



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Vincent Kirchhoff

Title: Examining Rio's pacification strategy in dialogue with a critically revised securitisation framework: an Immanent Critique

Programme/year: SECINTEL / 2018

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

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	25
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	35
<i>Total</i>		80	68
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	19
TOTAL		100	87



Evaluation

Major criteria:

Minor criteria:

Overall evaluation:

This is a very interesting and ambitious dissertation. It uses lenses of critical theory to look at the pacification strategy, which Brazil used to address the urban violence in Rio de Janeiro's poor neighborhoods known as favelas. The dissertation aims to shed light on the legitimization of pacification strategy, strategy's relationship to historically entrenched practices in Brazil, and also to broader political and economic power behind the strategy.

The research approach promises original insights into the functioning of security in Brazil but having read the dissertation a reader is left wondering what the central argument is. The author certainly demonstrates an extensive reading experience with the critical literature and good knowledge of Brazil's politics. I am, however, afraid that the dissertation draws too many inspirations from too many critical theorists. It would be beneficial to narrow what the dissertation addresses and to limit theoretical inspirations the author wants to put at work throughout the text.

The plentitude of approaches also calls into question compatibility of theoretical inspirations and coherence of the text. For instance, there is an extensive reference to critical approaches, but then in the chapter "theoretical-methodological approach" the author promises to follow the deductive reasoning and test hypotheses against empirical evidence. A hypothesis testing would be highly unusual for critical work. Furthermore, no hypotheses are developed, and no testing takes place. The dissertation also puts much effort to criticize securitization only to declare it will use securitization as an analytical tool.

The insights in the text are certainly original and valuable to our understanding of how security works in Brazil. Several notable ideas occur in the dissertation like how neoliberal capitalism shapes policing in Rio de Janeiro, or how enduring tradition of different levels of citizenship in Brazil influence Brazil's approach to favelas, or the description of the pacification strategy being a cover-up intended for international consumption at the time of football World Cup and Summer Olympics. These ideas would deserve further elaboration. The dissertation sketches these ideas but does not provide enough empirical evidence to convince the reader these ideas are anything more than plausible interpretations.

Despite the critique, I think there is a meaningful contribution in this dissertation. Unfortunately, the author puts too much emphasis to relate his ideas to the work of others. Central argument, the author's more extensive interpretation, and perhaps also less heavy "scientific" language would make this an excellent dissertation.



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Suggested grade: B

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jan J.", followed by a long, wavy horizontal line.