

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

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

Title of the thesis:	The Rise of China: A Comparative Analysis of Empires
Author of the thesis:	Kristin Templin
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr.Martin Riegl, PhD.

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	8
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	10
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	10
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	8
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	5
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	41
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	F

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) Theoretical background:

Three selected case studies are researched through the lens of (neo)realist approach, however, a better theoretical framework would be beneficial. The paper offers a conceptualization of terms like an empire, world order, imperialism, however, the terms defined are later applied rather randomly. As a result, the „theoretical part“ is disconnected from the empirical analysis.

The author also builds her paper on assumptions which are not supported by any arguments or at least relevant literature. E.g. „While China is rising, there is a consensus that the United States is in decline a (p.7).“

2) Contribution:

The selected (the rise of China with the main focus on economic power) is without any doubts important and relevant. Kristin Templin tries to frame it within historical and comparative perspective. The goal of the thesis is to provide foreign policy analysis of China since the beginning of Triangular Diplomacy and compare China's modus operandi with previous Chinese, British and American empires in order to answer following research questions: 1) China's involvement in the international community comparable to the role of previous empires? 2) What does the behavior of the Chinese, British and American empires tell us about the future behavior of China?

3) Methods:

As already mentioned above, Kristin uses the method of historical comparative analysis (starting in the year 1860). Selected case studies of Imperial China, the United Kingdom, and the United States since 1945 are analyzed through the lens of neo-realist approach and using mainly qualitative research. However, using more quantitative data (economic output, military potential) would be also useful) and subsequent comparison.

4) Literature:

List of sources is rather chaotic, relevant authors (Kaplan, Nye, Friedman and many other sources – primary documents) are missing. Also, the author should support her statements and arguments by existing relevant literature or research. E.g. “There are thousands of articles, books and academic journals and papers dedicated to the rise of China and what this means for the future (p.81)“...Political scientists around the world have tried to understand the motivations of the Chinese government and hypothesize what the state’s next steps will be (p. 88).“ This statement is perfectly correct, unfortunately, the author works with a limited number of sources and many relevant primary sources, articles or monographs are ignored (for example Chinese sources written in English). Also, authors like A.Carnegie or S.Gompers would be useful for analysis of US’s transformation into imperial power, the author mostly relies on N.Ferguson’s arguments, however, his conclusions were questioned.

5) Manuscript form:

First of the project has not been including in the thesis, the author has not used the official thesis layout which is basic requirements. Additional proofreading would be helpful, e.g. see kind of unfinished sentence (p.42, the last line). Secondly, each heading or sub-heading should be used to organize passages of text on a page (sub/chapters 4., 4.4.3, 4.9., 4.9.1 are completely free of any content).

Starting on page 73 the text is getting completely chaotic, there is no numbering of headings and sub-headings. The conclusion should summarize all author’s finding and conclusion which is impossible to achieve in three short paragraphs.

The paper does not bring any innovative ideas or a deep analysis of the chosen problem. It gives the impression of an unbalanced description of the chosen topic, providing very little or none value added. Most of the statements are and conclusions are not wrong per se, however, the paper reads like a textbook, which lacks a deep analysis of the selected problem.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 1 February 2018

Referee Signature

The referee should give comments to the following requirements:

1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

2) CONTRIBUTION: Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

3) METHODS: Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

4) LITERATURE REVIEW: The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

5) MANUSCRIPT FORM: The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0 points

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading
91 – 100	A	= excellent
81 - 90	B	= good
71 – 80	C	= satisfactory
61 - 70	D	= satisfactory
51 - 60	E	
0	F	= fail (not recommended for defence)