



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Lorenza Fortunati

Title: Civil Applications of Autonomous Systems: Implications for the Military Sector

Programme/year: International Security Studies 2023

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Anzhelika Solovyeva

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	28
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	33
<i>Total</i>		80	71
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	91



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This thesis explores a highly original and generally overlooked topic: the application of our experience with civilian autonomous systems to a better understanding of their possible implications in the military realm. Its contributions are highlighted and grounded in the existing literature. What may initially seem as a mismatch is the reference to the debate on fully autonomous weapons on the one hand and to at least partially supervised civilian systems on the other. However, the current stage of military R&D indicates that fully autonomous weapons will likely involve some kind of human participation too (for example, the switchable fully autonomous mode).

Therefore, I have only two outstanding comments. First, there could have been stronger and more systematic communication between theory and practice. Second, the structure in which an additional section with a future outlook follows after the conclusion is unusual. It is evident that the author tried to go beyond the notable limitation of this work, which is the focus on the cases where the impact of autonomous systems is negative. However, the way this perspective is integrated, too long and not being linked in any way to the above analysis, is unfortunate.

Minor criteria:

The thesis fulfill the formal requirements.

Assessment of plagiarism:

Not detected.

Overall evaluation:

Given the mentioned shortcomings, the thesis is at the lowest threshold for “A”.

Suggested grade: A

Signature: