

# Opponent's Report on Dissertation Thesis

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Title of the Thesis:	Economic History of Authors' Rights and Creative Industries in Czechoslovakia
Type of Defense:	<b>DEFENSE</b>
Date of Pre-Defense	May 13, 2020
Opponent:	Valentina Fava Ph.D.

Address the following questions in your report, please:

- a) Can you recognize an original contribution of the author?
- b) Is the thesis based on relevant references?
- c) Is the thesis defensible at your home institution or another respected institution where you gave lectures?
- d) Do the results of the thesis allow their publication in a respected economic journal?
- e) Are there any additional major comments on what should be improved?
- f) What is your overall assessment of the thesis? (a) I recommend the thesis for defense without substantial changes, (b) the thesis can be defended after revision indicated in my comments, (c) not-defensible in this form.

*(Note: The report should be at least 2 pages long.)*

I do confirm my positive evaluation of Hana Moravcova's thesis as a well-written and well-structured text providing an interesting and original contribution to the economic and business history of Inter-war Czechoslovakia and to the history of European creative industries.

The first chapter of the thesis offers a critical analysis of the literature on the economics of authors' rights and suggests a revision of economic literature based on examples and empirical data.

As an historian specializing in business and economic history, I am not fully qualified to evaluate the originality of the thesis's contribution to the economic theory of Authors' Rights *per se*. I do appreciate, however, Hana Moravcova's attempt to engage in critical analysis of theory as a precondition of their empirical and historical analysis. I think that this is a coherent answer to recurrent appeals to business historians to engage more with economic theory and make explicit their knowledge and use of it.

In the second chapter, Moravcová analyzes the Czechoslovak debate at the light of the international negotiations and discussion, underlining the interconnections between the national and international level. The chapter develops the hypothesis that interest groups contributed

significantly to the establishment and strengthening of the system of Authors' Rights in interwar Czechoslovakia. The chapter is well rooted in sources (primary and secondary; contemporary literature) and the use of them is appropriate. It provides an original and valuable contribution to the history of the role of interest groups in the definition of Authors' Rights regulation and of its enforcement in Czechoslovakia.

I found the chapter improved since pre-defense: the author added references to economic and business history of Inter-war Czechoslovakia and, as wisely suggested by another opponent, modified the way in which she had framed her research and the terminology she used to better adapt it to the historical methodology she employs.

The third chapter includes two historical case studies which are based on thoughtful enquiries in the relevant archives. The first, "Two case studies from economic history of creative industries in Czechoslovakia", focuses on the history of creative industries during the First Republic. It is based on both archival sources and statistical data (statistical yearbooks of Czech Statistical Office).

I am not qualified to evaluate the econometric evidence, its use and the methodology that Hana Moravcova employs here, yet I appreciate the original contribution of the thesis to the history of the Czechoslovak film industry and to our understanding of the system of state subsidies in interwar Czechoslovakia.

To conclude, the thesis includes:

- 1) a comprehensive state of the art of the international recent literature on economics of authors' rights (chapter 1);
- 2) a well elaborated review of the relevant Czechoslovak historical legal literature (debate leading and following the creation of the Authors' Rights Act, chapter 2);
- 3) an in depth examination of historical secondary (journals and magazines of professionals) and primary sources (Records from the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies of Czechoslovakia, as well as legislative documents from all the stages of the legislative process; minutes of government bodies) (chapters 2-3);
- 4) Reference to significant business history literature on the firm industry (chapter 3);
- 5) Collection and original elaboration of relevant statistical data.

Sources are diversified (primary, secondary and statistics).

In addition, the author gives evidence of critical approach towards both historical sources and scholarly literature in both economic history and institutional economics. She is also keen to combine different approaches and research methodologies.

The thesis is composed by articles already published or in publication in good business and economic history journals.

My overall assessment of the thesis is very positive. Moravcová did an excellent and impressive work in:

- 1) critically analyzing relevant economic theories (copyright; merit good, public choice)
- 2) gathering and re-working data and sources (primary, secondary and statistics)
- 3) structuring her thesis providing a coherency between the three parts of it.

I recommend the thesis for defense without substantial changes.

Date:	
Opponent's Signature:	
Opponent's Affiliation:	Valentina Fava Ph.D. Department of Management, Ca' Foscari University, Venice Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic