

# Výzkumné semináře

Masarykova ústavu a  
Archivu AV ČR, v. v. i.

**21. září 2020**  
**od 15 hod.**

**MÚA AV ČR**  
**ONLINE CONFERENCE**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85341491349>

**www.mua.cas.cz**

Masarykův ústav a Archiv AV ČR srdečně zve na přednášku

## **Drifting Westward? East Germany and Integrated Europe in the "long 1970s"**

**Maximilian Graf**

(MÚA AV ČR)

In cooperation with the ERC-funded project "Unlikely refuge?"  
[www.unlikely-refuge.eu](http://www.unlikely-refuge.eu).

The talk revisits the East German dealings with the West in the 'long 1970s' and compares them with the approaches of other Socialist states.

By combining political and economic history, it offers a fresh account on the country's elites' dealings with the challenges of the détente era and incipient globalization. The regime desired international recognition and increasing economic exchanges with Western Europe.

However, imports of Western goods and credit-financed modernization did not deliver the aspired payback and dependence on the West grew. Rising indebtedness led to the debt crisis of the early 1980s. Economic experts anticipated this outcome early on. Internal critics and the Soviets accused the leadership of drifting westwards. Throughout the decade, the initial self-confidence of the regime turned into desperation.

Nevertheless, due to domestic political concerns the so-called Unity of Economic and Social Policy remained unchanged. In relations with the West, East Germany pursued a strictly bilateral approach in which West Germany mattered most. Despite privileged economic relations with West Germany, the progress of European integration affected East German trade with the West more than previous studies have assumed. Additionally, despite its deplored protectionism, the European Economic Community was increasingly regarded as a role model for the stagnating integration of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

**The conference will present the results of a forthcoming monograph: "European Socialist Regimes' Fateful Engagement with the West National Strategies in the Long 1970s", ed. by Angela Romano and Federico Romero, London: Routledge, 2021.**

**Discussant: Pavel Szobi**

