

MASTER THESIS ASSESSMENT

Name of Student: Rogers, Lauren

Thesis Title: (Re)Writing History: How Germany and France Create and Project EU Narratives Abroad

Home University: Uppsala University

Host University: Palacky University

Name of 1st Supervisor / University: Dr. Moa Mårtensson / Uppsala University

In this report, please consider the following, by answering the following questions. Please add a short explanation instead of simply answering 'yes', 'no' or 'partly':

1) Content: Problem statement, method and theory:

a) Is the topic of the thesis clearly presented and motivated?

Yes, the topic is presented very clearly and so is its societal and scientific relevance.

b) Are the aims and objectives of the thesis clearly identified and explained?

Yes, the aims and objectives are laid out very clearly.

c) Is there a well formulated problem statement and is it of sufficient complexity for an MA level? Briefly explain?

The research question is: "How do EU member states project EU strategic narratives abroad through national public diplomacy?" This is a question of very high complexity. It allows the student to bring several existing literatures to bear on the classic topic of how the EU might manage to be a coherent and credible actor in global politics even though it contains 28 member states with different foreign policy agendas. Despite the complexity of the research question and the literatures that it relates to, the student's innovative and carefully thought-out research design paves the way for an efficient analysis and interesting and valuable conclusions.

d) Has a convincing rationale for conducting the research been formulated?

Yes, the student identifies a research gap in that no prior research has used strategic narrative analysis to study how individual member states "project" the EU's foreign policy goals, and how their "projections" turn relate to the original narratives formed by the EU institutions. She collects new and original empirical data to this end.

e) Has a suitable methodology and theoretical frame been taken to solve the stated problems?

Yes, great care was taken to select a case (the JCPOA) that establishes a level playing field between the EU and two central member states, Germany and France, so that the

formation/projection of narratives could be compared across the three actors in a fruitful way (i.e. without bias). The analytical framework works very well and structures the analysis throughout.

f) In cases where empirical research has been conducted: is there a suitable research design and has the research been conducted adequately?

Yes, the empirical work has been carried out in a structured and transparent manner.

g) Does the conclusion provide convincing answers/proof to the initial questions/hypotheses?

Yes, the overall results are interesting and convincing.

h) Does the research constitute a contribution to knowledge in this field or domain?

Yes, see above!

2) Structure:

a) Is the thesis coherently structured in chapters and sections?

Yes, it is very well structured.

b) Are concepts clearly introduced and explained, and critically and consistently applied?

Key concepts are carefully defined in the thesis, for example the central concept of "narrative" and its relation to other important concepts such as identity, ontological security, the international system, soft power and public diplomacy (see p.13 and onwards).

3) Sources (primary and secondary):

a) Has (enough) relevant (primary and secondary) literature been adequately interpreted and integrated into the thesis?

Yes, great effort has been made to reference and make substantive use of relevant prior works.

b) Is the bibliography/list of references complete and accurate?

Yes.

4) Stylistics:

a) Is the use of language (English) acceptable and of the required standard (i.e. no spelling mistakes and typos, range of vocabulary, grammar)?

Yes, the language is excellent.

b) Are references in the text given in a coherent and consistent manner (either in text or as footnotes)?

Yes.

5) Format:

a) How is the thesis presented (i.e. consistency in layout, choice of fonts, headings, tables and graphs)?

The thesis is well formatted. Fonts, headings, layout and tables all work well.

b) Does the thesis contain all required elements (title page, declaration, table of contents, bibliography, etc.)

Yes.

6) Quality of writing process:

a) To what degree has the student been able to work independently?

The student has worked very independently throughout the process.

b) Have recommended revisions been executed to a satisfying degree?

Yes.

c) Any other relevant comments (e.g on planning and commitment of the student).

The student is highly committed. Her planning and organization of the work has been excellent and the end result is impressive.

7) Possible questions for thesis defence (only if this thesis is to be defended

Orally):

(National) Grade: A

Date and place: 180823, Uppsala