

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE
Faculty of Social Sciences
Institute of International Studies

PROTOCOL ON BACHELOR THESIS ASSESSMENT
(Second reviewer)

Name of the student: Irina Molodkina

Title: Sartre and His Perception by Czech Intellectuals in 1960's

Reviewer (external reviewers including the address and position):

Eliška Tomalová, Ph.D.

1. TOPIC AND OBJECTIVE (short information on the thesis, research objective):

The thesis focuses on Jean-Paul Sartre, one of the most influential French authors of the XXth century, his relations and contacts with the intellectual scene in Czechoslovakia in the 1960's and the impact of Sartre's work on selected Czechoslovak authors, namely Jan Patočka, Karel Kosík, František Kautman, and Milan Kundera. The main goal of the thesis is to answer the following research question: „Who did Sartre and his activity influence the Czech intellectuals after 1963?“ (p. 8).

2. CONTENT (complexity, original approach, argument, structure, theoretical and methodological backing, work with sources, appropriateness of annexes etc.):

The research objective of the thesis is very ambitious and requires a very solid background in cultural history of France and Czechoslovakia. From a methodological perspective, the author opted for a case study (with sub cases on a set of 4 Czech authors). Biographical methodology serves as complementary to the main analysis of selected historical elements and texts.

The thesis offers a logical structure, with references to the historical and cultural background of Czechoslovakia and its intellectual scene, and to the relations both between the two countries (France and Czechoslovakia) and their intellectual elites. The author combines the usage of primary and secondary sources.

3. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE (quality of language, citation style, graphics, formal aspects etc.):

The formal aspects of the thesis are correct, with minor spelling issues. The English level is good, but could be better.

Theses Turnitin Ouriginal (Urkund)

No issues. The thesis corresponds to academic standards.

4. SHORT COMMENTS BY THE REVIEWER (overall impression, strengths and weaknesses, originality of ideas, achievement of the research objective etc.):

The author has chosen a very broad topic. I do appreciate a very elaborate mapping of Sartre's connections to the Czech intellectual scene and also the analysis of his relations with the official actors and diplomatic representation (including the role of IFP and Sartre's special treatment as an „accepted“ intellectual).

Let me also mention the weaker points of the thesis:

- The author does not specify clearly in the introduction (and most importantly, in the research question) what kind of Sartre's influence she wants to explore (intellectual, political, societal)
- I would welcome more details about the specificity of the relationship, as Sartre's work and activities impacted also on other intellectuals and cultural communities.
- The thesis offers interesting contextual elements, but more analysis on the main topic is needed

- There are many strong statements in the thesis that would require more explanation – see p. 14 (Sartre as a channel for Czechoslovakia), or p.33 („The philosopher sees intellectuals as a product of class society...“).
- The thesis highlights the fact (in the introduction) that the influence between Czech intellectual and Sartre was a mutual process. However, it does not display convincing arguments and examples about the effects of Czech academia on Sartre.

5. *QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DURING THE DEFENCE (one to three):*

Based on previous comments, let me suggest the two following questions for the thesis defence:

- Could you offer examples of the mutual influence? Can we trace in Sartre's work and political activism examples of Czech intellectual influence?
- Can you comment on longer effects of Sartre's relations with Czechoslovakia? Can we observe a certain longevity of the patterns that result from Sartre's connections in the 1960's?

7. *(NON-)RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED GRADE (A,B,C,D,E,F):*

I recommend Irina Molodkina's Master thesis for defence and I suggest that this thesis is graded **C**.

Date: 25/8/2023

Signature: Eliška Tomalová, Ph.D.