

Master's Thesis – Information for UPF supervisors (EPS, Erasmus Mundus Program European Politics & Society) – Academic year 2023-2024

Key dates for Master Thesis Supervisors

By June 14th, 2024: deadline for students to submit their final thesis project.

June 28th: deadline for the evaluation by all supervisors

From June 28th to July 1st: agreement with second reviewers and/or second supervisors on a final grade

July 2nd: EPS Students will receive their grade.

July 4th: the oral defense will take place on this date.

Formal requirements – Length of the Thesis

For **EPS students (Erasmus Mundus students)** the Master's thesis **has to be 12 000 words** ($\pm 10\%$ **including footnotes and bibliography and excluding appendixes**). The cover page of the MA thesis should include the number of words. This is a highly relevant issue, particularly for EPS – Erasmus students.

Assessment and grading

For the EPS students the following are the official assessment criteria they have in their handbook. Therefore, the evaluation and the report should mention this type of criteria. At UPF we need a numerical evaluation from 0 to 10. In addition, this numerical evaluation is translated in some universities into a non-numerical grade.

Grades for EPS – Erasmus Mundus students

A: All elements of a thesis are combined in an effective and convincing form. The case for the research question or hypothesis is well-made and grounded in a significant and topical issue, whether derived from the literature or empirics. The thesis delivers excellent, powerful engagement with the literature, suggesting full mastery of academic and/or empirical debates. The thesis conveys an excellent understanding of how to design and conduct research. The selected method aligns with the research question/hypothesis, and the student evidences a fulsome understanding of it, both at the abstract and applied level. The thesis offers an original answer based on an outstanding analysis of relevant sources, primary as well as secondary where appropriate, that advances our understanding of the matter. It is well-structured and shows excellent awareness of the need to account for the audience. Additionally, the thesis must demonstrate a full understanding of and compliance with academic conventions, including but not limited to the presentation, referencing and

use of footnotes. A thesis performing at this level should be considered to be exceptional, indicative of a student ready to begin doctoral research or high-level professional work.

B: The thesis covers all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but does not meet the exceptional standard above. It will be excellent, at least in part, with relatively minor deficiencies that do not compromise the research design and the relevance of the answer. The research question or hypothesis will be of significance, and the student will deliver an original contribution to knowledge by answering it. The thesis will be grounded in a very good or excellent evaluation of an appropriate body of literature, discussing key concepts and debates maturely and convincingly. The student will demonstrate a very good facility with the demands of good research design. The selected method will align with the research question/hypothesis and the student evidence a good understanding of it, both at the abstract and applied levels. The thesis offers an original answer based on a very good analysis of relevant sources, primary as well as secondary where appropriate, that goes some way to advance our understanding of the matter. Additionally, the thesis must demonstrate a full understanding of and compliance with academic conventions, including but not limited to the presentation, referencing and use of footnotes.

C: The thesis covers all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but with some significant deficiencies. The research question and corresponding hypotheses are developed according to academic standards and linked to the scholarly literature but do not appear entirely convincing. The answer offered is not fully persuasive but offers relevant insight into the topic. The thesis will be referring to an adequate amount of literature, but the reference and the contribution to the academic debate are not really insightful. The research methods show interesting and innovative ideas, but there are some doubts about their development. The thesis still demonstrates knowledge and application of academic conventions (including, but not limited to the presentation, referencing and the use of footnotes), but there are apparent issues with their employment and/or a lack of attention to detail.

D: The thesis covers most issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above, but it is relatively pedestrian, particularly in relation to the embedding of the research question. There is some engagement with the literature, identification of the method and operationalisation of that method to the research. The analysis is present but not fully developed. The selected research method may be of dubious utility, suggesting the student has an imperfect understanding of research design. The question or hypothesis is answered/ tested but not in a very compelling fashion. The thesis is vulnerable to criticism that it is derivative and descriptive, with opportunities for delivering critical analysis not exploited. Peripheral but important issues such as presentation and referencing are problematic, and the student does not always comply with other forms of academic convention.

E: The thesis does not cover all the issues mentioned in the description of thesis elements above but offers a structured piece of relevant analysis that is embedded in the literature and provides an answer to a research question. The method of analysis is explained, albeit not fully developed and persuasive. The thesis is pedestrian, descriptive and unoriginal in form.

F: The thesis does not represent a piece of independent research as far as it does not formulate a straightforward research question and/or lacks engagement with the literature and/or the method of inquiry and/or does not provide an answer based on the critical analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Evaluation procedure for students with second reviewer and/or second supervisor

EPS students - Erasmus Mundus students will have a second reviewer of their Master Theses (from Prague, Krakov or Leiden). Both reviewers, the UPF supervisor and the second reviewers from the previously mentioned universities will have to agree the common final grade. This means that they will have to be in touch either by email and, if necessary, through skype and/or zoom. According to the EPS-Erasmus Mundus rules, students have the right to see their evaluation of both reviewers before their oral defence. This means that in this current year your evaluation should be available by June 28th and then exchange this information with the second reviewer and to agree on a final grade by July 1st .

Oral defence of the thesis

The oral defence of the Master thesis will take place this year on July 4th in the classroom 20.053. The oral defence is 20 % of the final grade. This 20 % of the final grade is not so much about the quality of their work as for their capacity to do a good presentation to show their proficiency when presenting their research as well as providing convincing arguments when reacting to questions made by the Tribunal.

EVALUATION

Please be aware that in order to be able to go to the defense (on July 4th), Erasmus Mundus Students need to pass (5 out of 10 as agreed evaluation grade between both reviewers, the supervisor and the second reviewer).

Annex 1 – Template Dissertation Report EPS



Joint Dissertation Review

Name of the student:	Sara Caloiero
Title of the thesis:	Soft Power in Museums: Nation Branding and the Redefinition of Colonial Lega
Reviewer:	Joost Augusteijn

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

The research question is somewhat obscured and confusingly presented. There are various formulations present in the introduction and conclusions which make the actual focus of the thesis unclear. At numerous occasions the purpose or objective of the thesis is referred to which differ again from these various formulations of the research question to add to the confusion.

This is also reflected in the way the thesis is constructed. Centring around the interplay between cultural diplomacy, nation branding and soft power no clear is made for this, one of the research questions formulation actually contains the term cultural diplomacy while the other deals with nation branding. In the literature review all these terms and their genesis are quite well discussed but the issue of how people's perceptions are shaped by exhibitions gets little attention, while in the end the impact of the acquisition of artifacts through a colonial heritage is really the central issue for the student, but this is not reflected in the research question(s).

2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The methodology is quite extensively discussed but there are some weaknesses in the approach. The issue of provenance within colonial relations is not discussed in the catalogue while it is assumed to have to be there which causes problems in obtaining appropriate input.

The way the ten interviewees are selected is unclear. They are deemed to be representative as they differ on a number of parameters, but they may well be unrepresentative on other parameters.

The way the themes selected to analyse the interviews are identified is not clear. This seems to arise from a close reading of the interviews while use could have been made of the way similar studies have identified themes. This would have strengthened the validity and strength of the research.

The exclusion of the artifacts from Egypt is somewhat debatable. F.i.. all maps of the British empire around 1900 include it, and the artifacts were certainly collected partly in the context of a colonial relationship.

3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

The analysis of the catalogue and interviews is not very convincing. Neither of them use quotations and the interviews are not referenced at all. We have to rely on the trust that the researcher represents the material correctly without having access to the data, which makes verification of the research impossible.

The promised intensive in-depth analysis of the catalogue does not convince. All that is being recounted is whether the provenance is discussed. How this exactly relates to the research question is made unclear. The interviews are simple discussed in very general terms in a way that says a number of people referred to this or that, without showing how or whether other opinions were there. Some of the conclusions are or seem to be debatable. F.i. that it is stated that discussion the spiritual value of the objects is particularly significant seems odd seeing the spiritual aspect is the core subject of the exhibition and it is also unclear how it highlights the need to deal with the provenance.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The thesis is clearly structured and written in good English. The annotation is generally correct although specific page numbers are often missing and occasionally there are unreferenced statements.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

The thesis is structurally sound including all the elements that need to be there. There is a good methodological section and a good awareness of theoretical concepts. It suffers from a unclearly defined research question and insufficiently academic evidencing.

Grade (A-F)	C
Date	Signature
27-06-2024	Joost Augusteijn

GRADE CONVERSION MA EPS

Percentile	Prague	Krakow	Leiden	Barcelona
A (91-100)	91-100 %	4,51-5,00	8.0-10	9-10
B (81-90)	81-90 %	4,21-4,50	7.5-7.9	8-8,9
C (71-80)	71-80 %	3,71-4,20	7-7.4	7-7,9
D (61-70)	61-70 %	3,21-3,7	6.5-6.9	6-6,9

E (51-60)	51-60 %	3,00-3,20	6-6.4	5-5,9
-----------	---------	-----------	-------	-------

Assessment criteria:

Excellent (A): 'Outstanding performance with only minor errors';

Very good (B): 'Above the average standard but with some errors';

Good (C): 'Generally sound work but with a number of notable errors';

Satisfactory (D): 'Fair but with significant shortcomings';

Sufficient (E): 'Performance meets the minimum criteria';

Fail: 'Some/considerable more work required before the credit can be awarded'.