

General Certificate of Education
June 2008
Advanced Level Examination



SOCIOLOGY
Unit 4

SCY4

Thursday 5 June 2008 1.30 pm to 3.00 pm

For this paper you must have:

- a 12-page answer book.

Time allowed: 1 hour 30 minutes

Instructions

- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is SCY4.
- This paper is divided into **three** Sections.
Choose **one** Section.
Do **not** answer questions from more than one Section.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for questions (or part questions) are shown in brackets.
- Questions and part questions carrying 12 or more marks should be answered in continuous prose. In these questions and part questions you will be marked on your ability to use good English, to organise information clearly and to use specialist vocabulary where appropriate.

Choose **one** Section. Do **not** answer questions from more than one Section.

SECTION A: POWER AND POLITICS

If you choose this Section, answer Question 1 **and either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 1** Read **Item A** below and answer parts (a) and (b) that follow.

Item A

A report issued by the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust in 2006 indicated that a high proportion of voters in the United Kingdom had become disenchanted with the main political parties. These voters were now considering transferring their support to minority or fringe parties such as the Green Party. This transfer of support was particularly likely in local elections.

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Some argue that these findings confirm the notion that politics and elections in the United Kingdom are no longer just a two-party contest based on social class. They claim that traditional loyalties can no longer be taken for granted and that all parties will have to work harder to broaden their appeal and attract voters to support them. Others argue that people are simply less interested in politics and politicians nowadays.

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- (a) Identify and briefly explain some of the reasons why some voters may have ‘become disenchanted with the main political parties’ (**Item A**, lines 2–3). (8 marks)
- (b) Using material from **Item A** and elsewhere, briefly examine the view that ‘politics and elections in the United Kingdom are no longer just a two-party contest based on social class’ (**Item A**, lines 6–7). (12 marks)

EITHER

- 2** ‘With increasing globalisation, states are losing functions, power and influence in the contemporary political world.’

To what extent do sociological arguments and evidence support this view? (40 marks)

OR

- 3** Compare pluralist and feminist explanations of the nature and distribution of power in society today. (40 marks)

SECTION B: RELIGION

If you choose this Section, answer Question 4 **and either** Question 5 **or** Question 6.

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 4** Read **Item B** below and answer parts (a) and (b) that follow.

Item B

Sociologists such as Wilson (1982) have argued that the power and influence of religion are declining. They see the fall in attendance and membership of some traditional churches as evidence of a process of secularisation. This process has been especially noticeable in northern Europe.

However, if one considers religion in a global context, not all the evidence supports this conclusion. For example, Berger (1999) argued that, around the world, ‘conservative or orthodox or traditionalist movements’ were not declining. Indeed, he argued that they were becoming more significant and increasing their influence. These movements were more attractive as they opposed many new developments and social changes that some people felt were a threat or damaging to society. 5
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- (a) Identify and briefly explain some of the problems in measuring the extent of religious belief in society today. (8 marks)
- (b) Using material from **Item B** and elsewhere, briefly examine the view that ‘conservative or orthodox or traditionalist movements’ have become more significant and have increased their influence in the world today (**Item B**, lines 6–8). (12 marks)

EITHER

- 5** Assess the view that religion was once mainly a conservative influence but today is more of a force for social change. (40 marks)

OR

- 6** Evaluate postmodernist explanations of the role and functions of religion in contemporary society. (40 marks)

Turn over for Section C

Turn over ►

SECTION C: WORLD SOCIOLOGY

If you choose this Section, answer Question 7 **and either** Question 8 **or** Question 9.

Total for this section: 60 marks

- 7** Read **Item C** below and answer parts (a) and (b) that follow.

Item C

In global development today, there are a number of key contributors working alongside nation states. Some of the most significant are trans-national corporations (TNCs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

From 1970 to 1995, the number of TNCs rose from 700 to 40 000 and now account for about two-thirds of world trade. If TNCs were countries, the 'economy' of General Motors would be larger than that of Thailand, Norway or Saudi Arabia, and Mitsubishi's would be larger than that of Poland, South Africa or Greece. 5

By contrast, NGOs such as Oxfam and Save the Children have been working in development contexts for many decades and offer a very different approach to global development. They are often the most effective voice for ordinary people. They engage in a wide range of activities, such as human rights, the environment, social programmes and women's rights. It is argued that NGOs have many advantages over governmental organisations, and that such advantages have contributed to their continued success. 10

Source: adapted from P McMICHAEL, *Development and social change: a global perspective*, Pine Forge Press, 2004.
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- (a) Identify and briefly explain some of the reasons why NGOs may have 'many advantages over governmental organisations' in providing help in the processes of development (**Item C**, lines 12–13). (8 marks)
- (b) Using material from **Item C** and elsewhere, briefly examine why some sociologists see TNCs as an unhelpful force in the processes of development. (12 marks)

EITHER

- 8** 'Indicators from areas such as work, politics, education and health show that women's experience of development and under-development is often worse than that of men.'

To what extent do sociological arguments and evidence support this view? (40 marks)

OR

- 9** Evaluate explanations of development and under-development put forward by dependency theorists. (40 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS