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HINDUISM

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MARK SCHEME

Maximum Mark: 100

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Generic Marking Principles

These general marking principles must be applied by all examiners when marking candidate answers. They should be applied alongside the specific content of the mark scheme or generic level descriptors for a question. Each question paper and mark scheme will also comply with these marking principles.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 1:

Marks must be awarded in line with:

- the specific content of the mark scheme or the generic level descriptors for the question
- the specific skills defined in the mark scheme or in the generic level descriptors for the question
- the standard of response required by a candidate as exemplified by the standardisation scripts.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 2:

Marks awarded are always **whole marks** (not half marks, or other fractions).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 3:

Marks must be awarded **positively**:

- marks are awarded for correct/valid answers, as defined in the mark scheme. However, credit is given for valid answers which go beyond the scope of the syllabus and mark scheme, referring to your Team Leader as appropriate
- marks are awarded when candidates clearly demonstrate what they know and can do
- marks are not deducted for errors
- marks are not deducted for omissions
- answers should only be judged on the quality of spelling, punctuation and grammar when these features are specifically assessed by the question as indicated by the mark scheme. The meaning, however, should be unambiguous.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 4:

Rules must be applied consistently, e.g. in situations where candidates have not followed instructions or in the application of generic level descriptors.

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 5:

Marks should be awarded using the full range of marks defined in the mark scheme for the question (however; the use of the full mark range may be limited according to the quality of the candidate responses seen).

GENERIC MARKING PRINCIPLE 6:

Marks awarded are based solely on the requirements as defined in the mark scheme. Marks should not be awarded with grade thresholds or grade descriptors in mind.

Question	Answer	Marks
1	<p>To what extent does the Nasadiya Sukta suggest that there is power beyond the gods?</p> <p>The Nasadiya Sukta comes from book 10 of the Rig Veda, which is probably later than books 2–9. It contains mystical and philosophical musings on matters such as creation, death and the nature of the Cosmos. The Sukta is one of a number of scriptures that deal directly with creation. However, there is no one, single creation narrative within Hinduism.</p> <p>The general theme of the Nasadiya Sukta is the ineffable mystery of creation, which is, ultimately, unknowable. The question posed by the Sukta is, ultimately left unanswered, ‘Perhaps it formed itself or perhaps it did not.’ What is clear from this text is that it was not the gods of the Vedas that are ultimately responsible for creation. The text says that ‘the gods came afterwards with the creation of the Universe.’ Whether this means that there is a power beyond the gods is, however, open to debate. It could be argued that the Cosmos is entirely self-generated, without the intervention of any external power. The text suggests that it may have formed itself and concludes that it is, in the end, unknowable.</p> <p>The text does, however, hint at One above and beyond the gods, referred to as ‘That One’ that breathes by its own impulse. Creation arises, according to the Nasadiya Sukta from the desire (<i>kama</i>) that arose in ‘That One’ that was the first impulse of Mind. This could be taken as a power that precedes and is greater than the Vedic deities. Although this is not certain.</p> <p>Candidates might refer to the Being mentioned in the final verse of the Sukta, ‘The One who looks down on it, in the highest heaven, only he knows, or perhaps he does not’. This hints that this ‘One who looks down’ might be the agent of creation. Some might compare this to the ‘Unknown God’ in Hymn 121, who is ultimately identified with Prajāpati. Candidates might argue that this is a divine figure above and beyond the gods.</p> <p>Candidates might also compare this with the account of creation given in the Purusha Sukta, where the identity of the sacrifice is never made clear. In this Sukta it is clear that it is the gods who are carrying out the sacrifice. However Indra and Agni, at least, are created by it, born from the mouth of Purusha. This leads once again to confusion and uncertainty. There is the sense in some places that the Purusha is both the victim and the receiver of the sacrifice. Candidates may equate him with the Prajapati of Hymn 121. The top three quarters of the sacrifice go to create the immortal in heaven. Therefore, it seems that while the gods are responsible for his sacrifice, they are also created by it, a paradox not uncommon in Vedic scripture. Ultimately, the Nasadiya reminds us, there can be no certainty. Perhaps there is a Highest One who knows, but equally, perhaps there is not.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
2	<p>‘In the Vedas, the gods are less important than correct ritual.’ Discuss.</p> <p>There are several sources that candidates will have studied as part of this syllabus that are relevant to this question. Candidates are free to draw on any of them.</p> <p>Candidates might suggest that the Brahmanas provide very clear and detailed instructions for the correct performance of ritual, particularly the Yajna. Furthermore, there are warnings within the Brahmanas that the rituals, prayers and chants must be performed perfectly. This involves performing with the correct intonation, pronunciation and associated hand movements and mudras in order to be effective. If they are done correctly, they are almost infallible and bring about the long life and prosperity of the sacrificer almost automatically. If even the slightest mistake is made, they can be totally useless. Incorrect performance of a ritual can even produce unwanted effects. Ritual action is not necessarily connected with moral or ethical action. Even demons can carry out ritual correctly and receive boons for it. Despite this, performing ritual can be seen as a fulfilment of dharma.</p> <p>Against this, candidates might point out that the Yajna is held in honour of the gods, and that it would be pointless without them. In particular, the central aspect of the Yajna, the fire, is itself understood to be the god Agni. The ritual’s purpose is to carry the offerings from the world of men to the world of the gods. The gods also attend the ritual on a specially constructed platform of grass. In its simplest form, then, the Yajna is to be understood as a hospitable gathering between humans and gods. The human who commissioned the Yajna acts as host. As such it is the gods who are at the centre of the ritual.</p> <p>Candidates might also draw on their study of the Purusha Sukta, pointing out that in this passage the act of creation arises out of a Yajna conducted by the gods. This can be understood in two ways. The ritual can show that the gods are at the heart of the process. Contrastingly, even the gods must conduct the ritual (perhaps to themselves) according to a template that is above and beyond themselves and which must be followed precisely. The Yajna can also be seen as a mutual exchange between the gods who have power but cannot feed themselves and humans who have food but limited power. Humans make offerings out of dharma and so <i>ṛta</i> is maintained.</p> <p>Candidates might further suggest the school of thought arising within Hinduism towards the end of the Vedic period. This school of thought argued that the insistence on ritualism, and the absolutely perfect performance of each aspect of the Yajna was a narrative created and sustained by the Brahmins. This was done in order to justify the Brahmins’ elevated place in society. They might argue that it was always the intention behind the Yajna that was important but that the Brahmins intentionally</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
2	made it complicated. This would help to justify the material wealth that their technical knowledge gave them. This way of thinking also led to a more metaphysical/symbolic interpretation of the Yajna. This thinking saw the human heart and body as a microcosm of the universe, and as the real seat of sacrifice. Arguably this also led to less consideration being given to the gods of the Vedas. More consideration was given to the relationship between the atman and Brahman. This later became the overriding concern of the Upanishads. For some it is the physical participation in action itself that is useful, dissociating from any reward or belief associated with it. Religion can be interpreted as what someone does as much as what they believe.	

