



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Dominique Chagas Linhares

Title: Roles Women Play in the Alt-Right: Aspirations and Limitations

Programme/year: MISS 2020

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): doc. PhDr. Emil Aslan, Ph.D.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	28
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	36
<i>Total</i>		80	74
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	19
TOTAL		100	93



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This very topical Master's thesis successfully addresses the gap in radicalization research by focusing on the motivations and expectations of women joining the supremacist Alt-Right movement in the West. The main contribution of the author can be attributed to her endeavour to conduct pioneering, thorough and time-consuming netnographic non-participative 'field research' in diverse women online communities which enabled her to vividly convey the unique experience of women from within the Alt-Right movement about the roles they are expected to play, they play or (would) aspire to play in this men-dominated realm and which ultimately proves instrumental in deeper understanding of women's engagement in right-wing extremist groups.

The most valuable asset of the text is represented by netnography as the selected methodology, which can still be considered a relatively novel tool in researching the online space, combined with sharp analytical focus the author is able to maintain throughout the whole thesis. Seeking to address the primary puzzle who the women in the movement are and why they join, the author demonstrates her intellectual ability to distil the key conceptual themes from the masses of empirical data to report on the character of women's alt-right engagement. In a largely unexplored terrain, we can learn that despite the commonly-held notion about alt-right's misogynist tendencies exhibited through woman-hating verging on a 'sort of' white sharia, the women inside the movement do not share this perception – they feel comfortable with taking on supportive roles of caretakers and nurturers that are essential for advancing the agenda of white ethnonationalism as it is the role assigned to them by the ideology they espouse. Moreover, the key findings that these are sisterhood and belonging as one of the primary engagement drivers or the women-specific roles of 'friendly' recruiters and 'normalizing agents' of extreme ideas support the findings of the latest academic research on the intersection of radical Islamism and right-wing extremism as two model examples of conservative, revisionist movements.



FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Charles University

However, the contribution Dominique has made surpasses the expectations about certain relatedness of Islamist and right-wing extremist positions. Her findings point in an intriguing direction, claiming that the women in the Alt-Right are not represented just by the much self-evident group of 'tradwives', but they also participate in the intra-community discourse helping shape the ethnonationalist agenda – this is happening through active participation in the construction of the Alt-Right ideology, for instance “through women’s reinforcement, negation, and reinterpretation of the movement’s beliefs” as well as taking the risk to participate in the activities more publicly to recruit new members and improve the public image of the movement, thus furthering the cause of the Alt-Right.

Another strength of the thesis can be seen in author’s attempt to introduce all the new terms related to the white supremacist scene’s discourse, such as mansphere, trad, normie, (E)-THOTS or beta males, and explicate them with sufficient detail so that the reader does not get drowned in this almost argotic language.

Minor critical remarks are directed at the lack of a more thorough conceptualization of push and pull factors that should have been introduced in the theoretical section. If the terms are utilized in the analytical section, they could have been explained with better granularity in the theory, not left for the empirical analysis. Even though the terms are grasped correctly, the author cannot expect that all her readers will be familiar with the conceptual terminology of radicalization studies.

Minor criteria:

The text of the thesis is very well structured, the ideas logically linked throughout the whole piece which makes it a pleasure to read. The overall highly sophisticated academic writing suffers, in parts, from occasional typos, minor grammatical mistakes, and textual inconsistencies.



**FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Charles University

Overall evaluation:

In sum, Dominique's Master's Thesis must be recommended for defence. She persuasively managed to craft a very insightful and valuable text contributing to our enhanced understanding of the role of gender in extremist movements by penetrating the online environment women (not just) in the Alt-Right movement increasingly use as a safe space to support extreme ideas across the globe. Additionally, by using the 'internal framing' method she successfully demonstrated that the picture we get about women's engagement in the Alt-Right is not so black-and-white as is commonly assumed. Finally, the original research findings revealing the inner motivations and aspirations of the Alt-Right women can contribute (as the author herself points out) to policy making especially with respect to disengagement and exit efforts.

Suggested grade:

A

Signature:

Doc. PhDr. Emil Aslan, Ph.D.