

Lukáš Kindl
M.A. Dissertation Evaluation
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Title of Dissertation: ***The Impact of China's Engagement in Sub-Saharan Africa on U.S. Political and Economic Interests on the Continent (2000-2010)***

Lukáš Kindl has written his Master's dissertation on China's engagement in Africa and its impact on U.S. interests. The work is well referenced and Jana Sehnálková is a fine supervisor for such a topic. Lukáš's goal has been to demonstrate that Chinese activities in Africa are motivated by economic interests, not by a desire to oust the United States from Africa. Lukáš has consulted many sources and his overall approach is balanced. The treatise contains an Introduction, four main chapters, and a Conclusion. In the next paragraphs, I shall critique individual parts of the work.

In the Introduction, Lukáš outlines the structure of the dissertation and states his main ideas. He argues that China's investments in Africa are not meant to damage U.S.-African relations. The overview of the literature is excellent. Overall, the Introduction provides a detailed roadmap for the rest of the treatise.

Chapter 1 deals with China's policy towards Africa. The evolution in thinking and practice since the days of Mao is analyzed and all important aspects are addressed. After China's Tiananmen crackdown, the Chinese authorities began looking for ways to guarantee access to vital resources and Africa has provided a good opportunity for investment. The Chinese are guarding their economic interests and are willing to go into risky places, which other powers might shy away from. The chapter is properly organized and cites numerous experts on the matter. I find Lukáš's balanced approach impressive.

Chapter 2 represents an analysis of American policy in Africa. Lukáš rightly states that during the Cold War years, the United States placed greater emphasis on economic development than on democratization. After the Cold War ended, the United States began to emphasize human rights and democratization as well. The United States has programs to assist African states economically, militarily, medically (aid against communicable diseases like AIDS), and, of course, politically. As in the previous chapter, the main points are discussed. The evidence provided is more than sufficient.

Chapter 3 is a series of case studies, in which American and Chinese policies in Nigeria, Angola, and Sudan are examined. In the case of Nigeria, Lukáš demonstrates both political and economic realities and points out that both the United States and China have an interest in Nigerian stability. Insofar as Angola is concerned, Lukáš shows that the U.S. and China have invested in different sectors and that U.S. engagement is positive. Sudan tends to favor Chinese products when it comes to low-quality goods and U.S. products when high-quality goods are required. Sudan is the most controversial case. As the Chinese are not interested in human rights, they managed to fill in when the West initially curtailed its activities and imposed sanctions there. Chinese investment enabled the Sudanese regime to wage two wars and this hampered Western mediation efforts. However, things subsequently changed and now the Chinese position in Sudan may serve to aid Western efforts. I am happy with both the structure and content of this chapter.

Chapter 4 represents a comparison of American and Chinese policies in Africa and discusses the impact of Chinese activities on American interests. While

there are matters, such as democratization and human rights promotion, that are hampered by Chinese dealings in Africa, it does not appear that China wishes to chase the Americans out of Africa and any bones of contention can be dealt with through negotiations between the United States and China.

In the Conclusion, Lukáš summarizes the points he has made throughout the work. The Americans differentiate between government and the private sector, whereas the Chinese government is more involved in the activities of state companies. In addition, the Chinese policy towards Africa is more unified and centralized than is the case with the Americans. The United States also has a number of means at its disposal to counter Chinese rivalry in the African region and these are elucidated well. They include utilizing America's comparative advantage, learning from mistakes by taking inspiration from China in areas where the Chinese have been more effective, cooperating with China on security issues, and engaging with China on matters of mutual disagreement.

This dissertation is an excellent work and I recommend an **excellent** mark.

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Doc. PhDr. Francis D. Raška, PhD.
Faculty of Social Sciences
Charles University
Institute of International Studies
Department of American Studies