A-level
ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTH3 Global and Local : Societies, Environments and Globalisation
Report on the Examination

2110
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ANTH3

General

The examination produced a range of levels of response, with some students producing outstanding work, others performing extremely well and many producing very sound scripts.

No question appeared to cause any particular difficulties for students, although on question 03 many students focused on development projects rather than defining development. Answers for the most part were of sufficient length and most students attempted all the required questions. In Section B, there was a fairly even spread of students answering each of the optional questions.

Positive features

- Most students attempted all required questions.
- There was an awareness of the specific demands of Unit 3, particularly the connections between specific topics and issues related to globalisation, and the synoptic requirements of the unit.
- There was use of detailed, contextualised ethnographic studies in particular in Section B in relation to globalisation, migration and human rights.
- Students made appropriate use of relevant concepts and anthropological theories.
- Answers showed knowledge of the work (both ethnographic and theoretical) of specific anthropologists.
- Some students were able to incorporate methodological discussions, where relevant, into their answers.
- Stronger answers applied a range of perspectives and concepts in order to develop their analyses and discussion of the ethnographic examples.

Key Issues

- There was a lack of use of anthropological theory in some scripts, with some students making no reference to any relevant anthropological concepts or theories in their answers. Alternatively, there was the inclusion of theoretical material that was not directly relevant to the question and meant that students had less time to write material that was relevant.
- There was an over-emphasis on descriptive material with a corresponding lack of analysis and evaluation in some answers.
- There was a lack of precision in contextualising ethnographic material, with too many over-general, and sometimes problematic, statements about vague, often exoticised 'tribes' or the presentation of uncritical and unexamined material relating to an imagined idea of 'the West'. Ethnographic material referring to indigenous groups or to populations in western countries needs to be fully contextualised and the source of the information, ideally an ethnographer/anthropologist, cited.
- There were too many discussions based on apparently common-sense assumptions, particularly for questions 05 and 06, and some of these were problematic, such as discussion of 'push' or 'pull' factors without reference to groups or alternatively, discussion of positives of human rights in general without linking these to cultural rights. While such ideas are certainly in the public domain, students need to evaluate, assess and, if appropriate, critique such notions and not simply take them as given. In short, there was a lack of reflexive understanding that the positions presented as 'correct' are themselves the product of the time

and place in which they have developed and may say more about the person presenting the position than the people who are supposedly being described.

- Students sometimes located the societies that they wrote about in the wrong country or continent, or confused the practices of one society with those of another.
- There was sometimes a lack of explicit comparison, with students describing one case in relative detail and another briefly, with no discussion of how the two related to each other or advanced the understanding of the question. Alternatively, the comparative case was simply 'the West' and in such instances it was often the case that the West represented democracy, justice and freedom – or conversely, a place where the colonial past and contemporary consumerism means that the West is destructive of all worthy human values, which can now only be found among isolated and threatened 'tribal peoples'. While both these positions may have some merit to them, they need to be fully supported with evidence and detailed material presented to make such cases anthropologically convincing rather than merely romantic and nostalgic musings.

Section A

Question 01

Many students were able to give a full or partial definition of 'economic empowerment'. Partial definitions usually had some notion of the economic aspect. Other partial definitions had a notion of choice and control but with no explanation of the term 'economic'.

Some students were successful in giving two appropriate ways in which this would improve the position of women. These often related to aspects of political power and education. Weaker answers gave only limited accounts of how economic empowerment may improve the position of women; these often related to greater equality but without being fully developed.

A good proportion of students did achieve full marks or close to full marks on this question and managed to do this in a relatively short paragraph of writing.

Question 02

This question was reasonably well answered by a good proportion of students who gained high and, in a significant number of cases, full or nearly full marks for their answers. Students were able to identify a range of appropriate reasons for the failure of development projects; these often linked to indigenous groups' lack of knowledge or to the fact that projects may offer no benefit. Other answers identified sustainability (or lack of it) and also lack of consultation with local populations.

Explanations on the whole were good and used specific examples. Examples included a range of dam projects and evaluation of the development of hydroelectric power against the loss of land for indigenous people.

Students need to be aware of the structure of the marks for this question: one for each reason and two for developing each of these in a satisfactory manner. Although many students follow this format a few seemed to see this as a mini-essay and produced continuous prose about failure of development projects. In these cases, the answers often only addressed one reason why projects may be unsuccessful and then gave a range of examples of this problem. This limited their mark.

Question 03

The best answers to this question were able to display a clear understanding of the problems of defining development. These often focused on the fact that development is frequently defined by economic indicators. Students then evaluated this definition by using ethnographic examples to highlight how social and environmental factors can also be seen as evidence of development. Some answers were able to relate the definition of development to western economic models and some even linked this to western ideology through a Marxist analysis.

This question presented a problem to some students who saw this as a question about development projects. In these cases, students repeated much of their response to the previous question, focusing on a range of development projects and their positive and negative aspects.

Section B

Question 04

Of the optional questions, this was the most popular. There were some excellent responses to this question. These answers included detailed ethnographic material, which was analysed using suitable concepts and theories. Students who gained high marks were able to engage with the economic nature of globalisation by using examples of how global trade may have negatively impacted on indigenous cultures, often by considering the impact of transnational corporations. This was then evaluated by looking at the more positive aspects of economic globalisation and considering its benefits in contrast to the notion of dominance. Other strong answers considered the positive impacts of cultural globalisation in contrast to the negative impact of economic dominance. Examples included Japanese Hip Hop and the use of mobile phones and other technology. Some answers debated the dominance of non-western economies in contrast to western, such as the economic power of China. Some students also showed knowledge and understanding by considering the origins of western economic dominance and relating this to colonialism and neo-colonialism. Many responses showed conceptual detail in their understanding of processes of globalisation and the work of Appadurai and Eriksen featured in many answers.

Weaker answers did not refer to specific groups, specific peoples, or to any clearly anthropological sources or debates on the impact of globalisation. These answers were mostly relatively brief and mainly consisted of a more common-sense approach to the positive and negative impacts of globalisation in general. Some responses did note the impact of globalisation on different cultures but without reference to western economic dominance.

Question 05

Of the optional questions this was the one that fewest students chose to answer. This could have been because some may have misunderstood the point of the 'such as' part of the question, which gave students a hint about what 'push' and 'pull' factors are; they did not **have** to refer to the ones mentioned in the question.

The best answers showed detailed and relevant ethnographic examples analysed using appropriate concepts and theories. Students who scored high marks were able to use specific studies of migration and movement of people and clearly analyse these in relation to 'push' and 'pull' factors. The best responses showed how these factors linked and evaluated the relative importance of each. Many students showed a clear understanding of a range of both 'push' and 'pull' factors rather than just those in the question. Examples were varied and ranged from migrant workers to many examples of peoples moving due to environmental disasters. Many answers showed a clear conclusion as to which factors were the more likely factors to influence movement (often cited as push). 'Out of Africa' was used successfully in a number of responses.

Weaker responses tended to focus on a few examples of factors. Often these were listed without any consideration given to the relative importance of each. In these answers, students often gave a range of factors with limited examples. Alternatively, a range of groups were cited but without linking their movements to specific 'push' or 'pull' factors. In some cases, the answers only used the factors given in the question. In these answers there tended to be a more common-sense account with limited evaluation or ethnographic material.

Question 06

The best answers were able to clearly identify debates relating to human rights. Often these focused on discussion of the debate between human rights and cultural rights. Many students used the example of female genital mutilation to highlight this debate. The best answers were able to link this to specific groups and ethnographies. Often these responses were able to show a greater understanding of the debate by linking it to gender as well as culture. Students who scored high marks were also able to engage with the debate surrounding the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its applicability to differing cultures. In many cases, the example of education was used to highlight problems of definition in the human rights debate. Others discussed the UDHR in relation to ethnocentric and westernised views and its relevance to other cultures and societies. A further common debate was that of arranged and forced marriages and their impact on human rights.

The main weaknesses in answers stemmed from not reading the question carefully enough and so producing answers that were not directly relevant. In this regard, some students wrote answers that gave details of human rights abuses without linking these to debates on human rights.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the Results Statistics page of the AQA Website.

Converting Marks into UMS marks

Convert raw marks into Uniform Mark Scale (UMS) marks by using the link below.

UMS conversion calculator www.aqa.org.uk/umsconversion