FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Charles University

Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Shreya Sharma

Title: A Gender Perspective on the Responsibility to Protect: Case study of Machsom Watch in Israel

Programme/year: International Security Studies, 2021

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Tomáš Karásek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	**10**	9
	Theoretical / conceptual framework	**30**	28
	Methodology, analysis, argument	**40**	37
Total		***80***	*74*
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	**10**	10
	Style	**5**	4
	Formal requirements	**5**	4
Total		***20***	*18*
TOTAL		***100***	*92*

Evaluation

Major criteria:

An important criterion of differentiating an excellent dissertation from a merely good one is surely originality. In this regard, the author has more than fulfilled the general expectations. With gusto and, at the same time, considerable knowledge she weaves together the concept of R2P, the field of WPS (women, peace and security) and feminist security studies, applying all on the case of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Furthermore, while a majority of dissertations rely, for understandable and valid reasons, on an analysis of written documents, the author ventured directly into the field of her study. In cooperation with the women of Machsom Watch, she was able to participate and observe – a no small feat at this academic level. The results of her presence have been flawlessly incorporated into her analysis.

The research arch from the starting question "where are the women?" through a dissection of the aforementioned concepts to their hands-on application on a very specific case, is bold but firm thanks to the author's excellent understanding of all the phenomena and her apparent enthusiasm and passion about the topic. For this is not only finely written but also deeply felt dissertation – yet another feature to appreciate.

The author selected a topic bound to be regarded as 'controversial', writing about Israel's violations of the rights of the Palestinian population. Steeped in a wide and deep selection of relevant literature, the dissertation is mostly convincing in its analysis of the situation. In some places, however, this – mostly sympathetic – reader felt the arguments hard to accept. To mention two examples, a general and a specific one: On p. 30, the author claims that "it is beyond doubt that the raison detre [sic!] of R2P to protect civilian is applicable here." This reviewer begs to disagree: The goal of R2P is not to protect civilians from every and all harm, and while we may hate to accept the thought, it still leaves the possibility open for civilians to be killed in armed operations legally and legitimately. Hence, it is very important to prove that this is not the case in Israeli retaliations against the Palestinian side of the conflict.

The second example is relatively minor in the context of the dissertation's goals, but still worth mentioning. Referring to Lemish and Barzel (2000), the author argues that "in Israel, access to political institutions and therefore protest through political institutions are closed to women" (p. 42). While understanding the contextual point (that masculinity tends to be affirmed rather than challenged by the presence of women in Israeli security and defence forces and political institutions), the idea of institutions closed to women in the context of the regional surroundings is rather ludicrous.

Minor criteria:

The author writes ably, fluently and very convincingly, relying on a much appreciated combination of written sources, personal observations and interviews with the members of Machsom Watch. The only pity is a more-than-negligible amount of typos, misspellings and other writing errors.

Overall evaluation:

This is a conceptually ambitious and impeccably researched dissertation, successfully incorporating the author's direct engagement with the research object. Its conclusions are thought-provoking and, in some aspects, provocative – which this reviewer still considers a positive feature. There is nothing dull or meagre about this work, as it convincingly delivers on its declared research objectives.

Suggested grade: **A**

Signature: