

Name of the student:	Johanna Friederike Theile
Title of the thesis:	Poles and Poland as the Others as voiced by the German media
Reviewer:	Zuzana Lizcová, PhD.

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

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

The Master Thesis *Poles and Poland as the Others as voiced by the German media* by Johanna Friederike Theile is devoted to the perception of Polish politics and people in the German public discourse. The topic is very interesting and relevant. Thiele`s research scope and her goals are clearly defined. She explores the media image of Poland and Poles and describes how it shifted due to the political change from the Civic Platform`s liberal-democratic coalition into the Law and Justice`s anti-liberal conservative coalition in 2015. The author`s research is based on an elaborate analysis and comparison of a clearly defined sample of press articles from leading German nationwide newspapers in two different periods: April/May 2014 and December 2015/January 2016.

2. ANALYSIS

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

Johanna Friederike Theile demonstrates in her thesis a very good command of the topic and profound understanding of its theoretical framework. She uses relevant literature and other sources of information. She analysis the discourse on the basis of opposing concepts *Othering* and *Belonging* and reveals recurrent patterns in the journalistic texts about Poland and Poles which have the power to shape their public image in Germany.

3. CONCLUSIONS

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

Theile comes to the expectable conclusion, that the discourse about Poles and Poland in major German newspapers shifted between 2014 and 2015/16. Particularly interesting are her additional findings – e.g. that the change of the discourse was not equally strong in all explored media outlets and that it often was the Polish government and its actions who were othered in the discourse, not the Polish society and people. Remarkable is also her general conclusion that the discourse about Poland and Poles in Germany is never unambiguous and largely characterized by the concepts of *Othering* and *Belonging*.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

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

The thesis is a well-organized logical whole, its overall appearance is appropriate. No grammatical or spelling errors complicate the reading. The whole text is written in coherent, formal style.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

Johanna Friederike Theile shows her control of the theoretical and conceptual background of her research topic and convincingly introduces her conclusions. Her thesis constitutes an interesting contribution to current debate about the German-Polish relations. Since she was analysing only selected press articles (and not the content of TV reporting or social media), it would be more accurate to choose the title *Poles and Poland as the Others as voiced by the German press* (not *media*). But in the context of her convincing thesis this is just a minor objection.

Grade (A-F): A

Date: 16.6.2020

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Car', written in a cursive style.