

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

PROTOCOL ON DIPLOMA THESIS ASSESSMENT
(Supervisor)

Name of the student: Louis Menzard Minchin

Title: **Does the EU Affect the Resolution of the Issue of National Identity in Contested and Divided European Countries? Comparative Study of the EU Peace-building Initiatives in the Cyprus and Kosovo**

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Adrian Brisku (IMS)

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

Deploying a very well-defined and well-analysed comparison, this thesis investigates whether and to what extent existing EU peace-building initiatives in the two European states with contested national identities, Cyprus and Kosovo, have an impact on constitutionally defined national identities in the two countries. The thesis convincingly argues that such initiatives have only a marginal and indirect effect.

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

The thesis is extremely complex and the comparative approach is original for the two cases selected. Rarely have Kosovo and Cyprus been compared especially on a highly relevant theme as the unsettled national identities of two states, both of which experience strong influences (in their identities) from their neighbouring states, respectively Albanian and Serbian identities with regard to Kosovo and Greek and Turkish identities in Cyprus. The complexity of the thesis stands in the meticulous and laudable deployment of the comparative history method – though the detailed history of the method was not necessary and could have been cut – that allows for a sound analysis and well-articulated argument. The structure of the thesis is logical and solid, though the title of the chapter often could have been shorter. The acknowledgments are put at the beginning of the thesis not at the end. The thesis is excellently backed theoretically with the relevant use of peace studies, international relations and nationalism theories. Louis works very well with sources, and it is laudable the quantity of secondary and primary sources he has consulted and used; though in deploying the Saussurian structuralist approach for the content analysis of the primary sources, mainly official documents, he uses the term “literal analysis” which has a different meaning.

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

Though in some parts it starts to read slightly informal, the language becomes academic and of very good quality. The citation style is appropriate.

4. STATEMENT ON THE ORIGINALITY OF THE THESIS

The thesis was checked by the Turnitin anti-plagiarism software. It shows 26% overall similarity. Therefore, there is no plagiarism.

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

This work is original; it achieves its research objective and is executed excellently. Aside from that the thesis is over the maximum page limit, there are not significant weaknesses to speak of.

6. COOPERATION WITH THE SUPERVISOR (communication with the supervisor, ability to reflect comments, shift from the original intention, etc.)

The cooperation with Louis has been excellent. We met several times. He always reflected and took on my suggestions. Some shifts from the original intention did occur.

7. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DURING THE DEFENCE:

1. If the EU peace-building initiatives did little 'to move the needle' on the respective and de-facto divided bicomunal identities in both countries, how would you assess the processes of Europeanisation (EU Enlargement and integration) have affected these identities?
2. In the section in your conclusion on further research you suggest among other to examine the role of ethnic diasporas. What would be your starting assumption on their role on the respective national identity: reinforcing or changing the existing dichotomies?

8. RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED GRADE:

A

Date: 1 September 2024

Signature: