

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE
Faculty of Social Science
Department of Political Science

MASTER'S THESIS ASSESMENT

AUTHOR:

Surname: Khayrullaev Name: Andrey

TITLE: Expansion Strategy of Russia's Gazprom into European Market and European Counteraction Policy

OPPONENT:

Surname: Binhack Name: Petr

Affiliation: IPS/FMV

Supervisor: []

Opponent: [X]

1. Project and final thesis comparison

Final thesis fully conforms to the approved project in both objectives and structure.

2. Content assessment

		Mark
2.1	Topic relevance	A
2.2	Originality of the thesis	B
2.3	Bibliography relevance	B
2.4	Methodology	C

Well chosen topic addressing topical questions of current energy policy debate and the EU-Russia energy relations. However, thesis should have been better considered as the research questions are too broad and general. Bibliography is well balanced, although there are some key works that could enhance the quality of the theoretical - methodology chapter. It seems that author intentionally failed to quote prominent classics of realist though such as K. Waltz, S. Walt or J. Mearsheimer. Study of primary sources and classical pieces would provide clearer insight into realist thinking and made Chapter 1 more pure in terms of author's argumentation. In case of descriptive chapters, there is a lack of argumentation based on strategic documents relevant for the Russia federation on the field of energy policy. Methodologies are well chosen but lack appropriate implementation and have no relevance to the thesis findings. There is a clear insufficiency in connecting theory, methodology and knowledge together.

3. Thesis assessment

		Mark
3.1	Thesis structure	A
3.2	Argumentation and complexity of the thesis	C
3.3	Citations and formal aspects	B
3.4	Attachments	B
3.5	Linguistics and stylistics	A

In his thesis, Mr. Khayrullaev developed interesting thesis structure which promised complex explanation of the issue of Gazprom’s strategy on the European energy market. However, author failed to deliver appropriate consistency in his argumentation and provide us with unbalanced chapters where we can find whole pages quoting only one or no source (pp. 59-61, p. 69). Attachments should have been better explained but they are relevant to the thesis.

4. Final assessment

Mr. Khayrullaev failed to provide clear argumentation considering the theoretical background for his thesis as defensive realism is not well distinguished from offensive one. Considering methodology, author had a great vision of utilizing three methodologies usually chosen for energy security/policy issues. Contrary to the expectations, most of the thesis is of descriptive nature with almost no link to the methodology. For example comparative method is not only a comparison of “some” cases. Cases have to be well defined and of course have to be comparable in terms of research data. The problem of subject definition is obvious also with case study method, which would be more appropriate in case of Gazprom as a solo case instead of better comparable cases of two gas pipeline projects. Unfortunately, most of the thesis is pure description with no or a little added value. This insufficiency could have been overlooked in case of in depth analysis of researched topic. There are only minor factual mistakes but thesis provided only a little added value to already known facts. Mr. Khayrullaev missed the opportunity to find new or unexpected links and context in the past events and only tried to interpret well known. Despite these shortcomings, author managed to demonstrate his understanding of the issue and acquired the principles of research work to a sufficient level. To conclude, author missed the opportunity to fully develop well designed project concerning relevant topic but he managed to cover the topic in descriptive rather than analytical way.

5. Questions

5.1	What key changes would you identify in ownership structure of the Nabucco project and are there any subsequent changes in planned route?
5.2	What is the relation between energy policy and foreign policy in the “Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2030”?
5.3	What are the future plans of Russia in case of gas export diversification? What are the possible consequences for the EU?

6. Suggested mark

B-C

Date: 30.8. 2012

Podpis: