

IEPS, M.A. thesis						
Name:	Veronika Sorokina					
Dissertation title:	The Geopolitics of Gas Transportation of Contemporary Russia (Case Studies of Nord Stream and South Stream Pipeline Projects)					
Scale: 5 - excellent, 4 - good, 3 - satisfactory, 2 - poor, 1 – very poor						
	5	4	3	2	1	
<b>ARGUMENT:</b>						
Clearly defined research question		4				No clearly defined research question
Answers research question		4				Does not answer research question
Well structured		4				Badly structured
Shows theoretical awareness			3			Shows no theoretical awareness
Conceptual clarity			3			Conceptual confusion
Empirically appropriate & robust		4				Full of empirical errors
Logical and coherent		4				Illogical and incoherent
Analytical		4				Descriptive
Critical		4				Uncritical
Shows independent thought		4				Does not show independent thought
<b>SOURCES &amp; USAGE:</b>						
Evidence of reading/research		4				No evidence of reading/research
Effective use of sources/data		4				Ineffective use of sources/data
<b>WRITING STYLE:</b>						
Clear		4				Obscure
Good punctuation			3			Poor punctuation
Grammatically correct			3			Grammatically incorrect
<b>PRESENTATION:</b>						
Appropriate length		4				Too long/short
Good referencing		4				Poor/inconsistent referencing
Good spelling		4				Poor spelling
Good bibliography		4				Poor bibliography

Comments:

Veronika Sorokina has selected a topic which – despite its crucial importance for the energy security of the European continent – remains rather underresearched in the Czech/Central European academic circles. Her work is a successful synthesis of economics with emphasis on energy studies, international relations/political science and shows rich empirical knowledge of the region covered. In this regard, in its multidisciplinary nature it is to be considered a useful contribution to the ongoing discourse of Central Asian/Central Eurasian studies; a discourse that clearly overpasses the Czech academic and expert borders.

In the introductory part of her work, the author deals with methodological issues – the chapter is quite short, but clear and contains some basic information about the realist and neorealist school of thought that the author has chosen to focus on within the theoretical framework of her study. However, despite the mentioned desire in the project proposal, the concept of energy security is outlined in a rather superficial way, if at all. The study also contains a short, but useful chapter in which a critical analysis of contemporary scholarly literature on the topic is provided. Characteristic for the study is the use of a solid amount of both primary and secondary sources, mostly in English and Russian.

As for the structure of the study, it is clear and makes sense in any respect as it closely observes and analyzes relevant issues and leads to a comprehensive conclusion. The work is equipped with useful tables, maps and figures at the end that contribute to a better understanding of the region(s) and topics addressed.

The study is rich in empirical detail; the author has shown awareness of a wide range of both (geo)political and economic/energy issues pertaining to the topic of her research.

Specific Questions for oral defence:

1. Do you see any specific implication(s) of the South Ossetia war (2008) on the future of energetic projects linking the Caspian-Black Sea region to Europe?
2. How would you characterize the Gaz(prom) factor of Russian foreign policy towards the Ukraine and – most recently – Belarus?

**Mark\*:** A- (A minus) (výborně)

Signed: Emil Souleimanov

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> June  
2010