



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Alexandre Cuby

Title: Political Ideology and Organizational Structure: Comparative analysis of the Hezbollah, the FARC and the PKK

Programme/year: MISS 2019

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

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	29
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	34
<i>Total</i>		<i>80</i>	73
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		<i>20</i>	18
TOTAL		100	91



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This thesis is concerned with an original, non-trivial, and intellectually enriching issue. It looks at the nexus between the ideological background of terrorist and insurgent armed groups, their organisation, and targeting strategy. As Alexandre shows in his literature review, this issue is severely under-researched.

The thesis combines qualitative and quantitative methodology. Alexandre does a great job in analysing three ideologies that are prominent among terrorists and insurgents – Khomeinism, Marxism-Leninism, and Fanonism. He also makes an exciting contribution by examining military organisations and targeting strategies of Hezbollah, FARC, and PKK.

The declared aim of the thesis is to examine the link between political ideologies and the selection of their targets. This aim is attained by comparing original ideological imperatives with quantitative data on victims of terrorist attacks. Moreover, the existence of military bureaucracy is included as an intervening variable in the model. The author successfully addresses the question and gives a straightforward answer in conclusion. However, the analysis is not without weaknesses:

- Lack of focus – the entire scope of ‘military establishment’ is examined in the ideology and the actual organisation; yet, the relevance of some of the parts of the concept (e.g. hierarchy, recruitment...) is not clear, or its explanation is left for conclusion.
- The quantitative examination of victims – the thesis draws its conclusion on simple comparison of ideological prescriptions and the data of actual victims. The analysis omits contextual information (e.g. nature of the conflict) that could account for some of the differences.
- The role of discipline – the finding of the indirect relationship between discipline and civilian casualties is interesting, but, strangely, it fails to take into account the ideologically prescribed targeting strategy (=disciplined members of FARC may aim at civilian targets because it is a strategy of the FARC)

I believe, examining the entire nexus of ideology, organisation, and targeting is exceptionally stimulating and promising. Unfortunately, this connection is not sufficiently elaborated in the text, and it is left to the reader to check the congruence between ideology and organisation.



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Charles University

Minor criteria:

Although author's message is delivered with sufficient clarity, the text is stylistically cumbersome, with frequent misspellings, and grammar mistakes.

Overall evaluation:

Alexandre's thesis shows an excellent research design, proficient effort of the researcher, and great potential to become an outstanding academic outcome. Unfortunately, realisation of the work is not on par with its potential. It would be great if Alexandre could spend some more time to elaborate on the connection between ideology and military organisation, sharpen the focus of the text and polish its style. The thesis clearly reveals that Alexandre is very competent researcher with in-depth knowledge of his research topic.

Suggested grade: A (91)

Signature: