GUIDELINES TO EXAMINERS CONCERNING SOSANT1300

This course is examined through a take-home exam. This has been deemed a much more educative means for students to come to terms with the anthropological holism and the comparative approach needed to critically comprehend the phenomenon conventionally called "the economy". This pedagogical choice has been praised in student feedback as well as discussions in class (during seminars). However, what needs to be taken into account is the fact that some students, esp. from other departments (SOSANT1300 majority students are from outside SAI – indeed, some economy students in the amphitheatre, too) have not had a take-home exam before, so examiners might need to be lenient in assessment.

Examining the one question that students pick out in this take-home system implies that examiners seek out for connections made in student papers: connections among concepts, notions and readings. Teaching has focused on making these connections palpable and repeatedly in class, esp. towards the end of the course, we brought forward those links and the need to make cross-references and see the economy not as disconnected thematics but as a critical narrative and a series of ethnographies and theory pieces that talk to each other.

The examined paper needs be comprehensive pertaining to the question the student would pick. If students draw on different kinds of readings and effectively show critical capacity to engage with diverse ethnographic and conceptual themes, they should be rewarded with a high mark. Showing knowledge of the general overview of the course, especially drawing on the main concepts of economic anthropology is important, while managing to attach those to the specifics of the question is equally significant. Extra marks are given to students who can extend their answers including references to material mentioned in lectures and discussed in seminars but not included in the syllabus: these can be political economy and the labour theory of value, ideas from contemporary politics and the fluctuations of current capitalism, Marxist theory, phenomenology, as well as a variety of geographical, sociological and economic notions and theories, from habitus to mapping, from shanty town dwelling to colonialism; and finally, we more than welcome students' own views if well informed and if showing critical, independent, engaged thinking.

Exam questions are generic, but each engages a specific array of readings – in each and every case those extend beyond a week's readings: so, a question on social responses to market expansion -for instance-, might require students to mobilise learnings on the moral economy (as per Thompson and Scott, but also readings from other weeks touching on the subject, as per Barth or Dolan for example), as well as, for a bonus mark, show an understanding of Polanyi and the discussion on markets, but also indeed possibly a generic understanding of what neoliberalism is, and/or possibly a sense of how the labour market and ensued exploitation comes about (as per the course's monograph). The students must show a strong knowledge of the syllabus according to the specifics of the question but also, to get extra marks, a critical disposition and independent thought. Knowledge of the syllabus need not stress into name-dropping, as a firm engagement with even only 4-5 readings should suffice for a high mark. The degrees and respective grades of demonstrating that encompassing knowledge are varied, and we need to take into account that many students could extend beyond the 3500 limit, but need to be within word count; we also need to

make sure not the full array of that knowledge is demanded but that going that extra mile with it is properly rewarded.

Generally, students must use at least 3 texts from the reading list. They can draw on other readings and sources, news items, film and music to make your paper stronger, but with at least the stipulated number of reading list texts. Discussion questions require that they have a viewpoint that they argue well for and balance against other possible positions.

GRADING

A: These papers are **exceptional**. They illustrate excellence in that they bring in a large range of readings from across the course, demonstrating how these readings speak to each other. These papers thus show not only full understanding of the key reference points for the question, but also independent thinking and creativity. They naturally cover the key readings that are obvious reference points for the topic in question but also bring in a wide range of other relevant readings from the course and indeed possibly from beyond. The answers shed fresh light on the key concepts or topics. For example an answer on denaturalising might obviously reference readings on Polanyi, but could also point out how Thompson's historical reading of subjectivity is important, or how Mauss or Malinowski argued against homo economicus, or how Weiner points out how female labour is intrinsic to the making of economic life, or how Tsing's analysis of mushroom sorting potentially call into question what is naturalised as labour etc. We value personal, historical, and generally extracurricular examples in this course; if written with sophistication, they bring out a better understanding of the concepts.

B: These papers are **very good** in the way that they show good understanding of the key readings relevant to the topic at hand and bring in some comparison with other literature across the course. This will not be of the same degree as an A grade either in terms of range or sophistication of argument. They will bring in some comparison and show a degree of understanding of connections. For example an answer on the forming of markets will reference Polanyi on fictitious commodities and might attempt an obvious cross-reading across the course (for example mentioning Harvey's history of neoliberalism, or Dolan's discussion of introducing new commodities to Western Africa) without going more deeply into papers that also problematise the making of markets less obviously. For example, Zaloom's discussion on the making of the financial market through masculinity and competition might not be referenced. Indeed, the writing that warrants a B can be great, but might lack originality and independent thinking – might be the work of a laborious student but not a paper that stands out due to capacity to synthesise.

C: These papers are **good**. They show a good enough level of understanding of the basic concepts of the key texts for the topic involved and have at least one small comparison

across the course syllabus that is not entirely inaccurate. For example, in answering the 2nd question, a C paper would clearly talk about how anthropologists draw from ethnography of small places but also of -like with Zaloom or Miller- less “exotic” sites.

D: These papers are **satisfactory**: They show a basic if sometimes incomplete knowledge of the key readings and have little or no accurate reading across the syllabus. They do reference readings but they might not show a good grasp of them.

E: These papers are **adequate**: They show some understanding of the key texts or issues but with significant gaps or errors and little or no accurate reading across the syllabus. They might reference in a very superficial way, or show lack of understanding, or veer slightly off topic.

F: These papers **fail**. They do not reference the key texts or arguments or use them in a significantly inaccurate manner.

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