance. Comments are given to indicate where marks were awarded, and how additional marks could have been obtained. In this way, it is possible to understand what candidates have done to gain their marks and what they still have to do to improve their grades.

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PAPER 1

Question 1

Do Indra's heroic deeds in the Vedic writings show him to deserve the title 'Lord of the gods'? [20]

General comment

Candidates should have knowledge of Indra's war-like character, soma-drinking, slaying of Vrta and his growing popularity (e.g. over Varuna, whom Indra is said eventually to have surpassed). Following these themes, a good case could be made for Indra as 'lord of the (Vedic) gods', despite some more negative accounts. It is not necessary to present a firm conclusion of 'yes' or 'no', but to have discussed the question clearly, showing knowledge and understanding.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The Rig Veda Samhita form the basic scripture in Hinduism and Hindu religion accords it the the highest position as part of its work is devoted to the prayer and hymns to the vedic God like Indra, Agni, Varuna and so on. The vedic God are assigned to the three regions of the earth (prithvi), heaven (Dyaus) and space (antariksh). Indeed, Indra's heroic deeds in the vedic writing show him to deserve the title 'Lord of the gods.'

Indra is the chief deity of the Rig veda as by means of sacrifice he obtain supremacy over other God. Almost one quarter if the hymns of the Rig veda are devoted to Indra. Indra is the God of atmosphere, phenomena of the blue sky. Indra hold a thunderbolt (vajra) as his weapon and rides a chariot whose speed exceed that of a mind. He is the god of rain and conquers darkness to give light and life the humanity. He is born of cloud and thunders. "I sent thunderlightings" say Indra "then you believe in me." Thus, judging from this hymn, he is a very popular god in the Rig veda.

Indra is the giver of life as he brings water and sun to life and both are very essential for the well-being of humanity. He rides an elephant (Airavat). He has fought against the demon of drought Vrtra who has encompass water. The end result, he has been victorious over the demon and pierces and maintain and setting forth the water. He also give heat to the world. Due to him there is vegetation everywhere. All the human being even the animals rely on him. If Indra is angry he can brings torrential rain to humanity, tsunami, flood and many other calamities. It is stated that "He, on whose supreme control is the horses and chariot the villagers and the cattle. He who gave being to the sun and morning leads to water. He, oh men, is Indra". Hence, how can we deviate that Indra's heroic deeds in the vedic writings show him to deserve the title of 'Lord of the gods'.

Furthermore, Indra has been victorious over the demon of vala who has keep away the cows from humanity. The cows, is essential for every being as people are being nourished with his milk and are used for religious purposes. In the Kena Upanishad, Indra has been able to recognise Brahma through Uma. Indra has been able to recognise Brahma through Uma. Indra is also the god of war. He is addicted to Soma which stimulates him to carry wars like deeds. The kshatriyas before going to the battlefield prays Indra to be victorious over their enemies and he is invoked in this way. "Oh Indra, let's have your grace, we come fearless, we are in the safe side."

As a matter of fact, Indra is not only the god of nature but it also represents the human mind. Indra symbolises knowledge which kills ignorance in human mind. Indra in the past period was highly prayed but in the puranic period with the rise of the Tri-Murthi, Indra has lose his importance. He was even cursed by sage Gautami that he will always be harassed by the demons. In Krishna time, he had sent

torrential rain to the people and Krishna had saved the people by lifting the Govardhan mountain. Hence if Indra is angry he can be proved disastrous to mankind by overflowing the world with water like tsunami, flood and so on or by stopping to give water to mankind.

In this modern age, Indra is highly invoked when there is drought. Modern people have to get in tune with Indra, out of their busy life. Indra is amorous and brash character. He is highly significant to the Hindu.

Eventually, Indra is the god of life, giver of water and sun. All the vegetation around us is due to him. In this modern era if there is life, is due to his grace or else life would have been disappeared. Hence without least hesitation, Indra is the Lord of God.

Candidate B

The Rig Samhita is one of the basic hindu scripture that is full of hymns. A major part of the hymns is devoted to prayer to gods like Indra, Varuna, Agni, Marut. Though they appear different and independent, yet they are really fascets of the same Brahman. Here it is worth quoting the Rig Veda itself: "Etam satviprah viprah Bahude vadunti", that is "God is one but known to sages by various names".

According to vedic hymns, Indra is believed to be the supreme among the gods as he obtain supremacy by means of sacrifice. Almost a quarter of hymns is devoted to praising Him. In his pictures he is portrayed have four arms; two of his arms holding a lance, the third a thunderbolt and the last remains empty. He is sometime pictured having only two arms and having eyes all over his body, for he is called Sahwraksha. Here his omniscience and grandeur is portrayed. Besides, He is also the god of the sky phenomena. He is often shown on a beautiful elephant 'Airata' which came out of the churning of the ocean.

Moreover, vedic hymns highlights that Indra is swifter than the swiftest, faster that the fastest. He is believed to be faster that the thoughts of man. It is also mentioned in the vedic hymns that: "Heaven bows before Him and the earth trembles at His approach". Thus it is clear that he reigns over all existence and even the demi-gods are under His control. Indra has royal manners and He is laudably majestic. Even the demi-gods are pleased by His good governance.

Furthermore, the vedic hymns also puts forward the fact that Indra is the bestower of freshness and vitality. It is only Indra who has the divine power to destroy darkness and to give light to one and all. It is through His divine power that He sends rain to the four quarters of the universe. It is the advent of Indra Himself which transforms a soil deprived of nutritious vegetable into a blossoming garden of fruitful trees and plants.

He brings hope among the despair, life among the depressed and vitality in the midst of lethargy. This He helps for physical maintenance and makes life possible.

Additionally, Indra can be said to be the supreme according to the vedic hymns because He is the only one who has the divine power to destroy the demon of drough 'vrita' and setting forth water. However, Indra possesses some negative fruits, that is He is too addicted to the 'soma' juice which energies Him to kill demons like 'vrita'. When he takes excess of the soma juice He behaves in sensual and immoral ways and does not easily forgive the offenders. It is believed that He kill His father 'Trustar' in anger.

Thus, from the light of the above arguments we can say that Indra is the supreme among the lord. However, He possesses some negative traits which makes him lose His supremacy as demons tend to overpower Him. Nevertheless, He remains the king among the gods according to the vedic hymns.

Candidate C

The abode of the Vedic God, Indra, is "Indralokha", "Swarga" or heaven. Along with being the lord of the gods, Indra is also a guardian of the directions, representing the West. His weapon is the thunderbolt, and he usually uses a hook also. He mounts an elephant and his consort is named Indrani. Though Indra is lord of all the gods, he is the only god who has most human characteristics attributed to him. This is perhaps why there are numerous hymns dedicated to him in the Rig Veda.

The throne of Indra, in Heaven, is always insecure. The reason for this is rooted in a curse obtained by Indra when the latter had an affair with Ahalya, the wife of Sage Gautama. When Sage Gautama learnt about the illicit relationship of his wife with Indra the sage was very furious. In a fit of rage, the sage cursed Indra by saying that one thousand female organs would cover his body in a grotesque and vulgar manner. Upon hearing this, Indra was afraid and went to Brahma to beg him to convince sage Gautama to lift the curse. On the request of lord Brahma, Sage Gautama reduced the curse to one thousand eyes instead of one thousand female organs. Since that day, various asuras (demons) have their eyes on the throne of Indra at Swargalokha (abode of Indra). Thus, Indra has to constantly put up fights to protect his abode and throne from being taken over by demoniac beings. Though having sinned by having an affair with Ahalya, Indra can appropriately be called as "lord of the gods" since he courageously protects his abode from the invasion of demons, thus preventing adharma from taking over dharma.

Another heroic deed of Indra is his confrontation with Vritna, a demon who swallowed all the water on Earth. When Indra went to force Vritra to release the water he had swallowed, instead of obeying him, the demon swallowed Indra as well. He only vomitted the lord of Heaven out when he was pressed by all the other gods. And before he agreed to release Indra, he extracted a promise from the latter that after being free, he would not attack Vritra with anything made of metal, wood or fire, neither at night nor during the day. After Vritra vomitted him out, Indra killed the demon at twilight with the foam of the sea, which is neither wet, nor dry and neither made from metal, wood nor fire. Thus we can once more appropriately attribute the title "lord of the gods" to Indra, who fought hard and released the captured water from the demoniac Vritra for the welfare of mankind.

Though he has numerous human characteristics attributed to him, our respect for Lord Indra should not diminish. If we interpret his deeds in a positive way, we will realise that he is the only God who is closest to humans, even while he was sinning with Ahalya. Despite his mistakes, he still has been able to guard his throne and his abode and prevent demons from taking over Heaven. Thus, lord Indra rightly deserves the title "lord of the gods", despite his shortcomings as a God.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

The candidate scores highly in terms of the many details known about Indra and obvious acquaintance with relevant hymns (such as RV 2.12, from which a good quotation is given). Points are made with fair accuracy, showing understanding of the significance of water, cows etc. for mankind. There is also a hint that the candidate understands the development of the god's reputation over time, and that it is not always entirely favourable. Other Vedic gods are mentioned, including the correct reference to Kena Upanishad. In all this is a very good effort, despite many inaccuracies in the writing, but the candidate has tended to accept Indra's supremacy rather uncritically in both the first and the final paragraphs.

Marks awarded = 17 out of 20

Candidate B

The candidate shows a general knowledge of the topic and makes general points clearly. Only at the end, however, in a reference to the destruction of the demon, is a specific instance given. The descriptive parts in paragraphs 2-3 are not irrelevant, but they are not used to make a proper case. The candidate falls back on 'Thus it is clear that ...' despite only a passing reference to other Vedic gods. The Sanskrit quotation is inaccurate and fails to make any strong point here. In the final paragraph there is a further attempt to say that Indra's supremacy has been proved, whereas little has been offered to make the case. This is an honest effort, showing some understanding of what is required, but the candidate needs to study the hymns in more detail and, for this type of question, to practise going more deeply into possible 'fors' and 'againsts'.

Marks awarded = 11 out of 20

Candidate C

Although this is a weak answer, depending largely on narrative, there is some understanding of the status of the Vedic gods in hymns addressed to them. The candidate understands that a god's standing can be 'insecure' and that Indra's moral reputation was questionable. That a god's having 'human' failings should entitle him to supremacy was, however, rather an odd suggestion.

Marks awarded = 6 out of 20

Question 2

'The deepest stirrings of the human mind are reflected in the Nasadiya Sukta.' Discuss.

[20]

General comment

A basic answer should explain that the Nasadiya Sukta is one of several reverent attempts in Hindu scriptures to address the mystery of creation. Particular terms should be understood, such as the notion of energy and heat (tapas – later understood as 'austerity': undertaken for its creative power).

Comparison with the other two 'creation' texts set, if used, should not overbalance the answer. Some candidates will have been taught that this text is 'scientific' as well as, or rather than, 'religious' – such questions could be discussed, as well as the 'agnostic' response (that no definite answers can be known).

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The Nasadiya Sukta begins with the query about the creation of the universe. This Sukta deals with the manifestation of the Absolute. The hymn shows the greatness of the imaginative power of the Vedic poet.

When we think about the world, we think of it as either existent or non-existent, we do not think beyond these two stages. However, here in the Nasadiya Sukta, the speculator goes beyond and speculates on the beginning of creation: was the world non-existent? There is no fact that the Earth did not exist, nor did firmament or what is beyond. If nothing existed, then how could something come out of nothing. For every action, there is a reaction, so how has the world been created? Is there any force behind? Does any Supreme existence prevail anywhere?

In the beginning of creation there was nothing as it is today. Henceforth, we can deduce that life did not exist. Since life did not exist, how can death exist. In the same way, no life, no death, how can there be immortality? As from here, we see that with no life, no death, no immortality, there did not exist any day or night?

Next, another important question arises: if there was nothing – no day, no night, no life, no death, no immortality; then what existed? As the Vedic poet speculates on, we get to know that there was what is absolute darkness. Apart from utter darkness, there was nothing. Everywhere only darkness prevailed. Then it sounds quite ironic that how come in this darkness, we are now living in such a beautiful Earth. Did a Supreme Existence prevail somewhere?

Furthermore, in a mantra it is said that: It was He. He breathed without any breathe. It was He alone. Apart from Him, there was no one. So, we do ask ourselves that who is that He? The Vedic poet explains that 'That One' as he called Him, is not someone ordinary. He breathes with his own nature. His immanence cannot be described.

In the third mantra, the Vedic poet elaborates on the important factors. The first one is that there was desire that arose in 'That One'. It is this desire that leads to creation. Second factor is that the desire is described like a seed that has been enveloped by He. Thirdly, the world when created was not in a latent form as it is now, but was instead in a patent form.

As the poet moves on, he speculates more on the seed of desire. It is this seed of desire that encouraged 'That One' to create the Universe. And in that process, the seed of desire does not stop but it keeps on creating other things. For instance, small and big organic and inorganic things were created. By organic, the Vedic poet refers to living things. And inorganic refers to the Sun, moon, rivers, mountains among others. Here, we learn that desire is not something bad, provided that it does

not cause harm to something else. This desire of 'That One' has created such a beautiful One.

Moreover, an important question arises: Does 'That One' know when creation started? The Vedic poet wonders about this question because even the demi-gods do not know about creation. This is though because when creation began, they were not here themselves. So we see that the mystery is still here. The net result is that nobody can tell whether creation comes and whither it goes. The mystery is still in darkness and unknown.

So, in the Nasadiya Sukta, many theories have been discussed, still the mystery is unknown. The deepest stirrings of the Vedic poet's mind have been recorded in the Sukta. We can deduce that the Nasadiya Sukta stresses on the theories and while the Purusha Sukta deals with the practical side.

Candidate B

The Nasadya Sukta is a thought provoking passage that deals with the origin of creation. It is a passage that has provided us with the intellectual quests and the height of speculative imagination. In other words, the Nasadya Sukta reflects the subtleness of the mind of our erudite sages. This passage has not only inspired Hindus but has also drawn the attention and deep interest of other philosophers, like Max Müller, Materlink and others.

The way the nasadya Sukta deals with creation is unique and perhaps it is the only passage that starts with a doubt and ends as well with a doubt. Philosophers like Max Müller were astonished while going through the deep quests of our sages. He said: "I wonder how the vedic seers could soar so high in speculation". He also said: "This passage is not only important by what it says but also what it presupposes". However, there are many theories put forward about creation but the Nasadya Sukta stimulates the mind of an individual when he tries to interpret the meanings and aims of our sages. The Nasadya Sukta is a text that can ensure a healthy development of the human mind. Even the western scholars are amazed, surprised by the spiritually and intellectually advanced seers.

We normally talk of creation either through the existent or the non-existent. But the Nasadya Sukta shows how our sages have taken every possibility, probability to find the origin of the universe. It is said that the very first word of the first mantra starts with 'Nasat' which means not non-existent. Our sages wanted to know who was behind creation and how it came into existence. The verse states: "The existent was not then, nor was the non-existent. If there was not non-existence, then how could the existence come out of non-existent and under whose care?" This verse reflects the sophisticated minds of our sages. They were so carried away by speculation that they were asking question upon question. 'Under whose care' - our sages wanted to know who is the author of this universe. The following verse gives us an idea of how their minds were functioning: "If there was no day, there was no night. If day and night could not exist, ultimately time could also not exist for it is the happenings in life that gives us the notion of time. Then, if life and death did not exist, then immortality also could not exist. What was there and what could cover what?"

Through much of questionings and answers our sages believed that there was a force, a kind of energy behind creation. It was 'He', 'That One' who created the universe out of desire or tapas. Despite the conception of a Divine entity behind creation, it was also not left unquestioned and that is why Materlink said: "lest fall into despair, for it does not hesitate to ask whether the Supreme Being existed or not." Hence, our sages were so absorbed in speculation that they questioned the very existence of the Supreme Being. They were as if carried away in their quest for knowledge. This shows how should seeker of knowledge acquire wisdom. The text Nasadya Sukta helps us to boost our mind and intelligence. A continuous examination of this Sukta will gradually enrich the mind in terms of imagination, conception and thinking. The questions raised in the passage should not be ignored but one should ponder over it and try to understand how the mind worked at that period.

In the Purush Sukta, we come to know that Purush, the Gigantic Man, Master Artificer is behind creation. In the Nasadya Sukta 'that One' was responsible for creation and 'He' breathed without

breath, He was life itself.' Our sages were so humble that they did not want an individual to assume their conception as real.

After much of speculation, which is very different for an ordinary man, our sages denied and rejected all credits. It is said: "Who knows and who can declare whence it cometh and with it goeth or vanisheth." This shows the humility of our sages who despite having reflecting and pondering much deny their own conception.

Hence, through the mantras of the Nasadya Sukta we can see the clear reflection of the Nasadya Sukta we can see the clear reflection of the subtle and scientific minds of our seers. As such, we are taught to boost our mind to unimaginable heights so as we do not suffer mentally. The mind gains food for thought through the allegories of the Nasadya Sukta about creation and it is very important for the normal and healthy development or growth of the human brain.

As it is said by philosophers that the Nasadya Sukta starts as well as ends with a doubt, we find the last portion of the Nasadya Sukta as such: "the mystery of the universe is unknown and unknowable."

Hence, through the questions raised itself we can see the deep stirrings of the human mind. This passage has the ability to boost the mind of an individual to unimaginable heights though some people do criticise this passage.

Candidate C

Nasadiya Sukta is the most enriching Sukta among those like Purusha Sukta. It discuss about the mind, the questions arose such as the creator and preserver of the universe. In this Sukta the main part is to understand the doubting mind.

The rishis have discovered and obtain divine power from god, due to this, the rishis are able to write in the Rig Veda which is found in the Upanishads. It helps us to understand the creation of the world through the help of rishis.

First of all, we need to know that god is said to be omnipresent, omnipotent, and everlasting as said in the Vedas. But can be in an manifest and unmanifest form, that is Nirguna and Sagura.

Those who pray god in the unmanifest form are known to be Brahman whereas those who worship god in the manifest form are usually selfish as hence they claim to know Brahman, it is important to know and understand the meaning and foundation of the universe and earth in the Nasadiya Sukta.

God is omnipresent, thus we can admit that God is part of us, in our soul, our body may decay one day but the soul is eternal. Brahman is the sustainer of the universe, we deduce from this that Brahman is the creator of everything since the question arose who has created the world.

The Brahmanas had been revering Brahma the supreme god to acquire the knowledge of the creation of the earth. Nasadiya Sukta is the doubting mind, many question arose such as who, when, how the universe was created. It is still a mysterious fact, but in this Sukta, light is shed on the creation. In this Sukta it is clearly explained in a simple way the greatness of god.

The supreme being was already present when there was utter darkness surrounding. He was and remain the seed which has been reep in every corner of the earth. But the question arose that was he conscious of what he was doing, through this Sukta it is also said that the supreme being was the only existant then he created demi gods to make the earth a living place.

In this Sukta the earth is enlighten by Agni, the god who bring life to people, to make light appear where darkness was dominating.

The supreme being is immortal just as it is said, if there has been no life on earth before so no deauth

was also existant. The supreme being transended in multiplicity to create souls as they are eternal. God is present in everyone soul, the soul is the object of meditation, from the soul we can communicate to the supreme being, it is this reason that the rishis have gain supernatural power to write Sanskrit.

God is benevolant, he has always put human beings to test, God show the right path to chose which are Preya and Shreya, the good and the pleasant one. Those whose chose preya are known to be bliss, and perhaps they will obtain liberation.

The deepest stirrings in the mind will be eradicate when reading the Nasadiya Sukta and therefore "he who understands both the manifest and the unmanifest will crosses death through the manifest and obtain liberation throught the unmanifest".

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This candidate has clearly studied the text in detail and can explain the ideas raised with considerable skill. Nothing important has been omitted. Understanding of the 'mystery' and seeming impossibility of 'creation out of nothing' is shown by phrases such as 'Then it sounds quite ironic ...'. Understanding of the text as visionary and speculative is also displayed in quite sophisticated language. In brief, this is an excellent answer. The last paragraph, however, looks like a rather rushed and uncritical attempt to tie up loose ends.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

It appears that the candidate has been well taught but has not quite absorbed the material. Credit is given for knowledge of the text, but there is too much repetition offered without commentary. Valuable time is lost in repeating background notes – here referring to the praise for the hymn from later (non-Hindu) scholars. Too much of the answer is spent on eulogising, too little on actual critical comment.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate has no clear idea of the set text here. Various ideas contained in the Sukta do appear, and for these the candidate can gain a few marks. There is no attempt, however, to answer the question as set. Because the candidate is floundering, much of the essay is a jumble, seemingly of half-remembered lessons or notes and much irrelevant detail.

Marks awarded = 6 out of 20

Question 3

‘Sharp as the edge of a razor and hard to cross, difficult to tread is that path.’ (Katha Upanishad 1.3.14)
Discuss the efforts involved in seeking liberation, according to the Upanishads you have studied. [20]

General comment

The teaching of the Upanishads is that *effort* is involved in knowing the self, in controlling human desires and urges (e.g. in Katha Upanishad by the chanting of AUM, by the way of yoga and by heeding the Parable of the Chariot). The path of the ‘pleasant’ (preyas) is to be shunned in favour of the ‘good’ (shreyas). The seeker must exercise wise judgement based on understanding (as expounded by a teacher, such as Yama was to Naciketas).

‘Difficulty’ in the quotation should be discussed: e.g. although the demands of a righteous life are great, they are not extreme or unrealistic. The Isa Upanishad also emphasises that effort is involved in seeking deep understanding: in particular it warns against coveting the wealth of others.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Katha Upanishad is one of the most interesting texts where metaphysical, ethical values as well as the basic elements of mankind is being stressed upon. It is an illustrative text which has rightly pointed out all aspects which contribute in attaining liberation through the famous parable of chariot, the two ways. Adhyatma Yoga as well as the Supreme.

“Sharp as the edge of the razor and hard to cross, difficult to tread is that path.”

Indeed, a thorough analysis to this verse reveals how difficult is it to go along the path which leads to ‘moksha’, liberation. This path is said to be not only difficult but also ‘sharp as the edge of a razor’ simply because firstly, one needs to cultivate self-discipline, through which he can later overcome the two ways which are offered to man. These two ways have been rightly illustrated in the Katha Upanishad and says:

“Different is the good and different indeed is the pleasant. These two, with two different purposes bind man. Of these two, he who takes hold of the good reaches his goal, but he who chooses the pleasant fail of his aim.”

These two paths are mostly known as the ‘Shreyas’ and ‘Preyas’, meaning ‘good’ and ‘pleasant’ respectively. Of these two paths, the ‘Shreyas’ one is often chosen by wise men since their mere aim is to attain the beautitude of life, that is liberation. Here, the main effort that is fundamental for one to reach the highest bliss is primarily that he must have an evenness of the mind. In other words, he should choose the ‘Shreyas’ path if he really wants to seek liberation. On the contrary, by acquiring an evenness of mind he will know how to discriminate between the good and the pleasant. The path of ‘Preyas’ is chosen by the ignorant people, because what matters to them is the world of pleasures. They live a life of attachment. As such he will never attain in seeking liberation.

With reference to the Isa Upanishad, which says that one should cultivate the idea of ‘Vairagya’ meaning detachment. The Bhagavad Gita again and again emphasizes an detachment, and says that the aim of one’s life is to attain the Supreme. Even in the Katha Upanishad, these ideas are being stressed upon. It says:

“Transient are these O Yama, the vigour of all the senses. All life moreover is brief. Thine the chariot. Thine the dance and the song.”

This verse unveils that the whole world is temporary. One should not let himself influenced by luxury,

lust and lucre, greed and so on. The word 'chariot' here is an instance which shows that the sole aim of mankind can be attained merely by a synthesis of the mind, heart and the soul. This verse is linked to the famous 'Parable of the chariot' which is a clear example demonstrating the efforts needed for one to attain liberation. The chariot is said to be the soul, the chariot driver as the mind, the reins and horses as the senses. Well, this is in fact an obvious example which has been set up for one to know what should be made, what are the efforts needed to seek liberation. In other words, when compared to a car, if one does not have good control upon the steering wheel, all the other wheels cannot be easily maintained. Similarly, if one does not have a good maintenance of the mind as well as the senses, he will never be able to attain liberation. If only the mind is controlled, this will dispel the idea and the efforts needed to attain liberation, because to attain 'moksha' not only a synthesis of devotion, action and knowledge is essential, but also having control upon oneself is effectively required. With reference to the Bhagavad Gita which says:

"The mind goes after the roving senses, and carries away all the understanding just like wind carries away the ship on the waters."

A close analysis to this verse shows how the senses tend to divert the mind of the individual. It not only carries away the mind but also the understanding too. Only a man with settled intelligence will be able to attain liberation because he will know how to differentiate between the good and the bad, and know how much effort is required for one to seek liberation. When referred to the chariot, the horses normally tend to divert the attention of the chariot driver, and if the latter does not have a proper control over them he will never be able to attain the Supreme abode of the all-pervading, as he may be at his own loss due to a lack of control.

The Isa Upanishad emphasizes a lot on the efforts needed to attain liberation through the very first verse itself, which says:

"...All this whatever moves in this moving world is enveloped by God...Therefore find your enjoyment in renunciation. Do not covet what belongs to others."

Here, this verse states that cultivating the idea of detachment is primordial. Whatever is there in this verse is pervaded by God, therefore one should live a life with detachment. One should not be greedy. If one abides by it, he will no sooner reach liberation because at cosmic consciousness, covetousness disappears. He must not be greedy at all, even if in his mind, there is a thought of committing a theft this is considered as a sin. Even Adhyatma Yoga is of great importance for one to attain liberation. Quoting the Katha Upanishad itself says:

"Realising through self contemplation, the Primal God, deeply hidden in the cave of the heart..."

The efforts needed for the enlightenment of liberation can be reached through all the ideas mentioned above. By cultivating such ideas, one will surely reach liberation, 'moksha'. All this can be done with the synthesis of knowledge, discipline, yoga which involves listening, and having a stillness of mind and of the heart.

Candidate B

Katha Upanishad is about Nachiketa and his father Vajasrassa and yam. Nachiketa is an inquisitive child, curious child who asked Yam to grant him three boons. First of all, when he left, his father was angry, so he asked for the protection of his father.

Nachiketa asked about the second boon that is about the Agni. What happens to one who dies. The third boon which Nachiketa wanted to know about. Katha Upanishad is made with reference to the Brahmacharya Sukta whereby the guru teaches and moulds the character and capacity of the child. In this case it is yam who is the guru and Nachiketa is the disciple.

Katha Upanishad, not only has similarities of Brahmacharya Sukta but it is also linked to the Isa

Upanishad. Isa Upanishad is the holy book which teaches men how to make life noble and happy. This Isa Upanishad emphasises on the philosophy of life. It is also about the concept of God, man and the universe, the grandeur of God as a supreme being is introduced along to the relationship with man and the universe which is the indwelling self.

It is true that the Upanishads help men to find ways to attain liberation. However, man should know how to search for happiness and eternal bliss.

First of all, Upanishad provides about the philosophy of life. They highlight that human beings should not be frustrated in life. Upanishads do not oppose by wealth, but however reject the fact that people are becoming rich through unfair and illegal means. Man should know how to lead life in a noble way and they should not be attached to inactions as well.

Moreover, people should constantly remember that nothing is for them. Everything is belongs to God because it is he who has created everything, which means that everything is divine. God has created everything such as nature; birds, the sky, trees, plants and animals. So, people should rise above egoism and greediness. They should eliminate ahamkar "the I, me myself, mine" consciousness.

Upanishads also have similarities of the Bhagvad Geeta. In order to attain salvation, emphasis should be laid upon immortality of atama and good karma which would enable people to attain liberation. This means that people should know about the immortality of the atama and this is possible only through knowledge. If people are ignorant, they won't be able to attain liberation.

The atama is eternal, imperishable and indestructible we should realise that we do not only have an external self, we have an inner soul. The soul changes worn out bodies just like we changes worn out garments. However, man is not able to realise that he is a soul. The body changes in each birth whereas body remains the same.

Man should acquire spiritual knowledge to know more about themselves. Man is the slayer of the soul. Human beings are accumulating too much of impurities which prevent the soul from shining in its original purity. We are tiring the soul in the cycle of birth and death. In order to attain liberation, acquiring spiritual knowledge is important. In order to reach liberation, people should start praying from the formful/personal gods which is a medium to the formless one. In such case, Bhakti also is important.

We should also renounce from materialism, enjoy the worldly pleasures, but renounce from material pleasures. This could be a means to salvation. We enjoy all material pleasures not renounce from attachment. The fool is affected by pairs of opposites (pain and pleasure, defeat and victory, happiness and sadness) because their minds are over restless and they seek to enjoy material world.

The fool is clinged to desires, then more desires are created. Onfulfilled desires lead to anger. In this infatuation, we may suffer from lost of memory and even premature death. So the fools are not able to attain liberation because they are ignorant about spiritual reality.

Contrarily, the yogi or the wise remains unaffected amidst pairs of opposite. They remain in a balanced state of mind - yogi mind = equilibrium mind. This means that their senses do not affect their minds. They have full control over the mind and the body. Desires do not affect them at all. This is derived from the benefit of yoga and obtaining an evenness of mind. The benefits of yoga are that it helps to have control over the mind, purifies the heart, that is positive feelings are created and negative feelings are suppressed.

So, the wise are able to attain liberation because they have reached beyond and rise above common people. They renounce from material world. For example, in Bhagvad Geeta Arjun asked Krishna about the man, stitira prajna or sadhak, how he sit, work and speak. This man abandoned rites and rituals. This is because rites and rituals are medium to attain demi God and one who has attain Bramhan do not need any medium to gain eternal bliss.

Man should remember God while dying and the karmas performed in this birth provide an overview of what awaits us in the next birth. It is important to realise Brahman in order to attain liberation and while dying one must remember God.

So, it can be said that in order to seek liberation human beings have to undergo much sacrifice, renounce from material pleasures and perform good karmas and constantly know about the immortality of their atama. Bhagvad Gita and Upanishads show path to innumerable people in attaining liberation.

Candidate C

Upanishad comes from the word upatnitshad. Upa means sit, ni means down and shad means devotion. So, Upanishads simply means to sit down near someone with devotion. There are 108 upanishads in all. The most important ones are the Isa, Kena, Katha and Chandogya Upanishads.

Katha Upanishad has been mentioned in the Vedas to be the most difficult path. This path leads to liberation if followed carefully. The Katha Upanishad has long been used by devotees. As Isa, Kena, Chandogya Upanishad have been described in the Vedas, all are involved in seeking liberation and they try their best to follow the path of righteousness. As in Isa Upanishads, God has been given great importance and it has been concluded that everything is pervaded with God. Nothing is possible without the supreme one. God is omni-present, omniscient and omni-potent. Where God exists, everything exist. As a matter of fact, the world itself is here by God. Even if something has been taken out of the God, it does not diminish or reduce. It remains the same and is ready to make other things possible. By so doing, the world remains the same. Everyone wants liberation. It is said that by worshipping God and by believing in the supreme one, we can attain liberation. But, every path has its own actions.

In the Kena Upanishad we have seen that

Examiner comment

Candidate A

The candidate writes an excellent answer, showing mature understanding of the concepts expounded in both the Katha and Isa Upanishads. There is a genuine attempt to comment on the quotation and to answer the question. Most of the details included are accurately set out. Some of the explanation of the Parable of the Chariot is a little muddled, however, and tends to become repetitive. Phrases such as: 'A close analysis of this passage shows ...'/'A thorough analysis of this verse reveals ...' should be avoided. Such analysis is neither realistic at this stage nor required by the examination.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

This candidate appears to understand the main concepts, but in very general terms. There is little effort to discuss the principles of the good life as they are presented in Upanishadic texts (rather than the Bhagavad Gita). The central idea of 'effort' is understood but not challenged. The result is too much of a sermon. More practice is required in keeping to the question set.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate seems to run out of time here. Perhaps this is a final question hurriedly chosen despite lack of material to answer it. A few general points about Upanishads and moral principles are hinted at, but overall few marks could be given.

Marks awarded = 4 out of 20

Question 4

'Draupadi and Duryodhana respond equally well to the demands of dharma.' How far do you agree?**[20]**

General comment

The question requires the candidate to understand and explain the concept of *dharma* as a moral agent's duty. This can form part of the answer, as long as the deeds and dilemmas of the two Mahabharata characters are clearly known from the set text. All answers should take into account Krishna's overall teaching about what dharma involves for everyone in the war, depending on their place in the order of things. Candidates should not spend time outlining the 'plot' of the epic.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Draupadi and Duryodhana are two key characters in the Mahabharat. Draupadi is portrayed as the wife of the Pandavas and Duryodhana is stated to be the cousin of the Pandavas.

To begin with, Draupadi, the daughter of king Draupadi, can be said to respond well enough to the demands of dharma (righteousness). Draupadi, is portrayed as a sincere wife. She readily accepted the Five Pandavas as her husband. She pleased all her husband equally that once the wife of Krishna asked her how can she please five husband equally whereas she cannot please her one and only husband.

Moreover, in Draupadi, the most important characteristic of dharma is present which is Shama (forgiveness). Draupadi, was married to Arjuna. But when Arjuna married Subadra, the sister of Krishna, Draupadi forgave Arjuna. She even regarded the son of Subadra (Abhimanyu) as her own son and she cared for her.

Furthermore, during her exile, along with the Pandavas, Draupadi accepted her faith and served the queen of king Virat. She used to give alms to people and always share what she has.

Undeniably, she had supreme faith in God, which is another characteristic of dharma. When she had been stake and lost, humiliated and when brought to the Kaurava court, she had supreme faith in Lord Krishna and Lord Krishna did not let Dushasana rape her. Draupadi even did not held Yuishtir to be blame when Yudishtir stake and lost her.

But in contrast, there is a lack of Dharma to some extent in Draupadi. She was the one to instigate the Pandavas against Duryodhana by reminding them the humiliation she had gone through. When the Pandavas started talking about peace she was angry and said that if the Pandavas do not fight for her, her sons and brothers will. She even said that she will not tie her hair before applying Duryodhana blood on it.

On the other hand, Duryodhana does not respond at all to the demands of Dharma. To begin with, Duryodhana is portrayed as someone lost in the contrary of Dharma: Adharma (unrighteousness). Duryodhana, is said to be jealous of the Pandavas as his father Dritrasha wanted the Pandavas to be his heir.

Furthermore, Duryodhana also possess greed. He was always envious towards the Pandavas. He once tried to poison Bhima and set the camp of the Pandavas on fire. Also, Duryodhana was full of lust. When Draupadi was won in the famous game of dice, he wanted to molest her.

Moreover, the evil plan of the game of dice was from him. He was the one, according with his uncle Sakuni, to design the evil plan to gain the kingdom of Yudishtir and other Pandavas. Also, he was never

satisfied. He always tried to make the Pandavas feel miserable.

When the Pandavas were banished and exiled in the forest, he parade his riches to make the Pandavas feel miserable. To his bad luck, he was kidnapped by the Gandharva army and Arjuna went to save him.

Moreover, Duryodha was also "possessed by evil thought". When Durvasarishi once visited him and grant him a boon, he ordered the rishi to go with other rishis to the hut of the Pandavas at lunch time and in the perverse hope that they will not be fed properly and thus the Pandavas will be cursed. But due to the faith of Draupadi in Krishna, this did not happen.

Duryodhana was so "sunk" in negative thinkings, that he failed to know that that Krishna was Lord Vishnu himself. This help us to understand that so long as one is "sunk" in Adharma, he cannot reach God.

Thus, in conclusion guise, it cannot be stated that Draupadi and Duryodhana respond equally well to the demands of dharma. Draupadi is nearer to Dharma but does not fully practice Dharma, as she wanted revenge. Revenge, is not a characteristic of Dharma but of Adharma (unrighteousness). For what concerns Duryodhana, he is completely against the demands of Dharma. He has been living an unvirtuous life, always eager to humiliate the Pandavas and always ready to fight. But, it is undeniable that Draupadi was more noble than Duryodhana.

Candidate B

Mahabharata is the battle between two cousins in the battlefield of Kurushektra. It is a battle of dharma over Adharma, good over evil, truth over untruth, generosity over arrogance and so on. Draupadi and Duryodhana are two different personalities in the Mahabharata. They are completely different. Draupadi had always sided toward dharma whereas Duryodhana had always sided towards Adharma.

Draupadi is the greatest women in the Hindu tradition. She has always fought for her rights. Draupadi who is an example in today life. She was married to Yuddhistira in a Swayavara. Draupadi has five husbands and she was very happy with her life where as Duryodhana the wretched demon was always doing wrong in the Palace. Duryodhana was always against dharma. He killed people or torment people in the village.

One day, while Yuddhistira was gambling, he lost the game, as he has nothing to put on stake, he put his own wife on the stake. So, Duryodhana tried to rape Draupadi in front of everyone, even in front of his grandparents. Draupadi remembered lord Krishna and Lord Krishna had come to save the honour of Draupadi. Yuddhistira could not do nothing as it was an old tradition that they must keep their promise once it has been done. Draupadi has untied her hairs because she was waiting the death of Duryodhana. Duryodhana has always been wrong to poor people. He did not even respect his own family or any member of the family whereas Draupadi is a good wife, a good mother and daughter-in-law. She has filial respect for all members of family. Draupadi has always been fair to her family and she has always been a good wife.

Draupadi and Duryodhana are completely different from each other. Draupadi has always supported the right one and Duryodhana has always been wrong to people. Draupadi is an example of today. Every women in this third millennium must take an example from Draupadi.

Duryodhana was a wretched king as he was committing lots of wrong things and he has not even had respect for his grandparents. He was trying to rape Draupadi. It is said that dharma triumph Adharma. The Mahabharata has taught a lot for Draupadi and Duryodhana. Every women must take an example from Draupadi as she has all good qualities Duryodhana has always been wrong to his people and if someone do like him, he will never be happy for the whole life. So, I do not agree that Draupadi and Duryodhana respond equally well to the demands of dharma.

Candidate C

Duryodhana was symbolical of passion, haigh temper, anger, arrogance, hatredness and wickedness. Under the intoxication of his evil desires, he allowed himself to be influenced in all his actions by Shakuni, Karna and Dushashana.

To what low can a man be blinded by passion; lust and hatred fall is demonstrated by the manner of Duryodhana. Taking advantage of hiw father's attachment for him, Duryodhana contrive to invite the Pandavas for a game of dice with high stakes. He was adept in the game and also a cheat.

Intoxicated with his fraudulent victory Duryodhana had Draupadi dragged to the assembly and sought to insult her further by denuding her. But, lord Krishna came to her rescue in her helplessness.

Duryodhana like to cheat the Pandavas in the dice again and again and that time the loser would have to spend twelve years in the forest. As Duryodhana was very adamant that he was not willing to give back the kingdom of the Pandavas. Thus like that the war was declared. Duryodhana never gave up his revolve to fight. Even in his evil designs, Duryodhana had a great sense of self-esteem and would not be ready to bow before the Pandavas even if confronted with the worst of his family and thus he was killed in the war. On the other hand Draupadi was the opposite of Duryodhana, she was very kind towards his five husbands and very helpful, she can be say that she was the embodiment of kindness and dharma. "Thus we can't say that Draupadi and Duryodhana respond equally well to the demands of dharma."

Examiner comment**Candidate A**

This is an excellent answer to be produced in the time allowed. Selection of material has been thoughtfully done throughout, and narrative appears only for the sake of clarification. The candidate's knowledge of the set text is extensive and has been used to good effect. There is also evidence of critical ability.

Marks awarded = 20 out of 20

Candidate B

Although the candidate has some idea of the general theme, the answer is mainly presented in a simplistic 'story-book' style and shows no understanding of dharma and adharma other than a bare 'right versus wrong'. Accuracy also suffers, although the candidate does appear to understand the characters' strengths and weaknesses in simple terms. More study and practice are needed to reach the standard required by this examination.

Marks awarded = 7 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate concentrates on the wickedness of Duryodhana and fails to engage with the question until the last few lines. There is no explanation of what dharma means, or of its importance in the epic or in Hindu thought generally, so few marks could be given.

Marks awarded = 4 out of 20

Question 5

'Krishna was a more important avatar of Vishnu than Rama.' Discuss with reference to the texts you have studied. [20]

General comment

In this question the candidate is required to 'discuss' the relative importance of Krishna and Rama and to come to some conclusion. The strongest evidence in favour of the statement in the quotation would be the Bhagavad Gita, attributed to Krishna, though the stories of Rama, and Sita as his shakti, continue to command popular devotion. It will be more difficult to support the statement if only the more 'human' aspects of Krishna (the stories of his childhood, the '*lilas*', etc.) are considered, in comparison with the high moral tone of e.g. the Ramcaritamanasa, where Rama is *Purushottam*. All points should be presented clearly, showing understanding.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Krishna and Rama are both the avatar of Vishnu. They both are the same but their forms and attributes are different. Whether Krishna was a more important avatar of Vishnu than Rama cannot be told as both have its own forms - they both had thread the good path as in Katha Upanishad - they had walked on the shreyas path.

Krishna as an avatar of Vishnu can be seen as child, lover, friend or it can also be studied as an acharya in Bhagavad Gita. Whereas Rama can be studied only in the Ramacharitmanas - the deeds of Rama and Ramayana which is a story form. Krishna during his tender age had killed many demons such as Kansa and Putna whereas Rama had not killed anyone in his tender age. Instead he was brought up in luxurious palace. In this case it can be said that Krishna is a more important avatar than Rama as in his tender age itself he had killed demons and showed humanity his real form. He is a more important avatar in the sense that Krishna was not brought up among luxuries but he was brought up in a simple and ordinary manner like nowadays.

Krishna is a more important avatar as when he was born, he himself told that he was God whereas Rama at last stage of his life had to be told that he was an avatar of Vishnu. Krishna was the Paramatman whereas Krishna was the Jivatman.

In addition Krishna in Bhagavad Gita is important as well as Rama in Ramayana. This is so because Krishna in Bhagavad Gita tells Arjuna to perform his duty as a Kshatriya whereas Rama in Ramayan had to kill Ravana. By killing Ravana he destroys the wicked. Krishna's Bhagavad Gita tells Arjuna to perform his duty as this message is also given to humanity that everyone must perform his duty according to their respective qualities and capacities the Varna dharma had given. Krishna points out "It is better to die doing one's own duty than by doing another one's duty".

Rama kills Ravana - this also is a message to humanity. As through this human beings can learn that everyone has a wicked part in us. We must all take out this wicked part which always cling us to life and death.

Furthermore, Krishna's path is karma oriented whereas Rama's path is Dharma oriented. Both incarnations are important as one is path of *nivriti* whereas the other is path of *pravriti*. All the two are important. Krishna points out that human beings must always perform a work. Krishna takes his own example. He points out that by doing karma he is not getting anything but he must do it in order for others to perform good actions as he did. Rama on the other hand is dharma oriented. He is the *Narayana Purushottami*. He meditates on dharma so as others do as he did that is good action.

Both are important as both had come on earth in order to help human being to live a better life. Nelson Mandela for example eradicated the Apartheid system. Martin Luther King also did his sharma as he wanted people to have a better life and also not to let injustices.

In addition, Krishna can be more important as they he had helped much during his age. When he took avatar of Vishnu, there were jealousy, hatred, anger that were showing their ugly heads whereas when Rama came as an avatar - he came to save the sages which were persecuted by rakshashas which were as numberless as the stars. Krishna had killed during his tender age Kansa and Putna, he had lifted the Gobardhan hill so as to protect the villagers from blood. He helped Arjuna on the battle field by giving him advice that even though his near and dear one's are in front of him he must perform his duty. Krishna had helped more in educating humanity through his actions whereas Rama had only put forward his dharma. Nowadays human beings does not abide by dharma but they perform kama mostly so Krishna is a good example.

Moreover, Krishna in Bhagavad Gita describes himself - "I am the conscience in the heart of all creatures, I and the mind of the senses, I am the radiant lights of the sun, I am the priest of the grandseers, I am the king of the deities, I am all, I am OM".

The two are important as the two as said - "Whenever and wherever there is a decline in dharma and an increase in adharma, I will embodied myself for the protection of good and destruction of evil."

Rama's avatar or Krishna's avatar was more important cannot be said. This depends upon their action their good works. But as both had pointed out the above quotations we cannot say which one is more important.

Candidate B

Rama and Krishna are both avatar of Lord Vishnu. They are the most popular incarnation of Vishnu who are widely worshipped in Hindu pantheon. Therefore, it is not right to say that Krishna was a more important avatar of Vishnu than Rama.

It is as such because both of them had teaches mankind the path of righteousness. For instance, Rama has been described as 'Maryadah Purushotam', the man par excellence. Due to the efforts made by Tulsidas with his 'Ramacharitmanas' was successful by describing the holy lake of the deeds of Lord Rama. Though Rama was an incarnation of God, yet he was living among human beings and was teaching them the path of Dharma. He was considered as a perfect man. Rama is a great source of inspiration for modern Hindus. Moreover, Rama inspires people how to have respect for their parents. He provide great source of inspiration for youngsters. He shows how one must sacrifice himself in order to fulfill the wish of his parents. This is shown when he heartily accepted the wish of his mother Kakeyi and went in the forest for an exile of 14 years.

Furthermore, Rama also serves as an inspiration for brothers. By following the deeds of Rama, the spirit of brotherhood would be spread throughout the world. Rama was so devoted his brother that they were always ready to help him in every situation or confusion. In this way Rama is also considered as an ideal brother. As far as Sita is concerned, she is being characterised as the citadel of virtues. Thus Rama and Sita are considered as a perfect couple. Along with this Ram is also considered as a perfect ruler as he was always prepared to defend his citizens and seeks their welfare and this is why his citizens had intense love for him. His nature as a ruler in being described in more details in the Ramjya.

In other words, this kind of temperament of Rama is a lesson for modern politicians, rulers and statesman. That is they must serve their countries like Rama without any selfishness or self-proclaimed attitude. Without any doubt, Rama being an incarnation of Lord Vishnu is considered as an ideal son, brother, husband and ruler. His character is a set example for everyone.

On the other hand, Krishna also being an incarnation of lord Vishnu has been immortalised by Hindu worshippers. It is true that Krishna in his childhood was mischevious whereas Rama was perfect. Krishna used to harassed his mother Yashoda. But he did it in playful and lovely way, Sri Krishna was a very pleasant child indeed. Everyone love him. Along with this, Krishna became very popular with Bhagavad Gita where he is the guide of Arjuna. The Bhagavad Gita is the considered as the ocean of knowledge. It is also defined as part and parcel of Hindu teachings. We can also say that the Bhagavad Gita enhanced one's mode of living. Along with Arjuna, he also learn about karma yoga, swa-dharma and mishkama karma.

Furthermore, going through the Bhagavad Gita

Candidate C

Krishna was a more important avatar of Vishnu than Rama as Krishna had a role to play in the Mahabharata. He was destined to kill his wicked uncle (Kansa) and to play a role in the great Mahabharata with the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

Krishna was the loverboy of the Gopis when he played his flute and all the Gopis began to dance around him. Krishna was the hero of the Mahabharata and in the other hand Ram was the hero of Ramayana. Krishna was able to end his uncle Kansa's wickedness and arrogance. Krishna convinced Arjuna to fight with his family as the latter did not have the courage to fight against them. Krishna told Arjuna that the dharma says that you can fight against anyone be it his own family.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

Despite many inaccuracies in the actual writing, the candidate fully understands what the question is asking, and sticks to the task. Writing in correct English obviously presents problems, but at no point is the candidate's argument unclear or unsupported. Coming to a conclusion that there is a reasonable case to be made on both sides was brave. Understanding of the key concepts of 'avatar', 'karma' and 'dharma' is shown throughout. A very creditable, and promising, effort at this level.

Marks awarded = 18 out of 20

Candidate B

This candidate seems to have run out of time and also to have planned the essay poorly. What is here is quite accurate and could have made for a strong answer, had the essay been completed. The result is, however, almost entirely devoted to Rama, with potentially good points squeezed into the last paragraph. A shorter, balanced answer, using the same material, could have gained higher marks.

Marks awarded = 9 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate knows some 'facts' about the two avatars, but does not appear to understand the kind of comparison which the question requires.

Marks awarded = 2 out of 20

Question 6

To what extent are the Ramayana's ideals of devotion and loyalty still relevant for modern Hindus? Refer in your answer to the characters of Sita, Lakshmana and Bharata. [20]

General comment

Candidates have all three characters to consider, so must beware of including too much illustration and anecdote. Arguably the ideal qualities in the question are timeless and the mark of a good life. 'Devotion' is *bhakti*, however, so perhaps not the same as the human quality of loyalty. All three characters acknowledge devotion to Rama as God, as well as their duties as wife or brother. Candidates might consider whether loyalty demanded within a family is of a different order from loyalty in general. In all three cases practical support and loyalty were freely offered. Also valid is the question of altruistic action today: are there limits to what is required in terms of unselfishness?

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The Ramayana is one of the most important Vedic literature written by Ved Vipsa. The social, religious, political and economic life were found in the Ramayan. Religious teachings were not just found in theory but also practise in life. The main characters of the Ramayana are Ram, Sita, Lakshman, Bharata, Hanuman. This epic moves with the vitality of life. Modern Hindus should take examples from the Ramayana which is based on devotion and loyalty of persons like Sita, Lakshmana and Bharata.

Firstly Sita was an outstanding female character. She was the daughter of mother earth and was the daughter of King Janak. She was very pure, calm, patience and noble. Her beauty is beyond description. She was an ideal and devoted wife. When Sita was married to Ram she takes the vow to be life long sincere to him and she proved it to the last day of her life. Modern Hindus should take examples from Sita as nowadays women make many promises during the vivaha samskaras but do not fulfill anyone of them. They should take inspiration from Sita.

Moreover Sita was so devoted to Ram that she considered her supreme dharma is to serve Ram. On hearing Ram's exile, Sita as a devoted wife pleaded Ram to bring her along. Despite Ram sweetly explain to her about the difficulties of the forest which is full of wild animals, demons. Sita insisted to go. She was ready to leave all the material things and luxuries. In the word of Sita: "Just as a body is incomplete without the soul, river without water so is a wife without her husband". Seeing the situation of Sita, Lord Raghu affirms if Sita is left behind she will not survive.

Sita is so devoted to Ram as she is concerned with the likes and dislikes of Ram. For her the company of Ram is like heaven and without Ram it is like hell. Kausalya even praises the faithfulness of Sita. In the Aranya Kand more light is thrown on the chaste Sita. She considered her dharma to obey the command of her husband. When Ram asked her to proved her chastity by undergoing a sacrificial fire without hesitation. Sita approached the fire and enter in it but the fire did not touch her. Infact the Lord of fire appeared and presented Sita to Ram and praised her chastity.

Despite being sa devoted, yet there are some negative sight of Sita. In the forests she was pray of the Golden Skin of the deer which result with the seperation of Ram. Moreover she is shown crossing her limits when Lakshman has forbidden her to come out of the hermitage.

Hence modern Hindus should take examples from Sita as materials things lead to sufferings. If a woman is shown crossing her limits she is sure to face problems.

Another character from which the modern can take example is Lakchman. Lakshman was an ideal brother, reliable servant, Kshatriya, true devotee. He is always associated with Ram. Ram is the son

of Kausalya and Lakshman is the son of Sumitra. But he is always associated with Ram. Lakshman was a glorified brother as he considered his dharma to accompany Ram to the forest. Their brotherly relationship is exemplary to modern Hindus. Nowadays brothers fight among themselves because of property, wealth and material things.

No one has asked Lakshman to accompany Ram but as an ideal brother he considered his dharma to serve Ram. This was a very difficult decision for him as he had to leave his newly married wife Urmilla and mother Sumitra. In the forest he devoted himself in serving Ram and Sita by building the hermitage, collect fruits and roots for them. Due to his love for Ram he even suspect the arrival of Bharata and his army.

Moreover his mind is fixed of purpose as when Sugriva was indulge in merry-makings and had forgotten his promise to rescue Sita Lakshman burst out. Lakshman has great respect for women and for Sita. His unequal respect for Sita is portrayed when Ram asked him to identify the jewelleries of Sita but the latter could not identify them as he has never seen her face but he could only identify her anklets as he uses to bow at her feet daily.

Modern Hindus should take examples from Lakshman as nowadays men do not respect their own sister in law, they are greedy.

Furthermore another main character of Ramayana is Bharata who is portrayed as a saint poet who does not desire money, property, kingdom. For the sake of Ram he has rejected the kingdom he has even condemned his mother as heartless on hearing Ram's exile. After the meeting of Ram and Bharata it was decided that Bharata would rule the kingdom in the presence of Ram.

Moreover after the meeting with Ram he decided to lead a life just as Ram was living in the forest that is sleeping on the ground, eating fruits and roots. He rejected all the luxuries and mundane wealth of the castle. Bharata the embodiment of self sacrifice is a devoted brother and is someone who will not exist again.

Modern men should take examples from Bharata who has rejected the kingdom, all the wealth and luxuries as another person in the place of Bharata would have been happy to be the king but he was not. Many would have not been able to do the same sacrifice as Bharata.

Hence through the great epic Ramayan, one knows about dharma and loyalty as modern world is passing through a phase of turmoil and transition. They should take inspirations from Sita, Bharata and Lakshman to lead a peaceful and divine life. Hindus can take the examples of Ram the hero of Ramayan who was an ideal son, ideal husband, ideal brother, saviour of the oppressed and the embodiment of dharma.

Candidate B

Ramayana is written by Valmikki. Valmikki is known as the adi kavi as he is the first one to write Ramaya. In his Ramayana, he has shown Rama as the ideal man. Ramayana is a story on Rama, but it also highlights each characters' love and devotion for Him.

The character Sita, is a model for the modern Hindus. She is known for her love, faithfulness and chastity for many ages. Nowadays, there are many unfaithful women who are betraying their husbands. Many are ignoring their household's duties. They are more concerns about materialism and success rather than their husbands and children. It is wrong to say that a woman should not work and get proper education. Even during Sita's time, they were allowed to get good education and they were even allowed to choose their husbands.

When Rama was told to go on 14 years of exile, it was Sita's wish to accompany Him. For her, a truthful wife should be one who always support her husband in good and bad time. If we ask ourselves the question how many women today will do such a great sacrifice for her husband, the answer will be very few. Sita could have remarried after her banishment. But she never do so. She always had love and devotion for Rama. Her love for Rama was a divine one. 'Rama' for her was the final aim of life, liberation. Respect for the husband is one of the great devotion. If women of today would have followed the steps of Sita, the society would have been a perfect one.

In Ramayana, it also shows the love of brotherhood. Lakshmana and Bharata remain the ideal brothers of mankind. Lakshmana, knowing Rama to be the divine god, did not want to separate with him even after Rama's exile. He considered his devotion and love for Rama more important than his social duties. Nowadays, there are no such brothers who will want to leave her wife in order to suffer with his brother.

Bharata was also one of the faithful brother of Rama. He also wanted to accompany Rama to the forest. The promises of his father was binding him. He took the throne only on the insisting of Rama. He was only doing the duties of a king in the mere absent of his brother. Todays brothers fought for wealth. If these people would have the shadow of Bharata, there would not have crimes in this world.

If everyone would have been like Sita, Lakshmana and Bharata, our society would have been the same as the city of Ayodhya. The city of Ayodhya represented peace and harmony. Everyone knew his righteous duties.

Candidate C

The teaching of Ramayana is considered to be essential in the life of every Hindu. In this, Tulsidas has shown devotion for Rama.

First and foremost, Tulsidas was complete devoted to Rama and composed devotion to Him. He has shown that Rama can only be worshipped when he is in a concrete form. He has shown us that it is through devotion only that Shabri was able to cross the ocean the mudand and attained liberation.

In the epic of Ramayana, Sita is said to be an essential character. Infact, it is interesting to note that she is considered to be the role model for most Hindu women all around the world. Today, very few people have the same qualities as Sita.

Sita has performed all the duties whether she wanted to or not. She has done all her dharma. She remained in the palace, had to go bare foot in the trackless forest with Rama.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This is an excellent example of a well-planned answer, where the candidate sticks closely to the question and produces a wealth of evidence from the text in support of the argument. The one weakness is that the candidate overstates the failings of modern people. Not *all* of the candidate's contemporaries can be lacking in moral principles, or neglect at *all* times to do their duty.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

This answer is adequate, but rather short and lacking in specific detail. As far as the discussion is concerned, the candidate does very little beyond stating that hardly anyone today measures up to the examples mentioned. There is no attempt to examine critically the idea of 'relevance' to contemporary life.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

Here the candidate can only be awarded a few marks for some material on Sita. There seems to be misunderstanding: it is wrongly assumed that the question refers to the poetic version of Tulsidas. It appears that the Ramayana set text has not been studied.

Marks awarded = 3 out of 20

Question 7

'The Alvar, in ecstatic delight, visualises God everywhere.' Assess the impact of the Alvars' vision on Hindu belief and worship in medieval times. [20]

General comment

The candidate should give evidence of knowledge of the Alvars and their bhakti, spread in songs and preaching. The question asks for discussion of the impact they made: e.g. growth and influence of their cult of Krishna in south India. Popular support for the Alvars can be attributed to their use of Tamil vernacular, rejection of caste barriers and acceptance of the poor and illiterate, women, non-Brahmins etc. The general point should be developed that the Alvars opened their followers to new ideas about how God could be experienced by the loving worshipper.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The Alvars are the great souls lost in the love of god. They are said to have born out of flowers. They have flourished between sixth century A.D. and eighth century A.D. Alvars have realised god in three ways. Firstly by Parajnana (transcendent knowledge), then Parabhakti (full devotion) and Paramabhakti (knowledge and devotion).

It is a fact that the Alvars, in ecstatic delight, visualises God everywhere. The origin of bhakti in South India was the timely reaction against the spread of Jainism and Buddhism. Hinduism was mercilessly exposed to that big threat. This surprised many religious thinkers and they decided to save hinduism and restore it to its prestigious position.

These religious thinkers were the twelve Alvars who have worked tirelessly in order to make people have unquestionable belief in God. The twelve Alvars are namely Poygai, Puttatt, Pey, Tirumalisai, Kulshekhar, Tondar, Tirup-pan, Tirumangai, Perialvar, Andal, Satakopa and finally Madhviakavi.

These religious thinkers preferred Saguna mode of worship. They believed that god incarnates because he love his devotees. However they were Vaishnava that is they believe that lord Vishnu incarnates from time to time.

Moreover, Alvars believes that in all creatures god resides. Therefore through renunciation they enjoyed the world. They offered all their actions to god. They do Nishkama karma that is selfless action. Here we must not forget the first verse of Isa Upanishad because even for the Alvars everything was divine. The verse runs as follows:

"All this, whatsoever moves in this universe is all pervaded by the lord, therefore through renunciation you may enjoy."

As Hinduism was losing its value, the Alvars with a psychological view observed the society and decided to give up certain principles and practices in order to adopt new one.

As Vedas were in Sanskrit, it was accessible only to scholars. So illiterate do not have knowledge about Vedas. So the twelve alvars acted wisely. They translated Vedas, thus it is called Tamil Vedas. Just as Tulsidas has attracted the masses by writing Ram-chant-manas in Avadhi language similarly the Alvars have translated the Vedas in Tamil that is language of the mass.

The religious thinkers were really great because they did not act impulsively. Instead they approached the masses with a psychological view which captivated the attention of the mass.

In South India, the alvars translated many poems of the Vedas and in their songs and speeches they sprang it and as result Hindu started having strong belief in God.

According to Poygai, one must sacrifice his sense-organs as well as ego in order to reach god. He believed that it is very difficult to reach god so one must certainly give up Aham.

Like other Alvars, Poygai also believed that rites and rituals won't lead man to God which is a common teaching of Upanishad.

Moreover, Puttatt believed that god can be attained by renouncing all desire except desire for god and we must keep on meditating on him. He exclaims

"Devotion as the lamp-bowl aspirant as ghee ... with melting soul have I burnt the bright flame of devotion to Narayana in revealed Tamil language"

On the other hand Pey gives importance to Shri (Lakshmi). He believed that Lakshmi is the heart of Vishnu. By praying Lakshmi he'll get the grace of Vishnu.

Kulshekhar approached god with Vatsalya bhava that is love of parents like Devaki Krishna. To be close to god, god resides in our heart forever.

As for Tondar, Narayana (Vishnu) is in deep slumber. To wake him he saying

"O Shri Ranganatha wake up from thy sleep"

Tirumangai alvar transfers his wife live to god. Actually he fell in love with a Vaishnava maiden. The latter asked him for the fulfilment of two conditions. Firstly to worship Vishnu and secondly to feed over a thousand of bhatas each day over a year and he accepted both conditions. So he preferred Madhurya bhava (To be absorbed in God love). However it is spiritual love, just as Radha love Krishna.

It is said that Tirumangai was really noble because in a way he was doing service to mankind by feeding them. Thus Mahatma Gandhi has rightly said:

"Service to man is Service to god"

Perialvar was an enlightened one because he was a great devotee of Krishna. It is said that God himself taught him Vedas.

Andal was the only woman in the galaxy of the Alvar. According to her, love between man and god must be mutual. So we must pray kamdeva (God of love) to be more close to god. So we can say that
 "love is born of love
 ... love has only one
 goal, to release the
 soul from bondage"

Last but not the least, Satakopa occupies the highest place amongst all the alvars. He has realized god through three successive way - Parabhakti, Para Jnana and Paramabhakti. He mostly laid emphasis on Dasya bhava that is to be servant of god like Hanuman. According to him we must serve god then god

will provide us with a citadel of his grace. For him, God is the backbone of all devotion. Ramanuja was influenced by Satakopa.

So we can conclude that the twelve alvars have enlightened the path of devotion. Thanks to them Hindu have a strong belief in god during the medieval times. Both rich, poor, literate and illiterate worshipped god due to them. In a way, the twelve alvars have synthesised path of action, devotion and knowledge. Thus Tiruvalluvar said

'None can swim the sea of births, but those who are united to the feet of god.'

Candidate B

The bhakti tradition was purposely reinforced in South India as a timely reaction against the rapid spread of Buddhism and Jainism. These offshoots of Hinduism had vigorously attacked the Vedic Religion to the point of uprooting it from the Indian soil. As Hinduism was mercilessly exposed to such a big threat, some religious enthusiasts were perturbed. They consequently decided to save Hinduism from further disintegration and restored it to a prestigious position. These thoughtful persons who had conceived this idea came to be known as Alvars.

These Alvars were, in the very beginning, just twelve in numbers. Their aim was to safeguard Hinduism and bring a final collapse to both Buddhism and Jainism. And this was not a simple task as though they did many religious activities in very ecstatic delight. They practised all what they preached. Before preaching about the omniscience of God, they made bhakti accessible to all. Because we should not forget that not all people were allowed to enter in temples. What they firstly did, is that they started making people pray formful God. Though they believed in formless God also, they started with the formful God because it is this formful that will take them to the formless. They organised sangkirtan and invited everyone to participate in, without paying any attention to one's colour, creed or status. They believed that in bhakti no such thing counts, what is important is that one should surrender himself completely to God. As Gandhiji puts it, "In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without heart." Again, it is one's heart that counts.

Furthermore, the Alvars did not preach to perform this ceremony, that rites, there was nothing as such. What they told the mass is that, they should sing the glory of lord with a pure heart. Infact when they organised sang-kirtan, they only sang the glory of Lord Vishnu along they played musical instruments for it to become more ecstatic. They chosed Lord Vishnu as the lord comes down on Earth to protect His devotees. So, they made the mass understand the fact that since lord Vishnu incarnates on Earth, then he can come anywhere, at any time. The Alvars, hence forth encouraged the people to sing the glory of the lord everywhere they can.

Moreover the songs that the Alvars comprised were of the ordinary language of the common mass. It should be noted that at that period of time, the people were not that educated, some did not attend school at all. We see that they make bhakti easy and accessible to all.

Next, they translated the Vedas, which were at that time in Sanskrit. And many people did not understand Sanskrit. The Alvars therefore translated the Vedas into vernacular languages. So that everyone could get the chance to learn what is there in the sacred Vedas.

The Alvars adopted a psychological aspect. They made bhakti appealing to the mass. This is why they organised sang-kirtan. Songs are soothing to the mind and heart. As a whole, we can say that while self-surrendering to God, the devotee will not have any problem in visualising God.

Candidate C

During the medieval age, Hinduism was on the 'brink to disappear'. This was so as there were different evils which were being practiced. Being the worshippers of lord Vishnu, the Alvars' come forward in order to make Hindus realise about Hinduism. They were about to convert themselves into other religion such as the Buddhism.

Thus, the Alvars came forward in order to help the Hindus. They have stopped superstitions, complicated rituals, animal sacrifices and other mal-practices. In fact, they showed people how to believe and worship personal gods and goddesses. They encourage Hindus to worship idols and murtis in temples.

Even the untouchables and the Sudras were allowed to enter temples. They worshipped idols and murtis. They even learn how to accept tolerance from Islam and the Islam learned how to accept non-violence. This was however, the mission to reconcile Hindus with Islam which was not a successful mission.

Therefore, the Alvars contributed a lot in order to make all Hindus realise about their true religion and about Hinduism itself. This is how the Hindus and Hinduism have been saved from different atrocities.

Examiner comment**Candidate A**

This is a superb example of what can be done by a candidate who studies a set topic in reasonable depth and learns the basic facts. At this stage no more could be required for a maximum mark.

Marks awarded = 20 out of 20

Candidate B

The candidate shows fair understanding of the topic, citing the Alvars' love of singing and their appeal to ordinary people, but much of the answer lacks precision. Reaction to the spread of Buddhism and Jainism is given as the explanation for the Alvars' popularity, but this is only part of the story. Reaction against excessive ritual (controlled by Brahmins) is hinted at but not explained. There is a suggestion (incorrect) that 12 Alvars (unnamed) deliberately started a movement at a particular (unspecified) time. The candidate refers correctly to the spontaneity of the Alvars' approach, though this seems to disprove the idea of a deliberately reactionary movement.

Marks awarded = 12 out of 20

Candidate C

Although some accurate general knowledge is offered, the answer is too short and the discussion does not get off the ground. Perhaps the candidate had only learned about the Alvars from a short class or paragraph in a general book on Hinduism. It is important to realise that more searching study of a topic is required as preparation for this examination.

Marks awarded = 5 out of 20

Question 8

'I am confident of one thing: that the good will be gratified to hear me, though fools will laugh.'
(Tulsidas) What elements of Tulsidas's teaching led him to expect this response? [20]

General comment

The question calls for some background knowledge of Tulsidas's own view of his task: as a teacher of religious and ethical principles, not just as the storyteller of Rama's adventures. He implies here that 'the good' are those who have faith in Rama, or simply seek a deeper understanding of God, but that shallow-minded people would probably laugh. Tulsidas himself expects that his 'vulgar' (vernacular) language and lack of polished poetic style might attract derision. Some who are not 'fools' however, might object to other aspects, such as his attitude to women. Long debates and philosophical speeches in the Ramacaritamanas might be criticised as out of place in a poetic work.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

An appraisal of Hinduism shows that the Hindu civilisation has undergone several changes in the course of its development. Basically the medieval age gives us a gloomy picture in all fields. The Hindu society was plunged in sinister and morbid atmosphere which many iconoclastic sects and Muslim rule had unleashes from time to time and the practice of vidya and jnana could never bring people to liaison with God. Hence in order to change the religious panorama of the Hindu society, some farsighted poets came importance to bhakti which was simply considered to channelise and man from (a) emancipation (b) socialisation (c) spiritual heights. Reform was brought about within the compass of Hinduism through the loving power of bhakti when a new era of Indian thought began during the bhakti movement, Tulsidas' importance as its most outstanding leader and prophet was clearly revealed. To study him is to delineate the main features of vaishna devotionalism.

One of the names which shines in the firmament of Hindu devotional literature is Tulsidas whose magic is unparalleled. As a poet of excellence, he felt that religious ends have lost their pristine purity and through his works he coined the concept of bhakti for men and became the best of the most daring poets of vaishna Devotionalism while theoretically leaning towards samkara, he used the smriti tradition to re-ignite the theistic views of shruti in order to bring divinity on earth on the basis of the avatarhood of Rama. He prescribed remedies for the ills of the Hindu society. Tulsidas portrayed Rama as a sectarian hero, the sum of true beings and is "absolute, negative form" meaning not this, not that (neti neti). Moreover he used to say "keep the name of Rama on the threshold of your tongue and by this we can overcome any difficulty". By glorifying Rama's divinity, he used to say "I am confident of one thing: that the good will be gratified although fools may laugh at me". Tulsidas's Rama is like a sun to dispel the darkness of ignorance.

Bhakti, as a concept became established and transformed our outlook of life. It comes from the root "Bhaj" meaning to enumerate the transcendental qualities of God. It is a gift of God that drives man to ecstasy. It means profound, unlimited and selfless love for the personal God. To emphasise on bhakti in minutest details, Tulsidas gave the following expressions: (1) Love of the servant for the loving master (2) Bhakti means 1, 2, 3 and implies devotional bliss (3) A man without bhakti is like a cloud without rain (4) An active agent characterised by intense love and when the stage is reached, the devotee retains it. Bhakti, according to Tulsidas is a form of negation (Prapatti) meaning to surrender everything to God. It also denotes service as the Purusha Sukta says "To sacrifice means to know everything". The Gita also emphasises on sacrifice: "He who does not help, in this world, to turn the wheel thus set in motion, is evil in his nature, sensual in his delight and he, O Partha lives in vain." Fundamental values like love, purity and kindness are all woven into a fabric of devotion that prepares man for liberation.

One of the rare scriptures which strikes the resonance of divinity in human hearts is the Ram Charit Manas, written by Tulsidas. Among the most excellent demonstration of literary achievements, it stands as unique because of its unparalleled beauty. As the 'magnus-opus', 'master piece' of Tulsidas, it is a brief summary of the best of the Vedas Upanishads and is the Bible of a hundred million of people. It beautifully probes on the lila of Rama in that Rama's achievements can be itching. The Ram-Charit Manas is so near to emotive needs and religious obligations that once a Vaishnava gets hold of it, he or she reaps the blessings of "All-compassionate and all-benevolent Rama". The Manas is: (1) A magic book (2) A book of universal appeal (3) A lake of the deeds of Rama. In this text, we even see that Ravana is a great devotee of Lord Rama when he says "If the lord himself has come on earth, I will go and fight against him and cross the ocean of mundane existence. The book is in everyone's hands, from court to cottage and is read alike by every class of Hindu community".

Hinduism is largely indebted to the insights of Tulsidas for having emphasised on Vaishnava traditions which are still favouring devotional moods among modern. His stature is no smaller than the great Samkhya himself. His ideals were so powerful that a person like Mahatma Gandhi was largely influenced and said "He Rama" as he died. His influence can not be ignored because even today his teachings are focussed in the mass media and films like Ramayana, Dasharatham and others. A Rama bhakta like Tulsi would believe that a Buddha or a Jesus is nothing but an avatara of his Rama. He is the "moon of Hindu devotional literature".

Candidate B

Tulsidas is one among the greatest poet in the medieval age. According to many philosophers Tulsidas is considered as the incarnation of Valmiki who is the 'Adhi kari', first poet of the Ramayana. Thus, Tulsidas translated Valmiki's Ramayana into Ramcharitmanas or the lake of the deeds of Rama.

Moreover, Tulsidas's Bhakti is considered as the easiest path to attain salvation. This is why Tulsidas pointed out that 'I am confident of one thing: that the good will be gratified to hear me, though fools will laugh.' In other words, it signifies that people who want to be freed from the cycle of birth and death will take the teachings of Tulsidas into consideration whereas those who take themselves to be aware of everything and who would laugh at those sacred teachings are actually fools. Without any doubt this is true as those latter would take birth again in this world of miseries.

Consequently, Tulsidas has rightly pointed out that man who lacks devotion are like clouds without rain. It means that those people are useless as without rain no one can survive. Therefore this analogy has very deep meaning. Wise people would definitely acknowledge it whereas fools will laugh as there is nothing funny in Tulsidas's teaching. In fact his teaching is considered as very essential in the life of every individual. Tulsidas wanted to facilitate the task of Hindu. As the Ramayana was in Sanskrit he translated it into the language of the mass and called it as 'Ramcharitmanas' or the lake of the deeds of Rama. Hindus must be very grateful to Tulsidas. Due to his great efforts Hindus are aware of the deeds of the lord and can follow this example.

On the other hand, Tulsidas describe two mode of Bhakti namely Dasya and Sakhya. In the Dasya mode of Bhakti, Tulsidas describe the love which exist between the Master and the servant. He take the example of the devotion of Kevat and Shabri for Lord Rama and without forgetting the loyalty of Hanuman. In this way man should be inspired to serve God just like a servant is serving the loving master. Therefore, in this way also man can approach God.

Furthermore, in the Sakhya mode of Bhakti, a devotee can approach God in the form of friendship. Therefore there would be no distance between the devotee and God. We can take the example of the friendship of Jatayu with Lord Rama. Therefore, those who want to attain liberation through the path of devotion will be gratified to listen to Tulsidas. Those who do not want to realise God will make fun and they are indeed fools. Tulsidas also laid emphasis on the nine forms of devotion also known as the marada Bhakti. This is the core teaching of the Ramacharitmanas. With devotion barriers separating humanity from divinity is destroyed. Tulsidas has been able to bring divinity at the level of humanity.

Tulsidas also show the practicability of Bhakti, it leads towards unity and equality as everyone can follow the path of devotion irrespective of his caste, creed and colour.

Candidate C

Tulsidasa being a staunch devotee of lord Rama praised him in most of his poems. Tulsidasa being a saint-poet devoted his time singing the praises of lord Rama. Compared to Surdasa, Tulsidas in order to reach lord Rama made his devotees as his ladder like Sita herself, Hanuman, Shabari etc. After having being rejected by his wife for clinging to her, Tulsidasa got engrossed to wing the praises of lord Rama, Tulsidasa was the medieval saint poet.

Tulsidasa being a wise man said that he was confident of one thing, that the good will be gratified to hear me, though fools will laugh. Tulsidasa raised Rama in everyone's eyes. He show Rama as the source of inspiration, as the perfect being, as being the embodiment of truth, honesty, faithfulness, dharma etc. He uplifted the character of Rama, Sita, Lakshma, Bharata etc. In Ramayana dharma is the bedrock of all virtues.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This candidate has a sophisticated grasp of the importance of Tulsidas's work and, despite many inaccuracies, has succeeded in answering the question quite fully. In particular Ram-bhakti is well explained. More attention could have been paid to the negative suggestion that 'fools will laugh'. At university level this candidate would be required to be more careful in quoting sources, e.g. the famous quotation 'from the court (here "count") to the cottage' comes from F.S. Growse's Introduction to his translation of the Ramcaritamanas. The candidate also seems to be trying to impress by using 'difficult' language where clear English would suffice. At this level, however, the answer is of a very good standard.

Marks awarded = 18 out of 20

Candidate B

This is a promising attempt, particularly as the candidate strives to answer the question directly. Some good points are offered, but in very general terms. Lacking more material, the answer tends to become repetitive. Study in greater depth is required here, and possibly more practice in essay writing.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate has only superficial knowledge of the poet's work, and in consequence fails to grasp what the question is about.

Marks awarded = 3 out of 20

Question 9

In what ways did Surdas convey the love of God through poetic imagery?

[20]

General comment

Candidates should explain that Surdas's poetry expressed the love of God in metaphor, more accessible to many than philosophical systems and treatises. Biographical material, true or apocryphal, is not required. Answers should concentrate on the writings, and show understanding of Surdas's treatment of the worship of God (Ishwara) 'with form' (saguna) e.g. description of the beauty of Krishna the lover as a predominant theme of the Surasagara. The various ways in which devotion to God is described (e.g. as love of a mother for her child, love of the servant for his master, love of a friend) are relevant here. Long quotations are not necessary.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Surdas the blind poet has immortalised his name in the medieval past. He believed that Bhakti was a profound faith to attain God. Surdas convey the love of God by creating the Four Bhakti Cult: dasya bhavna, sankhya bhavna, vatsalya bhavna and madhira bhavna.

In the first faith, the great teacher Vallabh met Surdas at Braj. He then initiated him into the pushti marga. Surdas composes many verses through his vinay ke pad. In the vinay ke pad Surdas describe the Lord as the Master of Universe. Vinay means request with humility. Hence it is full of devotion and commitment. Surdas self surrendered himself to the service of the Lord who has redeemed so many fallen. In the word of Surdas: "Lord you have redeemed so many fallen. I have been waiting for long, kindly include me in your list."

Furthermore the dasya bhavna of Surdas arrived at the sankhya bhavna. Surdas lost himself completely in singing the divine song and portrayed the Lord as a friend of everyone. The cowherd of Braj had an inseparable friendship with Krishna. They played with him, rebuked him. For example: Krishna's anxiety when defeated by Sudama: "Why do you bass in play? Hari was defeated. Sudama had one."

The sankhya bhavna of Surdas gradually move to the vatsalya bhavna. Surdas distinctive contribution no doubt lies that he had successfully develop the vatsalya bhavna. The vatsalya bhavna is shown through mother Yashoda. Affectionate love for children are unique and exemplary. Surdas advocated that service to parents is service to God. He convey the love of God through parental love. In the sports of children Krishna is very captivating: "Who is your mother? Who is your father? Yashoda is fair and so is Nand. Why are you so dark?"

Finally the bhakti cult of Surdas which has started with the dasya bhavna, sankhya bhavna and vatsalya bhavna finally reached the madhira bhavna. This link complete the bhakti cult. The love if the Gopis represent the climax of the Bhakti cult. The cowherd girl, Radha had an inseparable love with Krishna. In the word of Surdas: "Bride and Bridegroom are shyam and ahyama who beholding themselves in love." The flute of Lord Krishna help the yearning soul to merge with the supreme soul. Moreover the flute of Lord Krishna preaches the caus of the Gopis who abandon all their materials things and self surrender to their beloved Krishna. Furthermore Surdas advocated that sepration is needed to attain love. He even affirmed the nine forms of devotion to lead a divine and pure life they are: Remembering the God all time, Servility, Commandship, Offering one self to God, Repetition of Gods name, Humble service to the Lord, Worship of devotion, Devotional songs concerning the Lord, Having strong faith in the Lord.

Hence being primary a poet, Surdas did not formulate any philosophy of the great preceptor he re-expresses and re-affirms some of the philosophical concepts of the latter such as shuvait vand that is

follow the Guru. He ven describe Brahman, jive jagat and moksha to the Hindus in order to allow them to have the love for God.

The above theory provide the poetic imagery through which Surdas convey the love of God.

Candidate B

Suradasa is the great Poet and Singer in the bhakti Cult. He had contributed a lot in the rise and development in the Hindu society. Suradasa has explained the god of fascination. He has explained his close and love God namely Krishna.

Suradasa has laid emphasis upon the Shrimad Bhagavatam and he has even explained the nine form of devotion. Suradasa had laid emphasized upon the 4 mode of Bhakti namely Dasya, Sakhya, Vadsalya and Madhurya. Suradasa was a great poetry and singer. He has culminated all his poetry towards the love of god.

In his Dasya bhava, he has explained how a servant serves his loving master. He has even taken the example of Krishna. In his Sathya bhava, he has explained how the love of a friend must be pervaded. The gopis and gopitas love Krishna a lot and they know how to maintain their friendship. Suradasa has also mentioned the Vatsalya love of parents. The parents of Krishna love him a lot and he was pampered child. In his Madhurya bhava, he has explained the love and beloved between Krishna and Radha.

Suradasa has explained that how the two lovers were suffering from pang of separation. He has also related the erotic love between Radha and Krishna.

Krishna was playing the tune of his flute and Radha was dancing according to the flute of the flute. All the gopis and gopitas were eager to listen to the music of Krishna flute. They were so attracted by Krishna and once Radha started dancing on the flute of Krishna, she would not stop dancing and there was no one who could stop her from dancing.

Suradasa has explained how Radha and Krishna were separated. He was eager to see Krishna and Krishna was a lover. Suradasa has given example of his mode of bhakti.

Suradasa was against caste system and he was succeeded in eliminate evils in the society. Suradasa has taken example of Krishna and Radha so as to convey their love in such a way that man would like to read. He has also explained that liberation is not easiest path. It is important to perform such duties in the Hindus society.

Candidate C

Suradasa a great devotee of Krishna has convey the love of God through poetic imagery. For Suradasa the only god was Krishna. He could not imagine anything below or above Krishna. Everything for him was Krishna. Some critics say that Suradasa after the glance of Krishna broke his eyes as he deared to view nothing more than Krishna. Being blind he wrote a lot abt Krishna the way as a child, he behaved how he troubled mother Yashoda, the smearing of milk butter on his mouth. His being blind and with the imagination of Krishna, he wrote a lot whereas many people though having eyes are mentally blind. In the name of God, Surdas wrote many devotional songs which were full of His praises. He could not write anything else except praises of the lord.

Through the Naudha Bhakti, Surdas showed the love and serving of God, shy of devotional song and many more. His being one with the lord was the most important. Loving him, doing what he does, his likes and dislikes. Surdas even showed love through the Vatsalya bhava - the love between the mother and the child, the madhurya bhava - very well portrayed - the love of Radha and Krishna (Rasleela), the sakhya bhava - being friends with the lord and the Dasya bhava being always at the service of the

lord. Surdas was so much in deep inner contact with Krishna as nothing else meant anything to him. He was happy to be the friend of Krishna, to be His servant, to be his lover and his mother. He would put himself in all the different roles, to be one with Krishna. The love of God was mostly conveyed by devotional songs.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This candidate scores highly because they have managed to cover a great deal of material very succinctly, showing understanding throughout, and quoting intelligently. The many inaccuracies in individual words may reflect the candidate's poor handwriting and/or spelling, transcribed in the typing. Obviously accuracy in writing is desirable, but in this case the examiner has found the material to be sound despite weaknesses in presentation.

Marks awarded = 18 out of 20

Candidate B

Despite a superficial knowledge of Surdasa's main ideas, the candidate has not been able to give more than a succession of simple statements. Closer study of the poet's actual work is required. There is little attempt to show the connection between the different types of love referred to and the worshipper's devotion to God.

Marks awarded = 9 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate has some very generalised knowledge of the topic, but seems not to be equipped to write more than a general introduction. Much more material is required at this level, in order to show understanding.

Marks awarded = 5 out of 20

Question 10

What influences led Rammohan Roy to be a religious reformer, and how far did he achieve his aims?

[20]

General comment

This is the 'historical' section of the paper, so facts and commentary should be set out clearly. 'Influences' could include Roy's family, his exposure to Islam and later interest in Christianity. Candidates should be aware of Roy's erudition, that he learned many languages and translated Hindu scriptures into Bengali. Interested in all religion, he devised a special form of service with hymns, but no images, in the Brahmo Samaj (founded 1828). Reasons for his deeply felt objections to social abuses, sati in particular, should be known. The official abolition of sati in 1829 owed much to Roy's efforts. Recognised as 'Raja' by Mughal Emperor Akbar II he was also known and respected in France and England.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Ram Mohan Roy is considered to be the first reformer in the array of reformers in the medieaval age. Born in a family of traders, he had to deal with businessmen from many countries. Thus, he learnt Arabic and Persian languages. He even learnt Sanskrit, English and Bengali and became versatile in his reading.

At the age of sixteen, he had already read all the scriptures. He did not join the family business but joined the British Civil Service. When he left, he devoted the rest of his life to reforming the ills prevailing in the society.

Being a religious reformer, he tried to eradicate all the wrong practices which were performed in the name of religion. His first moto was to stop idol-worship. At the age of sixteen, he wrote an article questioning about idolatry. He did not believe in the worship of idols and even proved by saying that there has been no mention about idol-worship in the scriptures. The Vedas which are the authority state that "God has no form". Therefore, meaning no idol worship.

Vedas are the shrutis of the sages but at that time people were not giving importance to the Vedas. People had started believing in superstitions and wrong beliefs. Priests promoted animal sacrifices only to extract money from the poor. They were doing many wrong practices and yet did not get any spiritual enlightenment. Thus, Ram Mohan Roy tried to convince the masses that the priests were just extracting large sums of money in the name of religion. Thus, costly ritualisms were stopped. Even animal sacrifices were banned.

Roy even fought against casteism. This was just a means of divide and rule and he was successfull in eradicating such practices. He even preached monotheism. In the deed of the society, Ram Mohan Roy has said that "No graven image, carving, painting, statue, image, scultpture of anything shall be admitted".

Roy even believed in Christianity as he believed in some of its teachings. Thus, foreigners even believed in his ideas. He even promoted inter caste marriage which was once considered to be wrong. Even the performances of sati encouraged him to walk on the path of reforming the society. He witnessed his sister-in-law performing sati but was unable to do anything as he was a child. For him sati was murder. It was done because it was believed that after performing sati, they would go to heaven. Instead of remaining alive and prostitute herself, it was better to commit sati. But Roy proved that it this was done only to inherit the property of the dead as women were not given shares in the ancestral properties of the dead. Roy convinced Lady Bendick who then convinced Sir William Bendick to ban the sati pratha and the it was illegal to commit since 1881. After that, Roy was given the title of

'Raja' Ram Mohan Roy.

Roy even condemned child-marriage. He showed that it was just a means to exploit the children and that the old men married young girls just for sexual satisfaction. In order not to pay dowry, the girls were married to old men. In fact, it was a disguised way of satisfying the sexual vices.

Roy even banned female infanticide as girls were considered to be the cause of impoverishment for the family. Thus, it was better to kill them. But then Ram Mohan Roy highlighted on the fact that every human being has the right to live. Apart from all these reforms, he even condemned polygamy, that is, having many wives.

As such Ram Mohan Roy established and founded the Atmiya Sabha for the sake or order. In 1821, he founded the Brahma Samaj which meant the society of Brahmans where all human beings irrespective of castes were involved and worked for the welfare of the society. In this way, Ram Mohan Roy was able to eradicate all forms of malpractices which were done in the name of religion and was successful in curing all the religious ills prevalent in the country.

Candidate B

The 18th century was the period of social and religious decadence. Superstitions and blind beliefs were leading India towards downfall. To treat these maladies and to re-awaken the people from mental lethargy and ignorance, Ram Mohan Roy has rendered commendable effort to India.

Ram Mohan Roy 'the morning star of India' was the first one to throw light in the gloomy world of India. At that time there was the problem of idolatry prevailing over India. As a monotheist, Ram Mohan Roy opposed the practice of idol worship. In 1815 he founded the Atmiya Sabha where god was worship only in the impersonal form and it consisted of religious discourses.

Moreover, he even wrote the 'Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin' as a gift to all the monotheists. To add, as Hinduism had lost its pristine purity, he wanted to incorporate the teachings of Christianity and Islam in order to save India from downfall. However, he was criticised by the Christian missionaries that he wanted to mingle Christianity with Hinduism. His friend and even his mother doubted that he had converted to Christianity.

Furthermore, in 1828 when he founded the Brahma Samaj, he launched a crusade against idol worship, that is the religion of stones. He stated that: "No graven image, statue, picture, idol, sculpture shall be admitted". As such, Ram Mohan Roy was to a great extent successful to convince people that god is in an impersonal form.

Additionally, at that time people were doing unnecessary rites and rituals which has not been sanctioned in any Hindu scripture. People were doing several types of costly rites and rituals. Ram Mohan Roy carried out several religious discourses explaining to people that the performance of these practices is mere foolishness. However, he was criticised by the Hindu fanatics to create falsehood and misinterpretation of the Vedanta. Nevertheless, he was to a large extent able to eradicate these unethical rites and rituals such as the animal sacrifice.

Thus, from the above arguments we can say that Ram Mohan Roy has made relentless effort in order to free India from general religious malpractices and has made the work of other reformers like Swami Dayanand easier by laying the foundation work in his attempt to reform India. Thus, there is no denial of the fact that the progress of India today is to a large extent due to the remarkable service of Ram Mohan Roy.

Candidate C

In Hinduism many reformers are studied for example Swami Dayananda, Ram Mohun Roy and among

many others. Each of them have brought positive changes which is indeed helping the modern world. As such Ram Mohun Roy has been rightly called "The morning star of Hinduism".

There are unlimited reasons which pushed Ram Mohun Roy to be a religious reformer. Ram Mohun Roy noted that at a time in India religion was not playing its proper role, religion is something which should bound people together but at certain time in India, it was not the case, people were being separated, this was due because of different problems. Religion were being taken as caste system. Not everybody were getting accessed to religion, it was limited to only certain group of people.

Ram Mohun Roy could not accept this fact and hence decided to bring changes. Ram Mohun Roy gave each and everyone the opportunity to participate in religious activities, everyone had the opportunity to wear the sacred thread. There was no distinction between anyone. Each and everyone had the same opportunities. Even Swami Dayananda brought similar changes. Swami Dayananda gave everyone the opportunity to read the Vedas to participate in religious ceremonies to wear the Janewa. In order to bring such reforms Swami Dayananda referred "Back to the Vedas". According to him the Vedas are the words of God, divine in nature, hence they cannot contain any mistake and be ignored, it is in such a way that Swami Dayananda and his able leadership opened the Arya Samaj. In this way Ram Mohun Roy founded and opened the Brahna Samaj where "it will be a place of public meeting, there will be no religion, class barriers or caste barriers, each and everyone will be equal in status - no inferiority or superiority".

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This candidate sticks well to the question and is very well informed about Roy's life and work. The answer is well-constructed. What the candidate understands as 'mediaeval' raises some doubt about their historical grasp of Roy's importance, and as is often the case 'Bentinck' is written wrongly. In positive terms, however, a great deal of accurate material is presented and explained very well.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

This candidate gives quite a lot of information about Roy's career as a reformer, but has not read or noted the question with sufficient care. The result is an all-purpose essay on Roy, whereas *selection* of material was required. It is also doubtful whether the candidate had sufficient background knowledge to give a fuller answer. As seen in the work of many candidates, unhelpful stock phrases ('blind beliefs', 'pristine purity') are used without any explanation or evidence being offered.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

It appears from this answer that the candidate has studied 'reformers' as a group and finds it hard to separate them. This section calls for some accurate information about each reformer studied. Without sufficient knowledge to stick to Roy's reforms the candidate strays onto other aspects which are not relevant to this answer.

Marks awarded = 6 out of 20

Question 11

'In the 19th and 20th centuries, despite attempts to challenge attitudes to caste and untouchability, Hindu society resisted change.' Discuss. [20]

General comment

Candidates need to show understanding of the 'ideal' of *varna* in Hinduism as well as the problems raised by the caste system, and untouchability in particular, as they were met in the 19th and 20th centuries. Opposition to change in Hindu society was tackled head-on by Ambedkar and Gandhi and their supporters. Candidates should know that the 1947 Constitution declared untouchability illegal in April 1947, and any 'disability' resulting from it an offence. Conservative attitudes today are challenged by the concept of 'human rights'. At present calls for social reform continue in some sections of the media. Evidence of change might be 'caste no bar' marriage advertisements and easier social mobility in cities, but 'quotas' in education and other institutions are still a potential source of strife. Candidates are free to use any relevant material in discussing the question.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The reformers of the 18th, 19th and 20th century have contributed hugely to bring reforms in the human society. Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Swami Dayananda and M. K. Gandhi have all brought socio-religious reforms to uplift mankind and the Indian society. In the social field Ram Mohan Roy, the morning star of Indian Renaissance worked very hard to bring reforms like the proper rights given to women, education to both boys and girls. He opened anglo-Hindu School. Even Swami Dayanand, the father of Vedic Renaissance, left no stone unturned to dispel ignorance from lives of people.

His Arya Samaj in 1875, opened Kanya-Mahavidyalas for girls, DAV colleges for both boys and girls to get educated. Both the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj attempted to change attitudes towards caste and untouchability. Dayanand made it possible for the untouchables to get the right to participate in every festival, or to go to pray in temples. He fought against the dominance of the Brahmins priests over the Shudras. His clarion call was "back to the Vedas". His book "Satyarth Prakash" (light of truth) elucidates the truth. With the help of Vedic scriptures he prevented people from getting converted to Islam and Christianity. He introduced the Shuddhi Movement so as to bring new life to people. He fought courageously to dispel untouchability, caste system, Sati, child marriage, superstitious beliefs from lives of people. Being known as the "Luther of Modern India", he brought many reformers.

Even the universalist, Ramakrishna Paramhansa brought myriad forms of reforms. Being a mystic, his life was inspiring to one and all. He even preached that "God is One, Sages call it by different names".

He was in favour of preaching universal religion. He saw that caste system was prevailing everywhere. Being universalist, he was of strong conviction that all religions are the branches of the same tree. In his words "From a distance the water of the lake appears to be blue but when one approaches, it is found to be colourless, similarly the images of Lord Krishna and Mother Kali appear to be blue from a far distance but when a devotee transcends the personal aspects, he realises the infinite One".

According to him all the religions preach the same things, the same goal. In his words "From a bank of a river Muslim takes water and calls it 'paani'. From another bank, Christian takes water and calls it 'water' and on other Hindu takes water and calls it 'Jal'. The substance is the same, yet the name is different."

In this way, he expressed his views and fought vehemently against caste systems, untouchability etc. He said that everybody must live happily, in harmony and peace. In his words "I have practised Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and found that it is the same goal towards which all are directing themselves".

According to him, service to man is service divine. He even said that "I will give 10,000 bodies like this to help a person in difficulty".

Lastly M. K. Gandhi also by his lofty and pragmatic ideals brought many changes in the human society. His motto was 'Non-violence'. His Satyagraha was the establishment of truth. He wanted to create a healthy society where social evils like caste system. Untouchability would be driven away.

Throughout his life, he did not make any caste discrimination. Infact he expressed his view as follows: "I am a Hindu, a Muslim and a Christian".

He wanted to arouse brotherly love in the heart of the Indians so as problems like caste barriers, untouchability would be disappeared.

Last but not the least we can deduce that these reformers tried their very best to awaken the dead souls of the Indians. Their attempts to change attitudes towards caste, and untouchability are much inspiring to one and all. In nowadays world, we find that there still many people that are in the fetters of caste system and untouchability. They are becoming victims of their kinds class and caste barriers are existing everywhere. It is that the reforms, teachings of these great souls can re-establish order and pure religion in the society. The society can re-start to flourish again.

Candidate B

In the 19th and 20th centuries the Hindu society had to face numerous problems. At that time, in the political arena, there was no leadership. It can be said that at grass root, India was zero. The Mughal rule had also been crumbled down. Facts and figures would not be sufficient to prove all the miseries that the Hindu society had to overcome.

For instance, there were problems like 'Bala-vivaha' also known as child marriage, 'Sati-Pratha' the burning of the widow along with her husband on the funeral pyre, the 'purdah systems', the caste system, untouchability and so on. Thanks to the reformers of the Modern Age that the Hindu society resisted change otherwise these problems would not have been solved.

Child marriage was very famous at that time due to poverty. Parents married their children since their very young age, they discarded them as soon as possible. That is why child marriage gained much poularity. However, reformers like Rammohun Roy, Ramakrishna and Swami Dayanand gave a helping hand to put an end to this problem. They not only helped in dispelling child-marriage but for the welfare of the Hindu society, it was indeed important to put an end to all the malpractices, superstitious beliefs, tantric practices and so on.

The 'Sati-Pratha' - the burning of the widow along with her husband on the funeral pyre was one ot the most gruesome as well as cruel act. It was abolished in nearly 1847. This was due to the hard works and efforts of Rammohun Roy.

Regarding the field of education, women were not allowed to gain knowledge at schools, there was even the prohibition of foreign travel. But even Mohatma Gandhi who is said to be the noon of the star of the new Renaissance age, gave the right of equality. He promoted the right of equality to woman same as that of man.

It can be also added that the root cause of all those miseries that the Hindu society had to face was also due to political instability of that time.

Swami Dayanand on his behalf promoted inter-caste marriages. At that time the problem of caste system was prevailing and the untouchability was considered as the low caste of people with whom one should not even talk and so on. In the 19th and 20th century, the Hindu society resisted a change also in

the field of education. Thanks to the help of the reformers, subjects of science have been taught to not only men but also women had the right to grasp knowledge.

In the 19th and 20th century the problem of proselysation was very common. Many hindus converted to other religions, particularly Islamic. Many Hindus also converted into Christians. But while making reference to what Rama Krishna says below: "A river bank has several ghats. Christians call it water, others call it 'pani' and others call it 'jal' it can be pointed out that the substance is one but is known through various names. Furthermore, all religions are the brances of the same tree which leads to the same goal of life, so how come proselysation cropped up? This was mostly due to the lack of faith that the Hindus had for their religion.

One proof which clearly shows us that the aim of all the religions is discussed in Ramakrishna's life. He was one of the reformers known as the Morning Star. He heralded the new age. He wanted to reassure himself whether all religions have the same goal. As such he read not only the 'Quran' whereby he acquainted the Prophet Mohamed but also he read the 'Bible' when finally he was known to be the brother of Christ. It was only then that he said that all religions lead to the same goal. "Do not think that your religion is best."

It was highly significant in the 18th and 20th century to bring back the degenerated Hinduism to its pristine purity due to those various problems which have caused great problems to the Hindu society.

Candidate C

Our study and development within Hinduism shows that Hinduism was clouded with blind beliefs, lack of religiosity, there was seccarianism among others. Thus modern reformers such as Mahatma Gandhi, Ram Mohun Roy, Swami Dayananda, Ramakrishna came for the rescue.

Many problems were decaying Hinduism and thus modern men did no more follow the teachings of the Vedas, the Upanishads and so other texts and that is why Swami Dayananda stated back to the Vedas and that Ramakrishna stated that one should believe in God so as to attain salvation and self realisation. Problems like sati, low class women, untouchability of women, purdah and other such problems were the most prevailing one and that is why these humanists, great reformers wanted to review all these problems for modern men no more suffer.

Had not been all these reformers, Hinduism would still be losing its cultural heritage and also there will be too much of religious barbarism. Thanks to these modern reformers that we no more have these big problems like sati, purdah but it is unfortunate that in some areas in the world at sometimes women also are known to be the untouchables. In Islamic countries women do still suffer from this problem but not like in early decades.

In early decades, reformers saw that women were being neglected and faced lots of difficulties. For examples in the educational sectors. Behind that they were not in love with their husbands they were forced to get married only because of their parents sake. Girls was always having problems and were always being discriminated among men. Roy, Dayananda and Mahata Gandhi challenged these problems especially for women sake and this bring equipose in the society.

Mahata Gandhi overemphasises on "Truth force, love force" only for modern men follow the path of righteousness and also to follow the path of dharma. Thus Gandhi overemphasises on caste system meaning that differencial in the caste system should no more exists caste system is not a good thing because everyone is suppose to be the same and to be able to avoid all prejudical differences.

Had not been the modern reformers to challenge the blind orthodoxy of Hinduism, modern men would have still suffered and also it is undoubtedly sure that Mahatma Gandhi, Roy and Dayananda abolish the caste system where people were divided in many groups. But nowadays in Hindu teachings, Hindus are as well divided into groups like the Kshraiya, Brahnins, Vaishnavas, Shruddha etc.

Swami Dayananda along with his Arja Samaj movement wanted no more religious barbarism and that is why he applied "Sangathan and Shruddhi" for people who were converted into Christian missionaries and who wanted back to be Hindus. For all reformers, the only thing is that all people live in this world in harmony and in patriotism.

Untouchability also was a big problem for Islamic and Indian woman in India. These women were not allow to show a small part of their body, they should be covered completely and that it is only their husbands who should have the right to touch them. But thanks to Swami Dayananda and Roy that women do not totally have these problems.

It is noted that thanks to the humanistic approach of Roy, Mahatma Gandhi, Ramakrishna that although that in the 19th and 20th century were lots of problems they were ready to combat them. Swami Dayananda did write a book called "Satyaprakasu" on the problems existed and how it have been reduced.

Thanks to these reformers that nowadays Hinduism could stand as it is and behind that in some countries there is the problem of untouchability but it is not so much as problem than in early days. So after the death of such reformers, Hindus as well as non Hindus still worship them and their aya samaj movement and Brahmo samaj movement are still functioning and for Ramakrishna, there has been an association "Ramakrishna missions" where Hindus go there for these remembrance and for there marvellous job that they have done.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This answer addresses the question with understanding and gives clear examples of opposition to untouchability by the great reformers and their work in pursuit of social justice. The idea of 'resistance to change', however, is not discussed – no reasons are offered as to why the untouchability should continue to be a fact of Indian life, despite its being outlawed by the Constitution.

Marks awarded = 15 out of 20

Candidate B

The idea of social injustice is vaguely understood, but the candidate tries to cover too many social problems and says little about the caste system itself. 'Degradation' of Hinduism was to be reformed and returned to 'pristine purity' – when and where this ideal state of Hinduism prevailed is not discussed. The idea of 'resisted' does not appear to be understood, so the answer is lacking in an important aspect.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate has some idea about social justice, but cannot score more points on this essay since there is a misunderstanding of the meaning of 'untouchability' in the context of Hinduism.

Marks awarded = 2 out of 20

Question 12

‘He did not preach about God or religion; he was a living sermon.’ To what extent can M. K. Gandhi be considered a religious reformer? [20]

General comment

The question leaves candidates free to discuss what they regard as being ‘religious’ in Gandhi’s message, as opposed to social and political – though they might reasonably conclude that it is very difficult to isolate these different strands in his life. His writings provide evidence of his respect for the wise sayings of all religions, but his reverence for *sanatana dharma* and for controlling rules of life was possibly a greater influence. Many of his speeches and writings seem like religious sermons: examples can be given. Reference to his life and political action, where given, should be accurate.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the degeneration of Hinduism from its pristine purity was in its apex. A multitude social and religious injustices had cropped in India such as Sati, child marriage, caste system and many so on that crept into Hinduism. In order to remedy the situation, many reformers waged a merciless war against all these harmful ideologies to which women and society as a whole were subject. And they were successful to a certain extent in eradicating them.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, though a politician and a barrister, was a deeply religious man. He himself that “Most religious man, I have met one politician, I, however, who wear the disguise of a politician, am at heart a religious man”. Gandhiji was in fact an incarnation of spirituality. His ascetic habits, his fasts and his penance as well as his renunciation remind us of the ideal of Brahmacharya, Taspasya and Vaigraha (disinterest). Louis Fischer is right when he states that Gandhi did preach about God or religions. He was himself a living sermon.

Moreover, Gandhiji specialised himself in fasting and in simple living. He adopted this idea from the Gita. Gandhiji said that prayer has the power to purify a sinner and make him attain peace of mind, provided if he sincerely repents his action and is determined to lead a life of righteousness. This idea is expressed in the ninth chapter of the Gita which Lord Krishna says: “A confirmed sinner can become righteous, if he worships with sincerity”. And thus, he attains permanent peace.

Furthermore, Gandhiji emphasised the importance of faith. He said “A devotee must have faith in faith. The Lord assumes all full protection to all those who worship Him.

Gandhiji was a man of action. He is quoted to have say: “I am part and parcel of the whole and I can not find Him, apart from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They are so helpless, so resourceless, so enert that I must concentrate to serve the mankind”. To serve mankind the Mahatma undertook politics. He cannot remained idle because he has learnt to be active from the Gita. ‘Karma Yoga’ is the teaching of the Gita which Gandhi not only preach to the world but also put into practise. He did his work without expecting any rewards on return. He embraced the Gita’s doctrine of non-attachment to the fruit of action.

For him, violence was any act of inflicting pain, mentally or physically on anyone. He could not tolerate violence. When someone asked him as to how he would the atomb bomb, he replied “I will not go underground, I will not go into shelters. I will come out in the open and let the pilot see that I have not the face of evils against him. This, a believer in non-violence, does not fear death and is a completely innocent man”.

'Satya' (truth), 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) and 'Shancha' (purity) are the rules of observance taught in the 'Yoga Sutra' of sage Patanjali. These rules are observed for self-refomation.

To him, Satyagraha means: love force, soul force and truth force. Thus, it has a higher law and divide duty which when applied becomes a force reckoned by him as Satyagraha. He says: "It is never the intention of a Satyagrahi to embrace the wrong doer". The appeal is never to his fear, it is, must be, always to his heart. The Satyagrahi's object is to convert not to coerce the wrong-doer. Thus, we see, that M. K. Gandhi challenges the evils through a new approach termed by Him as Satyagraha. Satyagraha was practised for the first time in South Africa and later, he applied it on almost all his campaigns. He brought many people to his side and he says: "The aim is not to crush the opponent but to trust him and change him.

In addition, Gandhi also gave a new dimension to women's education. To him, education a woman was educating a whole generation and he did everything that was in his power to see to it that woman benefited from this facility.

There is no doubt to say that M. K. Gandhi's role in Hinduism is highly significant. The Mahatma Gandhi derived the doctrine of non-attachment from the gospel of the Gita. Therefore, it can be said that M. K. Gandhi was a religious reformer.

Once the 'London Times' made the following comment on Gandhi and India: "No other country than India, no other religion than Hinduism, would have produced a Gandhi".

For him God was truth and truth was God.

Candidate B

As Albert Einstein has said, "generations to come will hardly believe that such a man, in flesh and blood, has ever walked this earth".

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is considered to be the Apostle of truth and non-violence. He was the person who change India. He was one of the man who brought changes and reformed the society.

Born on the 2nd of November 1868 in the state of Gujrat, he grew under the loving care of his mother. He was an intelligent boy and always wanted to learn. When he grew up, he wanted to go to England to become a lawyer. At first, his mother did not want him to go. But, when Gandhi promised to stay away from women, wine and meat, his mother let him go. He was shocked when he was thrown out of the train just because of his colour and creed. He became a successful lawyer and returned to Gujrat and he was married to a beautiful girl named Kasturba. He started practising law. His 2 weapons were truth and non-violence. He always talked the truth and encouraged people to never leave the side of truth. He also made people understand that violence needs to nowhere. We must not use violence to solve a problem. He was the only man who brough independence to India without any weapons or violence.

He condemned the caste system and allowed inter-caste, inter-dining and inter-marriage. He also condemned the 'purdah system' where a woman should always cover her face before her husband or in-laws. He also encouraged women to get education and got emancipation of women, i.e., the right to vote. Gandhi said that women's place is not only behind the four walls. They have to go out to get education and to be emancipated. Gandhi was a living sermon. By preaching about truth and non-violence, he also convey people about God. By talking about truth, he is also referring to be pure hearted and devoted so as to attain salvation. He, indirectly, conveyed to people that God and religion was important.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was the epitome of truth. He never learnt to be untrue or to act violently. He reformed the religious activities by condemning inter-caste, inter-marriage. He was a man of great personality who not only talked the truth but made many people to follow his examples.

Candidate C

Mahatma Karamchand Gandhi was known as the apostle of truth. He did not preach about God or religion yet he was indeed a living sermon. To fight against injustices, his biggest tool was Ahimsa and Satyagraha.

M. K. Gandhi was known as the father of the renaissance of India. He brought many changes in the lives of the Indians. Due to him India achieved its independance on the 16th of August. MK Gandhi never preach about God or religion, he was himself a living sermon. He studied almost all the religions. His biggest tool was non-violence. According to MK Gandhi, the best way to stop injustices was to bear them. For him if one raises his voice or arms, that person was a fool and he was encouraging people; mostly the Britishes to feel powerful. MK Gandhi was a very tactful person. He stated that: "The varna dharma is the law of spiritual economic and has nothing to do with superiority or inferiority".

Examiner comment**Candidate A**

This is a very creditable answer, showing ability to cover the topic in some detail in the time available. Most of the material is accurate and the candidate shows quite mature judgement. It would have been better to avoid overstatement and eulogy, however, since Gandhi's achievements speak for themselves. The shape of the essay is good. The first paragraph is unnecessary, however, and the first sentence (used in some form by many candidates) means little as it stands: such generalisations, unsupported by evidence, gain no extra marks.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

Despite some correct points made, this answer is a general account of Gandhi's life and work without specific reference to the question set. The candidate has not grasped exactly what was asked and has not been aware that there is something to discuss, thereby failing to gain marks for understanding and development of the topic.

Marks awarded = 11 out of 20

Candidate C

This candidate is not equipped to tackle the question except in the most general and superficial way, so could gain few marks for this short response.

Marks awarded = 4 out of 20

PAPER 2

Question 1

'Bondage and liberation are of the mind alone.' Discuss the approaches to Avidya and Moksha in relation to the systems of Samkhya and Yoga. [20]

General comment

The candidate is required to show knowledge of the key terms such as 'avidya' and 'moksha', to have studied the Samkhya and Yoga philosophical systems and be aware how those are said to be related. In tackling the phrase 'of the mind alone' candidates should not be content to state that 'Samkhya is theory and Yoga is practice', but should explain that the stages and practice of Yoga are designed to lead to moksha by dispelling ignorance. Contrast with monist as opposed to dualist approaches is relevant, but should not overbalance the answer.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Bondage and liberation are considered as being two most important features in the samkhya and Yoga system and it has a great value to be able to attain the soul. Samkhya is one of the oldest school of philosophy in India and it advocates the dualism theory. It accepted the authority of the vedas and accept the belief of the soul. To be able to attain 'Moksha' that is liberation, one should understand the meaning of these two philosophies.

Samkhya and Yoga are not considered as being separated but are the two sides of the same system. Samkhya is the theoretical part and Yoga is the practical side. There are references of the Samkhya system in the Upanishads: Chandoga, Katha and also in the Gita and Mahabharata. However it is rejected as the teaching of the Upanishads as it had rejected monism and theism to accept dualism and atheism due to the influences of Buddhism and Jainism. Therefore this philosophy explains how one can attain Moksha. And to be able to achieve this goal, one should have right knowledge, and right knowledge means the right knowledge of the separation of the Purusa and Prakriti.

Samkhya advocates a clear cut dualism, accept the plurality of the Purusas and is silent on God. Prakriti is the source from where all causes and effects arises. It is the ultimate origin of the material world. Prakriti is said to be unconscious as it is the inanimate world. Prakriti is independent, eternal, absolute, one, beyond production and destruction but the products of Prakriti are dependent, temporal, relative, many and subject to birth and death. It consists of the three gunas which is the root of material world. One should understand this concept of Prakriti to be able to attain moksha.

Therefore, not only Prakriti matter but also Purusa, which is considered as the two main knowledge to understand the world. However there is also the presence of gunas in this system. They are considered to be three in all, namely sattva, Rajas and Tamas. They are not perceptible but subtle. They have qualities like lightness, heaviness, ever-changing and extremely fine. The three gunas give rise to pain. Even life in heaven is associated with the gunas. They are separate but support each other and intermingle in each other. An example is the wick, flame and oil of a lamp. The sattva guna give rise to joy, Rajas to pain and Tamas to indifference. When they are in equilibrium, Prakriti is said to be in unity and therefore there is no evolution. There are two type of gunas; homogenous and heterogenous. The first is when sattva changes to sattva, Rajas to Rajas and Tamas to Tamas. The second is when one is predominance upon the two others.

Purusa, which is considered to be the soul, self, knower, silent-witness, eternal, all-pervading is in fact pure and transcendental knowledge. It is the ultimate knower and therefore is a subject in itself and

cannot be regarded as the subject of objects. It is beyond time and space, merit and demerit. The samkhya system believes in the pluralities of the Purusa. It said that Purusa is many in quantity but one in quality. To prove that he said that if were not so, the birth and death of one will mean the birth and death of all and any experience of pain, pleasure and indifference will be experience by all. Liberation of one means liberation of all and bound of one means bound of all. It also explains that liberated souls are one in quality but bounded ones are different in quality.

One should understand both these concept to understand bondage and liberation in the samkhya and Yoga system. However the Purusa who is the perfect knowledge mistakes its identity because of its reflection in the Buddhi due to ego, intellect and the mind. Therefore the Purusa get trapped in its own misunderstanding. With the right knowledge of the separation of Prakriti and Purusa, the Purusa will realise in pure nature and become free, as it always was. This mistake was due to ignorance. Due to ignorance, one gets trapped into this world of materialism.

Therefore to be able to attain liberation, one should be able to have proper discrimination between the self and the non-self. Liberation is the complete cessation of all pains and sufferings. Human face 3 kinds of pain. The first one is cause by inter-organic substances, that is bodily and mental pain. The second is caused by extra-organic substances such as birds, men, beasts and so on. The third is caused by supernatural belief, that is ghosts, planets and demons. By attaining liberation one will be free from these three kinds of pains.

However, the Yoga system gives another approach, it said to practice the eight type of path to be able to attain Moksha. It gives the path that a mortal should choose to attain Moksha. The person should cultivate virtues and destroy vices. He should have a good knowledge of the cultures, he should control his speech, he should not lie, or use harsh words. He should control his mind from thinking what is bad. Abstention from killing, stealing, sensuality, intoxicans, women and so on. He should practice postures to be able to concentrate. The posturers should be firm one, he should be able to concentrate and meditate.

However Samkhya said that Prakriti and Purusa alone is enough to explain the existence of this world whereas Yoga does not deny the existence of God. However, these have raised quite a few criticism that 'Bondage and liberation are of the mind alone'. Purusa and Prakriti are independent and absolute, therefore they cannot get in contact, then there will be no evolution therefore the greatest mistake of this system is to treat Purusa and Prakriti as separate as experiments told us they are together. Samkhya confuse Purusa and reflected Purusa, therefore how can it lead to the pluralities of the Purusa.

Purusa is said to be many in number, whereas logic tells us that only the Jivas or reflected Purusa is plural. Purusa enjoys the fruits of actions of Prakriti, therefore this goes against the law of karma, as Prakriti will be performing actions and Purusa will be reaping its good and bad reaction. It also said that Prakriti is independent and absolute, but Prakriti need the support of Purusa, therefore it is not absolute. It said that liberation is the complete cessation of pains but without bliss therefore no one is interested to attain this bliss, does not encourage people.

However we cannot really be sure about what to believe.

Candidate B

The Samkhya System is of a complete spiritual realisation where God is completely disregarded. It is in itself an atheistic movement. Samkhya system is merely of a practical expression. The author of this samkhya system is Sage Kapila. This system recounts on the twenty-four tirtankaras. The Samkhya system is based on two realities Purush and Praktiri i.e. primordial matter and the soul.

These two realities are full of virtues. The Prakriti is in itself the bosom of the whole universe. Prakriti is eternal, one, beyond production and beyond destruction as it has the self esteem. These

matters are normally based upon the three gunas namely sattva, Rajas and tamas. These three gunas are the constituents or components of Prakriti. These three gunas namely sattva, Rajas and tamas are everchanging element and of the same equilibrium.

Sattva guna is responsible for the manifestation of objects in consciousness. Its results are lightness, bright, bliss and illuminating. Rajas guna is the principle of motion. Its results are restless activity and so on. Its colour is white. Tamas guna is the principle of inertia. Its colour is dark. These three gunas in all together are of equal force and equilibrium. Thus, there is no reason for the upset of their balance or equilibrium all together.

According to Samkhya system, bondage and liberation are of the mind alone. Liberation cannot be attained under any circumstances if there is any kind of bondage or attachment. Life on earth is full of suffering. For every suffering, there must be a certain cause. Due to these factors, moksha i.e. liberation cannot be attained. Liberation is the final stage in the life of an individual.

Liberation is the final stage in the life of an individual. Beyond this stage, there is nothing for him to attain. This is the supreme end. An individual cannot attain liberation (moksha) when there is bondage. The life of the individual, is thus under peril. Bondage takes place due to illusion (avidya). Avidya (illusion) is the main cause. Men are too attached to material life i.e. lots of comforts and luxuries, care and so on. These things blind the eye of the individual. Due to these, he cannot attain liberation.

Avidya (illusion) blinds the eye of an individual. The person thinks only of material life. For example, a magician that makes people to imagine or see things that are not in real life. Thus, the individual thinks that these are true or real.

On a conclusive note, we can say that bondage (attachment) and avidya (illusion) cannot lead the life of an individual. If there is bondage, there is no liberation (moksha). Illusion (avidya) is the main cause of this. Thus, the samkhya system put great emphasis on liberation and bondage (attachment).

Candidate C

To attain liberation that is Moksha one has to be free from bondage, have a pure mind and to perform dharma. Thus to be able to be free from bondage one has to be able to control his senses, to be healthy and to practice non-violence.

"Bondage and liberation are of this mind alone"

Only the soul is liberated, the body is only a mere vessel in which the soul resides. In order to attain liberation one have to have a positive control on his mind.

A person who have great knowledge of the soul and who know its importance, will not give much importance to materialistic pleasures, which is the cause of bondage. Through yoga one to learn different ways by which they can control their senses, mind, actions and thus lead a life of dharma. Yoga help oneself to be healthy and also teaches the art of living. That is while practicing yoga one will not only learn postures to keep his body in good shape but will also learn how to cope with the different stages of life.

Through Yama we are taught the five vows of Jainism that is non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing. Thus while practicing yoga we should have a pure mind. In iviyama we learn about how to respect our culture and the culture of other, to perform our religions. Asana are yogi postures which help us to keep our body fit and healthy. Pratyahara is the control of the five senses. When we are able to control our five senses automatically our mind also will be under control. Samadhi is the last stage through which we attain liberation.

The one who attain liberation is someone who has been enlighten. That is who have a complete knowledge about the soul. Through yoga the individual soul merges with the supreme soul. Thus in order to attain Moksha one has to be completely free from attachment. The samkhya system encourage people to lead of righteousness and dharma. That is to be able to attain liberation one has to perform

his duties.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This is a very competent review of the material, giving accurate explanations of the key terms and showing understanding throughout. The end of the answer is a little less secure, but in general the candidate has made a good case, explaining the Samkhya-Yoga systems clearly and in context.

Marks awarded = 17 out of 20

Candidate B

Although this candidate gains some marks for accurate knowledge e.g. of the three gunas, there is no attempt to discuss Samkhya in relation to Patanjali's Yoga. There are also many inaccuracies which suggest lack of understanding generally, and confusion with concepts in Jainism and Buddhism. 'Illusion' is usually the translation of 'maya' rather than 'avidya' (ignorance): the use of 'illusion' in the penultimate paragraph suggests confusion with the philosophy of Sankara.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate has some general knowledge of the purpose of Yoga and of a few key terms, but has not learnt about the Samkhya and Yoga systems sufficiently to be able to understand what the question asks, or what type of discussion is required.

Marks awarded = 7 out of 20

Question 2

'Patanjali and Isvarakrishna do not agree that Yoga is merely the practical expression of Samkhya philosophy.' Evaluate the truth of this statement.

[20]

General comment

The candidate must be aware that the question asks the candidate to identify the seeming inconsistency between the Samkhya and Yoga systems, the former being atheistic and the latter positing a divine being who is superior to the purusha of Samkhya and, as God, can provide an ideal (moral guide) for human action. This is not a question about Yoga in general. It does not invite detailed description of the stages or 'limbs' of Yoga, though reference to these would be in order.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

According to the Indian philosophy, Yoga is the 'union of the individual soul with the supreme soul'. As we all know that individual soul is part and parcel of the supreme soul. Yoga literally means a control upon the senses, mind and ego and even means the separation between the Purush and Prakriti in an efficient cause. It is a dualistic realism in an efficient cause.

Indeed, Samkhya speaks of dualistic realism that in a theoretical aspect whereas Yoga speaks of practical expression of Samkhya philosophy. Therefore Samkhya and Yoga system, each understand the truth in their own ways and means. Patanjali and Isvarakrishna do not agree that Yoga is merely the practical expression of Samkhya system because they have indulged their teachings in such a way that they themselves are not for practice of Yoga. As said earlier, it is a practical aspect and both differ in their end. Samkhya by the three Gunas manifest in themselves and it equal to Prakriti and Yoga in its practical way in it is attained through much of practice and great concentration.

In addition the truth behind this statement is to practice Yoga in a way that Nishkama Karma Yoga can be made use. In the Bhagavada Gita Krishna tells Arjuna to concentrate in his rightful duty as a Kshatriya that is to fight. Fight for the truth. In the same way here it is mentioned that Yoga which helps an individual to concentrate in his accustomed duty. In the Katha Upanishad it is rightly stated that; "A mortal ripens like corn and like corn he is born again." And in the Bhagavad Gita it is mentioned "One is bound to act helplessly by the impulses born of Nature".

Hence it is imperative not to spend our time in useless things rather devote our time in Yoga. It is the best and perfect way to attain our objectives. There are different aspects in the Yoga system and these practices help an individual to attain the Realisation of God in a more magnanimous manner. Krishna tried his level best to convince Arjuna to perform Yoga and to attain the Perfection (Samadhi).

According to Patanjali, the different ways to attain our objectives (Salvation) are firstly Yama, that is abstention from useless things, that is never be greedy for certain things and never touch thing which is not ours. Secondly it is Niyama that is a bit more advanced way of Yama that is to have a proper physical aspect and to enter in the stage of Asana that is to perform physical activities and the best posture in Yoga is Padmasana that is the lotus posture.

Furthermore, it comes the Pratyahara aspect that is, it is more inclined to have good and proper physical posture and to step forward on the respiration process that is. Pranayama, the best and not easy stage that is breathing. Breathing is vital to sustain life. But do we know the way we should breathe? There are mainly three aspects (Inhalation, Retention and Exhalation). Then come Dhyana that is to focus on the object of worship and Dhavana comes after that is concentration and last but not the least come Samadhi that is completely absorbed on the object of PERFECTION. Is it a way not to agree that Yoga is merely the practical expression of Samkhya philosophy? No, it should not be thought

of. Obviously it is a practical of the theory of Samkhya realism.

Candidate B

The great sage Patanjali has bestowed us with the eight limbs of yoga which one aspires for spiritual realization. Yoga means 'union'. Hence, it means union of individual soul with the supreme soul. Samkhya is mere knowledge. Yoga has some similarities and differences when compared to Samkhya philosophy.

Yoga is the way to attain liberation. By practising yoga one can be freed from the cycle of birth and death. There exists eight limbs of yoga and they are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayam, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi.

Yama means the abstention from killing, falsehood, hurting someone through deed, word. Niyama means self-culture. Asana is the posture that is required to meditation. Pranayam is the proper inhaling and exhaling of breath. Pratyahara means mindfulness. The five limbs of yoga is called the external posture of yoga.

Dharana means to fix one's mind on an object like the tip of the nose. Dhyana means to concentrate on one thing and Samadhi means to achieve the state of bliss. Samadhi is of two types, conscious and supraconscious. Supraconscious Samadhi is where one attains liberation from the cycle of birth and death. The three limbs of yoga are the external posture of yoga.

Yoga is similar to the Samkhya philosophy as yoga believes in the metaphysical and epistemology of Samkhya and in the twenty five numbers also.

However Yoga is different from Samkhya philosophy as Samkhya philosophy believes in knowledge but Yoga believes in the practice of the eight limbs.

Furthermore, Yoga believes in God, Prakriti, Purusha whereas Samkhya philosophy believes in only two forms. Samkhya philosophy does not believe in God.

According to the Yoga philosophy of Patanjali God exists. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscience but he is not the one who has taken avatars. He is kind and generous. The Yoga philosophy believes there is someone who is above all, above the law of karma. Yoga believes in Ishvara.

Hence, it can be said that Yoga is not a mere expression of the Samkhya philosophy. The Yoga philosophy of Patanjali believes that the eight limbs of Yoga control the mind, leading to the highest state known as Samadhi which eventually frees man from the bondage of rebirth.

Candidate C

Yoga is the philosophy of an invaluable gift from the great sage patanjali. It can be defined as the Chitta-Vriti-nirodha Itti yogah. This mean there is changes in the moral mind. It is also known as the patanjala system. We practice yoga to realise the existence of the Spirit. Samkhya comes from the word samkhya. In samkhya they do not believe in God.

The yoga sutra or the patanjali sutra is the first school philosophy. There are four types of how it is going to be done such as the samadic pada, sadhna pada, vibhuti pada and the kaywalia pada. These are the padas in the yoga system. The samadic pada stand for the attaining of different method to practice yoga. The sadhna pada stand for the knowledge we have in yoga. The vibhuti pada stand for how much we acquire the power of yoga. And the last is the kaywalia pada, it stand for the liberation of yoga.

It is being said how yoga practice can help a person in life. To practice yoga is the best way to succeed in life. There are many steps which an individual have to follow before the practicing of the yoga. These practices are the yama, Niyama, Asana, pranayama, pratyhara, Dharana, Dhyana and the samadhic. When yoga is being practice we people forget all our sufferings. That's why it is being said that when Lord Shiva is meditating He choose the mountain Himalaya to meditate. Because, mountaim Himalaya is very high and while meditating we must have high thinking. In other words, yama means restraint, Niyama means culture, Asana mean posture, pranayama means Breath control, Pratyhara the the withdrawal of our senses, Dharana means, Dhyana means meditate, Samadhi means full concentration.

We practice yoga to realise the existence of the spirit. Yama means that an individual must be ready to practice yoga. When practising yoga, we need to control our senses, we need to forget all the bad, evils, pleasures, desires. An individual should take an object whether it a picture which portrayed any Lord or even something else. Asana means posture, our body must have the feeling of practicing the yoga. As we say yoga is the theoretical and the practical one.

According to samkhya it comes from the word samkhya. Samkhya don't believe in God. But in samkhya we have certain disciplines like the yoga. It can also be in different stages such as the Pakriti, Mahat, Ahankara and other which follow. In samkhya itself we lead to liberation which is moksha. It is also the approaches of Avidhya and moksha both in the samkhya and the yoga. In samkhya there are also the Gunas. But both leads us to the realisation of God.

Through the system or the practice of yoga the yogis attained perfect bliss. In our modern time, yoga is the best medicine to cure a people. Centres have opened their door and it has also sprung up to practice the yoga. The sages from India are coming to Mauritius, so as to make the people learn and let yoga be a famous one. On television also, nowadays yoga practice is being broadcasted.

Thus, to conclude, yoga is both theoretical and practical. It is the best way to lead people to a right path as for samkhya, it does not believe in God.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

The candidate achieves a fair number of marks for accurate knowledge of Samkhya and Yoga. Going off at a tangent to discuss the Bhagavad Gita's understanding of the 'moral' purpose of yoga is not wholly irrelevant. The main question is not tackled, however, since the candidate fails to mention the absence of a god in the Samkhya system.

Marks awarded = 14 out of 20

Candidate B

This is a very basic answer, initially covering mainly a description of the limbs of yoga. On the other hand the candidate continues by correctly contrasting the Samkhya and Yoga systems, though in very general terms. This is on the right lines, but more detailed study is required.

Marks awarded = 10 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate can gain a few marks for a vague description of the limbs of yoga. Lack of knowledge about the Samkhya system (except that gunas are involved) entails, however, that the answer cannot really be begun. The only point of contrast offered is the 'atheism' of Samkhya – unfortunately the candidate contradicts this by saying that both systems lead to 'the realisation of God'.

Marks awarded = 4 out of 20

Question 3

‘Realisation of Advaita is the fruit of Jnana.’ Discuss this statement in the light of Sankara’s teaching.
[20]

General comment

Candidates should not be tempted here to write all they know about Sankara’s philosophy. It is the concept of knowledge (jnana) that is important in dispelling illusion and leading to moksha. Accounts of some of Sankara’s analogies could be usefully included, as long as they are properly connected with the theme of the question and show understanding.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Shankara was a might, marvellous and master of logic. He was a profound thinker of the first rank where philosophy has brought solace, peace and illumination to countless persons in the East and West. His philosophy has soothed the sorrows and difficulties of the most forelorn persons. His philosophy has brought hope, joy, freedom, wisdom, perfection and calmness to many. According to Shankara Brahman alone is real, the world is unreal and the individual soul is non-different from Brahman. Whatever is, is Brahman, all differences and plurality are illusory. “Brahman Satyan Jagat mithya, Jivo Brahmaiva naparah.” – “Spirit is fact and the world is unreal.” Among the different teachings and views of Shankara, knowledge is the path-way to liberation for this great thinker.

The Jiva identifies himself with Atman when it is deluded by ignorance, Ignorance do not only conceal the real nature of a thing but also distorts it. The veil of ignorance can be vanished with knowledge. When knowledge dawns in it, one realises the Sat Chit Ananda nature. Just as the bubble becomes one with the ocean when it bursts, similarly pot ether merges with the universal ether when it is broken. However, for Shankara, knowledge of the self is of utmost importance. For him, there is no differences between the individual soul and Brahman.

The above quotation is likely right pointing out the fruit of knowledge. To understand the concept of Shankara’s knowledge, it becomes important to know what maya is. Maya is the power of God which is indistinguishable from fire. Just as the burning power of fire is indistinguishable from fire itself so is the power of maya – illusion. Indeed, knowledge overcomes illusion.

Sankara puts forward the analogy of rope and snake to shed light on illusion. In the dim light, the rope is taken as a snake. Thus Sankara points out that due to ignorance, the rope is taken as a snake. Similarly, the ignorant people finds the world as real and contrarily, the wise finds nothing but God and discriminates between the reality and illusory.

In addition, due to ignorance itself, people take the world as real, devoid of right knowledge, they take the body as real and they do not know the essential of the soul.

If we take into consideration how ordinary illusions takes place in life, it is simply due to ignorance. When the veil of ignorance is overcome by knowledge, one finds nothing but the only reality. For Shankara, Brahman is not an object. He is Adrishya – beyond the reach of the eyes. He is infinite, changeless, self-existent, self-bliss and all-pervading. Sankara’s Supreme Brahman is Impersonal, Immutable and Eternal.

Moreover, due to ignorance the Jiva is taken as real. The Jiva is only a reflection of Atman. We are taking the Jiva to be real due to ignorance. However, the “world of ignorance” is pictured in the ‘Matrix trilogy’ which gives a clear cut image about the illusory world. Viewers are still perplexed about the story described there.

Sankara stresses on the point that knowledge clears ignorance by which the ignorant is deceived by this illusory world. The theory of Shankara may be strict but it points out directly the Truth. The river of life joins with the ocean of existence. This is essentially the truth in Sankara's teachings.

Furthermore, with the knowledge of the rope and snake, the ignorant will be able to know that the rope is nothing but a rope itself. However, when one gets knowledge of the Eternal, he knows that the body is only matter and is temporary. The real is the soul which is non-other than Brahman itself. However, Ramamuja contradicts this view of Shankara and believes in plurality of selves and emphasizes on devotion rather than knowledge.

Sankara with his theory of "Jnana" wants people to know the essential of the soul. With the bestial civilization of eating, drinking and sleeping, man has forgotten that he has a soul within him. In order to make people realize this truth, Sankara, came with the theory of knowledge. On the other hand, Jainism emphasizes on 'Right knowledge' leading to kaivalya - liberation.

Besides, Sankara who believes in one God, monism, Buddhism totally rejects this idea and do not believe in the theory of 'soul'. Indeed, Sankara's theory has enriched Hinduism with its views and has cleared the doubts of many. That is why the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes on knowledge, action and devotion but do not underestimates one another.

The philosophy of Shankara is lofty, sublime and unique. His philosophy is inspiring, interesting and elevating. He was a sage of highest realisation and his philosophy commands the admiration of the whole world. Thus, Hinduism has always been a winner with Sankara's teachings about God.

Candidate B

India has produced great philosophers who have worked tremendously to propagate Vedic knowledges to mankind. These eminent personalities have give their own point of views on Vedic literature and have distributed their spiritual knowledge. Shankaracharya stands one of the greatest Indian philosophers who has preached Advaita Vada which means non-dualism. Shankaracharya explained that soul and God are one and they are same.

Shankaracharya's philosophy is based on this statement of his: 'Brahman Satyam jagat mithya Jivo brambhaiva na paraha?' which means that God is truth, this world is unreal and the soul is equal to God and there is nothing apart from that. Shankaracharya said that if one has to realise the oneness of the individual soul with the super-soul therefore we must attain perfect Jnana. Shankaracharya taught that it is due to maya which is the embodiment of ignorance which makes us forget our real identity. If a person does not acquires Jnana then he is trapped in the vicious cycle of birth and death and he/she always lives under the effects of maya.

Shankarachara further said that man has to follow the path of knowledge which will help him to have control over the senses and inculcate moral values, rules and regulations properly which will ultimately lead to the attainment of the oneness with the supreme being. Lord Krishna said in the Bhagvad-Gita to Arjuna that whoever will put in practice the valuable knowledge inscribed in the Bhagvad Gita will attain me. So it is clear that for the realisation of Advaita one has to attain spiritual knowledge.

Moreover, Shankara said that if a person gets carried away by the tendencies of Maya and if he does not has control over his materialistic ideas then it will be very difficult for him to get the consciousness that 'Aham Brahmasmi' I and God and 'Tat Sat' I am He. Therefore it is through the practice of Jnana that one attains the union with God. Shankaracharya said that the Guru (preceptor) is the torch bearer who will guide us on the path of jnana and to reach our supreme goal. Normally the main aim of attaining knowledge in the past was to attain God but in the post modern world man is attaining knowledge for only the satisfaction of material desires and he/she is not realising that he is one with God.

To conclude, it can be said that Shankaracharya has always emphasised on the acquiring of knowledge of the Supreme being. Shankara had always laid emphasis on the oneness of the soul with God. By emphasising on the attainment of Jnana Shankara has contributed in the propagation of Vedic knowledge and it can be said that it is the hard effort of great philosophers like Shankaracharya that the Indian philosophy still has its importance on this world.

Candidate C

The term Jnana or its concept have been used in many theological analysis. The ultimate knowledge about Brahman is the purpose the Vedas. In Sankara's teachings we come across a very unic philosophycal analysis of God, where one realising the ultimate power in oneself. The Ultimate Being according to Sankara's teaching is only realised through Jnana.

Hinduism offer different path which claim that if one chooses can attain the supreme. The main paths are "Shakti Marga" the Path of Devotion, "Karma Marga" the Path of Action and "Jnana Marga", the Path of Knowledge. The path of knowledge is very difficult and it can be said that only a few people can walk on it and it involves lot of patient also.

Mere intelligence about material things is not necessarily going to help attaining the ultimate knowledge. Realising that oneself is not different from the suprem that is the essence of Advaita, "Aham Bramhmasmi" which mean I am God the suprem or "Shivsham" I am the source of comtemplation, of the Suprem Bliss. The fruit of Jnana is the realisation of Advaita, but one needs to understand Jnana in its very essence. The creation that is the material world around us is "Maya" or that which is not real, and because of Avidya, falls knowledge we get confused and look at the world as separate from the Ultimate Being. Maya make us see the One as not being single but having more than one. By doing so we compare and differentiate the waves from the oceans as if they were two things of different origins.

One realises the Advaita only with the help of Jnana as for the Devotional Path one need to have another entity to pray what is Advaita. Even 'Ramanuja's Vishistha Advaita assumes liberation is possible through devotion to the Saguna Brahman alone'. Path leading to the Supreme Realisation are many and each is good and applicable to some and the Jnana path also has its merits and even it being a difficult path as the Sruti and Smriti has said it has realy been the path for great saints and Sankara's teaching has been above to uphold the Hinduism tradition in India when many people were changing religion. Sankara's tool for the work was Jnana.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

The first paragraph and the last, which is a repeat of the first, are really unnecessary here, but the body of the answer is excellent. Understanding is demonstrated of all key terms and ideas, and illustrations from Sankara's writings are intelligently explained and used.

Marks awarded = 19 out of 20

Candidate B

The candidate sticks closely to the question and answers it well. Some further illustration, showing how Sankara explained his ideas, would have been relevant, however. As it stands the answer is rather brief.

Marks awarded = 14 out of 20

Candidate C

This answer is very basic. Although key terms are correctly given and the question seems to be understood, there is no evidence of close study of Sankara's work, and the answer is therefore not developed.

Marks awarded = 8 out of 20

Question 4

'Ramanuja's Vishistha Advaita assumes liberation is possible through devotion to the Saguna Brahman alone.' Discuss this view. [20]

General comment

Although the answer should concentrate on the devotion to God which is the essence of Ramanuja's teaching, the candidate should show clear understanding of the meaning of the concept of Advaita. This will involve some reference to Sankara's Advaita, of which Vishisht Advaita is a 'qualified' form. The emphasis of Ramanuja, however, is not on knowledge (jnana) but on becoming one with God (Saguna – 'with form') through devotion.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Ramanujacharya stands one among the great Vaishnava philosophers who have strived hard in the propagation of Vaisnavism. Ramanuja's philosophy is termed by the Sanskrit word - Vishithadvaita which means especial kind of non dualism. Contrary to the philosophy where Shankaracharya states that Brahman and the soul is one and the world is not the creation of God, Ramanuja says that God is one and real all the living entities including the world are found in him. Ramanuja as a Vaishnavas proposed man to pray Lord Vishnu so as to attain moksha.

According to Ramanuja one must dedicate his life in the service of the supreme maker - Lord Vishnu. Ramanujacharya declared that worship to the Saguna form of God leads to the attainment of bliss. Ramanuja argues that 'the worship of God without form is like loving a person who has never been seen.' Ramanuja boldly stated that only Saguna bhakti will lead an individual to the supreme. Ramanuja further stated that Nirguna God (God without form) is difficult to understand, praises could not be done to a God without form. Ramanuja's God is sath (truth), chitta (ocean of knowledge) and ananda (blissful). Shankaracharya who worships the Nirguna aspect of God has not much praises for God in his works whereas Ramanuja's saguna bhakti philosophy is full of praises for God.

The worship of idol is totally accepted by Ramanujacharya as he describes in his Vishistha Advaita philosophy that every thing that we see all around us is part and parcel of God and there is the presence of God in them. The famous saying in Hindi describes the omnipresence and the presence of God - 'Kana Kana mein hai Bhagwan' - that is God is present in each and every atom. So the worship of idols (saguna bhakti) is totally resonable. The worship of saguna God brings control to the mind as in the Hindu literature it has been stated that - 'the mind is like a drunken monkey stung by a scorpion.' So it is difficult to have control over the mind but through the practice of saguna bhakti proposed by Ramanujacharya one may have a fixed concentration and ultimately attain God.

Moreover Lord Krishna states in the Bhagvad-Gita that 'Patram pushpam phalam toyam yome bhaktya prayachyati...' chapter nine verse 27 - that whatever a devotee will offer with devotion to me, such a leaf, flower or fruit I will surely accept it and give him blessings. So this divine revelation of Lord Shri Krishna who is an incarnation of Vishnu himself shows how saguna bhakti marg (path) leads man to liberation and God. Shri Krishna chaitanya mahaprabhu who was among the twelve Alvars who propagated Bhakti said that 'Harer nama Harer nama Harer namaiva kevalam kalau nasty eva nasty eva gatih anyataha', that is in this age of Kali one must take the holy names of the Lord in order to attain liberation there is no other way. So we can see that how bhakti is considered to be the only path to attain salvation. In the puranas it has been stated that bhakti is the easiest way of attaining liberation and Ramanujacharya as a great Indian philosopher has proposed saguna bhakti which he learnt and put into practice.

In a nutshell it can be said that Ramanujacharya stands among the greatest preacher of Bhakti Yoga. Ramanuja's main aim was to bring the mass at the service of the feet of Lord Vishnu. 'Ramanuja' means

- the brother of Rama therefore Ramanuja taught man to live in the vicinity of God and to accept him like a friend (sakhya bhakti), father (vatsalya bhakti), like a lover (madhurya bhakti) or simply like his servant (Dasya bhakti).

Candidate B

After Sankara, Ramanuja ranked his place among Indian Philosophers. Sankara's philosophy though it did provide spiritual comfort to many but yet, it did not meet the requirements of all his aspirants. According to Ramakrishna, Sankara's Ishwar is 'a bloodless absolutely dark with excess of life'.

Ramanuja's philosophy is based on Vishistha Advaita which means that the One combined the many. Ramanuja regarded Brahman as Saguna, indeterminate, with form. According to Ramanuja liberation is possible through devotion to the Saguna Brahman alone.

On the other hand, Sankara stated that knowledge is vital for liberation whereas Ramanuja did not give room to such kind of knowledge.

As stated in the Purusha Sukta, Brahman is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, Ramanuja too considered these features of Brahman as important.

According to Ramanuja, liberation can be attained by the study of Vedanta. One should give up all desires. He should focus on the worship of God with form, study Vedas, Mimamsa. In general, one should completely surrender himself to the Supreme.

Even Tulsidas stated that God should be worshipped and he highlighted that we should self-surrender ourselves to his devotion. Ramanuja believed that by continuous following of these activities, one can attain liberation.

In fact, liberation can be attained by going with the same will of God. However, he denies that this world is a complete fallacy due to ignorance for him, this creation is real and is due to the gracious will of God.

Sankara denied that this world is real due to ignorance. But for Ramanuja, this world is real and according to him how can the Brahman create something which is unreal. Even the Purusha Sukta admitted that this world is created by Brahman.

Liberation will enable one to distinguish between Brahman and the soul. Sankara and the Katha Upanishad hold that Brahman is identical with the soul. However, Ramanuja ignored this point. According to him the soul is just part and parcel of Brahman. Though inseparable but distinguishable. The soul lives in the vicinity of Brahman.

According Ramanuja, this is a more abstract view. An analogy of a mother and baby can be made. A mother gives birth to her child. It can be said that it is her son. But it would be illogical to equate the mother and the son. It is just like the spider casts its web by its own and withdraws it.

There are men in every age who hunger for a God to whom they can serve and worship. Sankara's Ishwar is regarded but as a lower aspect of Brahman. On the other hand, Ramanuja was able to convince man that liberation can be attained by worshipping the Saguna God.

According to Ramanuja, ignorance is due to our last karma and ignorance of the soul. It can be vanished by Videha Mukti only.

In a concluding note, Ramanuja highlighted the importance of devotion that bring liberation from the vicious cycle of birth and death and not for the soul.

Candidate C

"Ramanuja's Vishistha Advaita assumes liberation is possible through devotion to the Saguna Brahman alone". This implies that according to Ramanuja one can only attain liberation through God.

For Ramanuja, it is only through Brahman and nothing else that one can attain liberation, whereas for Shankara it is totally different, for Shankara one can attain liberation only through knowledge. For Shankara liberation is explained in such a way "Realisation of Advaita is the fruit of Jnana". Some devotees find the bhakti of Ramanuja easier because it demands a calm and equipoised mind, it does not demand anything more than that, but some find it difficult because it demands much concentration which many devotees do not possess, hence they prefer to be emerged in the bhakti of Shankara.

But if we analyse this situation well, we can understand that both Ramanuja and Shankara have the same aim, but their methods of obtaining it are different but at the end both method demands endurance. Well Ramanuja advances that faith and simple dedication only can bring us closer to God and hence it will be easy for one to attain liberation. Ramanuja has even bitterly criticised Shankara. If we apply both the concept of bhakti of Ramanuja and Shankara in this modern world it will of course bring some changes. But in this so called modern world no one want to adopt either the bhakti of Ramanuja nor Shankara. How is this possible? One has to suffer in order to obtain liberation whatever is the path. Modern men should either accept that of Shankara or that of Ramanuja. But nowadays modern men want an easy path, how can this be possible.

Examiner comment**Candidate A**

The candidate does well because he/she writes a very clear basic account of Ramanuja's position contrasted with 'unqualified' Advaita. Evidence of study and understanding is shown in the recognition that Ramanuja's 'Saguna' God is Vishnu. Perhaps too much of the answer is devoted to a discussion of the bhakti tradition in general, but this discussion is also strong and shows understanding of what Ramanuja intended.

Marks awarded = 15 out of 20

Candidate B

The candidate shows clear understanding of Ramanuja's general position and its contrast with Sankara's Advaita. On the other hand, the references to devotion and 'God with form' could have been discussed or developed in more detail.

Marks awarded = 13 out of 20

Candidate C

Although there is a glimmering of understanding here as to how Ramanuja differed from Sankara, most of the answer is 'padding'. Phrases such as 'But if we analyse this situation well, we can understand...' only make more obvious the candidate's lack of understanding (including knowledge of the topic) and ability to analyse. There is basic understanding of what bhakti means, but no attempt to discuss God as 'saguna' (with form).

Marks awarded = 5 out of 20

Question 5

‘The name Jainism, which means a multitude of jivas who have conquered their lower nature and realised the highest, indicates the predominantly ethical character of the Jain system in sharp contrast to Hinduism.’ Discuss this view. [20]

General comment

Candidates are required here to show understanding of what ‘ethical’ entails, and to relate this concept to the demands of both Hinduism and Jainism as religious systems. As far as ‘sharp contrast’ is concerned, candidates should note that, despite the importance of the ethical principles set out in Jainism, which is theistic, it would be entirely wrong to claim that Hinduism lacks ethical principles. The Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, for example, could be cited to support this.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Jainism is one of the famous orthodox schools. Jainism has accepted only the authority of Tirthankaras or the Holy Founders. Jainism has not given a place to God in his philosophy. In Jainism, mentioned is made upon a multitude of Jivas, that a diversity of souls who have attained the state of kaivalya or moksha and thus indicating their predominance.

In Jainism, there is a theory of satkaryavada, the philosophy of causation. In fact, Jainism has dealt with the three triratnas or jewels, that is right faith, right knowledge and right conduct. There is also the five cardinal virtues namely truthfulness in thought, deed, word; celibacy, non-attachment, non-violence and non-stealing. In order to reach the state of kaivalya, one has to observe these disciplines. Many Ajivas, that is the human beings became jivas, the soul. These jivas or the soul have become one, that is all the holy Tirthankaras become a single one and hence they have conquered their lower nature and realised the highest. From an ordinary being, they have become a holy man who have been able to overcome the snares of bondage.

As Jainism is based on ethics, it stated that only ethics can lead man to the highest summum bonum. In Hinduism, also, ethics is a way to liberation, but it has accepted that God should associated with ethics. On the other hand, amkhyas have not given any place to God. However, in Hinduism, those who acquire liberation merges in God to become one. But, in Jainism, it is different as the one who have achieved kaivalya, continue to exist on this earth.

Though, Jainism and Hinduism have stated different aspects to attain liberation, both of them have taught ethics or morality in order to purify oneself and the mind. Both Jainism and Hinduism have laid emphasis upon knowledge, whose aid, one can attain moksha. Moreover, in Jainism, one has to follow strict disciplines such as self-mortification and animal sacrifices. Furthermore, Jainism is categorised into two principle sects namely Svetambaras, one gowned in white and Digambaras, those who are clothed in air, that is naked. But, in Hinduism, nothing of that sort is mentioned. Instead, a lot of emphasis has been made upon knowledge and consequently one can be freed from this bondage, either by the Jivan mukti or Videha mukti.

Since, Jainism is not associated with God, the holy tirthankaras despite having got moksha, continue to exist but they are devoid all passions and desires. There are in fact 24 holy tirthankaras, all of the jivas have associated to become one. They have conquered their lower nature and realised the highest. Hence, the Jains have to follow their steps so that they can attain moksha.

The holy tirthankaras, after having control upon their senses, that having right faith, right knowledge and right conduct, lead to the state of moksha. The one who is truthful in word, deed and speech and who meditate with deep concentration and devoid of passions, lead to moksha. On the other hand,

Hinduism have also preached these things but it has associated them with God. Consequently, they also become one with God as God is the universal soul.

Hence, the name Jainism means a multiple of Jivas who have conquered their lower nature and realised the highest. The only big differences between Jainism and Hinduism, is that Hinduism has accepted God as the greatest soul whereas for Jainism all the holy tirthankaras are the holy souls. Therefore, Jainism has preached ethics to attain liberation.

Candidate B

Plan - What is Jainism?

When was it founded and who is the founder?

- Jainism a heterodox system
 - Jains are against the religion of Hinduism
 - aim → to protest against the evils in the Hindu society
- concept of bondage, soul, liberation

↓ ↓ ↓

Karmic molecules illumined by the 3 jewels
 omniscient
 and enlightened

Hinduism → karma refer to the deeds of human being
liberation through devotion and knowledge
Bondage → link to the cycle of birth, death and re-birth
God is the Absolute Reality
There are complicated rituals, animal sacrifices.

Ethics → moral codes and values

Non-injury, non-attachment, non-stealing, celibacy and truth

Jainism is an ancient monastic religion in India. It was founded during the sixth century by Vardamana Mahavir and the other Tirthankaras. It is a heterodox system in denying the validity of Vedic (ancient) scriptures, rituals, pantheon and the Brahman priesthood.

The Jainism aims to protest against the malpractices and evils in Hinduism. During those days, many undesired, unwanted and unhealthy traditions and customs had crept into Hinduism causing confusion and chaos. Thus, Jainism proved to be a simpler religion in India. The Jains or the conqueror of flesh and passions accept only the authoritativeness of their holy Tirthankaras.

Moreover, the Jain system have been able to manifest itself against Hinduism in India. By adopting the ethical values like non-injury to the smallest creatures and to the biggest creatures, the Jains have observed a more realistic religion. Thus, Jainism has always been a more simpler religion than Hinduism. Furthermore, Jainism condemned animal sacrifices, superstitions and supernatural evils in India. Whereas Hinduism observe the animal sacrifices to please gods and goddesses. So, Jainism has a predominant character over Hinduism by following the ethical values namely, truth, non-injury, non-attachment, non-stealing and celibacy. On the contrary, in Hinduism there is the following of grihasthis, they are married people. Due to several evils in the Hindu society, people are attached to worldly matters only.

According to the holy tirthankaras, to overcome passion and desire is the greatest way to realise the highest. Thus, by following the Triratnas of the three jewels namely right faith, right knowledge and right conduct, one can reach the state of liberation. There is no need of devotion to several gods and goddesses like in Hinduism and neither to acquire discriminative knowledge. It is only by keeping faith in the teachings of the holy founders to consider their imparted knowledge as the perfect knowledge and to perform right action that the Jains can be enlightened.

In addition, Jainism states that bondage is caused by the influx of karmas. The karmic molecules are the tiny molecules which cannot be perceived and they are accumulated around the illumined soul which is then, covered by the influx of karmas. On the other hand, Hinduism believes that karma is the deeds and action perform by man. According to the saying "as you sow, so you rip", by one's action man is rewarded by his karma. Therefore, it is more vital to accept Jainism as an easy religion.

Therefore, Jainism have a predominant ethical character compared to Hinduism. They have been able to overcome passion and desire and realised the highest. Contrarily, desire and passion called kama or Trsna have been part of the aims of the lives of grihasthis in Hinduism.

Candidate C

Since the begining of human civilisation, Hinduism has been the most practice religion. In Hinduism people believe in the teaching of the Vedas, which are holy books containing the words of God. The Vedas help people to understand the meaning of life, they also teach people to live in the society, how to perform religious practices and also the true essence of life.

