REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

Title of the thesis:	Keynesian Politics: The Nature of Political Intervention Policies-Case Study Iraq War 2003
Author of the thesis:	**Vugar Bayramov**
Referee *(incl. titles)*:	**PhDr. Vít Střítecký, M.Phil., Ph.D.**

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 400 words. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

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

1) Theoretical background:

Vugar' s thesis originally looks at the processes of threat constructions that surround US foreign policy. This is a well-researched topic that, however, offers quite enough space for theorisation and empirical investigation. That said, Vugar's thesis gets beyond any disciplinary expectations. The thesis interestingly combines economic concepts (Keynes' theory) and critical IR scholarship (poststructuralist/critical constructivist). I find this combination unique and absolutely fascinating. The positive moment is not only the connection itself but also the way the two theoretical perspectives were connected in a functioning research design supported by effective methodological approach.

2) Contribution:

The contribution is in my eyes stronger than would be the usual case with decent theses. Vugar' s dissertation perfectly fulfils my understanding of an interdisciplinary research, which is a perfect conclusion of the interdisciplinary program. The combination of Keynesian demand-side stimulation and animal spirits with expansion of threat being part of identity construction form an interesting framework of what Vugar fittingly calls political market.

3) Methods:

Methodologically, the dissertation utilizes discourse analysis as it searches for the discoursive content associated with the theoretical concepts mentioned above. Vugar's approach resembles thematic discourse analysis that is appropriate corresponds with the empirical material that he investigated. The empirical analysis itself is solid and thorough and the results provide a decent ground for interpretation confirming the aptness of the concepts.

4) Literature:

The resource base of the thesis solid. The conceptualisation builds on Keynes' canonical literature and assemblage of poststructuralist and social constructivist literature focusing on foreign policy analysis. From the methodological perspective, the thesis refers to more conventional discourse analysis classics (van Dijk, Klotz). As mentioned above, the thesis is empirically strong due to the nature and number of original documents analysed. The literature review section could be expanded due to the interdisciplinary nature of the text. On the other hand I fully understand that a full lit-review would be indeed demanding in this case.

5) Manuscript form:

Formally, the thesis is well-elaborated and carefully formatted. I especially appreciate Vugar academic style as well as the level of his expression. In general, the thesis reads very well. It flows very logically, it is very clear and at the same time it is academically deep.

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 of communication/cooperation with the author:

I find Vugar an exceptional student. We originally discussed another proposal that would combine even neuroscientific perspective with social science but we then decided to switch to this more conventional thesis (even if the word conventional is not appropriate in this context). All meetings with him were mutually enriching (at least from my perspective) and pleasant. After all this, I find the thesis outstanding nearing to an ideal case of thesis that should conclude interdisciplinary political-economic programme.

Sugested questions for the defence are:

Much of the foreign policy analysis focuses on the international/foreign sources of threat construction. Would you find domestic resources relevant as well?

I recommend the thesis for final defence. I recommend the following grade: "1" (excellent).

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
Theoretical background (max. 20)	19
Contribution (max. 20)	20
Methods (max. 20)	19
Literature (max. 20)	18
Manuscript form (max. 20)	20
TOTAL POINTS *(max. 100)*	**96**
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	**1**

You can use the decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.4 for 61 points).

DATE OF EVALUATION:

_____

Referee Signature

The referee should give comments to the following requirements:

*1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts **omitted**? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently **incorporated with the topic** and hypotheses tested? Has the author demonstrated a genuine **understanding** of the theories addressed?*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	points

*2) CONTRIBUTION: Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw **conclusions** based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the **policy implications** well founded?*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	points

*3) METHODS: Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further **verification and testing**? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or **irrelevant detours** off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 12 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**).*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	points

*4) LITERATURE REVIEW: The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author **quotes** relevant literature in a **proper way** and disposes with a **representative bibliography**. (Remarks: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**. If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression. Any sort of **plagiarism** disqualifies the thesis from admission to defence.)*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	points

*5) MANUSCRIPT FORM: The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate **language and style**, including the academic **format for quotations**, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**. The text is free from typos and easy to comprehend.*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	points

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading	US grading
81 – 100	**1**	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	**2**	= good	= B
51 – 60	**3**	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	**3**	= satisfactory at a margin of failure	= D a marginal passing grade
0 – 40	**4**	= failing is recommended	= non-defendable