

IMESS dissertation						
Name:	Vilius Mačkinis					
Dissertation title:	CONCEPTUALIZING EASTERN EUROPE: PAST AND PRESENT					
Scale: 5 - excellent, 4 - good, 3 - satisfactory, 2 - poor, 1 - very poor						
	5	4	3	2	1	
<b>ARGUMENT:</b>						
Clearly defined research question	5					No clearly defined research question
Answers research question			3			Does not answer research question
Well structured			3			Badly structured
Shows theoretical awareness			3			Shows no theoretical awareness
Conceptual clarity			3			Conceptual confusion
Empirically appropriate & robust		4				Full of empirical errors
Logical and coherent			3			Illogical and incoherent
Analytical		4				Descriptive
Critical				2		Uncritical
Shows independent thought			3			Does not show independent thought
<b>SOURCES &amp; USAGE:</b>						
Evidence of reading/research			3			No evidence of reading/research
Effective use of sources/data			3			Ineffective use of sources/data
<b>WRITING STYLE:</b>						
Clear	5					Obscure
Good punctuation	5					Poor punctuation
Grammatically correct	5					Grammatically incorrect
<b>PRESENTATION:</b>						
Appropriate length	5					Too long/short
Good referencing		4				Poor/inconsistent referencing
Good spelling		4				Poor spelling
Good bibliography				2		Poor bibliography

Comments:

In his dissertation, Vilius Mačkinis provides an interpretation of the processes that shaped European identity in the course of centuries with special focus on East-West division of the continent. Using numerous examples the author outlines political, geographical, cultural and socio-economic context of his topic. He argues that European identity originally based on Christianity was later filled with more cultural and commercial content.

The dissertation is clearly structured. Unfortunately the author has failed to cover several fundamental aspects of his topic. Especially his interpretation of the long 19th century is weak. Not only Christianity and transcending power of reason shaped the European identity but freedom understood as the source of progress was also among its essential components; several others, phenomena like war, revolution, nobility, the formation of international law or the emergence of modern nations were of the same importance.

Secondly, Europe and Eastern Europe are not only the inner concepts, but also pictures drawn from outside, by foreigners. This perspective is missing completely in the thesis.

Thirdly, the author does not make much difference in the case of his sources. The sources presented in the bibliography section are not categorised, what is significant for the way they are being used in the text.

Finally, the idea to have a chapter on Historiography in the thesis is fine, however, it cannot be taken very seriously in the case it's based only on three sources (Russian or German historians are completely missing). At least Milyukov's concept and Naumann's Mitteleuropa should have been touched on.

In his rather ambitious attempt to encompass whole European history Vilius Mačkinis has succeeded to grasp and explain only some of the planned points and he answered only a part of his research questions; less ambitious goal and more detailed and careful work could open wider space for a critical approach.

Specific Questions for oral defence:

What is the Russian definition of Eastern Europe and how it was made?

What is the American definition of Eastern Europe and how it was made?

Which "European values" emerged after the French revolution and Napoleonic wars? Were they spread all over the continent?

Deducted for late submission:	Deducted for faulty referencing:	Mark*: B
Charles marker: Velmi dobře (2)	Signed:	Date: 16.6.2010

**\*Mark: A = 70+; B = 65-69; C = 60-64; D = 55-59; E = 50-54; F = fail, less than 50, see Scheme of award –please, fill in this way: Charles/IMESS (e.g. Výborně/A)**