

<b>Name of the student:</b>	<b>Inxhi Brisku</b>
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>The Influence of Economic Decline in the Rise of the Right-Wing Populist Parties in Europe – Two Case Studies</b>
<b>Reviewer:</b>	<b>Martin Mejstřík</b>

## **1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD**

**(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review)**

The student proposes a clear and relevant research objective seeking to identify the influence of economic decline at two cases of right-wing populism in Europe. The research objectives are clearly specified and coherent. There is no clear hypothesis, it rather discusses the correlation between the 2008 economic crisis and the rise of the radical right-wing populist parties. The case selection is also convincing, the same applies also for the time framework. The thesis itself is not presenting any new view on the researched problematic but on the other hand it shows on those two cases how radical right-wing populists struggled with the impact of the economic crisis

Overall, the author presents a very strong theoretical framework of the thesis which is based on an extensive literature review and various approaches towards populism.

## **2. ANALYSIS**

**(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):**

From a methodological point of view, the thesis represents a two single-cases studies connected with a correlation and set in the theoretical framework. The whole research design could be presented in broader and more clear way. The author described both cases quite convincingly but without further use of criteria which could be used for a proper comparison. There is also some disparity in quality of each case study – on one hand, the Italian case is very well analyzed and could even stand alone as a convincing argument for the thesis goal, on the other hand, the French case looks more as an addition to the Italian one than an equal comparison. The author works appropriately with sources.

## **3. CONCLUSIONS**

**(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):**

Overall, the MA thesis of Inxi Brisku is a very good one. He put an excellent theoretical framework, selected two appropriate case studies and convincingly showed how the economic crisis influenced both analyzed political parties. The Conclusions, on the other hand, are a little bit too vague and could be criticized as banal but the author proved what he formulated in the introduction. There are also some small discrepancies in quality between the two case studies but they are just minor issues.

## **4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE**

**(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):**

The author fulfils all formal aspects of the MA thesis. He uses an appropriate language and fully adheres to academic standards, including citation style, references and use of bibliography. Regarding language, the thesis is also without any major issue. However, the structure of the text could be clearer, in some parts (especially in the French case study) it's a little bit more difficult to orient. Nevertheless, it must be said that the whole formal aspect of the text massively improved during the writing process which showed the dedication from the author to his thesis.

## 5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

**(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)**

The thesis presents an excellent theoretical framework and overview of concepts of populism. The author used convincingly both case studies, however, their selection could be argued better. The conclusion is rather descriptive and too general but on the other hand it fits in the research design put together by the author. In more extensive research it will be interesting to see more cases being tested by this design but that would be out of the scope of an MA thesis.

Questions for the defense:

- 1) Are there some similarities right-wing populist parties shared in their reaction to the economic crisis with their left-wing counterparts?
- 2) Do you think your research design could be applicable to cases of other right-wing populist parties? And which one?
- 3) Do you see any similarities between the reaction of both parties to the economic crisis and the current covid situation?

**Grade: B-**

**31 August 2020**

**Martin Mejstřík**