

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

Title of the thesis:	Mastering Space by New Means of Power Politics: Democratization
Author of the thesis:	Ksenia Galtsova
Referee (incl. titles):	Michael Romancov, 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
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	13
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	13
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	71
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	C satisfactory

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

1) Theoretical background:

For the purposes of her work, the author decided to use several theoretical concepts, which are clearly presented in the text. Ideological geopolitics was used as a major point of departure for entire work. Security complex theory was used for analysis of (geopolitical) importance of Central/Eastern Europe for competing superpowers. Joseph Nye's soft power concept was used to clarify the issue of democratization and the theory of democratic peace was used to frame the debate on relations between members of the (democratic) community of sovereign states. The author presented all the concepts clearly and carefully, but their application to the selected cases should have been more detailed

2) Contribution:

The aim of the research was to prove that democratization is being exploited with an aim to promote the state's interests and spread influence. Which is a relevant, interesting, and actual question. But it is also an extremely complex and complicated question. I have to appreciate the enthusiasm with which the author embarked on the topic, and I acknowledge that she was able to overcome a number of difficulties in processing. She worked hard and was able to identify many interesting moments and details that were relevant to the topic. However, her efforts, perhaps due to lack of time, were not entirely successful. In many places, the argumentation is relatively superficial and not entirely convincing. Nevertheless, the conclusions reached by the author can be accepted.

3) Methods:

The structure of the work reflects the breadth and complexity of the researched topic. The author tried to carefully and proportionately discuss and apply all theoretical models. However, the breadth and complexity of the topic has complicated this effort in many places.

4) Literature:

The work is based on a relatively solid amount of resources. However, the list of literature and sources at the end of the work could and should have been created much more carefully. The inability to quickly determine the proportion of academic and non-academic resources, or primary and secondary resources, is a problem.

5) Manuscript form:

The work is written in a cultivated and readable language, but it is obvious that the text was created in time pressure. Unfortunately, there is a relatively large number of typos in the work. However, the text is completely understandable for readers. References to literature and other sources used are properly marked everywhere.

DATE OF EVALUATION: June 19th, 2020

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?

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 10 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. (Remark: 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.

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 academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading
91 – 100	A	= excellent
81 - 90	B	= good
71 – 80	C	= satisfactory
61 - 70	D	= satisfactory
51 - 60	E	
0	F	= fail (not recommended for defence)