

BACHELOR'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT
PPE – Bachelor's in Politics, Philosophy and Economics
Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Thesis title:	Loans for Shares Program: Influence on Post-Soviet Politics and Economy
Student's name:	Mikhail Gogol
Referee's name:	Aliaksei Kazharski

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	50	42
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	15	14
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	15	12
<i>Total</i>		80	68
Minor Criteria			
	Sources, literature	10	10
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	5	8
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	5	4
<i>Total</i>		20	17
TOTAL		100	85

Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score:

[NB:] If the plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score is above 15%, the reviewer has to include his/her assessment of the originality of the reviewed thesis in his/her review.

Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria (min. 1800 characters including spaces when recommending a passing grade, min. 2500 characters including spaces when recommending a failing grade):

The bachelor thesis is fairly well researched and well written. It is based on secondary sources, but this is fully acceptable for an undergraduate project. There are some things that should have been polished better.

I think the author should avoid sweeping generalizations and arguments from "culture", in particular when the latter is understood in a primordial, essentialist manner. E.g., "privatization and market reforms were generally inconsistent with Russian institutions and culture" (p.7). Then what about the pre-1917 burgeoning Russian capitalism with its successful entrepreneurs and the rapidly growing private industries? Every culture is, by definition, polyphonic and multi-dimensional - think about the very different type of political

and economic institutions and regimes that have operated in the context of German (or Korean) “culture”.

In this context, I would also strongly discourage the author from using the word “mentality” in his future writings, as for most social scientists it serves as a strong negative trigger due to its pseudoscientific implications.

There are some things that need polishing in terms of style, word use, and grammar. In particular, the first paragraph in the Introduction reads more like an opinion essay than an academic text. (The style eventually gravitates towards a more academic one).

On a closely related note, the text would definitely benefit from more in text references and at least some direct quotes. The specific pages should also be provided for the references.

There are some occasional word use issues. Thus, by “anecdotal data” (p.4) the author probably means “anecdotal evidence” (but anyway, anecdotal evidence is not a sound foundation for the methodology section. It can only be used to illustrate a point, not to prove it). “Immigrants” (p.6) should have probably been emigrants or émigrés.

The author should avoid shortened verb forms in the future (wasn’t, didn’t). They are sometimes acceptable in journalist writing but do not belong in academic texts.

There is repeated incorrect use of past tenses: the author often employs the present perfect where the simple past (“was, had”) should be used. This changes the meaning of what the author is trying to say.

Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): B

Suggested questions for the defence are:

How does the author define “culture” and its specific role in post-Communist transitions?

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.