REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	**Kosovo: Sovereign, Unrecognized or Failed State?**
Author of the thesis:	**Andrej Semenov**
Referee *(incl. titles)*:	**PhDr. Mgr. Jakub Landovský Ph.D.**

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
Theoretical background	*(max. 20)*	14
Contribution	*(max. 20)*	14
Methods	*(max. 20)*	15
Literature	*(max. 20)*	15
Manuscript form	*(max. 20)*	15
TOTAL POINTS	*(max. 100)*	**73**
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)		**2**

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

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

1) Theoretical background: Statehood of Kosovo is a treacherous subject. Scores of books, have been written about independence of Kosovo, by its proponents and critics. To writes something new in that area, Author should know the academic debate like the back of his hand. Even though mister Semenov tries to find a new angel by questioning the statehood of Kosovo, from the point of "failed state" theories, he should have spend more time getting familiar with the dominant theoretical concepts like responsibility to protect and other theories of failed state. That does not mean the work is not grounded in the modern theoretical approaches, it only means, that the fresh point of view is rendered less useful, by the omission of important theoretical "lenses". Author could persuade the referees answering the question below.

2) Contribution:
Author presents an analysis of present day Kosovo. Kosovar institutions, position in the international community, regional geopolitical impacts are thoroughly examined. Analyses is acute, well written and there are some fascinating details, even though the whole paper is not very well anchored in contemporary theoretical concepts. There are better and worse works about Kosovo, but bulk of the literature is written by international lawyers. Despite the fact, that primary legal sources, like ICJ advisory opinions are mentioned, the manuscript cannot be considered part of jurisprudence literature. It was refreshing for me to read something else for a change, and I must admit the author read most of the relevant literature.

3) Methods:
Methods are mostly quantitative. Author examines ethnicity and some economic date like gross domestic products per capita. Sadly author brings new comparisons to conclusions of his work, which is not very sound way to work with the data. Conclusions should be built on the previos data analyses and free of any new comparative assessments.

4) Literature:
The research for this thesis was done well. Author cites most of the relevant authors including Berg, Buchanan, Crawford, , Touathail or Fabry, but he should also include some more recent works on the matter. I would suggest reading Nina Caspersen for instance.

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5) Manuscript form:
The language is concise and the thesis is well structured. If we overlook some minor misspellings, we can include this work, among those, which does not distract or appall its readers through formal inadequacies.

Considering the solid work with literature, along with some overlooked theoretical concepts, wrapped in strong formal presentation and with some fresh findings, I would strongly recommend this work for B grade - good. If the author excels in answering following question, he can even get an A grade - excellent.

Question: Bring forth most important theories of failed states and their authors. Emphasize those missing in your work.

DATE OF EVALUATION:

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	US grading
81 – 100	**1**	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	**2**	= good	= B
51 – 60	**3**	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	**3**	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	**4**	= fail	= not recommended for defence