

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA
Fakulta sociálních věd
Institut mezinárodních studií

PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(Posudek oponenta)

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): **Zachary Lavengood**

Název práce: **The United States, China, and the Emerging Balance of Power in the Arctic**

Oponoval (u externích oponentů uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):

doc. PhDr. Francis D. Raška, PhD.

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle):

This paper discusses the power balance in the Arctic. The main focus here is on the roles of the United States and the People's Republic of China.

2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.):

The topic of the dissertation is challenging and the student provides solid logical argumentation. The methodology is sound, the sources consulted are more than adequate, and there are some useful charts, maps, and graphs.

3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.):

Insofar as presentation is concerned, I have no problem with the writing, citations, etc.

4. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z diplomové práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):

Zachary Lavengood has chosen the balance of power in the Arctic, with a focus on the United States and the People's Republic of China, as the topic of his M.A. dissertation. The treatise consists of an Introduction, four main chapters, and a Conclusion. I must make one minor criticism here, namely that the chapters are not numbered. In the ensuing paragraphs, I will offer my comments on each individual section of the work.

In the Introduction, Zachary discusses the importance of the balance of power in the Arctic region as the Arctic is unique. He explains his realistic approach and provides a synopsis of the main chapters, as well as a review of the most relevant literature. I have no problem with the Introduction.

The first main chapter bears the title "Sources of Competition in the Arctic." He stresses the presence of hydrocarbons, metals, and fish. Changes in climate means that the Arctic will be easier to access. Zachary identifies two areas of potential conflict, namely collective Arctic stewardship and the freedom of navigation. Insofar as Arctic shipping is concerned, Zachary identifies three routes, namely the Northern Sea Route (NSR), the Northwest Passage (NWP), and the Transpolar Sea Route (TSR). The advantages and disadvantages of each route are discussed in individual sections. In the section on natural resources, Zachary examines the potential for natural gas and oil extraction, mineral resources, and living resources. Here, he mentions that there could be potential for conflict with indigenous groups and those favoring protecting the environment over business opportunities. This chapter is of good quality and I think that it naturally flows into the next chapter.

"The Arctic Policy of the People's Republic of China and the United States of America" is the title of the second chapter. Zachary explains that the approaches of both countries are a reflection of each country's respective place in the international community. As China is an emerging great power, Chinese leaders have adopted quite an active, ambitious approach to the Arctic, whereas the United States is more conservative. In his overview of Chinese policy towards the Arctic, Zachary discusses the governmental document "China's Arctic Policy", which is based on four basic principles, namely respect, cooperation, win-win results, and sustainability. The major areas addressed are scientific pursuits, environmental issues, Arctic resources (including shipping routes), participation in Arctic governance, and stability in the Arctic region. Zachary specifies Chinese stances in detail and stresses that the Chinese have been quite careful because they know that critics can point to China's poor environmental record, disrespect of human rights, and irresponsible development within China's own borders. The Chinese have utilized their soft power assets, mainly investment capital and human resources in a bid to counter China's questionable reputation. Indeed, the Chinese are preparing for the future by investing in resource

extraction at a time when market prices are down. Zachary explains how Chinese investment in Greenland could result in Greenland's independence from Denmark. However, Greenland would become dependent on China and this would be a blow not only for Denmark itself, but also to NATO and the EU. China could also get its goals approved more easily through the Arctic Council if it were to exercise decisive influence over Greenland. In his overview of American Arctic policy, Zachary explains that, even though the Arctic has received renewed attention since the end of the Cold War, the United States is behind others when it comes to Arctic development. Zachary points to the "National Strategy for the Arctic Region" released in 2013 by the Obama Administration. The three main points of the document are: 1) Advancing United States Security Interests; 2) Pursue Responsible Arctic Region Stewardship; and 3) Strengthen International Cooperation. The Obama Administration hinted at acceding to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), but abandoned pursuit of this because it was clear that the two-thirds majority necessary for ratification in the United States Senate was unattainable. Obama even announced a moratorium on new oil and gas exploration in the Arctic. This policy has been reversed by the Trump Administration, but due to Trump's lack of interest in the Arctic, other aspects of United States Arctic policy is likely to remain largely the same as under Obama. This chapter is informative and well conceived.

The third chapter is entitled "Arctic Partnerships." Zachary emphasizes that the partnerships forged by the United States and China in the Arctic largely reflect both countries' other international commitments. The first partnership discussed is that between the United States and NATO. He points out that, as different NATO members have different Arctic policies, this could turn into a potential lack of unity in the organization. For example, Canada is afraid that a larger NATO role might undermine Canadian sovereignty. Therefore, even bilateral U.S.-Canadian security arrangements in the Arctic are not popular in Canada. On the other hand, NATO member Norway is the greatest proponent of increased NATO action in the Arctic. Zachary is correct that, as the Arctic becomes more strategically important, NATO will need to formulate a common policy vis-à-vis the Arctic. The Chinese-Russian Partnership in the Arctic is also addressed. Zachary points to the poor state of relations between Russia and the West because of Ukraine and Georgia and the opportunity this affords China with regard to the Arctic. Though the relationship between Russia and China has been far from ideal historically, a partnership of sorts has emerged in recent years. Beijing's "Belt and Road" initiative is one factor, but China is now in a position to rent access to the Arctic from Russia. There is distrust between China and Russia, but both sides see the benefits of a partnership for the time being. What both Russia and China agree on is the need to challenge the world order that is at present led by the West. Unlike the U.S.-NATO Partnership, the Chinese-Russian one is more pragmatic than military and both Russia and China reserve autonomy in foreign, domestic, and security policy. Russian gas pipelines to China reduce China's dependence on other sources for energy security. However, contentions over influence in Central Asia could halt this energy cooperation. However, any potential conflicts are unlikely in the near future, even though in the long term problems could arise. Zachary concludes the chapter by emphasizing that both the United States and China rely on their respective partners in Arctic policy and this raises the question whether the two individual actors (United States and China) or the power blocs (NATO and Sino-Russia) are driving the balance of power in the Arctic. This chapter is very informative and provides an incentive for the reader to continue reading.

The final chapter bears the title "The Balance of Power in the Arctic." The first matter, Zachary addresses is defining the term "balance of power." There is no single definition applicable to all scenarios. However, Zachary chooses Diana Zinnes' definition: "A balance of power involves a particular distribution of power among the states of the system such that no single state and on existing alliance has an "overwhelming" or "preponderant" amount of power...In effect, any distribution is permissible as long as the power of each unit-state or alliance of states-in the system is less than the combined power of all the remaining units." Zachary also places his trust in the ideas set out by A.F.K. Organski: "Whenever the weight of power on one side of the scale is growing too heavy, the nations on the opposite side have two alternatives open to them: they can act to increase their own power, or they can attempt to diminish that of their adversaries." On the basis of these two ideas, Zachary scrutinizes the Sino-Russian partnership of convenience, the United States' reluctance as an Arctic leader, the exclusivity of membership in the Arctic Council, China's "rental" of Arctic access, and the unpredictable impact of climate change. Zachary tackles each aspect well and explains possible options. As this is the most important chapter of the work, I think that Zachary makes valid points and definitely cites logical reasons based on evidence. In the Conclusion, Zachary recapitulates the main points made in the body of the treatise and reiterates his contention that China has been actively engaged in the Arctic and the United States has adopted a relatively hands-off approach. He concludes that the balance of power remains "civil and lawful" and that intergovernmental organizations, such as the Arctic Council or structured negotiations have been utilized rather than military action. Also credited is the fact that, thus far, Arctic issues have been kept isolated

from other flashpoints in the international arena.

This work far exceeds the requirements for a successful M.A. dissertation. I am quite impressed with Zachary's work. Though there are a few typographical errors or misuses of words (for example, principal and principle), I think that a mark of A or B is in order depending on the quality of Zachary's oral defense. I offer my sincere congratulations.

5. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):
How likely is it that there can be any real Arctic collaboration between the United States and NATO given the differences in worldview of U.S. President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau? Explain?

Will the growing use of alternative energy sources ultimately lead to a decline in the strategic importance of the Arctic? Why or why not?

6. **DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA**

(A výtečně, B velmi dobře, C dobře, D uspokojivě, E dostatečně a F nedostatečně): **A or B depending on performance in the oral defense**

Datum: **10 June 2019**

Podpis:

Pozn.: Hodnocení píše k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo příložený 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.