# Written Review by the Official Reviewer

| № | Criteria | Compliance with the Criteria (underline the appropriate option) | Rationale for the Official Reviewer's Position (remarks in italics) |
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| 1. | The dissertation topic (as of its formal approval) aligns with the priority directions of scientific development and/or state programmes | 1.1.Alignment with Priority Directions of Scientific Development or State Programmes<br>1)The dissertation was carried out within the framework of a project or targeted programme funded from the state budget (indicate the name and number of the project or programme);<br>2)The dissertation was carried out within the framework of another state programme (indicate the name of the programme);<br>3)The dissertation corresponds to a priority direction of scientific development, as approved by the Higher Scientific and Technical Commission under the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan (indicate the specific direction). | The dissertation's central focus on the integration and impact of digital technologies in nonfiction filmmaking speaks directly to the Higher Scientific-Technical Commission's approved priority "Digital Transformation of Cultural and Creative Industries." By systematically interrogating each stage of the documentary production pipeline—from digital image capture and non-linear editing to metadata-driven distribution on VOD platforms and algorithmic audience engagement—the study generates a comprehensive map of how Kazakhstan's documentary sector can harness technological innovation to enhance creative output and market reach.<br>In particular, the research offers 1)A rigorous analysis of emerging digital production tools (e.g., cloud-based editing suites, AI-assisted metadata tagging) and their effects on cost efficiency, workflow flexibility, and aesthetic experimentation.2) Case studies of institutionally supported projects that illustrate best practices for integrating digital infrastructures within studio environments, thereby informing strategic decisions about equipment investment and personnel training. 3) An evaluative framework for assessing novel distribution models—such as hybrid theatrical-streaming releases and interactive web documentaries—against audience metrics and cultural policy goals, thus providing evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and industry stakeholders.<br>Through these contributions, the dissertation not only advances scholarly understanding of digital transformations in documentary cinema but also equips national cultural institutions with the analytical tools needed to realize the Commission's mandate of modernizing and globalizing Kazakhstan's creative industries. |

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| 2. | Significance to the Scientific Field | The work makes/does not make a substantial contribution to the scholarly field, and its significance is well articulated/not articulated | This work makes a substantial contribution to the scholarly field, and its significance is exceptionally well articulated. By introducing a cyclical model that links technological innovation with phases of creative flourishing and institutional consolidation in documentary production, the study fills a notable gap in scholarship on film industry transformations. Methodological triangulation—combining archival research at Kazakhfilm named after Shaken Aimanov, in-depth interviews with practitioners, and comparative case studies of digital workflows—ensures both analytical rigor and contextual richness. Importantly, the dissertation not only advances theoretical paradigms in documentary studies but also translates its findings into actionable recommendations for cultural policy and professional practice. The clear exposition of how emerging digital tools reshape aesthetic choices, economic structures, and audience engagement strategies underscores the work's dual value for academics and industry stakeholders alike. |
| 3. | Principle of Independence | Level of Independence<br>1. High<br>2. Moderate<br>3. Low<br>4. None | **High.** Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna exhibited full scholarly autonomy: independently conceiving the research design, formulating the analytical framework, and executing all data collection and analysis of the Kazakhfilm case studies without supervisory guidance. On her own initiative, she arranged interviews with industry practitioners and sourced original production documents, synthesizing these elements into a cohesive theoretical model of technological disruption and institutional adaptation. By managing the research timeline, overcoming methodological challenges—such as archival access limitations and data triangulation—and integrating pertinent scholarly debates without external prompting, she clearly demonstrated complete independence throughout her doctoral research. |

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| 4. | Principle of Internal Unity | 4.1 Justification of the Dissertation's Relevance<br>1. justified;<br>2. partially justified;<br>3. not justified. | The study addresses a critical gap in both national and international scholarship by systematically examining how digital technologies reshape documentary film production workflows, distribution models, and audience engagement strategies. Its focus on Kazakhstan's industry within the broader framework of global digital transformation ensures the work speaks to pressing theoretical debates and practical policy concerns. By combining original case studies at Kazakhfilm named after Shaken Aimanov with rigorous analysis of emerging digital tools and institutional adaptations, the dissertation offers timely insights for scholars, cultural institutions, and industry practitioners—thereby **fully justifying** its relevance. |
| | | 4.2 Correspondence of the Dissertation's Content to Its Topic<br>1. fully corresponds;<br>2. partially corresponds;<br>3. does not correspond. | Every chapter and analytical strand of the dissertation directly aligns with the stated topic, "Transformation of Documentary Film Production in the Digital Age: Challenges and Opportunities in Emerging Practices and Distribution Models." The literature review establishes the theoretical foundations of digital transformation in nonfiction cinema; the methodology chapter details how archival, the empirical chapters systematically examine digital production workflows, metadata-driven distribution strategies, and audience engagement metrics; and the concluding model synthesizes these findings into a coherent framework. This seamless integration of objectives, methods, and results demonstrates that the dissertation's content fully corresponds to its declared topic. |
| | | 4.3 Alignment of the Research Aim and Objectives with the Dissertation Topic<br>1. fully aligned;<br>2. partially aligned;<br>3. not aligned. | The research aim and each objective directly mirror the dissertation topic, ensuring that all empirical and analytical work advances the core investigation of digital transformation in documentary production. **Fully aligned.** |

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| | | 4.4 Logical Interconnection of All Sections and Provisions of the Dissertation<br>  1.  fully interconnected;<br>  2.  partially interconnected;<br>  3.  not interconnected. | The dissertation demonstrates a clear structural progression: theoretical foundations inform the methodological design, which underpins empirical case studies, all culminating in an integrated theoretical model of digital transformation. Seamless transitions and explicit signposting ensure that each chapter and subsection builds logically on the previous, resulting in a coherent and unified argument. |
| | | 4.5 Argumentation and Evaluation of the Author's Proposed New Solutions (Principles, Methods) Compared to Established Solutions<br>  1.  critical analysis is present;<br>  2.  analysis is partial;<br>  3.  analysis consists of quotations from other authors rather than original evaluation;<br>  4.  analysis is absent. | **critical analysis is present.**<br><br>The dissertation systematically juxtaposes the novel cyclical model of digital transformation with established documentary production paradigms, critically examining both its innovative contributions—such as enhanced workflow flexibility and audience interactivity—and its potential limitations in institutional implementation. |
| | | 5.1 Novelty of Scientific Results and Propositions<br>  1.  entirely new;<br>  2.  partially new (25–75% novel);<br>  3.  not new (<25% novel). | In dissertation, the scientific results and theoretical propositions are **fully new** |
| | | 5.2 Novelty of the Dissertation's Conclusions<br>  1.  entirely new;<br>  2.  partially new (25–75% novel);<br>  3.  not new (<25% novel). | **entirely new** |

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| 5. | Principle of Scientific Novelty | 5.3 Novelty and Justification of Technical, Technological, Economic, or Managerial Solutions<br>1. entirely novel;<br>2. partially novel (25–75% novel);<br>3. not novel (<25% novel). | Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna introduces fully new technical, technological, economic, and managerial solutions, including an innovative digital asset management workflow specifically designed for documentary production, a bespoke hybrid distribution valuation model that quantifies cost–benefit parameters for simultaneous online and theatrical releases, and adaptive scheduling protocols that reconcile production timelines with the demands of digital platforms. Each proposal is meticulously justified through empirical evidence drawn from her Kazakhfilm case studies and critically contrasted with prevailing industry standards, thereby confirming both their originality and practical viability. |
| 6. | Justification of the Principal Conclusions | Reliance of Major Conclusions on Substantive Scholarly Evidence<br>All principal conclusions are based on substantial scholarly evidence and are adequately justified (for qualitative research and arts and humanities disciplines):<br>1. are based;<br>2. are not based. | All principal conclusions in Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna's dissertation are grounded in robust, scholarly evidence and articulated with rigorous justification. Drawing on methodologically sound qualitative inquiry—including in-depth, semi-structured interviews with documentary practitioners, extensive archival analysis of Kazakhfilm production records, and iterative thematic coding—the study employs data triangulation to ensure the validity and reliability of its interpretive claims. This evidentiary foundation conforms to the highest standards of arts and humanities research, thereby substantiating the dissertation's core findings with unequivocal academic rigor. |

| 7. | Principal Propositions Submitted for Defense | For each proposition, please answer separately:<br>7.1 Is the proposition proven?<br>   1.   Proven<br>   2.   Likely proven<br>   3.   Likely not proven<br>   4.   Not proven<br>   5.   Cannot verify proof in the current formulation<br>7.2 Is the proposition trivial?<br>   1.   Yes<br>   2.   No<br>   3.   Cannot verify triviality in the current formulation<br>7.3 Is the proposition new?<br>   1.   Yes<br>   2.   No<br>   3.   Cannot verify novelty in the current formulation<br>7.4 Scope of applicability:<br>   1.   Narrow<br>   2.   Medium<br>   3.   Broad<br>   4.   Cannot verify scope in the current formulation<br>7.5 Is the proposition proven within the article?<br>   1.   Yes<br>   2.   No<br>   3.   Cannot verify proof in the article in the current formulation | 7.1. Proven<br>7.2. Yes<br>7.3. Yes<br>7.4. Wide scope<br>7.5. Yes |
| | | 8.1 Choice of Methodology – Is the methodology justified or described in sufficient detail?<br>   1.   yes;<br>   2.   no. | Yes. |

| 8. | Principle of Reliability: Credibility of Sources and Information Provided<br>Достоверность источников и предоставляемой информации | 8.2 Have the dissertation results been obtained using modern scientific research methods and data processing and interpretation techniques employing computer technologies?<br>  1.   yes;<br>  2.   no. | Yes. |
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| | | 8.3 Have the theoretical conclusions, models, identified relationships, and patterns been demonstrated and validated through experimental research (for pedagogical fields, validated via a pedagogical experiment)?<br>  1.   yes;<br>  2.   no. | **Yes.** |
| | | 8.4 Have the key assertions been confirmed, partially confirmed, or not confirmed by references to current and credible scientific literature?<br>  1.   confirmed;<br>  2.   partially confirmed;<br>  3.   not confirmed. | **confirmed.** |
| | | 8.5 Are the literature sources used sufficient or insufficient for the literature review?<br>  1.   sufficient;<br>  2.   insufficient. | **Sufficient.** |
| | | 9.1 Does the dissertation have theoretical significance?<br>  1.   yes;<br>  2.   no. | **Yes.** |

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| 9 | Principle of Practical Value | 9.2 Does the dissertation have practical significance and is there a high likelihood that its results will be applied in practice?<br>1. yes;<br>2. no. | **Yes.** |
| | | 9.3 Are the practical recommendations new?<br>1. entirely new;<br>2. partially new (25–75% novel);<br>3. not new (<25% novel). | **Fully new.** The dissertation's practical proposals—including the digital asset management workflow, hybrid distribution valuation model, and adaptive production scheduling protocols—constitute entirely novel contributions to documentary practice. |
| 10. | Quality of Writing and Formatting | Quality of Academic Writing:<br>1. high;<br>2. average;<br>3. below average;<br>4. low. | The academic writing in Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna's dissertation exemplifies a high standard, as evidenced by consistently precise scholarly terminology, coherent and logically structured argumentation, and rigorous adherence to stylistic conventions and citation norms. |
| 11. | Reviewer's Comments on the Dissertation | The cyclical framework of technological disruption and institutional adaptation is both original and rigorously situated within existing scholarship; it would benefit from an expanded discussion of its epistemological foundations in relation to parallel models in media and cultural studies.<br>The qualitative methodology—combining archival research with semi-structured interviews—is robust and well executed; nonetheless, the criteria for selecting interview participants should be more thoroughly justified to ensure representativeness across varied production roles.<br>The Kazakhfilm case studies are richly detailed and convincingly demonstrate each phase of digital transformation; incorporating a succinct comparative vignette from an independent studio could further substantiate the broader applicability of the model. | |

| 12. | Scientific Level of the Doctoral Candidate's Articles on the Research Topic (In cases where the dissertation is defended as a series of publications, official reviewers assess the scholarly quality of each article authored by the candidate that pertains to the research topic.) | An appraisal of the scholarly quality of Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna's three peer-reviewed publications reveals a consistent pattern of theoretical sophistication and methodological precision. The article "Documentary Cinema as Social Therapy: Kazakhstan's Experience in Portraying Collective Trauma on Screen" (Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema, vol. 19, no. 1, 2025) combines rigorous film-historical analysis with nuanced theoretical insight, advancing our understanding of how nonfiction narratives mediate collective trauma. In the co-authored study "Creativity as a Defining Trend of Evolvement in Modern Documentary Cinema" (CAJAS, vol. 7, no. 1, 2022), a clearly articulated qualitative framework substantiate its comparative evaluation of national production practices. Finally, the collaboration with Anita Chernykh in "Animadoc – A Hybrid Phenomenon of Modern Cinema" (Central Asian Journal of Art Studies, vol. 8, no. 3, 2023) offers an original theoretical model for the animation-documentary interface, situating this emerging form within both Central Asian contexts and wider global debates. Taken together, these articles demonstrate mastery of diverse research methods, critical engagement with key theoretical paradigms, and the generation of substantive new knowledge in documentary studies. |
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| 13. | Decision of the Official Reviewer (pursuant to Clause 28 of the Current Standard Regulations) | After a comprehensive appraisal of the doctoral thesis submitted by Ramazanova Banu Kuandykovna—scrutinizing its conceptual contributions, methodological coherence, empirical robustness, and overall scholarly articulation—it is concluded that the manuscript fully satisfies the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. Accordingly, the thesis is recommended to proceed to the defense stage without the need for substantive amendments |

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**named after Kulyash Bayseitova, Associate Professor (Docent),**
**Honored Worker of the Republic of Kazakhstan**