

Name of the student:	Hark Möller
Title of the thesis:	Postering Populism. The routine message and meaning of the populist political communication in Germany and Austria
Reviewer:	Martin Mejstrik (Charles University)

**1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD**

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

The MA Thesis of Hark Möller offers an insight into a relevant and important research of populist political communication. Based on that, the author is presenting main research question “what is the preferred model of political communication typical for populist actors in Germany and Austria”. He is demonstrating that on electoral posters as one of the main channels of political communication.

Hark Möller focuses in her research on identifying strong elements in political campaigns of two cases of populist radical right-wing parties: FPÖ and AfD. In the first part of his thesis, he presents very well-structured state of the arts and theoretical framework in which the author clearly defines his research interests. In the second part, he offers very thorough analysis of electoral posters, first in theory and after by applying this theory in the practise of his case studies (however, there are not two case studies per se, author works with both cases together and structures his work based on various topics as objects of poster campaigns, which is a little bit less clear but doesn’t constitute serious issue).

The author presents in his thesis a comprehensive state of the art and literature review which shows his good orientation in the researched topic, even though it could include more literature on general understanding of radical right-wing populism.

**2. ANALYSIS**

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

From a methodological point of view, the thesis is done very well. The author presents a clear empirical focus and develops his own model based on the theory of Ruth Wodak which he applies without major difficulties on both cases. Those case are also very well justified and make together a compact text (important in this way is the same language of analysed parties). Focus only on electoral posters is also quite original for MA theses and without proper theoretical framework it could lead to very descriptive work. The author, nevertheless, constructs a very robust theoretical framework, create his own model and after succeeded in its application to selected cases. He also showed a very good knowledge in proper work with sources.

**3. CONCLUSIONS**

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

Hark’s thesis is very good analytical text which focuses on populist political communication and clearly applies constructed model on both case studies. The author shows an excellent knowledge of theories of political communication and ability of their application. His analytical model offers an insight into political campaigns of the FPÖ and AfD and analyses symbols and message they are using in spreading their populist narratives. The authors thus fully achieved his research objectives.

#### 4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The MA thesis of Hark Möller is written without major formal issues. It's well-structured, the author used appropriate and correct language and works well with citation style and bibliography. In general, the thesis fully adheres to academic standards in the EPS Programme.

#### 5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

Overall, the thesis is of an excellent quality. The author shows a systematic work in constructing his theoretical model and its subsequent application on two cases of German-speaking radical right-wing populist parties. Choosing electoral posters as the main sources for empirical analysis is well explained and argued and fits well to the theoretical framework. Apart from a little bit less clear structure of the text in the main part of the thesis (sometimes is hard to orient and switch between both cases) the thesis doesn't have any weak point, thus I fully recommend it for the defense.

<b>Grade (A-F):</b>	A; 5
Date:	Signature:
30 June 2021	Martin Mejstrik

classification scheme

Percentile	Prague		Krakow		Leiden		Barcelona	
	91-100 %	8,5%	5	6,7%	8,5-10	5,3%	9-10	5,5 %
B (81-90)	81-90 %	16,3%	4,5	11,7%	7,5-8,4	16,4%	8-8,9	11,0 %
C (71-80)	71-80 %	16,3%	4	20%	6,5-7,4	36,2%	7-7,9	18,4 %
D (61-70)	61-70 %	24%	3,5	28,3%			6-6,9	35,2 %
E (51-60)	51-60 %	34,9%	3	33,4 %	6-6,4	42,1 %	5-5,9	30,1 %

**Assessment criteria:**

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.