Posudek na diplomovou práci

Autor/ka práce: Bc. Jan Dostál

Název práce: Explaining the Kosovo's recognition and its withdrawal

Obor/Rok: MV/21

Autor posudku (~~vedoucí~~/oponent): Ondřej Rosendorf

Kritéria	Definice	Max. bodů	Získané body
Hlavní kritéria			
	Výzkumná otázka, formulace problému	**10**	9
	Teoretický konceptuální rámec	**30**	22
	Metodologie, analýza argumentace	**40**	33
Celkem		**80**	64
Vedlejší kritéria			
	Zdroje	**10**	8
	Styl	**5**	5
	Formální kritéria	**5**	5
Celkem		**20**	18
CELKEM		**100**	82

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Slovní hodnocení:

Hlavní kritéria:

This thesis examines factors contributing to statehood recognition and derecognition in the empirical context of the Kosovo case. The author poses the question: "Why did some governments decide to recognize Kosovo and others did not? [And] what motivation lies behind the withdrawal of this act?" (p. 2). The thesis exceeds the standard expectations in several ways: (1) it addresses an important but relatively underresearched topic of statehood recognition/derecognition; (2) it uses advanced statistical methods of analysis; and (3) it applies a novel theoretical approach to statehood recognition based on the literature on diffusion.

However, there are also some weaker points. The first and most obvious issue relates to how the thesis builds on the previous research on the topic. To a large extent, the research design replicates the study by Mirilovic and Siroky (2017). In fact, the part with quantitative analysis differs only in that the author uses one additional method of analysis (i.e.: Cox proportional hazards regression) and four additional variables, including total population, percent Orthodox population, ethnic ties to Serbia, and voting similarity to the US within the UNGA. The fact that the thesis draws heavily on the article by Mirilovic and Siroky should have been stated more clearly in the text.

The theoretical argument behind the inclusion of certain variables in the quantitative part of the analysis is not always clear. This applies, for example, to the inclusion of variables "democracy" and "GDP per capita", where the author states that "It is not entirely clarified what lies behind the relation [...]" (p. 19).[1] If we lack a theoretical argument for the inclusion of certain variables, why include them in the first place?

Similarly, the theoretical argument for the inclusion of the above-mentioned four variables should have been more elaborate. The mechanism behind the hypothesized effect of population is quite vague and variables percent Orthodox population and ethnic ties to Serbia are merely derivative of the two variables present in the original article by Mirilovic and Siroky (2017): percent Muslim population and ethnic ties to Albania. The hypothesis on the emulation of US behavior operationalized through UNGA voting patterns, therefore, appears to be "the" substantive contribution.

Although the argument about the effect of diffusion of statehood recognition (either through coercion or by emulation) is developed more thoroughly in the latter part of the analysis, which focuses on three case studies of derecognition of Kosovo, the thesis would have benefited from a greater theoretical focus on this mechanism in particular.

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[1] In the original article, Mirilovic and Siroky (2017) include these variables to isolate the effect of religious regulation, since lax regulation tends to be more prevalent in wealthy democracies.

At several points in the text, the author suggests that quantitative methods are used to determine the "correlation" between IVs and the binary DV. However, none of the methods used measure correlation (e.g.: logistic regression returns probabilities of association and Cox regression returns hazard ratios). Additionally, the use of Cox regression, which involves the aspect of time before an event (i.e.: state recognition) occurs, seems dubious in the light of the fact that the author works with data for only a single year, while the values of some variables in particular (e.g.: GDP per capita) could have changed dramatically over time, possibly biasing the results.

Regardless, the positive aspects of the thesis far outweigh these weaker points. The author demonstrates extensive knowledge of the empirical subject as well as an excellent ability to execute the research design with precision and rigor. During the defence, the author could: (1) clarify the main contribution of the thesis in relation to the previous research and especially the study by Mirilovic and Siroky (2017); (2) explain why the Kosovo case was favored over other potential cases, which have not been previously studied extensively; and (3) elaborate on the generalizability of findings to other cases of contested recognition.

Vedlejší kritéria:

The length, formatting, and sources of the thesis are adequate.

Celkové hodnocení:

The quality of the thesis is above the average; the author addresses an important and relatively underresearched topic, uses advanced quantitative methods of analysis, and applies novel theoretical approaches to statehood recognition (e.g.: diffusion by emulation). Some weaker points of the thesis include unclear rationale behind the inclusion of certain variables (e.g.: GDP per capita) and use of certain methods (e.g.: Cox regression), or fairly surface-level qualitative analysis in the latter part of the analytical section.

Výsledná známka:

B

Podpis:

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