

Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Department of Photography

Assessment of the Master's Thesis

Author of thesis: Georgia Aslanidou

Title of thesis: The role of landscape photography in the establishment of national parks

Assessment of the primary advisor ☒

Assessment of the opponent ☐

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace):

Tomáš Dvořák, KF FAMU

Evaluation of the content and final form of the thesis (A/excellent – B/very good – C/good – D/good with objections – E/satisfactory – F/unsatisfactory – not recommended for defence)

Suitability of the selected objective and work approach.....A
Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic.....A
Ability to critically evaluate and use professional literature.....A
Logicity of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters.....B
Language and stylistic level of the thesis.....D
Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence).....C
Sufficient extent of image attachments, justifiability and suitability of attachments, graphic layout.....A
Originality of the thesis, contribution to the development of the field of study.....B
Overall evaluation of the thesis.....B

Verbal evaluation of the thesis including questions that the diplomate must address in his/her thesis defence:

Georgia Aslanidou's thesis is based on systematic and thorough study of scholarly literature on landscape art and photography, history of national parks and early mountaineering expeditions, on research of the Boissonnas archive at the Thessaloniki Museum of Photography, as well as on interviews with scholars exploring mountaineering photography and the figure of the Swiss photographer Frédéric Boissonnas. Her thesis is well structured, follows a clear line of argument and provides necessary illustrations. My only objections concern the introductory, perhaps too broad and somewhat irrelevant discussions of the development of photography and landscape art, the lack of a clearer differentiation of landscape and mountaineering photography, and, above all, the inconsistencies in her citation style and the poor English of the text – it is evidently written by a non-native speaker and could have benefited from a more thorough proofreading.

I suggest the difference between landscape and mountaineering photography be discussed at the defence. Especially the photographs of peak ascents constitute a specific category that, first, tends towards the inclusion of a certain narrative element (ascending and descending the mountain) and, second, is close to sport or even performance photography – the conqueror of the mountain is always present, indulging in a ritual of marking the peak with a flag or an inscription. Within larger series, photographs of majestic massifs are thus often coupled with particular personal stories of exertion and commitment (the failure to provide evidence, as in the case of the first Boissonnas ascent, only reinforces this heroic gesture).

Georgia has chosen an intriguing topic and has treated it with both passion and rigour: her thesis tellingly demonstrates how a legal, political and environmental entity – the national park – is first constructed as an image, both real and mythological, conjoining specific understanding of nature with personal stories and expectations. Her thesis can contribute to the growing research interest in Boissonnas and the Olympus National Park. I strongly recommend the thesis for defence and, regarding the minor flaws described above, propose “B” for a grade, pending the outcome of the oral exam.

Date:8 May 2016.....

Signature:

