

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

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**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: Gabrielle Chastenet de Géry

**Thesis title:** Travel Narratives of New Mexico: Commodifying Culture and the Perpetuation of Colonial Discourses

**Reviewer:**

Surname and given name: Sandra Lábová

Affiliation: IKSŽ 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)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" 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 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):

Several changes were made compared to the research proposal. First, one research question was rephrased, and the other was removed. Furthermore, the methods were changed. The author uses MMR analysis in the presented study and combines QUAN visual content analysis and QUAN multimodal discourse analysis. All changes are well explained in the Introduction and are appropriate. Significantly, the MDA fits the intended research rather than the dispositive analysis suggested in the proposal.

**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	B
2.4	Ability to select the appropriate methods and to use them correctly	B
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):

In the Introduction, Gabrielle Chastenet de Géry introduces the thesis's main ideas, framework, and objections. The writing is clear and to the point. Aims and research questions are formulated, and methodology is introduced. The structure of the thesis is described.

The following theoretical chapters provide a solid ground for empirical research. The chapters are well structured and in line with the discussed main interest. Gabrielle Chastenet de Géry discusses the issues of travel narratives, travel journalism, the commodification of the place, and the power of images in forming an

opinion. I appreciate that she focuses on the role of the image in forming different narratives and discourses. Especially relevant is the theoretical framework where the candidate discusses the concept of orientalism, postcolonialism, and exoticification, and may influence the travel narratives. She also applies those in the context of New Mexico.

The chapter Methodology addresses the research design, objectives, and research questions. Gabrielle Chastenet de Géry uses MMR design - initial qualitative content analysis and MCDA. The candidate addresses a theoretical framework of MCDA and names its advantages and disadvantages. She describes the process of data collection and data analysis. Here it would be good to describe each step of the analysis separately, as it would clarify the reading and argumentation.

The chapter Findings and Discussion summarises and interprets the analysis results considering the theoretical framework while providing links to relevant academic literature. The results presented are convincing and clear. De Géry presents the results of visual analysis and linguistic analysis separately.

The reading of the QUAN visual analysis results gets complicated at times. How was the weighted calculation conducted?

The linguistic analysis builds on the visual, considering its conclusions while providing in-depth discussion. De Géry demonstrates the findings by using several quotations and connects them to the theoretical framework of her study.

The limitations of the study are suggested.

Among the notable findings are:

- Narratives that romanticise New Mexico as a place of ancient traditions, exoticism, culture, adventures, and wilderness.
- Presence of postcolonial and oriental discourse.
- Commodification of place and indigenous culture while at the same time promoting sustainability and slow travel.
- Mythologizing of multicultural narrative.

### 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
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	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):

The structure of the thesis is well-developed and logical. Quotations are treated correctly.

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

**The thesis presents original research results in journalism studies and tourism. Gabrielle Chastenet de Géry examines travel narratives of New Mexico while searching for narratives presented in the photographs and texts published in the selected travel outlets. The presented study is well-developed. The research is based on a sound theoretical foundation, critically accountable. The thesis shows a systematic structure. However, the methodology chapter could be better arranged. The study presents interesting findings and contributes to the discussion by offering an in-depth analysis of travel narratives about New Mexico. Gabrielle Chastenet de Géry shows a knowledge of the research problem and the ability to work independently and critically.**

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

5.1	How was the weighted calculation conducted?
5.2	
5.3	
5.4	

## 6. ANTIPLAGIARISM CHECK

**X** 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 overall similarity is 27%, most of which are included in the theoretical part of the thesis and findings (direct quotations used for MCDA). All sources and citations are correctly cited.
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## 7. SUGGESTED GRADE OF THE THESIS AS A WHOLE (choose one or two)

- A**                    **X**  
**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: June 7, 2023

Signature: Sandra Lábová

*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.*