

IMESS dissertation						
Name/code:	Ergys Bruci					
Dissertation title:	The Impact of the EU Accession Process in Shaping Democratization: The case of Albania					
Scale: 5 - excellent, 4 - good, 3 - satisfactory, 2 - poor, 1 - very poor						
	5	4	3	2	1	
ARGUMENT:						
Clearly defined research question		X				No clearly defined research question
Answers research question	X					Does not answer research question
Well structured	x					Badly structured
Shows theoretical awareness	X					Shows no theoretical awareness
Conceptual clarity		X				Conceptual confusion
Empirically appropriate & robust	X					Full of empirical errors
Logical and coherent	X					Illogical and incoherent
Analytical	X					Descriptive
Critical	X					Uncritical
Shows independent thought		X				Does not show independent thought
SOURCES & USAGE:						
Evidence of reading/research	X					No evidence of reading/research
Effective use of sources/data	X					Ineffective use of sources/data
WRITING STYLE:						
Clear	X					Obscure
Good punctuation	X					Poor punctuation
Grammatically correct	X					Grammatically incorrect
PRESENTATION:						
Appropriate length	X					Too long/short
Good referencing	X					Poor/inconsistent referencing
Good spelling	X					Poor spelling
Good bibliography	X					Poor bibliography
Deducted for late submission:		Deducted for faulty referencing:			Mark*:	
					A	
Charles Kamil Pikal marker:	Signed:			Date: June 14, 2012		

* Mark: A = 70+; B = 65-69; C = 60-64; D = 55-59; E = 50-54; F = fail, less than 50

Scheme of award (assessment criteria):

	Charles University**	IMESS
Excellent	Výborně [1]	A
Very Good	Velmi dobře [2]	B
Good	Velmi dobře [2.5]	C
Satisfactory	Dobře [3]	D
Sufficient	Dobře [3.5]	E
Fail	Neprospěl [4]	F

CONTINUES OVERLEAF

NOTE: Please provide substantive and detailed feedback

Comments (at least 300 words)

Europeisation and process of accession of various countries into the European Union have become an evergreen topic of thesis, scholar articles and numerous monographs. However, Albania is rarely in the focus of such works, partly because there is certain language and cultural barrier for general political scientists. On the other hand, a handful of Albanian studies scholars, who along with being experts in fields of Albanian language, culture and history, are often asked to analyze and comment current affairs of Albanian politics, are quite unfamiliar with recent development of political theories. For this reason, I was glad to supervise one of scholarly works that might fill the above-described gap in the field of European studies.

Author defines the accession process into the European Union as gradual fulfilling of the Copenhagen criteria. He describes various forms of pressure that the European Union has exerted into domestic political structures in effort to promote democratization reforms in Albania. However, he comes to conclusion, that "Democratization is a process that combines structures, policies, and norms. In their current formulation, Europeanization mechanisms are able to affect only the first two." As a result of his research and analysis, Mr. Bruci recommends that the European Union redirects her efforts "towards the development of civil society (that) could create the required internal pressure to push forward the process of democratization."

The thesis is very well written in terms of style, logically structured and is built on a solid corpus of various primary and secondary sources. Mr. Bruci chose a theoretical and conceptual framework that is relevant to the topic and used proper methodology that lead to find logical answers to the questions he had asked.

The overall impression of the thesis is, that its author did point out the most crucial aspects of issue he analyzed but failed to explain the cause of at least one of them. I found his explanation of resistance of Albanian political system to change of norms purely as a result of heritage of communist and transition periods. In fact, many of social norms and structures of any society are formed during centuries, they are *longue durées*.

Specific questions for oral defence (at least 100 words)

For the reason specified in the last paragraph of my comment, I'd like to ask Mr. Bruci to identify during his defence some characteristics of today's political structures in Albania, that are of pre-communist heritage, and that are obstacles to the democratisation process, as required by the European Union. These features may originate in norms of traditional society based on clans, which means rather ethnological than historical background. But they can also originate in older Albanian history, such as in Ottoman rule period, including the period of *rilindja* (the national renaissance) or in first Albanian state, that had similarly polarised political scene as today's republic, at least in first years of its existence.

