



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Elizaveta Mareeva

Title: Constructing and Transforming the Image of the Enemy in the Discourse of American Presidents on the Example of Counterterrorist Operations in Afghanistan and Iraq

Programme/year: International Security Studies, 2024

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Tomáš Karásek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	7
	Theoretical / conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	23
<i>Total</i>		80	50
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	7
	Style	5	3
	Formal requirements	5	2
<i>Total</i>		20	12
TOTAL		100	62



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This author aims to explain a phenomenon which is, beyond any doubt, important in the study of armed conflicts – the construction of the image of the enemy. The empirical material she selected in the form of the discourse of three successive U.S. presidencies is certainly relevant and could be highly revealing in this context.

Unfortunately, the thesis suffers from a number of problems that undermine its stated objective. The theoretical framework is presented only vaguely, on two pages with just one (!) reference to a source. The literature review that could, hypothetically, substitute the theoretical chapter, does not really serve that purpose – it is a voluminous survey that, however, lacks clear direction and focus.

The author must be lauded for going through a large volume of primary sources. The attempt to summarize the findings in structured tables, though, does not fully resonate, as a clear methodology that would allow the author to identify the relevant discursive ‘units’ is missing. Most importantly, while the analytical parts of the thesis do hold an informational value in relation to the processes of securization and desecuritization in U.S. discursive practice post-9/11, they are just vaguely connected to the proclaimed goal of focusing specifically on the construction of the image of the enemy.

Minor criteria:

The thesis makes an impression of a work (still) in progress: there is an erroneous list of contents, both English and Czech abstract is missing, and so is the summary. There are variations in both the size of the font as well as the text alignment. Throughout the text, errors and typos, including bizarre ones such as “President J. Bush” (p. 67), can be found.

Assessment of plagiarism:

The thesis does not exhibit traits of plagiarism, but the proportion of it that uses bits and pieces of its sources is unusually high (34 % according to Turnitin), signalling low level of originality of the text.



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Overall evaluation:

Despite an interesting original intention, the thesis is theoretically flat and methodologically convoluted. It does contain relevant information on U.S. securitization practices during the so called War on Terror and rests on a wide review of relevant literature, but these qualities are undermined by the lack of a more rigorous conceptual and analytical framework.

Suggested grade: **D**

Signature: