

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	American Humanitarian interventions
Author of the thesis:	Viktorya Arakelyan
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr. Martin Riegl, 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>	16
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	6
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	15
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	20
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	72
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	2

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

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

1) Theoretical background: The submitted thesis attempts to explain whether U.S. intervention can be understood within the realist or idealist approach. To do so the author works with the concepts of humanitarian intervention, intervention, humanitarianism in realist and idealist perspective. In this respect the R2P theory (including its evolving international legal framework) could have been at least mentioned in the thesis.

2) Contribution: The aim of the thesis is to analyze motivations which lead U.S. governments to intervene in case of humanitarian emergencies. Second goal of the thesis is to: *"initiate a theory building process to outline a group of variables which will allow to explain why USA launches humanitarian interventions."* (16) While I am sympathetic to such an analysis, it can't be overlooked that such a goal is simply too difficult to accomplish. Although, the author presents comprehensive, and to some extent original research trying to understand U.S. interventions abroad it unintentionally reveals weakness of such sort of analysis. It's rather obvious that such a complex issues (military intervention) can't be explained by a simple model of variables which ignores key stake-holders, unofficial actors, hidden motivations, pressure groups, international pressure, other geopolitical agents, regional particularities, geographic aspect, military capabilities of U.S. and many others which for example are needed to understand Washington's distaste for preventing genocide in Rwanda. It's not authors fault, but she simply encountered limits of such research approach. Consequently the main findings of the thesis are not (and couldn't be) conclusive or unexpected.

3) Methods: Methodology is clearly stated, the author uses both qualitative and quantitative methods throughout her paper. Methodologically, the thesis research presents a model of variables comprising four independent (complex humanitarian emergency, power disparity, public opinion and strategic necessity) and two dependent variables (U.S. intervention or nonintervention) which are applied to three case studies – namely Libya, Sudan and Haiti.

4) Literature: The author quotes very extensive, relevant and recent literature which demonstrates author's orientation in the field. Mrs. Arakelyan further analyzes relevant documents such as resolutions of the UN Security Council etc.

5) Manuscript form: The thesis is clear and well structured into eight chapters (including introduction and conclusion), the author uses appropriate language (misspellings or typos are rare) which allows the reader fluent reading. The thesis has a layout required by the Faculty of Social Sciences.

To sum it up the author has conducted dutiful and comprehensive research which encountered certain limits of chosen research method. I do recommend the B grade.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 26.1. 2016

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	US grading
81 – 100	1	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	2	= good	= B
51 – 60	3	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	3	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	4	= fail	= not recommended for defence