



## Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Jonathan Colombo

Title: "Influencing the Course of the Events: the NATO Military Intervention in Libya and the Expansion of the Islamic State in the Country"

Programme/year: International Security Studies, 2018

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Tomáš Karásek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Research question, definition of objectives	<b>10</b>	8
	Theoretical / conceptual framework	<b>30</b>	27
	Methodology, analysis, argument	<b>40</b>	34
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	69
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources	<b>10</b>	10
	Style	<b>5</b>	4
	Formal requirements	<b>5</b>	5
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	19
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	88



## Evaluation

### Major criteria:

The dissertation represents a testament to the possibilities of employing computer-supported methods to the analysis of conflicts – as well as the limits thereof. The author must be unambiguously credited for devising a coherent research design, starting with a robust literature review on third-party interventions in civil wars through the formulation of a clear methodology to an ingenious use of various databases and programmes to analyse the effects of the NATO intervention in Libya in 2011 on the subsequent rise of the Islamic State in the country. Apparently, much energy has been invested in the thesis, and the result does convey the author's understanding of the field in its conceptual as well as empirical aspects.

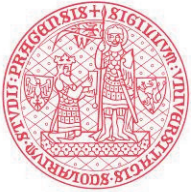
However, I am not convinced the analysis did actually manage to present novel findings on the case. I believe the results too often end up stating conclusions that are rather obvious and have been noted previously (such as the summarization of findings on p. 81). The author begins his quest for a better understanding of the linkages between the intervention and the civil wars/activities of terrorist groups by claiming that the analysis of civil wars (and interventions therein) tends to reduce the complexity of the phenomenon. While the dissertation purposefully strives to avoid such a failing (which, to some extent, I regard as being rather a straw man than a real problem), its 'cure' in the form of covering several categories of relevant aspects remains too crude to understand the dynamics (and much less microdynamics) of the conflict – and thus address the 'how' at the beginning of the research question.

### Minor criteria:

As noted above, the author's collection of relevant sources and their critical reflection is admirable, and so is the level of quality of the dissertation's formal aspects. The language of the text is generally acceptable and only a handful of mistakes or other lapses are to be found in it.

### Overall evaluation:

Generally, I view the dissertation as a heroic – but ultimately not fully satisfying - attempt to refine our understanding of civil war and military intervention dynamics with the help of progressive programming tools. While the result is far from perfect,



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the rigorousness of the approach and thematic insight of the author still make it a valuable contribution to the academic debate.

Suggested grade: **B (very good upper)**

Signature: