

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	The Implications of the Intervention in Iraq for the United States' Policy of Democracy Promotion
Author of the thesis:	Tereza Klimešová
Referee (incl. titles):	PhDr. Jan Hornát, Ph.D.

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

1) Theoretical background:

To form the theoretical framework of her thesis, Tereza has focused mainly on theory related to the substance and operationalization of democracy and democratic governance. She has correctly included a discussion about the myriad forms of democracy to demonstrate that different socio-cultural context may produce or desire different models of democracy. Following the broader discussion about democracy's iterations, she debated the theoretical/philosophical justifications for democracy promotion in the world of Westphalian sovereignty. The conclusions from these chapters are then confronted with the US "understanding" of democracy. These initial parts of the thesis set the tone of the subsequent empirical analysis and demonstrate that the author is capable of elaborating about complex issues and abstract ideas. Since, however, the thesis deals with foreign policy – or the employment of democracy *in* foreign policy – the study could have been enriched with theories from the field of International Relations (IR). Concepts such as "foreign policy analysis" (FPA) or "continuity and change" in US foreign policy could have been included to provide a more robust pillar to the empirical research and add new perspectives.

2) Contribution:

Given the current developments in Afghanistan, Tereza has selected a highly relevant and timely topic. Though her analysis deals with Iraq, an analogical study could deal with the case of Afghanistan. This is to say that the contribution of the thesis lies already in the question it poses, i.e. how has the 2003 intervention in Iraq influenced the practice and image of US democracy promotion. The thesis itself does not present new interview material or data that is not available elsewhere, but it provides a sound summary and coherent set of data (budgets, public opinion polls) to demonstrate and prove that the "invasion contributed significantly to the growing backlash against democracy promotion by the West", though "the policy practice during the Bush Administration did not change fundamentally" (pp. 61-62).

3) Methods:

The research questions are clearly stated and the structure and substance of the thesis corresponds to the goals Tereza has laid out for herself. Given the nature of the research question, no methodology is explicitly mentioned as the author applies an eclectic approach to deal with a multifaceted problem. She uses discourse analysis, qualitative content analysis and quantitative data analysis to provide answers to her queries. Such an approach was adequately chosen and employed in the paper properly.

4) Literature:

Tereza has consulted all the major and recent works on US democracy promotion and approached a number of publications related to democratic theory. Literature review is embedded in the presentation of the thesis' theoretical framework and is balanced and nuanced. The list of references includes a number of primary sources that were used in the empirical part of the thesis, for example when discussing the US federal budget for democracy assistance initiatives (which in itself is not an easy task as it requires good orientation in the federal government's budget-making process).

5) Manuscript form:

The thesis is clear and well structured. The language is fluent with a minimal number of typos or misleading formulations. The text is on point and does not make irrelevant detours. The overall formal aspects of the thesis meet the criteria of an MA qualification text.

Box for the thesis supervisor only. Please characterize the progress in the working out of thesis (e.g., steady and gradual versus discontinuous and abrupt) and the level (intensity) of communication/cooperation with the author:

Communication and cooperation with the student was frequent and steady. The student was responsive to my suggestions and my proposed revisions.

Suggested questions for the defence are:

- With regards to the situation in Afghanistan (as of August 2021), US President Joe Biden remarked that the drawdown from Afghanistan presents the end of US nation-building missions. Do you agree or is the urge to export democracy so intrinsic to US foreign policy that democracy assistance will still form a pillar of US global activity? In a related question, how is “nation-building” related to democracy promotion (if at all?).
- What was the fate of US democracy promotion during the Trump administration? Could that be also related to the consequences of US intervention in Iraq?

I recommend the thesis for final defence.

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20 points)</i>	16
<i>Contribution (max. 20 points)</i>	18
<i>Methods (max. 20 points)</i>	17
<i>Literature (max. 20 points)</i>	20
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20 points)</i>	20
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	91
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	A

DATE OF EVALUATION: 2 September 2021

Jan Hornát

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	A	= outstanding (high honour)
81 – 90	B	= superior (honour)
71 – 80	C	= good
61 – 70	D	= satisfactory
51 – 60	E	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	F	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.