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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>The master's research presented here is an empirical study based on qualitative methods. The purpose of this thesis is to produce a deeper understanding of the concepts of democracy as viewed by the student elites in Shanghai, China and St.Petersburg, Russia.</p> <p>The thesis is a comparative study, i.e. it scrutinizes the western democracy theories and compares them to the Russian and Chinese student's ideas on the concepts of democracy. The idea is to find out what the future leaders, who at the moment are university students, concepts of democracy are.</p> <p>The thesis is based on two sets of interviews of university students in China and Russia. The thesis aims to answer to a question whether the concepts of democracy viewed by the Chinese and Russian students are the same as the western concepts of democracy. The hypothesis is that there are signs of "western democracy" in China and in Russia.</p> <p>The main theoretical framework for this study is the four different democratic theorists', i.e. Robert Dahl's, David Held's, Seymour Lipset's and Heikki Patomäki's theories on democracy. Their democracy concepts are examined and compared to the findings arising out of the interviewed Chinese and Russian students' democracy concepts.</p> <p>The main qualitative methods used in this study are based on Eeva Pyörälä's six factors as outlined in her article "Kvalitatiivisen tutkimuksen metodologiaa" in Laadullisen tutkimuksen risteysasemalla.</p> <p>The thesis has been divided into seven parts. After the introduction in chapter one, the theoretical framework, research strategy, methodology and sources are examined in the second chapter.</p> <p>In the third chapter the four different democracy theorist's concepts of democracy are explained and set against the results of the interviews. The chapter four briefly introduces the histories, cultures and traditions connected to democracy in China and Russia.</p> <p>The fifth and sixth chapters are devoted to the analyzing of the interviews related to the four theories of this study. Chapter five also introduces the questionnaire design, selection of interviewees and explanations on the field work and peculiarities of the interviews. The sixth chapter binds the empirical material into the theoretical conceptions. The Atlas software programme tool utilized to analyze the interviews is described and the actual interviews are analyzed.</p> <p>The conclusion in the seventh chapter summarizes the conceptual understanding of the interviewees and comparison to western theories. The findings of this study suggest that the western theories as such do not correspond to the Chinese or Russian students' views on the concepts of democracy.</p>			
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