

**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

**Thesis author:**

Surname and given name: Strange Erica Bernsten

**Thesis title:** Now is the time: Commemorative journalism and the rereading of 300 years of Danish-Greenlandic history

**Reviewer:**

Surname and given name: Dimitrov Michal

Affiliation: Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, external lecturer

**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)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Methodology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Thesis structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

COMMENTARY (description of the relationship between the research proposal and the thesis. If there are problems, please be specific): Research objectives and thesis structure are in line with the approved research proposal. The adjustment in the methodology is very well argued, relevant and for the benefit of the thesis, as Strange added elements of multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA) to the primary method of critical discourse analysis (CDA) to present a more solid and profound analysis of commemorative journalism linked to the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Danish colonization of Greenland on the example of the TV documentary series Historien om Grønland og Danmark [The History of Greenland and Denmark] by Danish public broadcaster Danmarks Radio. The combination of both methods proves to be a useful tool for a successful contextualized analysis of discourses presented in the TV documentary and its subsequent reflexion/interpretation by media reviewers in Danish mainstream media.

**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
2.2	Ability to critically evaluate and apply the literature	A
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

COMMENTARY (description of thesis content and the main problems): Based on the profound reflection of broad and representative up-to-date theoretical and empirical literature, the author formulates a relevant hypothesis that the "discourses constructed in the TV documentary series The History of Greenland and Denmark from 2022 and the subsequent media reviews will reflect a Danish self-perception that is less proud of their actions as a coloniser in Greenland, and instead reveal a shift towards the politics of regret". (p. 3). To address the linked research question, Erica Bernsten Strange constructs a solid theoretical framework proving ability to critically evaluate and apply a broad spectrum of literature, while showing outstanding skills when introducing and applying key concepts and terms for her empirical study. The well-thought-out and explained

solution in combining CDA and MCDA proves to be a very effective tool for exploring postcolonial relations and discourses of commemorative journalism, especially regarding audiovisual content. Applying Fairclough's three-dimensional approach, the thesis explores the "textual", discursive and social dimensions of the TV-documentary series skillfully, correctly and transparently. Thus, the author goes far beyond sole identification of four distinct but interconnected discourses (p. 67) and is able to present a persuasive interpretation and sociocultural contextualization of these discourses. The quality of discussion (including limitations of the study) and conclusion once again proves the fact that Erica Bernsten Strange is a promising researcher and is able to present an outstanding academic work. The author comes to the conclusion that "the findings do not provide conclusive evidence to support" the transition from collective pride to politics of regret. However, she is able to showcase the "hybridity" of (sometimes contradictory) discourses (and ideologies in broader sense), illustrating the ongoing process of re-reading of the Danish collective memory and self-perception where politics of regret is getting more space. The original methodological approach and findings can be seen as a valuable contribution to prior research on the role of TV documentaries and their reception in constructing collective memory.

### 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	A
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
3.5	Conformity to quotation standards (*)	A
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	B

(\*) 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):

The thesis has a logical structure. The sound argumentation navigates the reader through the whole research procedure, thus making it transparent and verifiable. The thesis complies with all standards for academic work, including appropriate use of academic terminology, conformity to quotation standards and - last but not least - a smart academic writing style with correct use of language. The textual lay-outing and appendices have some limits: on the first pages, the paragraphs are left-aligned while the majority of the text is justified. In the appendices, there are different font typefaces used, but this is not a major weakness.

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

**Erica Bernsten Strange presents a mature and outstanding diploma thesis and interesting contribution to academic knowledge. After necessary adjustments, the study would deserve to be published in a relevant academic journal. The thesis stands out for the profound and transparent analysis of the discourses in TV documentary The History of Greenland and Denmark and its reflection in mainstream Danish Media, applying innovative methodological approach in combining CDA a MCDA to adopt the Fairclough's three-dimensional approach. The methodological framework proposed in this study can serve as a solid foundation for future research on commemorative audiovisual journalism and collective memory. The author is able to present a persuasive interpretation and socialcultural contextualization of the identified discourses. The thesis proves the author's deep expertise in this field of research.**

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

5.1	The author decided to combine critical discourse analysis (CDA) with elements of multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA). What were the biggest challenges and limits when applying this approach? Could it be universally applied scholars doing research on audiovisual commemorative journalism? How would the findings be different if she applied CDA alone?
5.2	The author comes to the conclusion that the most prominent critical discourse identified in the textual analysis is the portrayal of "Denmark as the repressive mother" and points to recent shifts in Danish-Greenlandic power dynamics and public discourse, "which may indicate a move toward the politics of regret" (p. 61). However, she does not see conclusive evidence to support the transition from collective pride to politics of regret. Could she explain her conclusion regarding the hypothesis in more detail?

5.3	The author points out that the next comparably significant anniversary related to the colonization of Greenland will not occur until 2121. Do other historically significant dates such as the implementation of Home Rule in 1979 or Self-rule in 2009 (suggested by the author herself) have a similar potential for major discourse shifts towards politics of regret? Is commemorative journalism restricted to anniversaries, or can there be another "window of opportunity" for journalists to have impact on discourse shifts?
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	The score of 19 % overall similarity by Turnitin does not indicate any problems after a detailed check. The thesis is original, conforming to quotation standards. The antiplagiarism tool of theses.cz identifies just 2 % of overall similarity.
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**7. SUGGESTED GRADE OF THE THESIS AS A WHOLE (choose one or two)**

- A
- B
- C
- D
- E
- F

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

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Date: 8. 9. 2024

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.*