



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Martin Hejlek

Title: Identity as an obstacle to state-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Programme/year: International Relations/2024

Author of Evaluation (second reader): Aliaksei Kazharski

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	5
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	15
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	25
<i>Total</i>		80	45
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	20
TOTAL		100	65



Evaluation

Major criteria:

Minor criteria:

Assessment of plagiarism: I found no indications of plagiarism in the work.

Overall evaluation:

The thesis addresses an interesting and highly relevant topic, the author's initial choice of focus and theoretical framework seems sound. It demonstrates the author's ability to reflect on the subject. The thesis is fairly well written from the stylistic point of view although a non-English word order is a problem in several places. There are several problems associated with the thesis. First of all, the research design is unclear. The thesis seems to be based on secondary sources entirely. While this is perfectly fine in some cases, for social constructivist analyses of identity I would expect some empirical work to be done as well. As a result of this, the discussion of identities in the thesis seems to be rather superficial. It is unclear whether the thesis was meant to focus on the formation of identity or on how identity impacts politics, in other words whether identity was going to be analyzed as a product or as a factor. Sometimes it is discussed rather as a product shaped by other factors, such as when the author establishes a link between the failures of transitional justice as obstacles to developing a cross-ethnic civic identity. Consequently, some of the more detailed discussion in the thesis is not focused on identity but on the shortcomings of the post-Dayton institutional setup. Finally, the theoretical part seems largely disconnected from the analysis. The level of analysis is unclear to begin with: the author discusses at some length social constructivist IR literature that deals with interstate relations, but it is not made clear how it can be made useful for understanding intra-state ethnic conflicts. I am afraid this shortcoming also stems from the research design issue.

Suggested grade: "D" (65)

Signature: 



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