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Review

Maciej Olchawa MA dissertation entitled: *The Polish and Ukrainian Lobby and U.S. Policy toward the Soviet Union and Russia*, Krakow 2022, pp. 316, written under the supervision of academic supervisor prof. Andrzej Mania and auxiliary supervisor dr Tomasz Pugacewicz.

I. Doctoral theme

I would like to underline at the very outset that I read with great interest the dissertation of Mr Maciej Olchawa. The dissertation addresses an immensely topical and important issue concerning, on the one hand, an analysis of the influence of the Polish and Ukrainian lobbies and their influence on US policy-making and, on the other hand, a comparative examination of how ethnic lobbies sought to influence US policy towards the Central and Eastern European region.

I positively assess the accuracy of the choice of the research area and the systematisation of the issue of the positioning of the Polish and Ukrainian ethnic lobby in the American decision-making process.

In summary, Mr Michal Olchawa has aptly defined the research niche and it should be highlighted that the PhD candidate has successfully managed to portray the dynamics of the functioning of ethnic Polish and Ukrainian lobbies and their positioning in the American political system.

II. Research theses and methodology

The dissertation is based on the following theoretical approaches, namely the pluralist theory about the influence of various competing institutions and groups for influence, but also for resources, on their activities, and the constructivist theory of looking at foreign policy from the inside, namely how goals are formulated and what influences them, what values guide the participants and what motivates them, and what their effectiveness is in forming US foreign policy.

The Author of the thesis analyses the activity of the Polish and Ukrainian lobbies within the framework of a model developed in which he examines the interplay between independent variables such as US national interests, also in the Cold War rivalry with the Soviet Union, and dependent variables such as US policy towards Poland and Ukraine, and finally intervening variables such as the assessment of the effectiveness of the lobby as an ethnic interest group in terms of its organisation structure, consistently pursued symbolic measures, the building of coalitions, and the ability to combine the interests of ethnic lobby objectives with American values and US national interests.

The qualitative comparative method was used to examine the material collected, from interviews conducted by various researchers to documents and the literature.

The Author of the dissertation has managed to collect an impressive body of research material and has succeeded in selecting the most relevant issues corresponding to the issue of the role of the ethnic lobby in the example of Americans Polish and Ukrainians.

For a more comprehensive institutional overview, an institutional legal perspective should be used to identify the institutional, legal and organisation conditions based on which the influence of various political actors on the American political system can be located.

I would like to underline that this is a minor deficit, as the author has succeeded brilliantly in showing the process of the formation of ethnic lobbies on the example of American Polish and Ukrainians, even at a time when, first, there was no sovereign Poland and Ukraine, and, secondly, the rules and procedures for the functioning of various interest groups and ethnic lobbies, in particular, were only just being formed in the American political system.

III. Dissertation structure

The structure of the doctoral thesis consists of three problem sections, an extended introduction, an abstract, a list of tables and a bibliography. The introduction to the thesis includes relevant issues for this section such as the structure and subject matter of the thesis, the time frame, the aims of the thesis and the research problems, the research hypotheses, the research methods and techniques, the theoretical framework, the state of the research and the source materials used in the thesis.

The introduction is comprehensive and particularly noteworthy in the literature review on the issue of the functioning of ethnic lobbies using the example of American Poles and Ukrainians.

The Author highlights that there are many publications on interest groups as well as ethnic lobbies in which authors have undertaken, with varying degrees of success, the task of showing the influence of various interest groups on the decision-making process and the tangible results of their influence on decision-makers. The Author aptly points out that there is a clear gap in the literature on the issue of ethnic lobbies when it comes to research on American Polish and Ukrainians and their ways, instruments and methods of influencing.

To understand this phenomenon, it is necessary to assume a broader approach, taking into account cultural, religious, institutional and social structural factors, and in the Author's opinion, this broader approach is neglected in the research literature on ethnic lobbies.

The table entitled Factors that make an ethnic lobby effective is instructive and well-designed (p.37-38). The Author of the doctoral dissertation has selected the approaches presented by various authors, which summarises their considerations of the factors that, in their view, influence the effectiveness of ethnic lobbies.

From a historical perspective that spans the period from the mid-nineteenth century to 1918, the origins of the Polish and Ukrainian communities in the United States are discussed. There was also a reference to the role of the Polish and Ukrainian churches, in which these religious institutions played the role of, as the Author put it, shepherds of souls. This section is also a subsection that analyses the lobbying for independence by stateless people.

The second chapter discusses the long period covering the half-century from 1939-1989 of the impact of totalitarian systems and occupation by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The partial convergence of US interests and the lobbying efforts of US Poles and Ukrainians in policy toward the Soviet Union is highlighted in this part of the thesis.

The third part deals with the issue of lobbying by the sovereign nations in the period 1989-1999. In this part, the importance of the ethnic lobbying of American Poles and Ukrainians is analysed. The topics include the topic of the Ukrainian nuclear arsenal and Poland's path to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

IV. Bibliography

The bibliography consists of State Department documents, congressional documents, White House and National Security Council documents, memoirs, correspondence and interviews, books, articles in academic journals, newspapers and weeklies, and websites. Covering several dozen pages, the bibliography from pages 298 to 316 demonstrates the Author's thorough search.

V. Key-specific comments

1. The Author precisely defines terms, which he then uses to describe and examine the research issue presented. He distinguishes ethnic lobbies from groups lobbying the American political system. Thoroughly described the organisation of American Polish and Ukrainian lobbies and how they influence US foreign policy from historical and political science perspectives. In the presented overview of the role of the various actors influencing US foreign policy, the Author highlights that pluralism is a characteristic of the US political-social system, and he is much correct. It is worth referring to other different theoretical approaches concerning outlining the elite theory, institutional theory, and the classic work of C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite*, 1956
2. The structure of the dissertation is reasonable. The selection of the subject matter is relevant and follows the dissertation approach. A historical-political perspective was adopted. The Author has been very successfully successful in demonstrating the genesis and, at the same time, the broader perspective revealing the functioning of the lobby of American Polish and Ukrainians.
3. The Author of the thesis managed to discuss the most important actions undertaken by the Polish and Ukrainian lobbies on US policy toward Russia and the Soviet Union in particular. A pertinent selection has been made of examples of effective American Polish and Ukrainian lobbies and their activity in influencing US strategy toward Russia and the Soviet Union. The dominant view, therefore, is taken blandly from the inside, namely from the perspective of their activities in the USA. A certain deficit is the limited consideration of the dynamics of events in Poland and Ukraine in particular in the post-1945 period and, correspondingly, in the post-1989 and post-1991 periods since Ukraine gained sovereignty. On the other hand, an undoubted strength is the detailed discussion of the activities of the most influential individuals and institutions associated with US Polish and Ukrainian lobbyists in influencing US foreign policy.

4. The research methods and techniques chosen are reasonable and indicative of a high-level research methodology. It demonstrates research, methodological and theorist-cognitive awareness and skilful navigation of the historic and political science fields.

5. The dissertation's value is enhanced by the fact that the Author's analysis of a particular process or phenomenon is accompanied by evaluations and conclusions. The factual aspect of the dissertation does not omit any problems relevant to the subject. Taking care of reliability, the Author refers to the output of various researchers, both Polish and Anglo-Saxon. He critically refers to publications and confronts the literature, whether in the form of monographs, memoirs, interviews or journalism, with the documents of Congress, the State Department or the US National Security Council that he has examined.

6. Many of the Author's observations and assessments should be considered accurate. Above all, it is interesting to capture and present examples of the effectiveness of the influence of the ethnic Polish and Ukrainian lobbies on US foreign policy. For example (p. 10) 'The challenge of assessing the influence of ethnic lobby groups is exacerbated by the fact that elected officials and their advisors are often reluctant to admit that they were influenced by ethnic lobbies.' Another example (p. 101) 'Paderewski was an effective lobbyist because he knew what the Americans wanted to hear and positioned himself as the sole representative of Polonia and Poland. This was convenient for Wilson and House because they could deal with one person and not be dragged into the quagmire of Polish politics and divisions.

7. There is a certain insufficiency associated with the reference to various theories relating to the description of different groups of influence on American foreign policy. Such theories, although mentioned in the dissertation, could have been used more as a theoretical framework, primarily regarding institutional, pluralist or elite theories.

8. In addition, the Author concentrated mainly on the American perspective in dealing with the activities of interest groups, while the role of the respective governments, in particular concerning Poland and Ukraine after 1989, namely how they used various instruments of influence was only indicated.

9. The dissertation primarily analyzes the activities and effects of US Polish and Ukrainian lobbies and, most importantly, demonstrates their operational model and how it has changed over the years, as well as the effectiveness of their activities on US foreign policy.

10. In conclusion, it should be emphasized that both in terms of content and methodology the dissertation has been well prepared. The choice of the topic, which still has not been so thoroughly analysed in the Polish literature on the subject, is most justifiable and the dissertation fills this gap. The theoretical considerations, as well as the methods and research techniques, prove a developed research methodology.

VI. Conclusions

The conclusions formulated by the Doctoral Candidate are very solidly documented. This demonstrates the Author's research mastery. He has not only his skill in the application of methods and techniques but has also proposed an interesting methodological approach to the study of the issue of the influence of ethnic interest groups on US foreign policy on the example of American Poles and Ukrainians. The Author has successfully achieved his research intended to demonstrate in historical as well as political perspective.

The dissertation was very carefully prepared in terms of content. The content of the dissertation testifies positively to the erudition and excellent knowledge of the facts, as well as various conditions, from political to cultural or religious, related to the functioning of ethnic lobbies, on the example of American Poles and Ukrainians. The Author was able to select and analyse as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of ethnic lobbies convincingly, additionally in a comparative perspective reflections and formulated conclusions and assessments are presented in a logical and comprehensible manner. The structure of the dissertation, the content of the individual chapters, the extended introduction and the conclusions testify well to the substantive preparation of the Author of the dissertation.

I declare unequivocally that the assessed dissertation is cognitively important and constitutes an original solution to the research problem. The dissertation is a confirmation of the Doctoral Candidate's scientific development and a contribution to the discipline of political science and administration.

With full conviction, I consider that the reviewed dissertation meets the requirements specified in the Act of 20 July 2018. Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws 2021, item 478). I request that the dissertation be accepted and that Mr Maciej Olchawa MA be admitted to the next stage in his doctoral procedure.

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