

HABILITATION THESIS REVIEWER'S REPORT

Masaryk University, Brno

Faculty of Social Studies

Applicant PhDr. Ondřej Ditrych, Ph.D.

Applicant's home unit, institution: Institute of International Relations Prague

Habilitation thesis CRITICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF THE GLOBAL

Field of study: *Political science*

Reviewer: **dr habilis Ryszard M. Machnikowski**, prof. UŁ

Workplace: Faculty of International and Political Studies, University of Lodz, Poland,

1. Applicant's research focus

Ondřej Ditrych has been dealing with various issues in the field of terrorism, security studies including drug prohibition regimes as well as ethnopolitical conflicts in the post-Soviet space and global for a long time. The present habilitation thesis is a summary of the results achieved in many subfields of his investigations and it can be regarded as well a summary of the applicant's work. The present work is in accordance with the author's long-term research focus.

2. Format of the thesis

Ondřej Ditrych's habilitation thesis has the form of a collection of six scholarly works in English published as parts of collective "international" monographs with texts published in good-quality international academic journals with an introduction commentary. In particular, there are the following texts: 1. "Georgia's Frosts: Ethnopolitical Conflict as Assemblage." *Asia-Europe Journal*, Vol. 17 (2018), No. 1, pp. 47-67; 2. "Georgia: A State of Flux." *Journal of International Relations and Development*, Vol. 13 (2010), No. 1, pp. 13-25.; 3. "Afghanistan Now: A Study of the Microcosmos of Global Disorder." In "Europe, the Middle East, and the Global War on Terror". Ed. Ondřej Beránek. Frankfurt: Peter Lang; 4. Ondřej Ditrych and Constanza Sánchez Avilés. "The International Drug Prohibition Regime as Security Regulation." in: "Regulating Global Security: Insights from Conventional and Unconventional Regimes". Eds. Nik Hynek, Ondřej Ditrych and Vit Stritecky. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019; 5. "Forget Hobbes." *International Politics*, Vol. 53 (2016), No. 3, pp. 285-302; 6.

“Security Community: A Future for a Troubled Concept?” *International Relations*, Vol. 28 (2014), No. 3, pp. 350-366.

All texts have been peer-reviewed and the fact they have been published proves their academic quality.

3. Evaluation of the content

Let me start with a clear statement that all chapters and articles presented here for evaluation are well-written, interesting and show Author's original insight into various problems touched upon in the content of his habilitation thesis. As this format of habilitation thesis has become more and more common, not only in Czechia but also in Poland, the role of habilitation opponent is to check the coherence of the proposed work. These published findings are valuable contribution to the understanding of some core issues in international relations studies. Dr Ditrych employs 'critical' perspective in his analysis, attempting to use various concepts to analyse selected issues: Deleuze/ Guattari's *assemblage* to depict *Frozen conflict(s)* in Georgia, Schmitt's concept of *sovereign dictatorship* to portrait Georgia's political regimes, Foucault's *dispositif* to show Afghanistan as an example of *global disorder*, he also attempts to historicise and 'archeologize' Hobbes, and provides the public with a constructivist interpretation proposed by Adler and Barnett to Deutsch's concept of *security community*; just to mention the leading ones. But we have also one more 'conventional' approach in this international relation's *bricolage*: the analysis of the international drug prohibition regime as a security regulation. This: "reflect the ambition to achieve theoretical pluralism, unbound by a single, narrowly defined paradigm – and its jargon", as it is openly announced by the Author of this dissertation; and this aim is clearly achieved by him. Dr Ditrych also skillfully achieves another aim of his dissertation, which is: "(to) underscore the processes of the constitution of knowledge on the premise that there is no unshakeable foundation, or an Archimedean point, from which social action could be made intelligible from safe distance." However, as a final result we deal here with a 'poststructuralist discourse' on these various issues of international relations which is, by a definition, not entirely clear and coherent. E. g. in order to make Ditrych's research complete, one should expect some deeper 'methodological introduction' as well as 'final conclusions' but neither is present in the 'structure' of this dissertation. Hence, if we fully adapt 'critical' approach to theories of international relations we may never expect such, but when we adopt critical stance towards this 'critical' approach, we remain in a limbo of unfulfilled 'conventional' expectations towards some definite result of the presented work.

4. Reviewer's questions for the habilitation thesis defence

- a) In what way this “pluralist” perspective (i.e. “the critical constructivist”, “the critical political ontology of Carl Schmitt, Walter Benjamin and Giorgio Agamben as well as concepts developed by Deleuze/ Guattari and Foucault” employed in habilitation thesis is providing *new* tools for the analysis of various cases?
- b) What precisely the term “global” visible in the title of dissertation means in reference to chapters 2 and 3 (on various aspects of the conflict in Georgia) and chapter 6 on Hobbes?

5. Conclusion

The habilitation thesis entitled "CRITICAL INVESTIGATIONS OF THE GLOBAL "by PhDr. Ondřej Ditrych, Ph.D. **fulfils** requirements expected of a habilitation thesis in the field of Political Science.

Date: 13 August 2021

Signature: