

## Review of Master's Thesis– Supervisor

Title: Islamization and Arabization of Berber tribes in Northern Africa

Author: Jeremy Stewart

Supervisor: Tomáš Doležal

Opponent: Professor Karel Müller

	Criteria	Classification level
1.	Achievement of the aims of the thesis	<b>2</b>
2.	Logical structure of the thesis	<b>1</b>
3.	Work with literature, citations	<b>1</b>
4.	Adequacy of used methods	<b>1</b>
5.	Depth of analysis with regard to the topic	<b>2</b>
6.	Individual approach to writing	<b>1</b>
7.	Formal arrangement of the thesis	<b>2</b>
8.	Language and stylistic arrangement of the thesis	<b>1</b>

### Comments on and questions to the thesis:

Jeremy Stewart decided to depict the processes of the Islamization and Arabization in a profound and ambitious historical context. The fascinating entity of Berbers was chosen as a (transnational) case to be studied. The choice of theoretical framework is even more challenging and unusual within the IR discipline. Although the conceptualization of practices and processes is based on an older work of a social-scientific giant Giddens it may represent one of the fresh trends or even turns in contemporary polyphony of IR research approaches. I also appreciate that the theoretical basis inspired by Giddens has been reflected critically in the text and that also recent works of other authors were incorporated by Jeremy into his own theoretical grasp of the topic.

The courageous application of an uneasy and quite complex theoretical conception presents both the strength as well as the limitation of the text. The focus is put explicitly on studying the processes per se and thus also the very deep historical examination of Arabization and Islamization makes sense. On the other hand, this author's choice did not leave too much space in the text for analysis of the current political situation or for transhistorical generalization of the core processes studied. Further elaboration of both motives would enrich the text definitely but still may happen during the discussion at the thesis defense, actually. Nevertheless, it must be respected that in the text the author does promise that only "in closing, this study will examine the practices associated with the most recent era" (Introduction, p 6) and by saying that he makes it clear that this represents only the last of the partial aims of his work. And finally, the relation between the Berber aspirations and the policies of 20th and 21st century's North African governments is commented within the section dedicated to the post-colonial period as well as in the Conclusion.

Last but not least, as the academic advisor, I do appreciate the enormous progress in the step-by-step work of Jeremy I had a chance to witness mainly regarding the clarity of the

structure and form of the final text.

My questions for the defense follow:

1) Can you tell us how this study enriched your understanding of the nowadays processes of Islamization in other cases - or in general? What has been rather specific in the case of Berbers and what could be generalized in your opinion?

2) You mention the current changes in governmental policies towards Berbers. How does the Arab majority/general public of the N. African societies reflect the existence and aspirations of Berbers today? And specifically, how do the local Islamist movements relate to Berbers?

**Conclusion: I recommend the thesis for defence.**

Suggested classification: 1

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