

November 2016 subject reports

## Social and Cultural Anthropology HL

Overall grade boundaries

### Higher level

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 14	15 - 30	31 - 42	43 - 54	55 - 66	67 - 78	79 - 100

Higher level internal assessment

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 7	8 - 9	10 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 15	16 - 20

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

Slightly more than half of reports presented appropriate and well-focused research topics, almost the same result as in the November 2015 session. Very few reports presented inappropriate topics this session.

Once again, issue-based research projects greatly outnumbered context-based approaches. The most successful reports seen this session were evenly split between these two general approaches. The highest achieving issue-based reports included one that examined relation between gossip discourse and social identity in a residential school, and another that considered how the adoption of iconic symbols on Facebook expresses the existence of an ephemeral transnational community. The most successful context-based reports included one examining how a religious ritual maintains social cohesion and another studying "creative economy" and personal identity in an artisanal market.

## Candidate performance against each criterion

### Criterion A: Identification of an issue or question

This session's results were very like last November's, as a slight majority of candidates presented appropriate and well-focused research questions. Very few candidates presented inappropriate topics or research questions.

### Criterion B: Research techniques

Three-quarters of the reports received at least two marks for this criterion, and very few candidates presented inappropriate research techniques. This result is somewhat less satisfactory than the result in the November 2015 session. No candidate received full marks for this criterion this session. It continues to be the case that many candidates do not fully describe and justify the context of their research, that is, discussion of selection criteria for informants, numbers of informants, selection of background (or "independent") variables, and circumstances under which research instruments were administered is incomplete or missing.

### Criterion C: Presentation of data

The majority of candidates received at least two marks for this criterion, and some candidates received full marks. Very few candidates presented data inappropriately. It continues evident that candidates find it difficult to balance ethnographic data presentation and the treatment of methodological and theoretical issues within this short report format. Often, and characteristic of a few centres, theoretically sophisticated reports appear "top-heavy", skimping on detailed data presentation. In contrast to recent May and November sessions, no cases were noted of data being erroneously presented in appendices.

### Criterion D: Interpretation and analysis of data

Further improvement was noted over the 2014 and 2015 November sessions in this criterion, as two-thirds of candidates presented appropriate analytical frameworks. However, the low mean mark for this criterion indicates that while candidates from all centres understood the need to frame ethnographic data in theory, all too often concepts and theory were simplistically defined and superficially applied in data analysis. It was gratifying to see less confusion between "theory" and "theoretical perspectives". Another improvement over the last two November sessions was that some candidates received full marks under this criterion, which has consistently been the most difficult criterion for candidates to fulfil in the past.

### Criterion E: Ethical issues

Performance in this criterion was slightly less successful than in recent November sessions, with slightly less than half of candidates providing substantial discussions of ethical issues. Unfortunately, almost a quarter of candidates failed to even mention ethical issues, a higher proportion than in recent sessions.

#### Criterion F: Anthropological insight and imagination

Performance in this criterion has improved over recent sessions as slightly more than half the candidates received at least two out of a possible three marks. Several candidates received full marks, but unfortunately a slightly larger number received no marks at all in this criterion.

### Recommendations for the teaching of future candidates

- **Data presentation:** Given the difficulties candidates often experience in providing detailed and well-organized presentations of data within the 2000-word limit, it is very important that teachers and candidates carefully work through the marked and annotated sample reports presented in the Teacher Support Material (TSM), accessible on the Online Curriculum Centre's subject home page.
- **Application of concepts and theory:** The Teacher Support Material will also be useful in guiding candidates to an appreciation of how theory can be made relevant to data analysis in a short report. Certainly, teachers in higher level classes should be making use of brief but well-written introductions to anthropological theory, several of which have appeared recently.
- **Treatment of ethical issues:** Since only a slight majority of candidates presented substantial discussions of ethical issues teachers cannot over-stress the importance of the guidelines and discussions of ethical practice found in the subject guide and in the Teacher Support Material. Ethical practice has received increased attention within anthropology over the past 40 years, and it has become impossible to critically read contemporary ethnography without seriously engaging ethical issues.
- **Organization and format of the report;** while there is no specific format for the HL IA report, it is advisable for teachers to produce a suggested format for their students to raise awareness of expectations for the research exercise as reflected in the assessment criteria. Inclusion of a table of contents, subheadings (often lacking in these reports), and a bibliography (often omitted) should be encouraged. The experience of some teachers has shown that if teachers do not suggest a format or outline for the report, students, especially the most conscientious ones, are likely to request one.

