REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS
GPS – Geopolitical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	Kristin Templin
Author of the thesis:	The Rise of China: A Comparative Analysis of Empires
Referee *(incl. titles)***:**	**Martin Riegl**

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
Theoretical background (max. 20)	15
Contribution (max. 20)	10
Methods (max. 20)	10
Literature (max. 20)	15
Manuscript form (max. 20)	15
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	**65**
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	**D**

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) Theoretical background:

Three selected case studies are researched through the lens of (neo)realist approach, however, relying mostly on work of A.Mahan, J. Mearsheimer and others (one would expect citing more than 1 or 2 works of both authors). The paper offers a conceptualization of terms like an empire, imperialism, however, the terms defined are still applied rather randomly. As a result, the „theoretical part" remains disconnected from the empirical analysis. Also the statement which I criticized in the previous version still appears in the paper *(the United States is currently in a state of decline – p. 16)*, however the author does not provide a single argument to support it. Having said that i can not agree with another statement: *„there is a consensus that the United States is in decline as THE economic and political powerhouse" (p.9)*. G.Friedman and many others would surely disagree. Also labeling China as a global state is lacks a deeper meaning (p.9).

2) Contribution:

The thesis topic (the rise of China in comparison with the rise and fall of US British empire) is without any doubts important and relevant. The whole paper is framed within historical and comparative perspective. Author declares to provide a foreign policy analysis of Beijing and its modus operandi (and its comparison with British and American).

3) Methods:

Author fails to clearly define hypothesis, research questions so it´s rather difficult to evaluate the quality of presented paper, especially its added value. The an essay with vaguely described objective.

4) Literature:

Author´s work with sources would deserve significant improvements. Vague statements about alleged decline in US´s reputation over past decades, references such as: "In a 2015 article on Fortune.com" (p.10) lack any references to relevant sources. Also additional literature review would be beneficial (as recommended in my previous review). To sum it up there are major shortfalls which negatively affect the overall impression.

5) Manuscript form:

The paper meets all formal criteria required by the Faculty of Social Sciences, however minor deficiencies occur (mispellings etc.). Also the final proofreading and editings is needed. E.g. see page 13, chapter Methodology, 1st line. Also the list of sources is rather chaotic as it mixes monographs, journal articles, internet sources, speeches etc. Considering the current quality of the paper, I do recommend to grade it D.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 20.8.2018

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Referee Signature

The referee should give comments to the following requirements:

1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: *Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	*points*

2) CONTRIBUTION: *Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	*points*

3) METHODS: *Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**).*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	*points*

4) LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	*points*

5) MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.*

Strong	Average	Weak	
20	10	0	*points*

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading
91 – 100	**A**	= excellent
81 - 90	**B**	= good
71 – 80	**C**	= satisfactory
61 - 70	**D**	= satisfactory
51 - 60	**E**	
0	**F**	= fail (not recommended for defence)