UNIVERZITA KARLOVA
Fakulta sociálních věd
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PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(Posudek oponenta)

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Jolana Sedláčková**
Název práce: **Contemporary American Conservatism in Historical Perspective: A Comparative Analysis of the Conservative Political Discourse in 1960-1980 and 2011-2020**

Oponoval (u externích oponentů uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce): **doc. PhDr. Francis Raška, PhD.**

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle): **This thesis investigates the indicators of a conservative backlash in presidential campaign discourse by contrasting the conservative rhetoric of 1960-1980 with that of 2011-2020. Grounded in a theoretical framework of Backlash Politics, the thesis examines the rise of conservatism in the 1960s and 1970s and its resurgence in the twenty-first century through the lens of a Critical Discourse Analysis. Through an analysis of conservative presidential candidates' public statements in the periods 1960-1980 and 2011-2020, the thesis explores the resurgence of American conservatism by identifying enduring themes in conservative discourse.**

2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.): **The topic is both interesting and challenging. The argumentation is likewise sound and logical as is the structure. The theoretical and methodological underpinning is also fine. The sources are balanced.**

3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.): **I have no problem with the formal and linguistic aspects of the thesis.**

4. KONTROLA ORIGINALITY TEXTU

Prohlašuji, že jsem se seznámil/a s výsledkem kontroly originality textu závěrečné práce v systému:
[ ] Theses [**xxx**] Turnitin [ ] Ouriginal (Urkund)
Komentář k výsledku kontroly: **The results do not indicate any problems with originality.**

5. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z diplomové práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):
Jolana Sedláčková has chosen American conservatism as the topic of her MA dissertation. She compares the 1960-1980 and the 2011-2020 periods by analyzing the statements made by politicians. The work consists of an Introduction, three main chapters, and a Conclusion. The work represents a Critical Discourse Analysis. The literature is discussed well, the theoretical framework is grounded in Backlash Politics, and the methodological approach is explained. I shall offer my comments on each part of the dissertation in the ensuing paragraphs.

In the Introduction, Jolana clearly spells out the aims of the thesis. The main research questions are as follows: "To what extent does the political discourse of 2011-2020 in the United States mirror that of 1960-1980"? How does the conservative rhetoric used in the United States during the 1960-1980 period interact with that of the twenty-first century"? The main goal is to ascertain whether a conservative backlash is underway in the United States. Subsequently. Jolana aptly summarizes the content of the three main chapters, furnishes a detailed review of the relevant literature, explains the value of discourse analysis in the field of political science, and, finally, explains the theoretical background, as well as the methodological approach utilized in the treatise. I think that the Introduction fulfills its purpose and arouses the curiosity of the reader.

Discourse analysis forms the subject of Chapter 1. Jolana conveys to the reader the role of conservative ideology in American discourse, which emphasizes the maintenance of the current social order. She

identifies ten major themes and explains their prominence in the discourse. Subequently, Jolana identifies presidential candidates most associated with conservative discourse. These are Barry Goldwater, George Wallace, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Ronald Reagan. The themes touched upon in the analysis are limited government, threat of the other in national security, fiscal conservatism, distrust in government, individual liberty and responsibility, separation of powers, opposition to abortion, support for traditional family values, working-class concerns, and denial of systemic racism and discrimination of minorities. I think that Jolana makes a strong case, and that the chapter is of excellent quality.

In Chapter 2, Jolana identifies the two most prominent themes present in the conservative discourse during the studied period as being limited government and the threat of the other in national security. She then discusses the criteria necessary for Backlash Politics and finds that the 2011-2020 period meets all these criteria and, therefore, can be described as one of Backlash Politics. What the political discourse of the 1960-1980 and 2011-2020 had in common was an emphasis on the need to protect individual liberties and opportunities. Fears of tyranny and a need for limited government were highlighted. The chapter is well-argued and fulfills its purpose.

The limitations of Jolana's study (for example, lack of discussion of discrimination of minorities) and possibilities for future research are addressed in Chapter 3. Jolana expresses the hope that further research on Backlash Politics will help in the formulation of strategies to scale back the conservative backlash in the United States. I like the chapter.

In the Conclusion, Jolana first summarizes the content of the main chapters. Furthermore, she recommends that further research be conducted on whether conservative rhetoric reflects the actions and ideology of candidates or is a mere manifestation of populism. Jolana makes clear to the reader what she wished to convey in the body of the text and that is exactly what conclusions ought to do.

This dissertation presents interesting findings and meets the requirements for an MA dissertation. One minor criticism I have is that Jolana is overly repetitive at times. I recommend a classification of A or B depending on Jolana's performance in the oral defense.

6. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):
Does Trump have so much in common with past Republican presidents? Please focus on economics and national security.

7. **DOPORUČENÍ** / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA
(A a B výborně, C a D velmi dobře, E dobře, F nevyhověl): **A or B based on the quality of the oral defense**

Datum: **Prague, 24 January 2024** Podpis:

Pozn.: Hodnocení pište k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo přiložený list. V hodnocení práce se pokuste oddělit ty její nedostatky, které jsou, podle vašeho mínění, obhajobou neodstranitelné (např. chybí kritické zhodnocení pramenů a literatury), od těch věcí, které student může dobrou obhajobou napravit; poměr těchto dvou položek berte prosím v úvahu při stanovení konečné známky.