

MASTER'S EXAMINER REPORT

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

Thesis title:	The rise and consolidation of the Taliban insurgency in Afghan government
Name of Student:	Paula Gomez Moniz
Referee (incl. titles):	Waris Miratif
Report Due Date:	2024-09-16

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

1) Contribution and argument: The thesis addresses a highly relevant topic by analyzing the evolution of the Taliban's insurgency in Afghanistan. The systematic comparison between the first and second Taliban emirates offers an insightful perspective on the changing dynamics of Taliban rule. However, the analysis would benefit from stronger, more defined conclusions. The concluding chapter leaves some research questions less explicitly answered, which slightly reduces the impact of the contribution. The argumentation is solid, but the conclusions could be more explicitly linked to the research questions. For example, in the Conclusion (page 65 and 66), while the final section summarizes the findings, it does not fully address how these findings directly answer the research questions posed at the beginning of the thesis. More direct answers to "What prevents the Taliban from being recognized by the international community?" could strengthen this section.

2) Theoretical and methodological framework: The use of Gérard Dussouy's "Systemic Geopolitics" provides a solid basis for the analysis. The division of the analysis into five spaces is commendable, and the comparative method is appropriate for the subject matter. Nevertheless, the connection between the five spaces and the research questions could have been more explicitly aligned to strengthen the overall argument. The five spaces (physical, demographic, diplomatic-strategic, economic, and symbolic fields) are well presented, but their direct connection to the research questions could be clearer. For instance, in Chapter 3: Diplomatico-Strategic Field (pages 26–30), the discussion on the Taliban's relations with other countries provides valuable insights, but it could be more explicitly tied back to the Taliban's struggle for recognition by the international community, which is one of the central research questions.

3) Sources and literature: The thesis makes use of relevant and appropriate literature. There are no issues with the sources or citations, and the breadth of references is sufficient for the scope of the thesis.

4) Manuscript form and structure: The thesis is logically structured and easy to follow. However, there are minor issues with the numbering of chapters that should be addressed. Small formatting issues can be found, such as missing numbering in the Table of Contents for some chapters (page 1). Additionally, Chapter 4's section numbering is inconsistent, which might confuse the reader. The overall structure supports the development of the argument effectively.

5) Quality of presentation: There are a number of language related issues, with some sentences written in non-standard English. While these do not impede understanding, they do affect the flow and coherence of the text, making it harder to read smoothly. For example, on page 4, the sentence "Its classification is very fluid, depending on the context and its perception it can be found in maps as part of the South Asian region..." could be smoother if reworded for clarity. Simple adjustments like this and some minor improvements, the readability of the thesis could be significantly enhanced.

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution (research quality, analysis, and conclusions) (max. 40 points)</i>	30
<i>Theoretical and methodological framework (max. 25 points)</i>	21

<i>Sources and literature</i>	<i>(max. 10 points)</i>	9
<i>Manuscript form and structure</i>	<i>(max. 15 points)</i>	11
<i>Quality of presentation (grammar, style, coherence)</i>	<i>(max. 10 points)</i>	6
TOTAL POINTS	<i>(max. 100 points)</i>	77
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)		C (Good)

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I recommend the thesis for final defence.



Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

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