



# **MARKSCHEME**

**NOVEMBER 2000**

**SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

**Higher Level**

**Paper 1**

## Notes on individual questions

It is essential to approach the task of assessing the candidate's responses to the questions on the unseen passage with a flexible and open mind. The response to each question must be assessed on its own merits, bearing in mind the criteria of evaluation, the notes on individual questions and the special requirements of the particular question.

The notes on individual questions are for guidance only, except in those cases where a short factual answer is required. Candidates' answers may vary considerably, especially where comparison is necessary. It is possible to give a similar mark to different answers in such cases. Given the limited number of points allocated for each question it is probably not possible for all the elements indicated below to be included in each answer.

*Extract (pp. 192-199) from Caroline Osella and Filippo Osella. 1998. Friendship and Flirting: Micro-Politics in Kerala, South India. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 4(n.s.):189-206.*

- 1. How does the interaction of young people differ when they engage in *tuning* and when they have a *line* in Valiyagramam? [4 marks]**

This question is designed to elicit an indication that candidates have understood the basic ethnographic tenets of the passage. Descriptions of the differences between *tuning* and a *line* are sprinkled throughout the passage. *Tuning* and a *line* differ in a variety of general ways, of which the following are examples: *tuning* is more ephemeral than a *line*; *tuning* resembles harassment more than the *line*; in *tuning*, the man is aggressive and the woman submissive, whereas this is not necessarily the case in the *line*.

Candidates may utilise differences that the passage describes implicitly rather than explicitly. For example, Osella & Osella characterize *tuning* as highly stereotyped in form; while they do not state explicitly that the form of the *line* is less stereotyped, candidates may infer that this is the case from the fact that the *line* is more protracted and dependent on the designs of both parties.

The best answers will aim to abstract from the details. For example, they may point out that *tuning* reproduces gender hierarchy more than the *line* does: in *tuning*, the man is aggressive while the woman still appears submissive, while the *line* either is more egalitarian or represents a reversal of the power dynamics of *tuning*, since the woman may withhold interaction should she wish to. However, the generalisations provided in the answer need not be elaborate to receive full marks.

2. **Provide *three* examples of the ambiguity that characterises *tuning* between young women and young men in Valiyagramam. Explain clearly why the examples you have chosen are ambiguous.** [6 marks]

This question requires candidates to focus on a subset of the illustrations that they may have provided in answer to Question 1, but to present them in a more overtly analytic fashion. The best answers will demonstrate a clear understanding of how social structures and dynamics can be made ambiguous, although they do not need to address this point explicitly.

Satisfactory examples can take a variety of forms and can be based on a broad panoply of ethnographic observations provided in the passage. For example, *tuning* is ambiguous because the hostility that young men display may or may not be meant seriously. Ambiguity is also embedded in *tuning* because its outcome is so highly unpredictable. This unpredictability is based in turn on the ambiguous nature of the young woman's response, which may communicate, in quick succession or simultaneously, irritation and amusement, aloofness and interest, and shyness and boldness. A more abstracted example based on the same evidence could describe how young women in Valiyagramam seem to be caught between their own hidden desires for romance and the structural requirements that they behave meekly, and that this situation is itself fraught with ambiguity. The above examples demonstrate the various levels of analysis and abstraction at which candidates can identify ambiguity.

3. **Drawing on the evidence in the passage of gender hierarchy that characterizes everyday life, show how this hierarchy is challenged in *tuning* and the *line* in Valiyagramam.** [5 marks]

Success in answering this question is predicated on the candidate being able to identify explicit evidence of gender hierarchy in Valiyagramam everyday life. Such evidence includes, among others, the fact that boys initiate contact in situations where no prior interaction has taken place; the suggestion that young women must beware of gossip and public observation; and the interpretation of girls' behaviour in *tuning* as either a reaction to dominance or a sign of deference (both signs of subordination). This evidence may be described on its own (*e.g.* in an introductory paragraph) or as part of a discussion of how gender hierarchy is challenged.

Gender hierarchy is challenged in various ways in *tuning* and the *line*. First, the girl may not respond to the boy's aggressive *tuning* overture, and thus potentially dismiss his prerogative to approach her at all. Alternatively, she may respond to the overture, but do so aggressively, and thus undermine the stereotypical association of men with aggression and women with the lack thereof. The trajectory of both *tuning* and a *line* is ultimately in the young woman's hands since she can put an end to the proceedings if she wishes to; this control is further evidence of the power young women wield in *tuning*. The fact that the girl's *tuning* demeanour can be interpreted in many different ways means that she can utilise ambiguity to further her own agendas and thus potentially undermine a system in which men have agendas and women are expected to *react to* men's agendas.

The best answers will consist of a few examples, framed in a context that will spell out the logical steps that lead the candidate to conclude that gender hierarchy is challenged in *tuning* and a *line*.

4. **Compare the challenge to hierarchy that occurs in *tuning* and the *line* in Valiyagramam with a similar process in one other society which you have studied.**

*[5 marks]*

Candidates may chose any situation in which hierarchy is challenged or resisted, and this hierarchy may but need not be gender-based. However, they should identify specific ways in which the situation they have chosen resembles or differs from the Valiyagramam case. They should organise their answers in a clear manner, and the best answers will utilise anthropological concepts (*e.g.* power, hierarchy, resistance) to capture similarities, differences, and generalisations. Candidates must situate the comparative case chosen in terms of group, place, author and ethnographic present.

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