



## Record of the dissertation thesis defence

Academic year: 2023/2024

**Student's name and surname:** Jakob Matthias Marcks, M.A.  
**Student's ID:** 62225714

**Type of the study programme:** doctoral  
**Study programme:** Modern history  
**Study ID:** 642022

**Title of the thesis:** Urban Development in the Global Cold War: East Germany in UN-HABITAT, 1976-1989  
**Thesis department:** Department of German and Austrian Studies (23-KNRS)  
**Language of the thesis:** English  
**Language of defence:** English  
**Supervisor:** PhDr. Václav Šmidrkal, Ph.D.  
**Reviewer(s):** Mgr. Mikuláš Pešta, Ph.D.  
prof. Caroline Moine

**Consultant(s):** PhDr. Jan Koura, Ph.D.

**Date of defence:** 20.09.2024    **Venue of defence:** Praha  
**Attempt:** regular

**Course of the examination:** Course of the defense  
Dr Konrad introduces Mr Marcks (hereinafter referred to as the student) and the committee. Then Dr Konrad introduces the structure of the defense and rules for the procedure. Dr Konrad invites the student to present his dissertation. The student starts his presentation. The student reports on his topic, research question, research design, outcomes and other segments of his dissertation. The student also discusses his approach to the choice of the cases that were examined in his research. The student finishes his presentation. Dr Konrad introduces the students supervisor (Dr Smidrkal) and invites him to comment on the collaboration with the student. The supervisor says that he is very satisfied with the collaboration with the student. The supervisor compliments the student, including his structured thinking on the topic, and considers this collaboration as successful. Dr Konrad thanks the supervisor and introduces Dr Moine and invites her for feedback. Dr Moine starts her presentation. Dr Moine says that she has enjoyed reading the student's dissertation. She says that the student has designed his research with care and thought, which reflected intellectual honesty. She has also appreciated the use of multiple languages and wise use of sources and archives. She asks the student 1) if he approached visual or oral sources for his research, 2) what is supposed to be institutional history and what was the role of individuals, 3) in what way tensions and disagreements between socialist countries impacted his research, 3) what the contribution of his research to the field is. She congratulates the student and finishes his presentation. Dr Konrad thanks and introduces the second reviewer. The second reviewer starts his presentation. He considers

the thesis very good, a fine piece of scholarship, and compliments the student's potential as a historian. The second reviewer appreciates the level of international organizations and Cold War context of the student's research. In terms of literature, he considers the student's choice of sources as good, but some additional sources on development would be useful. GDR was not discussed as extensively as it could, but the reviewer understands that it was meant as a general overview. The reviewer also thinks it could be useful to discuss in the dissertation the connection between urban development and developmental policies of those states. He appreciates also nuanced explanation of the terms and concepts in the student's dissertation, which reflects the student's ability to think on a theoretical level. The reviewer also does not understand the use of double referencing and asks if that was intention or mistake. He hopes to see this research published. Dr Konrad thanks and invites the student to respond. The student starts his presentation. He says the double referencing was a mistake. He then proceeds to address the second reviewer's comments. He says he had to narrow discussion of some issues to streamline the project. He also addresses Dr Moine's comment about expertise and explains how different sources and authors on expertise contribute to his research, including post-colonial and socialist perspectives. Then the student discusses the link between urban development and developmental policies. Then the student address Dr Moine's question about sources. He acknowledges that doing more interviews (oral sources) could be useful but it was difficult to get people agree to an interview. However, the student tried to reach out to some people, although many declined. He tells about such attempts in detail. As for the (audio)visual sources, he says he did not consider those as principal to his research, as it was difficult to decide on the way to work with and make use of them. He also acknowledges potential openings of his research to wider conceptual and theoretical discussions and explains some options. He finishes his presentation. Dr Konrad thanks and gives flour to Dr Moine and the second reviewer for feedback. Dr Moine starts first. She points out that showing links between institutional history and individual level more extensively could be interesting to consider. The student takes the flour and says he considers this an interesting point and explains how he sees its conceptual importance. He also elaborates on some examples of such links that Dr Moine suggested. Dr Konrad gives flour to Dr Gjuricova. She says discussing institutional dimension via anthropological approach could be useful for the student's research. Dr Kolenovska asks what was the function and role of international organizations in mediating tensions between different ideological camps within the context of the student's research. The student responds by saying that the UN's role was to mediate the process of decolonization. The student also says that Dr Gjuricova's suggestion is interesting and promising and he could consider it for further research. The second reviewer takes the flour and says that addressing some institutional aspects of HABITAT could be useful and suggests sources for consulting. Dr Smidrkal asks if that could possible to expand some parts of the dissertation to provide more detail to make it more publishable, as for now the dissertation does not have enough words to fit publication criteria. The student says he could expand some parts, such as other states' perspectives on institutions mentioned in the research. Dr Moine says it could be useful to develop comparative approach to HABITAT from the point of view of several countries. The student agrees and explains potential options for such comparasion. Dr Konrad finishes the discussion and asks the student to leave for a short while. The student leaves. Dr Konrad explains voting and invites further discussion. The committee discusses the student's work. The committee votes and invites the student back. The student comes in and Dr Konrad announces voting results to the student, the members of the

committee congratulate the student. Dr Konrad thanks the committee and closes the defense.

<b>Result of defence:</b>	pass (P)	
<b>Chair of the board:</b>	Konrad Ota, prof. PhDr., Ph.D. (present)	.....
<b>Committee members:</b>	Smidrkal Vaclav, PhDr., Ph.D. (present)	.....
	Kolenovska Daniela, Mgr., Ph.D. (present)	.....
	Gjuricova Adela, PhDr., Ph.D. (present)	.....
	Moine Caroline, prof. (present)	.....