



SAMPLE B

Diploma Programme subject in which this extended essay is registered: CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
(For an extended essay in the area of languages, state the language and whether it is group 1 or group 2.)

Title of the extended essay: IN WHAT WAYS HAS ANIMISM INFLUENCED
THE SACRED AND SECULAR RITUALS PRACTICED BY TRADITIONAL
ISLAM-CONVERTED TRIBES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA?

Candidate's declaration

If this declaration is not signed by the candidate the extended essay will not be assessed.

The extended essay I am submitting is my own work (apart from guidance allowed by the International Baccalaureate).

I have acknowledged each use of the words, graphics or ideas of another person, whether written, oral or visual.

I am aware that the word limit for all extended essays is 4000 words and that examiners are not required to read beyond this limit.

This is the final version of my extended essay.

Candidate's signature: _____

Date: FEBRUARY 27, 2009

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A: 44388

B:

Supervisor's report

The supervisor must complete the report below and then give the final version of the extended essay, with this cover attached, to the Diploma Programme coordinator. The supervisor must sign this report; otherwise the extended essay will not be assessed and may be returned to the school.

Name of supervisor (CAPITAL letters) _____

Comments

Please comment, as appropriate, on the candidate's performance, the context in which the candidate undertook the research for the extended essay, any difficulties encountered and how these were overcome (see page 13 of the extended essay guide). The concluding interview (viva voce) may provide useful information. These comments can help the examiner award a level for criterion K (holistic judgment). Do not comment on any adverse personal circumstances that may have affected the candidate. If the amount of time spent with the candidate was zero, you must explain this, in particular how it was then possible to authenticate the essay as the candidate's own work. You may attach an additional sheet if there is insufficient space here.

I have read the final version of the extended essay that will be submitted to the examiner.

To the best of my knowledge, the extended essay is the authentic work of the candidate.

I spent hours with the candidate discussing the progress of the extended essay.

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Date: 27th Feb 109



International Baccalaureate

Extended Essay

Cultural Anthropology

Research Question: In what ways has animism influenced the sacred and secular rituals practiced by traditional Islam-converted tribes in South East Asia?

Name:

IB Candidate Number:

School Name: ...

School Number:

Date Submitted: January 15, 2009

Abstract Word Count: 300

Essay Word Count: 3838

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the influence of animism on the secular and sacred rituals practiced in two traditional Islam-converted societies, namely The Tausug tribe of the Philippines and the Bajau tribe of Malaysia. In addition, this paper considers various theories concerning religion and the establishment of belief systems. A comparative approach has been used in the exploration of animism in traditional Islam societies. Ethnographies and books on theory by various anthropologists have been viewed as sources of information for this paper. A multitude of articles concerning the traditional and contemporary views of animism and religion itself have also been quoted. Textbooks and encyclopaedias have been used for specific definitions. All ethnographic material and articles published by anthropologists include personal biases and contrasting viewpoints, which reinforces the inevitable subjectivity involved in analyzing intangible concepts like religion. Therefore, this paper serves to consolidate one's understanding of animism and its subtle prominence in Islam today. In addition, an understanding of the various purposes of religion and the importance of animism as one of man's primary religions is to be established. To conclude, it is plausible to consider animism as the backbone by which religions were able to spread throughout various societies, as animism has led to the increased versatility of religion, which allows for such practices to spread worldwide. In relation to the purpose of this paper, which considers the investigation of traditional Islam rituals and incorporated animist beliefs, the animistic tendencies observed in Islam rituals serve as the means through which Islam can be understood and followed by a variety of peoples, regardless of their racial background or ethnicity, as all humans share a relationship with their surrounding physical environments. Animism was therefore essential in the successful spread of the Islam religion in traditional South East Asian societies.

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Introduction

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Animism, considered as one of man's first religions created, had established a line of division between material existence and the incorporeal. As a result, this separation became the foundation of any religion that had been created henceforth, which is commonly understood to be an institutionalized system of practices involving belief in the divine. Upon investigation of animism's influence on the Islam religion, the two case studies which will be explored are the Tausug tribe of the Philippines and Bajau tribe of Malaysia. It is important to note that both are syncretistic societies, thus animistic tendencies can be expected in their culture. A syncretism refers to, "cultural blends, or mixtures, including religious blends, that emerge from acculturation; the exchange of cultural features when cultures come into continuous firsthand contact."¹ It is important to acknowledge the evidence of animism in traditional Islam rituals so as to understand the fact that animism, being the 'original human religion' cannot be completely removed from religion, as it explains natural occurrences and intangible concepts such as the possibility of higher beings among us and within the environment. According to Conrad P. Kottak, religion involves any "belief or ritual concerned with supernatural beings, powers, and forces."² These supernatural beings are regarded as those of higher power and omnipotence, such as Allah of the Islam faith. Islam is a monotheistic faith which was founded by Muhammad and includes the belief in a single deity, Allah. According to anthropologist Dr. E.B Tylor, religion was formed through the initial belief in local deities which had control over the natural environment. However, he defines animism as a simple "belief in supernatural beings." Thus, it can be inferred that animism is not a religion in itself, but rather a belief found in other religions. Therefore, the Tausug and Bajau tribes are both polytheistic, as they belief in several gods other than Allah, but still consider themselves to be Muslim. This is common in traditional societies that have had animism as their main belief system in the past. Furthermore, Muslims, those who follow the Islam faith, obtain religiously significant knowledge from the Qu'ran, the holy text believed by Muslims to be a vital source of spiritual guidance. However, animism is unlike this monotheistic religion in which only one supreme being is worshipped. For animists, spirits of higher power take physical form on earth, as they believe that natural aspects of the environment

source for judgement? - implicit evolutionism

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¹ "Cultural Anthropology: Key Terms." McGrawHill Online Learning Center: Cultural Anthropology. 2002. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. 8 Nov. 2008 <http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072500506/student_view0/chapter12/key_terms.html>.

² "Cultural Anthropology: Key Terms." McGrawHill Online Learning Center: Cultural Anthropology.

hold spiritual value, such as the elements and other earthly things. Unlike Muslims, animists believe that animals and plants have spirits. Regardless of what religion one follows, he or she performs "ritual actions that reinforce belief itself and provide participants with what they perceive as a means of controlling their relations with others and with the world."³ This being the importance of ritual itself, the explanation is universal to all belief systems. Also, rituals are commonly categorized as either sacred or secular, as a sacred ritual has religious or spiritual significance to it, whereas a secular ritual is not regarded as either. Ritual is the main aspect of culture in which animism is most apparent, as they are the physical manifestations of one's faith and belief in supernatural forces. Essentially, a distinction between Islam and animism must be made, as they are different belief systems, (although it is faulty to believe that animism is a primordial religion, as many perceive it, due to the fact that "primitive man observes that there is a difference between the living body and the corpse,"⁴ a phenomenon which has yet to be unravelled and explained in modern society). Therefore, the evidence of animism in the Islam religion verifies the argument that aspects of animism have been incorporated into the Islam religion, and that it can be considered the backbone through which some religions develop and form their belief systems.

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Background Information

The two involved case studies, the Badjao and the Tausug, are notorious rival Muslim tribes. The origin of the Bajau tribe is questionable, as there are many theories linked to the arrival of the people to the island of Borneo. One theory was that most of the Bajau migrated from peninsular Malaysia due to their desire to expand their trading routes. The majority of the Bajau population subside in Sabah, also known as the eastern state of Malaysia. The term Badjao means "men of the sea," therefore those who live by bodies of water generate their income through fishing. Others who have abandoned this way of life have learned to rely on subsistence farming. The Tausug tribe are also similar to the Bajau, in terms of geographic settlement and location. From north-eastern Mindanao to the Sulu archipelago, where the Tausug tribe of the Philippines currently resides, they acted upon their incentive to migrate due to trade with the Sama-Bajau traders. Eventually, the Tausug were seen as the commercial elite of the area, as

³ Hammond, Peter B. Belief and Ritual. An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology. New York: Macmillan Co., 1971. 321.

⁴ Lowie, Robert H. Primitive Religion. New York: Liveright Corporation, 1974.

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their economic growth thrived on trade. Islamic influence may have come from Arab merchants in the early thirteenth century when they “opened direct trading links with southern China by way of the Sulu Archipelago.”⁵ Islam became the dominant religion in the region when the sultanate gained more and more power until the eighteenth century. The word Tausug is derived from ‘tau,’ meaning people, and ‘sug,’ which refers to water. Therefore, the name in its entirety means ‘people of the current,’ which is extremely similar to the meaning of the Bajau name. Also, their name explains their environment and lifestyle. In relation to their culture, they are well-known for their skill in making handicrafts and colourful boats. Music and dance play a major role in Tausug culture, as they are used to explain historical events and aspects of the environment. Animist characteristics can be found in the songs and dances performed by the Tausug, and are also evident in their literature. This emphasizes the fact that “many people in East Asia may belong to a major religion such as Islam but actually follow a mixture of that religion and animism.”⁶ Also, both tribes have been related to hunter-gatherer cultures- this is due to the animistic world view that emphasizes the equal relationship and value of human beings and all other aspects of the natural world. This has caused for both tribes to treat their surroundings with profound respect because human beings are considered to be a part of this natural environment as well. Rituals are constantly performed by the Tausug and the Bajau in order to win favour from the spirits. When these spirits who have control of particular natural aspects are appeased, food, well-being, and basic necessities are provided to the peoples while being protected from evil forces. ✓

Animism in Sacred Rituals

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The Tausug tribe of the Philippines follows an Islamic belief system that encourages the performance of various sacred rituals to appease the gods and maintain mental well-being. Defined as, “behaviour that is formal, stylized, repetitive, and stereotyped,”⁷ rituals are of great importance to Islam tribes like the Tausug of Mindanao, Philippines. Ironically, “their world is

ambiguous statement

⁵ "Tausug: History and Cultural Relations." Tausug: History and Cultural Relations. 2008. Advameg Inc. 7 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.everyculture.com/east-southeast-asia/tausug-history-and-cultural-relations.html>>.

⁶ "Animism Profile." Animism Profile. OMF. 10 Jan. 2009 <http://www.omf.org/omf/cambodia/about_cambodia/animism_profile>.

⁷ "Cultural Anthropology: Key Terms." McGrawHill Online Learning Center: Cultural Anthropology. 2002. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. 8 Nov. 2008 <http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072500506/student_view0/chapter12/key_terms.html>.

prayers, is "signalled by the beating of drums or gongs."¹¹ Also, there are devotional prayers, also known as 'duwaa,' which are recited along with the daily salat.^{def -?} These prayers are usually made when "when an individual, family, or community experiences extraordinary difficulties or joy"¹² In addition, there are prayers utilized for the purpose of commemorating the death anniversaries of loved ones. An example of this would be the 'duwaa ulan,' which is recited to reduce rainfall and drought in the community and is followed by a feast. Thus, as evident in animism, these ceremonies and rituals are also used as an effort to manipulate the intangible forces around the people so as to maintain order and prevent natural hazards from occurring, such as heavy rainfall and drought, which may prove detrimental for those who thrive on agriculture for income. Moreover, a standard ritual of the Tausug is to perform the daily salat, which is done at least five times in one day. In addition, there are specific times in which the salat must be performed, depending on one's location. The importance of one's location shows an acknowledgment for the significance of their natural surroundings. The Tausug's respect for nature and the elements, including the sun (which impacts the times of prayer recital), has not faltered since their animistic society turned to Islam. In relation to the daily salat, the Qu'ran states that one must, "...establish regular prayers at the Sun's decline till the darkness of the night, and the recital of the Quran in the morning prayer; for the recital of the dawn is Witnessed."¹³ These prayers are held in specific times of day, either in the morning of the evening, which infers that Islam religion holds the sun and the moon in high respect, as animism does. "The lugu or sail tradition is associated with religious rituals and rites of the life cycle such as wed-dings, births, paggungting, pagtammam, and funerals."¹⁴ Translated, a line of a song says, "birth, it was Monday night, a child was born of Allah. He is Muhammad to redeem the sins of man."¹⁵ The fact that he was born in the evening is indicative of a characteristic of animism, as there is a believed significance in the time in which Allah was born to represent the unexpected coming of a saviour in the night-time. Being born in the evening connotes mystery and the activity of spirits on Earth during this particular time, as they stereotypically roam at night. This emphasizes the fact like all other spirits, Muhammad is considered as a supernatural spirit that is present at times and at all places. Thus, the basic animist belief in supernatural forces is evident in the sacred rituals of the Tausug, and has taught the tribe to live in harmony with their natural

¹¹ Velasco, Fey. "Tausug." Tausug. 3 Nov. 2008 <http://litera1no4.tripod.com/tausug_frame.html>.

¹² Velasco, Fey. "Tausug."

¹³ Ali, Abdullah Yusuf. The Qur'an: Text, Translation & Commentary. Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, 1987.

¹⁴ Velasco, Fey. "Tausug." Tausug. 3 Nov. 2008 <http://litera1no4.tripod.com/tausug_frame.html>.

¹⁵ Velasco, Fey. "Tausug."

doesn't follow

surroundings.

The Bajau people perform a variety of sacred Islam rituals that incorporate animistic beliefs within them. An important trait that the Bajau and the Tausug have in common is that they were both converted to Islam and were not initially Muslim until exposed to external influence. In relation to marriage, a bribe will usually, "...receive many water buffalo which, to the Bajau, is a special animal that usually forms part of any woman's dowry."¹⁶ Evidently, animals associated with water and water itself is deemed to have religious value in the Bajau community. However, the religious significance of water is not emphasized in the Islam faith, although "several Bajau rituals having religious significance combine animistic and Islamic beliefs."¹⁷ Despite the fact that the majority of the Bajau people are devout Sunni Muslims, some Bajau believe in 'Omboh Dilaut,' or their god of the sea, as they consider the body of water to be particularly holy. The Bajau habitually release 'spirit boats' into the sea in fear of angering Omboh Dilaut, which is said to repel and drive away evil forces or spirits farther from the community. As in animist societies, the Bajau believe that evil spirits have the capability of inflict harm on the community, therefore they must be avoided. Conversely, gods of the elements such as the Bajau's Omboh Dilaut must be appeased. Although Islam, the belief in a god of sea is contradictory to Islam belief as it is a monotheistic religion. This is heavily animistic and establishes fear among the peoples, therefore animism incorporated into Islam is successful in maintaining social order among the Bajau people. This further reinforces the argument that animism is neither primitive nor basic and that dominant religions such as Islam can still be followed in (syncretistic) societies.

Animism in Secular Rituals

Secular or non-religious rituals in Tausug culture are performed in the areas of dance and medicinal practice. The Tausug's tribe name means "people of the sea current," therefore it can be inferred that their main source of food and income is fishing and agriculture near lakes or rivers. In addition to this, their medicinal and healing practices are executed by curers, also known as 'mangugubats', who have supposed access to the spirit world. The services performed

¹⁶ Waddington, Ray. "The Bajau." Indigenous Peoples of the World: The Bajau. 2008. The Peoples of the World Foundation. 3 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.peoplesoftheworld.org/text?people=bajau>>.

¹⁷ "The Badjao." Philippine Missions Association: The Badjao. Philippine Missions Association. 6 Nov. 2008 <http://cybermissions.org/pma/m_badjao.php>.

