



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Vít Krejčí

Title: The lightening of arsenals and implications for conventional warfare

Programme/year: BS

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/external assessor): Jan Kofroň

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	25
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	22
<i>Total</i>		<i>80</i>	54
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	7
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	4
<i>Total</i>		<i>20</i>	15
TOTAL		100	70



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis tries to investigate an important – to be more specific; policy relevant – question (*Is the level of armament disparity the most important factor in the outcome of combat?*). The whole work is logically structured with the aim at solving the research question(s). There is a connection between theoretical and empirical sections. On the other hand, it is fair to say that theoretical section is rather minimalistic – it provides basic arguments for empirical section, yet its depth is very limited. It seems to me that the theoretical section (from certain point) focuses rather on actual (or planned) changes in force posture of selected armies than on broader arguments dealing with key advantages or disadvantages of light forces. If nothing else, one would expect more nuanced discussion of the role of technology on relative pro/cons of lighter vs. heavier forces. Methodological section is in this sense better. Even here, however one can easily spot some problems. For example, “Table. 1 (depicting selected cases)” is informative, unfortunately – as it lacks any description of main axis (they are provided in the accompanying text only) – a reader might struggle to understand the figure/table for a while. At the very same time, I do appreciate that the author tried to select his cases from a predefined population of cases.

The Empirical section consists of seven cases investigated through structured focused comparison. While the empirical section clearly provides necessary info and analysis for resolving the research questions, it seems to me that individual cases could have been described and analysed in more detail (I think additional 5-8 pages could have strengthened this section a lot). Nevertheless, I have to appreciate explicit comparison of individual cases and contextualization of results.

The conclusion delivers key results and aims at framing the results into current literature on the topic. Nevertheless, one can imagine that it could have been possible to connect (explicitly) the results to broader debates on conventional deterrence (Mearsheimer 1983), military effectiveness (Biddle 2004) etc.

Minor criteria: Formal aspects are mostly OK. Here and there argument is bit shallower than I would suggest. Similarly, some arguments could have been supported by citation to relevant literature... (the point here is not that the author is wrong, rather that an unsympathetic reader might question some arguments or assumptions).

Overall evaluation:



**FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Charles University

The thesis deals with an interesting and policy relevant question. Its structure is logical, and it helps to provide plausible responses to key research questions, Structured focused comparison is a viable method for this kind on RQ. At the very same time it is quite obvious that the author faced time constraints... My guess is that additional two, or three weeks would have most likely helped the author to finalize an excellent thesis. As it is now the thesis is not bad, yet there are some parts (Conventional wisdom – theoretical section) or aspects that are rather shallow.

Suggested grade: C (assuming above-average oral defense)

Signature: