

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

Title of the thesis:	Iran in Latin America: A Regional Perspective
Author of the thesis:	Alonso Leon
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>	4
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	20
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	4
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	20
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	20
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	68
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	D - satisfactory

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

1) Theoretical background:

Unfortunately, the theoretical and methodological part of the work is its weakest part. In fact, it is very difficult to find from what perspective the author is trying to grasp the topic, because there are no clear starting points that would indicate this to the reader. On page 17 there is stated: "With this background in mind, two theories can help explain the causes of the establishment of a more substantial relation between Tehran and Latin American governments, as well as to elucidate if Iran's actions can be sustained in the long-term.". However, I did not find anywhere which two theories the author has in mind :-(-.

Fortunately the author was able to provide reader with a number of objectively interesting information and was able to work with it in an creative way and as a result he was able to offers an insider and plastic picture of relations between selected countries and Iran. If it weren't for that, I wouldn't be able to recommend the work for defense.

2) Contribution:

The author declared: "The central idea behind this work is to analyze Iran's involvement in the region from a Latin American viewpoint. Since most of the research on Iran's operations in Latin America is produced from a US-centric perspective, the topic, in many instances, revolves only around US security implications." After reading the whole work, I feel that he managed to fulfill the above in an excellent way. The text provides a number of interesting and relevant information that is, at least in (Central) Europe, either completely unknown or not given due attention. Because there is often a call for a global perspective, this text fills an important gap in our knowledge.

3) Methods:

See first point.

4) Literature:

The author was able to gather a considerable amount of academic literature and valuable information sources.

5) Manuscript form:

The work is written in a cultivated language with a minimum of grammatical deficiencies. All sources are properly marked in the work, the final list of literature is elaborated in careful way. The work contains a number of interesting and suitable and explanatory graphs and tables.

DATE OF EVALUATION: September 13th 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)