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<p>‘The story of Naciketas in the Katha Upanishad shows a better path to liberation than ritual. Discuss.</p> <p>In this version of the story, Naciketas argues with his father over the quality of cattle that his father is presenting to the Brahmins as a sacrificial gift. He believes that giving gifts of such low quality will ultimately lead to the giver going to ‘unblessed’ worlds following his death. He believes that his father has acted dishonourably. As Naciketas is the ‘hero’ of the Upanishad the reader, presumably, is expected to agree with him. This might imply that in fact Vedic ritual is very important. To perform ritual in a careless or resentful way is a dishonourable act worthy of punishment. Furthermore, the sacrifice of the cattle is carried out in hopes of achieving heaven. This is not the same as the ‘liberation’ discussed in the Upanishad. However, it is a good metaphysical outcome that can be brought about by ritual carried out not only correctly, but also with correct intention.</p> <p>Naciketas asks his father, ‘To whom will you give me?’ His father replies, ‘unto Death!’ Naciketas therefore arrives as a guest in the house of Death where he is left with no welcome for three days. The Upanishad then comments (verse 7) that it is foolish to leave a Brahmin as a guest with no food. To do so robs the host of hopes, expectations, livestock and children. As recompense for his lack of hospitality Death grants Naciketas three wishes. Again, the implication here is that Brahmins and the wider Vedic system that they represent are worthy of respect and honour.</p> <p>The first wish of Naciketas is that his father should forgive him and no longer be angry. The second is to have the building of the fire altar that can lead a dead man to heaven explained to him in detail. Death happily does so. This is a complex ritual fully developed in the Brahmanas and Aranyakas. It allows a ritually expert person to construct an immortal and glorious body for himself in the world of the gods. It requires long life, significant resources and technical expertise. Death promises that Naciketas’ name will forever be associated with it. Again, the implication is that expertise in Vedic ritual is deeply important. Candidates might therefore suggest that the Upanishad in no way suggests that Vedic ritual is unimportant. It leads to wealth, long life and some sort of afterlife, although not one that is secure. However, they</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
3	<p>may suggest that the value of Vedic ritual is limited and that there is something to be gained beyond it. The fire sacrifice leads to heaven. However, the Upanishad suggests that there is a liberation that is above and beyond even this. This liberation can be gained only through knowledge of the Self. Having said this, ritual allows a person to fulfil the <i>purusharthas</i> of <i>artha</i> and <i>kama</i>, since it brings prosperity and the fulfilment of desire. In some schools of thought prosperity and fulfilment of desire help a Hindu to ultimately achieve moksha.</p> <p>For his final wish, Naciketas asks to have explained to him the mystery of death itself. Do the dead exist, or do they not? Death protests that this is hard to understand and urges Naciketas to choose instead long life, health, wealth, social status and many other things traditionally gained through correct ritual. Naciketas however persists. He points out that all of those things are temporary and fleeting and therefore ultimately worthless. Death praises him for choosing what is good (<i>shreyas</i>) in preference to what is gratifying (<i>preyas</i>). It could be argued that the path of the <i>shreyas</i> in itself includes Vedic ritual. Yama (Death) claims that the ignorant give themselves to him again and again. Yama claims that the wise man is not born and does not die; has not come from anywhere and does not become anyone, being unborn, eternal, primeval and everlasting. This is true knowledge which leads to true liberation. Candidates might therefore argue that Vedic sacrifice has value, and can, indirectly, lead to liberation. However, candidates might argue that true knowledge of the nature of the self is worth far more.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<p>‘Both Sita and Draupadi fulfil the ethical ideals for women.’ Evaluate this claim.</p> <p>In order to access the higher levels candidates must address both Sita and Draupadi but not necessarily in equal proportions.</p> <p>Sita is the wife of Rama, an avatar of Vishnu. The Ramayana takes as one of its main themes the rescue of Sita from Lanka. Sita is abducted by the demon king Ravana and Rama is helped in his quest to rescue her by several different characters.</p> <p>Draupadi is the wife of the five Pandava brothers. The most well-known story about her is of her being miraculously saved from humiliation in the Kaurava court by appealing to Krishna.</p> <p>Sita is often cited as the perfect example of <i>stree dharma</i>, the <i>dharma</i> that particularly governs the lives of women. She is said to personify the ideal wife, mother and queen. Her actions are usually related to personal qualities rather than those of a queen. This contrasts to Rama who prioritises his <i>raja dharma</i> over that of his personal <i>dharma</i>. This in itself could be taken as an indication of the ethical ideals associated with women. Sita is loyal to Rama, following him into exile, and is obedient to him. Only once does she disobey the men in her family when she leaves the circle in</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
