

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

<b>Thesis title:</b>	<b>The influence of geopolitics and philosophy on each other. especially explored through the lens of communism and its impact on Britain and Russia.</b>
<b>Student's name:</b>	<b>Yelizaveta Frolova</b>
<b>Referee's name:</b>	<b>Jakub Franěk</b>

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	<b>50</b>	15
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	<b>15</b>	3
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	<b>15</b>	3
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources, literature	<b>10</b>	2
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	<b>5</b>	3
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	<b>5</b>	2
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>

**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 author has selected potentially relevant and interesting topic for her BA Thesis. (See, however, the qualifying explanation in the following section.) Nevertheless, unfortunately, she did not manage to explore this topic in a satisfying way and the submitted thesis hence suffers from a number of shortcomings. Indeed, the author's approach as well as the thesis itself can best be described as extremely confused.

*The title and the definition of the research aim and objectives*

Some confusion appears already in the title of the thesis (*The influence of geopolitics and geopolitics on each other*) and in the general statement of the research aim: "to explore whether or not there is a connection between the development of philosophical ideas and the changes in

geopolitics” (p. 3). Nonetheless, it quickly becomes apparent that by “philosophy” the author means mostly, if not exclusively, ideology, which obviously often is related to political philosophy... Both the subtitle and the statement of the research aim further specify that the scope of the thesis is limited to the exploration on the political impact of communism (as an ideology or “philosophy”) in Russia and England with the aim to assess the mutual influence of (presumably) ideology and geopolitics on the political development of these two countries.

“The ultimate goal” of the thesis, however is “to see the connection between geopolitics and philosophy, particularly the influence that philosophy has on geopolitics...” (p. 3). This general formulation of the principal research aim implies that the author intends to explore the impact of ideology on the foreign policy formation (or “geopolitics”) in general, while focussing specifically on the comparison of Russia and Britain during the period between 1778 and 1918.

By the way, the decision to limit the scope of the research to these two particular countries and the specified time-frame remains unexplained. As for the choice of countries: The inclusion of Russia makes perfect sense and does not need any additional explanation. On the other hand, the choice of Britain should be justified. As for the inclusion of the examined time-frame defined by the author as the period covering the period between 70 years prior to the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) and 70 years after its publication. At a first sight, this definition also appears as completely arbitrary. Until the reader realises (or is prompted to realise by the author on p. 47), that the October Revolution in Russia (1917) occurred “almost” seventy years after the publication of the *Communist Manifesto*. Moreover, the Soviet Union likewise lasted for “almost 70 years” (p. 47). BTW: Due to the initial (and also the final – see below) formulation of the research interest, it would seem to be more sensible to limit the time-frame of the research to the latter 70-years long period, i.e. to the duration of the existence of the communist regime in Russia.

Surprisingly enough, the author defines her principal (or “main”) hypothesis in the following way: “geopolitics influence the development of philosophical ideas; however those ideas do not right away change/influence geopolitics” (p. 3). While the above cited general statement of the research aim implies that the author intends to focus mostly on the impact of ideology (or ideological formulations) on “geopolitics”, the first part of the main hypothesis implies that she instead aims to explore the impact of “geopolitics” on the formation (or perhaps rather acceptance or influence-?) of a particular ideology in a given country. The formulation of the second (or “supplementary”) hypothesis nonetheless suggests that the author intends to follow both of these aims, i.e. to trace or describe the *mutual* influence of geopolitics and ideology in *both* directions.

To complicate the picture even more, the author has decided to explore also other factors, which might have influenced the political impact of communist ideology in the two countries – specifically the differences between their economic, social, political and cultural (specifically religious) developments during the examined period. Moreover, in the final chapter, the author (again) reformulates the main aim of her thesis in a way, which seems to (at least to some extent) return to the original formulation: “However, the ultimate question of this paper is to find out how soon philosophy impacts geopolitics” (p.47). To summarise, the author appears to be uncertain about the definition of the research aim of her BA Thesis.

#### *The research design and the BA Thesis’ structure*

The defended BA Thesis lacks any clearly defined and/or even only implicitly present research design. The author has apparently decided to say first something about Communism (in chapter 2, which discusses in very general terms the genesis, contents and impact of the *Communist Manifesto*) and about geopolitics in chapters 3-4, which contain an attempt to define geopolitics as a field of study, as well as a description of apparently randomly selected geopolitical topics and theories. This “theoretical part” is then followed by chapters devoted to the description of

“geopolitical” (or foreign-policy) developments of both countries during the studied period and then to their internal political, social and cultural developments. This is followed by the concluding chapter, which is supposed to summarise the findings of the entire thesis.

#### *Resources used, citation style and other formalities*

The author should be reminded that a BA Thesis is an academic paper and as such it should rely on academically acceptable resources. Occasional references to encyclopaedic entries may be acceptable. Nonetheless, the extent of the author’s reliance on the citations from the Encyclopaedia Britannica is unacceptable (especially since they include a reference to the “Kid’s” version of Britannica on p. 47).

The author does not follow any established citation style. More importantly, her own idiosyncratic citation style does not include all necessary information, such as the page number(-s).

The author should be informed that the alleged “Department of Geopolitics” at the Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences of Charles University does not actually exist (title page). The author should have also reviewed the Table of Content of her BA Thesis, prior to submitting it. (Instead of the title of Chapter 1, it contains a text editor error prompt in Russian.)

One more linguistic or perhaps typographical issue: the use of capital letters in the title and subtitle of the thesis. (In the title, all words with the exception of articles, prepositions and pronouns should be capitalised. In the subtitle, the first letter should be capitalised.)

#### *Argumentative Persuasiveness and Analytical Depth*

Given the fact that the lack of a clearly defined research aim as well as total absence of methodological considerations, as well as the type of resources, it should not come as a surprise that the arguments presented are shallow and unpersuasive.

#### *Conclusion*

The evaluated BA Thesis in its present form is definitely not fit to pass the defence. The author should be strongly advised to radically redraft her text – i.e. in effect to completely rewrite her thesis.

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

**Suggested questions for the defence are:**

**I do not recommend the thesis for final defence.**

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***Referee Signature***

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

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