

Oponent Review of Ph.D. Thesis of Li Yan Hu ,, National Identity and Social Integration of Overseas Chinese in Czech Republic: An Empirical and Comparative Study.

First problem of the thesis is a title. Actually text is mostly a comparative study of Chinese and Vietnamese community in Czech Republic. I think, it is a good approach and a decision of author. As she rightly pointed, Czechs are not able to recognize well basic differences among these two communities, so the thesis as a comparative study of Chinese and Vietnamese is very useful for better knowledge of identity and behavior of these communities in Czech Republic. But she had to mention Vietnamese in the title too.

More problematic is first part of the thesis, approximately one third of the text. Whole analysis is based on few (about four) authors and all these titles are about 10 years old. But the biggest problem is that text looks similar to authors from the West, for whom Central and Eastern Europe is a very strange and far territory. But author has spent quite a long time in Czech Republic, so I would expect deeper knowledge of this part of Europe. First, she is using term Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC), not saying precisely which countries she is putting in. I would expect that author will stress a special position of Czech Republic among Central European Countries in issues of this thesis. First of all, I am missing a sense that Czech Republic is the only target country of immigration of this region (if Austria is not recognized as Central European country). Czech Republic has 4.5% of foreigners living there, so it is similar to Austria, Netherlands or Denmark. There is actually not significant number of foreigners in Slovakia or Hungary. In absolute numbers Poland have got a similar number, but it is country four time bigger in population than Czech Republic, and these foreigners there are mostly season workers. Then all "analysis" of a comparison of xenophobia by western authors is missing these important point of huge difference in a situation in Czech Republic and itsw eastern neighbors. In historical context, emigration from a territory of today Czech Republic was till 1930's more similar to Germany then to eastern neighbors. Also emigration during communist era had specific periods in every communist country. How author can write that main aspects of immigration from formal communist countries after 1989 are same as high unemployment and political instability. Author should notice that emigration from Czech Republic is much smaller than from Slovakia, Poland or Lithuania. Unemployment in Czech Republic is smaller than in majority West European countries. In chapter of history of immigration into Czech Republic author should write a bit more about Vietnamese immigration during the communist regime. The Chapter about Chinese identity, nationalism is too long and sometime irrelevant. Very much I am missing comparison with Vietnamese.

Fortunately second part of the thesis (about two thirds of the text) is much better and very useful for further study of Chinese and Vietnamese community in Czech Republic. Author should mention among differences between these communities also a fact, that Vietnamese community, but not Chinese, was recently successful in being officially recognized as a minority in Czech Republic.

Because of that second part of the thesis, I can proclaim that work fulfills all demands of Ph.D.thesis and I can recommend this thesis for defense at state dissertation exam.

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