



MARKSCHEME

November 2008

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Higher Level

Paper 1

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1. **Discuss the relationship between “motherland” tours and the identities of those who take part in the tours.** *[6 marks]*

There are many examples from the text that may be selected to answer this question and a good answer will develop a sound discussion based on a range of such examples.

Transnationally adopted children may find, as they grow, that their position in a Norwegian family and social context raises issues about their biological and national origins. Rather than simply ignoring these, Norwegian parents, again falling back on ideas of the significance of shared substance, this time in the form of genetic inheritance and shared origins in the form of experiences in a different national and social context, increasingly appear to take part in “roots” or “motherland” tours. The very terms “roots” and “motherland” reinforce an understanding of identity as inextricably linked with a biological source (the “root” of a person) and with a place of origin, (here with a focus on the national using a combination of kin term + place term = the “motherland”). While the express aim of the tours is to enable the adopted children to acknowledge their dual identities, the latent aim, for the parents at least, is to reinforce the “Norwegianness” of the child and to confirm the reality of the family that was created when the adopted child arrived in Norway.

Candidates may choose to develop their answers in terms of their knowledge of kinship and essentialized notions of belonging or they may choose to consider the ways in which expectations about shared identity fail, as when the Korean children who were adopted by Norwegian families fail to experience any empathy with those they most resemble in Korea itself. The relations between assumed biological givens, the social contexts in which individuals find themselves and the ideologies of kinship may all be the focus of an appropriate answer to this question. As always, good answers do not need to be fully comprehensive but do need to justify the selections made from the text and develop these into a reasoned, coherent and focused response to the question.

2. How are transnationally adopted children transformed into Norwegian children? [6 marks]

The answer to this question requires an understanding of processes that work at the level of the state and the family to effect a change on the individual. The processes, however, have their limits and no amount of legal, linguistic or symbolic action is able to change the appearance of a Korean child adopted into a Norwegian family.

As soon as the child arrives in Norway a bureaucratic process of renaming and categorizing the child as a Norwegian with a Norwegian name, legal identity and kinship network begins. This is described as a rebirth because the process is not simply one of giving the child an identity but also simultaneously requires the negation of the child's original birth identity and the production of a new one. Birth origins that centre on the biological nature of the individual are replaced with new social and legal origins that negate the primacy of the biological and run counter to the dominant metaphor for describing kin as people who "share blood". Once the legal process is complete the parents begin to incorporate their adopted child into a social context serving to reinforce Norwegian family ideals. Children are photographed, and hence symbolically placed, in typical Norwegian locations and shown enjoying Norwegian national celebrations and practices. They are described as fitting into their new lives with ease and in this manner they are distanced socially and culturally from their countries of origin. Parents also use language to effect the transformation of their transnational children into Norwegian kin. The children are described as "coming home" as if a place in a Norwegian family is where the child was always, and quite naturally, supposed to be. This use of language denies the biological and national origins of the child and aims to reinforce their "Norwegianness" despite their appearance. Better answers will note that in spite of the attempts by adoptive parents to negate the biological and national origins of the children they adopt, the contradictions involved in adopting children who look so different from their parents and the attempts to "background" these origins lead to contradictions which surface as the children begin to grow up.

The most accomplished answers will develop an organized and focused response to the question which is supported by relevant selections of materials from the text. Candidates need not present every possible example found in the text but answers do have to be organized and discussed in a reasoned fashion to do well.

- 3. Compare the ways in which transnationally adopted children become Norwegian with the ways in which individuals in a society you have studied in detail become members of a group. [8 marks]**

This question requires candidates to describe the processes and interactions that enable an individual to be incorporated or assimilated or accepted into a group with all the benefits and obligations that follow from such membership of a group. However, the incorporation or transformation of the individual into a member of a group may not be entirely without contradictions or limitations. In the case of the Korean children adopted into Norwegian families the contradictions focus on identity mediated by a physical appearance that sets these children apart from those who look ethnically Norwegian. Despite their physical appearance, however, these children are not Korean and their visits to Korea reinforce their sense of not belonging to Korea and not empathising with Koreans. This situation is reinforced by a lack of linguistic and cultural knowledge and results in the confirmation of a Norwegian identity as the product of socialization which overrides and negates the bio-genetic component of identity.

Candidates may, but do not need to, select groups that directly compare with the adopted children and their parents of the passage, nor do they need to focus on kinship as an organizing frame for their answer.

However, 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]**.
