

CHARLES UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social Sciences
Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism

MA THESIS REVIEW

NOTE: Only the grey fields should be filled out!

Review type (choose one):

~~Review by thesis supervisor~~ Review by opponent X

Thesis author:

Surname and given name:

Goudis, Nikolaos Alexandros

Thesis title: Beyond the lens: An analysis of CNN,
Al Jazeera and protothema.gr news
photographs of the 2023 Israel-Palestine war

Reviewer:

Surname and given name: Silverio Robert

Affiliation: FSV UK

1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND THESIS (mark one box for each row)

| | | Conforms to approved research proposal | Changes are well explained and appropriate | Changes are explained but are inappropriate | Changes are not explained and are inappropriate | Does not conform to approved research proposal |
|-----|-----------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| 1.1 | Research objective(s) | X | | | | |
| 1.2 | Methodology | X | | | | |
| 1.3 | Thesis structure | X | | | | |

COMMENTARY (description of the relationship between the research proposal and the thesis. If there are problems, please be specific):

2. EVALUATION OF THE THESIS CONTENT

Use letters A – B – C – D – E – F (A=best, F= failed)

| | | Grade |
|-----|--|-------|
| 2.1 | Quality and appropriateness of the theoretical framework | A-B |
| 2.2 | Ability to critically evaluate and apply the literature | B |
| 2.3 | Quality and soundness of the empirical research | A |
| 2.4 | Ability to select the appropriate methods and to use them correctly | A |
| 2.5 | Quality of the conclusion | A |
| 2.6 | Thesis originality and its contribution to academic knowledge production | A-B |

COMMENTARY (description of thesis content and the main problems):

In his work, Nikolaos Alexandros Goudis examines the visual representation of the first three weeks of the 2023 Israel-Hamas war across three online media outlets: Al Jazeera, CNN, and Proto Thema. He effectively sets up the historical context of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the recent escalation and formulates his research goal.

3. EVALUATION OF THE THESIS FORM

Use letters A – B – C – D – E – F (A=best, F= failed)

| | | Grade |
|-----|--|-------|
| 3.1 | Quality of the structure | B |
| 3.2 | Quality of the argumentation | A |
| 3.3 | Appropriate use of academic terminology | A |
| 3.4 | Quality, quantity and appropriateness of the citations (both in the theory part and in the empirical part) | A-B |
| 3.5 | Conformity to quotation standards (*) | A-B |
| 3.6 | Use of an academic writing style, and correct use of language (both grammar and spelling) | A |
| 3.6 | Quality of the textual lay-outing and appendices | A |

(*) in case the text contains quotations without references, the grade is F; in case the text contains plagiarised parts, do not recommend the thesis for defence and suggest disciplinary action against the author instead.

COMMENTARY (description of thesis form and the main problems):

There are some minor inconsistencies in quoting. The text could benefit from clearer organization in some places. For instance, separating discussions of U.S., British, and Arab media coverage into distinct sections might improve readability and coherence.

4. OVERALL EVALUATION (provide a summarizing list of the thesis's strengths and weaknesses):

The theoretical framework is well-articulated, incorporating important concepts from notable scholars like Sontag, Barthes, Tagg, and Burgin. This grounding helps in understanding the significance of the study.

Goudis' text includes multiple perspectives on news values, from cognitive and materialistic views to discursive approaches. This diversity of perspectives provides a thorough understanding of how news values are conceptualized and applied.

Some photojournalistic context is offered as well. However, the title "2.1 War Photojournalism" of the chapter is somewhat misleading because it doesn't deal with war photojournalism but only with certain contemporary instances. Nevertheless, it is good that it remains concentrated on the present situation.

The literature review and examples from various studies and conflicts (e.g., Gulf War, Iraq War) are effectively used to illustrate points and provide empirical support for the arguments which are made later.

The research question and three hypotheses are clearly formulated.

The sample size is sufficient to show substantial findings.

On the other hand, there are minor shortcomings as well. The text mentions that the images were collected from October 7 to October 28, 2023, but does not clarify why this specific period was chosen or how it might impact the analysis. Additionally, the coding process should have been explained in more detail.

I read the thesis with interest. The findings are not surprising per se, but the detailed description of the findings helps readers understand the nuances of the conflict. In fact, I wish it had included an even larger number of media outlets from around the world. I acknowledge, however, that this would go beyond the scope of a student's standard thesis.

I suggest accepting the thesis and grading it an A.

5. QUESTIONS OR TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE THESIS DEFENSE:

| | |
|-----|--|
| 5.1 | Please elaborate on the choices of the coding and if you were thinking about more variables. |
| 5.2 | |
| 5.3 | |
| 5.4 | |

6. ANTIPLAGIARISM CHECK

The reviewer is familiar with the thesis' score in plagiarism analysis in SIS.

If the score is above 5%, please evaluate and indicate problems:

| | |
|-----|--|
| 6.1 | |
|-----|--|

7. SUGGESTED GRADE OF THE THESIS AS A WHOLE (choose one or two)

- A** Excellent (excellent performance)
- B** Excellent (excellent performance)
- C** Very Good (above the average standard but with some errors)
- D** Very Good (above the average standard but with some errors)
- E** Good (generally sound work with a number of notable errors)
- F** Fail (unsatisfactory performance)

If the mark is an “F”, please provide your reasons for not recommending the thesis for defence:

Date: 01/09/24

Signature:

A finalised review should be printed, signed and submitted in two copies to the secretary of the Department of Media Studies. The electronic version of the review should be converted into a PDF and uploaded to SIS, or sent to the Department of Media Studies secretary who will upload it to SIS on the reviewer’s behalf.

Do not upload PDFs with a scanned signature, the review uploaded to SIS must be without signature.