

HABILITATION THESIS REVIEWER'S REPORT

Masaryk University

Applicant

RNDr. Robert Osman, Ph.D.

Habilitation thesis

Crip Cities

Reviewer

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I have followed Robert Osman's work for years and I am thus honoured to have been invited to serve as one of the reviewers for his habilitation procedure. This gives me the opportunity to express my appreciation of Dr. Osman's work publicly. At the start of my review, before I offer commentary on his academic work, I want to credit Dr. Osman's engagement outside of academia, or more precisely, to credit the ways in which he ties the theoretical and academic work together with public-facing and participatory projects (e.g. Geography of disablement/Geografie znevýhodnění) that not only remodel the postsocialist cities into more habitable and accessible spaces, but also foreground and centre the lay expertise of disabled people and thus reconceptualise critical geography as a field. I have immense appreciation for the work Dr. Osman has achieved in these respects.

To the habilitation materials, Dr. Osman has submitted 10 academic articles (on 6 of which he is the first author, and 4 times the second author), all of these articles have been published over the last decade in very prestigious journals. Judged from the international citations, Dr. Osman's research contributes to relevant knots in international debates on urban spaces, their geopolitical power dynamics and structuration of temporal frames. In this alone, Dr. Osman undoubtedly proves that his work speaks to key issues in geography and that he has significantly contributed to the development of the field well beyond the national scope. I would also like to point out that the collected essays indicate that Dr. Osman, next to his independent research, has a capacity to build and uphold collaborative relations, a quality that is so needed in the neoliberalised academia. As said before, I have followed Dr. Osman's work, but it was with new appreciation that I have read his articles compounded as a whole, and could hence appreciate how they overlap, develop common themes but also how they provide a dynamic insight into Dr. Osman's thinking about the postsocialist urban spaces.

The compendium is prefaced by a comprehensive essay that lays out "a deeper underlying coherence" behind the thematic diversity in the collected articles. The essay is not only beautifully written, theoretically dense but also reader-accessible and could stand on its own as a short textbook/monograph summarising theoretisations on/of

time, space (of the city) against the postsocialist/postcolonial/decolonial context. The three nodal points: (i) postsocialist city theory, (ii) post-colonialism, and (iii) crip temporalities do tie the collected works together and also highlight the innovative aspects of Dr. Osman's research. I value that Dr. Osman opens by a reflexive note on the importance of postsocialist rural spaces and their role in further redrafting epistemological frameworks of geography. Similarly, and this comes from my shared positionality as a scholar of postsocialism and disability, I value Dr. Osman's positioning of the postsocialist city not through a structural disadvantage (which there are manyfold), but as a source of alternative knowledge-building and thus approaching the city "as a question" that allows him to explore the temporal and spatial structuring of the city, where the postsocialist city is proposed as the critical/analytical lens that might draw these out more clearly than places more easily accommodating normative sequence time – did this proven right? For the purposes of the defence debate, I would like to return to the queer time knots (Kulpa and Mizielinska) and invite Dr. Osman to present his conclusions – where and how can we see the queer moments of coincidence in the postsocialist urban spaces?

Given the title of the habilitation, *Crip Cities*, and given Dr. Osman's engagement with disability, I might have recommended that the disability/crip critique be taken up more coherently throughout the text (for instance as an integral part of the decolonial critique of evolutionary time, colonial time etc.) and not treated as a separate set of theory. Building on my previous invitation to elaborate, I would like to ask Dr. Osman to unpack how the non-normative spatial-temporal conditions of postsocialist cities get inhabited by disabled bodies/ how disability—as an analytical frame—complicates the times through which we think of cities in the postsocialist context?

I have really enjoyed Dr. Osman's discussion of the tension among slowness and various forms of acceleration – yet there seems to be an implied binary and reactivity of both terms. I am thinking of other temporal terms that were offered to record lingering time such as "enduring time" – does Dr. Osman see value in these terms that attempt to sidestep framing of time in terms of speed and velocity? The concluding chapter talks about potential of crip cities. I hold this as a very important and future-defining/enabling moment. Not only geography will need to reinvent cities that would be able to accommodate the multiple challenges we are facing. I hence want to invite Dr. Osman to flesh this aspect out. He does reference the ways in which cities have been targeted by neoliberalism, but does not speak to whether the postsocialist urban contexts allow for specific forms and practices of resistance/disidentification/dissonance, and how do disabled bodies figure in them?

Reviewer's questions for the habilitation thesis defence

I have posed some of my questions above, but if time permitted, I would like to probe the author to link the overarching topic (and conceptualisations) of spatiality and temporality to (the process of) his own writing. The introductory essay tackles the issue of text's assumed temporal frames but does not situate it as an embodied

practice within the space of the postsocialist city, does not speak to the ways in which encounters with cripness are carried in the text/across the texts.

Conclusion

It was with pleasure that I have read Dr. Osman's materials. The habilitation thesis entitled "Crip Cities: Nonlinear temporalities of post-socialist city" by RNDr. Robert Osman, Ph.D. **undoubtedly fulfils requirements** expected of a habilitation thesis in the field of Geography.

Date: October 7, 2025

Signature