

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

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| Student Matriculation No. | Glasgow 2696734 DCU 21109192 Charles 71057243 |
| Dissertation Title | Market Forces and Political Power: On the Evolution of the Wagner Group |

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| 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) | | |
| Word Count: 20266 Suggested Penalty: no penalty | | |

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

Final Agreed Mark: A5 [18]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

| Assessment Criteria | Rating |
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| 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> | Very Good |
| • <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i> | Excellent |
| • <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i> | Very Good |
| • <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i> | Excellent |
| • <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i> | Excellent |
| 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> | Excellent |
| • <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i> | Excellent |
| • <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i> | Very 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> | Very Good |
| • <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i> | Excellent |
| • <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i> | Yes |
| • <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i> | Not required |

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- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The reviewed thesis offers an analysis of the activities of the Russian Wagner group. Building upon Krahnemann's (2010) continuum of Liberal and Republican images of civil-military relations, and its recent extension by Ghiselli (2020) into a conceptual framework originally devised to the study of Chinese Security Privatisation, it examines the interplay of market dynamics and governmental power in shaping Wagner's unconventional development. As such, the thesis has a suitable and relatively novel conceptual framework. This framework is also actually utilized in the empirical chapters which focus on specific operations of the Wagner group in several key countries/conflicts.

Chapter 3 on societalization is more developed and nuanced than Chapter 4 for on stateification, possibly a reflection of the fact that the thesis has been largely drafted in the last couple weeks before the submission deadline. Overall, however, the final version is well structured and well written. The objectives, as well as the time period of analysis, are clearly stated and justified. The list of references is extensive for an MA thesis, including existing Russian sources.

While the author was wise not to delve much in the most recent, and still unfolding, developments regarding Wagner post-March on Moscow future, these could be further discussed during the oral defense.

Overall, the thesis certainly meets the standard criteria for this type of academic work and it offers a wealth of well-structured information regarding the evolution of the Wagner group as a prominent actor of the Russian private military/security market.

Reviewer 2

This is a very well-written and well researched dissertation. The student demonstrated excellent knowledge of the relevant academic literature, which enabled him/her to effectively navigate through the vast amount of empirical evidence, providing in-depth nuanced analysis of the selected case study of Wagner group.

The student managed to effectively apply the chosen theory to the case study as demonstrated by references to theoretical components throughout the empirical analysis and association between the empirical findings and theory foundations.

My only critical comment is on the discussion of dissertation's methodology. Although the student claimed to have followed the Grounded Theory approach, it was obvious they are doing quite the opposite: application of theory to a case study rather developing theory/hypotheses from an empirical evidence/case. I believe referring to Grounded Theory in the methodology section was redundant as its application was neither attempted nor possible under the extant study design.