

# MASTER'S EXAMINER REPORT

*GPS – Geopolitical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University*

<b>Thesis title:</b>	French Foreign Policy In The Middle East, And North Africa, Through Neoclassical Realism
<b>Name of Student:</b>	Aymeric Pochat
<b>Referee (incl. titles):</b>	Martin Riegl
<b>Report Due Date:</b>	29.5.2023

**Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the four numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).**

**Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score:**

*The thesis was checked by URKUND software and there is no indication of rules violation.*

**1) Contribution and argument:**

I do appreciate a thesis topic selection. Author's focus on French foreign policy towards the MENA region is not only relevant but also sort of fresh as the recent academic attention is given to France's engagement in the sub-Saharan Africa. A selection of three case studies – Libya, Lebanon, and Iran – is logical as Paris is one of the most active European players in all of these areas. Be it a strong role in Libya, where France pursues a pro-active policy, Lebanon where France as a former colonial metropole is a key player, or Iran, where France is a leading player in EU efforts.

**2) Theoretical and methodological framework:**

The thesis has a solid theoretical which is clearly presented. The methodology is somehow present in the thesis, but the author is expected to find it himself as the word method does not even appear in the paper. The key research question is also clear, however, additional research questions go to broad for the master thesis. What I am missing in the author's research design more clearly defined aim/objective of the paper. Is it factors that shaped France's FP since the Arab Spring as the conclusion indicates? Here is also a major problem, the conclusion rather provides a general discussion of French FP, but in fact, does not explicitly answer any of the research questions.

**3) Sources and literature:**

The author has gathered a solid amount of sources and proved his ability to critically analyze them. Especially a number of declarations or policy documents provided are impressive. What strikes me is a missing reference to Strategic Update (2021) or Security Strategy 2023, which describes a threat perception and defines priority regions.

**4) Manuscript form and structure:**

The overall paper meets all formal criteria required by the Faculty of Social Sciences. The structure of the paper is logical and coherent and I have no objections to that. What I find a bit unusual is the way the author names chapter titles. Second, I do not see a reason to provide Jstor links in footnotes, the author should just follow the standard way of citing articles accessed via Jstor or any other databases. Sometimes it's unclear what type of publication is cited (e.g. footnote 28), or partial information is missing (footnote 32, 34), this is a frequent issue throughout the paper.

### 5) Quality of presentation:

The formal aspects of the paper show no major deficiencies, typos or misspellings occur from time to time in the thesis, however, the overall language quality is high and allows a fluent reading.

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Contribution (research quality, analysis, and conclusions) (max. 40 points)</i>	32
<i>Theoretical and methodological framework (max. 25 points)</i>	20
<i>Sources and literature (max. 10 points)</i>	7
<i>Manuscript form and structure (max. 15 points)</i>	13
<i>Quality of presentation (grammar, style, coherence) (max. 10 points)</i>	9
<b>TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)</b>	<b>B</b>

**Suggested questions for the defence are:**

**I (do not) recommend the thesis for final defence.**

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**Referee Signature**

**Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:**

<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>Quality standard</b>
91 – 100	<b>A</b>	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	<b>B</b>	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	<b>C</b>	= good
61 – 70	<b>D</b>	= satisfactory
51 – 60	<b>E</b>	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	<b>F</b>	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.