



## Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Alison Gryzlo

Title: Chinese Involvement in Latin America Post-2009: A Study of the Relevance of Defensive, Offensive, and Postclassical Realism

Programme/year: International Relations, 2023/2024

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Jan Karlas

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Research question, definition of objectives	<b>10</b>	10
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	<b>30</b>	28
	Methodology, analysis, argument	<b>40</b>	35
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	73
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources	<b>10</b>	8
	Style	<b>5</b>	5
	Formal requirements	<b>5</b>	5
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	18
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	91



## Evaluation

### Major criteria:

This thesis seeks to explain the rising China's involvement in Latin America. To do so, the author departs from realism and its three major variants – defensive realism, offensive realism, and postclassical realism.

The first introductory chapter provides a good contextual introduction to the relations of China with the Latin American countries.

In the theoretical chapter, the thesis offers a solid outline of the three selected realist perspectives. The author demonstrates that she understands these perspectives correctly and derives from them meaningful explanations for the analysed case. It is also good that the thesis develops testable observations for each of the explanations (being inspired by the congruence approach).

The empirical analysis had to cope with two particular and considerable challenges. First, given the number of countries belonging to Latin America and the size of China, China's involvement in Latin America represents a massive amount of data. For this reason, it is rather challenging to cover this amount of data in an MA thesis, or to select the most relevant observations from this data. Second, while each of the three used explanations is distinct, they also have a lot in common, as all three of them generally associate the motivations of countries with power and security. Given this, it is rather difficult to determine to what extent the available data/observations support or disconfirm one of the explanations (and not the others).

I suppose that, in the end, the author succeeded, to a high extent, in coping with both of the above-mentioned challenges. The analysis of the China's relations with Latin America in three thematic areas (political, military, economic) that is presented in the thesis is not shallow. To a large extent, the thesis also succeeds in linking the analysed observations with the three applied perspectives. Overall, the thesis thus manages to apply the selected theoretical approaches in the empirical part in a relevant way.



**Minor criteria:**

**Assessment of plagiarism:**

The Turnitin check indicates a 33% of overall similarity, but according to my reading of these results the thesis does not commit plagiarism.

**Overall evaluation:**

The thesis provides a good contextualization of the topic and has a good theoretical and methodological basis. The analysis is challenging because China's involvement in Latin America is very extensive and complex, and because three applied variants of realism have a lot in common. However, the thesis succeeds, to high extent, to cope with these challenges and provides a good account of the respective case from the realist perspectives.

**Suggested grade:**

**A**

**Signature:**