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Advisor's evaluation of the M.A. thesis **The EU as an External Factor on Democratic Consolidation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia**, author: Ann Katrin Hilleren, IEPS FSV UK, Summer Semester 2006/2007

M.A. thesis of Ann Katrin Hilleren **The EU as an External Factor on Democratic Consolidation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia** deals with influence of European Union (EU) on democratic consolidation in two Central European Countries, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

Although both countries share common past, their paths after the split in 1992/1993 were different, concerning the way they consolidated its democracy, political processes and political/constitutional institutions. Author has tried to stress the differences between the consolidation processes in these countries with the focus on fulfilling the EU criteria for political acceptance of candidate states.

The work starts with 3 theoretical chapters focused on the theory of democracy (ch. 2), transitions to democracy (ch. 3) and external factors on democratization (ch. 4). Author uses The theoretical part is based on relevant sources. However, sometimes author could use and confront more sources (e.g. chapter 2.4. Transition to democracy – pp. 13-18 – is based just on one source, although it is definitely a relevant source: Linz & Stepan). Otherwise – except few examples similar to the above mentioned one – the work with sources is acceptable for M.A. thesis.

The core of the work is in chapters 5 and 6, where author deals with EU conditions for considering certain country a democratic one, and later follows with two case studies of democratic consolidation in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. When analyzing the political development in both countries since the Velvet revolution (resp. split), author proved excellent and in depth knowledge of Czech and Slovak politics. Author provides analysis of political development in the Czech Republic and Slovakia after the split. Special attention is given to factors that made the development in each of these countries different, stresses major milestones in the political development with special attention given to fulfilling the EU criteria.

Author has shown good knowledge of the theory, Czech/Slovak politics and ability to work with relevant information sources. Therefore, I propose to evaluate the thesis as **excellent (A)**.

In Prague, June 15th 2007

Petr Just
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