

Master's thesis assessment:

**Modernization theory and the case of France's Overseas Territories -
Swein Eurydice Baticle, B.A.**

This thesis seeks to apply a qualitative analysis of (mostly) secondary documents and legislative information to the French overseas territories in order to assess the applicability of modernisation theory in conjunction with colonialism. The writing style is clear and there are only some minor errors in proof reading present.

The theoretical framework chapter is extensive in terms of its descriptions of the theories of Parsons, Smelser and Coleman however there is little critical engagement beyond the descriptive elements and reads rather like a series of book reviews. The connections between theories and their relevance to the thesis analysis should have been better established in this chapter. More than half of the text is devoted to theories without any linkage to the subject of the thesis itself and it is unclear what the perspective of the author is until p.43. Having said that, the student clearly demonstrates good knowledge of the scholarship surrounding modernisation.

There is much irrelevant detail in the historical section and once again the information is not clearly linked to the research questions within the first part of that section although it improves further on. What is lacking throughout is a clear sense of the author's contribution – much space is given to other scholars (particularly Michalon) however little of the work is presented as the student's own analysis. The analysis sections would be better suited to being structured thematically rather than based on collections of sources. The conclusion chapter is certainly the strongest section of the work as it links the evidence presented with the modernisation theory discussed previously.

Overall it is clear that the student has done a significant amount of research into the subject however the analytical element of the paper seems restricted to the final sections and therefore undermines the usefulness of the thesis as a contribution to knowledge.

On that basis I would recommend the grade of **3 (good)**.

17.08.2023

Lucy Brown, MA.