FOREIGN ADVISOR ASSESSMENT REVIEW
DOCTORAL DISSERTATION BY
BANU RAMAZANOVA KUANDYKOVNA
«TRANSFORMATION OF DOCUMENTARY FILM PRODUCTION IN THE DIGITAL AGE: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN EMERGING PRACTICES AND DISTRIBUTION MODELS»

submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree (PhD) in the specialty
8D02184 Directing Film and TV

It is with sincere academic responsibility that I provide this official review of the doctoral dissertation submitted by Ms. Ramazanova Banu, entitled "Transformation of Documentary Film Production in the Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities in Emerging Practices and Distribution Models." Based on a careful reading of the full manuscript, I can affirm that the dissertation presents an original and scientifically rigorous study that makes a valuable contribution to the field of documentary cinema and media studies at large. The candidate's research is distinguished by its strong theoretical foundation, multidisciplinary methodology, and timely subject matter. Her work addresses a rapidly evolving area of inquiry—the integration of advanced digital technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual and augmented reality, and immersive media into the documentary filmmaking process. In doing so, the dissertation succeeds in generating significant new knowledge concerning both the aesthetic and structural transformation of nonfiction cinema. Particularly commendable is the candidate's comparative approach, which draws from case studies across the United States, Europe, and Asia, with a focused and insightful analysis of Kazakhstan's documentary sector. This regional perspective contributes to filling a notable gap in the global academic discourse and positions Kazakhstan within broader transnational cinematic developments.

Methodologically, the study is well-conceived and executed with precision. The candidate employs a balanced combination of qualitative and empirical methods, including comparative analysis, qualitative content analysis, and archival research. The processes are documented with clarity and transparency, allowing the research to be reproducible and verifiable. Data sources—such as national film archives and institutional production statistics—are clearly cited and appropriately contextualized. Furthermore, the candidate adheres fully to the international ethical standards of academic research. The structure of the dissertation reflects a logical progression from conceptual framing to analytical development, and the results are presented in a coherent and academically rigorous manner. Ms. Ramazanova

demonstrates an excellent grasp of the existing literature and state-of-the-art theoretical debates. Her engagement with contemporary scholars, including those focused on digital disruption, media convergence, and post-truth epistemologies, is thorough and critically reflective. She also shows familiarity with current industry practices and technological innovations, ensuring that her research remains relevant not only within academic circles but also for professionals in the field.

The findings are presented with intellectual clarity and supported by appropriate visual data and documentation. Although the study is primarily qualitative, the author skillfully integrates statistical material where relevant, especially in her examination of production trends and institutional funding mechanisms. The discussion situates these findings within a broader international context and offers thoughtful reflections on the ethical and political implications of emerging documentary practices. The candidate has taken care to delineate her own role in the conception, development, and writing of the dissertation. Her contribution is substantial and evident in every aspect of the research process. Any use of external data or previously published materials is properly cited, and collaborative efforts—where applicable—are acknowledged with academic transparency and integrity. Based on the originality of the research, the sophistication of its analytical framework, and the candidate's clear intellectual ownership of the work, I am confident in stating that Ms. Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna meets the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Her dissertation demonstrates not only academic excellence, but also a forward-looking understanding of the evolving nature of media, cinema, and public discourse in the digital age.

Based on the originality of the research, the sophistication of its analytical framework, the clarity of its argumentation, and the candidate's evident academic integrity and independent contribution, I am confident in stating that Ms. Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna has met the criteria required for the degree of PhD. Her dissertation demonstrates scholarly excellence, methodological soundness, and relevance to current debates in global media and documentary studies. The dissertation entitled *Transformation of Documentary Film Production in the Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities in Emerging Practices and Distribution Models* is, therefore, fully compliant with established academic standards and is hereby recommended for public defense and approval.

Sincerely,
Prof. Hong Sang-woo, PhD
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