FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Charles University

Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Mathieu Rochambeau

Title: *The perpetuation of Frozen Conflicts by De Facto States to gain International Recognition: Case Studies of Transnistria and Somaliland.*

Programme/year: International Security Studies / 2019

Author of Evaluation (~~supervisor~~/external assessor): Jan Ludvik, Ph.D.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	**10**	6
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	**30**	19
	Methodology, analysis, argument	**40**	25
Total		***80***	50
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	**10**	9
	Style	**5**	3
	Formal requirements	**5**	3
Total		***20***	15
TOTAL		***100***	65

Evaluation

Major criteria:

- I think the broad agenda of the thesis (the relationship between de-facto states and frozen conflicts) is an important one, and the overarching topic provides a fruitful space for a deeper analysis. Having said that, I must note that the aims of the thesis are rather underspecified. What exactly is the research question and/or the thesis' main argument remains rather blurred. Several times, the thesis hints it is testing hypotheses, but no explicit hypotheses are formulated (p.14-15).
- While the thesis provides some rationale for the case selection, the case selection is not entirely clear. It would be beneficial to be more explicit about the case selection and other aspects of the research strategy. What is the population of cases? What is the supporting evidence for the argument/hypothesis? What is the contrary evidence?
- The empirical sections of the thesis are extensive and demonstrate the author's good understanding of the Transnistria and Somaliland cases. It is, however, unfortunate that the empirical sections provide limited analytical insights. Often, the extensive narrative appears detached from the thesis aims and several chapters (e.g., p.18-43) do not appear to answer the research question in any meaningful way (I admit that I am still unsure what the research question is, so I am judging from what I could imply.).

Minor criteria:

- The thesis draws on a good number of sources. The use of sources, however, appears a bit unbalanced. The thesis repeatedly cites a few sources like Hoch & Rudincová, 2015 (99 references); Bradbury, Abokor & Yusuf, 2003 (84); and Kolstø & Pegg, 2014 (70 references) which might indicate the thesis takes too much from these sources.
- How much is taken from various sources is impossible to ascertain. This is primarily due to serious citation malpractice. Throughout the text, the thesis only refers to the entire work but does not provide the page range. Reference to the entire work should only be given when the work's main argument is being referred.
- The text would certainly benefit from some stylistic improvements. Most importantly, paragraphs are expensively long and contain multiple ideas (e.g. entire introduction is a single paragraph). Long paragraphs make reading a bit difficult, and ideas got lost in the long chunks of text. Short paragraphs, each with one argument would much improve the readability. Furthermore, I am not sure some words like securitization are used properly.

Overall evaluation:

I think this is a solid empirical thesis, which explores important and relatively under-researched topic. The analytical part of the thesis is, however, far less developed. The research question and the main argument are unclear and not systematically supported by empirical evidence. This is unfortunate. The empirical data the author presents would have sufficed for very solid analysis if the data had been read through a proper analytical framework.

Suggested grade: D

Signature: