



education

Department:
Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE

GRADE 12

RELIGION STUDIES P2

MEMORANDUM

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2009

MARKS: 150

This memorandum consists of 9 pages.

QUESTION 1**1.1 Identity**

- Means individuality
- Personality
- Characteristics that define a religion
- An exclusive self-image
- A religion sets boundaries that separate one religion from all others
- When we are talking about identity in religion we are saying that that particular religion has a certain individuality
- This individuality distinguishes it from other religions
- Identity also carries the meaning of dignity and value
- It has unique features
- No two religions are ever absolutely the same, down to every detail
- Religious identity involves the self-declaration of those who believe in and follow a particular religion
- Doctrines, rituals and customs are part of identity
- Religious identities sometimes mix (syncretism)

(20)**1.2 Uniqueness**

- Means there is only one of its kind
- Having no like, equal or parallel
- This points to the peculiarity of the religion
- To say that a religion is unique is not the same as saying that it is 'true'
- To say that a religion is unique does not mean that it is 'better' than other religions
- To speak of the uniqueness of the features in religion can also be a statement about relationships between religions
- Uniqueness implies more than just differences
- It may refer to the single most important feature which sets one religion apart from another
- Each religion, no matter how closely linked to others, has unique features
- To speak of uniqueness in religion can be an expression of how the adherents themselves see their own religion

(20)**1.3. Unity**

- A feeling of being at one with something
- Harmony/agreement amongst people
- Religions co-operate actively to achieve certain goals in society
- Different religions have unity/agreement of certain core beliefs, e.g. Judaism and Islam share a common understanding of God
- A religious person finds unity with God/Supreme Being through prayer
- Through inter-religious movements, religions discover the similarities that create this unity
- Unity also refers to the institutional unification of two previously separate institutions

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QUESTION 2

- 2.1 For the purposes of this memorandum, only ONE religion (Islam) is dealt with as an example.

The nature of divinity

- Muslims believe in One God, called Allah
- Allah is an Arabic word which means 'the object of worship'
- Allah is the Creator (Khaliq) and Originator
- The belief in Allah is the foundation of Islam
- Human beings must affirm and acknowledge the existence of Allah
- Human beings must live according to the divine will of Allah
- This will, Muslims believe, is expressed in the teachings contained in the Kutub
- Allah is beyond physical description
- Allah has 99 different titles, reflecting His divine attributes
- Allah is All-Seeing, All-Hearing, All-Powerful and All-Knowing

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- 2.2 The nature of the world

- According to the Qu'ran, Allah created the universe
- He created it in phases or stages
- Allah also provides the energy everything in the universe needs for survival and growth
- According to the Muslims, nothing exists by sheer accident
- The universe is not eternal but has a fixed timespan
- Allah is eternal
- Life is not purposeless, but planned and purposeful
- New forms of life are continuously being created
- Islam encourages nature conservation and environmental protection

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- 2.3 The place of humanity in the world

- All of humanity, as descendants of Adam, are a single nation or family
- The unity of humankind flows from the belief in the oneness of God
- Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, is the God of all humanity
- Human beings are the highest form of creation
- They are entitled to respect and honour above all other creatures
- Human beings were created from clay
- They are created free of sin
- They have an inborn sense of morality

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2.4 The origin of evil

- The origin of evil is explained in the Qur'an and Hadith
- It is also explained by Muslim scholars
- Human beings have the intellectual capacity to distinguish between good and evil
- We can be tempted to do evil by our base desires or by the devil
- Evil acts can be pardoned by sincere repentance
- Evil is linked to Satan who was cursed by God because of his arrogance
- Satan vowed to mislead humankind and lead them to hell

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2.5 Life after death

- Human existence continues beyond the grave
- Those who die enter a phase called *barzakh*
- This phase lasts until the day of resurrection
- On this day all people will be called by Allah to account for their lives on earth
- On the day of judgement those who believed in God and lived virtuous lives will be admitted to paradise
- Evil-doers will be sent to hell for cleansing or punishment
- These beings will be returned to Paradise after punishment, if they believe in the existence of God

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QUESTION 3**3.1 Identification and analysis of the problem**

For the purposes of this memorandum, only ONE social problem (HIV and Aids) is dealt with as an example.

- HIV and Aids affect mainly the youth in our communities
- Present efforts to contain it are only partly successful
- Some statistics to support this: e.g. one in ten females aged 18 – 25 is HIV positive
- HIV and Aids is a viral infection that spreads mainly by sexual intercourse and mother to child transmission
- It destroys the immune system
- As there is no cure, prevention is the best strategy
- The Aids pandemic weakens family structure
- It destroys self-confidence and trust
- It creates large numbers of HIV and Aids orphans
- Many of them are HIV positive and also vulnerable to abuse
- Aids affects the economically active, and depletes the work force
- The health care sector is overburdened with the long-term care of HIV and Aids patients
- Anti-retrovirals (ARVs) are not readily available
- Anti-retrovirals (ARVs) are also abused in some cases
- HIV and Aids victims and family are often stigmatised, leading to further difficulty

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3.2 Religious beliefs and approaches

- The Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) are unanimous in condemning extra-marital sex.
- They support the institution of marriage.
- Marriage is intended to foster faithfulness.
- It also builds a strong social and moral fibre.
- The Biblical teaching of 'thou shall not commit adultery' is central to the religious response to HIV and Aids.
- This approach advocates abstinence and faithfulness.
- The Catholic Church does not allow the use of condoms but emphasises abstinence.
- All religions advocate support for victims of HIV and AIDS.
- The Bible commands 'love thy neighbour' (Judaism and Christianity)
- Islam, Judaism and Christianity encourage visiting and aiding the sick
- In African Traditional Religion, sexual intercourse before marriage is discouraged
- In some African communities virginity testing is done to encourage abstinence among the girls
- Circumcision is also advocated in some African communities, this practice has been scientifically proven to reduce the chances of HIV transmission

- Hinduism advocates “Bramachariya” (student life that emphasises celibacy).
- The Hindu institution of marriage advocates one partner, and being faithful.
- Condoms should be used advisedly, and not for promiscuity. (20)

3.3 Practical steps to address the social problem

- The practical steps would be derived from the teachings of the relevant faiths
- All faith-based organisations acknowledge that their communities are not immune to the HIV and Aids pandemic
- To date much has already been done to address the challenge
- The Abrahamic faiths all reinforce conservative teachings, values and morals
- They emphasise marriage as a religious act
- They improve the understanding of HIV and Aids by disseminating scientific information about the disease
- They lay down social guidelines, based on their scriptures, to act as preventative measures
- They provide care to those infected and affected by HIV and Aids
- They provide medical support including Anti-retrovirals
- They conduct home visits to de-stigmatise the disease
- Basic support (food, shelter and clothing) are provided
- In future faith-based organisations in South Africa should co-ordinate the efforts more closely
- FBOs should also improve their co-operation with government
- Uganda and Tanzania are two examples of successful co-operation (20)

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QUESTION 4

- 4.1
- 'Teaching' comes from the verb 'to teach' i.e. to impart knowledge
 - In the context of religion, it refers to imparting knowledge, values, attitudes and norms
 - The significance of religious teaching varies among religions
 - Formal teaching is highly significant in some religions and less so in others
 - Teachings communicate the deeper meanings of the world and how life operates
 - Teachings explain why humans are in the world
 - Teachings also cover issues of divinity, the nature and origin of evil, the good life and creation
 - They also address human concerns
 - These concerns include death and life after death
 - In some religions formal teachings do not feature strongly

- Teachings are very important in religions that developed since one thousand years or so BCE
- The same applies to religions in the first thousand years CE
- Examples of such religions include Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Baha'i Faith
- In some religions e.g. Reformed Christianity groups, formalised and systematic teachings are extremely important
- In Charismatic groups, there is less emphasis on teachings
- In African Traditional Religion, strongly structured teachings do not play a central role
- Buddhism generally lays less emphasis on teachings than most Christian groups
- In hunter-gatherer societies, formal teachings do not exist
- Teaching primarily has an educational function
- Teachings also serve to protect the integrity (identity) of the religious group

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4.2. Atheism (This is one example of a world view. The candidates may choose other secular world views)

- Atheists do not believe in the existence of divine beings or supreme power
- Atheism is seen as a secular world view because it is the opposite of theism (belief in divine)
- There are different forms of atheism
- Soft (or neutral) atheists doubt the existence of God, gods and goddesses
- They do not actively reject or aim to prove that divine beings do not exist
- Strong (or positive) atheists believe that there is evidence to support their rejection of divinity
- They strongly reject the idea of a divine being
- In some cases soft or neutral atheists reject both theism and strong atheism because they feel that these beliefs depend on proof and faith to support their claims
- Many atheists argue that it is not logical to believe in divine power
- They argue that there is no evidence that such a power exists
- Some atheists turn to science to explain the nature of the universe
- Others reject religion because of so-called intra- and inter-religious conflicts e.g. Catholic-Protestant, Sunni-Shia, Hindu-Sikh

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QUESTION 5**5.1 Oral tradition**

- Divine inspiration is first received orally
- Divine inspiration is spread orally from person to person
- The original message is passed on from one generation to the next by word of mouth
- Before the invention of writing, traditions were carried by word of mouth.
- Oral traditions do change and adapt over time
- In African traditional religion, oral tradition has transmitted divine inspiration over many centuries
- In Islam, oral traditions regarding the teachings and practices of Prophet Muhammad were later recorded in the books of Hadith
- Such an oral tradition may be transmitted faithfully for hundreds and even thousands of years

Sacred books

- Writing is a fairly recent invention
- Writing entered the religious scene roughly four (4) thousand years ago.
- Sacred writing has played a key role in many religions
- Some examples are the Qur'an, the Bible and the Vedas
- Oral tradition can run parallel to written texts
- In many cases sacred books do not exist as individual writings, but as parts of larger collections (canons)
- There are primary and secondary sacred writings
- Secondary writings are commentaries on primary writings
- In Christianity for instance the Hebrew scriptures were accepted, but interpreted from the Christian perspective
- Christianity then compiled its own collection of texts, accepted as divine revelation (New Testament)
- Within decades of Jesus' death a number of gospels were written down and circulated

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5.2 For the purposes of this memorandum, only ONE religion (Christianity) is dealt with as an example.

- The Christian Bible consists of the Old and New Testaments
- Both were declared authoritative texts by various faith communities through the ages
- Christians hold different beliefs while they agree upon the central position of Jesus Christ
- Today most Christians believe that the Bible was not literally inspired
- Christians largely agree that the authors of the Holy Scriptures were inspired by God
- The scriptures originated as a collection of writings about the spiritual experiences of God-fearing people
- We may refer to the Bible as a library of books rather than a single book

- Translation into different languages created challenges for interpretation - to translate is to interpret
- The translation into different languages created additional challenges for translation as the translation was also influenced by changing circumstances
- The Old Testament gained new meaning in the context of Christ's teachings
- The most well known approaches come from the Alexandrian and Antiochian schools of interpretation
- The Alexandrian school focused more on allegorical or figurative interpretation of scriptures
- In the Antiochian school, texts were mostly interpreted literally
- Christians accept that the Bible is not a scientific textbook - the Bible does not convey modern scientific truths
- Most Christians accept that the Bible is a historical document – however it aims to convey the truth about God
- For Christians the Bible is a book of faith i.e. its authority and content must be accepted on faith
- The Bible is accepted as the Word of God – it still provides answers to the problems humanity faces today
- The reader influences interpretation – no text can be read objectively
- To understand the Bible properly, the historical context has to be taken into consideration
- In reading and applying the Biblical truths, Christians do that in the Christian perspective
- Christians interpret the whole Bible in the spirit of the teachings and meaning of Jesus Christ's life and death
- Texts were created at a specific time and in a particular context. All sacred texts were originally created to suit the need of people at that time and therefore they cannot be interpreted literally by someone in the present
- Another important hermeneutical principle is that the sacred texts do not contain teachings that remain the same throughout time. The way in which texts are understood or interpreted will always change. In the same way as cultures and societies change over time so do interpretations of religious texts
- In hermeneutics sacred texts might not always contain facts that can be proven as "truth"; nevertheless, they are still seen as true for the persons or community reading them
- Hermeneutical principles are not just about the text, they are also about the reader. In hermeneutics, the role of the interpreter is to first place texts into their historical and cultural contexts. Secondly, the interpreter interprets them in a way that their message is understood and has meaning in the present time and place. So, through the act of interpretation, the interpreter adapts the meaning of the sacred text to suit the needs of a particular society and culture

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[50]**TOTAL: 150**