

MARKSCHEME

November 2001

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Higher Level

Paper 1

Notes on Individual Questions

Extract (pp. 422-424) from David E. Sutton (1997), Local Names, Foreign Claims: Family Inheritance and National Heritage on a Greek Island, American Ethnologist 24:415-437.

1. **Identify *two* ways in which baptismal naming practices on Kalymnos creates and reinforces people's links to the past.** **[4 marks]**

This straightforwardly descriptive question elicits candidates' understanding that the past can take different forms. The past can be a recent, individualised past, embodied in grandparents whom one is likely to know. It can be a less tangible but more durable entity consisting of the alternation of two names over successive generations. It can be rooted in religion, as one is named after a saint whose life story and martyrdom are known and told.

Candidates may also invoke the connection between naming and the transmission of land ownership from one generation to the next, which grounds ownership, at any given point in time, in the legitimacy of direct inheritance. If an answer analyses the relationship between naming and land tenure for this question, it must focus primarily on the historical aspects of the relationship, *i.e.*, on the transmission of land over generations, rather than on the logistics of land ownership at any given point in time.

In each case, answers must both describe the particular concept of the past at play **and** explain the role of baptismal naming practices in creating and reinforcing the bond between living persons and the particular form of the past in question. Candidates must describe the ethnographic data and interpret them using their own words.

2. **Describe the major features of land inheritance on Kalymnos as it was practised in the past and as it is practised today?** **[4 marks]**

Land inheritance skipped one generation, and women and men passed on the title to land to their granddaughters and grandsons respectively. Furthermore, people bequeathed most of their property to their namesake, which were their first-born grandchildren of same sex as themselves. Naming practices followed exactly the same pattern.

The wording of the question clearly requires candidates to focus on the past, when Kalymnians were poorer and land tenure was more inequitable, but it also requires them to say something about contemporary practices. The question also elicits the discussion of a **relationship**. However, candidates are free to approach this relationship as they wish: for example, by discussing the general pattern and pointing out variations over time in the course of the discussion, or by discussing the past first, then the present, and alluding to differences. Candidates may usefully point out the close parallel between naming and land inheritance, as well as the fact that one justified the other. Particularly perceptive answers will also note the congruence between naming and land inheritance: both served to stress the continuity of families and their ideational or material attributes.

3. **Explain why Sutton discusses the connection between names and property as ‘ideological’ (line 51).** [6 marks]

This question encourages the candidate to view Kalymnos naming as an example of a common phenomenon, namely the invocation of ‘culture’ to support economic practices that benefit some but disadvantage others. Candidates may tackle this question in a variety of ways. For example, they may analyze the logic underlying the link between Kalymnos naming practices and inheritance practices, or they may invoke other illustrations of the same general phenomenon in other societies and clearly link them to this case, or they may discuss ‘ideology’ or political aspects of ‘culture’ on a theoretical level. Whatever approach they choose, good answers will demonstrate candidates’ understanding of the ‘political’ nature (in a broad sense) of the cultural practice in question, even if Kalymnos Islanders do not think of their naming practices as politics. The best answers may analyze different levels at which ‘benefit’ and ‘disadvantage’ operate in the Kalymnos case: the community as a whole, as well as each family, will benefit from land remaining consolidated into the hands of the elder heirs; while younger siblings suffer, even though they themselves are members of the community and family, and supposedly may reap indirectly from the benefits accrued to the group.

4. **Identify a social practice that links particular persons to some aspect of the group in a society which you have studied, and compare this practice to baptismal naming on Kalymnos.** [6 marks]

This question gives candidates wide scope in their choice of a comparative case, since many social practices have the effect, directly or indirectly, of grounding people into some aspect of the group into which they are born. More obvious examples are initiation rituals, marriage (particularly in an endogamous context), funerals, exchange, participation in religious events, and so on. Candidates may also choose judiciously selected ongoing processes that do not constitute specific events, such as some aspect of socialization.

Who is linked to whom can be an interesting question; for examples, funerals ostensibly reinforce the status of the deceased as a member of the group, but more importantly, they comment on the relationships between living persons. Similarly, there is variation in terms of which aspect of the group persons are grounded into through their participation in particular social practices. Many social practices reinforce bonds between persons and their kinship group, the past, or religious heritage, as is the case of Kalymnos baptismal naming; but other practices can be focused on other aspects of society (e.g., initiation rituals that embed people in age cohorts).

Candidates should organize their answers in a clear manner, and the best answers will utilize anthropological concepts relevant to the comparative case to capture similarities, differences, and generalizations. Candidates must situate the comparative case chosen in terms of group, place, author and ethnographic present.
