# CHARLES UNIVERSITY

## FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Department of Political Science

# China's Debt Trap diplomacy in the Democratic Republic of Congo: A case study of a failed state (2006-2023) through Neoclassical Geopolitcs

Master's Thesis

Author of the Thesis: Pauline Lempereur

Study programme: Geopolitical Studies Programme (GPS)

Supervisor: Prof. Nuno Morgado Valentim Albino, M.Pol.Sc., Ph.D

Year of the defence: 2024

# Abstract

Since China became the first global economic power, studies concerning Beijing's economic and diplomatic tools to achieve its goals and how Beijing can stabilize its position are analyzed. Thus, this thesis tries to understand in which manner the Democratic Republic of the Congo can able China to maintain its position of first economic power. By contrast, this thesis also aims to answer why the DRC has seen China and vice-versa, as a crucial tool to strengthen the economic and social levels of the country. Consequently, to answer to these questions an innovating approach called Neoclassical Geopolitics has been chosen to analysis the situation. First, the independent variable will analyse the *potential* and the *systemic stimuli.* Both analyses will enable the reader to understand how the geography combined with the geopolitical and geostrategic aspects are shaping the intervening variables, considered as the characterization of government and elites. To analyze this part, the analysis of the government, but also, its shadowy figures will be assessed. As the country faced years of dictatorship, the network of relations is crucial to understand how the mining agreement has been settled between both countries. Finally, this study will enable the reader to understand why the Congo is today considered as a failed state and how different politicians are implicated in the situation the DRC's faces nowadays.