



## Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: **Beatrice Cirrone**

Title: **The role of PMSCs in boosting the erosion of state sovereignty**

Programme/year: MISS/2023

Author of Evaluation (second reader): prof. Oldrich Bures

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Research question, definition of objectives	<b>10</b>	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	<b>30</b>	8
	Methodology, analysis, argument	<b>40</b>	33
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	71
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources	<b>10</b>	6
	Style	<b>5</b>	5
	Formal requirements	<b>5</b>	5
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	16
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	87



## Evaluation

### Major criteria:

The reviewed thesis offers an analysis of impacts of the engagement of Private Military and Security Companies in the conflict in Sierra Leone in the 1990s, with a specific focus on state sovereignty.

The thesis is well structured and overall quite well written. The objectives, as well as the time period of analysis, are clearly stated and justified. The methods section is exceptionally well developed for an M.A. thesis, albeit the actual process tracing performance is not ideal since it primarily relies on insights from other already published studies rather than primary documents or authors own research via interviews.

The thesis has two theoretical frameworks, which are both plausible, but it is somewhat unusual to have two different theories in one MA thesis. The Principal-Agent theory is also not much utilized in the empirical chapters. Alternative possible theories/concepts are not discussed, albeit they have been utilized in the study of PMSCs in general (especially the anti-mercenary norm literature) and for Africa in particular (e.g., the assemblage approach, see for example the work by Ritta Abrahamson and Michal Williams, which included Sierra Leone as a case study).

The author has managed to find, read and incorporate key insights from the booming literature on PMSCs, but her literature review does not include much of the more recent literature. It reflects the state of the art as 8-10 years ago, not as of 2023. The list of references is, however, still sufficient for an MA thesis.

### Minor criteria:

There are minor stylistic and grammar issues throughout the thesis.

### Assessment of plagiarism:

Not detected.

### Overall evaluation:

Overall, the thesis certainly meets the standard criteria for this type of academic work

### Suggested grade: B1

### Signature: