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**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
HIGHER LEVEL
PAPER 1**

Thursday 19 May 2011 (afternoon)

1 hour

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Do not open this examination paper until instructed to do so.
- Read the passage carefully and then answer all the questions.

Texts in this examination paper have been edited: word additions or explanations are shown in square brackets []; substantive deletions of text are indicated by ellipses in square brackets [...]; minor changes are not indicated.

*Extract adapted from Sirimarco, M. 2004. “Gender markers, bodies of power: Discourses on the production of masculinity in the making of police subjectivity”. **Cuadernos de Antropología Social** N° 20, pages 61–78, (Marcas de género, cuerpos de poder. Discursos de producción de masculinidad en la conformación del sujeto policial.).*

[...] Training in police academies [in Buenos Aires, Argentina] can be understood as a kind of liminal period [...], namely a moment of transition between different states, where members of the public are trained and in the process transform themselves into members of the police force [...]. Not surprisingly, the journey to a new status requires initiates to overcome challenges and pass tests, during which they are humiliated and ill treated, and bodies are molded and subject to new disciplines. Specific ideas about the body and sexuality are an inherent part of these transformative contexts.

It is well known that references to gender and sexuality play a key role in all initiation rituals [...]. Actions that similarly emphasize sexuality and gender frequently emerge in the context of training in these academies and play a decisive role in the manufacture of male identity. [...]

[...] These processes of transition to a new state involve demoralizing, degrading and oppressing the initiates to create a clear break with the past. This is precisely what the exercise of hierarchical power is about, as it is understood and practiced in these training contexts: to establish an authoritarian divide, and delimit positions and differential relations that reproduce and maintain inequality. This helps to establish contrasts between weak, effeminate civilians and strong, masculine police, highlighting particular social boundaries and portraying particular identities in a degrading light. [...]

[...] A recruit gave an example of the treatment they got: “when you have a free hour, they drag you to the front of the classroom and say: ‘How would you detain someone?’ So you show how you would do it, right? They say: ‘no, Sir, you’re not a man, you have to be stronger’ and they begin to abuse you. They call you ‘stupid’, ‘worthless’, ‘girly’, they begin to insult you, to throw you to the ground”.

[...] In this sense, to treat recruits as “girls” is to feminize their bodies, investing them with attributes considered specific to femininity: being conquered, dominated, subjugated – in essence, to be inferior. It is common to hear policemen talk about the reasons for the inferiority of women. One of the recruits explained to me, “a man and a woman may have the same rank, or the same physical constitution, but the man will always be superior to the woman, just because he is a man.” Feminization is as much a metaphor of subjugated bodies as a device to bring about the very act of submission. [...]

- 30 [...] The civilian world therefore, is also feminized. The Chief of Police advised recruits that it was time to leave “civilian life, that rubbish life. Now you live and breathe police work. As of this weekend, forget women; I don’t want any women trouble.” Clearly civilian life is not only “rubbish” life, but also a life defined by its proximity to the problems specific to women’s world which threatens to “corrupt” the masculine world, from which the “male” should distance himself
- 35 in order to safeguard his masculinity. [...]

To appreciate these values, one must understand that, for the police force, there is a categorical and sharp divide between police and civilian worlds, the product, perhaps, of considering that “to be a policeman is not a job, it is a state of being”. Becoming a police officer involves forgetting about one’s past and asserting one’s police identity exclusively.

- 40 [...] During these training courses, destruction eventually gives way to building. The “feminine” is destroyed, allowing the emergence of police subjectivity in its absence. Thus appealing to gender works as a discourse that generates first submissiveness and then new identity. Calling the recruits “girls” tells them who is subordinate and who is the male subject. [...] But it also tells them what they are not yet but aspire to become: police officers.

Adapted from Sirimarco, M. 2004. “Gender markers, bodies of power: Discourses on the production of masculinity in the making of police subjectivity”. *Cuadernos de Antropología Social*, No. 20, pp. 61–78, (Marcas de género, cuerpos de poder. Discursos de producción de masculinidad en la conformación del sujeto policial).

1. Describe the link between hierarchy and gender that police recruits learn to make in police academies in Buenos Aires, Argentina. [6 marks]
 2. Incorporating theoretical perspectives in your answer, explain how a civilian is transformed into a police officer. [6 marks]
 3. Compare and contrast how the police academies in Buenos Aires conceptualizes power with how power is understood in **one** group or society you have studied in detail. [8 marks]
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