



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Bindu Janardhan

Title: Germany's foreign policy. Is Federal Republic of Germany still a "civilian power"?

Programme/year: MAIN/2021

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/external assessor): Mgr. Kristián Földes

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	7
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	23
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	29
<i>Total</i>		80	59
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	77



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The author of the thesis puts forward a question whether the Federal Republic of Germany still comply with the requirements of a “Civilian power”. The objective of the research is, therefore, set clearly. The thesis also meets the expectations of academic standards. The student show a deep commitment to the research topic. The case studies are written in an interesting and well-readable manner.

On the other hand, there are also some comments that have to be addressed. First of all, the character of the research questions partially reduces the clarity of the research. On the level of Diploma thesis, it is expected that the research questions will exhibit the same complexity as the hypotheses’ derived from them. There is still a substantial space for improvement in the structuring of the questions.

From the theoretical point of view, the thesis draws on role theory presented by Holsti. However, it’s not clear why the thesis draws only on this particular research on national roles. I would expect to mention other scholars (Goffman, Mead, Stryker, Wendt et. al) as well. It is natural that a researcher builds a work on a particular work of a scholar, but it should be at least mentioned how this work relates to a broader scope of studies. Similarly, the student mentions the concept of ideal-type several times without a broader explanation what is meant under this concept. Does it draw on Weber’s ideal-types? Or is it based on other scholar’s work?

Furthermore, the structure of the hypotheses resembles a self-fulfilling character. There is an absence of regular hypothesis structure which would explain a relationship between two objects/subjects. It is again understandable that in case of constructivist works, the employment of hypotheses is not straightforward as in case of positivist/quantitative works. But in this case, I would suggest exchanging hypotheses for more constructivist concepts such as assumptions. The author also employs words such as “prove” which is problematic as there is no clear causal relationship explained.



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From the method point of view, the author works with two methods – process-tracing and qualitative content analysis. While the use of process-tracing is reasonably explained, the author reduced the second method to several remarks in the text. It is not clear how was the qualitative content analysis conducted? What steps did the author followed?

From the case selection point of view, there are some further comments I would mention. The author has chosen cases that in my opinion from the beginning give the perception that Germany is a civilian power. To strengthen the argument, it would be expected to choose negative cases, where it would be expected that Germany would follow its interest over values and in the end the actual behaviour would be opposite.

Minor criteria:

The minor criteria were sufficiently met. The URKUND check was negative, no substantial parts overlapped with already existing text.

Overall evaluation:

Overall, I would suggest to evaluate this thesis with a grade C.

Suggested grade: C

Signature: