GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH **9239/11**

Paper 1 Written Examination **October/November 2018**

1 hour 30 minutes

INSERT (RESOURCE BOOKLET)

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Resource Booklet contains Documents 1 and 2 which you should use to answer the questions.

You should spend approximately 10 minutes reading the documents before attempting to answer the questions. This is allowed for within the time set for the examination.

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

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The documents below consider issues related to cultural heritage. Read them **both** in order to answer **all** the questions on the paper.

Document 1: adapted from *Generational Change in the Social Acceptability of Tattoos*, an article written by Dave Paul Strohecker. The article was published by the University of Minnesota (USA) in 2012. The author teaches sociology at the University of Maryland (USA). He makes reference to a range of academic sources, which are fully referenced in the original document.

Recently, a British police chairman, Ian Pointon, called for the end of a ban against tattoos on police officers in the UK. His argument was that tattoos can break down barriers with the public. This is the first time a public official has argued that tattoos have social benefits. The change in perspective is a surprise, especially with the long connection between tattoos and deviance (behaviour that does not follow society's rules).

Tattoos have had a difficult history in American services such as fire, police, and the military. Members of these professions (especially the armed services) were tattoo enthusiasts in the early days (DeMello 2000; Steward 1990). However, they now find it more difficult to express themselves through body art. There is a gap in attitudes between them and their leaders. For instance, the Marines and the Army National Guard have recently banned visible tattoos. For many leaders of these services, tattoos still mean "unprofessional."

These different viewpoints show a change in the social acceptability of tattoos. I believe there is a shift in attitudes to body art in public life. Ian Pointon rightly identifies a generation gap in attitudes to tattoos and body art. Where youth admire tattoos and other body modifications, older Americans dislike them, mainly because they think tattoos tell them something about tattooed people. For our parents' generation, tattoos meant deviant behavior; having a tattoo was a sign that you were probably a criminal. Before the "Tattoo Renaissance" of the 1970s (Rubin 1988), tattooing was mainly practiced by working class groups, criminals, or the social outcasts of America.

Though some claim differently (Koch, Roberts, Armstrong, and Owen 2010), this connection between tattoos and deviance seems to be weakening. Having a tattoo (or two or three) no longer predicts deviant behavior. Tattooing has spread to nearly all class and racial groups. Social attitudes to women with tattoos are much stricter, so their tattoos tend to be smaller, less visible and with different images. People from a variety of social backgrounds modify their bodies with permanent inks. Books, magazines and blogs are devoted to tattoos and body art and people travel long distances, paying well to be tattooed by highly-respected tattoo artists. A recent independent American survey reveals that 18–29-year-olds are the most tattooed generation in American history, 38% having a tattoo. Among tattooed people, youth are likely to become more heavily tattooed than ever before! Tattoos are becoming mainstream, commonly seen on famous people, and much more acceptable to the general public.

Ian Pointon observes that tattoos may help organizations like the police to connect with the public. This is a welcome view of tattoos and tattooing. I am calling for a "pro-social" definition of tattoo, one that sees tattoos not as anti-social, but expressing identity, goodwill and meaningful social ties. The decorated skin becomes a statement of personality. It connects the individual to the larger social body (D'Costa 2012). Tattoos should not be seen as signs of social distance, but of connection. Let us not deny the positive potential of body markings for communication with others.

Document 2: adapted from *Tribal Marks – the 'African tattoo'* an article written by Melinda Ozongwu. The article was published on the This is Africa website in 2012. The author is a writer on African affairs.

In Africa, tattooing dates back thousands of years, from inked symbols on women in ancient Egypt to tattoos symbolising tribal status. Tattooing on body and face had a role in Africa's history because of tribal and clan wars, beauty, witchcraft and superstitious beliefs. Those reasons are not valid today, so we need not limit ourselves with old-fashioned practices.

In Nigeria, human rights activists are campaigning to ban tribal marks, and some states have outlawed them. Osun State now has a law stating: "No person shall tattoo or make a skin mark or cause any tattoo or skin mark to be made on a child". This law targets rural areas because increasing numbers of families are marking children for superstitious and spiritual reasons.

At university in the UK, thirty years ago, I had a Nigerian friend with traditional Yoruba markings on his cheeks. He was not proud of his scars and felt sad that he had never known his face without them. Before this, I thought people with tribal marks were uneducated, lived in rural areas and followed traditions without question. My friend's family was urban and wealthy, but his educated parents chose to uphold tradition by having his face marked permanently. Nowadays, fewer people in Africa choose to do this. Is modern Africa adjusting to Western standards of beauty, or are we simply changing our traditions and culture to suit ourselves?

A group of women beg for money near my workplace. Their tribe is identified partly by the many tiny dots on their foreheads and cheeks. These marks are often made during puberty by the girls' mothers, using thorns. I wonder how they feel about facial markings. Do they find them beautiful? Or are they more concerned about cultural traditions, ignoring Western or modern African definitions of beauty? Maybe tattooing is simply all they know. After all, they didn't choose to mark themselves. In their village the marks have value and meaning. However, in the city they cannot blend in – they become a symbol of the African who refuses to progress. They reflect a typical National Geographic magazine photo for Westerners. They do not represent us: the modern African, more influenced by Western ideas and definitions than we admit. In reality, our 'beauty' can affect job prospects, relationships and even how strangers treat us. Modern women want flawless skin, while traditional women have tribal marks that completely dominate their faces.

Oddly, some Western sub-cultures favour facial tattoos. Like most fashions, these will be a passing trend, removed by laser surgery in future. In Africa, some rural people are marking their children and for them it is far from a trend. We do not need to cling to old superstitions or to blindly follow Western fashion when it copies outdated ethnic traditions.

We have a rich heritage, but we cannot live in the past. Modern Africa must reject those historical rules, superstitions and practices that limit us. Our clothing, food and languages are evolving, and some practices must end. The West influences us but we must only follow trends out of choice; we aren't defenceless. We do not need to go back to the 'facial tattoo' – been there, done that.

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