



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Björn Mielke

Title: Advancing Space Security in the 21st Century - Private Actors and Governance of Space

Programme/year: International Security Studies

Author of Evaluation (second reader): Bohumil Doboš

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	5
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	19
<i>Total</i>		80	44
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	3
<i>Total</i>		20	16
TOTAL		100	60



Evaluation

Major criteria:

In general, a study of security implications of commercialization of space activities presents a very important topic of research in space security. The submitted thesis, however, includes two major shortcomings due to which it presents only limited added value to the ongoing debate and that, in my opinion, limits its value as a Master's Thesis. The first is the width of the topic selected. It combines a general overview of space security, a comparison of private space companies and PMCs, and a debate over a legal framework. The first segment should've been more clearly tied to the researched topic – thus shorter. The thesis should then pick just one of the topics as the current text is very superfluous and shattered. The logic behind the selection of PMCs as a case to compare with private space companies is also missing.

Second, the thesis does not hold any clear research design and is more an amalgam of different thoughts related to the discussed topics rather than a systematic analysis. "The broader objective of the thesis is to address this research question, more specific sub-questions will focus on different aspects of the main question." That is not really a statement of the objective but a general description of any research.

This is also visible in the selection of the theoretical framework. It is unclear how the Copenhagen school and its focus on the process of securitization is helpful in answering the research questions. Additionally, the case selection is not justified. Especially the inclusion of Blue Origin would necessitate deeper explanation.

Minor criteria:

Chapter numbering would make orientation in the text easier. There are numerous typos. The whole text seems unfinished – either the student did not have sufficient time to check the project for formal and language errors or the submitted version is some draft version of the thesis. There are numerous language imprecisions – for example "Luxembourg has passed a law allowing companies to own the space assets they extract..." (p. 36) – not assets but resources.

Assessment of plagiarism: No case of plagiarism identified



**FACULTY
OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**
Charles University

Overall evaluation:

The thesis broadly covers a very important and contemporary space security issues. Private space companies present a challenge and opportunity on numerous levels and will remain crucial topic for the research in the years to come. Unfortunately, the presented thesis has no clear focus nor a research design and presents a broad overview of diverse issues rather than systematic research of a narrow problem. Additionally, from a formal and language point of view, it seems like a final draft rather than a final text.

Suggested grade: D-E

Signature: