

Charles University
Faculty of Social sciences
Institute of International Studies (IMS)
Master's Thesis

Author: Viktoria Liehmann

Title: China tries within the current international framework dominated by the US to gain more power in the IMF

1. Main goals & organization

The submitted work has a clear thesis statement regarding China's role within the international order, specifically judging from Beijing's behavior within the IMF. The author spent quite some time thinking about the structure of the text & discussing it with me (as well as with other colleagues at university) – maybe at the expense of spending time on the analysis section (see below). Generally I find the proposed structure (page I) logically arranged, with one exception – I consider „The Structure of the Thesis“ a bit inappropriate being placed into the text as subchapter 1.6 (it should have been at the top or could have been omitted).

Unfortunately „Contents“ doesn't fully correspond to the chapter/subchapter structure of the text. According to „Contents“ pages 25-46 should be just „Analysis“. In reality, though, the headline on p. 25 says „Reforming the IMF before 2008“ and it's followed by several subchapters that are missing from „Contents“, which is a serious flaw.

The author also failed to consult the title with me. Its wording is very poor.

2. Research / Form and Language

It is obvious that Ms. Liehmann conducted thorough research ahead of writing the thesis, as – after all – pp. 51-61 attest. One could find issues with entries that are worded such as „„Overview“, <http://www.imf.org/external/about/overview.htm> (accessed 10.03.2015).“ (p. 54) but overall the Bibliography sections seems to be fine. Footnotes are frequent throughout the text, clearly showing the original sources of facts and ideas used. The author uses mature English.

3. Quality of Content

Generally I find sections 2.1 through 2.6 of higher quality than the third part of the thesis. E.g. „A Short Introduction into China's History“ sums up nicely China's complicated relationship with the outside world throughout its history.

On the other hand, the „Analysis“ section – the main part of the thesis – sometimes tends to be too descriptive and overly focused on details (as dozens of footnotes suggest), thus often missing the goal of analyzing the studied phenomena and rather just describing the developments in a chronological order. And when analysis is offered, it is sometimes poorly supported by data. One example – the claim that „The media supports reforms.“ (p. 35) is based on the following piece of evidence: “The Economist” noted that if the IMF is to

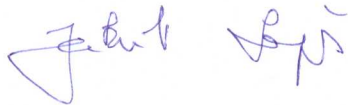
succeed, it needs to reform. It even suggests cutting the majorities for decisions and ending the American veto.“ To draw this kind of conclusion from one article is clearly insufficient.

The choice of both „Conclusion“ & „Summary“ is confusing to me, the last version of the thesis that I received from Ms. Liehmann to comment on had only a conclusion which would prevent the author from serving the reader duplicate claims/findings etc.

4. Grade recommendation

Based on my aforementioned comments about the text per se (and due to the fact that the author obviously spent a lot of time researching the topic and writing the text) I tend to suggest the thesis be graded as „2“. On the other hand the poor title choice and the „contents“ not corresponding to the text structure are serious errors, pointing toward „3“. So my final grade proposal ahead of the thesis defense is 2/3.

Date: June 15, 2015

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jakub Leps', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jakub Leps