

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

Thesis title:	Britain in the European Communities under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher
Student's name:	Ondrej Šebík
Referee's name:	Daniela Lenčář Chalániová, Ph.D. (Advisor)

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	50	40 (more descriptive than analytical)
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	15	14
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	15	14
Total		80	68
Minor Criteria			
	Sources, literature	10	10
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	5	4
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	5	4
Total		20	18
TOTAL		100	86

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):

Mr. Šebík's thesis is a fair example of an undergraduate thesis: well structured, well executed, including work with some primary sources, showing decent command of writing skills (both in foreign language and academic referencing).

The goal of the reviewed thesis is to evaluate Margaret Thatcher's approach (ideas and decisions) to European Communities during her time as British Prime Minister, and assess whether it complies with basic tenets of Conservatism; as it seems the Conservative party sports a variety of positions towards the EU/EC. The research question to this end is phrased clearly (on p. 6) and answered in the conclusion (p. 43).

To deal with the question, the author prepares a theoretical section in which he outlines the main themes/tenets of Conservatism – tradition, organic society, hierarchy/authority, relationship to property and opinions on human nature and the state – with “extras” on history of conservative thought, its ideological status and its theorization in International Relations theory.

- This section openly takes cue from the Conservatism themes as listed by Andrew Heywood’s in his textbook on *Political Ideologies*; however, besides explaining what the listed themes mean, Mr. Šebík often fills in additional details from other conservative authors to “refine” the “theme”
- This adds richness and depth to the chapter

This theory section is followed by empirical analysis part – in line with the research question – essentially a comparison or measurement of Margaret Thatcher’s European policy against the “Conservative template” built in the chapter before.

- For clarity, Thatcher’s deeds are split into three periods in time differentiated by turning moments in Thatcher-EC relationship (resolution of the BBQ, building of the common market and Single European Act, and her last years in office seeing the fall of the Iron curtain and a European move towards Economic and Monetary Union
- These empirical sections have enough descriptive detail of what happened
- The author makes good use of primary data: Thatcher’s own autobiography or excerpts from various speeches she gave in front of the House of Common/elsewhere
- The only issue is that the “measurement” or evaluation of Thatcher’s policies against the Conservative template ...is kind of brief. On the other hand, the analytical bits have been extended from earlier drafts.
- The author could have stuck more to the terminology built in theoretical chapter – how exactly is putting Britain first conservative? Which “theme” does it “match” - but the general meaning is there.

This is somewhat remedied in the Conclusion.

As for the criterion of “originality” in the table above – I would say that rather than advising students to run (pursue original research) before they can walk (before they have put their skills to the test), I stick to skills – and Mr. Šebík’s thesis does live up to the required skills of a BA graduate.

Writing style is, at times, quite repetitive. And a few text-bugs remained.

„Wall claimed that Wall asserted that Thatcher rejected the concepts of political union, a single currency“ (p. 37)

This thesis is not “exceptional” in a *Wunderkind* kind of way, nevertheless, I *DO* need to acknowledge here that Mr. Šebík has made great progress since the first drafts I’ve read about a year ago. Removing tautological evaluation, and fixing up a recognizable theoretical framework was a step in the right direction. Through several readings, trial and errors, we have also fixed up the facts of Thatcher’s influence and activities in European Communities. So, the shift from early drafts to final result is huge and shows the effort Mr. Šebík put into this work.

Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): I propose a **B**, in case of great defence, perhaps even an A.

Suggested questions for the defence are:

Since you're pondering Conservative party's inconsistent approach to European integration from Heath to Cameron, why have you picked precisely Margaret Thatcher and her European politics as a point of your interest?

More present-day question, would you say that Boris Johnson's "divorce" with the EU was in line with Conservatism? Which themes resonated during his premiership? Briefly.

I (do not) 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.