MAY 2013

SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

MODULE CODE: SA4857
MODULE TITLE: West Africa
EXAM DURATION: 3 hours
EXAM INSTRUCTIONS Candidates should answer THREE questions

Do not overlap your answers to different questions.

Ethnographic examples should be used to illustrate all your answers

PLEASE DO NOT TURN OVER THIS EXAM PAPER UNTIL YOU ARE INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.
1. Examine Hart’s claim that ‘the region [of West Africa] has been a crucible for the emergent synthesis of anthropology and history’.

2. Discuss how marginality has been a condition of survival for pastoralist societies.

3. Illustrate by using West African historical and ethnographic material how ‘Colonialism created the conditions in which an oppositional, identity preserving, and willed Islam could and did flourish’ (Geertz).

4. Colonial rule was the outcome of ‘murky and complex practical interactions’ (Pels). Discuss in relation to colonialism in West Africa.

5. To what extent does the term ‘caste’ adequately capture the kinds of social and cultural differences to be found in West African societies of the savannah belt?

6. Can religious conversion in West Africa be ascribed to the inevitable impact of the ‘juggernaut’ of world religions, or to endogenous social and cultural processes? Discuss.


8. What place does witchcraft have in the social relations of contemporary West Africa?