



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Daniele Crespi

Title: From competition to cooperation: Foreign aid policy as a mirror of Sino-Japanese relations in the age of Chinese rise

Programme/year: International Security Studies, 2022

Author of Evaluation (second reader): Tomáš Karásek

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	26
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	35
<i>Total</i>		80	70
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	9
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	2
<i>Total</i>		20	15
TOTAL		100	85



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This is a very interesting, thought-provoking dissertation. The author tests a hypothesis - whose roots could be traced back to the very core of one of the liberalist approaches to international relations – that economic interaction between China and Japan through the scheme of third party market cooperation (TPMC) may have a lasting, positive impact on mutual perception (or discursive construction) of the two parties.

There is much to praise in the dissertation – expansive literature review, deft theoretical anchoring, excellent insight into both Chinese and Japanese environments. Given presently almost instinctive political framing of the Sino-Japanese relations as competitive or even conflictual, probing mechanisms in which the two countries actually cooperate provides a healthy counterpoint.

The main problem I have with the final conclusions the author reaches (end of p. 66, beginning of p. 67) is the limited testing for control factors (performed more symbolically than seriously in chapter 2.4). Put shortly, I have not been convinced by the argumentation that TPMC is not too limited a phenomenon as to have a significant impact on the overall quality of the relationship. I guess this might be an idea for the author to comment upon during the dissertation's defence.

Minor criteria:

The author exhibits true analytical acumen, and the dissertation practically breathes expert knowledge and great insight. It does not, however, make it too easy for the reader to enjoy these qualities, with overlong paragraphs scattered across the text (see pp. 1-3, 3-5 or 16-18 for early examples; actually, the whole chapter 3 is in the form of one unending paragraph!). Also, there are shifts in formatting between alignment into a block or to the left side.



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Assessment of plagiarism:

The dissertation does not exhibit features of plagiarism.

Overall evaluation:

This is a highly interesting dissertation. It rests on a clear theoretical basis, exhibits sound methodology and reaches intriguing conclusions. The positive impact is somewhat dampened by the aforementioned limited assessment of the control factors, as well as some problems in the formatting of the text.

Suggested grade: B

Signature: