

5. Significant Ideas

Significant ideas in religious and moral thought, through comparison of the works of two key scholars from the field of religion and ethics

Conscience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquinas' theological approach • Freud's psychological approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of this approach, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>ratio</i> (reason placed in every person as a result of being created in the image of God) ○ <i>synderesis</i> (inner principle directing a person towards good and away from evil) ○ <i>conscientia</i> (a person's reason making moral judgements). ○ vincible ignorance (lack of knowledge for which a person is responsible) ○ invincible ignorance (lack of knowledge for which a person is not responsible) • details of this approach, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ psychosexual development (early childhood awareness of libido) ○ id (instinctive impulses that seek satisfaction in pleasure) ○ ego (mediates between the id and the demands of social interaction) ○ super-ego (contradicts the id and working on internalised ideals from parents and society tries to make the ego behave morally)
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Learners should have the opportunity to discuss issues related to ideas about conscience, including:

- comparison between Aquinas and Freud:
 - on the concept of guilt
 - on the presence or absence of God within the workings of the conscience and super-ego
 - on the process of moral decision-making
- whether conscience is linked to, or separate from, reason and the unconscious mind
- whether conscience exists at all or is instead an umbrella term covering various factors involved in moral decision-making, such as culture, environment, genetic predisposition and education

Contextual references

For reference, the ideas of Aquinas and Freud listed above can be found in:

- Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* I–I 79
- Freud, S. *The Ego and the Id*

Suggested scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority

*Learners will be given credit for referring to any **appropriate** scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority, however the following examples may prove useful*

- Fromm, E. (1947) *Man for Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics* London: Routledge, IV.2
- Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, *Sigmund Freud*, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/freud/>
- Strohm, P. (2011) *Conscience: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, Chapters 1 and 3