



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Emilie Sarah Roulet

Title: A SHIFTING NETWORK OF EXPERTISE: SWISS INTELLIGENCE, 1989-2017

Programme/year: Master in International Security Studies, 2018

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/external assessor): Dagmar Rychnovská

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	26
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	36
<i>Total</i>		80	71
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	91



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This is a fascinating and original MA thesis, which puts forward the claim that intelligence studies could benefit from adopting certain concepts and perspectives from critical security studies and sociological studies of expertise, and demonstrates how such approach can work on a case study focused on the evolution of Swiss intelligence.

The thesis is focused on tracing the evolution of Swiss intelligence. The encounter with further literature then leads the author to develop the theoretical line of her argument. The research question is not explicitly stated, though, and it remains somehow unclear whether the starting point is theoretical, or rather empirical. Despite this tension, though, the author further develops her argument in a smooth and logical way which leads to a convincing applications and conclusions.

Operationalization draws on an established sociological work on expertise and is good enough to guide the author in her analysis. More could have been done, however, to explain how the three selected dimensions (objects, subjects, clients of intelligence) fit to the overall theoretical framework integrating CSS, sociology of expertise, and intelligence studies. This part could have gone further in linking together concepts and analytical logics that seem to act behind the analytical scenes only implicitly. It seems that operationalization might have been “customized” better for this particular case and its specificities which the author highlights at the beginning (i.e. gradual gain of extraordinary competences by Swiss intelligence forces). The author also rightly concludes that the three-layered framework omits broader context, which also leaves open the question of why (in the constructivist “how possible” sense) the described shifts in intelligence networks actually occur.

In the course of her theoretical chapter, the author gradually and persuasively builds her argument about how critical security studies can enrich the scope, scale and perspectives of intelligence studies. This perspective is then applied in a robust case study in which these claims are empirically documented. This analysis is very well conducted and shows great knowledge of the empirical case, which is impressive by its breadth as well as analytical depth.

Minor criteria:

The thesis draws on a rich variety of relevant sources and the author thus demonstrates very good knowledge of different academic fields – from intelligence studies to critical security studies and literature on Swiss security.

The thesis is very well written and argued. The author shows very high proficiency in academic style of writing. The thesis fulfils all formal criteria.



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Overall evaluation:

This is a strong and well-written thesis, which draws on an original empirical research, critical reading and the integration of a broad scope of academic literature, and a novel theoretical argument. The author persuasively shows that she is able to think across different academic literatures and structure and conduct an impressive empirical case study that supports her theoretical argument. The author could have shown more persuasively what concretely CSS can offer to the studies of intelligence and the other way round both conceptually as well as analytically, yet for an MA thesis, this kind of writing and analysis is still highly advanced. Therefore, I fully recommend this thesis for a defence.

Suggested grade: A

Signature: 