

ANNOTATION

of the dissertation by Nurshaikhova Aliya Arnurovna entitled: "Documentary film as a form of investigative journalism: a comparative analysis of domestic and international practices" submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in educational program "8D03203 - International Journalism"

General characteristics of the work. The scientific research is devoted to documentary cinema as a form of investigative journalism and to the comparative analysis of Kazakhstani and international practices. The choice of this topic is determined by the relevance of the phenomenon in the context of the digitalization of the media environment, the growing public interest in digital platforms, and the emergence of new forms of information dissemination through documentary films.

Documentary investigations have become a powerful tool in the contemporary world, employing truth as a key mechanism to counter injustice, corruption, and crime. Such films stimulate social change, generate public resonance, and are capable of attracting audience attention to pressing issues. Often, by presenting their work, journalist-documentarians can inspire people to take action and foster social transformation. Investigations of this genre address important topics for discussion, including political, economic, and social issues, among others.

Relevance of the research. The relevance of the present study is determined by the transformation of the contemporary media environment, where processes of convergence between journalism and audiovisual storytelling are intensifying. Against the backdrop of declining trust in traditional media and the growing public demand for authentic, verified information, documentary cinema is increasingly acquiring functions not only as a cultural medium but also as a socio-political institution capable of performing investigative journalism tasks.

This topic is particularly significant in the context of the digitalization of the information space, where content distribution platforms (such as YouTube, streaming services, and social networks) have become the primary channels for delivering analytical and critically oriented video content to a wide audience. This shift alters the way investigative journalism is perceived, expands the boundaries of authorship and audience engagement, and gives rise to new forms of visual narrative capable of effectively addressing social realities.

At the same time, documentary investigation lies at the intersection of several disciplinary fields—journalism, documentary filmmaking, media communications, and human rights practice. In conditions of growing pressure on independent media, increasing censorship restrictions, and rising professional risks for journalists, turning to documentary cinema becomes not only a creative solution but also a strategic response to contemporary challenges.

Therefore, a systematic study of documentary cinema as a form of investigative journalism allows researchers not only to record shifts in media practices but also to identify the mechanisms through which visual investigation influences public opinion, institutional processes, and human rights agendas, thereby imparting both scientific significance and practical applicability to the research.

Degree of research development on the dissertation topic. A significant contribution to the development of the topic has been made by researchers in investigative journalism, including Guliayev A., Samusevich A. G., Weisboard S., De Bur H., Koroner S., Antonov P., Moss P., Hunter M., Zolotukhin A., Kim M., Lazutina G., Asfura A., Tertychny A., Kovach T., and others. Their works focus on the fundamentals of journalism, ethical aspects of the profession, and the specific characteristics of investigative journalism as a genre. The principles and methods of journalism are further discussed by Harkap T., Mauby R., Okremova D., and other scholars.

In the context of documentary cinema, the works of Suleimenova A. E., Aufderheide P., Ellis J., McLane B., Burns K., Koptseva N., Nichols B., Culloty E., Fedulina A., Abikeeva G., Uvalzhanova A., and Aparicio D. are particularly significant. These authors emphasize the importance of documentary cinema in socially relevant processes, as it shapes a representation of events, reflects the reality of social issues, and preserves historical moments.

The specific features of documentary cinema as a form of investigative journalism are explored by both domestic and international scholars, including Lozhnikova O. P., Pilger J., Lopez-Garcia K., Perez-Seijo S., Vasquez-Herrero H., and Garcia-Ortega A., who analyze new and innovative narrative forms in journalism. Such methods of information delivery have emerged through diverse possibilities and technological solutions, including multimedia approaches that enhance audience engagement with substantive content.

Furthermore, Birney T., Kobre K., Baigozhina A., Gibni A., Mitina E., Rhodes J., Boram S., Aguayo A., Zhang C., Fedulin A. S., Abikeeva G., Swimmer J., Aburgif H., and Nash K. discuss the principles of creating interactive methods and new documentary forms in investigative journalism.

The aim of the dissertation work is to identify the contemporary features and principles of documentary filmmaking within the context of both domestic and international investigative journalism.

For a comprehensive understanding of the objectives and tasks of modern media, it is essential to grasp the core concepts of documentary studies and investigative documentaries, to consider the historical forms and evolution of the journalist-documentarian profession, and to perform a comparative analysis of domestic and international practices in documentary filmmaking. Furthermore, it is important to analyze trends in critical reviews and expert assessments of

documentary cinema, as well as the evaluations and characteristics of the stages and phases in the development of investigative journalism.

Research objectives. Research Objectives. The primary objective of the dissertation is a comprehensive study of documentary cinema as a component of investigative journalism. The main research tasks are as follows:

- To examine the key approaches to defining investigative journalism as a phenomenon of the digital era in contemporary journalism;
- To review the main stages in the development of documentary cinema within investigative journalism;
- To analyze the genre-specific characteristics and analytical potential of the narrative in documentary investigations;
- To identify the specific features and differences in the investigative practices of domestic and international journalist-documentarians, taking into account freedom of speech, as well as cultural and social factors;
- To analyze the impact of digital technologies and streaming services on investigative journalism and interactive documentary cinema;
- To assess the influence of documentary cinema on the formation of public opinion;
- To determine the role and potential of artificial intelligence in documentary investigative filmmaking.

The subject of the study is the practices of documentary cinema within the context of investigative journalism.

The object of the study is documentary cinema as a form of investigative journalism.

Statements to be defended:

1. Documentary journalism is an integral part of investigative journalism, serving as an important tool for uncovering both current and often hidden issues. It is based on the principles of freedom of speech, accuracy, and transparency, which allows for the creation of thoroughly developed investigations.

2. Narrative forms and genre-specific features of documentary investigations in journalism define the expressive and analytical potential of this format, facilitating a deeper presentation of material, enhancing its impact on the audience, and contributing to the formation of public discourse.

3. Documentary cinema possesses significant potential to influence public opinion, shaping critical perceptions of social and political realities, fostering public discussions, and encouraging social action through visual authenticity, the ability to elicit emotional responses, and the provision of in-depth analysis of pressing issues.

4. Contemporary digital technologies, streaming services, and interactive documentary cinema substantially transform the approaches to creating and perceiving documentary investigations, expanding opportunities for audience

engagement, providing new formats for presenting information, and ensuring access to high-quality content for a global audience.

5. Artificial intelligence is transforming documentary journalism by automating routine processes, from transcribing audio and video recordings to analyzing large volumes of open data and fact-checking. This enables journalists to focus more on the substantive and creative aspects of investigations.

The theoretical significance of this study lies in its syncretic approach to examining investigative journalism, documentary cinema, and emerging media technologies. By employing a multifaceted methodology that encompasses both historical and socio-cultural processes, the research seeks to trace the evolution of documentary investigations and identify significant events that have been represented in documentary films and media, preserving them in historical memory. Moreover, the study emphasizes the importance of utilizing archival materials and unique footage for the study of historical memory and the reconstruction of events. Importantly, investigative journalism is considered not only as an analysis of methods for processing and presenting facts but also as an effort to narrate events truthfully and accurately.

The practical significance of the study lies in the fact that its results can serve as a foundation for further scientific research and can be applied in the professional activities of journalist-documentarians. The findings may also be used in the educational process when designing specialized courses. The collected data can be made available to interested institutions and agencies, potential users, the academic community, and the wider public.

The main principle of the **novelty** of the dissertation lies in the fact that, for the first time in domestic journalism studies, documentary cinema is examined within the context of both domestic and international investigative journalism. The limited research on this topic, combined with the scarcity of scientific and educational-methodological literature on documentary journalism, increases the complexity of conducting this study.

Approbation of the research. The materials of the dissertation study are reflected in the following publications:

A) in journals recommended by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Education Ministry of Education and Science RK:

Nurshaikhova, A.A., Negizbayeva, M.O., & Dudinova, E.I. (2024). Crowdfunding as an alternative Method of Financing Documentary Films: Kazakhstani and Turkish Projects. Bulletin of KazNU. Journalism Series, 71(1), 92–102. <https://bulletin-journalism.kaznu.kz/index.php/1-journal/article/view/1811>

2. Nurshaikhova, A., Negizbayeva, M., & Imanova, A. (2023). Review of documentary film: new forms and possibilities. Bulletin of L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. Journalism series, 143(2), 96–107. Retrieved from <https://buljourn.enu.kz/index.php/main/article/view/153/101>

3. Nurshaikhova A.A., Negizbaeva M.O. (2022). The Kazakh famine of 1930–1933 in Science and Mass Media. Bulletin of L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. Journalism series, No. 3. P. 92-102
<https://buljourn.enu.kz/index.php/main/article/view/35>

B) In international conferences and in the international journal approved by the Scopus rating:

1. Shyngyssova, N., Nurshaikhova, A., Kopbayev, T., Yessenbek, Z., & Yertassova, G. (2024). The impact of documentary films as a form of investigative journalism: analysis of methods, ethics, and public influence. Atlantic Journal of Communication, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15456870.2024.2435940>
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/386273388_The_impact_of_documentary_films_as_a_form_of_investigative_journalism_analysis_of_methods_ethics_and_public_influence

2. Ibrayeva, Galiya. "Emotional Dynamics and Opinion Cumulation on Social Networks in Kazakhstan (2024). Social Computing and Social Media." Social Computing and Social Media 2024. pp. 95–106

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/390280118_Emotional_Dynamic_and_Opinion_Cumulation_on_Social_Networks_in_Kazakhstan

c) in collections of materials from international scientific and practical conferences:

1. Nurshaikhova A.A. Journalism, Communication and Sustainable Development / (Connecting the world) International Summer Session (XJTSSS), Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an, China. 2025.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/M8D9Mf2np9XxWWxb8>

2. Nurshaikhova A.A. Documentary film as a form of investigative journalism. VII International scientific and practical conference "Models of teaching international journalism for sustainable development" (MTJ). Kazakh University. Almaty. 2023.

<https://articles.unesco.org/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2023/04/Agenda-6-Apr-2023-UNESCO-Chair-KazNU.pdf>

3. Nurshaikhova A.A. Investigation and journalism, professional tandem. I International scientific conference of students and young scientists "Farabi Forum". April 4-7, 2022. Kazakh University. Almaty. 2022. ISBN 978-601-04.
<https://disk.yandex.ru/d/RLQe7N3qK3ZfWA>

4. Negizbaeva M.O., Nurshaikhova A.A., Possibilities of documentary cinema in shaping the image of a migrant. "Media and PR in the context of digital transformation", dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Kazakh University. Almaty. 2021
<https://disk.yandex.ru/d/yK5vDiSPXa5CA>

The volume and structure of the dissertation are determined by the logical framework of the research problem. The dissertation comprises normative

references, definitions, symbols and abbreviations, an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of references, and appendices.