Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Lucie Hofmanová

Title: 'Cyber Security in the United States of America: Assessing the Role of the Department of Homeland Security'

Programme/year: 2019

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/~~external assessor~~):

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Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	**10**	**10**
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	**30**	**27**
	Methodology, analysis, argument	**40**	**38**
Total		*80*	*75*
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	**10**	**10**
	Style	**5**	**5**
	Formal requirements	**5**	**5**
Total		*20*	*20*
TOTAL		*100*	*95*

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Evaluation

Major criteria:

The research significantly contributes to the debates surrounding cybersecurity in general and the case of the USA in particular. The thesis on the USA cybersecurity strategy is a timely and relevant contribution, providing an original reflection as regards the impact of cutting-edge cyber technologies and their threat assessment on the USA's national security strategy. To this end, the author engages pertinent academic and policy debates concerning this emerging security field in an eloquent manner, which demonstrates advanced and in-depth analytical skills and a very good handle of conceptual and methodological approaches. As well, by operationalizing and drawing on a variety of theories and analytical tools, including Hansen and Nissenbaum's securitization theory and agenda setting theory, as well as various methods of political discourse analysis, Fairclough's critical discourse analysis, historical analysis, and process tracing, the thesis puts forward an impressive number of original insights into the United States' cyber security strategy and the institutional and agenda-setting role of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in the field of cyber security. In this regard, the linkage between concepts and empirics offers a balanced and proficient theoretical and empirical examination of the subject matter in response to the main research questions. Its main contribution is that it opens up for investigation the legitimizing and discursive strategies used to securitize the cyber domain, by offering a clear and rich analysis of the position of the DHS in cyber security and the influence of this federal department to mainstream its discourse onto the USA national cyber security strategy.

Minor criteria:

In terms of sources, writing style, and formal criteria, the thesis is very well written and demonstrates a high level of scholarly craft.

Overall evaluation:

I recommend this thesis for the highest grade.

Suggested grade: **95**

Signature:

Raluca Csernatoni, PhD
Brussels, 07.06.2019

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