Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Student:	**Ling Liu**
Advisor:	**Vilém Semerák, Ph.D.**
Title of the thesis:	**The Impacts of Non-Tariff Measures on China's Tea Exports**

***OVERALL ASSESSMENT** (provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):*

Please provide your assessment of each of the following four categories, summary and suggested questions for the discussion. The minimum length of the report is 300 words.

Contribution
Ling Liu's thesis aims to estimate the impact of non-tariff measures on exports of China's Tea by using a state-of art gravity model. The paper is relatively straightforward but interesting application of existing methodology, and it has some meaningful policy implications. The thesis recommends adoption of sound environmental standards in China by showing that without them, China's exports might be harmed.

Methods
The methodology of the gravity models is well described, but in a description of the research experiment itself, I was not able to find out how exactly are the variables representing the non-tariff measures implemented. I presume that they enter the model as time-varying dummies, with a jump from 0 to 1 in times of introduction of the non-tariff measure, but I'm not sure. However, the design of the experiment matters for assessment of the contribution: If time-varying dummies are used, some assessment about causality can be done. But causality could not be inferred from an experiment with time-invariant dummies.
Besides this criticism, maybe towards writing, the model implements the main important nuances of gravity models well.

Literature
The literature review is OK.

Manuscript form
My main limitations are related to the manuscript form. The language is just fine, but the look of the thesis written in MS Word with no attention to formatting is not nice. Sections do not end with the end of pages, tables are not formatted to present more models nicely, some sections and subsections are not numbered… Overall, the manuscript form degrades the impression from the thesis a lot, which is a pitty, as I can imagine that just with a bit of tweaking and few hours of editing the thesis would look much better in comparison to its current form.

Summary and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

After reviewing the thesis, **I recommend the thesis for the defense, and I suggest the grade C.** The main reason is the deficiency of the manuscript form and not very precise description of the research design. But, I can imagine that after successful defense, the grade could be improved for sure.
Recommended question: How exactly were the non-tariff variables implemented and what kind of implications for causality does the selected implication have?

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
Contribution *(max. 30 points)*	27
Methods *(max. 30 points)*	22
Literature *(max. 20 points)*	20
Manuscript Form *(max. 20 points)*	8
TOTAL POINTS *(max. 100 points)*	**77**
GRADE **(A – B – C – D – E – F)**	C

NAME OF THE REFEREE: *Jaromír Baxa*

DATE OF EVALUATION: *January 27,2021*

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                               Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

Overall grading:

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	A
81 - 90	B
71 - 80	C
61 – 70	D
51 – 60	E
0 – 50	F