



**Strathmore**  
UNIVERSITY

**SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES AND PHILOSOPHY**

**END OF SEMESTER EXAMINATION**

**BDP 4109 THEODICY**

**Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021**

**Time: 10:30 – 12:30**

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**Instructions**

1. This examination consists of **FIVE** questions.
2. Answer **Question ONE (COMPULSORY)** and any other **TWO** questions.

**QUESTION 1 (30 Marks)**

1. Read the following quote from William L. Rowe and answer the question that follows:

“An omniscient, wholly good being would prevent the occurrence of any intense suffering it could. However, there exist instances of intense suffering which an omnipotent, omniscient being could have prevented, but has not. Therefore, there does not exist an omnipotent, omniscient, wholly good being.”

What arguments in favour of the existence of God would a theist Philosopher present against Rowe’s syllogism above, specifically with recourse to the idea of free will, the two kinds of evil and the contingency of beings in a hierarchical universe? (10 marks)

2. According to C.S. Lewis, the idea of a personal encounter with God as the supreme being, regardless of the considerations of reason, inspires a fear of the “the numinous” which is different from the fear of encountering a ferocious animal. Explain this difference. (4 marks)
3. Sahid’s parents are troubled at his decision to become an atheist, even though they have provided a very good environment for him to practice Islam, even ensuring he goes to an Islamic school and are living in a neighbourhood that is majority Muslim. Moreover, his father is an imam and so was his father and grandfather before him. He comes from a long line of Muslim faith leaders.

How would you explain Sahid’s decision to his parents using the concept of determinism? (6 marks)

4. Explain the difference between the sacred and the profane, as explained by Josef Pieper, and how this distinction can be used to justify the use of secular objects (e.g. a piece of furniture or technology) within places of worship. (7 marks)

5. What view would pantheism hold concerning the distinction between the sacred and the profane, and how does it compare or contrast with Joseph Pieper's explanation of the same? (3 marks)

**QUESTION 2 (15 Marks)**

A failure to understand the relationship and distinction between faith and reason may lead to several errors in Theodicy. Three such errors are Rationalism, Fideism and Dualism. Explain each of them, their implications, and give an example of each error.

- a. Rationalism (5 marks)
- b. Fideism (5 marks)
- c. Dualism (5 marks)

**QUESTION 3 (15 Marks)**

For the human mind to access the truth of the existence of God and the validity of revelation in any religion, both rational and non-rational arguments must be used.

- a. Regarding rational arguments, explain what characterises they have, and the basis of those characteristics. (6 marks)
- b. State and explain **any three** non-rational arguments or acts, as used in Theodicy, giving an example for each. (9 marks)

**QUESTION 4 (15 Marks)**

- a. From your understanding of Aquinas' explanation of how beings achieve their perfection, and the etymology of Religion as Re + Ligare, and, explain how Religion leads to the perfection of an individual. Support your answer with an example. (7 marks)
- b. A form of religious reductionism is to base all of religion on only one aspect related to the triple etymology of Religion, as either *re-legere* or *re-eligere*. Give two examples of such cases in history and discuss how they fail to address man's integral nature. (8 marks)

**QUESTION 5 (15 Marks)**

Explain how the following religious worldviews deal with the problem of evil, and illustrate how each would explain a moral evil such as alcohol addiction.

- a. Pantheism. (5 marks)
- b. Polytheism. (5 marks)
- c. Buddhism. (5 marks)