REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

GPS – Geopolitical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	Isolationism in IR
Author of the thesis:	**Shota Mgeladze**
Referee *(incl. titles)*:	**RNDr. Jan Kofroň, Ph.D.**

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED *(for details, see below):*

CATEGORY	**POINTS**
Theoretical background (max. 20)	16
Contribution (max. 20)	12
Methods (max. 20)	12
Literature (max. 20)	14
Manuscript form (max. 20)	16
TOTAL POINTS *(max. 100)*	**70**
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	**C/D**

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) **Theoretical background**: The thesis has an explicit theoretical background (in the form of the key IR theories) and as it tries to test them explicitly, there is quite clear connection to theoretical dimension. I see however some problems in the way the author works with the theories. For example, I don't believe his first hypothesis can be so easily derived from the realist literature. Realist would need a cost-benefit analysis in order to tell if isolationism can be beneficial. From diferent perspective Hypothesis no. 2 is not a hypothesis) at least not at the same level of abstraction as other hypotheses). Similarly, I don't think H4 is a testable hypothesis.

2) Contribution: the thesis aims at an interesting and policy relevant issue. The contribution is a bit undermined by the abovementioned problems in hypotheses deduction. Still the discussion of variants of isolationism and their specific manifestation in the four empirical cases is interesting.

2) **Methods**: Comparative case study is a sensible methodological approach here. I will criticize the fact that predictions are not case specific (btw author has both – hypotheses and predictions). I think that more specific predictions could have strengthened the engagement with the theories (as one can expect the relative dis/advantages of isolationism varies within time and according to local conditions).
Also I would argue that the power cannot be easily captured by GDP unless we compare units within the same region and period. Power is essentially relative, not absolute.

4) Literature: The paper deals with a good amount of relevant literature. Here and there I noticed a discussed literature is not explicitly referenced, yet is seems to be the case only rarely. I think the author could benefit from bigger exposure to literature using cost-benefit approaches to analyzing social phenomena (this would be the case especially for the analysis of realism and liberalism).

5) Manuscript form: Here and there it is possible to see the author is not a native speaker. Otherwise the these is quite good, logically structured and comprehensible. The tables could have been nicer, nevertheless they do provide the intended information. Similarly, some charts could have been produced by author and not copied from a third party. Nevertheless, GPS theses usually struggle with this aspect so my criticism here is only limited.

DATE OF EVALUATION:

Referee Signature