However during years evil persons have been able to dupe poor people and evil practices have largely cropped into Hinduism. In order to earn money, evil priests have invented many false practices. As people of the lower classes did not have access to the Vedas, they blindly followed these priests. The ignorance of people have give place to adharma, false practices, superstitions, taboos and violence. Thus Hinduism in a sense was dirtied by these false beliefs.

On the other hand Jainism doesn't give any importance in religious practices. That is where it differentiates itself from Hinduism. Like Buddhism, Jainism believes that in order to attain God, we must practice non-violence, be free from bondage and to perform our duties. Jainism put more emphasis on ethical practices.

People following Jainism, put into practice the ethical practices, so that to attain liberation. That is they perform their duties towards their family and God. They practice non-violence, they follow the path of truthfulness and seek for knowledge. Whereas in Hinduism people give more importance to religious practices. Thus practice enumerable of religious ceremonies in order to attain God, but they do it the wrong way as their religious practices are mere invention of man himself.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

Apart from an initial stumble (unsure about orthodox/heterodox), this answer produced accurate knowledge and made a very good attempt to contrast the ethical aspirations of Jainism with those of Hinduism. Careful attention was shown in the note that Samkhya, like Jainism, was atheistic, but in general Hindus relate their attempts to make correct moral decisions to their belief in God. Good selection of the basic elements of Jain philosophy regarding 'jivas' avoided the 'all I know about Jainism' trap.

Marks awarded = 18 out of 20

Candidate B

As the candidate's plan and initial notes show, his/her knowledge of Jainism and its ethical system is sound. Reference to the historical emergence of Jainism as a reaction to weaknesses in Hinduism is valid, but contrast of the two as developed systems is rather shaky. In particular there is the rather odd suggestion that only grihasthis in Hinduism have to make moral decisions, and that such decisions involve 'kama' (desire), from which Jains are free. The candidate also ignores the fact that principles such as non-injury (ahimsa) are common to both Hindus and Jains.

Marks awarded = 13 out of 20

Candidate C

This is a very basic answer, but it does show knowledge of the kind of ethical principles on which Jainism is based. It also contains some idea of the reasons why Jainism developed in opposition to an excess of ritualism in Hinduism.

Marks awarded = 7 out of 20

Question 6

Discuss the importance of the Sangha for attaining Nirvana in Theravada Buddhism.

[20]

General comment

It is important that the candidate gives clear evidence of knowing what the Sangha is and does not devote the whole answer to discussing Buddhism in general. The life of the monks should then be shown to form a vital part of the Buddhist community. Although monks are not entirely removed from practical concerns, membership of the Sangha demonstrates one important way in which nirvana can be sought without distraction.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Buddhism became popular at a time when Hinduism had degenerated from its pristine purity and people were practising caste system, untouchability and so on. The teachings of the Buddha is mainly on:- life is full of suffering, there is a cause of suffering, suffering can be stopped and the way leading to the cessation of suffering which avoids the two extreme - self indulgence and self-mortification.

In Theravada Buddhism, the Sangha plays an important role. Unlike Hinduism which does not have a founder, the Sangha was founded by Buddha. Buddha is an ethical teacher and a reformer who wanted to eradicate all the evils in the society. At a time when people were indulged in gross idolatry, practising unnecessary rites and rituals, Buddha opposed all these and stated that nowhere all these practices were mentioned. So, Buddha founded the Sangha. The Sangha has great importance which attracts lot of people towards Buddha. His compassionate nature, his teachings and the fact that he received great help from kings and other people made the Sangha flourished rapidly.

Moreover, anyone could be easily admitted in the Sangha. There is no place for caste, creed and colour. One has just to say these lines three times:-

"I take refuge in the Buddha"

"I take refuge in the Dharma"

"I take refuge in the Sangha."

So, no rigid practise is needed in order to be admitted in the Sangha as people especially the Brahmin were dominating the society. The Sangha is very important for attaining Nirvana, as in the Sangha one has to follow the teachings of the Buddha. In the Sangha, knowledge is given about the four-noble truth, following the eight fold path which are right view, right resolve, right conduct, right livelihood, right conduct, right speech, right mindfulness and right concentration.

In the Sangha, one has to observe strict rules and avoid self-indulgence, the use of perfumes, luxurious things and so on. As it is mentioned that the worldly things tempts a person. So, while living in the Sangha, they do not have the right to use all these things. Hence, they are not attracted by the material things. In the Sangha, the monk is also given lectures that everything in the world is momentary. The present moment cannot be the same as the last moment. In the Sangha, Buddha also gives teachings about the transitory things of nature and the existence of no-soul as compared to Hinduism which states:-

"Weapons cannot cut it, fire cannot burn it and water cannot wet it."

Hinduism admits that the soul is neither slane nor is it slain. So, Buddha means that if the body is perishable so why is not the soul? There is no acceptance of a soul in Buddhism.

Adding to this, the Sangha has importance for attaining nirvana as in the Sangha, there is no disturbance at all. In the Sangha a person has to observe the five great vows like in Jainism which are:- Brahmacharya and Asteya. One practise chastity and prepares himself mentally in order to be

fit to attain Nirvana. As Nirvana is attainable but demands great sacrifice. One has to be mentally prepared and should understand the transitory things of the world and learn that the body is just a vehicle towards the attainment of Nirvana.

It goes without saying that women are also given place in the Sangha for the attainment of Nirvana. However, Buddha was not really ready to accept women in the Sangha for He said:-

"If women had not be allowed to enter the Sangha, it would have lasted for 1000 years. But sincewomen are allowed in the Sangha it will last for only 500 years." Buddha is not against women but the lust of men for women. Women in the Sangha also practise and undergo the same penances as men. They are given the same and equal importance. Buddha himself accepted food from the woman named Sujata. Buddha mentions that right knowledge, right faith and conduct is needed. No self indulgence or mortification is allowed.

Buddha does not accept the existence of God. Hinduism depends on the grace of God for the attainment of liberation. However, Buddha says that one should be self-dependent. He mentions:- "Man is the architect of his own destiny." So in the Sangha, one has to be self dependent. Moreover, one develops the qualities of having right concentration which means Samadhi where one has complete mastery over himself and is not the least affected. Nirvana is a state where one enjoy complete bliss and happiness. Nirvana should be experienced. It cannot be explained in simple words as a Buddhist follower mentions:-

"Nirvana is lofty as the mountains and sweet like honey, deep like the ocean." Nirvana should be experience and Buddha taught that after the attainment of Nirvana, one should not shun activities. The Buddha himself after attaining Nirvana, led a life of preaching and finding brotherhood.

So also, in the Sangha one develops qualities like brotherhood and unity which helps in the attainment of Nirvana. Thus, the Sangha has a great importance in the attainment of Nirvana as in the Sangha, a person exerts himself and develops qualities like right faith, knowledge and conduct which are of great help for the attainment of Nirvana. So, the Sangha is for the individual to become someone perfect and for the help of attaining Nirvana, the highest goal of life of eternal bliss.

Candidate B

Buddhism is a religion which lays emphasis on the teachings of Gautama Buddha. Buddha's teachings was based on only for the removal of sufferings. The Buddhist who are the follower of Gautama Buddha put into practice the instructions given by Buddha to attain the perfect stage of Nirvana which is the highest aim to be achieved by the followers of Buddha.

Buddha taught to his disciples that the performance of his advices and instructions will declare a person to be a Buddhist. These lines normally recited by the Buddhist declares a person to be a Buddhist - Buddham sharanam gachyami, Dhammam sharanam gachyami, Sangham sharanam gachyami' which means that - I take refuge at the lotus feet of Buddha, I take refuge to the sacred text of Buddhism which is the Dhammapada and I take refuge in the sangha. In the last sentence of this statement Buddha taught that one must associate with the sangha which means the Buddhist monk. Buddha said that it will be difficult to follow his teachings if one does not live amidst the monk of Buddha.

After that Buddha had attained Nirvana it was and it still is that the Buddhist monk who propagate the teachings of Buddha. So it will be better for a person who wants to become a Buddhist to be associated with the sangha to attain the proper knowledge given by Buddha and thus attain Nirvana. Lord Ram said to Shabri in the Navadha bhakti delivered to her in the Ramayana that - 'one has to be associated with the holy men.' It is the association with the holy men that the devotee may approach and know God properly. There is a famous saying in the Hindu literature that - 'Binu satsanga Viveka na hove.' that is devoid of the association with the holy men one will never attain knowledge.

Buddha said that it is the association with the holy people that will help us to overcome sufferings and bad association will lead us to sufferings. In this modern world man is associating with gamblers, terrorists, thieves and they are falling to the level of animal - 'Dharmen hina pashu samana' - devoid of right conduct man falls to the level of animal. Buddha taught that a person's character is known by his associations. So for the proper attainment of the knowledge of Nirvana, man must associate with the sangha.

In a nutshell, it can be said that Buddha's teachings still influence many people and many people are following his path to be free from the clutches of sufferings. The persons who follow the instructions like the - Ashtangika marga (the eight noble path) among other principles of Buddhism overcome sufferings and attain Nirvana.

Candidate C

The Ultimate Bliss can be reached by each and everyone provided he lives in Sangha; that is in communion with the saintly people. To know about one's religion and real essence of the personality of oneself one needs to make an effort which requires a Guru, a master that can show the way.

The world is full of pain and that pain has a cause and the pain can be ended provided one knows the path that can eliminate it. The path that can eliminate the pain exists and one needs to abide to some rules and regulations to be able to overcome pain and ultimately realises the perfect state of Nirvana in the words of the Buddhist followers.

Right conduct, vision, dedication, faith, movement, profession and so on are the eightfold steps toward eliminating pain. The sangha will help in attaining Nirvana. Nirvana is a state where only the individual can realise and experience it but initially one needs to be among noble and saintly beings to form the basement on which one will step on and start the journey. Sangha will ease the path with positive counselling and one can experience the peaceful way leading to Nirvana. Attaining Nirvana is difficult if not among good people as one can be easily lured by the material world. But if the sangha is there to protect the aspirant he can practice the path smoothly.

Everything particularly the attainment of the Nirvana states journey starts from one's own self, so one needs to make a resolution of doing only and only the right things be it in mind and spirit and in action only after one realises the Right as known as the eightfold path then one is sure to attain Nirvana, it is a long process but Buddha's teachings are useful and the sangha also propagates the teachings and is someone who abides to it he or she is in the good way to attain Nirvana.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This is a very creditable attempt to answer the question, and all the main aspects are mentioned, although perhaps not in great depth. The candidate is able to incorporate the guiding tenets of Buddhism and explain important contrasts with Hinduism. The concept of nirvana as the goal in Buddhism also appears to be understood.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

This essay begins well and shows good understanding of the Sangha as the original and continuing model for those who aspire to follow the Buddha's path. Although the concept of nirvana is understood, however, more development of this aspect should have been attempted.

Marks awarded = 12 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate does appear to know what the Sangha is and be aware of the basics of Buddhist teaching. The answer is too short, however, and lacks any real discussion.

Marks awarded = 7 out of 20

Question 7

Theravada Buddhism teaches that the ultimate reality is a void (shunyata) whereas Upanishadic Hinduism teaches the Absolute is full, perfect and complete.' Comment on this analysis of Buddhism.

[20]

General comment

Although the contrast between the Buddhist and Hindu views form part of the question, the answer should concentrate on the Buddhist concept of no-soul (anatta) as the key to the discussion. Answers which only describe Hindu and Buddhist ideas in general will attract few marks.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Buddhism is the most important religion, it is a non-Vedic school founded in the 6th century BC by Gautama Buddha. While Upanishad is the end part of the holy Vedas whereby God and the soul is highly valued, Buddhism had made a competent departure from Vedic ways, opposed rituals and accept the authority of its holy founder Gautama Buddha.

Being a heterodox system, buddhism does not believe in the soul and God. It has only believed in the physical body as being real and has provided an ethical and spiritual path by which following miseries can be removed and liberation attained. On the other hand, the philosophy of the Upanishad is sublime, profound, lofty and soul stirring. It reveals the most subtle and deep spiritual truths. Katha Upanishad and Isa Upanishad has teaches that the Absolute is full, perfect and complete.

In the Isa Upanishad, the following verses is stated:

"This is full; that is full
The full has come from the
full; taking the full from the full;
the full itself remains."

According to the above verse, the Absolute is always full because it is eternal. God does not have any limitation. The Absolute has created this world out of Himself and hence has taken out of him souls, elements and everything. But yet, the fullness of God has not been affected, because He is infinite. After creating this world, God has pervaded it by being omnipresent and He is both immanent and transcendent. God exists in everything. The moral inspiration that the Isa Upanishad gives is that man should not find differences in human beings because the Absolute is present in everything. This makes everything equal in this world. Thus the Absolute is always omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresence.

On the contrary, Buddhism has taught that the Absolute is a void. This has been explained in his three mark of existence. There are three marks of existence in Buddhism. The three marks of existence form the central teachings of Buddhism. These three mark of existence have been ever present in life, aw experienced by the master. They are:

- (i) Dukha - sufferings
- (ii) Anatta - Non existence of the soul
- (iii) Anicca - Theory of impermanence

Among these three marks of existence, Anatta proves that the Ultimate reality is a void. Buddha did not accept that the soul exists. He believed only in the reality of the physical body which is comprised of a name, form, impression and consciousness. Infact according to Buddha the soul cannot exist because the body is perishable. And, thus a perishable body cannot contained a soul which is imperishable. Therefore, neither the absolute nor the soul is valued in Buddhism.

However, according to the Katha Upanishad and Isa Upanishad has mentioned that realisation of the Absolute is the way leading towards liberation. The Isa Upanishad and Katha Upanishad help men to realise the importance of the Absolute and soul. Both mention that the soul is the essence of the physical body which is full, eternal, infinite and perfect. Even though the physical body perishes, the soul never perishes. The soul inside is valuable and its realisation leads to the realisation of the supreme, that is realisation of immortality. The soul is also identified with God and this leads everyone towards the optimistic thought that they are divine by nature.

But in Buddhism, according to the theory of Anicca, nothing is eternal and permanent. Everything is bound to be destroyed, even the soul. Thus, when a man died, along with his physical body, his soul is as well perished. This means that the identity of the person is destroyed. It does not believe in the Absolute whereby the soul merges in the Absolute in order to attain Nirvana. But it has laid stress upon *astangika marga*, that is, the ethical path in order to attain Nirvana.

Therefore, it is clear that Buddhism's teachings is completely different from Upanishadic Hinduism teachings. That is why Buddhism is called a heterodox school while Hinduism following the teachings of an orthodox school.

Candidate B

Sanatan Dharma that is Hinduism, is a very flexible one as it has not discard the philosophy of Buddha. Though it contradicts with the teachings of Upanishads, they have accepted it by making Buddha one of the avatar of Vishnu.

Hinduism fears that maybe his followers might turn to Buddhism and thus rejecting Hinduism. But our sages have been witty ones by accepting to make Buddha teachings, one in the Hinduism. Before Buddha was given that title he was known as the Prince Siddhartha. He came from royal family and from royal blood living in all comfort that surpass our imaginations.

Yet he was not satisfied with his life. Having a wedded life with his wife and son, he could not gain peace of mind amidst all these luxuries. So he left this self luxurious life to self-mortification then also he was not satisfy in austerities. He was a revolutionary one when he gave us way to the middle path. Buddha says experience things on your own. "Be ye a lamp unto yourself" and not dependent on others. Become the master of your own.

Buddha teachings is not self experience and he does not believe in God and soul. Anatta no soul theory. Whereas the Upanishads believe and postulates that our purpose in life is to become one with God. Buddha notice that nothing in this world is permanent everything is subject to destruction, death, illness, diseases, poverty, miseries. Life is itself full of suffering *sarvam dukkam*. So why is there so much suffering. What is the origin of suffering, the cause, the path leading to its cessation. The 4 noble truth that is what Buddha teachings talk about to attain Nirvana.

Upanishads says that we must remove the five sheaths so as to gain the Absolute. The Upanishads with help of Katha, stories and parables makes us understand about the ultimate truth Buddha that there is only impressions, when we close our eyes we do not really see that soul so how can we believe in something that does not exist. So what is born is the question asked to Buddha. Buddha gave us the answer in as a 12 links.

Buddha says that the will to be born that leads to perpetual birth and rebirth. The clinging towards sense objects that we have perceive in our past life give us the willing to take birth again and again. In our mother womb the embryonic organism got the clinging to born from its past life and it's a cyclical one until you get rid of your will that is your karmas, your actions.

When ask to Buddha what is the soul he says that we should waste out time in things that we do not see or do not understand but spend that time in knowing ourself. He should question our self first and

not on thing that we do not perceive. Buddha says that we should inculcate right conduct, right action, right understanding, right livelihood, right mindfulness, right concentration, right resolve to lead a perfect life far from miseries and luxuries.

Buddha philosophy is a very pragmatic one it existed 6 century BC and today in the 21 century its teaching is found all over the world. The western are very keen to this philosophy. Buddhist teachings have been able to cross the boundaries of India to propound its teachings all over the whole. It is worthwhile as many celebrities are seduced by its teachings and adopt them in their life.

The Upanishads have not been able to cross India boundaries as to some it seems too complicated and man being in a lethargic mood find Buddhist teachings more appropriate to lead a balanced life.

Candidate C

For the Buddhist the stage of attaining Nirvana is a stage of complete bliss but for Hinduism liberation is reaching God the ultimate reality. The Buddhist finds that this life is full of sufferings for example: old age, diseases, having no food, living in poverty or always having conflicts. All this according to Buddhism occur because of ignorance that the self cannot be identical with the body.

This statement is agree by many schools of philosophy like Jainism and Samkhya - that ignorance is the cause of suffering. But for Buddhism reaching the self is the state of complete bliss. Whereas Hinduism who believe in existence of God will say that liberation is to attain God. For Hindus if you sow good actions you will reap good actions but for Hinduism the most good action one can reap is to attain God.

Hinduism for example: if one follow right path for example Dharma, artha, kama and moksha or the four stages of life: student life, married life, detachment and complete renunciation and praying God this person will attain liberation. For Buddhism one must practise deep meditation to reach the self.

Hence to conclude Buddhism and Hinduism main objective is to reach liberation for them is in different ways.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

The argument is strong here and technical terms well understood. Contrast between Hinduism and Buddhism is well set out. The only weak point was in the understanding and explanation of what a Buddhist means by nirvana.

Marks awarded = 18 out of 20

Candidate B

In the answer the candidate correctly identifies the key concept of *anatta*. The general account of Buddhism as an off-shoot of Hinduism is well set out, and there is evidence of understanding. The candidate should have tried to develop the main topic, however: too much of the essay contains peripheral, general material on Buddhism.

Marks awarded = 13 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate has some idea of what the question demands, but does not have sufficient knowledge of Buddhism to attempt a fuller answer.

Marks awarded = 4 out of 20

Question 8

‘The aim is to reach the highest place of Vishnu.’ Discuss in the light of Vishnu’s symbolism and significance in the spiritual life of some Hindus. [20]

General comment

Candidates should show ability to discuss the attributes of the god at a deeper level than simple description of images or icons. In particular they should emphasise Vishnu’s distinctive position as one element of the Trimurti. The moral appeal of the god should be recognised in the attempt to attain the ‘highest place’, and the importance of the much-worshipped avatars Rama and Krishna should be noted.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Vishnu, also known as Mahavishnu is the second deity in the Hindu Pantheon. Vishnu is considered to be a major God in Hinduism and Indian mythology. He represents the sattva guna and is the contripetal force as it is responsible for the maintenance, preservice and sustenance of this created world. The aim of some Hindus is to reach the highest place of Vishnu. Vishnu comes from the word 'vishir' meaning 'one who pervades, and one who has entered into everything'. Vishnu is the inner cause and effect of all things. He is the creator, supreme Being and God of this universe. He is worshipped by many Hindus.

Vishnu is very kind and benevolent. He does everything to create a better world so that people may live in peace. He is very much concerned when there is decline of morality and values. Vishnu is considered to be all-mighty, all-existing and all-cunning. He is regarded under countless name. The most common one is Narayana. The word 'Nara' means water and 'ayana' means abode. Therefore Lord Vishnu can be considered to be the cosmic power of everything. Narayana literally means that one who has made the casual water his abode, one who is the abode of all human beings. One who has made the heart of all human beings His abode and finally one who is the final goal of all human beings.

As Vishnu has made the casual water His abode, He is seen either resting or sleeping on the coils of snakes on the milky ocean known as ksirsagar. His consort, Lakshmi, who is the personification of wealth and prosperity is seen sitting at His feet. Vishnu is depicted as a dark blue hue like that of the rain-bearing clouds. As the infinite space appears blue in colour, it is only proper that Vishnu, the cosmic power is depicted as blue in colour. The two most effigies show Him either sleeping on a lotus with His four arms, each supporting one of His four main characteristics.

The serpent 'Shesh' or 'Ananta' is said to have a thousand heads and is supporting the world on its hoods. 'Ananta' which literally means 'infinite' or 'unlimited' stands for the cosmic time which is infinite or unlimited. Created worlds came into being in time and is substained in time, this is the meaning of the thousands hoods supporting the world. It also means the innumerable division of time or the cosmic energy from which everything emerge. The serpents also stands for 'kama' that is desires, which is never fulfilled even after enjoyment and acquisition of the desired objects. In a cosmic way, it can represent the desire of the lord to continue with the act of the next creation after His rest.

Lord Vishnu has four hands; in His upper right hand He holds the discus brightening like a mirror. It represents the token of the mind and is the cohensive trend. In His lower right hand He holds the conch, it is a token of the five elements and is the original trend. In His upper left hand, He holds a lotus, which stands for the evolving world and is the trend towards diffusion and emancipation. In His lower left hand, He holds the mace. It stands for personal existence and is the token of early wisdom. The four hands of Vishnu shows the omnipresent and omnipotent of God, thus absolute power in all directions.

The most common icon of Vishnu shows Him wearing a necklace of the famous gem kashthubha, which is seen dangling on His left chest. He also wears a garland of the fragrance flowers vaijayavanti. He is seen sitting or resting on the coils of snakes on the milky ocean. His hair represents the nature of things. The gem kashthubha stands for the enjoyment, thus this world of dualism, in which both the enjoyer or enjoy exist is only an ornament for Him. The flowers vaijayavanti stands for the subtle elements.

Vishnu is very much concern when there is decline of values and morality. Therefore He incarnates to take care of the world. The incarnation is regardless to time and appearances. His incarnation is known to be ten in all. He re-bodies Himself to re-store balance in the society. Vishnu is also pray in the form of His emblem, which is a round, polished and black stone with a hole containing fossil of molluses. He is a very popular God and people worship Him as He is considered to be the fulfiller of desires.

Candidate B

In the Hindu trinity, Brahma is the creator, Vishnu is the preserver and Shiva is the destroyer. Vishnu is great as he is always seen establishing righteousness and eradicating the evils.

Vishnu lives in the ocean. He is always seen resting on his bed of serpents, Sheshnaga. His consort is Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Vishnu is blue in colour and is always adorned with beautiful and golden jewels.

Unlike the other Hindu deities, Vishnu has taken many avatars on earth. Vishnu has taken nine important avatars till now and it is believed that the tenth will soon take birth. Vishnu has taken the form of a fish, Matsya, a tortoise, Kurma, a boar, Varaha and man-lion, Narsimha in the diamond age; Vamana, Parsuram and Ram in the golden age; Krishna in the silver age and Buddha and Kalki (who is yet to come) in the Iron age.

These avatars were born to save mankind from the evil powers and establish dharma. In the Bhagavata Gita, Krishna has said to Arjun that 'whenever there is a decline of righteousness and a rise in unrighteousness, I manifest myself and come forth'.

The form Matsya was taken in water. The form Kurma was taken to help in the churning of the ocean. The form Varaha shows that the lord can manifest himself anywhere and has come out of water. The form Narsimha was taken to kill Bali, the demon. Vamana, the dwarf was taken birth to show to all human beings that with two steps the lord can cover the entire world and no one is greater than him. Parsuram was born to fight evil.

Ram was taken birth to establish righteousness, protect the sages and kill Ravan. Krishna was taken birth to kill the wicked Kansa and to show that where there is dharma, victory lies. Krishna had helped the Pandavas because they were noble. Gautam Buddha was taken birth so as to eradicate the superstition and blind beliefs that had crept into Hinduism and to show to people that to attain Moksha is the ultimate goal of life. Kalki is believed to come also so as to establish righteousness.

Lord Vishnu is always benevolent towards his devotees. He helps his devotees in bad times and this can be seen through the avatars he had taken. He punishes the evil-doers.

Furthermore, Lord Vishnu is always seen with a Garuda as his vehicle. He holds a discus, lotus and other important weapons. Vishnu is also called as Narayan, Vasuder, Krishna, Govind, Hari and so on. In Rig Veda, he is associated with the Vedic God Indra. They are two close friends. Vishnu is also associated with the sun, gold and to the ocean. His many avatars signify that he is omniscience, omnipotent and omnipresent.

Vishnu has a great place in the spiritual life of some Hindus. Prayers are still said in his names. The births of his avatars are still celebrated in Mauritius. There are societies like the Iskcon which believes in Lord Vishnu as being Supreme. But there are some Hindus who believe that these avatars were in

fact simple men who have done great deed with the evolution of time.

Hence, it can be said that Vishnu still has a great significance in the spiritual life of some Hindus. Some Hindus believe that by taking the mere name of Lord Vishnu their sins will be eradicated and they can achieve Moksha. This has been practised by many great saints.

Candidate C

Vishnu symbolism and significance have an important part in the spiritual life of some Hindus. Vishnu hence come in different forms through his avataras.

The different incarnations of Lord Vishnu are: fish, tortoise, dwarf, boar, man-lion, Purasurama, Rama Krishna, Buddha. He has ten main incarnations, but the last incarnation is yet to come (Kalki). Vishnu in the Hindu mythology is seen on the primeval sea, sleeping on the many snakes. Vishnu has a great importance in some Hindus life as when the devil forces dominates in this world Vishnu incarnates himself to save the world.

Vishnu represents righteousness for his devotees, the one who destroys the evil forces. For example when he incarnates himself to save the sacred texts and destroy the demons. Vishnu is also seen as the preserver of the world whereas Brahma is seen as the creator and Shiva the destroyer. All these symbolism enable the Hindus to follow the path of righteousness.

Following the right path is well shown in Vishnu incarnation of Rama. As Rama in the Ramayan is picture as the perfect man, one who obeys to the decision of his father. This can be a sort of example to some Hindus who give Vishnu a great place in their spiritual life.

Vishnu incarnation in Buddha is a great example of how to lead a good spiritual life. As Gautama Buddha has left everything, renounce everything to concentrate himself on meditation, in order to attain liberation. This can help the Hindus to destroy all the evil in them which are for example: jealousy, anger and attachment.

Hence to conclude by following the path of Vishnu, individuals can be liberated by evading all the bad feelings in them.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This is a carefully constructed answer which endeavours in each paragraph to point out the significance of the god's attributes. Despite some inaccuracies (e.g. 'casual' water), the candidate shows interest in the linguistic derivations and significance of the god's many titles. The general level of discussion is excellent. Perhaps more could have been said about the concept and worship of avatars.

Marks awarded = 17 out of 20

Candidate B

The candidate tackles the question well, and gives special attention to the avatars. Although discussion of the god's names, iconographic features and mythology is brief, the candidate shows understanding of the worship of Vishnu as a choice (mentioning ISKON in particular), acknowledging that some Hindus reject devotion to avatars.

Marks awarded = 14 out of 20

Candidate C

Although what appears in this answer is basically correct, there is insufficient detail and discussion for a response at this level. Phrases such as 'a sort of example', 'a great place in their spiritual life' are imprecise and inappropriate in an academic study of Hinduism.

Marks awarded = 8 out of 20

Question 9

‘Lakshmi is only an excuse for glorifying the acquisition of wealth.’ Evaluate this negative statement about the goddess (shakti) Lakshmi. [20]

General comment

The question provides a quotation for comment, which need not be exclusively ‘for’ or ‘against’. Viewpoints should, however, be supported by evidence. A contrast could be drawn between beliefs and practice at a popular level, where Lakshmi is indeed a good-luck symbol and a more elevated view of her moral attributes as the consort and shakti of Vishnu.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The worship of the female aspect of God has always prevailed in Hinduism. Goddess Lakshmi is worshipped as the goddess who fulfills all the desires of man. Lakshmi is considered to be the better half of Lord Vishnu who is the protecting aspect of God. Goddess Lakshmi is also worshipped as the Goddess of wealth as she provides material comforts to her devotees.

Goddess Lakshmi's name comes from the Sanskrit root word 'Laksh' which means goal, therefore 'Lakshmi' means the goddess who helps the devotee to attain his/her goal. The attainment of goal does not only refer to the attainment of only material goals such as kama (satisfaction of sensual pleasures) and Artha (getting money), which are among the four main objectives of man on earth, but it also refers to the attainment of Dharma (righteousness) and Moksha (salvation). So this statement that goddess Lakshmi is only an excuse for glorifying the acquisition of wealth is totally refutable. Goddess Lakshmi has been described in the Vishnu purana that she has eight main forms, in the eight forms of Lakshmi we find Goddess Lakshmi as Vijaya Lakshmi (to attain victory), Dhanya Lakshmi (the provider of food), Santana Lakshmi (the provider of children) among others which shows that Lakshmi is not only for other material and spiritual comforts.

Mother Lakshmi not only represents the Goddess of wealth but she is the representation of female aspect which is above all. Women are considered to be the form of Lakshmi as their presence in the house brings welfare to the family such as taking care of the children and other members of the family, doing domestic works among others. But in this modern world women are not fulfilling their duties (dharma) as a wife, sister and mother among other family relationships. Divorce cases, weakening of family ties are being experienced by the society today. Women of today have a lot to learn from Lakshmi's holy deeds such as: when she came on earth like Sita to be by the side of her husband Rama when he was in difficult circumstances.

Goddess Lakshmi is portrayed in some pictures where she is serving the lotus feet of her husband, so the message of Lakshmi to women is that one must serve their husband and be by his side as promised when performing the Vivaha Samskara. Goddess Lakshmi as Dhana Lakshmi - the goddess of wealth teaches Hindus that money has been made for proper use as giving alms to the poor, using the money for good purpose such as for the satisfaction of family needs and wants. Goddess Lakshmi warns her devotees as Alakshmi, who is the embodiment of bad luck, that if one does not use money for proper use then bad luck will fall upon that person and he will fall to the level of animal.

