



MARKSCHEME

November 2009

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Higher Level

Paper 1

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1. How did the war change the roles of children in El Salvador?

[6 marks]

This question aims to elicit a primarily descriptive answer based on information in the text itself. Children during the war themselves took over the roles that are normally those of adults. As the adults around them were killed or found themselves unable to provide for their families, the children stepped in to care for the adults. The normal parent-child roles were reversed. Some children joined the guerrilla in order to feed and clothe families, others because their fathers had been killed and their mothers were too distressed to cope with family life as a result of this.

Stronger answers may also incorporate the adult perspective when interviewed, about the impact of war on children: they stated that there was none because the children were too young to understand what was going on. Some candidates might question this and discuss why adults might need to believe that their children were not able to understand the violence of war. Some candidates might also note that the ongoing problems former child soldiers have in reintegrating into social life is evidence of the long-term impact of war on children, in particular the failure of children to be taught normal adult peace time roles because their social education was disrupted by the war.

Candidates do not have to discuss every possible example in the text, nor do they have to limit themselves solely to the points made above. However, all answers must be well-ordered, coherent and justify the selections made from the text to produce a focused response to the question.

2. To what extent are the problems that young adults face after demobilization the result of the war? **[6 marks]**

The text provides examples of individuals who are dealing with problems as young adults which stem from their experiences during the war as well as the ongoing political, social and economic issues facing the country and which may have been caused, or exacerbated by, the war itself.

The individuals discussed in the text are José and Elva and part of the answer to this question might be to develop a gendered understanding of the impacts of war on children and young adults. Both José and Elva are in their own ways remarkable as young adults who are trying to improve themselves to improve the futures for their families. Both sought education and both have taken on responsible positions in their communities. However, their economic difficulties are compounded by their wartime experiences which serve to limit and undermine their chances of success in the present.

In the case of many young boys the problems they face as adults stem from the failure to learn in childhood how to fulfil adult roles. As children they learnt how to be soldiers and not how to become subsistence farmers. The children in the guerrilla camps were not given the opportunity to learn how to use alcohol and tobacco responsibly. This has led to some difficulties with alcohol abuse among young adults.

José is also disillusioned by the failure of the promises of social justice made by the guerrilla during the war and this reflects the failures of the government in El Salvador to meet the economic needs and the political aspirations of the people in the present. Contemporary poverty, wartime experiences and adult responsibilities take their toll in a context where no matter how hard the adults work and no matter how much they strive to gain some formal education, they are still unable to earn enough to provide for their families. Individuals cannot succeed in the present because the social structures that would make this possible are not in place.

In Elva's case her leadership skills and her return to education after demobilization almost certainly facilitated her employment by an NGO. Clearly she is a hardworking and resilient individual. However, her gender, as a woman means that she is vulnerable to criticism and gossip which undermines her as a leader in the community by questioning her fidelity to her husband. As a consequence she is abandoned by her husband and left with five children to raise. Her loss of income from the NGO adds further difficulty to her already challenging life. Elva's case shows how vulnerable to unemployment individuals are. Employment prospects are limited and insecure and this means that individuals cannot make any long term plans for themselves or their families.

Both José and Elva struggle with the many difficulties in their lives, some of which are the direct and continuing result of the economic and social disruption caused by the war and some by the individual impact of war on children which results in different, gendered responses by them to their current situation as adults. José fathers children he cannot care for by different women and Elva is left as a mother to care for many children because rumours of sexual misconduct by women can be used by men to justify abandoning women and children.

Answers to this question may focus on the economic plight of young adults in a post-war society, the disruptions caused by war to a country's economy and infrastructure, their individual difficulties in adjusting to adult life in a community and on the gendered distinctions that can be made between the behaviours of women and men who were child soldiers. Stronger candidates may seek to link the larger social issues to the individual life stories of José and Elva and make connections between

the structural constraints limiting the life chances of young adults and the creative agentive options, however limited, that are available to them.

The problems confronting young adults in El Salvador are, in many respects, beyond their control and may often seem to be overwhelming. The continued struggle against these difficulties reveals both José and Elva to be resilient and determined young people – these are perhaps the qualities they developed to survive during the war and which may both hamper and help their current attempts to provide for themselves and their families in the present.

Candidates should incorporate their knowledge of relevant concepts and theoretical perspectives in their answers to this question. They might, for example, choose to frame this question by using the issues of structure and agency to understand the situation of child soldiers during the war in El Salvador and the situation in which young adults now find themselves.

3. **Compare the disruptions of war in El Salvador with the way in which change has affected *one* group that you have studied in detail.** **[8 marks]**

This question requires candidates to refer to the disruptions that resulted from the war in El Salvador. These disruptions, social, political, economic and educational, impacted on the lives of children during the war and continue to hamper their attempts to provide for themselves and their families in the present.

Candidates may, but do not need to, select groups that directly compare with the child soldiers and young adults of El Salvador as an organizing frame for their answer. Ethnographic examples where people have found themselves in crisis because of events they have no control over would provide appropriate comparative cases. However, comparisons need not be limited to social groups in crisis. It may, for example, be possible for candidates to discuss gradual processes of change and to use an ethnographic example reflecting this as their comparative case.

Candidates should introduce theoretical concepts drawn from the curriculum and their study of anthropology to analyse the ethnographic materials they present in their answers.

In all instances, however, in order to obtain full marks answers must be organized in a clear manner, highlighting similarities, differences and generalizations. Candidates must situate the comparative case in terms of group, place, author, and ethnographic context to gain more than **[4 marks]**.
