



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Andrei Nosov

Title: Eastern Partnership as a Matter of Security: Russia's perspective

Programme/year: Security Studies, 2024

Author of Evaluation (second reader): Emil Aslan

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	6
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	25
<i>Total</i>		80	51
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	71



Evaluation

Major criteria: This is an empirical thesis that seeks to understand „how the officials responsible for making Russian foreign policy decisions at the highest level addressed the emergence and development of the Eastern Partnership.“ The thesis’ research problém, as the author sees it, is „the way Russian officials frame their perception of the Eastern Partnership program is understudied 9 and might be important to understanding the underlying reasons for this perception.“ To achieve this gol, the author deploys QCA. The disconnect between the (loosely) defined goals and methods is where I see the main weakness of the thesis. First, to grasp how top Russian diplomats (or is it Putin along with some key figures in the Presidential Administration that have taken over the role of main foreign policy makers, according to some recent observations?) addressed (or perceive of?) the emergence and development of the Eastern Partnership, the author would need to either carry out elite interviews, or to carry out thorough discourse analysis. While the former isn’t a feasible option given the circumstances, the latter wouldn’t be of much use given, to use a Russian term for it, the „ofitsioz“, bureaucratic and formalistic narratives given by policy makers. QCA is a very questionable method given the stated objectives of the thesis. To add to the weaknesses is the underdeveloped research problém that is empirical, doesn’t really link the empirical analysis to theoretical and/or conceptual literature, and leaves the literature review largely focused on the chronology and description of the Eastern Partnership.

Minor criteria: The thesis is quite well-structured and well-written.

Assessment of plagiarism: none detected.

Overall evaluation: This is an empirical analysis of a phenomenon. The stated objectives of the thesis don’t fit the methods (and, to an extent, the data) utilized by the author. The thesis is rather detached from theoretical and conceptual literature on a related phenomenon which makes it impossible for the author to contribute to the general (supra-empirical) literature. The metatheoretical “sauce” used by the author in the introductory chapter doesn’t compensate for the discussed lack of theoretical and conceptual framing.

Suggested grade: C



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Signature: Emil Aslan