

IMESS dissertation						
Name:	Donna Boniface					
Dissertation title:	Making moments of history: how the comparison between the 1953 uprising and the 1989 revolution is contributing to a new German story.					
<b>Scale: 5 - excellent, 4 - good, 3 - satisfactory, 2 - poor, 1 – very poor</b>						
	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>ARGUMENT:</b>						
Clearly defined research question			3			No clearly defined research question
Answers research question			3			Does not answer research question
Well structured			3			Badly structured
Shows theoretical awareness			3			Shows no theoretical awareness
Conceptual clarity				2		Conceptual confusion
Empirically appropriate & robust				2		Full of empirical errors
Logical and coherent			3			Illogical and incoherent
Analytical			3			Descriptive
Critical		4				Uncritical
Shows independent thought		4				Does not show independent thought
<b>SOURCES &amp; USAGE:</b>						
Evidence of reading/research				2		No evidence of reading/research
Effective use of sources/data				2		Ineffective use of sources/data
<b>WRITING STYLE:</b>						
Clear		4				Obscure
Good punctuation		4				Poor punctuation
Grammatically correct	5					Grammatically incorrect
<b>PRESENTATION:</b>						
Appropriate length	5					Too long/short
Good referencing			3			Poor/inconsistent referencing
Good spelling	5					Poor spelling
Good bibliography				2		Poor bibliography

Comments:

Donna Boniface's work is a risky undertaking merging two approaches – research of the topic and research of its interpretation. Here the topic is represented by comparison of the two key events in East German (German) history – revolt/uprising of 1953 and revolts/revolution of 1989 assessed *vis a vis* consequences and problems related to different perception of re-unification in the former FRG and GDR.

The author tries to answer the question “how the 1953 uprising has been used by politicians and academics to rehabilitate the 1989 revolution and build national identity and assess why linking these two events is so vital for the building of a new identity for reunified Germany.”

This question has been answered only partially. The author tried to reconstruct and compare significant features of the two events (and came to interesting conclusion about incompatibility of that comparison in terms of political and economic aspects and in the case of their actors, respectively).

What we do not get is the information about mentioned “politicians and academics” in terms of their representativeness. Using dominantly English sources (including German works translated to English) we do not know how much of the analysis is the matter of the author and how much of it is a matter of German historiography and political discourse, also systemic and coherent picture of how German authors do this operation is rather absenting.

There are signals of this problem in the introduction chapter which completely lacks critical assessment of sources in general and their sorting. If the author claims “interpretivism” her main theoretical concept, then the work should focus dominantly on interpretation of texts (which then have to be pre-analyzed and pre-classified); with respect to this claim text is the primary source, not documents related to particular parts of East German/German history. Hence the author oscillates between analysis of history and analysis of history's interpretation and the emphasis is more on history than its interpretation.

One of the reasons behind is the fact that the author did not work very much on methodology as an instrument of her analysis – Grigor Suny and his interpretation of Post-Soviet stories do not help very much. It's obvious that the model can be used in various geopolitical and cultural contexts, however, it has to be designed for the one which is the main aim of the dissertation, i. e. for Germany.

Lot of the stuff is then treated rather intuitively (it does not mean that the author is always missing her point), however the “conclusion map” is rather incomplete. On the other hand the author shows how much seasonal was the East German communism in terms of its dependence on Moscow and how much academic as well political perceptions of communism were a matter of the victorious perspective which believes that political victory is good enough and often does not take other perspective into account.

Specific Questions for oral defence:

1. Which is the role and position of “1953 from 1989 perspective” in current German historiography and political discourse (quantitatively and qualitatively).

Deducted for late submission:	Deducted for faulty referencing:	<b>Mark*:</b> 2/C (62)
Charles marker: Jiří Vykoukal	Signed:	Date:

**\*Mark: A = 70+; B = 65-69; C = 60-64; D = 55-59; E = 50-54; F = fail, less than 50, see Scheme of award –please, fill in this way: Charles/IMESS (e.g. Výborně/A)**

**Scheme of award (assessment criteria):**

	<b>Charles University**</b>	<b>IMESS</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	Výborně [1]	A
<b>Very Good</b>	Velmi dobře [2]	B
<b>Good</b>	Velmi dobře [2.5]	C
<b>Satisfactory</b>	Dobře [3]	D
<b>Sufficient</b>	Dobře [3.5]	E
<b>Fail</b>	Neprospěl [4]	F