Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Saadet Ertürk

Title: The Rise of China and its Implications for Western Development Cooperation Policy

Programme/year: MAIN/2019

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Michal Parizek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	**10**	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	**30**	27
	Methodology, analysis, argument	**40**	35
Total		*80*	72
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	**10**	10
	Style	**5**	4
	Formal requirements	**5**	5
Total		*20*	19
TOTAL		*100*	91

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Evaluation

Major criteria:

This is a strong and interesting master theses on a highly important and yet still understudied topic of foreign aid, in particular the possible changes in foreign aid practices of OECD DAC members in the light/under the pressure of aid activity of China in Sub-Saharan Africa. The thesis has a fairly well defined set of questions and hypotheses, where in particular H1 (expectation of increased OECD DAC members' aid in response to increased Chinese aid) is clearcut and worthy of serious testing. H2 and H3 are slightly less developed but still meaningful.

The thesis presents a very elaborate and thorough literature review and (as mentioned above) a fairly comprehensive theoretical discussion. The analytical part is somewhat weaker than it could be. The results could be presented and interpreted with more confidence. I am not sure about the setup of the test for H2, where democracy is included as a set of factors rather than a continuous variable to be interacted with Chinese aid. I am also not sure about to what extent a FE estimation is suitable for this topic, given the prominence of essentially time-invariant factors for aid allocation. However, I should highlight that in terms of analytical techniques (panel regression with RE and FE effects), the thesis goes a long way beyond the usual skill set of students of IR at Charles University. So I very much appreciate Saadet's readiness to carry out a panel regression analysis, without apparent big flaws.

While the statistical analysis could be somewhat stronger (but again bearing in mind that the thesis uses intermediate/more advanced techniques), the thing I most appreciate on the thesis is its rich description of the otherwise quite complex topic. This is achieved both thanks to systematic empirical data and, most importantly, thanks to a very robust, exceptionally comprehensive work with the existing studies. This is something to be very much applauded.

Minor criteria:

The text is generally well written and clear, with only occasional language mistakes.

Overall evaluation:

This is a strong MA thesis. It suffers from certain analytical weaknesses (in the inferential part), but in my view these are compensated by the very thorough empirical picture of this complex problem painted by Saadet. The main finding (that OECD DAC members do not respond to Chinese aid by changing their own practices, H1, perhaps other than in the infrastructure sector, H3) is very interesting and highly relevant.

Suggested grade: A (91%)

Signature:

30/8/2019

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