

Joint Dissertation Review

Name of the student:	Shang-Yen Lee
Title of the thesis:	Political Engagement and Identity among Czech-Vietnamese University Students
Reviewer:	Joost Augusteijn, Leiden University

1. KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review):

The research questions are well-framed in a theoretical debate on political participation, and are relevant. The fact there are two and not one integrated question does limit the sharp focus of the research somewhat. The research objective is however clear, and literature review is very strong, and shows a great awareness of various aspects of the debate on political participation.

2. ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources):

The methodology is very-well described and supported in the theory with a certain realisation of its limitations, which are in itself serious. The knowledge and understanding of the methodological approaches taken is strong and is converted well into a research approach. The approach is logical and based on the theoretical works. The questions used in the interviews could have been better founded in the theory. Now they seem a little random and sometimes leading. The use of sets of opposing hypotheses could have been simplified by framing them as straightforward questions.

The argument is generally clearly structured in the approach taken, but there are a few elements in the approach which do not conform entirely with the set up. Despite the realisation of the limitations there are serious shortcomings in the source material that the research is based on, but these are well integrated in the execution of the work. The almost exclusive reliance on interviews with fifteen anonymous respondents (wrongly accounted for in numbers in the analysis) is methodologically problematic, nevertheless the conclusions are judicious and appropriate.

3. CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives):

In the end the logical structure of the thesis and the straightforward analysis makes for a consistent line of argument, even if the hypotheses could have been more leading in the analysis, and the research questions more explicitly answered in the conclusion. As mentioned above the use of interviews as the primary source of information has its problems and also makes the outcome of the research itself somewhat unsatisfactory. The research objective to assess political participation and its relation with civic participation of minorities is within the limitations of the sources nevertheless well answered. The issue whether civic participation is a form of political participation despite the fact the respondents reject political participation could have been pushed somewhat further.

4. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout):

In itself the thesis is clearly and logically structured, well annotated and laid out. Although conforming to the best standards in this regard, the thesis would benefit from some editing, particularly in the linguistics department as the standard of English is really not up to the standard required. In the end the meaning is clear but it needs serious attention to grammar.

5. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak point of the dissertation, other issues)

The thesis is very-well contextualised in the academic debate and theoretical discussion, which is translated in a in itself well founded methodology which is also clearly accounted for. At the abstract level there is a good awareness of the limitations of the conclusions that can be drawn, and what is done is very well executed. The thesis suffers a bit in its reliance on interviews in the research part and from a somewhat deficient command of English grammar.

Grade (A-F):	8 Dutch terms = B in Czech terms
Date:	Signature:
13 June 2019	