

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCE Religious Studies 6RS02 1A

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Introduction

The 2015 examination series was another very successful series for candidates who presented inspirational studies in the Investigations Paper. The quality of candidates' work is a testimony to the high level of engagement with selected studies drawn from a very wide range of academic fields. The high standard of work evidenced in June 2015 was no exception to historical high standards as candidates demonstrated a very high level of independent enquiry which clearly demonstrated what their chosen area of investigation had meant to them as a learning experience. Candidates showcased their knowledge of a particular academic field in the way they identified a line of enquiry, clearly expressed their view, analysed key concepts and deployed evidence with coherent understanding of their task whilst fluently evaluating a wide range of source material that they had at their disposal. The enthusiasm for, and knowledge of, the chosen topic was clearly conveyed in many answers that were truly academic in their approach. A few centres continue to focus on the same or similar topics for all their candidates, whereas other centres permitted considerable choice for individual candidates. Candidates were mostly very well prepared for the examination and it was evident that centres used their specialist resources and interests to encourage candidates to research in depth a particular area of study. It is important to stress again that the 'Investigations' unit has a definite academic purpose. The aim is to involve students as active participants pursuing open-ended enquiries with an emphasis on independent learning. Questions were designed to be inclusive of all possible approaches to various topics and all valid answers were considered. At this stage in the life of the specification it is difficult to find new things to report because, in the main, centres possess a very high degree of expertise and this is clearly evidenced in the work that is produced on the day of the examination.

Whilst most centres had entered their candidates for the correct option, there were still a few entries for particular Areas of Study where consideration regarding entry for a different Area of Study may have been beneficial to the candidate. It is important to ensure candidates know which area of their investigation is the best fit for the question they answer on the paper.

There was evidence of candidates choosing a different question on the paper to the question they had clearly prepared for before the examination. In some of these cases the candidate was using material suitable for Question 1 to answer Question 3 (or vice versa) and not really grappling fully with the demands of the question.

This practice does not always work to the best effect as the candidate might end up answering neither question as fully as possible. It must be noted that each question was written for ONE of three topics within each particular Area of Study. Whilst it is good to note that fewer candidates than 2014 attempted this approach there were still some candidates in this session who answered a question they had not prepared for. They may need to be reminded which question their material is best directed at and be advised to answer that question.

Centres should ensure that candidates are entered for the option that matches their Area of Study and that candidates are clear about which question they have been prepared for on the paper. There is still evidence of centres studying Papers 1B and 1F being entered for 1A. This might be an oversight regarding filling out the form – centres must choose 6RS02 and then identify which of the seven papers from 1A to 1G is the specific entry.

Variation in achievement was related to the two assessment objectives. These objectives should receive prominent attention in the process of the investigation. Importantly, there must be explicit attention to both objectives in the examination answer and also to the question that is intended to focus the answer. Each question consistently referred to the assessment objectives with the trigger word 'Examine' for AO1 and 'Comment on' for AO2. These dictated the structure of the question and helped candidates to plan their answers. It would be advisable for candidates to pay regular attention to the level descriptors for these assessment objectives as a way of monitoring their development and progress during their investigations. The phrase 'with reference to the topic you have investigated' will always appear in the question to ensure that the generic question can be answered with material from any appropriate investigation. The mark scheme itself is generic to all questions but the answer itself is not necessarily generic as candidates are expected to use their material to answer the question. The purpose of the question is to challenge candidates to adapt their material so that at the highest levels they may demonstrate a coherent understanding of the task based on the selection of their material. Widely deployed evidence/arguments/sources were evident in well structured responses to the task whereby a clearly expressed viewpoint was supported by well-deployed evidence and reasoned argument. There was skilful deployment of religious language in many answers and the fluency of good essays showed command over the material; such command makes for high outcomes and rewards the amount of hard work done by the candidate. Many candidates had clearly learned much in the process and their overall grasp of the issues involved and command over their material was highly commendable.

Candidates at the lower end of achievement struggled with the demands of the question. In preparation for this examination, some candidates may find it useful to write up their investigation under exam timed conditions to a variety of different possible questions. They might build up a number of different essay plans to different possible questions. The important point in these activities is to enable candidates to develop their management of material such as how to best structure their content to answer the specific question. However, success can be undermined by writing up a rote-learned answer which was not adapted to the question set or by answering a question that has been written for a topic they have not studied. In 2015 there was still far too much evidence of rote learned answers using the same structure and material inclusive of quotes; whilst much information was relevant to the topic and consequently was awarded in terms of AO1, there was a significant lack of engagement with the specific demands of the question and consequently marks for AO2 were low, with only generic evaluation provided. This approach is contrasted with another form where candidates were trained to answer the question; arguably, this is evidence of good practice but at the lower end some candidates thought it was sufficient to simply use the question stimulus at the end of each paragraph. The best answers were those which were guided by the statement as opposed to simply '*tagging it on*' to content that they were already anticipating to write about. A balanced approach to the question that meets the highest levels of achievement according to both assessment objectives is obviously desirable and the generic question accommodates many possible routes to success whereby any valid approach to the question was credited.

Finally, there is increasing evidence of poorly written scripts. Candidates are strongly advised to practice writing under timed conditions. Centres are assured that much time was invested in attempting to decipher illegible answers but there is always the risk that a badly written word/phrase/paragraph could be misinterpreted and it is best to avoid the chances of this occurring. Examiners understand the time constraints that candidates are writing under but this problem regarding illegible handwriting seems to be on the increase. Centres need to address this issue because the current format for examinations requires candidates' ability to sustain handwriting and academic standards under examination pressure.

That said, the excellent work of centres and candidates in 6RS02 bears testimony to the academic potential of candidates that is a joy to behold when it is fully realised.

Question 1

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

The study of the interface between religion and science attracted some of the best responses that have appeared so far within this specification. Question 1 was very well answered with many students giving insightful comments on the various different models of science and religion working together. There was the usual wide range of responses to this question. Some candidates examined the historical interaction between religion and science and focussed on the dialogue between Christianity and the natural sciences.

Intriguingly, Ian Barbour's four models of the relationship between religion and science featured much less prominently despite Barbour's death last academic year.

The shaping of western culture through this interaction was noted by some candidates who very ably marshalled a range of works of proven value for their exploration of the field. Issues in religion were discussed with reference to a range of scientific and religious accounts of the origins of the universe; most notably the creation and evolution debate that is not without its own controversy. The best answers adapted their material to the question, or set up their approach clearly with reference to the question and offered a thorough discussion as to whether science and religion as disciplines have anything to say to each other. Key themes were addressed through a variety of models of relationships between religion and science which answered the thrust of the question very well. Good mention was made in some answers to the methodology of both disciplines, and the usage of language within the two systems but other more 'straightforward' approaches also did extremely well in many cases because they did not ignore the question. A good range of material was used in the majority of cases with appropriate scholarship but the weaker answers lacked supporting or illustrative material of a suitably academic nature. Answers at this level confined themselves to offering a descriptive narrative with little focus on the question.

Overall, there was good material on science but sometimes weaker on the distinctive discipline of religion. The best candidates were well versed in the debate from a scientific and religious perspective and were up to date with their account of it.

There was good analysis of key terms and drawing out of their significance. Effective use was made of material which candidates had studied in 6RS01, such as the design argument and process theology, although a few weaker answers relied on 'Design Argument' type approaches or stuck to a general 'creation versus evolution' narrative without demonstrating any further knowledge of the religion and science debate. A small number of candidates answered the question by examining arguments for the existence of God and refuted them with scientific theories/observation in a rather formulaic way, that suggested they had prepared an essay which they then adapted to answer the question, some more successfully than others.

It must be stressed again that the demands of the Investigations Paper are different to the Foundations Paper and this Area of Study is not exclusively about the existence of God or Paley's design argument refuted within Dawkins' Blind Watchmaker account. It is also worth noting that some answers on creationism echoed of fundamentalism and whilst any point of view can be argued for it is important to be able to substantiate an individual view with balanced knowledge of both sides of the debate. Many candidates managed to move beyond a purely Dawkinian critique towards a balanced reflection on the question. The potential in this topic to discuss divine intervention against the backdrop of various models of God and recent works by Clayton and McGrath are largely left unexplored. A considerable number used Dawkins and Harris to support the conflict model again, although there is a danger of weaker candidates allowing Dawkins' infantile *reductio ad absurdum* arguments to obscure sound theological or philosophical debate – some candidates were clearly more comfortable with their knowledge of Dawkins' views than they were with other scholars within religious studies.

The candidate in the following essay extract engaged immediately with the question and selected from a wide range of material to support the view suggested in the question. The first paragraph is rather short but sets out very clearly the argument that directs the thrust of the entire essay. The essay narrative moves through commentary on the medieval debate with mention of Copernicus and the Galileo affair and at the end of this section the candidate makes a statement that directly answers the question. The next section, dealing with the creation-evolution debate, addresses the question directly within the narrative (Page 4) both in the midst of the material and towards the end of the page. Moving on to the Huxley Wilberforce debate, the candidate once again addresses the question directly. This style is maintained as the candidate moves through the Scopes trial, Behe's work on irreducible complexity and more recent work on neurotheology by Blackmore and Persinger. The pages are packed with fluent references to wide ranging scholarship and the final section draws together a similarity between the view of Ward and Einstein, which is integrated with brief analysis of the approach taken by Tennant and Swinburne showing how science and religion can work together beneficially.

To say that science and religion are opposed to each other seems ridiculous, the two have been in conflict with each other over the topic of creation for ~~ten~~ thousands of years, the Church used to even be patrons of science, the claim that the two have nothing to say to each other is fundamentally wrong.

Conflict on the topic of creation comes directly from Genesis 1 and 2. This is due to differences between the two texts. In Genesis 1 man comes last, in Genesis 2 man comes first, these discrepancies may be due to the fact the books have different writers, J and P. Still these discrepancies beg the question, which one is the word of God?

2 Timothy 3:16 has been translated and from this translation only certain parts of the bible are actually the word of ^{God}, but which parts are they? This causes conflict because no one can agree on the right creation story while Scientist present ideas such as the big bang which cause conflict between the two, evidencing interaction between the two.

A lot of interaction between the two occurred during the Middle Ages. At this time the church were patrons of science and funded the conduction of experiments, thus showing interaction between the two. However, the church tried to control the results published by scientists as shown with Copernicus. The church believed the universe to be geocentric and revolve around the earth. Copernicus argued the universe to be in fact Heliocentric and revolve around the Sun.

This directly contradicted the Church and thus they banned Copernicus from publishing. Bruno and Galileo later tried to further Copernicus's work and as such they were punished to, with Bruno being burnt at the stake and Galileo being sent into exile. Teilhard De Chardin was also punished for going against the Church. This clearly shows that the two factions do have something to say to each other in terms of how they go about their work, the Church and Science used to work together towards a common goal. This directly contradicts the ~~relative~~ statements made.

Charles Lyell was an influential geologist who inspired the works of many including Charles Darwin.

Lyell took to looking at rock strata and fossils to trace the origin of the world to several million years ago. Philip Gosse claims that the fossils were put there by God as a test of faith and do not hold any significance in the long run. This shows the two interact through conflict despite the fact they search for different things. Bishop Ussher looked at the bible and geologically dated the world to have begun in 4004 BC, making the world 6000 years old. The island of Scurney being used as well. It looks millions of years old but can be dated back to the 1950's. These views contradict that of Charles Lyell and thus show the two to be connected once again by conflict over the idea of creation.

Charles Darwin published the 'Origin of Species' in 1826 which listed his key work on the theory of evolution. This work contradicted the creation stories of classical theism and thus the church opposed it and tried to prevent it's publication. once again showing interaction by conflict. From this conflict the wulberforce and Huxley debate was born. Bishop Samuel Wulberforce tried to denounce Darwin's work while Thomas Huxley tried to defend it. Wulberforce is quoted as saying "what matters is the truth" while Huxley is quoted to have said "clericalism, not religion, is the enemy of science" this debate shows that the two sides most definitely do not have something to say to each other ~~and~~ proving the statements to be wrong.

In 1925 the John Scopes tried to challenge the ban on teaching evolution in American schools. This was known as the Scopes trial. The church decreed the theory of evolution to be fundamentally wrong and thus banned it's teaching. The trial failed, however, and the law still stands today in some states. The Butler Act bans the teaching of evolution in Tennessee and Kansas textbooks have the pages stuck together to prevent teaching. This shows that the church in some cases dictates science and what is taught just because it contradicts Genesis 1 and 2. Once again this proves the claim to be wrong.

However, it could be argued that science opposes itself and not all conflict arises through the church. Michael Behe, in his book 'Darwin's Black Box' argued against the theory of evolution through

Irreducible Complexity. He argued that if at some point the human race evolved the ability to form blood clots then before hand any injury would have resulted in blood loss until death. Michael Behe then argued that it would make it impossible to have survived long enough to evolve. As Brian Cox said "Science is only a theory, it will never prove everything" as shown by Professor Singh and Professor Lunie who argue the truth behind the Big Bang theory. These accounts show that not all conflict is between the two, showing scientists to argue against each other.

Religion, however, is not the sole cause of conflict between the two with scientist trying to disprove religious accounts and

ideals. Dr Blackmore discovered that near death experiences are not caused by God but by enzymes being released into the brain. Persinger's helmet proved that religious visions can be caused by temporal lobe epilepsy rather than a God. This idea brings the likelihood of Moses and Noah having been visited by God: Richard Dawkins states "soon we will be able to get rid of religion altogether" calling it a "corrupting influence". Brian Cox calls creation ideas such as that of Bishop Ussher, Henry Morris, founder of Young earth creationism and Samuel Shenton, founder of the Flat earth Society "absolute drivel". This shows that science has something to say to religion even going so far as to disprove religious accounts: making the claim fundamentally wrong.

