

REVIEW

by research supervisor of the graduate qualification paper submitted by the second-year student of the
“International Relations (in English)” master’s program at SPbSU **ДОНОВАНА Дина Шона**
 (first name, last name of the student)

titled «Доктрина Буша» после президентства Дж. Буша мл.: Принципы односторонних действий и
 упреждения во внешней политике США в 2009-2020 гг.»

“The Bush Doctrine Post-Bush: Unilateralism and Pre-Emption in U.S. Foreign Policy in 2009-2020”

1. Assessment of the paper:

No.	Assessment Criteria <small>(model of the master’s program: codes of skills)</small>	Grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • excellent (5) • good (4) • satisfactory (3) • unsatisfactory (2)¹ 	Reviewer’s Comments (mandatory for those criteria on which the paper is assessed critically or downgraded)
1.	Academic relevance of the research problem <small>(АОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-7; ПКА-5; ПКА-10; ПОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-7; ПКП-4;)</small>	excellent (5)	Both the principles and the practice of unilateralist and pre-emptive actions of the United States have been on the forefront of international agenda due to significant consequences for geopolitics, state-building and armed conflicts around the world, particularly in the MENA region. How the principles associated with the George W. Bush administration outlived their architects can be regarded as an extraordinarily relevant subject of academic research.
2.	Scholarly contribution by the author <small>(АОМ: УКМ-1; ПКА-5; ПКА-6; ПКА-10; ПКА-11; ПКП-5; ПКП-9; ПОМ: УКМ-1; ПКП-1; ПКП-7)</small>	excellent (5)	The results of this study and their interpretation offer invaluable scholarly contribution to the body of research on U.S. foreign policy as well as on foreign interventions in the MENA region and beyond. Contrary to conventional belief, Dean’s results demonstrate that roots of unilateralism and pre-emption go much further than a foreign strategy of a single administration and can be regarded as near permanent drivers of the U.S. foreign policy.
3.	Appropriateness of the research objective, coherence of research objective and research tasks <small>(АОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-2; ПКА-2; ПКА-11; ПОМ: УКМ-1; УКМ-2; ПКП-3; ПКП-4)</small>	excellent (5)	The aim of the research and its objectives are properly formulated and refined. The logic of the research process and the ensuing structure of the paper make perfect sense in view of the main research question and its explanation.
4.	Quality of the empirical scope and of the primary sources review <small>(АОМ: УКМ-8; ПКА-4; ПКА-7; ПКП-4; ПОМ: УКМ-8; ПКА-1; ПКП-6)</small>	excellent (5)	The author’s handling of primary sources is professional. Dean invested significant effort into studying multiple both documentary and narrative sources of different origins. The choice of primary sources is adequate for the selected research design.
5.	Comprehensiveness of secondary sources (academic literature) employed by the author	excellent/good (4.5)	The paper covers a decent range of secondary sources and academic literature on various aspects of U.S. foreign policy strategy as well as foreign policy implementation, mostly focused on the MENA

¹ If the paper is assessed as “unsatisfactory” based on one of the criteria, the overall recommended grade for the paper is to be “unsatisfactory”, in which case a reviewer presents his/her detailed arguments in the Comments section as well as in the Conclusion/Recommendations section.

	(AOM: УKM-6; УKM-8; ПКА-7; ПКП-3 ПОМ: УKM-6; УKM-8; ПКА-1; ПКП-1)		conflicts. The literature review is solid and detailed, but it is not organized in a way that is traditionally common for academic research (a small number of books and articles are covered in detail instead of large number of scholars' names that are to be covered more briefly and in relation to specific topical aspects of the problem).
6.	Adequacy of chosen research methods to the stated research objective and research tasks (AOM: УKM-8; ПКА-2; ПКА-8; ПКА-10; ПОМ: УKM-8; ПКА-1; ПКП-4)	good (4)	The methodological research design chosen by Dean reflects the nature of research objectives set for this study. It is based on the combination of comparative case studies, event analysis and discourse analysis. It is to be noted that the former two are applied more or less correctly, but application of the latter is not really clear in the main part of the text.
7.	Correspondence of empirical results to the stated research objective and research tasks (AOM: УKM-1; УKM-4; УKM-5; ПКА-5; ПКА-6; ПКА-11; ПКП-3; ПКП-9; ПОМ: УKM-1; УKM-4; УKM-5; ПКА-2; ПКП-4; ПКП-7)	excellent (5)	All the research objectives were properly achieved. The paper draws specific and grounded images of how various combinations of five principles guided the U.S. approach towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, wars in Libya, Iraq and Afghanistan, the drone program, Pakistan and Yemen after the Bush Jr. administration was gone. The results explicitly demonstrate that conventional interpretation of the Obama administration's approach as a major overhaul of the Bush principles is not entirely correct.
8.	Text formatting and design (AOM: УKM-4; УKM-8; ПКА-7; ПКП-6; ПОМ: УKM-4; УKM-8; ПКА-2; ПКП-2)	excellent (5)	The quality of text formatting conforms to all main requirements stipulated for graduate qualification papers at the master's level.
9.	Diligence, consistency, and responsibility demonstrated by the student when writing the paper (AOM: УKM-2; УKM-7; ПКА-10; ПКП-8; ПОМ: УKM-2; УKM-7; ПКП-4; ПКП-5)	excellent (5)	Over the entire period of working on the thesis, Dean demonstrated genuine academic interest, responsiveness and responsibility. His workflow was well-paced, collaborative and reflective. The effort put into this research deserves high credit.
Average grade:		4,83	

2. Conclusion/Recommendations for the evaluation commission:

Overall, the master's dissertation of Dean Donovan is a piece of quality academic work – thoughtful, ambitious, conceptually refined and empirically mature. It conforms to all major requirements associated with graduate master's papers and deserves to be evaluated with the highest grade. The author, in turn, deserves to be conferred on with the master's degree in International Relations.

3. Recommended grade: excellent (5)

June 11, 2020

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