

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2807892 DCU 233483 Charles 20231714
Dissertation Title	Sustaining Violence – A Colonial Déja Vu?

<p>Word Count Penalty (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)</p> <p>Word Count: 23,582 Suggested Penalty: no penalty</p>		

JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

Final Agreed Mark B1 [17]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Excellent
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Excellent
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Good
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Good
B. Use of Source Material	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Very Good
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Very Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Good
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Excellent
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Excellent
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes

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| • Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology) | Not required |
| • Appropriate word count | Yes |

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

These comments and the grade are based on a reading of the dissertation excluding the appendices - this seems the fairest given the word constraints on all IMSISS students.

The subject matter of the dissertation is original and interesting - it seeks to understand whether, like other types of extractivism, extractive industries for rare minerals crucial to the transition away from a fossil-fuel based economy are threat multipliers for different types of violence in the communities where these minerals are extracted.

The literature review is extensive, though there was definitely space to be more selective and synthetic to leave more room for a thorough and clear presentation of the central points. All the work covered is relevant, but the points are similar and could have been better streamlined. There is also a lack of distinction between the literature reviewed and the theoretical framework. The framework draws on environmental justice and degrowth, but uses them rather as an explanation for the case then examined instead of as a source for operationalising a clear methodological approach. This is particularly clear with degrowth, which is a less a theory for analysing the problems of continued patterns of colonialism/capitalism, but a solution for transformation. This means that the reasons for the categories, sources of data etc. used in the exploratory case study remain unclear. Given the research question some discussion of how to isolate particular facets of the transition in the explanation would have been expected - the account of the complex problems in DRC is absolutely convincing, but does it provide a real answer to the question posed? It tells us about the difficult and intricately overlapping problems in the country around cobalt mining, but does it tell us is cobalt mining, or rather the increased demand for cobalt, is a specific threat multiplier? The answer becomes rather lost because the information is all presented in unselected detail, and the part that links it to the theoretical framework is rather too cursory.

Overall it is clear that a great deal of effort and reflection went into this work, but it would have benefitted from a bit more honing, selectivity, and careful research design.

Reviewer 2

This study examines how the contemporary 'scramble' for rare minerals (especially cobalt) which are fueling the green energy transition, "disguises latent forms of violence that echo the historical trajectory of climate colonialism." Overall, the paper is well written, well structured, and advances a logical set of arguments. That said, a few aspects required attention: the main research question needed to have been explicitly formulated much earlier (in the abstract and introduction) than page 40; I would have liked to see some engagement with the civil war literature that investigates the link between expropriable natural resources and internal violence; recent work on the effect of climate change on conflict (see recent research by Halvard Buhaug and Clionadh Raleigh, among others) could have also been better integrated into the discussion; the theory section reads more like an extended literature review than a logically consistent framework; the case study enquiry could have explored more closely the relationship between rare mineral mining and the outbreak of different forms of violence. These comments notwithstanding, the study has produced a really nice paper.



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