## Higher level paper one

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 14	15 - 17	18 - 20

### General comments

It is encouraging that centres appear to be taking on feedback, and this is demonstrated by a steady improvement in performance in this component. IB Social and Cultural Anthropology teachers should be commended for this.

### The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

The examination did not expose any areas of the programme which appeared difficult for the candidates. A few candidates struggled to offer generalizations and to clearly articulate the viewpoint of the anthropologist. Despite comments and feedback in the past this is still overlooked by some centres.

### The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

Almost all candidates had a relevant ethnography to offer in question 3. Most showed confident use of terminology, which is a useful indicator of study.

### The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

#### Question 1

Almost all candidates understood the question and answered it competently. Higher achieving responses were in the candidates' own words. Some were not clear about offering generalisations and stuck very close to the text.

#### Question 2

Almost all candidates were able to offer one or more theoretical perspective; the better responses offered sustained and coherent discussion of the text rather than isolated 'name checking' of theoretical perspectives. Several offered a clearly identified viewpoint of the anthropologist supported by reasoning, as opposed to vague and general mention of a possible viewpoint of the anthropologist.

### Question 3

Higher achieving responses chose a relevant ethnography for comparative purposes and were anchored to the point of comparison presented in the question rather than being a superficial comparison. Several candidates in one centre offered inappropriate material ('ethno-historical').

### Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Reiterating the comments made above, candidates should be encouraged to offer one or more generalization from beyond the text in question 1; should be clear about their reasons for offering a viewpoint of an anthropologist in question 2 and make sure that they are answering the question in question 3.
- Teachers must be reminded to use ethnographic material, not ethno-historical accounts.

### Higher level paper two

#### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 7	8 - 14	15 - 18	19 - 23	24 - 28	29 - 33	34 - 44

### The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

Some candidates wrote very short essays and so were not able to provide sufficient material to develop their answers fully. In several cases, it appeared that candidates had memorized set introductory paragraphs that were used no matter what the question. In one case a candidate answered only one question. In a fair number of responses there was either no reference at all to theory or no reference to a relevant theory that was linked to other materials in the answer. Candidates did not always seem to understand the theoretical perspectives that they referred to in their answers.

Too often answers were entirely descriptive and cited material that was not relevant, or made relevant, to the question. Far too many candidates did not demonstrate detailed knowledge of three societies and many wrote on only two societies in their answers with a very small number unable to write on more than one society.

Some subject-specific terms were not understood by candidates. In this examination session, the term 'post-colonialism' (question 1) was incorrectly defined as 'colonialism' by several candidates who then went on to use material that was not relevant to answering the question in their responses. Candidates did not always seem to clearly understand what was meant by 'industrialization' and very few tackled 'syncretism' convincingly (question 3). 'Morality' (question 7) was not always defined well or discussed appropriately.

Some candidates continue to be limited by their texts and/or ethnographic materials; these are either very general and wide-ranging and so do not permit candidates to write in detail on any society or are now rather dated and used with scant regard for the historical context in which they were produced and the very many changes that have taken place since the original ethnographic fieldwork was conducted. A small number of candidates were not able to identify the ethnographic materials they cited and several were not able correctly to locate the fieldwork locations of the people studied. This meant that the Mbuti, for example, were described as living in Papua New Guinea, the Trobrianders in South Asia, etc.

In terms of the questions themselves, as in previous years, candidates did not always answer all parts of the question and so were unable to produce essays that had covered all the necessary material to gain high marks.

## The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

As ever, some responses were very strong with clear focus, effective reference to theory and/or theoretical perspectives, and relevant and very well detailed ethnography. This was most evident in responses to question 2 (gender / politics, economy), question 4 (globalization / identity, equality), question 6 (symbols / resistance, purity, ethnicity), showing that some candidates are well prepared in terms of these areas of the programme. In terms of theory, there was some informed and very effective use of symbolic theory and globalization theory (e.g. Turner, Geertz, Appadurai, Hannerz), and sometimes of political economy. A proportion of candidates could cite non-anthropologists who have developed theoretical insights which are relevant to and used by anthropologists in their work (e.g. Judith Butler, Michel Foucault).

The clear majority of candidates could correctly identify the ethnographies used in their answers and could provide detailed materials from these to support their arguments.

## The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

### Question 1

This was a relatively popular question but was not always well answered. While many candidates could describe what was meant by 'economic issues' several candidates did not understand what 'post-colonialism' meant, sometimes incorrectly defining this as the period after the beginning of colonialism (i.e. colonialism itself) and so wrote essays that were not relevant to the question. These candidates wrote about colonial contexts and the economic changes wrought by colonisers on local populations. Had the question been about colonialism these essays would have been more successful as the ethnographic material selected would have been relevant. For both options to this question a significant proportion of candidates chose to write on the Guaraní and used ethno-historical resources as the ethnographic material. One limitation of the answers to this question was the broad historical sweep covering several centuries in a matter of a few words and the sometimes over generalizing nature of the essays. On new technologies, some candidates could write about the economic changes resulting from the contemporary use of the internet and relate this to notions of consumption but many others fell back on describing, for example, the arrival of iron tools in indigenous societies many decades and even centuries ago.

### Question 2

This was one of the more popular questions on the examination paper with the first two options most often selected by candidates to answer on. Most candidates could define gender appropriately though some still struggled with this concept. While some candidates used rather old ethnographic material such as Fernea's work in Iraq in the 1950s to describe the position of women in terms of either political or economic systems many others were able to cite more contemporary relevant ethnographies such as Fiona Ross's, 2010 *Raw life, New Hope: housing and everyday life in a post-apartheid community*; Lindquist's 2010 *Singapore's Borderlands: Tourism, Migration and the Anxieties of Mobility*; Jennaway's 2002 *Sisters and Lovers: Women and Desire in Bali*, and Wardlow's 2006 *Wayward Women: Sexuality and Agency in a New Guinea Society*. Some candidates used Kuper's Swazi material to good effect and could provide reasoned evaluations of her theoretical perspective and contextualize her work in sound historical terms. While lower achieving responses remained very descriptive and sometimes were little more than lists of differences between what women and men did in each society such as among the Trobrianders, higher achieving responses could incorporate theoretical concepts derived from Judith Butler or Foucault to help them explore gender issues. In a very small number of essays it was not clear which option a candidate had selected to answer on and some essays appeared to try to cover all three options.

### Question 3

This was not among the more popular questions on the examination and was not often well answered. In a few cases candidates wrote on societies where kinship practices had indeed changed but not in relation to any of the options offered on the question itself. For example, one candidate wrote about kinship changes among the Ju'Hoansi in relation to industrialization but this latter (industrialization) is not relevant to the society in question (at least not as described by Lee). Higher achieving responses to this question linked to industrialization used Bourgois's *In Search of Respect*. Others simply wrote whatever they knew about the kinship system of a given society but did not link their answers clearly to any one of the options listed in the question.

### Question 4

This was a very popular question with identity the most popular of the two options. Most candidates had a good understanding of globalization and could cite relevant anthropologists such as Appadurai or Hannerz when theorizing globalization. Some candidates used Nakamura's 2006 *Deaf in Japan: signing and the politics of identity* to good effect in answering this question. Some candidates focused on group identity and discussed the consequences of globalization on a group's sense of themselves. Higher achieving answers were those where identity was clearly and appropriately defined. For the responses on equality again, candidates who were clear about what they meant by equality tended to produce better essays. Often these responses focused on the impact of globalization on gender equality and cited cases of women entering the workforce in large numbers because of globalization. Higher achieving answers here could show how a local 'emancipation' of women in economic terms often went hand in hand with global inequality as workers in poorer countries gained work offered by companies based in richer countries only because they were paid less than workers in richer countries. Lower achieving responses discussed how the Trobrianders had not been changed by globalization or described globalization as another term for colonialism and then went on to write about what colonialism had changed in a selected society. Some interesting responses used Scheper-Hughes work on organ transplants to discuss globalization and equality.

### Question 5

Very few candidates answered this question and those who did mostly wrote on social movements. Where a social movement was correctly identified and described the answers were generally sound.



## Question 6

This question was relatively popular and was often quite well answered by candidates who could define and discuss symbols and symbolism and link this to relevant ethnography. Turner and Geertz were regularly cited for theoretical understandings and approaches to symbolism in culture and this was often well done. A range of ethnographies were selected to answer this question ranging from Kuper's work on the Swazi (for symbols and ethnicity), to work on caste systems (purity and symbols) to the rituals of the Mbuti. Many candidates also found ways of using Bourgois's *In Search of Respect* to link symbols with both resistance and ethnicity. Not surprisingly Geertz's "Balinese Cockfight" was also used to good effect by a small number of candidates.

## Question 7

While many candidates had a clear sense of the anthropology of exchange and could define and describe this, fewer could connect this in a reasoned and sustained fashion to morality. Some responses focused almost exclusively on exchange and made only passing and very limited reference to morality which meant that these responses did not fully answer the question. Candidates who answered this question often chose to write on Trobriand exchange using material on women's mortuary rituals (Weiner) and some sought to link these exchanges to notions of right and duty. Others wrote on exchange that was not moral – at least in hindsight – and described exploitative practices found during the colonial period. The lowest achieving responses were somewhat judgmental and apportioned blame and praise for particular forms of conduct found in ethnographies.

## Question 8

Again, Bourgois's *In Search of Respect* was used to answer this question and where candidates explicitly stated that an urban environment was the focus of their answer this was acceptable or where they compared the rural environment of the Puerto Ricans prior to migration to the USA and the urban environment they moved to. Others used ethnography about the Mbuti and their use of the forest, the Kayapo or Whitaker's work on reindeer herders in Finland for their answers to this question. In general, the material candidates presented was sound but often not all parts of the question were equally answered which meant that candidates either wrote mostly on one society and only briefly referred to the second one or they compared but did not contrast the ways in which the environment was used.

## Question 9

This was a very popular question drawing on many ethnographies for the answers. Bourgois was used to discuss migration consequences for the Puerto Ricans in New York and when well answered this also allowed for discussion of Marxist and feminist theories as well as world systems theory and political economy. More descriptive answers used Lee's work on the Ju'Hoansi and described the impact of migration on a host society while some used Ratier's *Villeros y Villas*. Some candidates made distinctions between internal and international forms of migration, forced migration and the disempowered position of refugees on arrival in a new home. Ross's, 2010 *Raw life, New Hope: housing and everyday life in a post-apartheid community* and Lindquist's 2010 *Singapore's Borderlands: Tourism, Migration and the Anxieties of Mobility* were also both used – often well – in response to this question. The consequences of migration were, depending on ethnographies selected both positive and negative. In many responses candidates could integrate changes in the consequences of migration for a society over time and some utilized Bourdieu's work on social and cultural capital in writing about the impact of migration on first, second and even third generation migrants. A small number of candidates wrote about tourism as a form of migration and this was not appropriate.

