

PUBLIC LECTURE EVALUATION

Masaryk University

Faculty	Faculty of Social Studies
Procedure field	political science
Applicant	PhDr. Michal Smetana, Ph.D.
Lecture date	14 March 2022
Lecture topic	Moral Foundations Theory and Foreign Policy Attitudes
Persons present (number)	18
Designated evaluators (board members)	prof. PhDr. Vít Hloušek, Ph.D. prof. Alexander Duleba, CSc. doc. Mgr. Jan Osička, Ph.D.

The habitation committee selected the topic mentioned above among the three suggested by the candidate.

After setting the topic into the context of his long-term research interest, Michal Smetana explained the overlaps among international relations, security studies, and political psychology when one wants to deal seriously with the moral foundation of foreign policy attitudes. He explained that the topic has remained on the margins of research interests. Yet, the investigation into the micro-foundations of policy-makers normative foundations can contribute to empirical knowledge of policymaking's emotional and moral background. Its theoretical contribution addresses the shortcomings of rational choice theory.

After illustrative and meticulous information about the role of morality in the theory and research of international politics, Smetana demonstrated the necessary multi-disciplinary approach and cross-fertilisation between international relations on the one hand and political psychology, anthropology, or evolutionary biology. Further, he proceeded to the general moral foundations that all the people have in common and demonstrated how this common ground is then impacted by the differences in cultural norms and patterns. Smetana paid crucial attention to the way emotions affect decision-making in general and politics in particular. He explained the discrepancy between moral foundations and policy preferences and interests. Smetana focused on the example of the USA while showing that moral background is a better predictor of policy preferences and stances than, for example, age or education.

Further, he discussed the moral background of the 'hawks' and 'doves' approaches to US foreign policy, disputing the alleged alternative between cosmopolitan idealistic liberal foreign policy and realistic pragmatic foreign policy based on national interests. Smetana argued in a very plausible way that this dichotomy should be instead addressed in the framework of differentiated moral foundations of political conduct. Smetana also offered empirical evidence from his original experimental research in willingness to use nuclear and chemical weapons based on the moral foundation of policy preferences. This part of his public lecture was

concluded with precise and deep-going integration of empirical findings and theoretical considerations.

In the discussion following the lecture, Michal Smetana answered all the questions clearly and assuredly. He tackled, among the others, the theoretical implications of his research, the diverging results for nuclear and chemical weapons, to what extent the individual preferences can be aggregated to policymaking processes etc.

Michal Smetana demonstrated in his public lecture not only his profound knowledge of researched topics but also his ability to connect empirical and theoretical perspectives across the diverse areas of study and social science disciplines and to integrate them through the lenses of international relations. Moreover, he showed excellent pedagogical and rhetorical skills that correspond well with his academic maturity level.

Conclusion

The lecture delivered by Michal Smetana, entitled "Moral Foundations Theory and Foreign Policy Attitudes" and delivered as part of the habilitation appointment procedure, **demonstrated** sufficient scholarly qualifications and pedagogical capabilities expected of applicants participating in a habilitation procedure in the field of political science.

Date: 14 March 2022

Alexander Duleba
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Vít Hloušek
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Jan Osička
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