

HABILITATION THESIS REVIEWER'S REPORT

Masaryk University

Applicant

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Habilitation thesis

Crip Cities: Nonlinear temporalities of Post-socialist Cities

Reviewer

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With real pleasure I can say that this habilitation is the work of a generous and ambitious scholar who writes with intellectual courage, conceptual finesse, and a consistent sense of responsibility to debates that matter.

The thesis *Crip Cities: Nonlinear Temporalities of Post-Socialist City* reframes the question of the post-socialist city from a predominantly spatial object to a set of temporal problems, showing how heterotemporality, duration, rhythm, and chrononormativity open a different angle on postsocialism and on urban theory more broadly. Dr Osman insists that the debate is not only academic but sits between epistemology and politics, challenging the teleology of transition, the “catching-up” imaginary, and the erasures that follow from linear chronologies. The three pillars that structure the commentary – post-socialist urban studies, post-colonial critiques of time, and crip and queer temporalities – are woven together in a way that is inventive and persuasive, and the conceptual links between them are made with clarity and care.

The empirical portfolio substantiates these claims with range and depth. The analysis of time–space rhythms in Brno’s public transport demonstrates the shift from industrial pacemakers to individualised urban rhythmicity and provides a tractable way to read city temporalities through mobility infrastructures. The dialogical approach to the metropolitan region, constructed from the heteroglossia of shop-opening hours, offers a compelling demonstration of how temporal grammar co-produces regional form. The chronopolis study classifies eighteen urban localities in Brno by their rhythm profiles and shows how polyrhythmia can be operationalised for comparative urban analysis. The heterochronotopia case study, finally, offers a thick description of a single place as a nexus of spatial and temporal elsewhere, extending classic place theory with a carefully specified temporal vocabulary.

Later papers extend these interests into negotiations of urban change. The Ústí nad Orlicí brownfield study is exemplary in tracing how NGOs, municipal authorities, and firms work on different temporal registers, and how slowing-down and speeding-up devices are mobilised strategically in regeneration. The analysis of Brno’s former prison shows how creative-city framings collide with mnemonic politics, and how competing time horizons structure conflict

over place futures. The “social stone” paper moves with precision from a tram-island kerb to a theory of ableist and accessible topologies, making a strong case that small artifacts sediment temporal expectations into urban movement. The work on intentional automobility links Bergsonian duration to everyday mode choice, demonstrating how socialist and post-socialist chrononormatives still contour present decisions. Most recently, the critique of cartographic reason in accessibility planning centres corpography and multisensory experience to show why safe maps can still translate into unsafe bodies, which is a neat methodological counterpoint to the thesis’s wider argument about spatialised time.

I want to expand the critique because the strengths invite further sharpening. The post-colonial strand is used effectively to denaturalise evolutionary time, temporal distance, and the denial of coevalness, and to expose how modernity’s linearities police the present. However, the engagement with post-colonial theory feels somewhat cursory, tends to escape to post-structuralist literature, and does not fully reckon with the political weight of post-colonial vocabulary. Concepts such as coloniality and decolonization carry a history of violent dispossession and racialised domination that does not translate easily into the post-socialist context, and we need more caution taking them as an ‘inspiration’ only. While the thesis acknowledges this difficulty, it tends to sidestep the question of whether borrowing these terms risks flattening their historical specificity. The discussion of borders as time thresholds, internal colonialism, and chronopolitics is strong conceptually, but the argument would gain from a more explicit reflection on what is at stake when these terms migrate into a setting where the legacies of empire and racial capitalism operate differently. This is not a flaw but an opening: Dr Osman is well placed to lead a conversation on how to adapt or provincialise post-colonial vocabularies without losing their critical edge.

A second point concerns the crip and queer temporalities. The theoretical chapters on chrononormativity, survival time, and crip futurity are original and generous, and they sit very naturally with the thesis’s broader argument about heterotemporality. In the articles, these insights are present most vividly in the accessibility papers and in the critique of cartographic reason; they are less explicit in the transport rhythms and regional heteroglossia studies. This is not a defect of the dossier, and the commentary is transparent about the non-linear evolution of the author’s geographical imagination. It does, however, mark a rich opportunity for the next phase. The thesis itself offers a pathway: chrononormativity could be operationalised in rhythm analysis and in choice modelling through explicit temporal variables that track institutional pacing, bodily pacing, and scheduling devices, and the interviews already collected in several studies could be revisited with that vocabulary in mind.

A third point is about scope and signposting. The conceptual architecture is ambitious, and the commentary moves across multiple traditions: Bergsonian duration, Deleuzian multiplicities, Fabian’s coevalness, Massey’s relational space, Lefebvre’s rhythm analysis. This is a strength, but it also creates a demanding reading experience. At times, the density of theoretical references risks obscuring the empirical stakes, and I found the signposting somewhat underdeveloped. Dr Osman already anticipates this by offering meta-reflections on writing order and by framing postsocialism “as method,” which is one of the most persuasive proposals. Going forward, brief restatements of key distinctions at the point of use – for example, the practical difference between spatialization of time and temporalization of space, or between differences of degree and differences in kind – would make the bridge between concepts and cases even sturdier, especially for interdisciplinary audiences.

Finally, a note on the title. While “Crip Cities” is striking and memorable, it foregrounds only one of the three inspirations that structure the thesis. Crip temporalities are an important and original part of the framework, but they are not its sole or even dominant strand. A more encompassing title might have reflected the equal weight of the post-socialist and post-colonial perspectives and would be more congruent.

Taken together, the commentary and the published articles demonstrate originality, international impact, and a clear future trajectory. Dr Osman has already shaped debates on post-socialist urban temporalities and is poised to do even more as the crip and queer strands are drawn more explicitly into the empirical repertoire. I recommend the conferment of the title of docent without any reservation.

Reviewer's questions for the habilitation thesis defence (number of questions up to the reviewer)

1. Your commentary draws on post-colonial theory to critique linear temporalities, but you also acknowledge the difficulty of translating this vocabulary into the post-socialist context. How do you see the risks and possibilities of using terms like “decolonisation” or “coloniality” in a setting where the historical legacies of empire and racial capitalism differ so markedly from those in the Global South?
2. Crip and queer temporalities are a powerful conceptual strand in your framework, yet they appear most strongly in the commentary rather than across the empirical articles. How do you imagine operationalizing these ideas in future empirical research, and what kinds of methods or cases might allow them to speak more directly to post-socialist urbanism?
3. The title foregrounds “Crip Cities,” which is striking but represents only one of the three inspirations in your framework. How did you arrive at this choice, and do you see it as a strategic provocation, a conceptual anchor, or something you might reconsider in future publications?
4. Your empirical work spans rhythmanalysis, dialogical approaches, and mixed methods for mobility studies. How do you see these methodological choices evolving if you were to integrate crip and queer temporalities more explicitly? Would this require new techniques, or can existing ones be adapted?
5. The thesis argues for rethinking the temporal framing of the post-socialist city, yet the term “post-socialism” itself carries strong chronological assumptions. Do you think we should retain this term, or is it time to move beyond it? And if so, what might replace it?

Conclusion

The habilitation thesis entitled “Crip Cities: Nonlinear temporalities of Post-socialist Cities” by Robert Osman **fulfils** requirements expected of a habilitation thesis in the field of Sociální geografie a regionální rozvoj.

Date: 30/9/2025

Signature