

La Sapienza

Revisione esterna dottorandi \_\_\_° ciclo

<dottorando>

## Evaluation form for PhD dissertation

### Evaluation form

Title of the thesis

On the Frontlines of Fiction: Authority and Fictionality in American Veteran Narratives of the War on Terror

Affiliation of the reviewer

University of Warsaw

Report

Presentation and clarity

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The reviewer should be able to read the text without difficulty. This implies that the dissertation is clear and 'user friendly', without duplications or repetitions.

Evaluation file (optional)

Integration and coherence

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The manuscript should present logical and rational links between different parts of the thesis.

Introduction to scientific background

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The text should contain a satisfactory introduction to the scientific background which is relevant to the research, preparing the reader to the exposition of the problem.

Review of relevant literature

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The candidate must have a detailed knowledge of original sources, have a thorough knowledge of the field, and understand the main theoretical and methodological issues.

Statement of research problem

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

A clear statement of the research problem should be made, together with specific hypotheses, predictions, or questions which the research is designed to address.

Originality

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The research must be the candidate's own work. The degree of independence may vary according to the research topic.

Contribution to knowledge and scientific relevance

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The dissertation should be substantial enough to be able to form the basis of two articles on refereed journal, a book or research monograph.

Mastery of the English language

None  Poor  Average  Good  Excellent

The candidate must be proficient in written English and show mastery of appropriate scientific/technical language.

A major goal of the review process is to evaluate if the present version of the thesis is:

- 1) adequate as is
- 2) require minor revision
- 3) require major revision

for admission of the candidate to the defense of the work in front of a national evaluation board.

Accept as is  Minor revision  Major revision



Reviewer: Marek Paryż

Angelo Arminio's doctoral dissertation titled "On the Frontlines of Fiction: Authority and Fictionality in American Veteran Narratives of the War on Terror" offers an analysis of selected works of fiction written by American veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan with respect to their ways of constructing narrative authority. The selection of writers includes: Kevin Powers, David Abrams, Roy Scranton, Phil Klay and Brian Van Reet. Mr. Arminio argues that their fictional accounts of the wars in the Middle East exemplify a variety of war literature which he terms "authofiction." In other words, they are fictional, but they echo the authors' experiences—and this is what attracts the reading audience. The writers can achieve the effect of authenticity without observing the demands of accuracy. This in turn allows them to mediate the experience of war to the civilian readership from an authoritative position. Mr. Arminio's dissertation offers a comprehensive approach to the literature of the Global War on Terror—GWOL. His argument is logically developed, insightful, original and convincing, and his style of presentation is very lucid, a far cry from pretentious academic jargon. The phenomenon under discussion—GWOL literature—is properly contextualized through its placement in the contemporary American literary landscape, on the one hand, and the tradition of American war literature, on the other. A broader look at the social and political reality in the post-truth era enables Mr. Arminio to underline the ethical implications of the analyzed literary works. His discussion of GWOL literature is theoretically sophisticated; he draws from a range of theoretical inspirations, to mention Paul Ricoeur, Richard Walsh, Lubomir Doležal, Hanna Meretoja and Hayden White, to create a coherent interpretative framework for his analysis. In my opinion, Mr. Arminio's dissertation can be submitted for the doctoral procedure in its present version. I do not recommend any revisions, although the manuscript could benefit from a final copy-edit (e.g. on page 94 Mr. Arminio missed the dates of publication that he wanted to add to the titles listed there). If Mr. Arminio decides to revise the manuscript for publication—as I hope he will—I would suggest that he consider cutting down on theory and expanding the literary analysis proper to better demonstrate the originality of individual works under discussion within the model of authofiction.

*Mehmet Perzi*