

Examiners' Report
June 2015

GCE Religious Studies 6RS04 1E

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Introduction

Important information about mark schemes:

Detailed mark schemes are available on the Religious Studies web site. Examiners at standardisation are reminded that the mark scheme contains:

(i) General Marking Guidance: This consists of eight bullet points including, 'Candidates must be rewarded for what they have shown they can do rather than penalised for omissions.'

(ii) Generic mark scheme: This divides each level across both AO1 and AO2 into three sub-levels – low, mid and high. Each concludes with a statement about quality of written communication.

(iii) Indicative level descriptors: These are meant to be indicative rather than definitional of content at each level. The introduction to the indicative level descriptors states:

'Examiners should be reminded that any legitimate approach to the clarification and discussion of the passage must be rewarded and there is no need for candidates to cover every idea mentioned in the extract.'

(iv) In addition, on pages 120-121 of the Spec there is an abbreviated guide of the level descriptors.

Introduction to the paper: Examiners commented that much of this work was competent with evidence of depth of understanding. Candidates at this level of success made the best use of the synoptic opportunities from related anthologies in 6RS04 and relevant material in 6RS03, plus, where appropriate, the two AS units: 6RS01 and 6RS02.

Lower levels of work had a more basic understanding of the passage with limited scholarship to support the claims being made. There were instances of unsatisfactory time management relating to the respective demands of the two assessment objectives. A few spent too long on AO1 with too little attention to AO2 and vice versa.

Question 1

Good practice and areas for improvement

AO1 characteristics of good quality:

- comprehensive understanding of the passage and its context within Bilimoria
- well-structured and coherent answers
- competent analysis of complex issues and problems associated with 'opposing traditions' of anti-action and moral duties
- analysis of terms including Nivritti and Pravritti
- synoptic links with Gandhi and Dayanda Sarasvati.

AO1 work that requires improvement:

- answers were not systematically focused on the passage in an explicit manner
- a simple comprehension task and typically short.

AO2 characteristics of good quality:

- impressive presentations with confident evaluations of the complexities of the Bhagavad Gita
- effective selection and management of arguments and implications including a range of views about the synthesis of asceticism and duty
- an ability to discuss key ideas such as the claim that the Bhagavad Gita has not 'satisfied all and sundry'
- the significance of the 'unique concept of nishkama karma'.

AO2 work that requires improvement:

- basic points of view with limited use of argument and evidence
- isolated view-points without appropriate exemplary support.

The following scripts are examples of good practice.

PLAN (a)

① 'DECISIVE' ^{MOLE} in ethical pronouncements than Upanhadic ethics/Vedii mystical-based
JNANA- (KANDA) → U.P.s. → GITA = BHAKTI → translated → Gita
'EXTRAORDINARY IMPACT' → GANOHISCHA
encouraged ideas for loving God 'make all your action a sacrifice to me' K → AT.

② Middle of ASCETICS / DHARMA.
NIVRITTI → path favoured by Brahmins - in renunciation
↓
ASPIRANCE → Arjuna/Arjuna
↓
STRICT MONKS
ahimsa → would avoid
mechanical.
DETACHED
→ more direct
assured path
↓ to God
DO DUTY
All villages -
Gandhi came + made use
of all paths
to God
ATTACHED

③ that of ethical issues - 'INGENUITY'
addresses all possible issues
Facing (- 2:22 RENUNCIATION, lib or not?)
'have not established all + surely'
← → ALTHOUGH CONTEXTUALLY OUTDATED

④ Conflict of traditions = resolved through
NISHKAMA KARMA (3:25)
not entirely resolved - quoting desisten either
quoting part of doing duty
'DUTY FOR DUTY'S SAKE?' (KAT)
NOT FOR KARMA 'HARA

PANA (1)

① new decisive → YES AKHTE → form of
conscience rather than personal
check found in Spain

Cita → UKHATA + -scripture- UKHATA - access God.
SHAKTI → access God

but ALSO UKHATA

more for Gyges

UKHATA realized + referenced part of
teaching, but also influenced by
other 'scriptures' - New Testament + Qur'an.

② Cita: NIKRITI v. PRAKITI - MIDDLE

similar to Soubera's ← somewhat contradictory

higher + lower levels
of UKHATA → UKHATA.

③ AKHTE → Cita good but not completely
accepted → PERHAPS WIDE

CONTEXT → NEW JOINED AKHT

✓ for UKHATA.

UKHATA → UKHATA

④ Conflict of badities, UKHATA → NO

Nihama UKHATA encourages non-individual

- action, although perhaps UKHATA for those
of lower castes - NOT ABSOLUTE.

a) With Sivananda's 'Indian Ethic', the article addresses the essence of 'ethic' in India - along with comparison of the several 'stages' of ethic throughout time (Cardhuin, Jainist and Brahmanic). Furthermore, Sivananda suggests that perhaps 'ethic' is merely a Western creation; this passage focuses on the Gita and its content is addressing the rather originalistic sense that is 'Indian Ethic'.

Like Sivananda notes that this particular text 'appears to be more decisive' in its approach to Indian Ethic - 'prescribing' (rather 'describing', as Flood alludes) a system of ethic for a Hindu to follow. This is in contrast largely to the 'Upanishadic ethic', (to which Sivananda also refers) the Upanishads being rather 'mythical' based on certain ecstatic-experienced mystical experiences rather than a code from which a legalistic system may be deduced. Where the Upanishads promote 'jñāna' (knowledge), the Gita promotes 'bhakti' (worship), something relatively similar to the various Vedānta schools of thought - where Śaṅkara's 'Advaita Vedānta' promotes the development of knowledge, and both Madhva and Ramanuja's (Dvaita and Viśiṣṭhānta Vedānta) promote worship as a way

of obtaining moksha. The relatively 'legalistic' approach of the Citta exerts itself in a conversation between Lord Krishna, and the Kshatriya, Arjuna. What Bilimoria describes as 'vigilance' (in a series of questions and answers) presents ethical 'ramifications' which the 'ordinary' Hindu may follow in order to obtain 'good karma' (or not, as Bilimoria later discusses). Its 'decision' nature has therefore enabled an established ethical system to arise, something unfound ~~explicit~~ ^{explicit} in the earlier Upanishads or Vedas, which is, as Bilimoria claims, of 'extraordinary impact' in the modern Hindu society. However, the Citta itself may be argued as being ^{indeed} ~~not~~ of vital importance to the modern Hindu tradition, but it is perhaps the work of Gandhi, and his promotion of this text, that has had such an 'extraordinary impact'.

The Bhagavad Gita remained throughout his life Gandhi's 'code of ethics' from which to take his message of satyagraha. Conveying to tribes such as Kayastha who maintained the ancient Veda as the 'ayana' (ultimate truth), a tribe who promoted jñāna as a way to God, Gandhi took the Gita as his absolute truth, in reference to other sacred scriptures or 'revelations' such as

the Christian New Testament and Islam Qur'an. Gandhi, with his ^{message from the} ~~hita~~ the promoted ~~shahi~~ - a form of worship accessible to all members of society (something esteemed by his people - the 'children of God' - 'Harigans', or as they prefer to be called - 'Balits'). Therefore it was perhaps Gandhi's interpretation and thus diffusion of the message of the ~~hita~~ (in the form of 'ethnis') that enabled the ~~hita~~ to have been of such extraordinary impact on the 'Modern-Indian-Hindu mind' rather than the ~~hita~~ itself.

Secondly, the ~~hita~~ being located itself between the (typically Jain) 'abstinent' and the 'performative' in a way was united by, as Sihnana claims the notion of 'ubhanna hanna' (3:25). The 'abstinent', as Sihnana discusses in his 'Jainist ethnis' section of this article, includes abstaining from the empirical world - something possibly likened to that of 'right-brodded-tantia', wherein one simply avoids the empirical, remaining completely detached (something many Jain particularly believe will allow their soul to be free in attaining ~~araha~~, or 'liberation'). Contrastingly, the 'performative' 'Praviti' is perhaps more popular

among 'ordinary' Hindus living in villages who believe the life of an ascetic is not a guaranteed path to God. Thus arises the notion of 'dharma', loosely translated to mean 'duty'. 'Dharma' is not 'duty', as Srimad Bhagavad Gita, is effectively active involvement in the community there are few 'varnas', or 'castes' which may dictate one's duty - brahmi (religious duty - not likely to pursue jñāna to attain moksha), kshatriya (warrior), vaishya (business) and shudra (laborer). The Gita states (in the words of Krishna) 'do your duty, make all your actions a sacrifice to me' - suggesting that despite the nature of the duty, one may be proud to do it as it is a sacrifice to God. However, as Srimad Bhagavad Gita suggests, there has arisen further conflict between those following a path of detached ascetic abstinence, and those believing attached dharma (karma) social involvement will bring them closer to God. While the Gita aims to settle such dispute with 'nishkama-karma', whereby the actual enjoyment from an action comes attachment not the action itself, the active 'karmic' dharma path appears to be the most popular, as despite restraints of caste (with Dalits performing the most 'polluted' of

duties) ~~the~~ there needs to exist a series of ethical guidelines to follow in order to be wished in society - as Hitte's absence, one must be wished in actual society, not for 'karma phala' (the fruits of action) but because it is what one must do within the empirical world - something one may compare with Kant's 'duty for duty's sake'.

b) I do agree with the interpretation that the Aita has had an 'extraordinary impact' on the 'Modern Indian-Hindu mind', yet as mentioned, I believe it to be largely as a result of Gandhi's admiration of the book rather than the book itself. Having been translated into English towards the end of the nineteenth century, Gandhi, having lived in Britain for several years, wished to read this translated version of the Aita. Despite being a Gujarati Hindu, Gandhi had not been able to read this book as it was only in Sanskrit - the ancient language of India - therefore this surely acts as evidence of the reverence of the Aita at the time - relatively respected. Being in England allowed Gandhi access to this sacred text, from which he could derive his

message of 'grace' and 'Sabyagnalio' (translated by Flood as to mean 'holding fast onto the truth') and diffuses such to the people of India. With Gandhi's such use, the word could now be used with the 'supremacy' debate in a country once accused of being 'backward' and 'idolatrous' by bitter colonialists of the East India Company and Christian missionaries. Since such a challenge to Hinduism, and the previous challenge by Islam and Buddhism, India and Hinduism had now found its word from which to join the 'my word is bigger than your word' debate. The interpretation of Gandhi of the Rites is the one most diverse - a message of truth, and hence by God's grace Dayananda's resistance to such words as being 'non-Hindu' and preaching Vedic supremacy has, in the modern day, been all but ignored, with Gandhi's message of truth coming with God as a multi-like literature (chapter 15) being much preferred.

Furthermore, the 'deep conflict of tradition is resolved' is rather 'sweeping', as the 'nikhania-hana' concept is not favoured by all, in which the promotion of 'desireless action' raises the question 'why?'. Doing one's duty for the sake of one's duty (similar to the

Thinking of Kant, although considered by
Bilmeia as being closer linked to that of
Hegel's 'Sittlichkeit') appears to be rather
unnecessary, as observed by Suresh in his 'ritual
dimension' of religion, that ritual may indeed
become meaningless should the act itself replace
the values of the act - becoming an obligation
rather than an act of meaning.

The implications of the substantial
diffusion of the Shogunad Ciba throughout
~~the country~~ India are that an ethical
system of 'dharma' (or suadhona - self-
dharma, similar to that of a Western 'calling'
to a certain profession, in the Church sense,
or as a doctor) may be combined with asceticism,
however an attached approach remains more
regular among 'enduring Hindus'.

The content of the Ciba also
remains largely united, as Agria asks whether
of Krishna or irrespective of the 'caste system'
which (although Hinduism believes this system
to be ~~old~~ in decline) can be highly limiting
to those who have higher aspirations, something
Taylor observes as being a religious trait of 'self-
negating humility', where one's duty may
limit the path of one's life. In so doing

KF

- social + moral duties
 - ↳ Caste
- asceticism + Duty
 - ↳ Dharma
- Disinterested action
 - ↳ BVG

LOA

FOR

- ~~widely read~~
- ~~available to W~~
- ~~Bhakti = easier~~
- ~~path~~
- Kamayana + Great battle

Against

- Vedas = Shruhi
- Caste from V.

a) Bilimoria is a renowned philosopher who in this passage looks at ethic within Indian categorising it into ethics revealed from The Upanishads, The Bhagavad Gita, Gandhian ethic just to name a few. However due to Hinduism being "A many headed animal" Ling, it is apparent to us that there are a number of codes or ethics to follow within Hinduism. Many suggest that Hinduism is not as clear cut as other religions such as Christianity or Judaism. Key ideas represented in this passage are Caste, Dharma and disinterested action.

The first key idea in this passage is "The doing of social and moral duties". In relation to Hinduism ~~it~~ there are clear links here to caste. The

caste was believed to have first originated from the Vedic period where a power struggle eventually led to a four fold system of the priests, the warriors, the ordinary tribesman and the pre-Aryans. Later it was given divine sanction in the hymns of the primal man which is from the Vedas. The Vedas is Shruhi or divinely revealed by God as so its authority is respected by orthodox Hindu's such as Dayananda Sarasvati. Today the caste can be seen from this there were four categories in the Varna system. The Brahmins who were the priests, the Kshatriyas who were the warrior, the Vaishnavas who are the ordinary people who job was trade and agriculture and finally the Sudras who served the other three castes. However, the development has led to a fifth caste in society called the Dalits or untouchables. Both White Dayananda and Gandhi respected the authority of the caste system because it was Shruhi they rejected the unethical parts or the idea of untouchability. Dayananda, being a Hinduva, wanted to see it return to the Vedic value of being done

by their ruler from being born into caste. Where as Gandhi fought for the rights of Dalits being a universalist but faced strong opposition by Dr. Ambedkar. Ramakrishna however, thought that the unethical side of untouchability will disappear overtime when "people realise the divine in each other it becomes impossible to treat others badly" Smith, and true religion will help dissolve create a better social welfare. The caste in modern Hinduism, especially urbanised area is less evident ~~to~~ but Hindus will still only ~~stay~~ marry within caste division.

In relation to a wider context "Social and moral duties" can be seen in Islam where a strict sharia Law is in place. Also evident in generally societies by laws set up by governments to uphold society.

Another key idea in this argument is "Asceticism and Duty." Dharma "is most simply translated to duty" Jamison, and is most influential in the Gita as in the Great Battle where Krishna encourage Arjuna to complete his duty as a warrior. There are considered

to be three types of Dharma: Sanatana Dharma, Varnashramadharma and Smidharma.

Sanatana Dharma is known as the "eternal law underpinning the universe" Smith. It is the selfless act of helping those who ask for it. Sanatana Dharma includes concepts such as Ahimsa (~~the~~ no harm to any living thing) and Satya or otherwise known as truth. Ahimsa is originally a Jain concept and Satya is Islamic.

Gandhi was clearly influenced by this form of Dharma as he used both concepts in his political campaign for reform.

Dayananda also wanted a return to Sanatana Dharma as it was Shrutis having come from the Vedas. Varnashramadharma is both duty in relation to caste and the Ashramas. Each caste had their own duty, for example the Brahmins were the priests who performed sacrifice. By doing one's caste duty you would accumulate good karma which will lead you closer to liberation/Moksha or a better rebirth up the caste system. The Ashramas are the four stages of life. The first is Brahmacharya or "celibate

Student "Smith" where a boy ventures into the forest with his guru to be taught Hindu texts. The second is to become a householder where your main aim is Artha and the third is when a man retires to the forest with his ~~his~~ wife to begin an ascetic life and concentrate on reaching God. The fourth stage is that of a San yasin or otherwise referred to as "complete renunciation" Jnana. This is one liberation/Moksha has been reached and he now lives to teach others. Many men aspire to progress through the four stages of life. However, complete renunciation may be seen as a goal for their next life due to their casting. Finally, Shridharma is the female's Dharma, it is to carry out general tasks with the household such as Pujā, which is worship three times a day. It involves dressing and washing the Murtis, giving offerings to God and prayer. A bell is generally rung before Pujā begins to invoke the Gods and Goddesses in the invisible world. Pujā is a form of Bhakti which is "love and devotion to God." Jnana

Iskcon is a path to liberation.

Within a wider context duties can be seen in Christianity where the ten commandments must be followed or in the five pillars of Islam where charity or pilgrim can be seen as a duty.

The final key idea that has been interpreted from the passage is the term of "Disinterested action."

Within Hinduism this is shown in the Bhagavad Gita through the Wise man. The wise man performs his duty without ~~&~~ reaping the benefits and is not concerned by the gains he will make but instead doing it ~~is~~ for God only.

Where as the Dull man is always concerned with the fruits of his actions and therefore gets trapped in the cycle of Samsara. Which simply is the cycle of birth, death and rebirth by reincarnation. The Atman becomes trap in Samsara as it is too involved in Maya (illusions) of the world. In the Gita reincarnation is described as putting on "New clothes." When

the physical body dies the Atman is ~~not~~ given another body unless Moksha is reached. The Upanishads share similar teachings. This is similar to Buddhism thought on life after death and appeals to many as there is no judgement day like in ~~the~~ Islam or Christian but instead a chance to another life.

"Disinterested action" can also be shown through asceticism. Asceticism mainly arose from the Upanishads as a path to liberation through Jnana. Jnana is the knowledge that your Brahman is Atman but you must experience this in order to achieve Moksha. This influence Shaktara and Advaita Vedanta thought which is described as "Pure Monism".

Peoples Atmans ~~gets~~ get caught up in Maya and their salvation lies in realising their difference from it. Therefore ~~the~~ people become ascetic to unattach themselves from emotions and material possessions (Maya) in order to experience Jnana. Extreme ascetic will hold their hand up for year and most retire to the forest to live a simple life, away

from distractions.

Ascetics can be seen in Buddhist monks where their main aim is to connect with God and so spent all their time focussed on that.

B) An idea expressed in this passage is that "The Bhagavad Gita... appears to be more decisive in its ethical pronouncements and perhaps for that reason has had an extraordinary impact on the modern Hindu-Indian mind." I ~~was~~ agree with this statement as the Bhagavad Gita is seen as the most popular text within Hinduism. However, others would disagree as it is important to accept the authorities of other books being sacred and all teaching ethics.

One reason as to why I agree with this statement is because the Bhagavad Gita is open to all and offers an easier path to liberation. Unlike the Upanishads the Gita is not esoteric and is also available to women. An implication of this is that it is more widely read in modern Hinduism as it isn't secluded and appeals to women as well.

As well as this, the Bija offers an easier path to achieving Moksha. While, in contrast, the path of Jnana from the Upanishads is difficult. Bhakti is simply love to God which does not involve becoming an ascetic. The implications of this is that modern Hindus are still able to work within society whilst accumulating good karma and striving for liberation. This is more accessible to a modern-Hindu Indian mind as it is difficult to become an ascetic.

Evidence of this in a wider context can be seen through Christian missionaries. Whilst helping others and completing a job they are still serving God.

Another reason I agree with this statement ~~the~~ because the ethics which are implied from the Ramayana and The Great Battle provide a moral stand for modern Hindu Indian-Mind. The Ramayana portrays Rama as the ideal husband, father and king to which Hindus are able to emulate and aspire to. Dharma

as enforced by the great battle is important to a modern Hindu-Indian mind as it provides a ~~the~~ focus and standard to be followed. Gandhi was considered to be a "living Sermon" Fisher and represented "Ideal Character" which clearly implies that it is important to modern Hindus.

A reason to disagree with this statement made is because the Bhagavad Gita is not ~~or~~ the only doctrine within Hinduism. Due to this other sacred texts to some may appear to have more of an impact on modern Hinduism. For example the Vedas will have a huge impact on any orthodox Hindu such as Dayananda. Due to the Shukh nature Dayananda believes that the Vedas is true and all other ~~the~~ books were produced by the self interest of man. He took concepts from the Vedas and used them in his political work to gain Swaraj as he wished to create an Indian national identity. ~~That~~ ~~impulse~~ that He also claimed that

all knowledge is found in the Vedas whether it's philosophical, spiritual or mathematic. This implies that the Gita is not the only that has had an impact on modern Hindu or that expresses ethical values.

Another reason ~~for~~ that disagrees with this statement is because Caste ~~is~~ still has an extraordinary impact on modern Hindu-Indian mind however ~~that~~ first originated from the Vedas in the hymn of the ritual man and is only referred to in the Gita in relation to other Dharma. Modern Hindus will still only marry within Caste and Indian can still be secularised into caste groupings which uphold society.

In conclusion, The Bhagavad Gita does present a number of ethical values to follow but it is not the only text in Hinduism to do so. However, I do agree with this statement because the Bhagavad Gita ~~it~~ does have an extraordinary impact on modern Hindu-Indian

mind as it is available to both women and men whilst also offering an easier path to liberation.



ResultsPlus

Examiner Comments

The candidate examined the passage in detail and expanded on a range of key issues. The candidate investigated themes such as caste, asceticism and ahimsa. There was effective use of significant Hindu thinkers and scriptures. Particular attention was given to the notion of 'disinterested action' as highlighted in the passage.

There was a range of views about the Bhavagad Gita in AO2, together with reasons for these views. This part was characterised by arguments for and against various interpretations about the Bhagavad Gita.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are encouraged to develop important study skills. This unit opens up the possibility of developing a range of study skills applicable to a number of career and HE routes. There are many excellent sources available. One noteworthy edition is:

- The Arts Good Study Guide 2nd Edition 2008 Open University Worldwide
- Chambers, Ellie and Northedge, Andrew.

This includes a scrutiny of:

- range of reading and note making techniques
- the craft and process of writing good essays
- significance of analysis and evaluation
- preparing for examinations.

Grade Boundaries

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