4	<p>order to fulfil her obligation to provide alms. There is a possible message here about how women should behave when confronted with conflicting dharmas. However, it is unclear what this message is. Sita remains faithful to Rama even when to do so places her in danger. She also bears the suffering of her later exile from Ayodhya bravely, raising her sons well despite being a 'single parent'. She does not demand that Rama chooses his dharma to her in preference to his dharma as king. There is, however, a limit to her obedience and to her willingness to bear false accusation and public humiliation. Having fulfilled her dharma as a mother by raising her twin sons as outstanding brahmacharya, she chooses to return to her mother, the earth rather than proving her fidelity for a second time as Rama demands. This act, which could be interpreted as one of defiance, has been raised as an example by groups in India campaigning for women's' rights. Others might interpret it as a failure, ultimately, to fulfil the ethical ideals of women.</p> <p>Draupadi, sometimes seen as a reincarnation of Sita Maya, is represented as a more forceful figure. She berates her husbands, and in particular Yudhistira, when he fails to protect her and her honour as his dharma as a husband demands. Unlike Sita, Draupadi could be said to embody the dharma of a queen, rather than of women in the domestic sphere. She is acting to protect and promote her kingdom and the reputation of her kinsmen. Like Sita, however, she remains faithful to her husbands in difficult circumstances. This can be seen when she is abducted in the forest. Candidates might suggest that as both figures are often seen as avatars of goddesses their behaviour cannot be taken as an example to women of how to fulfil their ethical ideals.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p>To what extent does Krishna provide a perfect example for Hindus today?</p> <p>While candidates are most likely to use material drawn from the sources specified in the syllabus, accurate material from other sources such as the Bhagavata Purana should be credited if it is given.</p> <p>Candidates are likely to draw from material in the Mahabharata/Bhagavad Gita.</p> <p>Candidates might suggest that as an avatar of Vishnu and in the Vaishnava tradition, the supreme God, Krishna is the embodiment of righteousness and dharma. As such he will always act in the best possible way and hence must be a good role model. His actions in the Mahabharata are always honourable and righteous. Candidates might use the examples of Krishna urging Arjuna to behave in accordance with his dharma in the Bhagavad Gita. They might also use the example of Krishna trying to work for the good of both the Pandavas and the Kauravas wherever he can.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
5	<p>However, candidates might point out that as Krishna is clearly presented as a divine figure in the Mahabharata. He performs miracles and answers prayers, such as when Draupadi prays to him when the Kauravas attempt to strip her when she has been 'won' in a dice game. He manifests as fully divine to Arjuna. Krishna gives Arjuna and Duryodhana the choice in the battle. Krishna says that they can either have himself as charioteer, oath bound not to take up arms himself, or his entire army on their side. Arjuna, given the first choice, wisely chooses Krishna. As a result, Arjuna gains not only the military victory, but also the benefit of Krishna's teaching. This teaching was later recorded as the Bhagavad Gita. Again, candidates might suggest that these are not actions that a human being could emulate. While his teachings are undoubtedly good for humans to live by, his life example is less so.</p> <p>Candidates may give examples of occasions on which Krishna's actions may seem to be questionable. One example might be in the advice and help he gives to Arjuna when he abducts Subhadra as his bride. Krishna's teachings here about women may be seen as morally suspect to a modern audience. However, candidates might suggest that they would not have been out of place when the Mahabharata was first written down.; This may raise questions as to whether the lives of avatars give teachings that are valid for all time. They could be for a particular time and place.</p> <p>Krishna also breaks his oath not to fight on two occasions during the battle. One such instance was when Arjuna is hesitant in engaging his grandfather in battle. It could be argued that this is a failing on Krishna's part. Alternatively, it is the only course of action open to him in order to protect Arjuna from error or even death. As such he is continuing to act in accordance with dharma. Others have given a metaphorical interpretation to the incident. This interpretation sees it as symbolic of the relationship between a guru and his disciple. The guru is prepared to sacrifice even his own personal dharma in order to fulfil the obligation he owes to his disciple. There are other occasions when Krishna appears to trick the Kauravas and particularly Duryodhana in ways that lead, ultimately, to the death of the latter. This could be seen as dishonest. Alternatively, given the divine nature of Krishna, his trickery could be seen as action in accordance with the preservation of dharma and the right governance of the universe. This could ultimately lead to the salvation of Duryodhana.</p> <p>Krishna's compassion and willingness to protect those who appeal to him for help might also be explained by candidates. Krishna gives an example both to Arjuna, and to Hindus more widely, by showing his willingness to fight to defend dharma, but also to be honourable and gracious in victory.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
6	<p>Explore the reasons for the popularity of the Bhagavad Gita.</p> <p>The Bhagavad Gita (literally the Song of the Lord) is a distinct section within the much larger poetic work, the Mahabharata. This tells the story of a war between two factions of the same family. In it, Krishna, an avatar of the god Vishnu, acts as charioteer to Arjuna. In the 18 chapters of the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna delivers teachings to Arjuna about dharma, karma moksha and the paths to liberation.</p> <p>There are many reasons for the popularity of the Bhagavad Gita. It is the best-known Hindu scripture, not only to Hindus but outside India as well.</p> <p>It has been translated into many languages. This makes it easily accessible to people of any nationality that have an interest in it. This is an obvious reason for its popularity. However, it is also necessary to ask why it is this scripture, in particular, that has been so widely translated.</p> <p>Gandhi was very fond of the Gita and believed that it contained all that was most valuable and important about Hinduism. The fact that he became such a widely known and instantly recognisable figure, may mean that people were interested in the Gita because he thought it was important.</p> <p>Candidates might also suggest that it is the contents themselves that make it such an important text. Its themes of liberation, dharma and karma cover the main teachings that are common to all forms of Hinduism. Its language is also straightforward and accessible. Some scholars have even suggested that it was originally compiled as a summary of the main teachings of Hinduism. Therefore it might have been designed for those that were not widely educated in Sanskrit or the Vedic traditions. It is also a key text in the bhakti movement. It gives a theological and scriptural basis for the belief that liberation can be attained by anyone through loving devotion alone. This, in itself, would be enough to make it popular among those who did not have access to more traditional paths to liberation; people such as women, shudras and the poor.</p> <p>The Gita has also been used as the basis of media productions. TV series, devotional songs and local plays and pageants have made it accessible even to those who are illiterate. In the West, its importance to movements such as ISKCON, which are highly visible, adds to its popularity. Such movements have made sure that it is widely published and distributed to people who might not otherwise have come into contact with it.</p> <p>Candidates might also suggest that its popularity is due to the divine grace of Vishnu. Its teachings are of such fundamental importance. Its teachings find emotional and spiritual resonance with people from so many different walks of life. This in itself accounts for its popularity.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
7	<p>Assess the claim that the bhakti movement has no basis in Hindu scripture.</p> <p>Candidates might discuss commentaries on scriptures that make reference to bhakti, and suggest that these commentaries have more relevance than the scriptures themselves.</p> <p>Many scholars assert that the Bhakti movement began in Southern India, in the Tamil Nadu region around the Eighth Century CE. It is often represented as a reaction against the ritualistic and elitist form of religion upheld by the Brahmins. From here it spread north and east, reaching the peak of its popularity around the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries.</p> <p>Many believe that the movement can be traced to the Vaishnava Alvars and the Shaivite Nayanars, bands of devotional poets who travelled from place to place. They spread their philosophy and their poems and established temples wherever they went.</p> <p>This view of the Bhakti movement makes it a fairly late development in Hinduism. It rose in reaction to Brahminism and, according to some, the conquest of Islam in India. As such it is far later than any Vedic writing. However, Hindu scriptures are not a fixed body of work that can be said to have been completed by a certain period. During the early Medieval period, and even later, texts were being written that would be included in the Upanishads. This period also saw the appearance of various philosophers such as Shankara and Ramanuja, who would have a huge impact upon Hindu thought. So, while the Bhakti movement may not have an origin in the more ancient Hindu scriptures, this does not mean that it is not scriptural. The Bhagavata Purana which is seen as the greatest Bhakti text, is sometimes referred to as the fifth Veda. It is universally regarded as scriptural. It is dated by most scholars to somewhere between the Fifth and Tenth centuries CE. This means it was being compiled during the period where the Bhakti movement was gaining popularity.</p> <p>Recently, some scholars have questioned the theory that the Bhakti movement originated in Southern India, suggesting instead, several different points of origin. They have also questioned the assumption that its creation was reactionary. Scholars question whether the movement was created in response to increased ritualism, widely perceived as empty and unnecessary. Likewise, recent scholars question the influence of the spread of Islam and, later, Christianity in the movement's development. Instead they suggest that it was a renewal and reawakening of a tradition that has its origins in ancient scripture. The Alvars, in particular, did much to spread the popularity of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Both of these epics encourage love and personal devotion towards the avatars of Vishnu. The Bhagavad Gita, in particular, contains teachings that can clearly be related to Bhakti ideology. Krishna promises that anyone who offers him a leaf or a drink of water with genuine love will achieve moksha regardless of their past or their status. As the Gita is usually dated to the Seventh Century BCE it is clear that the Alvars were drawing on some scriptural material.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
7	Hindu scripture is notoriously difficult to date, and some would ascribe much earlier dates to these texts, and, indeed, to the Alvars themselves. Candidates might suggest that the hymns of the bhakti saints including the Alvars have scriptural status in themselves.	

Question	Answer	Marks
8	<p>‘Bhakti is the best path to enlightenment.’ Discuss</p> <p>Bhakti is the path of loving devotion to a particular god. Liberation is granted by the grace of that god who is in a loving relationship with the devotee. This relationship is often characterised by one of the four bhavas, that of master and servant; of friends; of mother and child; and of lovers. The bhakti movement is usually believed to have its origins in the South of India in the medieval period (although this is not universally agreed). It is also said to have been a reaction against Brahminism. In the bhakti ideology, religion did not need to be costly and complicated. Direct access to the gods was freely available to everyone, including those to whom it had formerly been restricted. Loving devotion to a god would typically be to, but not exclusively, Vishnu, Shiva or, later, Shakti. It could allow direct access to moksha, even for women and those of the lower or even no varna. For these people, the best they could previously have hoped for was to be reborn as a man in one of the upper three varnas, from where it was possible to access moksha directly. For many in this situation, it may seem clear that bhakti is not only the best route to moksha, but indeed the only one.</p> <p>In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna claims that he has established two paths to Moksha, the path of knowledge (or <i>jnana</i>) for those inclined towards contemplation and the path of action (<i>karma</i>) for those more inclined to action. Some have interpreted this as referring to different paths for brahmins as those inclined to meditation and intensive study of the scriptures, and for the kshatriyas and vaishyas as those inclined to action. This would suggest that the ‘best way’ to moksha very much depends on who you are, with different possibilities provided for those with different inclinations. There is plenty of evidence that in scriptural sources varna often depended on natural aptitude and inclination rather than on birth alone.</p> <p>However, Krishna declares himself to be the sum of the Vedas and the object of the Yajna. Thus, the paths of knowledge and action both meet in the person of Krishna who is the absolute and supreme. In effect, Krishna presents himself as Brahman Saguna. Having not only attributes, but also an earthly form he can easily become the focus of personal love and devotion. Anyone, including women, shudras or former criminals can gain moksha in a single lifetime in this way, since devotion to Krishna amounts to completion of the other paths. Since this does not require particular knowledge or intelligence, nor access to great wealth, it would certainly appear that bhakti is the best route to moksha. Bhakti does, however, often require a guru and as such, may not be as widely attainable to all as it sometimes thought. It is not the best path for those who are unable to find a suitable guru.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
8	<p>Not all would agree with the value of bhakti, however. Reformers like the Arya and Brahmo Samaj, regarded the worship of Brahman Saguna, and other figures associated with stories and earthly attributes with superstition. Reformers believed this worship led people away from the true knowledge and understanding that could lead to moksha. In particular devotion to murtis, which would include those of Krishna, were heavily condemned by these thinkers. For these, bhakti is not only not the best route to moksha but is no route at all. In fact, they might regard it as a dangerous distraction from true understanding that could form an obstacle to the achievement of moksha.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
9	<p>To what extent do you agree that Tulsidasa is the most important person in the bhakti movement?</p> <p>Whilst candidates are most likely to focus on the Ramcharitmanas as the best known and most influential work of Tulsidasa, they are free to mention any of his other works or philosophies and any reference that is accurate and relevant should be credited.</p> <p>Tulsidasa was a Vaishnava bhakti poet of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth centuries CE. He was a devotee of Rama and several legends about his life describe him seeking and being granted darshan of both Hanuman and Rama. He believed that in the Kali Yuga, all paths to moksha that had been effective in previous epochs (such as meditation or puja) had become useless. Tulsidasa believed that they were as effective as ‘trying to climb to heaven by holding on to the rain.’ The only effective means of liberation was through chanting the name of Rama. Tulsidasa is best known for the composition of the Hanuman Chalisa. This is a devotional hymn to Hanuman, and the Ramcharitmanas. It retells the Ramayana of Valmiki in the vernacular language of the time. As such he is clearly associated with the bhakti movement.</p> <p>The Ramcharitmanas has become a hugely popular work and is widely known and told. Tulsidasa is widely held to be a reincarnation of Valmiki. He is said to have been born into the Kali Yuga for the purpose of making Rama’s story easily available to all. Tulsidasa’s work is easier to access than the Ramayana. It is shorter and is written in the vernacular rather than in Sanskrit, which would be accessible only to Brahmins. His work is also told in the form of a number of conversations between key figures such as Shiva and Parvati. Legend holds that it was Shiva himself who commanded Tulsidasa to abandon Sanskrit and write in the vernacular. Candidates could argue that the success and influence of Tulsidasa’s works, particularly the Ramcharitmanas, mean that he has had a huge influence on Hindu culture around the world. He has also helped to popularise the story of Rama and so his worship. Tulsidasa holds Rama up as the supreme divinity from whom Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma emerge and it is Rama who is periodically incarnated in order to oppose evil.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
9	<p>Candidates might also contrast Tulsidasa's works and thoughts with those of Surdas.</p> <p>The earliest Alvares and Nayanars predated Tulsidasa by several centuries. Therefore, candidates could argue that they could be seen to be the origin of the Bhakti movement. Without these key figures the movement would not have existed. As a result, the earliest Alvares and Nayanars are of greater importance than Tulsidasa.</p> <p>Some candidates might suggest that it is the scriptural sources of bhakti, such as the Bhagavad Gita or the Bhagavata Purana that have the greatest importance as these carry greater authority. However, it could be argued that the Ramcharitmanas is very close to having scriptural status as and such, Tulsidasa as its author is a person of immense importance. Other candidates might suggest that it is the objects of bhakti have the greatest importance. This would mean that the most important figures in the Bhakti movement would be Rama and Krishna themselves as the object of love, devotion and worship. As part of the bhakti movement they make themselves available to form relationships with their devotees and to grant liberation through their grace. Since bhakti would be pointless without this, it could be argued that they are in fact the most important figures.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
