



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Nina Webrová

Title: Strategic Narratives in Sino-European Relations

Programme/year: Bezpečnostní studia, 2024

Author of Evaluation (opponent): Tomáš Karásek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	27
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	39
<i>Total</i>		80	75
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	9
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	19
TOTAL		100	94



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The author has selected a highly relevant topic that draws enormous amount of attention both politically and academically. China's rise to the position of one of the most prominent global actors could arguably be characterised as the most important process in contemporary international relations. The thesis's focus on the European Union's strategic narratives shifts attention to one of the international players with a strong interest in reacting to and, better yet, managing the aforementioned process.

The assumption that such a policy needs to commence with a sufficient level of discursive coherence is a logical starting point of the thesis. From this point, the author builds a clear, cohesive analytical structure that underpins the whole work. After the initial review of literature on Chinese and European strategic narratives, the author defines the term itself, rightly pointing out its explanatory relevance, then performs a two-tier content analysis of major documents the EU produced on China over the last decade. After carefully reading each one of these, five key strategic narratives are identified and subsequently explained.

The author must be commended for the clarity of her argumentation. The objectives of the analysis are explicitly formulated, the reader is firmly guided through the analytical process, and at the end of the work the author more than delivers on the initial analytical promises. The concluding comments on the need for (and, at the same time, difficulty of) achieving a more coherent EU narrative strategy towards China are at the same time finely nuanced and unambiguously presented.

I can hardly think of an outright critical comment. What the successful analysis opens, though, is a question of what can best explain the continuing tensions between narrative emphases of different EU institutions and whether these incongruities are uniquely European or could actually be identified in the narrative practice of other actors (including EU member states) as well.



Minor criteria:

The author ably – and formally correctly – uses a large amount of relevant primary and secondary sources, with both categories being nicely utilized in the service of her analytical goals. The thesis is written in a clear, appropriate academic language. The summarization of the results of narrative analysis in the resulting tables adds a welcome layer of informative value to the text.

Assessment of plagiarism:

The thesis does not exhibit traits of plagiarism.

Overall evaluation:

This is a well thought-out, meticulously constructed and nicely crafted thesis with clearly stated analytical goals which it fully delivers at the end of the process.

Suggested grade:

A

Signature: