

Charles University

Faculty of Social Sciences

Institute of International Studies

Opponent: Dr. Anna Vidén

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Title of MA- thesis: *India-U.S. Relations in the late 1960s and in the first half of the 1970s*

1. Fulfillment of stated objectives

1.1. Introduction of the topic and stated hypothesis

This thesis focuses on the bilateral U.S.-India relations from the late 1960s to 1975. After studying various events during this time period, which influenced these relations, the author reaches the conclusion that the United States in its foreign policy strictly followed the principle of realpolitik. The author argues that the U.S.-Indian relations were negatively affected by the U.S.-Pakistan relationship and the newly established relationship with China.

1.2. Fulfillment of stated objectives

Since the study lacks thesis statement and does not have a hypothesis it is impossible to verify that the stated objectives of the MA-thesis have been carried out.

2. Strength and weaknesses

This MA-thesis has major issues which need to be addressed before defense can be recommended; the most important being that it lacks a thesis statement and a verifiable hypothesis. Without such key elements there is no MA-thesis. This should have been apparent to previous readers of the material currently under review. It also should have been apparent that the thesis lacks structure and a coherent overarching argument. This could have been straightened out through a proper review and proofreading of the material. The author has analyzed many documents but has not constructed a cohesive narrative, which makes sense. Instead the reader is left with disparate portions of text which does not constitute a cohesive whole. This could have been salvaged through sufficient proofreading and discussions with the thesis director.

Another key issue is the fact that the author does not support his arguments with pertinent sources. Instead of evidence we are left with quite a bit of speculation and guess-work about realpolitik and U.S. foreign policy. It is quite apparent that the author lacks a proper understanding of key concepts and U.S. foreign policy, and how it is elaborated or was

elaborated at the time. Based on my reading of the present thesis, I make the following recommendations which should be fulfilled in order to enable the author to defend his MA-thesis:

1. The thesis should have a thesis statement backed with pertinent arguments and a verifiable hypothesis.
2. The previous point is linked to the development of a coherent causal argument with established dependent and independent variables. The author is interested in how the United States' relationships with Pakistan and China affected the U.S.-India bilateral relations. This causal relationship, how it plays out, and how the author projects to study it needs to be addressed in the methodological section.
3. There needs to be a coherent theoretical argument grounded in theory which fits with the historical and contextual reality.
4. The author needs to define, contextualize and operationalize key concepts (bilateral relations, bipolar international system, multipolar international system, security doctrine, interests, realism, realpolitik, Nixon doctrine, idealism and non-aligned states). The author needs to demonstrate a thorough understanding these concepts and how they should be applied in the specific context. IR-handbooks which discuss such theories and concepts should be used before turning to specialized literature.
5. Studying U.S. foreign policy and realpolitik in a historic perspective supposes knowing something about previous presidents and their specific policy preferences. Had the author carried out such a study, he would have known that realpolitik is not the ownership of Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon alone. Discussing realpolitik during the Nixon administration supposes contextualizing this orientation in relation to previous U.S. administrations. No guessing or assuming should be tolerated. Evidence based arguments should be the norm.
6. Therefore, a much closer and deeper study of the sources at hand needs to happen.
7. There also needs to be a proper evidence based contextualization of the strategic reality during the specific time period at hand. This suppose also providing the reader with maps to situate the reality.
8. A focused discussion of the establishment of India and the subsequent establishment of Pakistan would be welcome as would a more thorough discussion of the India-Pakistan enmity and its basis. Such a discussion is a prerequisite to the discussion about US-India bilateral relations.

9. A proper evaluation of the US-Pakistan relations and how they affect the US-India relations is also welcome as is a similar evaluation of the US-China relations and how they affect the US-India relations.
 10. The sources need to be referenced.
 11. The language needs to be verified and proofed in regards to expressions, syntax, spelling and grammar.
 12. The study needs to be provided with a coherent structure.
3. Final assessment

My final assessment based on the previous discussion is that Ondřej Novotný should not be recommended for defense until the issues previously discussed have been rectified.

Dr. Anna Viden June 9, 2015 in Prague