UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXAMINATIONS
General Certificate of Education Advanced Subsidiary Level and Advanced Level

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**SOCIOLOGY** **9699/23**

Paper 2 Principles and Methods 2 **May/June 2012**

**1 hour 30 minutes**

Candidates answer on the Question Paper.

No additional materials are required.

**READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST**

Write your Centre number, candidate number and name on all the work you hand in.
Write in dark blue or black pen.
You may use a soft pencil for any diagrams, graphs or rough working.
Do not use staples, paper clips, highlighters, glue or correction fluid.
DO **NOT** WRITE IN ANY BARCODES.

Answer **two** questions.
You may not need all the answer lines for your answer.
The number of marks is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.

This document consists of **13** printed pages and **3** blank pages.


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Answer **two** questions.

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**1** When a group of people establish a way of life in which there are shared norms and values their behaviour and morality is described as their culture. A culture will include language, dress, food, material goods, skills and knowledge. More importantly perhaps, it will also include beliefs and ideas about appropriate forms of behaviour. The national culture of a country may be described as the pattern of conduct and beliefs that is shared by most or all of the population. However, there may be differences between the behaviour and thought processes of groups within any single country based on such factors as class, gender, age and ethnicity. Some sociologists think that cultural differences between countries and groups in modern industrial societies are disappearing due to the impact of *globalisation*.

The term community is sometimes used to describe all the people that share a similar culture, but it usually refers to a closer sense of identification between individuals in terms of co-operation and a sense of belonging. The idea of community is very important in understanding traditional rural societies where kinship ties and religion bind people together in a way of life that is slow to change and involves close relations with neighbours and family members. Industrialisation led to the breakdown of close-knit rural communities and their replacement by an urban way of life in which relations between people are more impersonal and there is greater individual freedom.

**(a)** What is meant by the term *globalisation*?

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**(b)** Describe **two** characteristics that are common to most national cultures.

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**(c)** Explain why there may be greater individual freedom in societies based on an urban way of life.

*For Examiner's Use*

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**(d)** Assess the extent to which cultural differences are disappearing in modern industrial societies.

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**2** Much sociological research involves asking people questions using either questionnaires or interviews. Sociologists may also conduct research by using observation techniques, which involve watching and listening to the group under study and recording what is observed over time. There are two types of observation: participant observation and non-participant observation. Both types of observation can be carried out covertly or overtly.

In participant observation the researcher becomes part of the group that is to be studied. By taking part in the day-to-day activities of the group, the researcher can acquire a deeper understanding than would be possible using other research methods. However, it may be difficult to gain acceptance by the group to be studied. Participant observation may also give rise to ethical and legal problems. For these reasons, it may be preferable for the researcher to observe the group's activities without taking part in them. This is known as non-participant observation. *Objectivity* may be easier to achieve with non-participant observation than with participant observation.

**(a)** What is meant by the term *objectivity* in sociological research?

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**(b)** Describe **two** reasons why the participant observer may find difficulty in gaining acceptance by the study group.

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**(c)** Explain why *objectivity* may be easier to achieve with non-participant observation than with participant observation.

For Examiner's Use

[8]

**(d)** Assess the view that ethical issues are the major limitation in using covert participant observation.

*For Examiner's Use*

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**3** Writing in the nineteenth century, Karl Marx claimed that the capitalist economic system gave rise to two main social classes, which he named the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Marx recognised that other classes existed, but he believed that they would gradually be absorbed into the two main classes as capitalism developed. This led Marx to predict that there would be an increasing polarisation of society between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Critics of Marx argue that rather than becoming polarised, social classes have become more fragmented since the nineteenth century.

By the time Max Weber was writing in the early twentieth century, a large middle class had emerged in capitalist societies. This led Weber to reject Marx's two class model of society. Weber actually identified four social classes: manual workers, petty bourgeoisie, professionals and property owners. But he distanced himself from Marx's *economic determinism* by arguing that there are many other divisions in society apart from those based on social class. Status divisions and power groupings are two other forms of social stratification that Weber emphasised.

**(a)** What is meant by the term *economic determinism*?

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**(b)** Describe **two** examples of status divisions.

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**(c)** Explain the main divisions within the working class today.

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**(d)** Assess how far the ownership of property continues to be the main source of power in modern industrial societies.

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