10	<p>'Ramakrishna Paramahansa was a mystic rather than a social reformer.' Discuss.</p> <p>Ramakrishna is often included in lists of social reformers in India, largely due to the work of the Ramakrishna Mission. This was founded by his disciple and successor Vivekananda in 1897, more than a decade after Ramakrishna's death. The Mission works to establish hospitals and promotes respect to all religions, whether they belong to the 'family' of Hindu traditions or not. This also means that it disregards the traditional divisions within Hindu society. It sees both men and women, and people of all castes as being equally able to achieve Moksha and so deserving of respect. In particular, the Mission promotes the education of girls and women. In addition to this, one of Ramakrishna's other disciples, Gauri Ma, who was a woman, founded the Saradesvari Ashram, which is devoted to the education of women and the promotion of their rights. While this was not directly established by Ramakrishna, he did encourage his female disciples to seek liberation through service to other women rather than through the practice of austerities. He could be said to be indirectly responsible for its establishment. However, the Ramakrishna Mission is a monastic order. It is concerned as much with spreading his spiritual teachings and ideals as it is with social reform and work. It seeks service to the divine and spiritual development through service to all people. However, at its heart is religious devotion.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
10	<p>Ramakrishna himself produced no writings and never involved himself with politics. He was teaching at a time when new ideas were coming to the fore in India. As a result, his teachings were picked up and developed in a way that might not have been the case had he been active at a different time. He is perhaps best described as a mystic, in that he experienced visions, ecstatic trances and states of altered consciousness. He believed that he was having direct encounters with the divine. These instances of direct experience of the divine had ultimate authority. This was, for him, more immediate and more important than any scripture or religious convention.</p> <p>He did not teach ethical or social reform directly. He assumed that they would flow automatically from a life in close relationship with the divine. He started to have ecstatic experiences as a small child in the fields around his village. In his adult life, as priest of the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar, he sought a vision of the Goddess with great fervour. He spent much of his life in a state of complete or partial samadhi. When he did have his vision of 'The Mother' in the Temple he declared that there were no distinctions between things, only an endless sea of consciousness. Ramakrishna spent time in the study of various Hindu traditions including Bhakti and Advaita Vedanta. He also spent time practising as a Muslim and a Christian. He believed that all spiritual paths would eventually lead to the discovery of God, although some might take longer than others. His concern was primarily with spreading the message of the absolute bliss to be gained in the state of samadhi. He spoke about the fact that this was available to all, regardless of their birth, gender or religion. As such he had little concern for such material concerns as social reform.</p> <p>Ramakrishna was a mystic rather than a reformer. However, candidates might suggest that his legacy has been one of social reform. The idea of service for all has been expressed by his disciples through the Ramakrishna Mission and other legacy movements. As a result of the way these movements interpreted the teachings of Ramakrishna they have promoted education and healthcare for all.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
11	<p>'Non-violence cannot defeat violence' Discuss this statement with reference to the work of M K Gandhi.</p> <p>Mohandas Gandhi is best known for leading the Indian resistance to British rule and for being largely responsible for the British withdrawal from India in 1947. He also campaigned for the rights of the oppressed in South Africa and later in India, only beginning the 'Quit India' movement in 1942. Candidates may give an account of his life. However, this should focus on his use of non-violent civil disobedience as a way of opposing unjust power. Gandhi was a pluralist who saw value in any religious tradition that promoted love and peace. He was particularly impressed by the Sermon on the Mount and by the concept of ahimsa as it was practised by the Jains, which he largely adopted. He was also influenced by the political ideas of Western writers such as Leo Tolstoy. He taught about satyagraha (literally 'truth force') or the power of truth to overcome injustice to achieve its aims.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
11	<p>Gandhi is well known for leading the Salt March in 1930. Marchers collected salt in defiance of an unfair salt tax imposed by the British. This demonstrated his belief that political aims could be achieved through non-violent but determined civil disobedience.</p> <p>On the one hand, it could be argued that Gandhi's non-violent methods were a success. Non-violent resistance eventually led to the repeal of the salt tax and, ultimately to the British withdrawal from India. Candidates might suggest that violent resistance would have made it easier for the British to respond violently. Gandhi's non-violence had the effect of shaming the actions of the British in the eyes of the world and their own citizens. Martin Luther King Jnr. declared himself to be deeply influenced by Gandhi's thinking, and his success. King utilised his methods in the Civil Rights movement in America. This, also, was eventually successful, at least in legal terms.</p> <p>Candidates might question the extent to which Gandhi's methods could be said to truly embody ahimsa. He regularly used the 'fast unto death' as a method of forcing the British authorities to comply with his wishes. This could be argued to be self-violence that is not in accordance with the principles of ahimsa. It could also be argued that he changed the original interpretation of ahimsa within traditional Hinduism into one that better suited his aims and objectives. Gandhi's reinterpretation gradually came to be the most widely accepted meaning of the word. Also, while he was successful in bringing about changes to the law, this came at the cost of great violence and loss of life both from the British and Indians. This is particularly evident during Partition. Candidates might therefore suggest that while a non-violent approach allowed Gandhi to achieve his political aims it did not, in fact, defeat violence as there was still great suffering and loss of life. Also, it is questionable whether he did in fact, achieve his objectives. He himself finished his life believing that he had been a failure. Partition was not the vision that he had for the future of India. It had caused huge violence, death and suffering. In the end, it might be suggested that the eventual assassination of Gandhi proves that the statement is true.</p>	

Question	Answer	Marks
12	<p>Assess the claim that Rammohan Roy has had a lasting impact on Hinduism.</p> <p>Rammohan Roy was a Bengali scholar and political activist at the end of the Eighteenth and beginning of the Nineteenth Centuries. He was concerned to return Hinduism to the pure monotheistic (as he understood it) religion of the Vedas. He saw polytheism and murti puja as superstitious practices of comparatively recent origin. He also believed that the purest principles of Vedic religions were common to all true religions of the world. He worked, in his early career, with Christian missionaries in order to promote religious discussion. Roy was also concerned to remove practices such as purdah, child marriage and sati from Hinduism. He saw these practices as being unworthy of a civilised society.</p>	20

Question	Answer	Marks
12	<p>Roy was impressed with various elements of Western society. He sought to combine what he saw as the best elements of Hindu society with the best elements of Western society. In particular, he advocated for a western style education that should be freely available to all people, including girls and women.</p> <p>Roy is best known as one the founders of the Brahmo Samaj movement in 1828. This was a society that rejected the caste system (although it was initially only open to Brahmins). It also rejected polytheism, the doctrine of avatars, the authority of scriptures, including the Vedas and murti worship. For a while, it was very influential, with many educated Hindus joining what appeared to be a rationalist, monotheistic approach to Hinduism. The movement opposed some of the ethical issues that were current in Hinduism at that time.</p> <p>Candidates might argue that Roy has had little lasting impact on Hinduism. Murti puja, belief in avatars, the caste system, polytheism, and other things to which he was opposed continue to be widespread in all areas. The Brahmo Samaj itself fell into near obscurity following Partition and so could be said to have no lasting influence.</p> <p>Against this, it could be argued that the social reforms achieved by Roy and the Brahmo Samaj are important. Successes like the outlawing of sati in 1829, and the introduction of western style education have had a lasting impact on Hinduism. They changed the ways in which groups such as women and lower castes are treated. The Samaj also gave rise to a religion (Brahmoism) that is acknowledged to be separate from Hinduism and which persists today. Rammohan Roy could therefore be said to have had a lasting effect on the religious landscape of India, even if the religion to which he ultimately gave rise is not considered to be Hindu. Brahmoism adapted some ideas and practices from both Christianity and Islam. Candidates might also suggest that Hinduism represents a very wide spectrum of beliefs and practices. Therefore, the lasting impact of Rammohan Roy has been far greater on some than others. His effect is arguably most noticeable on Western perceptions of Hinduism and on Hinduism as it is practised outside India. They might also suggest that his social reforms, such as the education of women and the abolition of sati, have had a more lasting effect than those that were purely religious.</p>	