

MASTER'S EXAMINER REPORT

GPS – Geopolitical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Thesis title:	No Safe Harbour: Is economic reliance on the People's Republic of China sinking regional foreign policy independence?
Name of Student:	Raymond Lee Gough
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr. Bohumil Doboš, Ph.D.
Report Due Date:	6.9.2021

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

1) Contribution and argument:

The thesis covers a very important topic, attempting to quantify level of influence China holds in the wider region and seeking economic determination of political influence. Unfortunately, the text holds several shortcomings that prevent it from fully reaching its potential. Introduction is rather confusing as it only provides historical analysis and does not present topic at hand. Selected hypotheses are having very complicated formulations which makes them less valuable. Methodology section is covering only case selection and method itself is then shattered throughout the remaining text. The results are then presented rather chaotically even though many of the findings are relevant and interesting. It would be also useful if the research question and hypotheses would be explicitly dealt with in the conclusion.

2) Theoretical and methodological framework:

Theoretical background seems insufficient as the literature review does not provide review of relevant theoretical literature that might be relevant for the topic. It is unclear on what basis the variables are selected. Methodology of indexes is explained rather late and there are methodological issues with their construction. On the other hand, case selection is well described and justified and author clearly understands some of the limitations of his work.

3) Sources and literature:

Beside lacking theoretical literature, the sources used seem relevant and plentiful.

4) Manuscript form and structure:

Figures are placed randomly in the text making the text structure rather confusing. Headings are also not very well selected and inclusion of hypotheses/variables/etc. would be much easier to understand if better explained. Otherwise, the text seems OK.

5) Quality of presentation

Language-wise the text is very well prepared.

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution (research quality, analysis, and conclusions) (max. 40 points)</i>	28
<i>Theoretical and methodological framework (max. 25 points)</i>	5
<i>Sources and literature (max. 10 points)</i>	10
<i>Manuscript form and structure (max. 15 points)</i>	8
<i>Quality of presentation (grammar, style, coherence) (max. 10 points)</i>	10
TOTAL POINTS	61
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	D

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I recommend the thesis for final defence.

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	A	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	B	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	C	= good
61 – 70	D	= satisfactory
51 – 60	E	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	F	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.