To conclude, it can be said that Goddess Lakshmi englobes all the valuable teachings that helps man to attain the supreme. Lakshmi invites her devotees to use money in a proper way which will be for the betterment of the society and for oneself. Lakshmi will always inspire her devotees to move forward for the ultimate goal of life which is known as Moksha and attain the abode of Vishnu (Vishnu Loka).

Candidate B

In the Hindu Mythology, Lakshmi is regarded as goddess of wealth but this is not true according to some people. 'Lakshmi is only an excuse for glorifying the acquisition of wealth'. Wealth has been associated with many other deities.

Lakshmi is a form of the goddess Durga. According to the Devimahatmyam, the female deity Durga has three major forms, namely Mahakali, Lakshmi and Saraswati. Mahakali has taken the form to destroy demons and evil-doers. Saraswati is considered to be the goddess of knowledge and wisdom. Luxmi has thus, been associated with wealth.

According to the Hindu mythology Kuber is the god of wealth. Lakshmi is the consort of Lord Vishnu. Thus, Lakshmi cannot be the goddess of wealth at the same time as Kuber.

Nevertheless, Luxmi, the beautiful goddess is considered to be the goddess of wealth and prosperity. She is prayed by many people, specially by traders, shopkeepers and merchants. It is believed that on the festival of Divali, which is the festival of light one should start with the construction work or start a business. This is believed to be auspicious because Mother Lakshmi showers her blessings on that day.

Goddess Lakshmi is always dressed beautifully, adorned with golden jewellery just like her husband, Vishnu. The golden jewellery signifies that she is the goddess of wealth because in the Hindu mythology no other goddesses wear so much golden jewelleries as she wears.

In the image of Goddess Lakshmi she is always seen with pots full of golden coins and golden coin coming from her hand while she is showering us with blessings.

The vehicle of goddess Lakshmi is an owl which represents darkness. But Mother Lakshmi being the embodiment of lighting, she eliminates the darkness. This shows that truth always triumphs over evil. She is also associated with elephants which are considered to intelligent animals, also known as 'Gaja-Lakshmi'. The elephants shower water. They represent rain and the green vegetation that is present on the fertile land because of the rainfall.

Moreover, in almost all ceremonies prayers are offered to her as it is believed that it is with her grace that one prospers and gains wealth in life. She is also the bestower of happiness. She helps her devotees by giving happiness, joy, wealth, name and fame and she does not let her sister 'Alakshmi' to be present in homes who is considered to be inauspicious and comes in the form of need, poverty and sorrows.

Hence, it can be concluded that Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth. 'Lakshmi is only an excuse for glorifying the acquisition of wealth'. This statement does not exactly prove it. Lakshmi is always generous. She fulfils the wishes of her devotees, along with being the goddess of wealth. But there are places in the sacred books of Hinduism where this statement is being shown as true.

Candidate C

Deities have a great importance in the hindou's religion. Each deity has their own specific qualities. Some are prayed in order to bring success, fame, knowledge, wealth and some are prayed in order to get protection. Thus we can say that behind their prayers, hide hypocrisy, as people pray specific deities in order to something in return.

Among these numerous deities, the most prayed one is Lakshmi. She is another form of shakti. Lakshmi is said to have come out of the churning of the ocean. She is characterised as being very beautiful, with fair complexion, beautifully dressed and wears wealthy jewelleries. Spouse of Lord Vishnu, she is said to be the Goddess of wealth.

Most of the hindous pray for the Goddess Lakshmi in order to acquire money.

'Lakshmi is only an excuse for glorifying the acquisition of wealth.'

Meaning to say that give more importance to the wealth than to the Goddess herself. They perform great religious ceremonies for Lakshmi but their heart and mind are full of selfishness. Indeed Lakshmi is the goddess of wealth and definitely will grant her devotees with wealth but only to those who have a pure mind and who pray for her without asking anything in return.

Moreover man gave more importance to their own benefits. They act very hypocritely even towards God. Their aim is to reach to the toppest in life, not to attain liberation but wealth and fame. Nowadays only a handful of people know about the true essence of life and know about the importance of God.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

Although 'better half' of Vishnu is a poor definition of 'shakti', the answer in total is very good. The candidate sticks well to the theme, that the proper worship of Lakshmi as a female deity should not be merely for selfish ends – particularly as wealth (artha) can only be gained and used ethically in accordance with dharma. The discussion gives attention to the importance of female roles in the modern world and to the inspiration which the goddess provides in her various aspects.

Marks awarded = 17 out of 20

Candidate B

The candidate gives hints of understanding what might be discussed here, but there is little development. Most of the 'facts' are accurate, but the whole answer is rather superficial. The candidate fails to give a definite idea about the importance of a god's consort as his 'shakti'.

Marks awarded = 13 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate makes a basic attempt to answer the question and has a few ideas, but the answer is very short and there is insufficient evidence of study.

Marks awarded = 7 out of 20

Question 10

‘Form by form, every form is for the sake of making Him known.’ To what extent does this Rig-Vedic statement suggest that without murtis God cannot be known? [20]

General comment

The important point here is for the candidate to know that there always has been a tension within Hinduism between worshippers who insist on the importance of the murti to represent God, or a god, and those who believe that such representations distract from the contemplation of God as the Absolute. Having shown understanding of this, the candidate is free to use any relevant material from the history of Hinduism in practice or from his/her experience to discuss the topic.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Rig-Veda is the most ancient and sacred scripture among the three other Veda. Rig Veda occupies a significant place in our Hindu pantheon.

God is neither male nor female. In fact, God is revered in the Saguna form to make it accessible to those people who are not literate.

‘Ekam Sad vipra Dahuda Vadanti’

This means that God is one but sages called him by different names. This is because to make it attainable by the whole society whether of different colours, children or adult, Brahman or Kahatriya.

It is true that without murtis God cannot be know for those only who are of low intellect. However, the Brahman do not seek the help of murtis to attain God. They perform direct worship.

The importance of murtis is immeasurable. It is said that by the coming of a murti in a house, every obstacles are removed and thus giving rise to a peaceful and healthy place to live.

Rig-Vedic admitted this system for the welfare of the hindus itself. People in different age seek to worship a God with form. It would be impossible for them to attain the highest goal of life. Thus, the requirement of murtis are essential.

In mandir, Shivala, it can be encountered that several murtis are placed for the betterment of the devotees. From the murtis itself, one get to know the different forms, names of Gods.

For a common man, it is impossible to worship the Nirguna Brahman. Thus, murtis are at their disposal. This in turn reinforce the relationship of God and his devotees.

In different Hindu festivals, different Gods are worshipped. For example, in Durga Pooja, Mother Durga is being invoked, in Ganesh Chatucthi, Lord Ganesha is being invoked.

Thus, it is easy for common people the chief iconographical features of each and every Gods invoked in different festivals.

However, it is often argued by other theists that God is one. Ram Mohun Roy, an Indian reformer believed that God is without forms and it is the fool sages, pundit that perform unnecessary rites and rituals. Thus, he has no room for murtis whereby God can be known.

Murtis is in fact introduced to develop a devotional feeling among hindu members. According to Surdasa and Tulsidas, the Avtaras of Lord Vishnu namely Krishna and Rama can be invoked in Saguna form.

The presence of murtis signifies the feeling of union between Hindu society. When a child is born, it is by the help of the Murti that he knows the different Hindu deities.

Thus, murtis can lead to God realisation but its main purpose is to unite all as one 'Vasu daiva kutumbakam'.

Candidate B

Truth is one though sages called it by different names. Why there exist personal and impersonal god; that is nirguna and saguna one, when God is one.

As it is said 'form by form, every form is for the sake of making Him known'. Whatever the medium is that count that mortal come to know the only truth. In the Vedic period and epic age knowledge was only gained by privileged one like the upper caste and Brahmin. The lower caste, untouchables and women were not considered apt to deliver the teachings of the Vedar. Due to some misconception that some greedy sages distorted the reality thus making confusion in the mind of many illiterate Hindus. Some no longer has faith in Hindu religion and begin to convert. All these confusion is not due to murtis but because of distortion of fact by sages tempted by fame and money.

Sages have well calculated before giving the statement that Truth is one though sages called it by different names. It is so as all mortals do not have to the same conception of the world and understanding of some things in the world. Everyone got its own opinion. So to satisfy all these there has been puranas, kathas, image form God, to make worship to God more easily for them.

All these puranas and kathas were inspired by the Vedas which are of divine origin. The murtis God are more adored to man as their stories, legends are more popular than the worship of the impersonal God. To some it seems abstract to worship an impersonal God. It is more easier to put an image, to personify the God of worship.

Surdas the great poet and erudite writer, the devotee at heart of Krishna gave rise to the personal worship. He excels par excellence in personal worship. He adores the Lord, plays with his, loves the Lord. Even portrays himself as parent Mother Yashoda running after him with a stick. This type of devotion and bhakti is not seen everywhere.

Ramakrishna, the prophet of all religion was a devotee of Mother Kali, he feeds mother Kali, dresses her, dance with her, weep with her. He even excels in devotion for Mother Kali. But yet, he asked Totapuri to teach him the advaita teachings to attain Brahman and he even excels in worshipping impersonal God.

Impersonal and personal worship both will lead you to your ultimate destination if you worship at heart, with devotion bhakti and wisdom.

Candidate C

Idol worship may also be referred as vandana, puja. The devotee may choose his or her deity such as Lord Ram, Krishna, Hanuman, Vishnu etc. Sometimes, his guru or preceptor may choose his kuladevi or kuladeva. Murtis play an important role to bring into our mind the image forms of god we are praying.

Murtis help the devotees to get concentration in our minds and hence purity of heart. It helps to attain one-pointedness in our mind. The devotee tends to develop a sense of bhakti. Saligrama is the symbol of Lord Vishnu, praying the siva linga increases concentration in our mind, Ravana worshipped siva linga and was granted boons. The Christians pray the cross, Vedant prays om, praying murtis tend to bring the devotees with communion with god. Gods manifest in its different forms, if one prays him as Lord Ram, he will come as Ram, if one worships him as Krishna, he will come as Krishna in its different forms.

We have devotees who keep various murtis at home, in temples. They pray with intense devotion, faith. This help the devotees to develop pure minds and keep them away from the path of ignorance.

Moreover, the majority of people are of impure minds, attracted to worldly material, sensual pleasures. The murtis is said to cure ailment give blessings to the devotees. In any ritual ceremony, it is not easy to get a clear picture, emblem of the god. Murtis help us to give a picture of our chosen deity. It makes prayer easier.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This is a very sound answer. There is good understanding of the tradition of image-worship in Hinduism and recognition of opposing views such as those of Ram Mohun Roy. The candidate engages with the question but rather overstates his/her case in grouping all who revere a murti as being 'of low intellect'.

Marks awarded = 14 out of 20

Candidate B

There is basic knowledge here, a coherent account of the main theme and one or two illustrations, but the answer itself requires more development and more detailed information.

Marks awarded = 12 out of 20

Candidate C

This is a very short account of murtis and their use. The actual question is not discussed and there is no trace of critical comment.

Marks awarded = 6 out of 20

Question 11

‘The Purusha Sukta gives the best explanation of the origins of the four varnas.’ Discuss in the light of your understanding of modern Hindu society. [20]

General comment

The debate about the relationship between varna, as derived from an interpretation of the Purusha Sukta, and caste, as it has developed over the centuries in Hindu life, should be discussed. It should be realised that the Purusha Sukta does not itself prescribe any social divisions and that other explanations of caste have been given on the basis of some historical theories. How varna and caste can be viewed ethically within Hinduism is relevant, but answers should relate to the question asked.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

The Purusha Sukta gives the best explanation...

The four Varnas are said to have found their origins from the Purusha Sukta. The four Varnas are namely:- Brahmin - teachers, priests, Kshatriyas - warriors, policeman, Vaishyas - traders, businessmen, Shudras - manual workers. All the four Varnas are equally important for the smooth running of the society.

Accordingly, the four Varnas can be traced from the Purusha Sukta. In the Sukta, it is mentioned:- "The Brahmins come from the mouth of the Purusha, The Kshatriyas his arms, The Vaishyas his thighs and The Shudra his feet." So according to this Sukta, all the four classes of people are seen to have come out from the different parts of the Purusha. The Purusha have divided people into four categories according to their aptitudes and qualities. One has the free will to choose his job according to the qualities he has. In this context, birth is immaterial.

However, in earlier Hindu society it can be seen that people were practising the Jati system in the name of religion. Birth was given more importance. If someone is born in a Brahmin family, he will become a Brahmin even though he does not possess the qualities needed. As the scriptures were in the hand of the Brahmin, so they distorted everything. They started practising jati system and those who are at the lower level, remained the same. The practice of untouchability started prevailing in the society. Only Brahmin were being given due respect.

In the Sukta, the Purusha created all the four Varnas for the welfare of humanity. Everyone in the society has to co-operate equally in order to bring economic as well as spiritual progress. Even in the Gita it is mentioned:- "Whoever offers me a leaf, a flower or water with devotion I accept when it is offered by the pure hearted". So it can clearly be seen that even God does not make any discrimination of caste, creed and colour. Everyone is acceptable to him. Furthermore, it is even mentioned in the Gita:- "Even if the most sinful man worship me with devotion, he too should be considered noble for he has rightly resolved". Thus, if God does not make any discrimination then why should man do so. Even the lowest of the low, the vilest of the vile is acceptable.

The Varna system is something flexible. Family background does not have any importance. People of the four Varnas can be seen in one family. In the Rig, it is mentioned:- "My father is a doctor. I am a barber and my mother is a grinder of corn on stone". So people of all the class live happily in one family. Aptitude is more given importance. Even Vyas who was the son of a fisherwoman became the great sage through his work. So, Varna is something flexible. It is seen that it is the modern Hindu society who are practising jati system, which is absolutely wrong. Even M. K. Gandhi states:- "The law of spiritual economics have nothing to do with caste system".

The modern Hindu society is not following the explanation of the four Varnas as it is mentioned in the Purusha Sukta. Even today, people down-look upon people who do manual works. People who are the elite, at the top of the society enjoys all the facilities. The Shudra who do manual works, give due respect to the priest and so on. However, in return the priest are practising untouchability. In some parts of India, even today the Shudras are not allowed to enter the temple. They stay down the ladder where they are. Even though possessing good qualities to become a Brahmin, they cannot do so. Even Manu states:- "A person becomes a Brahmin by qualities like chastity, perseverance and serenity. Caste, creed, colour does not have any importance". So people should take this example into consideration.

However, today due to the evolving of the world, it can be seen that the practise of caste system who is termed as jati is being somehow eliminated. People are giving importance to the origins of the Varnas. They can understand that all people are on the same pedestal. If someone like Shabri, Hanumana in the Ramayana being of low caste attained the grace of God, then why cannot a Shudra become a Brahmin? People who are at the low class are striving very hard to achieve something. Even if some of the people in the society are still considering the Brahmins and Kshatriyas to be of the upper class, even then other people are striving. This is so because all of them are interdependent on each other. The Brahmins depend on the other Varnas for their sustenance and the other Varnas the same. This is so, because everything does not have the capacity and ability to do the same thing. One person is more versatile in one field.

In a nutshell, it can be seen that the Varna system is something flexible. It has nothing to do with birth, creed or colour. However, still in the modern Hindu society, some people have not been able to understand this and are practising the jati system. However, some of the people have been able to rightly understand that if we want a peaceful world, happiness, progress of the country, unity and brotherhood, so it is better if we stop practising the jati system. Still, some people who wants to remain at the top, do not care about this origin of Varna who has emancipated from the same Purusha for the welfare and benefit of everyone.

Candidate B

The Varna Sydtim or Varna Vyavastha was wisely devised by our ancient peers. It consists of the classification of labour. Brahman and Shudras are considered to be the primary Varna and Icshatriya and Shudra are secondary. They all create a sense of unity to make the society into a hygienic condition. It is them that boast the society's condition into a more awesome manner.

First and foremost, Brahmins that is the intellectualist of the society, they form part of the intelligence class that is like doctor, barrister, teacher, they are of great intelligence and make their maximum to modify the academic situation of the society. Secondly, came the Icshatuiya, that is the protector of the society like the police, voice of Hindu and other such fortress which try to bring peace in the society and to make life of people into a peaceful and harmonious way. They are always vigilant and very slact by nature. Ready to attract or even assault in an afraidable manner but not to cause harm.

Then came the Vaishya that is the businessman which deal with only money - making and they even work hard to bring profit in the economic predication. They work as manager of the bank, shopkeeper, merchants and even milkman, because he also form part of this society. Fourth came the Sudra that is the manual worker which provide the society with food. We should all know that 'We are what we eat'. If this limb is removed, all the classifaction of labour would go to its lowest ebb and society would not serve for any person. They provide the society with good food and make good hygienic activities so as to prosper clear vision in the environment.

As far as modern Hindu society is concerned we can see that the lid of corruption is so heavy that each and every limbs are being corrupted and led the society to a chaotic situation. Brahmins like the teacher are imparting only a academic education to student. Where is the spirituality gone? We need some more. Brahmins are failing in their duty. They even are become more oriented to money-making

and they are not doing their duty as it is.

As the Icshatriya is concerned, they also have become more ego-centred and their mindset have turn to money-making. We can hardly see people abiding by dharma. The policeman nowadays are simply to show off. They are more indulge in corruption and the accustomed job is not perform according to Dharma. The Vaishya who should be more prompt and vigilant concerning money-matter are not fulfilling his duty and failed to endeavour. How can a society progress in such states? Obviously not.

Thus as the Shudra should maintain good food in the society and provide a right skill and not orient his mind on money. He also, we can see is naturally carried away by his friends and the whole sphere turn to sheer frustration. In this modern context people are more prone to money-making and are eventually not aware of the Code of Conduct's result.

Therefore, we should again adopt the worked done and acknowledge by our wise pages and reframe our accustom duties. Then ultimate reality might be reached. Thereupon adopt a fair means and bring control for the betterment of our day to day life.

Candidate C

Varna means colour. It came from the root vri. Varna system means to choose or to select. It is also known as Varnaashrama dharma.

Hinduism believes in Varna system as one of the foremost ideals and values for the development of the society. The society is personified and highlight for the different limbs work for the whole body, which brings and equilibrium in life. Varna system brings agricultural, educational and cultural progress. Merits and Karma determine the Varna of an individual. It came from the Purusha Sukta from the Rig Vedas.

If in the modern society Varna system is applied, there will be a healthy society. Unfortunately Varna system is not given much importance in this modern world.

Varnashramas dharma bring democratic attitudes, brotherhoodness, righteousness, civism, professionals, equal opportunities and shares, harmony and confidence, peace and stability and expansion of the society for progress. The Parusha Sukta describes Varna system like this. Unfortunately people in the world today cannot occupy these advantages.

The Varna system is classified not divided into four groups namely Brahmanas, Kshtrinyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. Brahmanas are intellectuals, white in colour and comprises by Sattvas gunas. Kshtriyas are warriors, red in colour and are of Rajas gunas. Vaiyas are businessmen, yellow in colour and of Tamas gunas. Brahmanas have spiritual, mental and physical knowledge. Vaishyas have business tendencies and Sudras have skill tendencies.

If in today's world everybody works with peaceful co-existence and mutual understanding for the equilibrium which is the importance of Varna system, there will be no fight or discussions or crime in the question of money.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

There is clear coverage of the topic. At times, however, there is some confusion between 'origin' and tradition. The candidate uses some interesting material in illustration, e.g. from the Mahabharata.

Marks awarded = 16 out of 20

Candidate B

Marks for knowledge can be given here for a clear account of a traditional interpretation of what is known as the varna system. The candidate fails, however, to engage in any discussion of the imagery of the Purusha Sukta, and to this extent ignores the question asked.

Marks awarded = 13 out of 20

Candidate C

There is a great deal of confusion here. Some points have been picked up, but in general they appear in a very ill-digested form. Much clearer analysis is necessary.

Marks awarded = 8 out of 20

Question 12

‘Traditional Teaching on the purusharthas holds that it is wrong (adharmic) to pursue pleasure (kama) or wealth (artha) alone.’ Discuss. [20]

General comment

It is vital here that the candidate tries to answer the question rather than merely repeating lesson notes on the topic. The question is about *kama* and *artha*: the other two purusharthas are relevant in the discussion, but this relationship must be explained.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

Purusharthas are values divided in four categories which are as follows Dharma, Artha, kama and Moksa. Those four values, we as human beings must imbibe them in our life to lead to the highest Truth that is liberation from the cycle of birth and rebirth.

Our sages have well calculated before introducing each of these four as guidelines to help us find our way amidst darkness. Our sages were not fools that they introduced Kama and artha in our mode of life. In this world where everything seem so perfect like a mosais, these two also got their place in our life.

Human is made out of bundles of desires so how can we really be apart or reject Kama from our life which is the cravings of flesh to the yearning of the soul. So our rishis never ask man to suppress its desires or to reject it but asked us to associate Kama with dharma and if well directed we can lead to perfection through Kama.

Kama associated with dharma becomes an art so how can we deny its existence. In the Purusha Sukta and Nasadiya Sukta itself it is said that the master artificer that is the creator got the desire and thus there was creation. So if the Supreme Being is not spared by desires that is Kama how can we as mortal be spared. We must always associate Kama with dharma to get marvellous results.

Kama is the inspiration that one get to create, to invent, to write, to do sculpture and all that are fine arts and we are attracted to such things as it is inherent in us. The Indian philosophers have dealt in the matter and proven Kama as a marvellous way to procreate whether a master piece or giving birth to a child - All this is a sacrifice, Yajna.

Master piece like the Kama Sutra, the thinker got inspiration from Kama and now even the West have learn a lot over the matter. Through the Kama Sutra the Indian have educate the West in love making in very profound way. In India there exist temple that immortalised the beauty of love making.

Wealth that is artha if not combined with dharma give birth to spotted wealth and black money. Only with dharma wealth can generate into white money. Money is an essential means in one's life, from money we can get a good living to buy our essential and basic needs. Also to perform rites and rituals money, wealth is needed to buy all the ingredients needed in the rites and rituals to give as offering and donation.

Rishis and Sages never deny Kama and Artha that is why those who wanted a wedded life there existed the grihastha ashrama whereby they can enjoy their life from their standpoints. For celibate there exist the Brahmacharya ashrama. Even today these ashramas and punisharsthas got it place in the modern society as it is because of it wrong interpretation that nowadays there exist corruption, bribes, aids, cohabitation, drugs, homosexuality, lesbianism, liberal thinking, child abuse, and many others than today man is leading a very hectic life.

All these problems could be alleviated if only we educate people the true meaning and importance of the purusharthas and the ashramas systems. As these are guidelines that regulates human being life to do good and be good.

Thus, everything have been well calculated concerning Kama and artha by our rishis and sages we must only apply dharma with Kama and artha to attain liberation that is moksha.

Candidate B

In the Hindu culture, we can say that Purushartha play a magnificent or even a vital role in the moulding of one's character. Dharma and Moksha are considered to be the primary objective of life and Kama and artha are considered secondary. It should be noted that each and every task should be oriented according to Dharma. Dharma that speaks the proper Code of Conduct. As rightly said by M.K Ghandi "Follow your dharma it will indeed protect you"

Dharma is the isness of everything. Dharma of fire is to burn, dharma of sugar is to be sweet. It acts as a regulator and our tasks should always be regulated by dharma (righteousness). As in the Bhagavada Gita Krishna was making Arjun aware of his duty as a Kshatuiya that is to fight or else people would laugh at him and consider him as a cowardice. As we all admit the fact that, "Coward dies many a time before their death." Therefore, one has to concentrate upon its duty".

There come the one among the second objective of life, that is Artha. Wealth should be gained by fair means as said earlier. The Grihasthi has to acquire wealth so as to provide basic needs to the family and he must be very vigilant not to attach himself in the wrong way to get money. Excess of everything is wrong. We have to amass money only by fair means.

In this modern terminology, we can see the height of corruption is so heavy that the majority of the Grihasthi are carried away and are falling to abide with certain vows they have taken. Money is a good servant but a very bad master. We should not let money master over us. With this dogmatic condition we can see that majority of the marriage are failing in the ends, leads to extra-marital affair, divorce and lots of problems concerning this led of corruption. We should halt this machiavellian act and again reframe the system use by our ancient seers.

As far as Kama is concern. It is a very pure act between the couple. It should be under control at any conditions. It is said that a Grihasthi has to indulge in sexual act only once a months. This flow of genuine love should be oriented obviously towards Dharma or else it would obviously end to adharma. Today we can see that even teenagers are indulged in sexual acts. They are indeed crossing their limits. As a Brahmacharya he should led a life full of hardships and endurance but here we notice that they are evaporating the regulations. As far as the couple is concerned, they are indulging themselves in sexual acts more habitually and they also are crossing their limits and this would automatically not help them to attain their goal (moksha).

Last but not the least, moksha that is salvation. One get salvation only if every and each action is oriented to Dharma and by this way moksha is automatically reached. Therefore, the Grishathic and the Brahmacharya has to keep in mind that this not an ecstatic state for them and they should have a control upon the desire. As said by the great Buddha "one cannot step onto the same running water twice".

Gradually, when time come, it will indeed be act accordingly. As Arjun, he was not a cowardice, but an act of anti-patriotic response. In the same way, we have to get over our mindset according and one and only to Dharma. Each action should be well think before put into work. We can see that we have to again adopt the system 'design' by our wise seers and make social and even religious reformers to propagate these unanimus and magnanimus teachings. A paralysis among any objectives in the life of human being would led to a great if not a complete failure in the filial of the family.

Candidate C

According to the traditional teachings on the purushartas it is wrong to pursue pleasures only or wealth only.

An individual must be aware that in life concentration must not be place only on pleasure or wealth only. Pleasure which is mainly identifies with satisfying the basic needs like foods or sexual urge. Wealth - like being too materialistic, always want to gain more and more wealth. Dharma and moksha must also be important in a person's life.

Dharma which represent reightousness and Moksha - reaching the ultimate reality. If someone place too much importance on having wealth, will be have for example: time to share with others? Helping the poor people? The answer is no as this person will always be for example: working doing many jobs just to obtain more money, this person can also become an egoist person - don't want to share his belongings with others.

Moksha must be the main goal to be achieve by a person, doings good actions like don't put all importance on pleasures, do no let evil forces control one's life - like always ignoring for example other people - example caste system in India, letting jealousy control one's life all this must be avade to let place for good things.

The four stages of life also can be practice, like the student life, married life which can be associated with kama as it is a house-holder who will get wealth or satisfy his pleasures. The vanaprastha and saryasa ashramas whereas there is renunciation and where meditation and prayers are done, also being of service to mankind like in the vedic time people use to do it. Today also these concept can be done to make people realise that the main importance must to realise God.

To conclude the main objectives in life must not be to obtain only wealth and pleasures. There are also other important things to be achieved in this life.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This answer is clearly set out and the theme logically followed. In particular the topic of *kama* is dealt with maturely, and the candidate shows clear insight throughout. This is a good example of an essay which is neither long nor complicated but fulfils the requirements of the examination by sticking to the subject and using appropriate material.

Marks awarded = 18 out of 20

Candidate B

Most of the material here is relevant, but insufficient attention is given to the question itself: selection of material could have been better angled towards answering what was asked. The candidate is also struggling with too difficult language instead of trying to express the ideas simply.

Marks awarded = 14 out of 20

Candidate C

The candidate succeeds in giving a very basic answer, but seems to run out of material and switch to the topic of ashramas (not in itself irrelevant, but here not well linked to the main topic). The resultant answer is short and lacks discussion.

Marks awarded = 9 out of 20

Question 13

'He who does good will be born good; he who does evil will be born evil. He becomes holy by holy deeds, evil by evil.' Discuss the relevance of the so-called law of karma for today in the light of this teaching from the Upanishads. [20]

General comment

Adequate study is required if this complex topic is to be treated in anything but a simplistic way. The question invites discussion of karma as a 'law', so candidates should at least be aware of the philosophical explanations for the belief in Hinduism that actions have attendant consequences and that moral judgements are to be made on that basis. The question also asks the candidate to relate the answer to 'today'.

Example candidate responses

Candidate A

"As you sow, So you reap" this is the doctrine of the law of karma. It is the law of Causation whatever you do, you shall reap it in future. If you do good action you will surely reap good fruits, if you do bad action obviously result is going to be bad.

Similarly, by the reference of Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna, the incarnation of Lord Vishnu explains to Arjuna who is unwilling to perform his Nishkama karma that he should do action in a disinterested way it was attraction for his near and dear ones that has weakened him to perform the holy deed that is his Nishkama karma. Sri Krishna says never to be affected by joy and sorrow, perform your action, for the sake of action itself and never to think about the result while performing your action but do it in a sense of renouncement. That is the duty of being a kshatriyas. And the duty of a kshatriyas is to fight and be a good example for his followers and he was not doing a bad thing but was fighting for righteousness and he will surely attain "Brahma Stithi"...

He took many examples such as the example of King Marata, who had attain salvation through his good deeds and action. The duty of a kshatriya was to fight for righteousness it is no good to go to adopt other path saying that it is easy. But all path are same. Even God is not going to judge you for what type of action you did but the Spirit through which action is being done is regarded.

Sri Krishna by his forceful words pacified Arjuna to fight and thus being a great example for others to read and be impressed by the Bhagavad Gita. Even Gandhi says "Whenever despairs, grief or difficulty stare at him he refer to the Bhagavad Gita." He says from Bhagavad Gita he has got more nourishment than his mother's milk.

The law of karma, is that action, no action does not exist, even the blinking of eyes and breathing is an action. So one must do good action throughout his lifetime and not be affected by pleasure, pain and joy but be neutral as a Sage...

Similarly, Buddha, the prince of peace also got attracted by the holy wisdom of the priest for the first time. In the law of karma, it has been thrown much emphasis on the Sanchita (Past accumulated karmas), Praravda (fruittifying works) and Agami (future works). Thus one has to be content in what he has, but never dream to get one thing which he will never have or great attachment to that thing. But he or she should be happy in what he has and perform good deeds, help people and do his or her action well.

A man trying to run away from work, his own duty is not fooling others but is fooling himself. Such type of man is referred as a Pretended. And at the end he will surely bound himself to the cycle of birth and death.

Truly said that who does good will be born good: he who does evil will be born as evil. Similarly through the reference of the Ramayana King Dasratha had shot his arrow and killed Shrivatsa unknowingly... So he had to bear the same fruit in future, as he was cursed by his parents and had to endure same pain in the separation of Rama.

Likewise in the Katha Upanishad King Vageshrara was accumulating sin for himself and was promoting adharma. It was Nalika that intervened and he even agreed to go to death because of his father. Thus Nalika, being a true seeker of knowledge on being given the three boons had saved his father by asking forgiveness in his path and thus paved the way for home and the determination he showed in when Lord Yama was proposing him for damsel's womans he had refused. This shows the determination that Nalika was having in seeking knowledge... this... by the wrong deeds of King Vageshrara he was bounding himself in the cycle of birth and death but due to his devoted son he was saved...

Even in the Kera Upanishad, owing to ignorance, the deities couldn't recognise the divine vision of the God himself and to teach them a lesson, God descended as an adorable Spirit Yaksha. It was Indra who was successful in knowing about Yaksha.

Thus, the Katha Upanishad throws light on how people are in this world, too money minded, showing too much concern for themselves. Even the old persons are busy greying their hair in hairdressing saloons and spending lots of money covering their wrinkles on their faces to look more younger.

But they have forgotten about spirituality and binding themselves in the cycle of birth and death. And even having sex urges more than necessary not even in the accordance of dharma.

Thus, law of karma states one person is going to reap what he or she have done... "As you sow, so you reap"

Candidate B

The law of karma and doctrine of rebirth is the backbone of Hinduism. It is the essence of the Vedas, Gita, Upanishad and Ramayana. All the school of Indian philosophy declare "Every effect has a cause, and every cause has its effect". Universe is the effect and God is the efficient cause. God is the impartial judge of our action. He decides the course of action of the creation. His planning and designing is perfect in all respect. According to our action in previous life he gives us next life. Just as there is day after night and night after day, in the same way there is birth after death and death after birth. This rebirth continues till salvation the ultimate goal of our life.

The law of karma function under the philosophy of cause and effect. Babies that are born blind, deaf, dumb are due to their past karmas and others are born strong, stout and healthy and are welcomed like princes are due to their previous actions too.

What bad action or sin the child who have born blind had done now and what good action the child had done who is giving lots of love and attention? According to Hinduism the answer is that the action performed in previous life have matured and they have respectively result in joy and sorrow. The law of action state "As you sow, so shall you reap. Love begets love, hate begets hate."

Chillies produce chillies, mango produces mangoes. Mr A will not suffer the consequences of action performed by Mr B. No one can take the sin of others. All have to suffer the consequences of their action otherwise God will become partial and unjust.

For instance Saddam Hussain. He was a very intelligent man. He was the ruler of Iraq. But his action put him toward downfall. Just like Ravana in Ramayana. He was the son of a great Brahmin's boy. He had done meditation and obtained boons from Brahman. He was a very intelligent man. But his action in the abducting Sita had put him into trouble.

So lesson is for the all humanity that if you do an evil action, the result will be bad and you will be always in suffering contrary to those who do a good action, will get the fruits of happiness and peace, just as the Pandavas in the holy Gita. A phrase in the holy Gita said the if you protect Dharma, Dharma will protect us but if you discarded Dharma the result will be our ruin. If we do good action give charity, services you will get happiness but if you insult other you will get unhappiness.

In the examination an student have all the freedom to show his skill for three hours after that their scripts came into the examiner hand for award of record, distinction or failure, according to their performances. Similarly one full life is given to a worldly man to write the story of his life bright or dark. After that judgment came into the hand of the Almighty Lord.

Law of Karma prove that existence of God who award epidemics, heavy rain, no rain, accident, untimely death for collective bad karma and bestowed peace, prosperity, long life, life and death for collective good karma.

Candidate C

As you sow, you reap, this applies to the law of karma, from the teachings of the Upanishads. Every individual passes through this law of karma.

Individuals who do good will be born good; he who does evil will be born as evil. This statement is really true as for example one who follow the right path that is sowing good actions, he will definitely reap the fruits of good actions. To be able to get out of this cycle of birth one must realise the self, which not an easy thing.

When someone follow the right things which are for example: detached himself from this material world, concentrate himself on God for example he will get his good rewards. Nowadays it is very rare to found people who want to understand the law of karma. People now have no time to think about it, they mainly concentrate themselves on gaining material things. But this does not apply to everyone.

There are also some people who are very conscious of the law of karma and who do all their best to be liberated one day. These people for example, although they live in this world, they feel detached to the world, do not have hate, jealousy in their heart.

Doing good actions hence is very rare nowadays in this world as everyday, we heard about: murder, rape, robbery. These persons so not realise that he who does evil will be born as evil. People nowadays just give importance to satisfy their pleasure. They don't realise that they will have to pay the fruits of their actions one day.

For an individual to follow a right path he can for example: doing what is said in the four stages of life; bramacharya, griastha, vanaprastha and sanyasa ashrama or doing which is said in the four dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Or simply practised deep meditation for example: yoga or devote all his life to God like to devotion of Surdasa Krishna or Ramakrishna Paramhansa to kali. It is not necessary not to satisfy human needs like food or sexual urge but to not to exaggerate those things and concentrate also on God.

As conclusion if you a person do good action he will reap good actions and can get out of this cycle of birth and death by attaining liberation, but if one do bad actions will reap the fruits of his evil actions.

Examiner comment

Candidate A

This is a sincere attempt to answer the question, using as many examples from texts studied as the candidate has at his/her disposal. There is evidence of study of the 'law' of karma, as shown by reference to different

classes of actions and consequences. Perhaps the candidate does not quite display full comprehension of the question, but there is evidence of critical ability.

Marks awarded = 15 out of 20

Candidate B

This sets out the 'law of karma' in its most simplistic and bleakest form, with no 'love and attention' in sight for the child born with a disability. None of the subtleties of the idea of karma as requiring moral accountability, which are prominent in Hinduism, are referred to or discussed. Reference to the examination student at the end was inappropriate.

Marks awarded = 11 out of 20

Candidate C

This is a 'common-sense' response from a candidate who has a basic idea about karma but no detailed knowledge. It is clear as far as it stands, and does attempt to deal with ethical decisions 'today', but lacks information as to the various understandings of karma within Hinduism.

Marks awarded = 7 out of 20

APPENDIX 1

Marking bands and descriptors

Each essay is marked out of 20, using no half marks.

The following Descriptors should be used to aid differentiation in marking. Careful application of these should minimise the need for examiner scaling. A further aim is to use these descriptors to achieve optimum year-on-year consistency in marking.

Examiners are expected to familiarise themselves with the following requirements for each Band. In marking each answer, the examiner should always be asking the following key questions:

- What Band does the quality of this answer suggest? (say, Band C);
- Within the correct Band, should the answer have a higher or a lower mark? (i.e. 12 or 13?).

N.B. In no circumstances should marks be awarded simply on the basis of adding up 'points made' in the candidate's answers.

Band A 16 – 20*
 a commendable answer; shows a high level of detailed and accurate knowledge, displayed with confidence, clear reasoning and relevance to the question; articulate, well-constructed;
 For 18, 19 and 20 marks shows evidence of independent interest or background reading.

*Examiners should award 19 or 20 as appropriate. A candidate's script may not be 'perfect', but if it is as good as may reasonably be expected from an A Level student who had studied this Syllabus then it must be highly rewarded.

Band B 14 or 15
 a very competent answer, with some evidence of critical judgement attempted; covers the main points in reasonable depth; relates the material coherently to the question on the paper, rather than writing about the topic in general.

Band C 12 or 13
 gives an adequate list of the main relevant information, without much additional comment or explanation; possibly a fair repetition of class / teacher's / textbook notes; answer may be uneven: good in parts but missing an important point or ignoring what the question is actually asking.

Band D 10 or 11
 shows a fair understanding of the topic; material mostly relevant, although lacking in detail and/or specific examples; possible weaknesses: misses one whole aspect of the question; writes only in a narrative style, 'telling the story'; ignores the set question apart from a final paragraph; presents material as a list rather than a sustained argument.*

*When this has happened because time was running out, it is important to pay careful attention to the quality of the 'list' given, and to look out for clues to understanding (which can be credited).

Band E..... 8 or 9

basic knowledge only, but what appears is fairly accurate; shows just enough understanding of the topic, though possibly not of the question being asked; possible weaknesses: a seemingly pre-prepared answer copied out; a short answer 'padded out' with irrelevant material; weakly argued, contains material which contradicts the accurate part, or in some other way raises doubts about the candidate's understanding.

It is particularly important to be fair at the lowest level. Differentiation must be as accurate as possible here as everywhere else across the mark range. There is a significant qualitative difference between an answer scoring 7 and one scoring 3.

Marking very weak answers is difficult because they tend to be weak in different, unpredictable and idiosyncratic ways. Some are 'last minute' answers from good candidates, abandoned for lack of time. The following are guidelines, but answers / scripts which are particularly problematic should always be referred to the Principal Examiner.

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 6 or 7 | knowledge too limited; answer thin on detail; understanding in doubt (of the topic itself and/ or of what is being asked); standard of writing / approach to the question is more appropriate to IGCSE / O Level; very short (typically, one page of script). |
| 4 or 5 | a minimal attempt made to address the topic; recognition of several key terms (e.g. karma, dharma, Upanishad); a few sentences written which show evidence of recognising the topic / or show an attempt to give a 'common sense' answer; short (at least half, but less than one page of script). |
| 2 or 3 | shows recognition of meaning of at least two key terms relevant to the question, even if what is written is incoherent or fails to make a point; one or two paragraphs only (perhaps half a page in total). |
| 1 | at least one sentence containing a pertinent point or key term and showing some understanding of its meaning / relevance. |
| 0 | no discernible relevance at all to the topic or question. |

APPENDIX 2

Mark scheme – 8058/01 and 9014/01

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Section A

1 Do Indra's heroic deeds in the Vedic writings show him to deserve the title 'Lord of the gods'?

Basic knowledge should be of the war-like character of the god, of his command of the Maruts, of his soma-drinking and his slaying of Vrta. In terms of his 'human' history he might be thought of as a 'hero' rather than a god. In the hymns of the Rig-Veda, however, he is also seen as becoming the most popular of the gods (his name meaning 'Lord') and the one who eventually surpasses even Varuna. His religious importance – as opposed to an interpretation in terms of remembered wars and/or simple observation of storms in nature – can be discussed as the bringing of order out of chaos, of the necessity of water and cattle for the people, and the early development of a religion of sacrifice. Interpretation of Indra as the representative of a warrior class (later Kshatriyas) in opposition to Brahmins could also be mentioned. Good candidates might also know of the idea that Indra as both man and god pre-figures the 'human' avatar of Krishna. It might also be noted that in Kena Upanishad Indra is said to surpass the other great gods by being the first to recognise Brahman.

2 'The deepest stirrings of the human mind are reflected in the Nasadiya Sukta.' Discuss.

A basic answer should be able to show that the Nasadiya Sukta is a reverent attempt to address the mystery of creation, which is the subject of speculation in all human societies, but here is answered, unusually, not by a story (mythos) such as that of a Cosmic Egg or a giant Purusha, but by more abstract suggestions and questions which arguably stand the test of time better than worked-out myths because they can be understood on different levels at different stages in history. This particularly Hindu 'take' on creation is the notion of energy and heat (tapas – later understood as 'austerity': undertaken for its creative power). Knowledge of the set text should show understanding and not be merely repeated, but good paraphrases with commentary will fulfil this requirement.

3 'Sharp as the edge of a razor and hard to cross, difficult to tread is that path.' (Katha Upanishad 1.3.14) Discuss the efforts involved in seeking liberation, according to the Upanishads you have studied.

Candidates are free to use material from any texts they have studied, but if they use Katha Upanishad they should not spend too much time on relating the story of Naciketas. The teaching of this Upanishad and similar texts is that effort is involved in knowing the self, controlling human desires and urges (e.g. by the chanting of AUM, by the way of yoga and by heeding the Parable of the Chariot). The path of the 'pleasant' (preyas) is to be shunned in favour of the 'good' (shreyas). The seeker must exercise wise judgement based on understanding (as expounded by a teacher, such as Yama was to Naciketas). Good

candidates might notice that, although the demands are great, they are not extreme or unrealistic, but attainable for the willing aspirant – as is demonstrated by the youth of Naciketas. Svetaketu, at 24 years of age, though having studied all the Vedas, has to acquire real wisdom from his father.

Section B

4 'Draupadi and Duryodhana respond equally well to the demands of dharma.' How far do you agree?

The concept of dharma as a moral agent's duty must be understood and explained. This can form part of the answer, as long as the deeds and dilemmas of the two Mahabharata characters are clearly known from the set text. Draupadi obviously responds impeccably as a good and loyal wife and mother (in this respect, like Sita), but also in upholding her own self-respect in face of personal humiliation, exile and the ruin of her husband and relatives. In particular she ingeniously argues that Yudisthira cannot have 'lost' her at dice if he was already incompetent to make this wager, having lost everything of his own. Duryodhana is painted throughout as proud, jealous and vengeful, often wicked. Good answers will not be too 'black and white' in their judgement, however. Duryodhana is also called 'brave' and sometimes even 'great' – he acts consistently in accordance with his understanding of his duty as a Kshatriya and appears to inspire valour in his forces (though the wisest, such as Bhishma, refuse to endorse his crimes against the Pandavas). Queen Gandhari's lament argues that, as a soldier dying in battle, her son has a place in heaven. All answers should take into account Krishna's overall teaching about what dharma involves for everyone in the war, depending on their place in the order of things.

5 'Krishna was a more important avatar of Vishnu than Rama.' Discuss with reference to the texts you have studied.

The strongest evidence in favour of the statement would be the existence of the Bhagavad Gita as an essential text (and in this case a set text) in the establishment of what might be generally agreed as Hindu ethics for times to come. Although the stories of Rama, and Sita as his shakti, continue to command popular devotion throughout the Hindu world, it is the Gita which draws together many strands in earlier thought and articulates what bhakti means in a memorable and economical way. It will be more difficult to support the statement if only the more 'human' aspects of Krishna (the stories of his childhood, the 'lilas', etc.) are considered, in comparison with the high moral tone of e.g. the Ramcaritamanasa where Rama is Purushottam, the 'highest person'.

6 To what extent are the Ramayana's ideals of devotion and loyalty still relevant for modern Hindus? Refer in your answer to the characters of Sita, Lakshmana and Bharata.

Candidates have all three characters to consider, so must beware of over-balancing the answer with illustration and anecdote. They must also remember that the question is about Hindu worshippers today. A starting position could be that these ideal qualities are timeless and remain the mark of a good life lived in the society of other people. The case could be made that 'devotion' is quasi-religious and therefore devotion to Rama as God is not the same as the human quality of loyalty. All three of the characters mentioned acknowledge devotion to Rama as God as well as what might be expected of them as wife or brother. It is also arguable that the loyalty demanded within a family is of a different order from loyalty in general. In all three cases the practical support and unswerving loyalty were freely offered (Sita and Lakshmana accompanying Rama when they could have avoided the privations of the jungle, and Bharata refusing to accept that anyone but Rama was the rightful king of Ayodhya), so the question of altruistic action today should be explored – are there limits to what is required of people in terms of unselfishness?

Section C

- 7 'The Alvar, in ecstatic delight, visualises God everywhere.' Assess the impact of the Alvars' vision on Hindu belief and worship in medieval times.**

Some details of the Alvars, their songs and the wide range of dates given for their activity should be known, along with some names, at least of Namm'alvar. The question asks for discussion of the impact they made, however, so the growth and influence of bhakti movements (in this case the cult of Krishna in south India) should be understood. Popular support for the Alvars grew because of the Tamil vernacular they used, their disdain for caste barriers and the accessibility of the devotion they offered to the poor, the illiterate, to women and to non-Brahmins. On a more sophisticated level they opened their followers to new ideas about how God could be experienced by the loving worshipper.

- 8 'I am confident of one thing: that the good will be gratified to hear me, though fools will laugh.' (Tulsidasa) What elements of Tulsidasa's teaching led him to expect this response?**

The question calls for some knowledge of the poet's place as a teacher of religious and ethical principles, not just as the story-teller of Rama's adventures and misfortunes. The popularity of Tulsidasa's work should be straightforward to explain, enduring as it does to the present day, and the reasons for this should be known. 'The good' are those who have faith in Rama and here might be taken to include all who seek in the poet's work a deeper understanding of God in the Vishnu avatar tradition. He expects that there will be objection to his 'vulgar' (vernacular) language and lack of polished poetic style, but perhaps protests too much. Detractors may not all be 'fools' however – good candidates should be aware that there are elements in Tulsidasa's work which are not universally admired – particularly today his seeming misogyny. He often risks sacrificing the artistic unity of his work by inserting long debates and speeches illustrating his Advaita Vedanta philosophy.

- 9 In what ways did Surdasa convey the love of God through poetic imagery?**

Surdasa's poetry expressed this love in metaphor, which many Hindu worshippers from his own day until now have found to be accessible in ways that the works of the philosophers and systems such as Yoga could not be. Biographical material, true or apocryphal, is not asked for here. Candidates should concentrate on the writings and show understanding of Surdasa's treatment of the childhood and youth of Krishna, dalliance with the gopis and all-embracing love for Radha as illustrating God's love for humanity and the possibility of loving God in return. The kinds of imagery used are appropriate because the poet worships God (Ishwara) as 'with form' (saguna) so description of the beauty of Krishna the lover is a predominant theme of the Surasagara. The various ways in which devotion to God was described by the poet (e.g. as love of a mother for her child, love of the servant for his master, love of a friend) should be referred to, as well as the falling in love with Radha, their happiness together and sadness in separation. Long quotations are not required, but candidates should show familiarity with these themes in Surdasa's verses and their significance.

Section D

- 10 What influences led Rammohan Roy to be a religious reformer, and how far did he achieve his aims?**

The question aims to limit the candidate to the work of Roy himself, and not what happened in the Brama Samaj once his successors took it over (though this could be mentioned as additional information).

'Influences' could include his religious family, his early exposure to Islam and later interest in Christianity and religion in general. He learned many languages for his own interest while working for the British East India Company and translated the Vedas and Upanishads into Bengali, so had a wide experience of religion from his own and other cultures, but settled for a special form of service with hymns, but no images, in the Brahmo Samaj (founded 1828). Before this he had founded the Atmiya Sabha in 1815. Reasons for his deeply felt objections to social abolition of sati by Lord William Bentinck, largely owing to Roy's efforts. In his lifetime he spread his ideas beyond India and travelled to both France and England. Recognition as 'Raja' by Mughal Emperor Akbar II also show the breadth of his achievement.

11 'In the 19th and 20th centuries, despite attempts to challenge attitudes to caste and untouchability, Hindu society resisted change.' Discuss.

Candidates should not be content merely to describe the 'ideal' of varna and/or the problems to which the cast system and untouchability had given rise, but should show some understanding of the influence of Muslims and Christians as rulers in India and the reasons for conservatism (not only among the upper classes of Indians), even though abuses and tragedies were acknowledged to result from caste traditions. These reasons included fear of ostracism and the breakdown of family and business networks which depended on caste, also fear of the 'infection' of untouchability. Hence opposition to proselytising of Christians and Muslims, and to travel abroad, which resulted in loss of caste status. Reforming influences with Hinduism over this period should be noted, e.g. the lifetime efforts and achievements of Ambedkar and Gandhi. In particular the 1947 Constitution, of which Dr Ambedkar was Chairman of the Drafting Committee, declared untouchability illegal in April 1947, and any 'disability' resulting from it an offence. Gandhi's personal efforts in his life and writings to effect change are also important, as were the works of some writers and film-makers. Good candidates should know that comment on change and resistance to it has continued in the work of writers such as Amartya Sen. Evidence of change might be the 'caste no bar' marriage advertisements now common in India and the freer treatment of these questions in the press and on TV.

12 'He did not preach about God or religion; he was a living sermon.' To what extent can M.K. Gandhi be considered a religious reformer?

Candidates should make clear what they regard as being 'religious' in Gandhi's message, as opposed to social and political – though they might reasonably conclude that it is very difficult to isolate these different strands in his life. To support the not statement in the question, it would not be difficult to make a case that he was a secular reformer who happened to be interested in religion, particularly in the wise sayings of all religions and in their inherent power (if any) to change society for its own good. Good candidates might mention his particular attachment to the New Testament (Sermon on the Mount) and the works of Emerson. On the other hand, his reverence for sanatana dharma and for controlling rules of life show those to be perhaps the most powerful influence in helping him achieve his aims. Certainly many of his writings seem to be intended as homilies: critics can reasonably take exception to his, at times, didactic style. Illustrations can be given to good effect, but should not over-balance the answer.

APPENDIX 3

Mark scheme – 9014/02

This mark scheme is published as an aid to teachers and candidates, to indicate the requirements of the examination. It shows the basis on which Examiners were instructed to award marks. It does not indicate the details of the discussions that took place at an Examiners' meeting before marking began.

All Examiners are instructed that alternative correct answers and unexpected approaches in candidates' scripts must be given marks that fairly reflect the relevant knowledge and skills demonstrated.

Section A

1 'Bondage and liberation are of the mind alone.' Discuss the approaches to Avidya and Moksha in relation to the systems of Samkhya and Yoga.

Candidates should show their understanding of how the Samkhya-Yoga system teaches freedom from bondage to nature. Moksha is attained through knowledge (jnana), not by devotion (bhakti). The eight limbs of yoga in combination prepare the mind for full wisdom and enlightenment. Thus moksha (or its synonym kaivalya) can only be achieved through jnana in combination with karma. Jnana is essential for dispelling the ignorance which binds purusha to prakriti. The distinctive nature of freedom from bondage to nature, moksha (kaivalya) in relation to knowledge and jnana in the Samkhya system should be evaluated.

2 'Patanjali and Isvarakrishna do not agree that Yoga is merely the practical expression of Samkhya philosophy.' Evaluate the truth of this statement.

The Yoga system includes a conception of God which is superior to Purusha. Candidates should explore the apparent inconsistency of Patanjali's Yoga with Samkhya. They should note the difference between the conception of the Divine in the Yoga system and that in Isvarakrishna's Samkhya Karika, which is atheistic, treating the purushas and prakriti as eternal. The role of Isvara is to prompt the evolution of prakriti. Isvara is a necessary being in the sense of the 'ontological argument', unique in his perfection and an example for human beings.

3 'Realisation of Advaita is the fruit of Jnana.' Discuss this statement in the light of Sankara's teaching.

Candidates should show their understanding of the fundamental teaching of Advaita Vedanta on jnana and moksha by connecting it with the teaching of Sankara, that 'Brahman is real, the world is illusory, the jiva or atman is nothing other than Brahman.' They should show awareness of his vivarta view that in his analogy 'the snake is a mere false appearance with no independent reality' (not a parinama or transformation, like butter from curds). Other analogies used by Sankara (e.g. of gold and ornaments, waves and ocean) may be usefully discussed.

4 'Ramanuja's Vishistha Advaita assumes liberation is possible through devotion to the Saguna Brahman alone.' Discuss this view.

Candidates should clearly describe the two different approaches of Advaita Vedanta and Vishistha Advaita. In the former only knowledge can ultimately dispel ignorance, the cause of all bondage; whereas Vishistha Advaita establishes a relationship of love between devotee and beloved, whereby total surrender of the ego to the beloved may take place, and the distinction between subject and object disappears. However, these two emphases require very different approaches. Advaita Vedanta requires disciplined study of the Upanishads etc. and deep meditation. Vishistha Advaita hinges on total surrender to the Lord of body, mind and soul in a life of devotion.

Section B

5 'The name Jainism, which means a multitude of jivas who have conquered their lower nature and realised the highest, indicates the predominantly ethical character of the Jain system in sharp contrast to Hinduism.' Discuss this view.

Both religions have strong ethical dimensions. In Hinduism this goes back to the Upanishads, the Gita and the Laws of Manu. Jainism grew after the time of Mahavira at a time of intellectual exploration, when there was a movement away from interest in sacrifice, gods, priestly class etc. Both can be viewed as philosophical systems, rather than religions, stressing logic and knowledge; but Hinduism stresses dependence on devotion to God. The Jewels of Jainism stress the importance of right conduct, self-discipline and ahimsa, as does ethical Hinduism to a considerable extent. Unlike Jainism, however, Hinduism is not anti-caste. Both see liberation in terms of escaping the cycle of death and rebirth, but Hinduism stresses the importance of moksha as union of Brahman and Atman. Candidates will need to confine themselves to the question to avoid writing all they know about both religions.

6 Discuss the importance of the Sangha for attaining Nirvana in Theravada Buddhism.

The Sangha is the community of monks, not restricted to a small minority but a possible way of life for most Buddhists. Candidates could describe the life of monks, the robes, begging bowls etc., but this should not form the main part of the answer. The importance of the Sangha for the individual is that it promotes the detachment from worldly concerns that Buddhism requires. On joining the Sangha the individual can give up family ties, the responsibility of having to earn a living etc. and devote himself to contemplation in order to reach Nirvana. The importance of the community is that the Sangha provides a place of refuge and of education, sometimes a hospital as well. It gives the wider community a focus and a way in which to acquire good karma, through supporting the monks' way of life.

- 7 'Theravada Buddhism teaches that the ultimate reality is a void (shunyata) whereas Upanishadic Hinduism teaches the Absolute is full, perfect and complete.' Comment on this analysis of Buddhism.**

Candidates should discuss anatta as one of the three marks of existence, often translated as 'non-self'. It is the view that there is no essential soul (Atman, spirit or person). People are just made up of 'a series of successive dharmas'. In this extreme form, the doctrine of anatta is a denial of the Upanishadic teaching of the Self/Atman as not different to the Brahman. In the Upanishads the Self is Truth, knowledge, Bliss and eternal. The doctrine of anatta gives rise to questions: what is reborn from one life to another; how does the new 'person' relate to the one who has just died? In contrast, the Advaita teaching in the Upanishads says that the whole cycle of rebirth according to deeds is in the realm of avidya (ignorance). Only vidya (knowledge) of Atman (i.e. Sat Chit Ananda) can dispel this and free one from transmigration, to realise one's true nature as purna (full, perfect, complete).

Section C

- 8 'The aim is to reach the highest place of Vishnu.' Discuss in the light of Vishnu's symbolism and significance in the spiritual life of some Hindus.**

Candidates need to show understanding of the essentially 'Sattvika' nature of Vishnu being ever-present, sustaining and preserving everything. He is especially manifest in his nine avatars incarnate and the tenth yet to arrive (these can be noted). Vishnu has the unique role as the universal A of OM/AUM. He is incarnate in the world at times of adharma in order to help mankind, protect the good, destroy evil and restore dharma. Vishnu is a deity concerned with morality and goodness, interested in individuals and therefore a particularly strong object of bhakti. This is especially evident in the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata, respectively as Ram and Krishna.

- 9 'Lakshmi is only an excuse for glorifying the acquisition of wealth.' Evaluate this negative statement about the goddess (shakti) Lakshmi.**

Lakshmi is not just a queen to support the king, but as shakti she is an aspect of the deity, the force of the forceful, the feminine side of the coin. Candidates should show awareness that the devi is not ultimately separate. Two aspects of the same, Lakshmi is the consort of Vishnu; her forms are all different manifestations of the one shakti. As the devi of wealth and prosperity, she is often symbolised by a lotus.

- 10 'Form by form, every form is for the sake of making Him known.' To what extent does this Rig-Vedic statement suggest that without murtis God cannot be known?**

Answers will need to cover the issues raised by the treating of murtis as just stone, wood or metal idols, diverting attention from one God. The importance of their use as icons for practising devotion to the divine being should be discussed, as well as links with avatar theology. Good answers should be able to distinguish within Hinduism strands of monotheism, henotheism and polytheism, but will recognise the function of the murti in Hindu devotion as being to connect with the one God dwelling in the hearts of all.

Section D

- 11 'The Purusha Sukta gives the best explanation of the origins of the four varnas.' Discuss in the light of your understanding of modern Hindu society.**

Candidates should show understanding of the traditional account of the origin of the four varnas in the Vedic hymn, Purusha Sukta. Some have argued that the idea originated from the invasion of the Indus valley civilisation by other racial groups, a view rejected by Indian scholars. In theory there are four castes but in practice many more. Different skin colours (traditionally fair, red, yellow, black) were associated respectively with Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, with their different roles as priests, warriors, farmers and servants. Candidates should be aware of modern re-interpretations of these social divisions, especially in the light of the dharma traditionally associated with each of the four castes.

- 12 'Traditional teaching on the purusharthas holds that it is wrong (adharmic) to pursue pleasure (kama) and wealth (artha) alone.' Discuss.**

The four aims of life are traditionally dharma, kama, artha and moksha. Moksha is the summit of the purusharthas, the ultimate aim of life, where the individual soul is liberated from the endless round of death and rebirth. Following dharma leads the individual in the direction of moksha. First dharma may be followed for the sake of its own rewards and later following the love of God with detachment. Finally, perfect pursuit of dharma, without any desire even for heaven, leads to moksha. Kama and artha, however, are not necessarily wrong by comparison. The pursuit of pleasure and wealth are seen as part of the dharma or duty of the householder, in order to provide a happy marriage and family life. The pursuit of artha in a righteous way will provide a comfortable home for the family. The surplus will support members of the other three ashramas: students, the elderly and mendicants. Wealth especially is often seen as an indication of good karma, of blessedness. The element of wrong (adharma) comes in with 'attachment'. There is nothing wrong with enjoying good things when they are seen as impermanent, i.e. when kama and artha are pursued in conjunction with dharma. Dharma here signifies the eternal law of order and duty, dependent on one's caste and stage in life.

- 13 'He who does good will be born good; he who does evil will be born evil. He becomes holy by holy deeds, evil by evil.' Discuss the relevance of the so-called law of karma for today in the light of this teaching from the Upanishads.**

The standard teaching on the law of karma and its origins in the Vedas, especially the Upanishada, and later expounded in the Gita, should be outlined by candidates. The so-called law of Samsara and possibility of 8,400 million forms should be referred to. Some candidates may refer to the three elements involved: sancita, prarabdha and agami. The key issue, that present action changes samskara (predisposition, innate tendency), should be related to the teaching about the path to moksha.

University of Cambridge International Examinations
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1223 553554 Fax: +44 (0)1223 553558
international@cie.org.uk www.cie.org.uk

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