

## **Evaluation of the Master Thesis „Changing Attitudes towards Human Rights in Europe: Perceptions of Czech Non-Profit Organisations“ by Anna Libová**

The aim of this thesis is to interpret the perceptions of Czech human rights activists regarding the changing context of human rights advocacy. Anna Libová first covers general reflections of the current changes in order to establish a proper background of her investigation. Her main research question follows from this background: *How do the human rights activists perceive the changing attitudes towards the human rights?* (p. 28) Stated this way, the research goal of this thesis is rather exploratory and motivated by the desire of the author to give voice to the concerned actors. Although a lot has already been written about the current transformations and normative weakening of the human rights discourse, the main contribution of the thesis is in bringing the voice of the activists themselves in.

The thesis is well structured, it is properly framed, and its methodology is well described and justified. The thesis deals with a highly socially relevant problem, and given it is an MA thesis, it makes a relevant contribution based on a transparent research strategy. The thesis is well written and clear in its overall argumentation.

However, there are some problems. The way the main dimensions of the research are used is not very well explained. They seem to be generated on the basis of the available literature to guide the actual research. The information partners are asked to discuss them during the interview so that their perceptions of these dimensions are revealed. At the same time, these dimensions are evaluated in the concluding part of the thesis, and the causes of the current changes are identified: “From what this research showed, we could think of the political dimensions as causes, and of the other dimensions as effects. These then lead to the changing perceptions of the human rights among the public.” (p. 55).

First, this was *not* stated as the goal of this thesis, which is generally more inductive than explanatory. Second, it is *not clear* how exactly, i.e. on the basis of what criteria, the supposed causes have been isolated from the list of presented dimensions. In addition, how do the “political dimensions” relate to yet another mentioned set of resource-based globalization variables (p. 55-56, p. 62)?

If I understand it correctly, these are actually not the causes, but the way in which the causes of the current changes are perceived by activists blaming the political elite (and the lack of resources for some social groups due to globalization?) for the weakening of the human rights regime. Are there any theoretical or real-world implications of these perceptions? Anna Libová should discuss her conclusions during her defense, and describe the way different dimensions have been evaluated and interpreted by her.

In case of successful defense, I recommend this thesis to be graded *excellent*.

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