

Leri Jijavadze: The Impact of Social Capital on Academic and Social Integration of International Students After Mobility to Study in the Czech Republic

Thesis assessment

The thesis by Leri Jijavadze is theoretical and empirical in nature. The thesis, whose key concept is social capital, is based on an approach that has maintained considerable popularity and appeal in contemporary sociology for several decades. What is absent from the text under review, however, is the perspective of historical sociology. The work is essentially ahistorical in nature, completely disregarding how student mobility has taken place in the past, where it has come from, and what challenges it has presented to students in previous years.

The structure of the content for this thesis can be described as traditional. Its first part presents the theoretical background, in which the reader is introduced to concepts of social capital as found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, Robert Putnam, Nan Lin and Ronald Burt. The second part is introduced by a chapter on methodology and is based on the student's own research. The theoretical part of the thesis appears to be more successful and more interesting to the reader. What is presented in the second part could be described as a 'research probe' rather than full independent research. To this it may be added that the conclusions the author arrives at in the second part of the thesis are nothing particularly novel and that the thesis' final conclusions, in my opinion, were anticipated and developed largely on the basis of the student's experience and reflection (independent of the research probe element).

In spite of this somewhat critical evaluation, it can nevertheless be stated that the author of the diploma thesis has convincingly demonstrated through the submitted text that he is able to work satisfactorily with foreign language literature and that he has acquired an appropriate level of knowledge and skills during his studies which he can satisfactorily apply in independent research work.

Depending on how Leri Jijavadze is able to present and defend his work, in my opinion it could be assessed as good or even very good.