

## **BACHELOR THESIS EVALUATION: THESIS OPPONENT**

**Thesis topic:** Slovakia: Materialism: The Case of Post-Communist Slovakia

**University:** Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts

**Author:** Silvia Hrubá

**Advisor:** Lukáš Siegel

**Opponent:** Dagmar Kusá

**Study program:** Political Science, Liberal Arts

*Evaluation contains objective and critical analysis of a bachelor thesis proposal. Evaluation should be considered by the following criteria:*

| Criteria for the evaluation of the final thesis   | Max. points | Points given by evaluator |
|---|-------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Methodological aspect<br>(Logical frame, process of inquiry, topic specification, how realistic are set goals and how adequate are proposed working methods) | 10          | 6                         |
| 2. Sources of domestic and foreign literature, familiarity with relevant literature   | 15          | 10                        |
| 3. Formatting and style   | 15          | 13                        |
| 4. Scope and proportionality of content   | 5           | 4                         |
| 5. Systematic approach  | 15          | 10                        |
| 6. Evaluation of achieved results   | 40          | 35                        |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100</b>  | <b>78</b>                 |

**Final evaluation:** 78 **A** (90-100 points), **B** (80-89 points), **C** (70-79 points), **D** (60-69 points), **E** (50-59 points), **Fx** (<49 points)

### **Evaluation, comments, and recommendations:**

The thesis maps the shift of cultural values from material to postmaterial in (part of) Slovak society. This topic has not been sufficiently studied in Slovak academic sources; therefore, its choice was timely and fitting, responding to a specific niche in comparative politics research in this region.

However, it fell short on two main grounds:

- 1) The thesis lacks a problem, a puzzle. It is a descriptive work, analyzing primarily the data from value orientations surveys. However, the narrative adds little by way of explanation or problematization related to the trend of cultural shift towards postmaterialism in Slovakia. The lack of a clear hypothesis containing a puzzle also makes the reading more muddled for the reader, as it is not clear from the beginning what is the reader asked to focus their attention to.
- 2) The theoretical foundation in this case, particularly since it is only descriptive and is not providing a thorough analysis, should be robust and up to date. However, literature on postmaterialism rests on few older works of R. Inglehart, despite the fact that he is still publishing on the topic and we have read some of his recent work in the Comparative Politics course last year. The literature used is generally outdated, only the data from public databases of value orientations are of a recent date.  
There has been research, albeit in a master thesis, that already mapped the shift of values in Slovakia towards postmaterialism (or rather the persistence of materialist orientations and the pockets of postmaterialist orientations in Bratislava to Trnava and partially Košice). Though this research has been conducted quite some time ago, it does map the same issue as this thesis. Therefore, again, an additional specific focus is needed, ideally in relation to one of the mentioned other concepts. The passages chronologically describing parts of the

Slovak history seem out of place—it is unclear what they are intending to establish, as that connection is not made transparent.

**Questions for the author (relevant to the content of the Thesis):**

- 1. The bachelor thesis mentions and describes several concepts besides materialism—especially consumerism and postsocialism. In what specific relation are they to young people's materialist orientations?**
- 2. Can we witness the reverse wave of materialism among the young in Slovakia? The so-called cultural backlash, also described by Inglehart (with Norris)?**

In Bratislava, on: \_\_\_\_17.5.2024\_\_\_\_(date)

Signature of evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_