

REVIEW

by research supervisor of the graduate qualification paper submitted by the second-year student of the
“International Relations (in English)” master’s program at SPbSU **САНДЖАР Олены**
 (first name, last name of the student)

titled «Роль политических лидеров в динамике российско-турецких отношений с начала XXI века»

“The Leadership Factor in the Dynamics of Russian-Turkish Relations Since Early 21st Century”

1. Assessment of the paper:

No.	Assessment Criteria <small>(model of the master’s program: codes of skills)</small>	Grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● excellent (5) ● good (4) ● satisfactory (3) ● unsatisfactory (2)¹ 	Reviewer’s Comments (mandatory for those criteria on which the paper is assessed critically or downgraded)
1.	Academic relevance of the research problem <small>(АОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-7; ПКА-5; ПКА-10; ПОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-7; ПКП-4;)</small>	excellent (5)	Given the unusual “frenmity” in bilateral Russian-Turkish relations, the role of leaders as contrasted with the role of structural factors can be regarded as an extraordinarily relevant subject of academic research.
2.	Scholarly contribution by the author (АОМ: УКМ-1; ПКА-5; ПКА-6; ПКА-10; ПКА-11; ПКП-5; ПКП-9; ПОМ: УКМ-1; ПКП-1; ПКП-7)	excellent (5)	The results of this study and their interpretation offer invaluable scholarly contribution to the body of research on the leadership factor in international relations and the agent-structure debate in the IR theory.
3.	Appropriateness of the research objective, coherence of research objective and research tasks <small>(АОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-2; ПКА-2; ПКА-11; ПОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-2; ПКП-3; ПКП-4)</small>	excellent (5)	The aim of the research and its objectives are properly formulated and refined. The logic of the research process and the ensuing structure of the paper make perfect sense in view of the main research question and its explanation.
4.	Quality of the empirical scope and of the primary sources review <small>(АОМ: УКМ-8; ПКА-4; ПКА-7; ПКП-4; ПОМ: УКМ-8; ПКА-1; ПКП-6)</small>	excellent (5)	The author’s handling of primary sources is professional. Olena invested significant effort into studying multiple narrative sources mostly related to leaders’ public statements. The choice of primary sources us adequate for the selected research design.
5.	Comprehensiveness of secondary sources (academic literature) employed by the author <small>(АОМ: УКМ-6; УКМ-8; ПКА-7; ПКП-3 ПОМ: УКМ-6; УКМ-8; ПКА-1; ПКП-1)</small>	excellent (5)	The paper covers a wide range of secondary sources and academic literature on various aspects of the leadership factor, operational code analysis and other methods, as well as on the Russian-Turkish relations as such. The literature review is solid and detailed.
6.	Adequacy of chosen research methods to the stated research objective and research tasks <small>(АОМ: УКМ-8; ПКА-2; ПКА-8; ПКА-10; ПОМ: УКМ-8; ПКА-1; ПКП-4)</small>	excellent (5)	The methodological research design reflects the nature of research objectives set for this study. It is based on the combination of operational code analysis and automated content analysis via the NVIVO software. This combination seems to be the most adequate given the objectives, availability of sources and the empirical scope of the research.

¹ If the paper is assessed as “unsatisfactory” based on one of the criteria, the overall recommended grade for the paper is to be “unsatisfactory”, in which case a reviewer presents his/her detailed arguments in the Comments section as well as in the Conclusion/Recommendations section.

7.	Correspondence of empirical results to the stated research objective and research tasks (AOM: УKM-1; УKM-4; УKM-5; ПКА-5; ПКА-6; ПКА-11; ПКП-3; ПКП-9; ПОМ: УKM-1; УKM-4; УKM-5; ПКА-2; ПКП-4; ПКП-7)	excellent (5)	All the research objectives were properly achieved. The paper draws specific and grounded images of how the main leaders' belief systems either could shape the dynamics in specific cases of bilateral relation, or on the contrary, were powerless in the face of structural and contextual factors.
8.	Text formatting and editing (AOM: УKM-4; УKM-8; ПКА-7; ПКП-6; ПОМ: УKM-4; УKM-8; ПКА-2; ПКП-2)	excellent (5)	The quality of text formatting conforms to main requirements stipulated for graduate qualification papers at the master's level.
9.	Diligence, consistency, and responsibility demonstrated by the student when writing the paper (AOM: УKM-2; УKM-7; ПКА-10; ПКП-8; ПОМ: УKM-2; УKM-7; ПКП-4; ПКП-5)	excellent (5)	Over the entire period of working on the thesis, Olena demonstrated genuine academic interest, responsiveness and responsibility. Her workflow was well-paced, collaborative and reflective. The effort put into this research deserves high credit.
Average grade:		5,0	

2. Conclusion/Recommendations for the evaluation commission:

Overall, the master's dissertation of Olena Sancar is a piece of quality academic work – thoughtful, ambitious, conceptually refined and empirically mature. It conforms to all major requirements associated with graduate master's papers and deserves to be evaluated with the highest grade. The author, in turn, deserves to be conferred on with the master's degree in International Relations.

3. Recommended grade: excellent (5)

June 11, 2021

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