

# **MARKSCHEME**

**May 2006**

## **SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

**Higher Level**

**Paper 1**

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**1. What was the relationship between hierarchy and ethnicity on the plantation? [6 marks]**

There are several descriptive examples to choose from in the passage and these begin with the pragmatic outlining of the hierarchically organised ethnic groups in relation to labour practice on the plantation. This then leads on to the discussion of the rationale for the labour hierarchy and the implications and outcomes of such ranking according to ethnicity.

Clearly, there is a hierarchy of ethnicity based on subsistence with the hunter-gatherer Toba at the bottom of the scale and the Chiriguano slash and burn horticulturalists above them. The Toba are seasonal migrant workers and are therefore expected to have alternative sources of income when the plantation does not require their labour. The Criollos are permanent workers on the plantation and can be assumed to be considered ethnically superior to the other groups on the plantation (some students might guess that they are peasants). The Criollos work indoors in the factory while the Toba and Chiriguano work outdoors in the fields. The ethnic hierarchy established at the plantation equates subsistence patterns with supposed skills and cultural abilities and ranks groups according to this. Pay differentials follow this ranking and the outcome is a form of institutionalised discrimination against certain groups because of their assumed abilities, or lack of them, on the basis of their traditional forms of subsistence and ethnicity. Such an organisation of labour keeps workers divided along ethnic lines and prevents a collective union of workers against harsh working conditions. Some candidates might also mention that the harsher working conditions of the seasonal field labourers also took a heavier toll on them in terms of disease and death. The lower down the ethnic and labour hierarchy one was the greater the likelihood of disease and death. The poorer one was to begin with the worse the chances of survival and well-being.

Another aspect of the inferior labour position of the Toba on the plantation was their internalisation of this situation in their beliefs that the cannibal *KiyaGaikpi* would not find their flesh tasty because the Toba did not eat the nice food of the whites. In this instance relative poverty reflected in poorer diet may have worked, as far as the Toba were concerned, to their advantage when confronted by cannibals.

Candidates may choose to highlight and discuss a range of materials from the text and better answers will demonstrate an ability to select and discuss relevant examples in a well-ordered fashion rather than simply providing a checklist.

**2. How were the Toba's beliefs about death and disease an expression of their working conditions on the plantation? [6 marks]**

This question requires candidates to develop answers which move beyond the more descriptive answer of question 1. Here the ability of candidates to show that beliefs are, to some extent, contextual and can be understood in relation to working and living conditions will produce stronger answers than those which simply list the devil and cannibal beliefs of the Toba. The level of fear of devils is correlated to the high death rates among the Toba working on the plantations and the terror of the people that they were being wiped out by death and disease as the deaths of children, in particular, compromised the ability of the Toba to reproduce themselves in the future. These death rates are themselves the outcome of the very harsh working and living conditions on the plantation and the price the Toba paid for entering the capitalist system at the very bottom of the hierarchy. The Toba recognised this but were tempted by the commodities available to wage labourers and also compelled to work in the fields by the fact that their traditional means of subsistence were no longer sufficient to meet their needs.

Some candidates may even consider the “naturalising” effect of beliefs in devils as a cause of death and disease. If such things are caused by devils then the actual labour conditions on the plantation are not responsible and this displaces the causes of the death from the organisation of labour in the fields (which could be challenged and changed) to the non-human and non-preventable action of devils (which the plantation owners cannot do anything about).

The alienation of labour and its commodification is expressed in the stories of cannibals who use human flesh as a means of exchange.

Good answers do not have to provide an exhaustive discussion of all elements of devil and cannibal belief and the alienation and commodification of labour covered in the passage but they do have to contextualise their answers within a suitable conceptual framework and select a sufficient range of appropriate examples from the text to justify their discussion.

**3. Compare the Toba's response to their work experience with the response to work experience of *one* other group you have studied in detail. [8 marks]**

The target societies for this comparative question are varied and many. The question requires candidates to demonstrate an understanding of capitalist labour practice as a force which does not impact uniformly on all members of a society. While the Toba find ways of expressing and understanding the impacts of exploitative working conditions through beliefs in devils and cannibals, other social groups may have alternative ways of conceptualising the impacts of capitalism on their social order. The ethnic inequalities that the passage highlights may be compared to class or gender inequalities in relation to work practices found in other social systems. Better answers will be able to demonstrate the variable impacts of labour conditions on different segments within a given society.

In order to obtain full marks answers must be organised 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].

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