**Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies**

**HIGHER 2013-14**

**Morality in the Modern World**

**Kant**

**Euthyphro Dilemma**

**Scripture and Tradition**

**Utilitarianism**

**What is meant by “respect of persons” in Kantian Ethics? 3KU**

**Suggested areas covered in answers:**

* *The second formulation of the Categorical Imperative*
* *A moral act will not use people as means to an end*
* *Treat people with dignity*
* *Don’t exploit people.*

**b) Describe the key features of Kantian Ethics 6KU**

* *Do right without any reference to rules or emotions*
* *Use human reason*
* *Do duty*
* *Categorical Imperative – can my act be universalised*
* *Never use others as a means to an end*
* *Act as if you are a law-maker*

**In Kantian Ethics, what is the Categorical Imperative? 3KU**

**Marking Instructions: No marks for simply writing a list. Each point about the Categorical Imperative should be accompanied by an explanation to gain a mark**

**Suggested areas covered in answers:**

* Moral absolute
* Universal law
* Examples can be used
* Humans reason can work it out from nature
* One of the key principles alongside not using people as a means to an end and assuming the role of lawmaker.

**What does the Categorical Imperative tell us about what are morally right actions?**

* Definition of Categorical Imperative: is some moral action that can be shown to be a universal law;
* A universal law is something that everyone from any culture can agree is a morally right thing to do;
* An example of a universal law is to always act honestly – as without a regard to honesty, trust, community rules, laws, banking etc would collapse;
* The categorical imperative is the central feature of ‘Kantian ethics’ (named after Emmanuel Kant;
* The main principles of the categorical imperative are ‘duty’ and ‘reason’;
* Duty – because if it is a universal law, then it is something we ought to do;
* Reason – because we can discover a universal law through reason;
* Categorical Imperative’s are universal, unconditional, NOT subject to variation or change
* Duty means to: “Do this, whether you want to or not, whether you can be made to or not, whether anyone will notice, reward, praise, or blame you (or not).’’

**In what ways can duty be seen as the basis of ethical decision-making? (5)**

* duty in Kantian ethics (the ethical system of Emmanuel Kant) expresses the idea that if a moral action can be shown to be a universal law, then we ought to do that which expresses that universal law;
* Duty lays stress on obligation to do what is morally right;
* Doing what is right is a categorical imperative;
* Categorical - what can clearly be shown to be right;
* Imperative – if it is clearly right – then it is ‘imperative’ I have a duty to do that which is categorically (clearly) morally right;
* What is our moral duty – (categorical imperative) is derived from reason;
* Reason can demonstrate what is a universal law (categorical imperative);
* Eg – ‘honesty is the best policy’ – can be shown through reason to be a universal law (categorical imperative) because of what society might be shown to be like with the absence of honesty – we need the principle of honesty to have some cohesion in any society;

**b) Explain the role of duty and reason in moral decision making. 4 KU**

* ***Kantian ethics- for Kant the key issue is how to discover a rational basis for ethics***
* ***The Categorical imperative is a priori- we can see that it is true without having to experience it***
* ***Define categorical imperative- act only on that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law***
* ***The Categorical Imperative is a principle of pure practical reason***
* ***Moral actions are done from a sense of duty***
* ***A moral person is one who acts from a sense of duty not from inclination***
* ***Acting morally amounts to doing one’s duty whatever consequences might follow***
* ***Motive of an action is more important than the action and its consequences.***

**What issues concerning morality does the Euthyphro Dilemma raise? 4 KU**

*Marking Instructions: Any reference to the story must relate to the issue.*

*Suggested areas covered in answers:*

* Is God the source of morality?
* Is man the source of morality?
* Is there a higher authority for morality than God?
* Omnipotence of God
* Does God act arbitrarily?

**What issues are raised by the Euthyphro dilemma? (4)**

* A maximum of 2 marks for an account of the dilemma.
* Other points e.g.
* **“**piety”, “pious or holy” refer to that which is morally “good”
* It raises the question “What makes an action morally good?”
* Socrates clearly implies actions are good in themselves
* Raises questions about the nature of morality and the nature of God – eg is God good, or does God need to appeal to something else;
* It raises questions about the relationship between morality and God – eg heteronomous, autonomous and relativist relationships between God and goodness;

***Describe the Euthyphro dilemma. 3KU***

• Plato told the story

• Socrates and Euthyphro at court

• Who decides what is right?

• Do moral rules come from God?

• Do moral rules come from elsewhere and God recognises them as good?

**What are the relationships between morality and God raised by the Euthyphro dilemma? (3)**

* + *heteronomy – (different) – whereby man (who is different) from God, looks for morality in God/religion;*
  + *Autonomy – where man rejects the idea that morality is found outwith mankind and society – autonomy expresses the idea that we are a law to ourselves;*
  + *Relativism – where morality depends upon the situation and the society in which we live – something is good because we decide it is good;*

**Describe the issue the Euthyphro Dilemma addresses. 4KU**

♦ Source of morality.

♦ God’s role in morality.

♦ Human role in morality.

♦ Proposed by Plato.

♦ Summary of the story.

**What problems does the Euthyphro dilemma pose? (4)**

Problems:

* The relationship of God and moral commands to each other
* Are God (the gods) actions subject to the superiority of morality?
* Is morality subject to what God (the gods) decides what is right or wrong?
* Is morality (moral laws) absolute, relative or arbitrary?
* The problem of the arbitrariness of the gods actions in Greek mythology, and their commands having moral legitimacy – little wonder Socrates was on trial

1 mark for each identifiable problem

1 mark for corresponding explanation

Or

1 mark in total for a list of problems without explanation

**(a) Describe the Euthyphro dilemma.**

**A maximum of 2 marks for an account of the dilemma. 4KU**

**A maximum of 2 marks for formula.**

*Other points may include e.g.:*

* *Concerns the origin of morality*
* *A description of the context*
* *Centres around the issue of what it is that makes an action right or good*
* *Are actions good in themselves or are they good because an external authority (e.g. god) commands them?*
* *Socrates implies that actions are good in themselves*
* *Formula –“is what is good loved by the gods….”*

**a) Describe one way in which sacred writings guide moral values in one religion you have studied. 2KU**

* ***Religious writings are central to all religions***
* ***They contain rules and guidelines regarding ethical behaviour i.e. how we should behave. For instance, the 10 commandments tells us not to steal, not to commit murder etc.***
* ***Ethical behaviour is tied in to outcome in the afterlife –heaven or hell. This is linked to Bible passage such as the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats-the sheep go to heaven the goats go to hell depending on what they do for others.***

**Give a description of the sources of religious morality. 3KU**

*Marking Instructions: No marks for simply writing a list. Each point about the source of religious morality should be accompanied by an explanation to gain a mark.*

*Suggested areas covered in answers:*

* Sacred writings
* Human reason
* Deity
* Prophecy
* Religious leaders.

**Describe 3 sources of moral guidance which are found in one or more religious traditions. (6)**

* No marks for merely listing sources. Descriptions of e.g.
* Scriptures as source of guidance – used by religious people as an authority for moral guidance as a whole;
* Tradition as source of guidance – is the corporate wisdom of teachers and leaders in religious traditions as a source of guidance for moral teaching;
* Reason as source of guidance – is the use of one’s own mind, argument, evidence, research (of morality within scriptures and tradition etc);

**Describe the use of reason in the interpretation of sacred writings (2)**

* Reason is difficult to separate from faith in religious traditions;
* Within Christianity faith and reason are two sides of the same coin;
* Conservative Christians might give faith a more prominent role than reason, believing as Martin Luther (the Protestant Reformer), that it is genuine faith that enlightens the mind to reason / interpret the scriptures;
* Liberal Christians might give reason a more prominent role in interpretation of the scriptures;

**Describe two principles of religious morality. 4KU**

♦ Golden Rule.

♦ Love God and Love Others.

♦ Examples of principles taught by founder.

♦ Examples of principles taught by leaders.

♦ Examples of principle found in scripture/tradition

**What is the role of sacred writings in religious morality? 4KU**

*•* Depends on the religion

• Depends on status of sacred writing in religions

* Source of moral teaching

• Morality developed from sacred writings

*•* Sacred writings used to help form basis of response to new issues

• Literal understanding leads to literal obedience to morality

**What is the role of sacred writings in religious morality? 3KU**

♦ Source of direct teaching on issues.

♦ Gives explicit examples of how to behave.

♦ Gives implicit examples of how to behave.

♦ Can be used to apply principles to contemporary issues.

♦ Source of authority.

♦ Source of moral tradition.

♦ Advises on what God/founder wants.

**What is religious morality based upon? 4KU**

*Marking Instructions: No marks for simply writing a list.*

*Each basis of religious morality should be accompanied by an explanation to gain a mark.*

*Examples of areas covered:*

• Sacred writings

• Faith

• Tradition

• Reason

• Religious experience

• Examples from each of these will be given credit

**What issues might interpretation pose for believers using the scriptures as a source of moral guidance. Refer to two religious traditions. (4)**

**Issue:**

* Believers find it difficult to agree on what the scriptures are:
* Jews- Torah, Tenakh, or both with Rabbinical commentaries
* Islam – Qur’an and the place of Muhammad’s saying – Hadith, Sharia law
* Christianity – Old and New Testaments – are both of equal importance? Apocryphal writings, other gospels?

**Issue:**

* How are the scriptures interpreted, even if there is agreement as what the scriptures are?
* Torah- Old Testament and Mosaic law on the prohibition of men and women to wear clothing of the opposite sex
* Liberal (Christian/Jew) – interpreted as being a culturally influenced command, not relevant for today
* Conservative (Christian/Jew) interpreted as morally relevant then and now, with reference to sexual perversion or gender roles

1 mark per stated issue

1 mark per explanation Or 1 mark in total for a list of issues without explanation

**Describe, with examples, the principles of consequentialist ethics (3)**

* Description refers to utilitarianism
* Utilitarianism / consequentialist (consequences) ethics are concerned with the outcomes of actions;
* The outcomes of actions are said to be good if the fulfill the utilitarian principle of bring the greatest happiness to the greatest number of people;
* The actions are not good/bad in themselves
* The moral consequences of the action is the promotion of human happiness/well being and the minimising of unhappiness/pain
* The founder of this method of moral behaviour is J S Mill
* Two forms of utilitarianism are: rule utilitarianism, and act utilitarianism;
* Rule utilitarianism might be argued to be less flexible and uses rules to guide moral actions that meet the criteria of the greatest happiness principle;
* Act utilitarianism is more concerned with the actions themselves, and their outcomes – whether they achieve the greatest happiness;

**What are the key principles of Utilitarian Ethics? 4 KU**

*Marking Instructions: No marks for simply writing a list.*

*Each point about Utilitarian Ethics should be accompanied by an explanation to gain a mark.*

*Suggested areas covered in answers:*

* Consequentialist ethical system
* Actions are good if they have good consequences
* Pleasure and pain
* Based on the principle of the greatest good
* Act Utilitarianism – principles applied to a particular situation
* Rule Utilitarianism – principles applied as general rules based on past experience.

**What is the difference between rule and act utilitarianism? 3KU**

♦ Rule – refers to the greatest benefit in all similar situations.

♦ Act – refers to the greatest benefit accrued for one act.

♦ Difference – what might be considered right under act utility might not be considered right under rule utility.

♦ Difference – act utility measures consequences of one act.

♦ Difference – rule utility measures consequences of repeated act.

**In what ways might the consequences of an action be used as a guide to moral decision-making? (5)**

* Description refers to Utilitarianism
* Actions not good/bad in themselves
* The moral consequences are guided by the promotion of human happiness/well-being and the minimising of unhappiness/pain
* Act/rule Utilitarianism distinction
* The writings of Mill/Bentham or contemporary Utilitarian may be cited.

**Explain the main features of utilitarian ethics. 3KU**

• Consequentialist

• Greatest benefit for greatest number

• Act

• Rule

**•** Bentham and/or Mill developed it

**(c) What are the key features of Utilitarian ethics? KU 4**

**A description of the ideas Bentham, Mill, Singer,**

* *Utilitarian ethics focus on consequences of actions rather than actions*
* *Good actions promote the greatest happiness/pleasure of the greatest number*

**c) What are the key features of consequentialist ethics? 4 KU**

* ***Utilitarianism: actions are good or bad depending on the outcome***
* ***The moral consequences of the action is the promotion of human happiness/wellbeing and the minimising of unhappiness/pain***
* ***The aim is to achieve consequences that will bring about the greatest happiness for the greatest number of people.***
* ***Distinction between act-utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism***
* ***Reference to Mill or Bentham’s position***

**Explain what is meant by *‘the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number’*. 3KU**

♦ Utiltarianism.

♦ Greatest good for the greatest number.

♦ Least amount of pain.

♦ Good is whatever brings greatest happiness.

**State the key principles of Kantian ethics. 4KU**

♦ Use of people as a means to an end.

♦ Universal Maxim.

♦ Categorical Imperative.

♦ Moral absolutes.

♦ Duty.

♦ Respect for Moral Laws.

♦ Use of human reason.

♦ Act in way that you are the legislator.

**What is meant by the claim that moral values are autonomous? (2)**

* It means that moral values are independent of religious belief
* Contrasts with heteronomy – which relates to God / religion for moral authority;
* Highlights reason as the main source of morality
* Describes reasons for the rejection of religion as a source of morality
* Explains that both religious and non-religious people can accept that moral values are autonomous

**What is autonomy?**

* + Moral values are decided independently of any influences
  + Uses human reason to work out for ourselves what is right.
  + Acts are good because they just are.
  + Gives people freedom of choice as nobody tells us what to do.

**What is meant by the claim that moral values are heteronomous? (2)**

* Values are dependent upon God / religious authority (scriptures / tradition)
* Often heteronomous values are absolute (that is they never change);
* An example of the moral law could be the Ten Commandments – which some Jews / Christians see as being absolute – just as morally right or wrong ways of behaving today and in the future as when they were given by God;

**What is heteronomy?**

* + Moral values are decided by God
  + Divine Command Theory says what is right and wrong
  + Good clear guidelines. They are universal and cannot be changed (often absolute –they never change)

**What is meant by ‘moral absolutism’? 2marks**

* *moral absolutism is the belief that moral standards of right or wrong never change – the same yesterday, today and for ever;*
* *Some Christians / Jews believe that the Ten Commandments are moral absolutes;*
* *eg – always wrong to kill, commit adultery; steal, worship God in a wrong way; etc;*
* *the ‘Divine Command theory’ is an example of moral absolutism – eg: if God commands it, then it is good;*
* *is the opposite to ‘moral relativism’ which states that morality changes according to the circumstances, society or culture that is prevalent at the time;*

**Explain what is meant by ‘moral relativism. 2 marks**

* *is the opposite to ‘moral absolutism’ which states that morality never changes;*
* *moral relativism is a kind of moral ‘autonomy’ where a moral relativist gets his or her ideas of moral right or wrongness from other than God or religion;*
* *Utilitarians might be described as moral relativists as their moral actions might be guided not by God/religion, but by the situation they find themselves in;*
* *moral relativism often criticised as being more a matter of taste (personal preference) rather than what is right or wrong;*

**What does it mean to say that morals are arbitrary? 2marks**

* *it means that morals do not depend on God, religion or anything else for being right or wrong;*
* *the Greek gods in the time of Euthyphro were often criticised for acting in an arbitrary fashion when it came to moral actions;*
* *hence the question to Euthyphro, ‘is something good because the gods say so, or do they say so because it is good?’*

**What is moral autonomy? 2KU**

* ***What is morally right or wrong is independent of a person’s religious beliefs***
* ***Use reason to work out what is morally right and wrong***
* ***Doing things your own way not just following a set of rules***