Master's Thesis Evaluation Form

Student's name: Valeria Galushkevych

Thesis title: 'Czech people' coming from Ukraine, their understanding of national identity

Name of the supervisor: Jakub Grygar, Ph.D.

Name of the opponent: Michal Nekorjak, Ph.D.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis? Please give your reasons for the suggested grade in detail below.

1.   Does the author show understanding of one or more theories, and use theory to generate a hypothesis or to make the problem area more understandable?

Valeria Galushkeviech decided to undertake interesting and very living topic: to study descendants of 19th century Czech emigrants to Čehohrad (Novhorodkivka) in Donbas region who have decided to resettle to Czechia due to current military conflict in Eastern Ukraine.

2.   Is the research question articulated clearly and properly? Is the research question sufficiently answered in the conclusion?

Valeria Galushkeviech formulated following research questions:
1. What are the determinants of Ukrainian migration into the Czech Republic for migrants who arrived under the recent wave of the resettlement program?
2. To what extend is their migration decision motivated by national identity considerations as opposed to wage differentials?
3. What are the integration patterns of these migrants as opposed to other migrants described in migration literature?

Author´s research questions are in particular continuously answered in the text. In the conclusion Valeria Galushkeviech clearly summarizes her main findings and discusses benefits of the resettlement programme of the Government of the Czech Republic.

3.   Is the thesis based on relevant research and literature and does it accurately summarize and integrate the information?

Yes, Valeria Galushkeviech uses literature relevant both to the debates of national identity and ethnic ties and belonging on the one hand, and literature mapping former research of immigrants from Ukraine to the Czech Republic. What I find innovating is author´s emphasis on cross-national survey of different national politics toward immigrants and comparison of world data to data from Czechia.

4. What is the quality of the data or the other sources? Are the sample method, data collection and data analysis appropriate?

The author´s thesis is based on statistical data, cross-national surveys and author´s own research interviews with ten respondents. Although this is always seductive but risky to combine quantitative and qualitative data, I have to confirm, that Valeria Galushkeviech 1) has showed her knowledge of limits of quantitative and qualitative analysis; 2) she has proved she can interpret her data with respect to relevant literature; and 3) she is able to make appropriate analysis of her date toward their wider socio-political context. However, knowledge from chapters bringing information of transnational migration and different national politics and policies toward immigrants are only slightly used in interpretation of author´s own research interviews.

To collect research interviews toward topic of somebody´s identity is always sensitive, regardless of given political context. However, Valeria Galushkeviech´s topic of national identity of resettled "Czechs" from of Ukraine, is an extreme case. Author´s resettled research participants are generally exposed to wider public attention and Valeria Galushkeviech had uphill struggle to gain their trust. I appreciate she was finally able to collect her data and she appropriately interprets them.

5. Are the findings relevant to the research question? Are the conclusions of the thesis based on strong arguments?

Yes, all author´s findings are relevant and based on well-developed arguments.

6. Are the author's thoughts distinguished unambiguously from the borrowed ideas?

Yes.

7. Is the thesis containing original/innovative research (in terms of topic, approach, and/or findings)?

There is research conducting on similar topic by the Institute of Ethnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences but Valeria Galushkeviech is the first student of reemigrating Czech Ukrainians who publish his/her findings. The depth of her analysis is limited by financial, institutional, and time sources she had but regardless these facts, Valeria Galushkeviech´s thesis is in certain respect a pioneer work.

8. What is the quality of style and other formal requirements?

The thesis has standard quality. This is well structured and well written text with all required formal essentialness.

9.   Are there any other strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, which are not included in the previous questions? Please list them if any.

Comments:

10.   What topic do you suggest for the discussion in the thesis defence?

In the thesis the author presents Calhoun´s explanation of identity. What is / was the identity formation of your research partners (respondents) and what is the role of national belonging in their identity under their experience of migration to Czechia?

Overall assessment of the thesis:

This is very good thesis. The author decided to make research on up-to-date topic witch resonate in wider public audience, but which is thus also very sensitive. Because the fact Valeria Galushkeviech studies dynamic process of changing self-understanding of immigrants from a territory which suffer both from economic decrease and close proximity of war zone, she had uneasy access to her field. Despite that, she proved she has relevant skills and knowledge to identify key issues of her topic and can present her findings in structured and well-argued way. The only thing I miss in her thesis is deeper link between information from quantitative data and her own research interviews. The overview of these quantitative data is used as an illustration of the state of transnational migration and not so much as source of following analysis.

Proposed grade: very good

(excellent, very good, good, fail)

Date: 16. 6. 2016   Signature: