

MASTER'S EXAMINER REPORT

GPS – Geopolitical Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Thesis title:	Geopolitical Dynamics and State-Building in Central Asia
Name of Student:	Alex Perry
Referee (incl. titles):	Michael Romancov, Ph.D.
Report Due Date:	09.09. 2024

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the four numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) Contribution and argument:

The diploma thesis is devoted to an interesting and current topic. I appreciate that the author chose three actors and three major events (dissolution of the USSR, 9/11 and BRI), through which she tried to analyze the dynamics of regional geopolitical development, respectively the issue of state-building. Nevertheless, I would welcome it if the author focused more on defining the reasons why she chose the three great powers and the three events mentioned. For example, trying to grasp the geopolitical dynamics of the region almost without mentioning the influence of Islam (and the competition between Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey) is, in my opinion, very difficult and in many ways counterproductive. In the same way, I have reservations about, for example, why the situation in Afghanistan was not discussed more prominently in the context of developments after September 11. If the work is to monitor geopolitical aspects, why was the situation around the so-called Northern Distribution Network not analyzed, for example? Finally, if the work was primarily devoted to the phenomenon of state-building, why wasn't more attention paid to how political regimes function in the region? After all, their proximity/distance from the three considered actors is perhaps more important for answering the research question than some of the other mentioned factors.

2) Theoretical and methodological framework:

The theoretical and methodological framework are presented in the work. However, I believe that both of these parts should have been processed - and subsequently applied - in a significantly deeper way.

3) Sources and literature:

The topic that was the subject of research is relatively solidly covered by scientific literature and a number of other relevant information sources (statistics of international organizations, government memoranda, international treaties, etc.). The sources that the author chose can be considered relevant, although it can be argued that they dominantly reflect the American/Western approach to the region. In this regard, it is a pity that more Russian and Chinese sources/authors were not used.

The sources used in the work were properly cited.

The Turnitin check showed a high degree of similarity with other texts (31%), but when I looked at the report, I did not get the impression that the work was not original.

4) Manuscript form and structure:

In this respect, the work meets the standards set for texts of this type.

5) Quality of presentation

The diploma thesis was devoted to an undoubtedly interesting and challenging topic, which, however, from my point of view, was grasped too loosely and was not analyzed in sufficient depth. I am therefore looking forward to the defense, where much will certainly be explained.

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution (research quality, analysis, and conclusions) (max. 40 points)</i>	20
<i>Theoretical and methodological framework (max. 25 points)</i>	15
<i>Sources and literature (max. 10 points)</i>	8
<i>Manuscript form and structure (max. 15 points)</i>	15
<i>Quality of presentation (grammar, style, coherence) (max. 10 points)</i>	10
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	68
The proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F)	D

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I recommend the thesis for final defence.

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	A	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	B	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	C	= good
61 – 70	D	= satisfactory
51 – 60	E	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	F	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.