

Name of the student:	Aleksandr Pachkov
Title of the thesis:	<i>The effect of education on nationalism and ethnic exclusionism in modern Russia</i>
Reviewer:	Dr. Abel Escribà-Folch (Universitat Pompeu Fabra)

### 1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

This thesis examines the use of (history) education as an instrument of promoting nationalism and ethnic exclusionism in contemporary Russia. The question is without a doubt relevant and beautifully presented in the introduction of the paper, which does a great job at engaging the reader and capturing his/her interest.

Much it is often assumed about the use of indoctrination in autocratic regimes, but little research actually exists that examines it closely, and, in this case, from a mixed methodological perspective that delves into the textbooks used for such purpose.

The literature discussion is quite comprehensive and well-written. It shows that the author has put a great effort into exploring the relevant arguments, historical contexts and implications of his research question. The section that needs a bit more work is 2.1.2, where works related to state construction and the construction of shared identities in other contexts/countries could have received much more attention. It is a literature on identity creation that is directly related to the thesis and its RQ. Also, a discussion of other mechanisms of national identity creation beyond education would have been interesting to include, so that the author can better frame the paper into a broader topic.

### 2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The paper needs, in my opinion, of a proper theory section, where the author explains his expectations in detail when applied to the Russian case before moving to the discussion of data and methods, which is done in section 3. The theory section would allow to connect the existing debates and arguments to the specificities of Russia and its recent development and also to the political context and institutions. This is all the more important since the author affirms in the data and methods section that “The research design of the paper follows a deductive logic (grounded in the theoretical and conceptual frameworks discussed in Chapter 2).”

The author uses a longitudinal comparative legal analysis to examine the influence of Russia’s government in shaping educational policies and historical texts and the resulting included narratives aimed at indoctrination. Secondly, the author employs a qualitative content analysis of textbooks. Both approaches complement each other well and are appropriate given the nature of the data and sources analysed.

The analysis is well executed and rigorous. I praise the author for all the effort put into this considering the time constraints.

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

The conclusions are clear and summarize very well the main findings of the thesis. They also discuss the implications of the research. They are compelling while, at the same time, honest and accurate.

### 4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

The thesis is very well-written. It has been a pleasure to read it indeed. It is engaging, uses the appropriate style and academic language.


Citations are correct. All formalities associated with academic work are fulfilled excellently.

--

**5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT**

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

<p>This thesis has several strong points. It is beautifully written. It studies a relevant, understudied topic in an important context. It shows a great command of the literature. It uses appropriate methods and approaches. The main weak point is the partial lack of a clear theoretical contribution, which lies somewhat blurred in the second section, and could be better developed and stand out more.</p>
---

<b>Grade (A-F):</b>	B -- 8.1
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
June 21st 2023	 Abel Escribà-Folch