

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (jiri.vykoukal@post.cz)

Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

Student:	Jingjing Xu
Dissertation title:	Can Nationalism Influence Democracy – Analyzing the Impact of Azerbaijan Nationalism

	70+	69-65	60-61	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.</i>			61			
Analysis & Interpretation <i>Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.</i>					50	
Structure & Argument <i>Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an argument's limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.</i>				58		
Presentation & Documentation <i>Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.</i>					54	
Methodology <i>Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.</i>					50	

ECTS Mark:	E (54)	Charles Mark:	B (59)	Marker:	Pavel Szobi
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>			No	Signed:	
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>				Date:	

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+) = A (Charles mark 91-100 - excellent): Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work.

Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B (UCL mark 69-65) = B (Charles mark 81-90 – very good)

C (UCL mark 64-60) = C (Charles mark 71-80 – good): A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of

research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 65 or over equates to a B grade.

demonstrating methodological awareness. 55 or over equates to a D grade.

D (UCL mark 59-55) = D (Charles mark 61-70 – satisfactory)

E (UCL mark 54-50) = E (Charles mark 51-60 – sufficient):

Demonstration of a critical use of sources and ability to engage in systematic inquiry. An ability to engage in sustained research work,

F (UCL mark less than 50) = F (Charles mark 0-50 - insufficient):

Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques.

Please provide substantive and detailed feedback!

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (*at least 300 words*):

In the acknowledgement, Jingjing Xu speaks about one specific added value of the research outcomes - to explore the causes of nationalism in China as well as the potential for democratization by researching on former communist country in post-Soviet area. I find that very intriguing.

I appreciate that the author took the time and effort to map various theories of nationalism, as well as the links between nationalism and democratic systems. At the same time, I do wonder why some authors and works are emphasised while others completely omitted. As for Azerbaijan, Jingjing Xu identified a tendency to treat nationalism as a monolithic construct in the existing literature - differences between government-driven nationalism and the nationalism emerging organically from civil society have been often overlooked.

The research combines the tools of both quantitative and qualitative analysis to follow the relationship between nationalism and democracy and the context and of individual shifts in this relationship. The author considered other methods but eventually chose a less complicated set of methods. Unfortunately, the chosen set does not provide the reader with a thorough analysis, nor are the possibilities of their use fully exhausted.

Jingjing Xu did not lose unnecessary effort on describing the history development background prior 1991 and only briefly introduced it to understand the development of the Azerbaijan society in the 1990s. In order to comprehend the changes of the 1990s, the author used the Anders Aslund's work on the link between authoritarianism and resource wealth which can hinder democratic development (oil and natural gas in the case of Azerbaijan). The descriptive part of the dissertation regarding the rise of an authoritarian rule in the country is rather long and serves overall as an introduction to the actual research and data work. It gives the reader an inside regarding the existing factors which contributed to the relative democratization of the country between 1991 and 1993 but some strong indicators toward an authoritarian society in this period are ignored.

The author underlined the added value of the research outcomes as well as its limits. I agree that the period of 2011-2017 is way too short to provide the reader with conclusive results. The author could have attempted to prolong the research period toward the recent years (the recent developments in the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia are mentioned only briefly). Nevertheless, the results and argumentation are somewhat of evidence that the author has the capacity to work with data and interpret it properly - qualities which are expected of well conducted dissertation research.

Random grammar and spelling errors have a minor impact on the overall quality of the dissertation.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (at least 2 questions):

In your dissertation, you considered various factors to play a key role in the development of government nationalism in Azerbaijan. You mentioned the high-level government spending in the capital Baku. One can mention the Baku Olympic Stadium or the Baku Crystal Hall. How did government-promoted/funded events (such as the Eurovision contest or UEFA matches and European Games) capitalize on the growth of the pride and nationalism of the local population?