## Question 10

Very few candidates answered this question and responses were mainly about nation building with the invention of national rituals and events foregrounded in answers. Nation building as a post-colonial enterprise and as a means of uniting disparate ethnic and religious communities found within the nation state served as the focus for both why nation building was necessary and allowed for higher achieving answers to consider the limits of nation building endeavours, particularly in the context of globalization.

## Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- Teachers need to emphasize the critical importance of reading questions carefully, to make sure that responses address the terms of the question as asked. Candidates should be encouraged to answer all parts of the question.
- In terms of knowledge, teachers need to continue to work with candidates to help them find effective ways to incorporate their knowledge of theory and theoretical perspectives in this paper, and to make this relevant to the question. As noted previously, where candidates remembered to include some theoretical reference, too often this seemed isolated and unconnected to the rest of the response, and seemed to represent something learned by rote rather than something understood, that could be used to think about ethnographic materials.
- While most candidates are usually able to present some descriptive ethnographic materials, quite often these lack sufficient detail and/or the details are not made explicitly relevant to the question; again, as with theory, this seems to be a key issue – how to help candidates learn to think both with and about the materials, to address a range of different kinds of questions that require them to do something more than simply reproduce what has been learned, often it seems, somewhat mechanically.

- Too many candidates were not able to show evidence of having studied at least three societies in detail and a small number only cited one society on their examination responses. Candidates should be strongly encouraged to write on three societies across the examination paper and to select questions to answer that make this possible.

## Higher level paper three

### Component grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Mark range:</b>	0 - 3	4 - 6	7 - 8	9 - 11	12 - 13	14 - 16	17 - 20

### General comments

It was encouraging this year to see a clear increase in performance, as more candidates could demonstrate the quality of closely focused, critical thinking and writing about theory and theoretical perspectives in relation to ethnography that can be achieved at this level. More often than not, this seemed to be related to the kinds of materials studied, with candidates who had knowledge of more contemporary theory and ethnography consistently able to develop more effective and coherent responses, making clear connections and comparisons between programme components. While other candidates were usually able to demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of more or less relevant perspectives, theory and ethnography, this rarely went beyond description with each component presented in isolation and with little of the specific focus required by the question. For example, as noted previously, many chose to write about pairs of theoretical perspectives, which can be useful, however more often than not they gave equal weight to both, where the question required a specific focus on just one. Similarly, where the question specified a focus on just one theory or school of thought, many responses made reference to two. While this may allow candidates to demonstrate some knowledge that is generally relevant, it misses the kind of detailed knowledge and understanding expected at higher level.

## The areas of the programme and examination which appeared difficult for the candidates

This repeats what has often been said in previous years: the ability to develop relevant connections and comparisons between theoretical perspectives, schools of thought and relevant ethnography in terms of critical analysis continues to be a challenge for many candidates. While most candidates seemed to have some knowledge and understanding of each of these three critical components, rather often this appeared to be isolated, and limited to 'learned' materials that candidates struggled to apply effectively beyond the specific context in which it has been taught, or in response to new questions in terms of a genuine inquiry. Consequently, more often than not, relevance to the question was only weakly established, limiting achievement, especially on criteria D and E. And in some cases, even the "learned knowledge" was in itself quite limited to one or two schools of thought that are in themselves outdated (for example, it is troubling to continue to see accounts of Evolutionary Theory, particularly when it is uncritical as is often the case) and did not serve candidates well (this was also the case for some of the ethnography still in use). These kinds of limitations mean that some candidates ignored the requirement to focus on **one** perspective or **one** school of thought, and wrote what they knew with little apparent consideration of focus and/or relevance.

## The areas of the programme and examination in which candidates appeared well prepared

It was encouraging again this year to see the quality of some of the thinking and writing candidates can produce about ethnography in relation to both perspectives and schools of thought: this session at least four of the five questions produced an encouraging number of anthropologically informed and closely argued responses, demonstrating effectively the kind of critical work that can be done at this level. It was also encouraging that different candidates were able to use their knowledge and understanding of the same ethnographic and sometimes theoretical materials to respond thoughtfully to different questions. Almost all candidates were able to demonstrate some knowledge of different perspectives and of some mostly relevant ethnography; and several schools of thought seem quite well understood, including Structural Functionalism, Symbolic Theory, Cultural Ecology, Cultural Materialism, Political Economy, Feminist Theory, Postmodernism and some aspects of Practice Theory, although the extent of this knowledge and understanding is very uneven between centres. Some of the most successful responses used some quite current ethnographic materials, including Bourgois' *In Search of Respect* (1996, 2<sup>nd</sup>. ed. 2003), Lindquist's *Singapore Borderlands* (2010), Khosravi's *Young and Defiant in Tehran* (2008), Jennaway's *Sisters and Lovers* (2002), Ross' *Raw Life, New Hope* (2010), and Kaifa Roland's *Cuban Color in Tourism and La Lucha* (2010).

## The strengths and weaknesses of the candidates in the treatment of individual questions

### Question 1

This question was quite popular and produced a wide range of responses: several were high achieving in terms of critical comparative argument where others were largely descriptive, and seemed limited by the materials studied in terms of either schools of thought and/or ethnography. The most successful responses compared Structural-Functionalism and Postmodernism, with reference to Kuper's 1930s study of the Swazi and Khosravi's *Young and Defiant in Tehran* (2008) or Bourgois' *In Search of Respect* (1996), articulating the comparison in terms of either structure-centred and agency-centred or materialist and idealist perspectives. Almost all of the other responses compared, more or less effectively, either Psychological/Biosocial Functionalism or Structural Functionalism with Political Economy, Cultural Ecology or Conflict theory. These responses tended to be more descriptive than analytical, but were able to list some comparative perspectives and characteristics.

### Question 2

This was the most popular question and produced some sound responses on both options, however those evaluating a conflict-centred perspective were more often relatively successful than those who chose to examine a diachronic perspective in relation to the study of social change. This difference appeared to be closely linked to knowledge of relevant schools of thought: responses evaluating a conflict-centred perspective used a range of theories including Marxist theory, Gluckman's conflict theory, Geertz's version of symbolic theory, Feminism and Bourdieu and Scott, whereas those evaluating a diachronic perspective were limited to Evolutionary theory or Historical Particularism, with only one response referencing Political Economy. This is where their problems began. While some candidates were able to demonstrate limited descriptive and uncritical knowledge of Evolutionary Theory in anthropology, they were mostly unable to make any relevant links to ethnography or social change, and if they did risked doing this in very problematic terms such as 'progress', 'advanced', and even 'primitive' and 'civilized' which was very troubling to read in 2016. Others sometimes had a little more success when they tried to evaluate Historical Particularism, but again this was usually presented with little understanding of the school of thought itself, or ways in which it continues to have some relevance for more current approaches to ethnographic thought or practice. As in other questions, the key distinction between effective and less effective responses was the ability to move beyond a largely learned description of theory and perspectives, to think and write with and about them in terms of the given question.

## Question 3

The four options offered here in terms of exploring social issues also proved popular and those focused on the idealist perspective or on the agency-centred perspective produced some of the highest achieving responses seen overall. In general, it was clear that all four perspectives were quite well understood, and that most candidates could link these to relevant theory and ethnography. Although not always clearly identified as such, social issues explored included social marginalization and inner-city poverty (Bourgois' *In Search of Respect*, 1996), gender inequality (Patel's *Working the Nightshift*, 2010, and Jennaway's *Sisters and Lovers*, 2002), and global migration and cultural conflict (Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You*, 1998 – but **not** an ethnography, Lindquist's *Singapore Borderlands*, 2010, and Khosravi's *Young and Defiant in Tehran*, 2008). It was interesting to see several candidates exploring the same ethnographic materials and social issue through different perspectives; for example, Patel's *Working the Night Shift* was very effectively explored in terms of gender inequality using feminist theory – Butler and Massey – through idealist, materialist and agency-centred perspectives. These responses each demonstrated the importance of close focus on the terms of the question, to make sure that the detailed knowledge and understanding presented was used critically to make a particular argument. Those working with other ethnographic materials such as Lee's study of the Ju'Hoansi or Harris' account of the Maring based on Rapaport's materials, while usually linked to potentially relevant perspectives and theory, remained descriptive rather than analytical and lacked close focus as a social issue was not identified.

## Question 4

Although not often chosen this question produced an unusual range of responses with candidates either producing high achieving or low achieving responses, with none in the middle. As already noted, the distinction again seemed to be linked to knowledge and understanding of more contemporary schools of thought, and the ability to think and write critically with and about these in relation to perspectives and ethnography. Some essays focused on the role of structure in relation to feminist theory, which were all excellent; using the work of Butler and Massey, the responses variously identified and discussed capitalism, patriarchy, religious ideology and globalization as key structures limiting women's agency in Patel's *Working the Night Shift* about women in India's call centres. Some essays focused on the role of structure in relation to symbolic theory, which were also well done; these responses discussed the different approaches of Turner and Geertz to symbolic theory in relation to Fadiman's journalistic account of the Hmong in California (*The Spirit Catches You*) working with Bourdieu's notions of fields and particular forms of cultural and linguistic capital as dominant structures for the Hmong. At the other end of the scale, some responses focused on the role of structure in structural-functionalism, presented limited and incomplete description with little and/or problematic links to bits and pieces of ethnography. The remaining responses were something of a mixture – some had no clear reference to any theory or referred to more than one theory briefly, with little understanding, and one was more satisfactory in at least trying to link relevant ethnography to transactionalism as a theory, but this was not well understood.

### Question 5

Although this was a fairly straightforward question, it was not often chosen and was generally not well done. Although all responses had at least a basic understanding of a synchronic perspective and its counterpart, any relation to relevant theory was a challenge, with almost half of the responses making no reference to any theory or referencing a theory incorrectly as synchronic. Here again, in several cases, it was worrying to see descriptive and uncritical knowledge of evolutionary theory presented unproblematically as something a synchronic perspective could not produce. Several more successful candidates were able to identify structural-functionalism as a relevant theory here and to present some ethnographic examples (Australian Aborigines, the Trobrianders or the Ju'Hoansi) to illustrate their claims but this remained quite limited and largely descriptive. Overall, all the responses to this question suggested that the candidates had quite limited knowledge and understanding of relevant ideas and materials.

### Recommendations and guidance for the teaching of future candidates

- The challenge of this paper is for candidates to be secure enough in their knowledge and understanding of theoretical perspectives, and selected schools of thought and ethnography, to be able to think and write with and about these components in response to unseen questions to demonstrate understanding of some of the ways in which perspectives and schools of thought shape ethnographic accounts. As noted above, this year it seemed that for some candidates knowledge of schools of thought and/or ethnography was limited in range or context or outdated, often limiting their achievement; thus teachers are encouraged to review their own programme and materials to make sure that they are as current and relevant as is possible.
- The other challenge for teachers is to develop classroom strategies that encourage candidates to become more confident in their knowledge and understanding of perspectives, and especially current schools of thought, through frequent discussion, debate and application/writing. Candidates need to develop more critical, analytical and comparative skills to ensure that answers are clearly focused and relevant to the question, making connections between different elements of the programme rather than presenting isolated 'learned' materials mechanically.
- Finally, it is important to emphasize that at this level, ethnographic materials studied need to be more than just short cases described or re-examined in a general or larger text.