

MASTER'S EXAMINER REPORT

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

Thesis title:	Correlation between U.S. - China Hegemonic Competition and The Deployment of THAAD on the Korean Peninsula
Name of Student:	Kim Byung Ju
Referee (incl. titles):	Martin Riegl
Report Due Date:	August 30, 2021

The thesis has been checked by anti-plagiarism software.

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

The paper analyzing several aspects of the US-China power competition in the context of THAAD deployment presents a valuable contribution to study not only geopolitics of East Asia but also an overall global competition between Washington and Beijing. An author argues that the US decision to deploy the THAAD system on the Korean Peninsula does not provide a bedrock protection against North Korean missile attack, but rather needs to be understood in the broader geopolitical competition between the two world's largest economies. A strong part of the thesis is a convincing analysis of technical and military aspects of the problem, which is often missing in similar works. Author comes up to the conclusion that the deployment of THAAD serves the US as a countermeasure against China's aim to achieve a power transition and replaced the US as the global hegemon, rather protect the ROK against potential North Korea's missile threat.

2) Theoretical and methodological framework:

The master thesis is framed within the theory of power transition developed by A. Organski in the late 1950s. The author provides an introduction into theories of IR and also explains some basic concepts such as soft, and hard power (however the concept of smart power also introduced by J. Nye is missing), further the concepts of national power, hegemony (here he mentions definitions developed by Keohane, Aron, or Bousquet) are discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis. The concepts introduced in the theoretical part are later applied on the analytical part of the paper, in which the author measures aspects of the power potential of both countries in order to find an answer to the question of likelihood (based on prerequisite that national power of competitor reaches 80 to 120% of the incumbent hegemon) of power transition (and its mode) between the United States and China.

3) Sources and literature:

The master thesis analyzing several aspects of the US-China competition for hegemony is based on sufficient amount of both theoretical works (just to mention a few such as J.S. Nye, R. Keohane, A. Organski and others), but especially empirical data used to measure power potential of both countries

in the area of economics, military, or their soft powers. In the literature review, the author summarizes various streams of discussion about the THAAD system.

Also an analysis of primary sources, such as countries' strategies or white papers need to be appraised.

4) Manuscript form and structure:

The submitted master thesis meets all formal criteria for a master thesis. The text is logically structured and the manuscript form is of good quality.

5) Quality of presentation

The quality of presentation is of appropriate quality, there are no major shortcomings regarding the grammar quality and coherence of the presented text.

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution (research quality, analysis, and conclusions) (max. 40 points)</i>	35
<i>Theoretical and methodological framework (max. 25 points)</i>	24
<i>Sources and literature (max. 10 points)</i>	9
<i>Manuscript form and structure (max. 15 points)</i>	14
<i>Quality of presentation (grammar, style, coherence) (max. 10 points)</i>	8
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	90
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	B

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I (do not) 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.