

BACHELOR'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT
PPE – Bachelor's in Politics, Philosophy and Economics
Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Thesis title:	Unravelling Iranian Nationalism: Historical Foundations, Contested Movements, and Contemporary Dynamics
Student's name:	Pouran Sepavhand
Referee's name:	Jakub Franěk

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	50	47
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	15	12
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	15	14
<i>Total</i>		80	71
Minor Criteria			
	Sources, literature	10	6
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	5	4
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	5	2
<i>Total</i>		20	12
TOTAL		100	83

Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score: 7%

[NB:] If the plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score is above 15%, the reviewer has to include his/her assessment of the originality of the reviewed thesis in his/her review.

Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria (min. 1800 characters including spaces when recommending a passing grade, min. 2500 characters including spaces when recommending a failing grade):

This is in many ways a really interesting and impressive BA Thesis. The author has chosen a highly relevant and, at least from the Western point of view, also an original topic for her BA Thesis: interpretation of the development of Iranian nationalism from early 20th century until today. The author must be commended for her outline and analysis of the development of Iranian nationalism from the Constitutional Revolution until the Islamic Revolution, which is presented in the context of the political as well as social and economic development of the country. The author also does a very good job explaining the complexities of the development of Iranian nationalism in its various stages with regard to the multi-ethnic nature of the country, its complex history (and its various re-interpretations by the successive waves of nationalism), as well as the complicated relationship between national and religious identity, or the stance of various waves (and strands) of Iranian

nationalism on the issues of social modernisation, (cultural) westernisation as well as the international orientation of the country.

On the other hand, the part of the thesis, which was originally intended to form its core, i.e. Chapter 2 devoted to the current or “new wave” of Iranian nationalism, is less persuasive. In contrast to the original plans announced in the BA Thesis project and partially restated in the Introduction to the present Thesis, the author did not include any interviews or analyses of social and other media outputs of the “new Iranian nationalists”. To put it more generally, Chapter 2 suffers from a lack of references as well as textual or other analysis needed to support the author’s argument, which, unfortunately, makes its conclusions (and the conclusions of the entire thesis) less than fully persuasive.

I suspect that these shortcomings must be largely contributed to the rush with which the thesis was completed. As Puran’s supervisor, I know that she invested an extraordinary amount of time and energy into the research and preparation of her thesis. Unfortunately, when it came to the actual writing stage, she suffered from repeated writer’s blocks, which were most likely caused by her awareness of the complexity of the topic of her thesis on one hand, and a lack of self-esteem or courage on the other hand. At the same time, one has to acknowledge that the anxiety that haunted the author during her work on her BA Thesis can be attributed to the fact that her chosen topic is politically very sensitive in Iran, of which she is a national.

The rush with which the thesis was completed is also manifest in the less-than perfect formal appearance of the submitted document (e.g. the style of the page numbers, lack of customary page-breaks at the ends of individual chapters, etc.). The Introduction and the Conclusion would have also benefited from some extra-time for editing. (See e.g. the wrong references to Chapter numbers on page 16 or a somewhat cumbersome definition of research questions on page 15.)

In spite of all of the critical points stated above, I am convinced this is a very well researched and written BA Thesis that can be recommended for final defence.

Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): B

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I (do not) recommend the thesis for final defence.

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	A	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	B	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	C	= good
61 – 70	D	= satisfactory
51 – 60	E	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	F	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.