

Assessment of Master Thesis – Academic Consultant



Study programme: **International Economic Relations**

Field of study: **International Politics and Diplomacy**

Academic year: **2018/2019**

Master Thesis Topic: **Security Externalities of the Chinese Maritime Silk Road Initiative in the Indian Ocean, with Focus on Sino-Indian Competition**

Author's name: **Bc. Hana Burešová**

Ac. Consultant's Name: **Jeremy Alan Garlick, M.A., Ph.D.**

Opponent: **Ing. PhDr. Radka Havlová, Ph.D.**

	Criterion	Mark (1–4)
1.	Overall objective achievement	1
2.	Logical structure	2
3.	Using of literature, citations	2
4.	Adequacy of methods used	1
5.	Depth of analysis	1
6.	Self-reliance of author	1
7.	Formal requirements: text, graphs, tables	1
8.	Language and stylistics	1

Comments and Questions:

The thesis contains a wide-ranging and thoughtful analysis of the security issues arising from China's involvement in the Indian Ocean. In support of the analysis, two case studies are conducted, of China's economic statecraft in Sri Lanka and Pakistan. The author demonstrates a detailed knowledge of the region and the issues involved, and effectively uses secondary source material to discuss them. The methodology used is a qualitative / interpretative analysis of empirical data, combined with the aforementioned case studies.

In terms of its language and formal aspects, the thesis is very accomplished. It communicates clearly and effectively. The discussion of China's role in the Indian Ocean is extensive and ambitious. The attempt to tie together the analysis of China's economic statecraft, security 'externalities', and the emerging security dilemma between China, India and the US in the Indian Ocean is always engaging and interesting.

One area in which the thesis could have been improved is in the citation style. There is a high usage of internet sources, many of which are referenced only by URLs. The sources are therefore not identified clearly in some of the footnotes.

I also feel that the organisation of the thesis could have been more logical and that this would have improved the structure of the argument. For instance, Part II could have been placed at the start of the thesis and the case studies in the latter half. There is also a sense that there are two different theses present, with the economic statecraft of the first half not quite being reconciled with the security analysis in the second half. To be clear: the conclusions reached are valid, but the question of the relationship between China's economic statecraft and the security dilemma in the Indian Ocean, while addressed to an extent, is still left largely unresolved at the end.

Nevertheless, this is a very accomplished piece of work which demonstrates a firm grasp of the issues based on very detailed and in-depth research. I therefore recommend it for the grade 'excellent'.

Q1: Can you outline the similarities and differences between China's economic statecraft in Sri Lanka and Pakistan? Is there any evidence from the two case studies of an attempt to create, as some observers believe, a 'string of pearls' of military bases in the Indian Ocean region?

Q2: You seem to suggest that the spiralling security dilemma in the Indian Ocean is accidental rather than intended by any of the state actors in the region. So to what extent is China's activity intentionally aimed at

protecting its security interests (such as energy supplies and trade), and how does the pursuit of these security interests influence the security situation in the Indian Ocean?

Conclusion: The Master Thesis is recommended for the defence.

Suggested Grade: **1**

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