by these curers are considered to be secular rituals as they are not connected to religion, although there are supernatural spirits that are occasionally summoned when they are needed. Animism in secular rituals can take the form of superstition and concepts of luck in modern societies, while in traditional Muslim societies, they can believe in curers who possess *mana* in addition to their ultimate god, Allah. The concept of *mana* is important in animist culture, as it is defined as an impersonal force that allows one to connect with the supernatural realm. It is similar to what we believe as luck in modern society. Medicinal practices are performed by these curers, and they are considered rituals because they are activities that are repetitive and formalized, therefore these medicinal practices suit the mentioned criteria. Illnesses are, at times, caused by supernatural forces, according to the Tausug. "Traditional practices which were "medical" in intent included the sacrifice of a hen near a 'balete' tree,"¹⁸ which served as a means of soothing the anger of a spirit that caused the corresponding illness in a person. Rocks and trees and believed to be the cause of torment and sorrow in Tausug communities, and this may be due to rock and its ability to interrupt the flow of water, whereas trees tend to absorb sunlight and cause shade to dominate verdant land regions. This is an animistic belief that has been incorporated in this process of appeasing the gods, as they have profound respect for the natural environment. Thus, sacrifices are another concept conceived from the animist belief system and have been incorporated into their rituals today to illustrate their respect for the supernatural forces. In relation to other secular rituals performed by the Tausug, dance is considered a ritual, and it is also considered to be a social act. The pangalay, also known as daling - daling, is the Tausug tribe's claim to fame among others. Props such as fans and handkerchiefs are used while dancing to the music. One is encouraged to sing and dance simultaneously, to a well-known song called the 'sangbay.' The famous daling-daling dance of courtship is usually performed during weddings and other festivities. Thus, there is animism incorporated in the 'Palangay,' as the dance is said to be "based on the pre-Islamic Buddhist concept of male and female celestial angels."¹⁹ The belief in supernatural forces is evident, and the dance represents the relationship between man and spirits. Thus, it underpins the status of the Tausug as a syncretistic society with rituals mixing various religious beliefs with one another, which has allowed animism to survive throughout the generations. Another dance of the Tausug is the 'linggisan' dance which tells of a

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¹⁸ "Tausug: Religion and Expressive Culture." Tausug: Religion and Expressive Culture. 2008. Advameg Inc. 3 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.everyculture.com/east-southeast-asia/tausug-religion-and-expressive-culture.html>>.

¹⁹ "Palangay." Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. 22 Oct. 2008. Wikimedia Foundation Inc. 3 Nov. 2008 <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/palangay>>.

flying bird in the air, a fisherman at sea, while there are lemon trees moved by the wind in the background. Clearly, the emphasis on the flying bird and fish indicate an appreciation and respect for the animals, as the Tausug may believe that they are of some degree of power over humans, since birds can fly while humans cannot and fish live in water, which they consider holy, which also explains why ritual bathing is held in these waters. Muslims do not particularly believe in the importance of water in upholding spirituality, while animism puts water in high regard. These animistic concepts

except for ritual washing

The secular rituals that the Bajau perform also have animistic characteristics in them. The Bajau are well-known for their horses and extensive breeding of horses, as "their equine skills are well known in this part of the World, and are always to be found displayed in Bajau ceremonial events."²⁰ Perhaps the Bajau have a profound respect for horses, which is why they are often used for ceremonial practices. A 'pamatulikan', or a spirit boat, is the mode of transportation in which a diseased person floats to another village in order to cleanse his or herself from illness, which also dispels particular evil forces from the whole community. This is animistic in the sense that the sea is believed to have healing properties. Also, the idea of evil spirits existing in the human realm and around us is very animistic in itself. Similar to the Tausug, the Bajau culture also puts emphasis on dance during rituals. They are usually performed in healing rituals and weddings. Many dances, however, are not accompanied by lyrics nor an actual song. The concepts depicted by the dance movements include the history of the Bajau people and the myths concerning sea-farers. One example would be the "tarirai, performed to the beat of a traditional musical ensemble... and the dancers' wooden castanets tell the story of seafarers out on a jaunt to look for seashells. While on their trip, they encounter a strange animal."²¹ The dancers' steps become seemingly evasive, therefore this might indicate the power that this particular strange animal may have, which reinforces the element of animism in Bajau dance.

not necessarily

²⁰ "The Bajau Tribe." Ancient Historical Society Virtual Museum. 1970. Moer Foundation Inc. 7 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.ancienthistoricalsociety.org/tribesbajau.html>>.

²¹ "Bajau and Bajau Laut Properties in Sabah, Malaysia." Bajau and Bajau Laut Properties in Sabah, Malaysia. 7 Nov. 2008 <<http://www.101cookingrecipes.com/malaysia-cooking-recipes/bajau-and-bajau-laut-sabah-malaysia.php>>.

Conclusion

Animism manifests itself in these traditional Islam societies through sacrificial procedures, ceremonial rites, death preparations, concepts included in prayers, recited literature, and even representations in dance. Both the Tausug and Bajau tribes were initially animist, as traditional societies tend to explain their surroundings by believing that nature is governed by spirits around them. The evidence of animism in Islam rituals confirms that it is inevitable and is perhaps useful in maintaining social order in societies today. Considered as the original human religion, it is understandable that animist characteristics can be found in other religions. Also, it is ultimately through these animist aspects of religion that nature and natural forces are appreciated as they should be. Therefore, animism merely explains the profound respect given to animals and plants as they are believed to have spirits. "Although formative to the worldviews of some cultures, animism is a stratum in every culture."²² The incorporation of animism into major religions such as Islam reinforce its importance is establishing a strong relationship between man and his physical surroundings. Also, animist beliefs are included in the creation and performance of both sacred and secular rituals in traditional societies so as to highlight nature's influence of man's way of living. Finally, animism in itself teaches people to respect their physical surroundings to prevent exploitation of natural resources and cause environmental degradation, which would threaten their healthy lifestyles. Thus, "animism is a nearly universal ingredient in all religions, and is not a religious system in itself"²³ Animism was created as a way of explaining supernatural phenomenon, and these concepts are still in use in modern society today. Human beings have an inherent need to understand their physical environment and have a guiding force to lead them through life, whether these take the form of gods or spirits in inanimate objects. Also, it has been said that, "Islam and Animism live, in very neighbourly fashion, on the same street and in the same mind,"²⁴ which emphasizes the idea that animism can be accepted in modern society, although it takes benign forms in major religions today. In tribes like the Tausug and the Bajau, animism is still very much evident, but less apparent in the modernized areas with the clearance of forest and establishment of buildings in densely population areas. Traditional societies still believe in animism as they are less exposed to modern

²² Distinctive Formulations of Animism in the World. 2000. 28 Dec. 2008
<<http://www.missiology.org/animism/Foundations/formulations.htm>>.

²³ Smalley, William A. Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission. New York, 1971.

²⁴ Zwerner, Samuel M. The Influence of Animism on Islam. New York: Macmillan, 1920.

distorted, naive use—

societies in which order is maintained through fear in a intangible supreme beings. Furthermore, this is proved by the fact that the concept of tradition reveals an explicit link with the past. The prominence of animism is far less in urban communities due to the rising importance of secular values concerning money and capitalism. In terms of the future, the prevalence of Islam and Christianity worldwide is indicative of the future erosion of traditional cultures throughout the world. Culture and traditions are bound to change due to internal and external influences that enforce change upon communities, therefore culture can never remain constant from one person to another. Without the concepts concerning the physical environment brought about by animism, the spread of major religions such as Islam would not have been possible, as the importance of nature and the elements is considered in all human societies. The boundaries of anthropological studies must be questioned, as it cannot fully conceptualize cultures that are continuously changing, although it is certain that animism manifests itself in all religions through different customs, rituals, and beliefs, as all religions believe in the existence of a spiritual realm.

While the candidate is sensitive to the changes cultures experience in contact situations, in examining examples of syncretism, the analytic framework is based on an uncritical and unidirectional coding of animism, harking back to unilinear evolutionary theory.

The focus then is called into question, as the research question frames "animism" as a narrowly definable concept — which, however, is broadly questionable — at least since the work of Malinowski.

The candidate's sources are largely non-anthropological — the anthropological sources are outdated (e.g., Tylor, Lowie)

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Assessment form (for examiner use only)

Candidate session number	0	0							
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Assessment criteria		Achievement level		
		First examiner	maximum	Second examiner
A	research question	1	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
B	introduction	1	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
C	investigation	2	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
D	knowledge and understanding	2	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
E	reasoned argument	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
F	analysis and evaluation	2	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
G	use of subject language	2	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
H	conclusion	1	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
I	formal presentation	3	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
J	abstract	2	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
K	holistic judgment	2	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total out of 36		21		<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of first examiner: _____
(CAPITAL letters)

Examiner number: _____

Name of second examiner: _____
(CAPITAL letters)

Examiner number: _____