

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: Armando Peñafuerte III

Thesis title: WeChat in Silence? How WeChat surveillance and censorship experience impacts the digital communication behaviors of Filipino migrants in China

Reviewer:

Surname and given name: Veronika Macková

Affiliation: KŽ 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)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	Methodology	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.3	Thesis structure	X	<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): The author acknowledged all changes in the "Differences from the proposal" chapter. These changes are justified, well described and appropriate.

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):

In the chapter "Literature Review and Theoretical Arguments", the author works with relevant literature, which is very well related to the topic of the diploma thesis.

Although the thesis offers a detailed analysis of Filipino migrants' experiences with digital surveillance and censorship on the WeChat platform, I lack a more thorough introduction to the WeChat application itself. Although WeChat is widely known and used in China, it would be useful to include a more detailed description of its operation, main functions, and its importance in the Chinese digital system. But it's a small complaint (negligible) because otherwise, the presented diploma thesis is of a very high level.

For an even better connection of the text, it would be advisable to link individual quotations from the respondents. The author sometimes placed the statements of Filipinos one after the other without his text to link or introduce the next quotation.

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	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):

This thesis deals with an important and actual topic, namely the experiences of Filipino migrants in China experiencing digital surveillance and censorship on the WeChat platform.

Overall, the text is well structured and offers valuable empirical insights.

I also appreciated the self-reflection when the author of the study admitted that the results are limited only to the experiences of Filipino migrants and could differ on other social platforms or in other groups of migrants. It also mentions possible barriers related to technical issues in online interviews and translations. Nevertheless, the research represents a valuable contribution to the discussion and future research.

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

The diploma thesis offers valuable insights into the relationship between digital surveillance, censorship, and the daily communication habits of migrants. Its results can serve as a basis for further research into the impact of digital repression not only in China but also in the global context, where surveillance technologies are increasingly penetrating people's lives.

As can be seen from the assessment and its partial evaluation, I am very satisfied with the text submitted by Armando Peñafuerte III, and that is why I am evaluating the thesis with the grade "A".

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

5.1	How do Filipino migrants perceive the role of WeChat as a tool for maintaining contact with home as well as a means of digital surveillance?
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	19 %
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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:

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Date:

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.