Frederick Temple argued that the two sides should come together

to further the knowledge of both both sides, rather than constantly fight each other. Keith Ward famously stated "Faith is just as necessary in science, as it is in religion". Einstein also famously stated that "Religion without science is blind, science without religion is lame". These statements argue that the two should work together to gain a better insight into the origin of our species and the universe. A union between the two has been shown to be beneficial as was the case with F. R. Tennant's Anthropic Principle or Paul Davies's Goldilocks enigma. A union has further developed our understandings. Richard Swinburne argued that science only makes God existence "more probable" by pointing out the complexity of our universe. This serves to show that the two may have something to say to each other, but not necessarily in conflict.

In conclusion the statement is fundamentally wrong. Although the two factions are engaged in different forms of enquiry, ~~with~~ Science looking for reason and empiricism, Religion looking to prove the divine nature of our existence, the two still interact, primarily through conflict. Each side tries to disprove each other in a vicious circle. While it is not good interaction, it is interaction non the less, thus making the statement incorrect. Don Cupitt argued that the relationship between the two used to be harmonious and in some cases it still is as shown by the Anthropic and Aesthetic principle, this being a better and more beneficial form of interaction between the two, still serving to prove the statement to be wrong. To summarise, there is sufficient interaction between the two diametrically opposed factions to justify the statement as completely wrong.



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Examiner Comments

The candidate selected from a wide range of material and responded with immediacy to the question. The question was answered throughout the essay and the reader was left to consider the candidate's conclusive statement.



ResultsPlus
Examiner Tip

Answer the question. Know your argument and then you will have no trouble establishing your view. It also helps to write legibly.

The candidate in this essay demonstrated coherent understanding of the task; based on selection of material to demonstrate emphasis and clarity of ideas. This was a well structured, fluent response to the task that was expressed cogently through skilful deployment of religious language. The argument was substantiated and clearly reasoned. A very impressive piece of work that shows exemplary control over the topic.

The relationship between religion and science is one that has been deliberated for many years and with the exponential rate of evidence being discovered in science it's becoming increasingly difficult for the two to compete logically leaving people to rely entirely on faith. There are 3 models which describe the association between religion and science, the conflict, convergence and distinct. The conflict model describes how both religion and science contradict each other and insist entirely that the other is wrong whereas the convergence model describes how science benefits mankind beliefs and exemplifies God's love and omniscience. Alternatively, the distinct model describes how both religion and science cannot be associated as they are two incompatible concepts. I feel that the most credible model is the conflict, as I feel the revolution in science is too factually

consistent than the age old theory of
and that ultimately, they cannot converge.

God: Before I evaluate each of the models

I will first describe the historical
and intelligent design and its impact
landmarks on the debate.

Perhaps the most famous landmark is
the Copernican revolution. During the
majority of the 16th and 17th centuries
a fear of heretics spreading views
that contradicted the bible dominated the
Catholic church. People had a solid belief
in a ~~geocentric~~ geocentric view of the
universe ~~in which the earth both~~
~~orbited the sun and rotated on its own~~
~~axis simultaneously~~ as a literal
biblical interpretation. However, Nicholas
Copernicus, a Polish scholar, noticed the
flaws with these views and instead
hypothesised a heliocentric view of the
solar system in which the earth
both orbited the sun and rotated on its
own axis simultaneously. Johannes Kepler's
modifications of this model proved the
majority of the theory correct and this
new and radical approach to the solar
system caused theologians to reconsider
specific biblical interpretation. This ^{I feel} is one

form of enquiry between religion and science, the view that science is outdated religious accounts.

The Copernican revolution helped ~~broader~~ broader specific biblical exegesis to a literal approach, ~~and an~~ allegorical approach, and an approach based on accommodation. John Calvin associated himself with this approach and argued that when interpreting the bible it must be assumed that God adjusts to the specific capacities of the human mind and heart and books such as Genesis should be adjusted to suit ~~the~~ the individual opinion on what would be a prodigious beginning to life. ^{I feel this is a mature} ~~Calvin~~ ^{approach.}

Galileo mounted a major defence on Copernican's theories ~~&~~ which led him to be condemned from the Roman Catholic church. He had an accommodated view of the bible and when critics argued his views contradicted the bible he claimed that in biblical times people could not have been familiar with ^{the} celestial mechanics and therefore we have to relativize its meaning to suit our

modern knowledge. Galileo's views were rejected as innovations without any precedent in Christian thought, and this exemplifies how ^{the original} Catholic opinion was that religion and science have nothing to say to each other.

Isaac Newton resolved the issue of the mechanics by uncovering 3 laws of motion, meaning the universe could be perceived as a machine acting to fixed laws. Although this was scientifically a leap forward it eliminated the conception of needing a God as the world could now be perceived as a self-governing, self-sustaining system, defeating much of what the bible enforces. This is another example of scientific enquiry ~~by~~ ^{to} religion.

Perhaps the biggest challenge to religion was Charles Darwin's evolution. In 'The Origin of the Species' Darwin claimed a process called natural selection takes place in which plants and animals evolve slowly over time due to genetic variations, mutations and speciations. This ^{however} defeated the traditional

christian idea that life owed its specific characteristics to individual acts of divine ~~above~~ creation and undermined the unique and privileged position of humanity as the pinnacle of creation. A ~~the~~ key conflict involving evolution is the Scopes trial which took place of July 10th 1925. John Thomas Scopes, a political socialist, was fined \$ for violating the Butler act, which forbade any teaching other than the story of creation. Scopes had taught evolution in class, and had effectively broken the law, showing that in ~~many~~ ^{conflicting} forms, enquiries ^{in history} ~~between~~ ^{with} religion ~~and~~ science ~~has~~ ^{has} ~~been~~ shown not to be allowed to comment on religion or override its theories.

From evolutionary theory rose the intelligent design theory as an a posteriori claim that life as we know it is far too complex to have come about by chance and it seems the more logical explanation to under a supernatural cause outside the universe. It ~~differs~~ ^{differs from} creationism as it divorces creationist ideas from its roots in scripture. I however believe

These are inductive conclusions and that when we consider the extent of the flaws of the universe more so than perfectisms, it seems wrong to call the design 'intelligent'. Malfunctioning genetics and discontinuity in design suggest chance is a far more feasible explanation. Activists in intelligent design, such as Michael Behe, have argued the irreducible complexity of the flagellum bacteria. The individual parts ~~of~~ of the flagellum serve no purpose alone and therefore by the theory of intelligent design they must have been designed as there is no reason or roof for them to have evolved.

Intelligent design however avoids any reference to scripture as it would appear as though it had its roots in religion rather than just design. This may be partly to ensure it does not fall foul of the separation of religion and state in the US constitution. It does not necessarily have to associate with religion and therefore can be taught as an alternative to ~~the~~ evolution. This shows ~~and~~ another religious enquiry, as it appears

to avoid reference to religion, despite appearing religious, in order to override science.

David Hume said about looking into the universe and inferring design that it is "an inductive leap *vo far*". If you start applying science to religion you start worshipping science and diminishing religion and the idea is a category mistake. If you're already a theist you're going to try and apply religion to explanation but it seems wrong to converge religion and science within education as it gives false pretences as to what science is ^{about} ~~about~~, which is evidence and data. It appears as though ~~as~~ intelligent design is just using a God of the gaps example, and filling spaces that lack scientific knowledge with the concept of a God. As Richard Dawkins says, intelligent design cannot explain ~~anything~~ anything as it cannot explain itself.

Firstly, I will attempt to elaborate on the convergence model. One of the most prominent components of this model is

theistic evolution which Francis Collins describes as the position that "evolution is real" but was "set in motion by God".

~~As I~~ however feel there appear no elements of evolution in the bible and ~~when he considers the flaws of the universe and the extent of per~~ if God had omnipotence, he wouldn't have needed to initiate such a flawed process. There is still a feasible connection however, Henry M. Morris ~~has~~ states a type of theistic evolution called "biblical evolution" where God's ~~one~~ creation advanced over time due to evolution. They retain the belief that humans were literally created in imago dei ~~in order~~ and therefore stayed completely in-synch with the ~~story~~ book of Genesis. Thus, the view rejects Darwinian evolution but openly accepts the possibility of transmutation of species. This view would reject the claim that religion and science have nothing to say to each other as here they intercept.

For nearly a century, the papacy offered no authoritative pronouncement on Darwin's ~~many~~ theories, however in 1950, Pope Pius

XII stated ~~as~~ there is no intrinsic conflict between religion and science providing Christians believe that the individual soul is a direct creation of God and not of purely material forces. Now, Catholic schools in the US and other countries teach evolution as part of their science curriculum. Cardinal Newman in 1868 stated that ~~the~~ evolution gives us a larger idea of God's divine providence and skill. ~~Cardinal Newman~~ Moreover, St. Augustine stated that 'God is not temporal' and the world is a mechanism for change, otherwise interpreted as evolution. Neither of these beliefs would support the claim that religion and science have nothing to say to each other.

The so-called myth that Darwin 'killed God' was rejected by the majority of Christians as only a handful took the bible ~~liter~~ literally. Darwin himself stated 'it seems to me to be absurd that a man cannot be an ardent theist and an evolutionist'. Philo of Alexandria recognised the contradictions within the bible and instead saw them as allegorical.

He believed a literal view of the bible would stifle our perception of a God so complex and marvellous he cannot be understood on literal human terms. It could be argued that the only way in which to accept convergence between religion and science is to not take biblical exegesis literally. Thus I feel is the most viable way to go about the religion whilst maintaining a mature view of biblical teachings and remaining in-sync with newfound science.

The distinct model is another approach to the enquiries between religion and science, and one I feel more appropriate than the convergence model but still not entirely convincing. It predominantly supports the statement that religion and science have nothing to say to each other.

Fideism is the view that religious belief should not be subject to rational evaluation. According to this, having faith that God exists and loves us should not be depend on scientific evidence to prove or disprove it. Kierkegaard adopted these views and believed we

should take a 'leap of faith' and trust in God. Alternatively, Karl Barth argued that the Bible is not a scientific text, and treating it this way is missing something absolutely crucial. As stated by ~~Robert~~ Robert Lanza "religion and science look at reality differently".

* It is clear here that enquiries between religion and science are treated as unable to intersect, and I would argue this is more appropriate than trying to get them to converge.

Could developed the term 'Non-overlapping magisteria' to describe how, in his view, religion and science cannot comment on each others realm, again further supporting this claim. He believed that science asks the question 'how' and religion asks the question 'why'. I however believe that our minds are programmed to be compatible with reason and logic and otherwise we would become ~~very~~ irrational and absurd and there ~~be~~ would be no reason for us ever to seek knowledge. In many ways, as Dawkins argues, the distinct model is

~~use~~ an excuse to reject ~~all~~ ~~stating that~~ ~~can~~ natural evidence that contradicts the bible without having to argue against fact. ~~the~~ A religious person on the ~~other~~ other hand would be only too happy to accept any evidence which supported their views.

Finally, I will attempt to elaborate on the conflict model, emphasising that these are the views most succinct with what I believe. conflicting claims concerning the origins of humanity, of the world, and of the universe itself are individual matters which will remain unresolved indefinitely as ~~both~~ both religion and science have ~~different~~ different concepts of 'truth'. Disputes arise as they are two different ~~disciplines~~ disciplines based on different foundations. Science is largely based on the observation of nature, any compromise would require them to reject hard evidence. Religion on the other hand is largely based on a faith that God has taught absolute ~~the~~ truth, any compromise, would require them to reject their own beliefs. Scientific

revelation can be adapted to coincide with religious beliefs, however this often takes some creative thinking and imagination, ultimately, diminishing the essence of Christian faith.

Ultimately I contend that although there appear ways in which science and religion ~~can~~ can converge, there are more ways in which it cannot, and either they should be treated as two different concepts that cannot intersect or two that will neither effectively disprove the other nor join them. Science and religion have had ~~things~~ ^{enquiries} to say to each other, but ultimately they should remain apart, as they cannot seem to cross paths. As stated by John Haldane "there can be no cruce between science and religion".



ResultsPlus
Examiner Comments

This piece of work speaks for itself. The candidate clearly knows the debate and has navigated a clear pathway towards a conclusion that is intelligible and creditworthy.



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Examiner Tip

Know your stuff. There is no substitute for clear knowledge of your topic.

Question 2

ANTHROPOLOGY/SOCIOLOGY/PSYCHOLOGY of RELIGION

There was evidence of more improvement in the approach to this question for candidates investigating the psychology of religion. Many answers investigating Freud were particularly well done and this remains one of the most popular choices of topic.

With regard to this question, these able candidates focused on, for example, those Freudian ideas pertinent to an understanding of religion. It is not essential, but some candidates knew the distinctive ideas in some of Freud's primary texts and were able to draw on specific textual data. If candidates know this type of material it is to their credit to draw on this expertise.

The level of scholarship was most impressive at the higher end of achievement in all topics with much evidence of skilful interaction with the question; candidates presented a coherent discussion regarding the contribution of their chosen thinker/discipline to the study of religion. Most candidates used mainly the psychological or sociological disciplines, but a significant number included thinkers from both disciplines, most commonly Durkheim, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud and Jung. This year it was apparent that many candidates were able to explore in much greater depth the discipline of sociology in relation to religious belief and practice.

Generally in AO1, most candidates presented the core, basic details about the main ideas with a proficient use of terms. Candidates who performed at the lower levels were content with a straightforward exposition of the key ideas without much acknowledgement of the question. Those candidates who were credited at the higher levels selected and adapted their work to the demands of the question. AO2 tended to be well answered with a consideration of a range of debate and controversy ending in a conclusion that decisively argued for or against the question. There were some examples of

Freud and Jung contrasted against each other and these essays worked very well as candidates clearly understood the distinctive differences in their works.

Other approaches included a comparison and analysis of sociologists of religion and an assessment of the validity of those views in the light of the quotation and some focused on Dawkins' critique of religion and evaluated that viewpoint well.

The same points made about Freud apply in terms of the crucial importance of managing the content so as to focus on the question. Some candidates attempted to cover a breadth of several academic disciplines such as psychology, sociology and anthropology within an essay. There is nothing to prohibit this, but there is no requirement that such breadth of material is essential, and in the time available. It is a daunting task to attempt such breadth. Studies on cults were very well executed and some candidates showed evidence of original research that is to be highly commended.

The following essay demonstrates a clear answer to the question where the candidate possesses a strong command of relevant technical vocabulary and sound knowledge of Freud's work. However, the question was effectively written out again 27 times through a 'tagged on' style that took up valuable space in this ten page essay. It cannot be disputed that the candidate kept the question in mind throughout the essay but it is important to examine how far the material presented actually has something to say in relation to the question. It is not enough to merely say there is a connection – the next step is to demonstrate how the material presented elucidates the claim and/or supports the candidate's view.

The approach taken in this essay does not always produce the desired impact and time is better spent presenting new material or showing a critical understanding through further commentary. Redundant phrases do not add anything to already good material. Time is precious in the exam and this practice might prevent a candidate who has learned more good material from presenting it – the candidate would have benefitted from presenting their material in more depth rather than writing out the question stimulus so often.

Anthropologists are not concerned about the truth of religion and whether or not God exists but are more concerned with how religion and its beliefs affect society as a whole and on a day to day basis. Anthropologists such as Freud, Marx and Durkheim are anti-realist as they deny an objective reality. They are also functionalists as they believe that we are born into society and learn to function in it as a result of our surroundings. The work of the above scholars is crucial for our understanding of religious belief and practice as they account for all aspects of religious belief and the effects these have, whether it be positive or negative.

Freud's work is crucial in our understanding of religious belief and practice through his idea that religion is a form of neurosis.

illness arising from the unconscious mind. Freud believed religion is infantilising which is a symptom of psychological and emotional immaturity which holds man back from being self-reliant and clear-sighted about his place in the world. Freud also advocated the idea that religion is an illusion associated with repressed sexual memories and so, Freud, as a scholar, is crucial for our understanding of religious belief and practice.

Freud's work is also crucial for our understanding as he introduced the idea that God is an idealised father figure which we project onto the world. The Oedipus Complex brings hate and respect towards our father figure which leads to universal sex trauma and guilt which reappears in the form of religion. We must give up our father figures but still require a source of authority, love and comfort which is where God comes in. Thus, the work of Freud is crucial for our understanding of religious belief and practice.

However, Freud's work is proved to be not so
crucial to our understanding of religion due
to its inherent weaknesses. For example,
Freud's theory is far too simple and is



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Examiner Comments

The candidate introduces the topic in the first paragraph by including the proposition contained in the question stimulus. The second paragraph is signposted in the same way but needed a further reason as to why this might be the case. The examiner is left to fill in the gap in thinking.



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Examiner Tip

Understanding of the significance of your material will help you to structure a response that answers the question. Writing out the question, even if it looks integrated, is not sufficient to demonstrate why your material actually answers the question.

The following essay clearly possesses more fluidity than the previous essay. The candidate has clearly learned a sound body of material but engages in a thought process that answers the question more effectively. The candidate's critical understanding of the material is demonstrated through additional words; for example 'significantly' on the first line of the introduction, 'non-traditional way' on the second line of the next paragraph, 'further enhanced' on first line of next paragraph on second page. The extract below is slightly longer than the last but demonstrates great coverage and analysis.

origins → reasons → Darwin effect → Evolution → ~~change~~ Abnormal → Subjectivity → Cultural

Freud, 'the father of psychoanalysis', has contributed significantly to our understanding of religious belief and its practices. Aiming to deal a terminal blow to religion via the path of psychology, Freud believed, like Copernicus' astronomical critique and Darwin's biological critique of religion, that he would provide scientific, objective evidence for a further critique of religious belief, helping us understand reasons for the belief in the process. This perspective revolves around four key ideas; religion is an obsessional neurosis, religion is an illusion, it is derived from the unconscious and is closely related to sexual impulses.

Freud looked to discuss the origins of religious belief in a non-traditional way, by examining how it occurred through the psyche. To contribute the idea of a psychological approach to the understanding of religious belief and practices, Freud built on Darwin's ground work theory, suggesting that a physical enactment of the Oedipus complex (a sexual desire for one's

mother and fear/jealousy of one's father) took place. This would involve outcast males of the group rising up and killing the dominant male (their father) and taking the women (their mothers) as mates. This is referred to as the primal crime, and is the cause of an unconscious guilt that is passed down through generations. This guilt led to the creation of totems and animism, using magic and appealing to the totem to control the environment due to a lack of protection from the father (the dead dominant male). This links to religion as both appeal to an external power (animists use magic, religion uses prayer) to influence the environment. This shows that the origins of religion lie in the sexual impulses of the Oedipus complex, and despite religion trying to repress this fact, it is retold through the story of Jesus, whom was killed by his 'children' and then worshipped by them.

Frend further enhanced the understanding of religion by presenting the reasons why we originally turned to religion. ~~He~~ Even at the present, believers will admit that religion provides a safety jacket, and if we consider that this is in a time of science and understanding, we can only assume the needs for primal man for religion would be amplified, ~~as~~ since,

as Dinkheim claimed, for primal man everything is supernatural. The need for Darwin's usage of the term 'God of the gaps' would be paramount, as it would seem primal man's whole world was a 'gap'.*

This is one of the views of religion as an illusion that has been clarified by Michael Palmer; religion is a society mechanism to understand the environment, and that it is used to control the primal instincts of the Id (instinctive drive).

This relates closely to Feuerbach's view that religion is used to alleviate believers from the harsh realities of life, and that we prescribe qualities we do not have to God. Similarly, Carl Jung, Freud's protégé of many years, believed God to be an archetype (a priori views of things in the psyche), and that channeling libidos energy to the right archetypes would make the 'self' archetype (what Freud would term the ego) more like the 'God' archetype (the super ego) and control the 'Shadow' archetype (the Id). It is clear here how Freud inspired Jung's views, and this is an important concept to remember when evaluating the ~~best~~ contributions of scholars ~~not~~ to the understanding of religion. Freud's work has inspired many, having a

domino effect on the direction of the understanding of religion, opening up the new concept of psychological reasons for religious beliefs.



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Examiner Comments

The introduction presents a strong analysis of Freud's work and the candidate covers a wide range of ideas – starts off the essay with a good pace.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Understanding of the significance of your material will help you to structure a response that answers the question. Have confidence in what you have studied and learn ways to express this knowledge with a style that takes less time in the exam but effectively answers the question.

Question 3

There is so much originality and real research in this Area of Study that it is a shame that numbers for this question are still fairly low. Nonetheless, the range of topics covered was still impressive and there is real flair in the way candidates combine other subjects like Art, English Literature, Drama, Film, Architecture, History, and Music in order to extrapolate religious themes from these creative expressions that contribute to, or manifest experiences of, religious life. There were examples of studies that covered a very wide range of material about various art forms across different historical periods. The best works reflect the spirit of the Investigations Paper which allows for a creative approach to topic choice, independent research and substantive study of religious themes. The best essays engaged with religious ideas that were creatively expressed and had no difficulty with showcasing their understanding of the work in question and what it has to offer religious life.

Candidate interest in Film and Art continues and this is the topic that was evidenced by some of the best and worst answers. The best studies were highly independent and candidates possessed fluent knowledge of the religious themes studied. There were a few studies where only film was studied and there is still room for more substantial development of the religious ideas discussed in relation to some of the film choices. These studies struggled because of the tenuous link to theological themes. Candidates would be well advised to adopt a subject for study where a more substantial range of religious themes may be drawn upon to develop depth and detail of approach.

Essays on different creative expressions that studied a single religious idea seemed better able to pursue it at incredible depth, all backed up with scholarly viewpoints. These essays were passionate about the topic and were subsequently beautifully crafted and executed. Candidates need to be reminded that Question 3 is not intended to be a 'go to' question for candidates who have failed to revise and who try to make up the ground by offering tenuous and unconvincing choices of creative expression.

This essay is an example of a study of well-known and well-loved literature by CS Lewis. The candidate has no difficulty with grappling with religious themes within these works and takes the reader on a journey through the Chronicles of Narnia. Along the way, substantive religious themes are convincingly elaborated upon with reference to classical Christology and critical commentary by an impressive range of authors.

The Chronicles of Narnia were written by C.S. Lewis, and are about a fantasy land of talking animals. It is believed by many that these books contain a huge ~~dear~~ amount of religious insights which are allegorical to the Bible, however this view is not shared by everyone and so the books don't convey the nature of the holy to everyone, but they do convey it to a vast amount of people.

Perhaps the closest comparison of religion to Narnia is Aslan, the great lion, who is the only character to feature in all seven Narnia books, because he is infinite, just like Jesus. Just as Jesus is the son of God, Aslan is the son of the Emperor over the sea, and Revelation 5:5 states that Jesus Christ is "The Lion of Judah" potentially giving us an insight into why Lewis portrayed his "holy" character as a lion. The most compelling, intricate and powerful comparisons can be made in "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" however, particularly in Aslan's death and resurrection,

which appears to mirror Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Before death, the White Witch orders for Aslan's mane, a symbol of authority and pride for a lion, to be cut off, thus humiliating the King of the Jungle. This draws comparisons with Jesus' presentation of the Crown of Thorns to show he is the "King of the Jews." Furthermore, after death, Aslan, Lucy and Susan cry over Aslan's dead body, just as Mary and Mary Magdalene cry over Jesus' dead body. Duncan Rice, who wrote "Aslan as Jesus," said, "Many similarities can be drawn between Aslan and Jesus" and the most striking similarity is that they both die out of selfless, agape love. After Edmund betrays the White Witch, she has a right to kill him, as for "every treachery, I have a right to kill" and this is because of the Deep Magic from the Dawn of Time. However, the Deeper Magic from before the Dawn of Time says that, "If a willing victim is ~~killed~~ who had done no wrong is killed in a traitor's stead... death itself would start working backwards," so Aslan sacrifices himself to save Edmund just as Jesus died on the cross to ~~to~~ wash away all human sins, as both knew they would rise again, and the lack of resistance they both showed helps us to see the compassion, love and respect the Narnians possess for all humans. This use of Aslan to portray Jesus

shows to us a contemporary belief that the whole of Narnia is a religion-based set of novels, which help to convey an understanding of the Nature of the Holy through intricate parallels and symbolisation, while still being an attractive and appealing read.

There are criticisms ^{of} Narnia ~~who~~ which show its not appealing to all however. In "The Last Battle," the final Narnia book, Susan is not allowed into paradise post-destruction of Narnia, causing a large debate known as "The Problem of Susan." This problem was created by Neil Gaiman, who believes Susan was not allowed to re-enter Narnia because she had become too interested in "nylons, lipsticks and invitations to parties," and ~~write~~ J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter series, backed up Gaiman, adding that Susan was too intrigued by "sex." Both believe this was a sexist message, that women lose their chance of salvation when they start to express themselves, and that this exclusion of Susan is a "damnation of feminism." However, this is countered by A.J. Anderson who thinks Susan has just drifted into apostasy and that the use of "lipsticks" and "nylons" is materialistic, rather than a metaphor for sex. She thinks Susan is excluded from Narnia because she no longer believes in

Narnia, as "people can see miracles done before their own eyes and still discount them." She thinks this is a warning that it is possible to lose contact with God so constant restoration of your faith is needed, which shows that even though Narnia's issues such as "The Problem of Susan" cause it to not be appealing to all, it still finds ways to give an understanding of the nature of the holy, even though these interpretations may be different, like how the two gardeners in John Wisdom's "Parable of the Gardener" have different ideas on who has tended to the abandoned garden.

A further criticism of Narnia comes from Keith Akers, who, on his online blog, argued that Narnia contains many prejudices. Firstly, he points out that the Narnians live by a rule that the talking animals may not kill each other but they may kill the non-talking animals, showing a clear divide and that the talking animals are supreme. Akers then says that "This is all very socially acceptable. But it is not the religion of Jesus." At first, this argument appears to be very strong because Christians are supposed to promote equality and not have prejudices as Jesus taught us to "Love thy Neighbour," however, upon reflection, Akers viewpoint is flawed. This is because if Narnia

is an alternative Christian story, then there must be prejudice in the novels, because there ~~was~~ has always been prejudice on planet Earth, which Narnia is supposedly based on. The only person in history who was never ~~prejudiced~~ seen to be prejudiced was Jesus - and Aslan is never seen to be prejudiced either, so Atter's view is seen to fall flat. This shows to us, however, that even though Narnia can lose its appeal for many people, it still provides an understanding of the nature of the holy through the different opinions and viewpoints of what the 'religion of Jesus' actually is and how it is portrayed, allowing people to make their own decisions on how evil is solved, just as Augustine and Irenaeus did with their theodicies, which differ, thus helping us further understand that we must make our own, individual, opinion of the nature of the holy.

Finally, some people, like Paul Friskney, who wrote an essay called "Sharing the Narnia Experience," believe Narnia contains no religious insights. Friskney said that "Lewis maintained" that the Narnia books were not religious, "referring to them as a 'supposition'." This is a bold statement from Friskney as he shows no evidence that Narnia has no

allegorical content and then claims the author himself also didn't believe in the religious content of the books. Surprisingly, Lewis appears to back up Friskney's quote, saying, "At first there was nothing religious about them," which suggests that the Narnia novels are purely fantasy, however Lewis added, "That bit (the insights into religion) pushed itself in of its own accord." This helps to reject Friskney's statement and show evidence of religion in Narnia, however it suggests the inclusion was an accident. C.S. Lewis had a very rocky relationship with God, ~~acting like a~~ as he became an atheist following his mother's death and only really explored faith when he became good friends with J.R.R. Tolkien, the author of "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy, however Lewis was a practising Christian by the time he wrote The Chronicles of Narnia, and this therefore provides a solid reason for the inclusion of Christian material in his work. This helps us to see that we can understand the nature of the holy in different ways dependent on the stage of our life, the beliefs we hold etc, and so Narnia could become more or less attractive through time as our views on what the deeper meanings of sections of the novel actually are.

Overall, the Chronicles of Narnia show to us that

even though people can find the novels unappealing, or sections of the novel, like how Gaius dislikes Susan's exclusion from paradise, the novels do help us to further our understanding of the nature of the holy, and characters like Aslan help us see an alternative view on ~~how~~ the holy's characteristics - just how poems ~~and stories~~ like Mary Steptenson's "Footsteps in the Sand" can help us to realise that God is always with us, even through the bad times, just how Aslan is always with the Narnians, even though they only see him when they genuinely need him. This means that we can experience the holy in different ways, and feel the holy's compassion, love, or power, in ways we want to experience, as each person has their own take on how the holy acts which is reliant on how the holy appears to us through prose in a novel, which has been cleverly designed so the religious insights are integrated discretely in order for the novels to be read as mere fantasy stories if desired.



ResultsPlus Examiner Comments

The candidate introduces the topic and its relationship to the question. No time is wasted in flagging up a range of academic views as to whether or not religious themes can be extrapolated from the literature.



ResultsPlus Examiner Tip

Wide reading on your topic is essential in order to know both sides of the argument. This essay demonstrates a very useful skill.

This essay show another topic that has been successfully explored by candidates. There are many examples of religious art and it helps to be clear as to why any piece is selected for study. The candidate understands each piece of art very well and presents some background of the artist and their historical context. Theological themes are explored very well and the conclusion reached by the candidate is substantiated in a detailed, competently written essay.

Plan

Diff people → diff faiths → diff things appeal
Expressions created for diff reasons

THEY ARE DIFFERENT. But ~~for~~ looking
at them together = important + in
elucidating understanding
of that social/historical context

① Appealing to element of us that
wants stability - Rosselli
+ structure

② Appealing to element that wants close/caring
community - Coarack

③ Religion as magical / mystical - Tintoretto.

3) With the wide range of religions that we have, creative expressions that come from religion also vary enormously in their style, message, and the way in which they appeal to the viewer. The people ~~with~~^{which} the pieces aim to connect with change with the passing of time and changes in ~~&~~ ~~the~~ social climate, and therefore creative expressions also adapt to appeal to their respective audiences. Through study of three depictions of the Last Supper, (one Catholic pre-Reformation piece, one Reformation piece, and one Counter-Reformation piece), I have learnt that even in ~~the~~ within the one religion of Christianity, the way in which creative expressions ~~&~~ ~~vary~~ appeal ~~to~~ to their viewers varies enormously. However, if we study them together, we can see that they have common messages and fundamental ideas about the nature of the holy ^{present} in the work itself.

Catholicism in the 15th century was stable, structured and hierarchical, and Cosimo Rosselli's depiction of the Last Supper (painted in 1482) ~~conveys~~ this appeals to this human desire for ~~a~~ stability. In the piece, the disciples are sat in one long row along the table, ~~and~~ with Jesus in the centre of the composition. This regimented arrangement mirrors the way that the Catholic Church was arranged at this time: between the ~~a~~ believer and God there was a hierarchy of priests and saints. So perhaps this piece appealed to those who wanted a less personal kind of religious faith. They would have seen this piece in the Sistine Chapel and understood their relationship with God by ~~viewing~~ observing the composition. I, however, think that this piece is piece, though conveys the structure of the church, does ~~not~~ not tell me about the nature of the holy itself.

~~By contrast, Titian's~~

~~depiction of the Last Supper,
painted in 1594 after the Reformation~~

The Protestant Reformation was the active break from the Catholic Church, in the sixteenth century. ~~and~~ The Protestant movement had contrasting ideals with the Catholic Church, which are evident in the creative expressions of this time. ~~whereas~~ ^{whilst} the Rosselli's depiction ^{is an} appeal ~~to~~ to a structured, stable faith, Lucas Cranach the Elder's depiction (painted in 1547) is an appeal ^{to} the opposite kind of faith: one of close community. The disciples in the scene are gathered closely around a small table, engaged in conversation with one another. This shows ^{leading Reformer} Martin Luther's idea of a "priesthood of all believers" that we are all equal in the eyes of God. Believers at the time would have seen this close community and family-like attitude in the piece.

However, creative expressions can tell us much more about faith than just historical detail about the nature of the opposing churches. Creative expressions can tell us about the nature of the holy itself, ~~but~~ in the eyes of these different Christians. The Eucharist, arguably the holiest ritual in Christianity, originated in the biblical event of the Last Supper, so we can learn about ^{the} different views on the Eucharist by studying depictions of the Last Supper.

In Catholicism, the sacrament of the Eucharist was a mystical and magical event. They believed in transubstantiation, the idea that when the bread and wine of the Eucharist are taken, they literally transform into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and we are thus partaking in his sacrifice on the cross. This importance of the Eucharist is clear in

Cosimo Rosselli's depiction of the event. The golden chalice of wine, the blood of Jesus, is in the centre of the large table, and is the only object on it. This draws the attention of the viewer to the wine, showing them the importance of the Eucharist as a sacrament. Three scenes from Jesus' life are depicted in the background of the piece: the prayer at Gethsemane, the arrest of Jesus, and the Crucifixion. Having the crucifixion in the background prompts the viewer to make the connection between the Eucharist and Jesus' sacrifice, perhaps showing through connection, the idea of transubstantiation. However, ^{I do not think that} ~~the~~ a viewer at the time would have necessarily ~~not~~ made this connection. Much of the religious art at the time simply showed the narrative of Bible stories, ~~was~~ and this piece could be another of these story-telling paintings. However, ~~was~~ ^{as} a modern viewer with knowledge

of the Catholic view on the nature of the Eucharist, I can make this connection. (1594)

Tintoretto's 'last supper', in my opinion, conveys both the importance of the Eucharist and its nature. Painted in 1594, in the light of the Protestant Reformation, the ^{Catholic} Church needed to "win back not only Catholic lands, but also hearts and minds" (Mastair Armstrong). The piece; unlike the Rosselli, does not focus on the food/wine on the table, but on Jesus Christ himself, placed centrally in the composition, light bursting from his halo. In a way, there is no need to show the objects of the Eucharist, all ^{that} the viewer needs to know is that they literally transform into the body and blood of Jesus (transubstantiation). The piece itself was hung in the San Giorgio Maggiore Church in Venice, above where the laity would have taken communion,

thereby (in the words of Michael Lacey) "involving the spectator to the point of participation". At the same time, as they were partaking in the Eucharist, the viewers would have seen this ^{illuminated} depiction of Christ, and therefore would have seen the link between the Eucharist and His sacrifice.

I think that this is clear to any viewer from any time. ~~that~~ Perhaps without knowledge of the piece's context, one might not see its connection with the Eucharist, however it works on a level of conveying the nature of ~~the holy body~~ faith.

Cranach's Reformation depiction of the Last Supper shows a different interpretation of the nature of the Eucharist to the Catholic pieces. Perhaps the key cause of the divide between Catholics and Protestants was about the nature of the Eucharist. Protestants believed in

consubstantiation as opposed to transubstantiation, the idea that the bread and wine of communion ~~simply~~ symbolised the body and blood of Jesus, ^{as opposed to} ~~not~~ literally transforming into ~~the~~ Christ. This meant that there was less emphasis on the Eucharist as a ritual, which is evident in Cranach's depiction of the Last Supper. The table which the disciples are seated around is cluttered with food, cups and a Paschal lamb. It looks as though it could be a meal among friends, as opposed to a depiction of the ritual of the Eucharist. ~~The classic~~ This lack of emphasis on the Eucharist itself ^{in the piece} shows the lack of ~~an~~ emphasis that Protestantism placed on the ritual. This would have been clear to a believer at the time. However, like Rosselli's piece, it tells us about the level of importance of the ritual, but not about its holy nature.

With knowledge of Protestant ideas about the Eucharist, I can see them in the piece, however to other viewers the piece could look like a naturalistic scene. It does not, therefore, necessarily fulfil the role of Protestant art, to "redefine sacraments" (Bonnie Noble).

I think that religious creative expressions can go even further than depicting the nature of holy ritual, however.

I think that creative expressions in religious life are capable of depicting the nature of God himself. We can see, through study of these creative expressions, differing views ^{on} ~~what~~ ~~God is~~ God's relationship with the world.

The most successful piece in achieving this, in my opinion, is Tintoretto's depiction of the Last Supper. It ~~is~~ ~~executes~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ what Felix Arnett describes as the achievement of religious

art: "The complete fusion of the religious content with the artistic." It shows not only the nature of the Eucharist, but the nature of Christ himself. The light which bursts from Christ's halo is, in the opinion of Tom Nichols, "a reference to the Johannine metaphor of God-as-light". The light of Jesus' halo illuminates the others around him, exactly enacting the phrase "I am the light of the world" (John 8.12). The piece also shows God's relationship with the world. The scene shows no disciples at the table with Jesus, but around them are "unperceiving servants" (Levey) and also angels floating at the top of the composition. Levey argues that this shows ~~the~~ ~~piece~~ "spiritual and earthly in their extremes... and yet in harmony". ~~Das~~ The Catholic ideal was to bring together the

earthly and the divine, and this is the achievement of the piece. God's light and illumination is magical (shown by the angels) and is possible to attain through Catholicism. This message of God's nature is clear to me, and ~~was~~ in my opinion would have been clear to any believer from any time.

Cranach's piece presents an alternative view of God, as a caring equal. Jesus is depicted at the edge of the scene, with the Beloved Disciple in his arms ("the one who leaned back against Jesus at the Last Supper" - John 21). This shows ~~that~~ God the Protestant idea of God as an equal, almost, who you can speak directly to. ~~to~~ Protestantism discarded the Catholic belief that you needed to pray to saints as intermediaries between Earth and God. ~~to~~ Protestants believed ~~that~~ you in 'personal

faith', that you can & speak to God himself through prayer. This is evident in the piece itself. Jesus is not haloed, and does not stand out from the other disciples, he is almost one of them. This effectively shows the Protestant attitude towards God, however the mystical ~~not~~ nature of God is perhaps lost slightly. Through depicting Jesus as an equal, he ~~looks~~ ^{seems} ~~like~~ ~~as~~ as if he were an ordinary man, which he was not. Behind the ~~table~~ disciples is a scene of a tranquil landscape, again seemingly naturalistic. However, ~~it~~ ^{it could} perhaps symbolise heaven. The tree in the background could symbolize the cross, and if the scene is heaven, it is perhaps a reminder that Jesus is in fact the son of God, and provides access to heaven through his sacrifice. However, for many viewers the

background could ~~be~~ seem like a natural landscape as ~~op~~ opposed to a statement about the nature of the holy.

In conclusion, it can be seen that religious creative expressions appeal to people on multiple levels. ~~They~~ They can show the ~~st~~ nature of religious community, of religious holy ritual, and the nature of the "object of man's devotion" (Felix Arndt): God himself. Though different religious creative expressions show these aspects of faith in different ways, and appeal to different tendencies in us, they all ~~show~~ ^{are} capable of giving some form of insight into the nature of the holy. Though perhaps not always explicit, through study of religious creative expressions alongside one another, we can ~~understand~~ ^{elucidate} our understanding of what it means to have faith in different religious contexts.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The candidate understands the theological significance of religious art. This understanding permeates the whole essay.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Tip

Engaging with religious ideas is important in this topic. Researching and expressing these ideas carefully will add substance to your study. Your study needs enough detail to warrant high achievement.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Do not ignore the question.
- A generic question is not best answered with a generic answer. The question is made up of two parts: The question itself and the generic phrase 'Examine and comment with reference to the topic you have investigated.' Answer the question.
- Use appropriate sources and, if possible, include recent scholarship.
- Well deployed material will show how well you understand your topic and how you are using your material to answer the question.
- Do not forget to comment on your material in relation to the question.
- Use your evidence to substantiate your argument.
- Comment on alternative views if you know them.
- Express your viewpoint clearly.
- Practice writing under timed conditions as part of your preparation.
- Do not spend too much time on your essay plan to the detriment of the essay itself.
- Write legibly.

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