



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Simone de Roode

Title: Small State Agency in International Relations: Exploring Opportunities for the Netherlands in the Security Relationship to the United States through Missile Defence

Programme/year: Master in International Security Studies (MISS), 2020

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Tomáš Karásek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical / conceptual framework	30	26
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	34
<i>Total</i>		80	68
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	9
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	4
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	86



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis represents an ambitious effort to provide explanation for small-state agency in defence cooperation as a specific subsection of international relations. It is impressive in many of its features, including innovative theorization and deep understanding of various conceptual anchors used for the explication of specific aspects of the contemporary world order. Put simply, the author's theoretical framework, built on a *tour de force* of a literature review, is truly impressive.

What happens next, though, is that the thesis basically veers off the course, and instead of bringing a deeper insight into the topic advertised by its title, it devotes most of the focus (and space) to the challenges to the U.S.-led world order, focusing on two regional examples (Crimean Sea and South China Sea). It should be noted that the theoretically knowledgeable analysis is of high quality. Nevertheless, when looking for the promised explication of the Netherlands' role, one effectively has to wait till the very end of the thesis (p. 57, to be exact).

In essence, the thesis seems to contain two self-standing analyses, one focusing on challenges to the functioning of the world order and the other on small-state agency, glued together only very lightly. The overall impression is still positive, but there is a sense of missed opportunity here.

Minor criteria:

In this respect, there is essentially no criticism – the author writes well, clearly and convincingly, and all the other aspects (sources, references etc.) are as they should be.

Overall evaluation:

An ambitious, theoretically innovative thesis that ultimately fails to deliver on the initial promise of analysing small-state agency – but largely compensates for that by offering a high-quality analysis of the contemporary international security order and challenges thereto.



**FACULTY
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Suggested grade: **B**

Signature: