

Filmová a televizní fakulta AMU v Praze / Film and TV School of Academy of Performing Arts, Prague

FAMU International

Posudek magisterské diplomové práce / Thesis Evaluation Form

Student: Elísabet Elma L. Guðrúnardóttir.....

Název práce / Title of the Thesis:

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FICTIONAL TRUTH: Use of documentary style to create truthfulness in fiction films

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Jméno autora/ky posudku / Name of the thesis opponent:

.....Mgr. Petra Dominková, PhD

Hodnocení obsahu a výsledné podoby diplomové práce / Evaluation scale:

A – výborně / excellent

B – velmi dobře / very good

C – dobře / good

D – dobře s výhradami / good with minor mistakes

E – dostatečně / suitable for defense

F – nedostatečně / fail – not recommended for defense

- Hodnotící kritéria a podíl na známce / Evaluated parameters and weight:
- *Vyplňte u každé položky evaluaci dle výše uvedené škály. / Please fill in the evaluation for each parameter according to the scale above.*

	Hodnotící kritéria / Evaluated parameters	Váha/Weight	Grade (A-F)
1	Vhodnost zvoleného cíle / Relevance of the chosen subject	5 %	B
2	Práce naplňuje zadání / Thesis covers the chosen subject	5 %	D
3	Stanovení metodologie a její adekvátnost / Choice of an adequate methodology	10 %	D
4	Relativní úplnost zpracované literatury ke zvolenému tématu / Research of the relevant sources and bibliography	10 %	C
5	Schopnost kriticky vyhodnotit a použít odbornou literaturu / Ability to critically process and use the relevant sources and literature	10 %	D
6	Logičnost struktury práce, souvislost jejích kapitol, užití stanovené metodologie / Structure of the work and chapters, use of the chosen methodology	20 %	C
7	Dosažení cíle práce, původnost, přínos / Was the goal of the work achieved, quality and originality of the result	20 %	D
8	Jazyková a stylistická úroveň práce / Language and style	10 %	C
9	Dodržení citační etiky a kvalita poznámkového aparátu / Citation ethics and quality of citations*)	10 %	B

*) Pokud se v textu vyskytují přejaté pasáže bez udání zdroje, hodnocení této kategorie je F. / If the work uses parts of the other texts without citing them properly, the evaluation of this parameter is F.

Navrhované hodnocení diplomové práce (kalkulace bude doplněna pracovníkem katedry) / Suggested final grade (<i>will be calculated by the department</i>):	C
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Slovní hodnocení práce (V případě přílohy, prosíme, připojte datum a podpis) / Verbal evaluation of thesis (in case of separate attachment please add your signature and date):

Prosíme, zdůvodněte zejména případné hodnocení „Nedostatečně“ / Please provide reasoning particularly in case of „Fail“ evaluation

Doporučený rozsah do 2700 znaků / Recommendation: up to 2700 characters

The thesis with the title “FICTIONAL TRUTH: Use of documentary style to create truthfulness in fiction films” by Elísabet Elma L. Guðrúnardóttir seeks to contemplate how the techniques of documentary filmmaking are used in fiction films, particularly in *Festen* (1998) and *Rosetta* (1999). While the topic chosen is indeed interesting and might have lead to an original paper, Elísabeth did not use fully its potential and restricted herself to the repetitive, often banal claims that did not bring almost any new information.

First of all, it is unclear why Elísabeth has chosen Italian Neorealism (IN) and French New Wave (FNW) as the quintessential examples of realistic cinema and left aside, for instance, Kitchen sink realism, which would be much closer to both, *Rosetta* and *Festen*. What is more, the chapter devoted to those two movements is lacking any personal comment from the author, which raises the question, how much experience (as a spectator) Elísabet has with those two movements – if any. The subsequent comparison of those two movements and two films she has chosen as her case studies are quite random, superficial, sometimes even nonsensical, as in the sentence “Unlike the New Wave filmmakers who adjusted their film stock to cope with the lighting at hand, Vinterberg was shooting on a simple digital handycam” (p. 38). Well, FNW directors might not use the Handycam, so no wonder they did not use it. It does not prove anything besides the fact that FNW and Dogma 95 did not occur in the same period. Overall, the reason for the inclusion of the discussion about those two cinematic movements, FNW and IN is unclear and the thesis would work much better if the author spends the place designated for the thesis by focusing properly on the two films themselves.

Other Elísabeth's arguments are not well developed – for instance, she insists that “lower budget may indicate less interference with a subject or a space” (p. 22), implying first, that documentaries are almost exclusively shot for a lower budget, and second, that lower budget will somehow assure the documentary-like quality of the fiction film. This is, however, very problematic – in the history of cinema we know plenty of fiction films done on a very low budget (e.g. *Killer's Kiss*, *Easy Rider*, *Detour*) while not seeking documentary-like qualities. The budget discussion seems to be irrelevant.

It is apparent, that Elísabeth works with the scholarly literature, however, it is surprising, how little she uses the sources that would discuss the Dardenne brothers – besides 3-page interview and one short review there is nothing – a couple of books that were written on the Dardenne brothers' work are ignored. On the other hand, when she cites, she does it properly.

Last but not least, the thesis contains quite a lot of unclear terms, as “simple editing” (p. 23), “radical montage” (p. 38), choppy editing (p. 37), “unconventional editing” (p. 35), “unusual shooting methods” (p. 35), etc., while none of these have any established meanings. Besides, there are some typos left (2 typos in first 6 lines of abstract!), e.g. “stylic” instead of “stylistic” (p. 41), “were centra” – missing “l” (p. 43), etc. - the thesis would indeed use a proof-reading.

On the other hand, I have to admit that there is seen a lot of work behind the thesis and it is clear that Elísabet did spend quite a lot of time developing her thesis. The strongest part of the thesis are two case studies, and here we can find few interesting ideas, mainly concerning the cinematography (see, for instance, page 36). That all, regardless of my criticisms above, lead to my belief that the thesis of Elísabet Elma L. Guðrúnardóttir should be accepted by the committee. I do recommend it for the defense and suggest the grade D.

**Práci doporučuji k obhajobě / Thesis is recommended for the defense:
(Zakroužkujte odpověď / Please circle the answer)**

ANO/YES – NE/NO

Pokud je hodnocení jakéhokoliv kritéria uvedeného výše F, práce nemůže být doporučena k obhajobě. / If the evaluation of any parameter above is F, thesis cannot be recommended for defense.

Datum/Date:
2nd of June 2021

Podpis/Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized initial 'P' followed by a long horizontal stroke.