

Evaluation of the bachelor thesis „Critical Discourse Analysis of Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government“
written by Berk Köksal

The thesis deals with political discourse of the Kurdish regional government (KRG) regarding the (semi) nation state building process in Northern Iraq. The thesis focuses on the political discourse in the time span between the 2003 American led invasion to Iraq and the September 2017 independence referendum held in the KRG. The aim of the thesis is to describe, interpret and explain the political discourse of the KRG.

To do so, the first part of the thesis introduces reader into the historical, geographical, political, demographical, and economic context of the KRG relying on relevant academic literature. Together with the situational context, it provides the context for explaining the dynamics of the discourse regarding the relationship between the KRG and the Iraqi central government. The second part of the thesis introduces the methodology of the critical discourse analysis (CDA) and focuses on analysis of six selected texts. The thesis shows how the political discourse developed before the independence referendum and explains why this happened (the shifting power balance between Erbil and Baghdad, the shifting alliance between the Iraqi Kurds and the US, partly internal pressures as part of the Arab Spring and the creation of a new political movement Goran).

Generally, I like the thesis and the way how the CDA is implemented. However, I see at least two weaker points.

The **sample of texts** under evaluation using the CDA. It is not clear according to which logic the texts have been selected. It is not clear if the texts aim to domestic or rather international audience (it could significantly differ; also the explanation of the discourses should take this explicitly into the consideration). It is not clear if the discourse of the KRG in fact means discourse of the KDP, one of the two (or three) main Kurdish political parties (is there plurality or singularity of discourses in KRG?). It is not clear if the original texts have been published in English or if the author had to translate them into English (possible problem of translation should be mentioned). Finally, I guess the list of the texts should be listed in the references or sources of the thesis.

The **conclusion chapter** seems to me to be rather short and brief (two pages). I would like to have more complex understanding of the political discourse of the KRG at the end of the thesis. Since the author made quite a lot of effort and provided us with several interesting insights in the analytical chapters, some kind of a critical synthesis of these particular (isolated) findings would be welcomed.

I consider the thesis to be very good and propose mark „excellent“.

In Prague, 11th June, 2018.

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