

HABILITATION THESIS REVIEWER'S REPORT

Masaryk University

Applicant

Ondřej Mulíček, Ph.D.

Habilitation thesis

Urban Relational Spaces: Spatiotemporal
Patterns of Everyday Life

Reviewer

Siiri Silm, PhD, Associate Professor in Human
Geography

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Ondřej Mulíček's habilitation thesis explores the core dimensions of geography —space and time—through the lens of everyday practices that are collective and shared among individuals. The habilitation thesis comprises 11 articles published between 2009 and 2024, with the author serving as the first author on six of them. These articles are thematically cohesive and form a well-integrated body of work that addresses three interrelated topics: (1) spatiality of everyday routines, (2) temporality, including repetition and timing, and (3) the embedding of everyday practices within broader social contexts. Together, the articles offer a comprehensive and insightful synthesis of space and time in relation to everyday practices.

A habilitation thesis reflects the work of a mature and experienced researcher. Ondřej Mulíček demonstrates a strong command of the subject matter and engages with it at an ontological level, offering both depth and clarity. The thesis successfully integrates philosophical perspectives with concrete empirical examples, showcasing the author's ability to bridge theoretical insight with practical relevance.

The habilitation thesis is clearly and logically structured around its central topics. It is written in a clear and accessible style, making it easy to follow and engaging to read.

The first part of the habilitation thesis provides a solid overview of key theoretical frameworks related to space and time, including for example time geography, actor-network theory, and the new mobilities paradigm. However, it is somewhat surprising that social practice theory—commonly applied in the analysis of everyday practices—is not addressed (e.g., Kent 2022). Additionally, the location of people in space and time is not placed in the context of the concept of activity space (e.g. Axhausen), although activity spaces are mentioned in Article 10. Nevertheless, the thesis engages with important theoretical approaches from multiple perspectives—general, urban, and analytical—spanning both individual and societal levels.

The habilitation thesis offers a well-balanced analytical and synthetic overview of the methodological approaches employed. It discusses both quantitative methods—such as time geography, rhythm analysis, and chronotopes—and qualitative methods, including mapping and storytelling. The methodological section is particularly effective in its progression from

general frameworks to more detail. Moreover, the author critically engages with the methods used.

The habilitation thesis brings out also current global challenges such as climate change and migration crises. It also addresses the spatial and temporal dimensions of everyday practices in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic—one of the most significant global disruptions in recent history. This situates the research within a highly relevant and timely frameworks.

The second part of the habilitation thesis effectively presents the findings from the included articles. It covers a range of urban domains, including work commuting, shopping (with attention to retail opening hours), and transportation. Habilitation theses have used different types of datasets, both traditional and novel (such as Google Popular Times and Facebook Popular Hours features, and data from various digital systems), which allows for a multifaceted overview of the topic. Novel data sources offer fresh perspectives on spatio-temporal patterns and enrich the understanding of everyday urban practices.

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

1. Urban areas studies are based on commuting between home and work. As noted in the theoretical section in relation to recent crises, workplaces no longer have to be in a fixed location. If you were to conduct these studies now, would you use the same workplace-based commuting indicator, or some broader indicator based on the people's entire activity space? Justify, including if you would use other indicators, which ones?
2. Rhythms have been analyzed in the context of post-industrial societies, but what might these rhythms look like in the digital age and in the future?
3. Spatio-temporal analysis has only been done on the example of the city of Brno. How might chronotopes be different in other cities, including outside Europe?
4. The habilitation thesis addresses social groups, with particular attention to wheelchair users and older adults engaging with technology. This raises broader questions about how spatial and temporal patterns of everyday life may vary across social groups. For which social groups might it be especially important to map spatial and temporal behaviors separately, in order to better understand their unique constraints, opportunities, and rhythms of daily life?
5. To what extent does the analysis of spatial and temporal patterns depend on the availability of existing datasets? Are there specific domains that remain underexplored due to data limitations? If so, what are these areas and how might the lack of data affect a holistic understanding of society?
6. What theoretical contributions has your work made, or in what ways has it extended existing theories related to space, time, and everyday life?

Conclusion

Ondřej Mulíček's habilitation thesis reflects the work of a mature scholar, demonstrating his deep expertise, extensive experience, and strong abilities in both analysis and theoretical generalization.

The habilitation thesis entitled "Urban Relational Spaces: Spatiotemporal Patterns of Everyday Life" by Ondřej Mulíček **fulfils** requirements expected of a habilitation thesis in the field of Social geography and regional development.

Date: 22.07.2025

Signature: