

MOCK-DOCUMENTARY: QUESTIONING THE FACTUAL  
DISCOURSE OF DOCUMENTARY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **MOCK-DOCUMENTARY: QUESTIONING OF FACTUAL DISCOURSE OF DOCUMENTARY**

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This study aims to examine the relation between mock-documentary and factual discourse of documentary. By factual discourse it is meant to documentary's claim of representing reality. Within this respect, documentary has its own particular codes and conventions to construct its factual discourse. Mock-documentary, simulates these codes and conventions to create a fictional world. In this study, mock-documentary and its relationship with the most popular modes of documentary is examined. Within this study the earliest examples of mock-documentary and recent examples of the form are compared, and it is stated that with the recent examples of the form the critical approach of mock-documentary has been reduced.

Key words: mock, documentary, parody, factuality.

## ÖZ

### UYDURMA BELGESEL (MELGESEL): BELGESELİN GERÇEKLİK SÖYLEMİNİN SORGULANMASI

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Bu çalışma uydurma belgesellerin (melgesellerin) belgeselle kurduđu ilişkiyi incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Böylece uydurma belgesellerin (melgesellerin), belgesellerin gerçeklik söylemi üzerindeki olası etkisini ve bu tür filmlerin belgesele olan eleştirisini ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Belgeselin gerçeklik söylemi belirli kodlar ve geleneklerden oluşur. Uydurma belgesel (melgesel), belgeselin kod ve geleneklerini taklit ederek tamamen uydurma ve genellikle absürd hikayeler anlatır. Bu bağlamda bu çalışma uydurma belgeselin, belgeselin popüler alt türleriyle olan ilişkisini ele almayı hedeflemektedir. Bu çalışma içerisinde uydurma belgeselin (melgeselin) erken örnekleri ile son on yılda yapılmış çağdaş örnekleri karşılaştırılmış ve uydurma belgeselin ilk dönemlerdeki eleştirel özelliklerinin, sonraki örneklerinde görülmediđi öne sürülmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: uydurma, belgesel, parodi, gerçekçilik.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the relation between mock-documentary, and factual discourse of documentary. Within this study I am going to focus on the possible influences of mock-documentary towards the factual discourse of documentary. The factual discourse refers to documentary's claim of representing reality. Within this respect, documentary has its own particular codes and conventions to create its factual discourse. Mock-documentary, simulates these codes and conventions to create a fictional world. In this study I am going to examine the relationship of mock-documentary and documentary. In doing this, I am going to focus on mock-documentary and its relationship with the most popular modes of documentary.

My purpose is to understand the characteristics of mock-documentary, and its stance towards to main-stream documentary. Does mock-documentary influence the factual discourse of popular modes of documentary, what is the main aim of these kinds of forms are the main questions of this study. How mock-documentary questions the factual discourse of documentary is going to be examined through the most popular examples of the mock-documentary form. For this study popular examples of mock-documentary are preferred rather than independent or avant-garde examples. Since popular examples of the form are representatives for the contemporary mock-documentaries. It has been stated that the critical approach of mock-documentary has been decreased within the later examples of the form. In order to make apparent this discussion, the earliest examples of mock-documentary and recent examples of the form were compared. In this context, while *David Holzman's Diary* (1967) and *No Lies* (1973) were taken as the earliest examples of mock-documentary, *A Mighty Wind* (2003) and *Confetti* (2006) were taken as the recent examples of the form.

The significance of this study lies in the wide spread usage of these kinds of narratives in recent years. From science fiction films such as *District 9* (2010), to horror films such as *Paranormal Activity* (2010), use this narrative style to create a more realistic world. Within this respect this study might be a source for future studies.



Mock-documentary is a form of fiction film that uses the style of documentary in order to create imaginary stories. In other words, mock-documentary produces fake discourses by using the style of factual discourses. Both fiction and non-fiction are in the scope of mock-documentary; it is a hybrid form that is the mixture of these two kinds of film forms. While its style represents characteristics of documentary, it is a representative of parodic and satiric characteristics. Although, mock-documentary is in the fiction category, its strong resemblance to documentary is more constitutive in positioning of the form.

Fake documentaries are at least in part fiction films, but we receive them as in part like a documentary. Another way to get at the specificity of the fake documentary is to say that it is fiction received like a documentary (Juhasz & Lerner, 2006).

For that reason to understand the form brings forward its relationship with documentary. There are mainly three approaches that represent different aspects of the form. While scholars like Roscoe and Hight (Roscoe & Hight, 2001) bring forward to similarities between mock-documentary and documentary, Del Jacobs (Jacobs, 2000) characterizes mock-documentary by its relation to fiction film. In addition to these scholars, Paul Ward (Ward, 2005) harmonizes characteristics of documentary and parody in the composition of mock-documentary. Moreover, In addition to Roscoe and Hight, Juhasz and Lerner (Juhasz & Lerner, 2006) focus on relationship of mock-documentary with documentary. Their main focus is to put forward the reflexive characteristics of mock-documentary in relation to documentary. Although these approaches represent different characteristics of mock-documentary, they do not exclude each other. For this study I am going to prefer Roscoe and Hight's approach.

For this study it is important to define the basic characteristics of documentary in order to reveal the relationship between documentary and mock-documentary. In this context, I am going to use Nichols' categorization of different kinds of documentary, which he named as 'the modes of documentary' (Nichols, 2000). I am going to examine especially three modes of documentary, namely the expository mode, the observational mode, and the participatory mode and their

relationship with mock-documentary. Documentary is a form of film that narrates the real events. There are different understandings of documentary. However, there is a general tendency that accepts documentary as a representation of the world as it is. Although documentary cannot be reduced to this single tendency, this tendency has a privileged place in positioning documentary. Although documentary is entitled to reality, in recent years most of the arguments about documentary take place around the truth claim of documentary. According to Beattie (Beattie, 2004), careful researches and representing experts and witnesses relevant to subject, achieve the truth claim of documentary. Within this context, most of the mock-documentaries address this general tendency of positioning documentary, and the promise of truth claim of the genre. Their main aim is to create a fictional world as an actual real world. They represent events as if they actually happen in front of the camera. Most of mock-documentaries ridicule the truth claim of the genre by presenting absurd stories, as if they were well-researched subjects and verified by experts. Mock-documentary achieves these goals by mocking the style of documentary. It ridicules, satirizes and makes parody of the style of documentary by importing exaggerated absurd stories.

In this context, one of the essential questions in here is how documentary constructs truth claim of documentary, and how it creates this reliability among its audience. According to Izod and Kilborn there are codes and conventions<sup>1</sup> that are identified with documentary, which also constitute the general documentary style<sup>2</sup> (Kilborn & Izod, 1997). They briefly mention about the effects of hand held camera, poor lighting and sound quality, and minimum editing style. These are the general characteristics of style of documentary that constructs the style of factuality in documentary. In addition to this, Beattie explains how documentary creates a consensus about its truth claim (Beattie, 2004). According to him, there is audience expectation that requests the validity

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<sup>1</sup> “Conventions include profilmic practices, those relating to events which occur before the camera, and filmic techniques, stylistic features adopted within the text itself,” (Beattie, 2004)

<sup>2</sup> “Style refers to patterns of use, conventions or techniques in which particular meanings and effects are produced” (Beattie, 2004)

of information represented by documentary (Beattie, 2004). As it is mentioned above filmmaker fulfills this demand by representing a well-done research and authorized experts or witnesses (Beattie, 2004). Mock-documentary usually addresses these conventions to ridicule. However, what mock-documentary creates by ridiculing these codes is an essential question. According to Juhasz and Lerner, even popular examples of the form, these narratives always produce a critical distance towards the sobriety of documentary (Juhasz & Lerner, 2006). They also emphasize the parodic and satiric characteristics of mock-documentary that increase the critical effect of the form. According to them rather than mainstream mock-documentaries, independent producers' mock-documentary films produce a critical approach towards the cultural position of documentary (Juhasz & Lerner, 2006).

As it is mentioned above, mock-documentary raises questions about the factual discourse of documentary by mimicking the style of documentary. In some examples of mock-documentary, the style is preserved, as it is. In these kinds of mock-documentaries, the absurdity of the film manifests itself through the film's content rather than its' form. Woody Allen's *Zelig* (1983) is a good example of these kinds of mock-documentaries. Different from these kinds of documentaries, in some examples of the form, documentary style becomes the target of parody. In these kinds of mock-documentaries, film explicitly ridicules the style of documentary. Awkward presenters are exaggerated usage of voice of God narration directly address the inhabitant style of documentary. *Rutles: All You Need is Cash* (1978), is a good example for these kinds of mock-documentaries, which recklessly ridicules the documentary style. The style has a privileged place in mock-documentary. According to Roscoe and Hight the manner of usage style also helpful to determine the different types of mock-documentary. Within this respect, according to them there are mainly three types of mock-documentary. They categorize these types of mock-documentary under the title of 'degrees of mock-documentary' (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). They determine these three degrees of mock-documentary, according to purpose of filmmakers with respect to usage of documentary style and reflexivity within the

text. These degrees are parody, critique and deconstruction (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In the next chapter, I am going to focus on the main characteristics of documentary. In this respect, the general overview of the genre will be discussed. The historical background of documentary, modes of documentary and its relation to science and journalism are going to be discussed. As it is mentioned above, three popular modes of the genre are going to be examined through their relationships with mock-documentary. Within this chapter, my purpose is to expose the relationship between documentary and mock-documentary. Since mock-documentary ridicules cultural and historical position of documentary, it is necessary to understand the formation of documentary, and its position within the cultural-historical world. In this respect, The constructive elements of position of documentary is essential to understand the function of mock-documentary. Also realist movements in cinema are going to be examined in relation to documentary.

The third chapter is going to be a detailed examination of characteristics of mock-documentary. How mock-documentary raise questions about the popular forms of documentary is the main concern of this chapter. In this respect the critical stance of mock-documentary is another main focus of this chapter. The aim of this part is to present a comprehensive understanding of the mock-documentary. The scope of mock-documentary, historical background of the form and the degrees of mock-documentary are going to be examined. Within this chapter mock-documentary and its relation to documentary and fiction films are going to be presented. Different approaches about the form are going to be considered. In this respect, works of Del Jacobs, Roscoe, Hight, Juhasz, Lerner and Paul Ward are going to be discussed. Within this chapter, I state that the later examples of the form represent entertaining characteristics rather than critical characteristics of the form. In order to make apparent the discussions in this chapter, earliest and later examples of the form are going to be analyzed. In this respect as earliest examples of the form, David Holzman's *Diary* (1967) and *No Lies*(1973), that are the constructive prototypes of mock-documentary, and as

recent examples of the form that were produced within the ten years, *A Mighty Wind* (2003) and *Confetti* (2006) are going to be analyzed.

The final chapter is going to present a discussion covering the issues, which are presented in second and third chapters.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **DOCUMENTARY: FINDING THE REAL**

This chapter aims to reveal the complex characteristics of documentary and its relation to mock-documentary. In this way it aims to construct relationship of documentary with mock- documentary. In the first part, general overview of the genre that comprises the historical background, the modes of documentary and relation of the genre with fiction film and science & journalism are going to be examined. In the second part, realism in cinema and its contribution to documentary is going to be presented. The main aim of this chapter is to construct a comprehensive understanding of the role of documentary within the mock-documentary.

#### **2.1. A General Overview: Understanding the Field**

Documentary, often perceived as a factual form of narrative that has direct relationship with the actual world. The perception of documentary as a factual form constitutes its position as a precise and reliable source of information. Even though, there is such a specific understanding of documentary, the formation of documentary represents more complex construction than this single point of view.

There are three main understandings of documentary. The first one characterizes documentary according to its periods, which refers to social, cultural and technological changes that affect both making and understanding of documentary. Within this respect, documentary represents different characteristics in different periods. For example, in the first years of documentary, documentary refers to an artistic attempt that uses crude supplies in order to produce meaningful narrative (Grierson quoted in Aufderheide, 2007). However, documentary filmmakers rejected the creative side of documentary, in 1960's (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In addition to this, Michael Chanan indicates the influences of technological developments<sup>3</sup> and influence

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<sup>3</sup> Also we cannot ignore the changes in social, political, economic and martial fields that affect and also create the technological developments in film industry.

development of television as a medium of broadcasting in the formation of the genre (Chanan, 2007). In this context, while the technological developments in 1960s brought forward a claim of direct cinema filmmakers to represent real life, television documentary became another form of entertainment (Ellis & McLane, 2005). Moreover, as the cultural phenomenon postmodernism that emerged late 1950s (Lyotart, 1979), the factual discourse of documentary began to be questioned and documentary is criticized as an instrument of modernity that reduces the world to a single point of view (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Within the first approach, documentary is categorized according to its dominant understandings in relation to social, cultural and technological changes.

The second approach suggests the examination of the relationship between documentary and fiction. In this respect the comparison between documentary and fiction becomes important to characterize documentary. Theoreticians such as Nichols, Ward, Ellis, McLane, Kilborn, Izod put forward the transitional characteristics of two genre. They also state, that there is no such thing as an absolute documentary or an absolute fiction film. In this context, it is important to mention the relationship between mock-documentary and documentary in terms of non-fiction and fiction film. Since mock-documentary occurs in the crack between fiction and non-fiction, it represents fiction and non-fiction characteristics. It indicates that the relationship between these two forms can serve to create another film form.

The third approach refers to classification of documentary according to its different forms. This approach directly derives from Nichols' categorization of documentary named as "the modes of documentary". According to Nichols documentary represents multiple characteristics of representation. He categorized documentary according its different features. Each mode that Nichols introduces exposes a different stage of documentary. Modes of documentary are also important to characterize mock-documentary. As a form of parody, mock-documentary uses the codes of most popular modes of documentary in order to reach its audience. In this respect, mock-documentary constructs its narrative on the specific forms of documentary.

To give a comprehensive discussion of this part, I am going to move toward a deeper examination of the statements that are mentioned above.

### **2.1.1. Period of Documentary Filmmaking: Historical Background**

What was the motivation of people that engraved the wall of a cave? Of course we do not have to go so far to find out the roots of documenting. However, as Kilborn and Izod indicate, it is the human nature that motivates to keep record about what it is substantial (Kilborn & Izod, 1997). Thus, the idea of recording or documenting did not come up with the invention of the photography or camera. It was already there, but the invention of camera gave it a new form and phase.

The development of documentary represents different formations in different countries, and also there are different approaches that explain the issue (Chanan, 2007). While government supported the formation of documentary in Britain and Russia, in U.S. it was the private foundations that supported documentary. Thus the formations of documentary in those countries represent different characteristics (Chanan, 2007). In addition to Chanan's approach, there are also other approaches about the emergence of the genre. For example, according to Patricia Aufderheide, documentary filmmaking started in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with the first attempt of filmmaking (Aufderheide, 2007). While others such as, Ellis and McLane, believe that documentary filmmaking began its life with Grierson, who described the works of Flaherty as 'documentary' (Ellis & McLane, 2005). Although there are different point of views, all these different aspects indicate that the 1920s are important years for documentary.

According to Kilborn and Izod these were the years that can be seen as the foundation of the documentary tradition (Kilborn & Izod, 1997). Nichols suggests that these achievements should not be understood as intentional achievements to construct a tradition of the documentary, but they should be understood as the attempts to explore cinema as a tool (Nichols, 2001). As Nichols and Ocak indicate, the main aim of the filmmakers, was understanding the medium itself, rather than create a form (Ocak, 2010). Michael Chanan portrays the documentary as an artistic attempt that occurred as a reaction to



commercialized form of film (Chanan, 2007). According to him the origins of documentary derived from the artistic movements in 1920s.

It was the film club movement and art house circuits which took shape during the 20s where the documentary found its real encouragement alongside the experimental short, and this is therefore the birthplace of documentary as an artistic movement (Chanan, 2007).

Trinh T. Minha shares a similar point of view with Chanan, however she indicates that it is the marketing strategy of documentary;

Asserting its independence from the studio and the star system, documentary has its *raison d'être* in a strategic distinction. It puts the social function of film *on the market* (Minha, 1991).

The stand point of Trinh T. Minha is especially true for the U.S.A, where the commercial sponsors support the documentary filmmaking. The formation of documentary in Europe especially in Russia represented different characteristics.

In Soviet Russia, documentary thrived because its fresh-eyed construction of reality fed into the ideological priorities of the Revolution. (Chanan, 2007).

Consequently the earliest formation of documentary represented different characteristics in different political systems. In addition to this, Nichols puts forward the role of British filmmaker John Grierson and Russian filmmaker Dziga Vertov as the leading actors of documentary filmmaking (Nichols, 2001). According to scholars like Nichols, to understand the formation of documentary in Europe, it is important to understand the role of these two filmmakers. In this context, Kilborn and Izod emphasize the close relationship between those two filmmakers and government (Kilborn & Izod, 1997). In this respect they emphasize the influence of government on earliest documentaries (Kilborn & Izod, 1997). According to Aufderheide, there are mainly three actors that constructed the core of the documentary (Aufderheide, 2007).

#### **2.1.1.1. First Pioneers**

Patricia Aufderheide points out that there are chiefly three pioneers that lead to the earliest formation of documentary filmmaking. She briefly mentions the role

of John Grierson, Robert Flaherty and Dziga Vertov (Denis Arkadievich Kaufman) in formation of the earliest documentary.

Each one claimed simultaneously that they told the truth and that they were artists. These two assertions, as we have seen, create the most basic tension in documentary (Aufderheide, 2007).

As Paul Rotha, Patricia Aufderheide introduces Flaherty as a romantic filmmaker who made impressive films that lead the later examples of the form. Aufderheide emphasizes the artistic characteristics of Flaherty that constructed humanistic qualities of his works. Flaherty preferred to make films about people, who live close to nature and his main interest was representing authentic and extinguishing civilizations like in *Nanook of the North* and *Moana* (Ellis & McLane, 2008). Most of his works refer to form of travelogue that took place abroad (Aufderheide, 2007). It is a well-known fact that Flaherty used constructed scenes in most of his films, but he stayed loyal to reality;

His films were not created from make-believe or fakery; all that he shows did happen or had happened in the lives of the people (Ellis & McLane, 2008).

Most of his work gave inspiration to documentary filmmaking, and he affected most of the filmmakers. Like Vertov he was in favour of representing real life, however, he differed in applying this notion to his films. While Vertov preferred to use the editing technique to construct meaning, Flaherty preferred less a dynamic editing. *Nanook of the North (1921)*, *Maona (1926)*, and *Man of Aran (1934)* are examples of his works, in which he combined the artistic endeavour and reality.

John Grierson is another main character who is also well-known as a named father of the genre. He used the word documentary to define Flaherty's film *Maona (1926)* in the *New York Sun* in 1926 (Ellis & McLane, 2008). Although Grierson and Flaherty influenced and enhanced each other, Patricia Aufderheide also mentions the failed collaboration between Flaherty and Grierson that ended with *Industrial Britain (1934)*. She points out that the main difference between the two filmmakers, was that while Flaherty aspired to present the artistic soul of

documentary and exceeded the budget, Grierson had to think of the feasibility of the work and could not allow any more artistic attempts by Flaherty (Aufderheide, 2007).

With Grierson, documentary became a movement that aimed to enhance people's vision of the world in which they live. Aufderheide emphasizes Grierson's strong tendency to use documentary as an instrument of education and his close relationship to the state;

Grierson became more strident about the social function of documentary, even at the expense of the "beautiful". In 1942 he asserted "The documentary idea was not basically a film idea at all" but "a new for public education" (Aufderheide, 2007).

Aufderheide frames Grierson as a producer rather than a director. *Drifters* (1928) is the only one of his films, that he worked on as a director. Later on, he worked with directors to produce other films (Aufderheide, 2007). *Drifters* has an important place in documentary filmmaking history.

Beginning with his own first film, *Drifters*, in 1929, British documentary advanced to become an established movement. Most of the characteristics we associate with the term documentary and see evident in the films to which is applied were present by the mid thirties (Ellis & McLane, 2008).

Grierson has an important place in the history of documentary filmmaking. As Ellis and McLane put forward, he was not only a filmmaker but also a theoretician that constructed the core of the aesthetics, ethics and contents of the genre (Ellis & McLane, 2008). *The Song of Ceylon* (1934), *Housing Problems* (1935), and *Night Mail* (1936) are some examples of films that he produced.

Another leading actor in early documentary filmmaking is Dziga Vertov (Denis Arkadievich Kaufman). His main concern was to bring forward the potential of film in representing reality (Aufderheide, 2007). One of his main goals was taking film out of the theatres and inserting it into life itself (Aufderheide, 2007). As Ellis and McLane indicates;

His iconoclasm was intended to free film from bourgeois obfuscations of story and the effete pleasures of theatrical performance in order to arrive at the truths of the actual world (Ellis & McLane, 2008)

Like Grierson he had tendency to see the film as a strong tool for the enhancement of particular ideology (Aufderheide, 2007). According to Aufderheide his main contribution to documentary filmmaking is his editing style and she frames him as an editor as well as a director. His short film series named *Kino Pravda* (1922-1925) was a pioneer of the direct cinema/cinéma vérité movements in 1960s (Ellis & McLane, 2008). *Cinema Eye (Kino-Glaz)* (1924), *Man with a Movie Camera* (1929), and *Tri Pesni o Lenine* (1934) are examples of his films.

These three actors have different contributions to the genre. While Flaherty put forward the artistic characteristics of the genre, Grierson as a producer, formed the genre as an enhancement tool (Aufderheide, 2007). Dziga Vertov created the language of the documentary through editing (Aufderheide, 2007). These three filmmakers constructed the core of documentary filmmaking. However, they did not only create the principles of documentary, but they also formed the earliest formation of ideological characteristics of the genre. General attribution of documentary, which refers to didactic and objective characteristics of the genre, stems from the first years of documentary filmmaking. Grierson has an important role in the formation of documentary.

In this context, when we approach the first pioneers' works within a critical perspective, we find out that their films also function as a specific world-view. In this context while Flaherty presented the unknown, exotic abroad, he also represented the dominant world-view of bourgeoisie. Grierson and Vertov never tried to hide their aim to spread a specific ideology of state. Both of them saw film as a medium of enlightenment that can reach many people. As Kilborn and Izod indicate about Grierson's attitude

“Grierson's strongly held belief was that documentary could be used as an effective tool in the task of providing cultural or educational enlightenment (Grierson, quoted in Izod & Kilborn).

In addition to Grierson in Soviet Union, Dziga Vertov saw cinema as a tool for spreading the ideology of state (Izod & Kilborn, 1997), and his works were affected by the ideology of socialism;

Dziga Vertov's views on what documentary could achieve are closely connected with, and determined by, the ideas which underpinned the Soviet system in which he lived and worked (Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

While Dziga Vertov praised the socialist regime with language of cinema, Grierson constructed the core language for documentary and stay in tune with the expedience of the state. As Ellis indicates, Grierson's main purpose was to create a medium and Grierson had three main concerns in constructing the language of documentary. As Philip Rosen indicates, Grierson's first main concern was to create a language that could address different people at the same time. His second concern was to construct an audience profile that would have matched with this new form of film. In this context his main target audience was the well-educated middle class intellectuals (Rosen, 1993). The third concern was the last step to achieve these goals, which was defining the role of a filmmaker;

In Grierson, the virtuous filmmaker fulfils a duty to educate, to transmit such knowledge to the modern, divided mass, for whom it is otherwise inaccessible (Rosen, 1993).

To achieve these goals Grierson gathered mostly well educated people around the documentary movement (Ellis, 2000). As a result, the documentary movement became an endeavour for creating a film language by intellectuals to reach to specific group of people (intellectuals), to make them aware and motivated for the public interest. In other words, for Grierson, the documentary movement was an essential attempt to create one language to achieve the goals of modernity. Also he was very concerned with spreading the ideology of government (Ellis, 2000). The government must have liked Grierson's idea, so that they gave him support. In this context Ian Aitken points out the close relationship between British documentary movement and government institutions;

Between 1927 and 1939 the movement became established within two consecutive government film units: the Empire Marketing Board Film Unit (1927- 33), and the General Post Office Film Unit (1933-39) (Aitken, 1990).

This close relationship had an immense effect on the formation of the earliest documentary films. These two units did not only support producing films, but they also educated young people.

The training at the E.M.B Film Unit and subsequently the General Post Office Film Unit, was ideological as well as technical and aesthetic. The young filmmaker exposed to it, came to share Grierson's broad social purposes and developed an extraordinary loyalty to him and to his goals. It was in this way that the British documentary movement was given shape and impetus (Ellis, 2000).

Actually Grierson's strategy corresponds with what Gramsci suggests. According to Gramsci, a system should create its own intellectuals in order to function properly. In this context, in order to change an existing pattern of society, it is vital to raise intellectuals that would produce and apply new cultural codes of the coming system. Based on Gramsci's approach, what Grierson formed as the documentary movement was to create intellectuals to apply the new form's codes and principles.

Both Grierson and Vertov were supported by the state. As a result, the documentary movement was shaped according to the will of state and became institutionalized. Nichols states that this close relationship has a two-sided effect;

An institutional framework also imposes an institutional way of seeing and speaking, which functions as a set of limits, or conventions, for the filmmaker and audience alike (Nichols, 2001).

Grierson's works such as *Drifters* (1929), *Industrial Britain* (1933), and *Night Mail* (1936); and Vertov's works *A Man with a Movie Camera* (*Chelovek s Kino-apparatom*) (1929), and *Three Songs for Lenin* (*Tri Pesni o Lenine*) (1934), are examples that are identified with the ideals of these filmmakers.

In addition to Grierson and Vertov, the works of Robert Flaherty also represent a particular world-view. Although his purpose was exploring and expressing the artistic features of the genre, his films were subjected to his middle class intellectual perspective. In this context, *Nanook of the North* is a good example, which also exemplifies Grierson's attitude of documentary. Flaherty's romanticism about the primitive culture becomes real in the character of Nanook. Actually, Nanook was a fictional character that Flaherty created to represent life in the wild. Although many scholars suggest that Nanook represents the real characteristics of traditional Eskimo man, we cannot ignore Flaherty's attribution about how a traditional Eskimo man should be. For example, in some parts of the film, Flaherty becomes a person that introduces the modern life apparatuses to Nanook and his family. In these frames Nanook and his family are represented as savages that become enchanted by devices of modern world. Although Nanook is acquaintance about technological apparatuses, he pretends as though he does not know anything. In these frames, the relationship between Flaherty and Nnook becomes a relationship of superior and inferior. In addition to this, Flaherty's artistic perspective about the wild life of North manifests itself through his preference of music. The usage of classic music, frames the life in the North around the western understanding. Beyond these, in some parts of the film the practices of Nanook and his family are interpreted as correspondence to modern life practices. By doing so, Flaherty naturalised the practices of the modern world as if they are the natural outcomes of the life. He usually makes these interpretations by using inter-titles, which give us direct and clear directives about the images. Also, he gave a universal value to modern life practices; as if people do the same things in every part of the world. In other words Flaherty, may have unwittingly, universalized and naturalized the early capitalist life style within his films. As Althusser points out, we were born into the world of ideology as a component of the system. Based on Althusser's statement, it can be said that Flaherty just represented his own world as a real world, since it was the only world that he knew.

Consequently, although documentary started as an artistic and reflexive attempt towards to mainstream commercial film, it became another institutionalized form

of narrative. Flaherty, Grierson and Vertov gave a voice to documentary, and chanted the basis of the genre. Vertov and Grierson led documentary movement outside the cinema saloons, and brought it to schools, factories, and halls. Vertov especially, made a great effort to bring documentary and people together. Both Vertov and Grierson wanted to introduce modern life to enhance the lives of people all around the country. In addition to this, Flaherty introduced primitive cultures to modern societies. By producing such films, he unintentionally reproduced the perspective of modern world view in a different level.

Later on, with television documentary continuing to change and transform, television itself became another actor in formation of documentary filmmaking.

#### **2.1.1.2. Television: The Illusion of Survival**

In 1950s, TV began to become an area for documentary and it brought a new phase to documentary filmmaking (Chanan, 2007). In Britain, Documentary Department was founded in 1953 and it provided a stage for documentary filmmakers (Ellis & McLane, 2007). There were also other foundations that supported documentary filmmaking such as *The Independent Television Authority*, *National film Board of Canada*, and *Tames Television* (Ellis & McLane, 2007). Between 1950 and 1970, education was an important issue for television producers, for that reason, documentary could easily be found among the program schedules (Ellis & McLane, 2005). As an outcome of this collaboration, documentary began to adapt to television and its characteristics began to change (Kilborn & Izod, 1997). Ellis and McLane map out three new characteristics of documentaries in this period;

First is the documentary based on a newsworthy subject, something that is of current, wide spread interest. This is television's major contribution to the evolution of documentary subjects and forms, a genre in which uniquely effective. ... Second are the historical and often nostalgic subjects, odd compilation series and programs. ... Lastly there is what could be called "human interest," the curiosity we have about others, their personalities, and their problems. This sort of content is most manifested in the use of direct cinema, (Ellis & McLane, 2005).



Although television gave a place to documentary, as Ellis and McLane indicate, this collaboration did not last for a long time. With commercialization in television the popularity of documentary decreased, especially when it is compared to other forms (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). In the 1990s, documentary had to face the harsh rules of the market

Faced with the question in 1991 or 1992 (as to how documentaries would fare in the coming years), many British documentarists would have predicted a bleak future. Refranchising ITV and allowing Channel 4 to raise its own advertising revenue were bound to create a much more competitive broadcasting world. And traditionally it was sport, feature films, drama and light entertainment which were the winners in a rating game (Triffitt, quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

This new structure of television inevitably affected the formation of documentary, and the motivation of the documentary filmmaker (Ellis & McLane, 2005). Documentary changed its axis from education, politics, and science to entertainment. It did not give up these issues, but it made these issues more enjoyable and soft. Another new challenge that television presented was the issue of duration; with television, documentary should have to adapt the flow of program. For that reason it had to adapt to the new time schedule of television

The fixed times of television resulted in some strains, with insufficient time available to deal with a subject, or padding required to fill out the half hour, even though less time would have been sufficient (Ellis & McLane, 2005).

In addition to these Garnham states that, with television the artistic endeavor of documentary filmmaker came to an end, since they have to collaborate with the interests of producers. According to him there is no space for new and creative attempts, but the ratings guarantee programs. Garnham, also emphasizes that both television broadcasting and television documentary claim to represent the world as it is. Thus, television documentaries developed according to this statement. Garnham describes this kind of documentary as a mode of documentary and he emphasizes

This mode sees the act of communication as essentially passive and its tools, for instance the camera, as neutral. It stresses the recording function of film or TV rather than its manipulative and illusion creating function. (Garnham, 1972)

According to Garnham, technological developments obscure the artificiality and help with creating the illusion of objective representation. His argument is based on the construction of a neutral framework as a tool of status quo. And he emphasizes that documentary strengthens this status quo, by claiming to represent the real world.

In addition to these, the cable and satellite technology that arose in 1970s brought a new perspective to classic broadcasting understanding. With this profit oriented technology, came specialized channels that made more room for documentary (Ellis & McLane, 2007). Discovery Channel, History Channel, HBO, and CNN are the channels that support documentary filmmaking. Channels such as Discovery are specialized in documentary broadcasting (Ellis & McLane, 2007). According to Ellis and McLane, these channels were different from other television channels, because they provided more freedom to documentary filmmakers. These kinds of channels also develop a specific understanding of documentary by producing specific prototypes of the genre. As Nichols states, they become authorities in assessment of documentary filmmaking. In other words they produce the same kinds of films in different formats<sup>4</sup>.

In addition to this, Roscoe and Hight put forward the role of digital technology through the words of McQuire;

With the advent of digital television and interactive television, and especially the potential of the internet as a site for exhibition and distribution of documentary, we are likely to see new traditions, styles and filmmaking agendas that transcend the divergent institutional factors that have tended to shape

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<sup>4</sup> What Adorno states for culture industry, is valid for these kinds of channels. As a production of culture industry, these channels only create an illusion of freedom by producing the same things in different formats. As a result we are subjected to same messages in different styles, which also helps to create single minded masses.

documentary within film and television (McQuire, quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Consequently, television created a new form of documentary that was mostly based on entertainment. The interference of documentary and television mainly constitutes three parts which are: the first years of documentary, crisis of documentary in 1990s, and documentary in new broadcasting technologies. With television documentary has become a new form, and takes its place as another kind of program. As Garnham introduces Norman Swallow's conclusion about television

It may well be that television in our time will not be remembered for its new dramatists, its rediscovery of satire or its presentation of controversy, but for the programme of a small group of men who have used the TV documentary as a means of *expressing their own visions of our age* (Swallow quoted in Garnham).

Television reduced the perspective of documentary to a single point of view. It constructed the general understanding of documentary, which is still valid today. Changes in broadcasting regimes influenced and lead to the transformations in documentary. The changes in these fields brought the new styles and quests in documentary filmmaking. In terms of mock-documentary, television documentary became another (maybe the most dominant) object of mocking. Most of the recent examples of mock-documentary, address these documentary formations. Television also became another area for mock-documentary, as most of the popular mock-documentaries, such as *Bad News Tour* and *Forgotten Silver* are for television.

In addition to these, new cultural quests also affected documentary and possibly, postmodern discourses presented the most coercive challenges to documentary. As a production of the modern world, documentary is affected by postmodern inquisitions. As Roscoe and Hight declare;

As well as institutional changes, documentary has also faced a wider challenge from postmodernist discourses (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Jameson asserts that postmodern discourses evolved between late 1950s and beginning of 1960s (Jameson, 1984). The questioning of truth and reality in postmodern approach have challenged the cultural formation of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). According to Rosen with postmodern discourses, documentary is identified with the ideology of modernism and enlightenment, and as a result of these new challenges documentary has invited questioning of itself (Rosen, 1993). Debates on reality, truth and knowledge brought new aspects to documentary. Most of the postmodern arguments focus on the articulation and representation of this knowledge and information (Minha, 1990). Thus, the documentary representation in relation to reality and truth became the centre of postmodern critics (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Scholars like Trinh T. Minha question the distribution and articulation of documentary and its effects on knowledge. As a result with notions of postmodernism the practice of making and understanding of documentary has been challenged and changed.

Especially classic objective argument of documentary became the target of these discourses. With cultural and institutional changes the formation of documentary has changed (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). The earliest examples of mock-documentary occurred in late 1960s and their main concern was to question the place of documentary in society. They mainly address the dominant form of documentary; direct cinema/cinema vérité and classic objective argument of documentary. Within this respect, mock-documentary can be seen as the early production of postmodern discourses.

As it is mentioned before, documentary represents different narrative styles that represent different approaches. Nichols introduces them as *the modes of documentary*, and they are essential to understand the field.

### **2.1.2. Documentary Modes**

As it is mentioned before, the nature of documentary is open to variety. Documentary filmmakers have constituted different styles and different approaches. As Nichols puts forward that there is no single style of documentary, but there are different types of styles, and each style has different qualities and different relationships with its audiences (Nichols, 2001). Within this approach

Nichols introduces six main modes of documentary, which are named as *the poetic mode*, *the expository mode*, *the observational mode*, *the participatory mode*, *the reflexive mode*, and *the performative mode*. All these six modes constitute the subgenres of documentary and also they depict different forms and approaches of documentary. According to Izod and Kilborn these modes are important to separate different types of documentary (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). These modes are also important for understanding mock-documentary, since it uses the codes of most popular modes of documentary. Most mock-documentaries mainly use the expository, observational and participatory modes (Roscoe & Hight, Jacobs).

*The poetic mode* represents a more abstract form that departs its subject from the standard understanding of time and space continuity. It makes fragmentation of the historical world according to aesthetic formation and subjectivity (Nichols, 2001). Nichols puts forward the avant-garde modernist characterization of poetic mode that is usually associated with 1920s (Nichols, 2001). For Izod and Kilborn it depicts two important characteristics. The first one is making an argument and is replaced by making an implication (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Secondly the expressiveness of the film becomes more important than the reality itself (Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

Depart from the poetic mode; *the expository mode* puts forward an argument about its subject. It is the most didactic mode. It addresses directly its viewer. It uses narrative voice that is also known as the voice of God. This narrative voice directs and informs the audience with a single point of view (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Nichols explains this voice

The voice of God tradition fostered the cultivation of the professionally trained, richly toned male voice of commentary that proved a hallmark of the expository mode even though some of the most impressive films chose less polished voices precisely for the credibility gained by avoiding too much polish (Nichols, 201)

According to Roscoe and Hight the expository mode of documentary mostly represents and naturalizes the leading ideology by applying scientific, objective and realistic points of view, as well as a persuasive nature (Roscoe & Hight,

2001). One of its key features is representing an argument and accomplishing that argument with an objective and scientific manner (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). The expository mode is also adapted by most of the television documentaries (Kilborn & Izod, 1997).

Since it is one of the popular modes of documentary, most of the mock-documentaries prefer to make parody of this mode. Most of them present absurd arguments and while doing this they keep the style as it is in the original one. Their main aim is not to disrupt the style, but construct the style as a confederate of the absurd world. As in the expository mode of documentary, the narrations of these kinds of mock-documentaries are dependent on the voice over. In other words, the God-voice style of narration dominates the film. Most of these films fabricate their subject as they represent a story from a socio-historical world. They usually use fake newsreels, achieve footage and fake interviews. Woody Allen's *Take the Money and Run* and *Zelig* are good examples of this kind of mocking. Both of these films are dependent on specific historical characters. While *Take the Money and Run* presents a very dangerous, but awkward criminal named as Virgil Starkwell, the character in *Zelig* presented as a phenomena of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. God-voice narrative, fake interviews and footages construct the narrative of the films. In addition to Allen's films, *The Rutles: All You Need is Cash* (1978) is another mock-documentary that addresses the expository mode. Different from Allen's works, in *The Rutles*, Eric Idle explicitly parodies the style of the documentary. BBC style of documentaries is parodied. Idle, uses a male presenter that behaves awkwardly in front of the camera. *The Rutles* addresses the films about Beatles. As well, some sketches in television programs such as Monty Python's *Flying Circus* and *Saturday Night Live* address the expository mode as an object of parody.

As Nichols puts forward one of the reasons for seeking new mode is the insufficiency of previous mode (Nichols, 2001). As a mode of documentary *the observational mode* depicts this quest in a remarkable manner. For Kilborn and Izod the new generation of documentary filmmakers tried to avoid distant and didactic manner of expository mode, and they were looking for more a intimate

form of representing the real world (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Although Nichols' explanation is notable, we cannot ignore the new quest in marketing for new forms of narrations<sup>5</sup>. The observational mode aroused in 1960s and developments in film technology affected the constitution of the mode. According to Michael Chanan, this period of time represents important changes in documentary filmmaking (Chanan, 2007). With the mobilization of the camera, filmmakers became more independent and they could easily record the spontaneous nature of everyday life (Nichols, 2001). Filmmakers main concern is observing rather than intervening (Nichols, 2001). There is no voice over or aesthetic arrangements in this mode (Nichols, 2001). The observational mode brought two forms of film. The first one is *cinéma vérité*, which is identified with French documentary. The other one is Direct Cinema which is identified with American documentary (Winston quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Different from other modes of documentary, the observational mode represents everyday life rather than making an argument about it (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). However, according to Garnham this mode of documentary strengthens the illusion of reality and serves the dominant ideology. The observational mode of documentary lead the first examples of mock-documentary. In one of the earliest examples of mock-documentary, *David Holzman's Diary* arose as a *critique* of direct cinema/*cinéma vérité*. The later examples of the form continue to address this mode as their target. In these kinds of mock-documentaries, the characteristics of fiction are hidden very well. Although everything is staged, film represents them like actual events. The usage of hand held cameras, poor lighting and editing serve to obscure the fictional feature of the films. The actors and actresses are represented as if they were real and ordinary. Events are presented as if they were events that unfold before the camera. These kinds of mock-documentaries can be categorized as most the convulsive types of the form, since they easily play the codes of reality perception of the audience. Most

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<sup>5</sup>According Izod and Kilborn it also depends on the new requirements of government and associated sponsors to apply more social and domestic politics after World War II. Of course they primarily suggest the influence of television and new phases of marketing depend on television (Izod & Kilborn,; 1997).

of these mock-documentaries represent absurd events that aim to irritate audience. *Man Bites Dog* is a good example of these kinds of mock-documentaries. In this film, a group of students aim to shot a serial killer's daily life. The film questions the relationship between the subject and filmmaker. The film also questions the choice of subject and the attitude of the filmmakers to the subject. Hand held cameras, poor lighting, and the spontaneous flow of events serve the aim of the film. *No Lies*, *Confetti*, and *The Blair Witch Project* are examples of these kinds of mock-documentaries.

*The participatory mode*, which was named as interactive mode in 1991 by Nichols, depends on the participation of the filmmaker as a witness (Nichols, 2001). Differing from others, in this mode audience has encounters with the filmmaker (Nichols, 2001). Participatory mode is mostly used by social sciences, especially by anthropologists (Nichols, 2001). This mode is also another preferred mode for mock-documentary. These kinds of mock-documentaries usually target the common cultural beliefs of a society. In this respect, not only do they parodise the documentary style, but they also parodise the cultural established beliefs. They can also create a new legend, which is totally absurd. *The Forgotten Silver* is a good example of these kinds of mock-documentaries. The film represents a New Zealand filmmaker's unknown life. Film states that most of the inventions in cinema, including the cinema itself were the invention of one man named Colin Mckenzie. The film perfectly represents its argument and provides many evidences to support its argument. Also this film represents the characteristics of expository and observational modes of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). *The History of White people in America* (1985) is another example of these kinds of mock-documentaries. In this television mock-documentary series, the life style of middle class white American people is introduced. Religion, ceremonies, family life, are the basic concerns of the film. Film accomplishes its task by examining a middle class American family's daily life. As it is mentioned above *The Forgotten Silver*, *Water Melon Woman*, and *The History of White people in America* (Vol. 1-2) are examples of these kinds of mock-documentaries.



*The reflexive mode* of documentary brings forward the matter of documenting process while it deals with a subject (Nichols, 2000). It is the most radical mode of documentary that provokes and invites its audience to question the process of documentary. The reflexive mode emerged in 1970s and 1980s as a reaction to the observational mode (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). It is essential to emphasize that this mode is sometimes perceived as mock- documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). For example Nichols himself introduces *David Holzman's Diary* as an example of reflexive documentary in his book *Introduction to Documentary*<sup>6</sup>.

And as the last mode, Nichols introduces *the performative mode* that accentuates the subjective feature of any experience (Nichols, 2001). As Paul Ward indicates, it is difficult to position this mode and it can be taken as reflexive mode because of its emphasis over the subjectivity (Ward, 2005).

According to Paul Ward the relations of these styles as modes of documentary is crucial to understand documentary (Ward, 2005). For Nichols each mode indicates the quest of new and better ways to represent reality, and also represent the development of the genre in itself (Nichols, 2001). In addition to this it is important to indicate that the relationship between modes is permeable; each style can adopt other's feature of style, however they are not replaceable with each other (Nichols quoted in Ward, 2005). The modes of documentary reveal the different aspects of documentary. It is significant to express that these modes are not stable or fixed and they are subject to change. Each of them represents the conventions of the documentary in different styles.

In this case it would be a vain effort to try to reduce documentary to a single style. As Paul Ward highlights the same point by declaring;

One simply cannot come up with a model of documentary that explains all documentary texts and their variants, precisely because it is an 'open concept' with 'fuzzy boundaries (Ward, 2005).

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<sup>6</sup> While this is a good example of blurred boundaries between documentary and fiction film, the risk of misplacement of these two categories cannot be ignored.

It is essential to understand that documentary is not a whole or complete genre, but rather as Nichols claims documentary is a genre that continues to develop, change it grows over time (Nichols, 2001). As Paul Ward emphasizes despite this unstable and changeable nature of documentary there is one thing that stays the same about the genre, which is the assertion of truth claim of documentary. According to Ward “how” documentary represents this truth claim is subject to change rather than the claim itself (Ward, 2005).

Consequently, although documentary represents different modes of style and approaches about representing the world, it changes over time. This is the common point of the modes of the genre, it even takes more radical ways as reflexive mode or didactic manner as classic expository mode. In addition to this, modes represent the varieties of approaches towards the factual discourse. As Nichols puts forward, there arises the insufficiency of the previous mode in representing the reality (Nichols quoted in Ward, 2005).

### **2.1.3. Nonfiction and Fiction**

The relationship of documentary and fiction film is essential to understand the documentary. As a form of film, documentary is identified with non-fiction film that devotes itself representing the real world. Other film forms such as classic Hollywood films or experimental films are identified with the fiction category that represents imaginary worlds. There is an accepted discrepancy between two forms of film that disguise the common points between these two forms. Many scholars point out the importance of relationship between documentary and fiction film to understand the documentary. While Nichols suggests that all films are documentary (Nichols, 2001), Paul Ward points out that the difference between fiction and non-fiction is not the matter of form or style but the standpoints of these two forms towards the world they represent (Ward, 2005). In addition to this according to Izod and Kilborn, the main common point of these two forms is sharing a narrative structure (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). For Nichols relationship between documentary and fiction film is essential to understand the documentary (Nichols, 2001). As with Nichols, Ward comes with a similar suggestion. According to Ward looking at the relationship of non-fiction,

documentary and fiction is a good beginning to understand documentary (Ward, 2005). Thus in order to understand documentary it is essential to look at its relationship with fiction. Also examining this relationship will also help to figure out the relationship between mock-documentary and documentary.

For Nichols there are similarities and differences between documentary and fiction films. However in the beginning of his book *“Introduction to Documentary”* he puts away the distinction between fiction and documentary and he brings a different point of view that suggests “every film is documentary” since all of them embody factual representations to the real world (Nichols, 2001). He puts these two forms under the same roof and after that he highlights the differences between two forms. As Nichols suggests;

There are two kinds of film: (1) documentaries of wish-fulfillment and (2) documentaries of social representation. Each type tells a story, but the stories, or narratives, are of different sorts (Nichols, 2000).

According to Nichols fictions and non-fiction films represent different kinds of world, however, while doing this they can use each other’s style (Nichols, 2001). For example music is an indispensable component that increases the dramatic influences in documentaries. Hand held cameras, and voice over can be used in some fictions films to increase the reality effect of the film. Thus as Nichols suggests there is an exchange of styles between these two categories. Aufderheide indicates the shared structure of narrative in documentary and fiction film;

They are stories, they have beginnings, middles, and ends; they invest viewers in their characters, they take viewers on emotional journeys. They often refer to classic story structure (Aufderheide, 2007).

In explaining the relationship between non- fiction and fiction Paul Ward follows a different path from Nichols. He gives prominence to distinction between non-fiction film and documentary. Although he categorizes the documentary as a non-fiction film form, he emphasizes there are levels of non- fiction films that separate it from documentary (Ward, 2005). According to Ward:

All documentary films are non-fictional, but not all non-fictional films are documentaries

As non-fiction films he refers to lecture films or newsreel films that are categorized as “lower categories” of non-fiction film by Grierson (Ward, 2005). These kinds of films are far from any systematic of filmmaking, and basically they only represent the events as raw materials (Grierson quoted in Ward, 2005).

Parallel to Nichols, Ward argues that there is a permeable relationship between fiction and non-fiction categories (Ward, 2005). According to Nichols and Ward both categories tell stories, and both of them can adopt each other’s styles to construct a narrative. However, they are different from each other in terms of the functions and purposes of the styles (quoted in Roscoe Hight, 2001). Paul Ward propounds this difference between fictions and documentary as:

There is nothing inherently ‘fictional’ about narrative structure and the editing styles that have developed to tell stories. The key distinction is never one of form or style, but rather of purpose and context (Ward, 2005).

Documentary constructs itself through a real story and it aims to reveal what really happened. However, fiction constructs itself on the imaginary world, even taking its subject from the real event, it is apparent that it is constructed according to a scenario. As Nichols indicates documentary represents *the* world, whereas fiction represents *a* world (Nichols quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

Similar to Nichols and Ward, Izod and Kilborn point out the differences between these two categories in terms of their manner of representing their subjects. They bring forward the “motivation” of the filmmakers. According to them documentary filmmakers and fiction filmmakers are motivated. In this respect they mention about the *documentary impulse* that leads the process of documentary (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). This impulse requires giving privilege to represent events as they are (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). In other words it requires patience to give permission to allow to occur reality in front of the camera (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Obviously, manipulative and script based fiction films do not require such an impulse. Their motivation differs in terms of this impulsions. In

the context of the relationship between fiction and non-fiction, Izod and Kilborn mainly emphasize on the narrative. According to them the formation of narrative represents similar and distinctive features in documentary and fiction (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Since all narrative requires an order of telling story, also it requires making decision to make that order which destroys the inviolability of the real event (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Thus, documentary necessarily has to use the manipulative tool of fictions in order to decode its subject. It even claims to represent the real world; it has to transform that world. As Izod and Kilborn indicate that a documentarist does not only record the world but he/she also has to interpret that world (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). As a consequence, both fiction and documentary represent a kind of interpretation of the world, however they differ in terms of motivation and level of the interpretation of the world. In terms of mock-documentary, the relationship between documentary and fiction represents a complex relationship. As a fiction film, mock-documentary represents an imaginary world; however, within its form it produces the claim of representing real world. Mock-documentary and documentary as a style, share a similar stand point towards the world that they represent. However in their contextual background they represent different perspectives. While documentary provides its truth claim with its style and context, mock-documentary destroys its own truth claim within its context and also sometimes within its style.

Both fictions and documentary represent people, but each category differs from the other in manner of representing them. In documentaries characters refer to the real people. However, in fiction characters are double indexical bound. They refer to imaginary characters of a narrative and also they refer to the real people living in the real world (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Characters in fictions perform an act, but subjects in documentary do not perform, they are expected to be themselves. As Nichols indicates;

“People” are treated as *social actors*: they continue to conduct their lives more or less as they would have done without the presence of a camera (Nichols,2001).

In this case the presence of camera becomes a dilemma that compels the documentary to present the world as it is<sup>7</sup>. In documentary characters are witnesses or experts and they share their information (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Thus, according to Izod and Kilborn, they are perceived as subjects rather than characters (Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

However, in mock-documentaries the issue of characters becomes more complex. This is especially true with the usage of cameo appearances, where people acting as themselves blur the boundaries. In mock- documentary cameo appearances are preferred to strengthen the fake discourses. While characters appear themselves as in the real world, they totally represent a discourse that belongs to an imaginary world. The characters in *Forgotten Silver* and *Zelig* are good examples of these kinds of cameo appearances. For example in *Forgotten Silver* Costa Botes and Peter Jackson take a place the in film as filmmakers as they do in real life. However, they present fake characters that searching the truth about an unknown filmmaker. Susan Sontag in *Zelig* is another good example. Sontag appears as she is, and she introduces us to *Zelig* as a cultural phenomena of 20<sup>th</sup> century. As a scholar she has certain credibility and she uses her credibility to represent a fake historical character. Within this respect people in mock- documentary are perceived as both subjects and characters of the film. Mock-documentary plays this subject and character transitions and creates another level of framing the people in front of the camera.

#### **2.1.3.1. Audience**

Audience is an important constituent that determines the line between documentary and fiction film. Attitudes and expectations of audience towards the two categories are different. Nichols brings forward the importance of audience interpretation:

As stories, film of both type call on us to interpret them, and as “true stories,” films calls on us to believe them. Interpretation is a matter of grasping how the

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<sup>7</sup> The presence of camera can make people behave differently, for Nichols and Izod & Kilborn the existence of camera bring issues of acting prudently, differently and changing in personality.

form or organization of the film conveys meanings and values. Belief is a question of our response to these meanings and values (Nichols, 2001).

Similar to Nichols, for Ward the interpretation of audience is important to understand documentary:

Central to an understanding of 'documentary' is the spectatorial activity of actually interpreting the material (Ward, 2005)

The interpretation of audience is important, and this interpretation does not depend on an absolute free will. There are some constituents that lead the audience interpretation. The most important of this constituent is the truth claim of documentary. The way documentary constructs this claim constitutes a different audience expectation from the fictions. Nichols also indicates that the relationship of the films with the reality has an influence in this relationship:

The most fundamental difference between the expectations prompted by narrative fiction and those prompted documentary lies in the status of the text in relation to the historical world ( Nichols quoted in Kilborn & Izod, 1997).

Documentary and fictions constitute different expectations; their relationship to the socio-historical world is a fundamental component of constructing this expectation. While fictions represent an imaginary world and promise entertainment, documentary promises to give information, educate or represent the real situations in the real world. The main difference between these two forms is their position towards the world. Fiction film does not have a claim that it represents real events with high fidelity to its original source; however, documentary builds itself on the claim of representing reality. Nichols depicts, fiction film constructs itself on wishes and dreams, but documentary constructs itself on social reality (Nichols, 2001). The aim of documentary is demonstrating the world we already know. Nichols and Ward's emphasis of this difference does not come from their representing styles of subjects, but their positions towards their subject.

Also, Patricia Aufderheide emphasizes the truth-value of documentary for audience and she underlines the placement of documentary through this expectation;

The truthfulness, accuracy, and trustworthiness of documentaries are important to us all because we value them precisely and uniquely for these qualities (Aufderheide, 2007).

Finally it is essential to briefly mention about Nichols' three formulations in the context of audience and its relation to documentary. Nichols suggests three formulations of documentary in order to mapping out the relationship between audience and documentary. Each of them includes different combinations of components of documentary, which are defined as filmmakers, people (who are represented in the film), and audience (Nichols, 2001). The first one is: "*I speak about them to you*", basically refers to documentaries that filmmaker telling a story about others. In these documentaries, stimulating the sense of audience is important (Nichols, 2001). There is a person (it is usually filmmaker itself) that introduces audience the issue (Nichols, 2001).

The second one is "*It speaks about them or it to us*". These are the documentaries that mainly use a narrator to present their subjects, and audience only hears the voice of the narrator (Nichols, 2001). In these documentaries audience is addressed as a passive viewer (Nichols, 2001).

The third one is "*I or We speak about us to you*" in these documentaries filmmaker(s) is/are the subject itself (Nichols, 2001). These kinds of documentaries are usually far from being formal (Nichols, 2001). He uses these three formulations to reveal different relationships between filmmaker, people in the film and audience. According to Nichols these three formulations have different approaches to their subject, and each of them constructs a different relationship with their audience. In the context of mock-documentary, it plays with these three formulations to construct its narrative. Also by playing these formulations it also questions the relationship between documentary and its audience.



Mock-documentary has a different kind of relationship with its audience. Its relationship with audience is different from classic fiction films and documentary. In most classic fiction films, the aim of narrative is obscuring the artificial characteristics of the film. Audience is expected to identify with the film. In documentary audience is expected to adopt the world presented in documentary as possible as it can be. However, most mock-documentary aim to breakthrough the identification constructed by fiction film. They also aim to disturb the audience adaptation of the world presented by the film. Different from these, in mock-documentary, audience is to be expected to understand the fictional features of the film. They are asked to see the mocking or exaggerated portrait of the world presented by the film. In some examples of the form, such as *Punishment Park* (1971) or *Alien Abduction* (1998), audience becomes confused by ambiguous characteristics of the films. They have difficulties in believing or not believing the presented events. It is the challenge that most mock-documentary represent for their audience.

#### **2.1.4. Science & Journalism**

There is a strong relationship between science, journalism and documentary. Roscoe and Hight indicate the importance of science in the modern world and its correlative relationship with documentary:

The camera became an apparatus through which the natural world could be accurately documented and recorded and, in this way, was able to capitalize on the new thirst for facts (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

Most of the mainstream documentary accompany science. The potential of camera representing the world with high fidelity has an essential role in this engagement. Brian Winston in his article “*The Documentary Film as Scientific Inscription*” (1993) highlights the role of photography in relationship of documentary and science.

Contemporary positioning of photography as an art does not detract from the camera’s status as a scientific instrument. There are two main reasons for this; first, the long history of pictorial representation as mode of scientific evidence, a history which conditions, in part, the research agenda that produces the modern

camera; and second, the tendency of modern science to produce data via instruments of inscription whose operations are analogous to the camera (Winston, 1993).

The role of camera as a scientific instrument has a strong influence on positioning documentary as a form of truth and objectivity.

(...) the public understanding (and acceptance) of the camera as an accurate recorder of reality was shaped by its association with other scientific apparatus such as the barometer and the thermometer. Just as this considered tools which were able to give objective and truthful readings of the natural world, so too the camera was regarded in much the same way (Winston quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Thus, as a tool of science, documentary introduces scientific methods and worldview, where science positions documentary as another form of factuality.

Beside the relationship between science and documentary, journalism has an important effect on documentary. For Izod and Kilborn documentary applies the methods of journalism to form a research.

For example, some documentarists have learned from journalists' chronicles of events how to use commentary to structure matters into a swiftly moving, chronological narrative that can be readily understood by the listening viewer (Izod & Kilborn, 125, 1997).

Similar to science, journalism has a distinct place in society, and constructs itself chasing the truth through the events. It does not only introduce to us a well-researched case, but it also invites us to do something or it gives us an attitude towards a case. According to Felski "Journalism has sought to encourage political emancipation through reasoned and logical argument" (Felski quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Documentary gives strength to journalistic endeavor by supporting it a qualified narrative; it makes visible the effort of journalism. Besides, journalism prompts documentary as a trustful source, thus they strengthen each others' positions in the society. As science, journalism constructs the dominant understanding of documentary as 'a form of truth telling.'

As a consequence documentary is a narrative form that changes over time. There are different styles and formulations about the genre and each of them constructs a different relationship with their subjects, audience and with the genre itself. In addition to this, the relationship of documentary with fictions is very important to understand the genre. This relationship indicates that while they share similar features, they represent distinct features that construct the core of each genre. There is a social consensus that distinguishes documentary as a form of truth, which is highly supported by science and journalism. As well, the audience contribution is one of the important elements that determines the understanding of documentary and also lines the distinction between documentary and fictions.

Despite the ambiguous characteristics of the genre there is an established understanding of documentary as a sober form of telling stories, however the nature of documentary is open to new styles and understandings.

## **2.2. Realism in Cinema**

Reality is a strong word that comes from the deepest willing to believe and understand of human being. The quest of reality may be one of the ancient quests. The arguments about reality in European culture stem from the time of Plato and Aristotle (Hallam & Marshment, 2000). Philosophy, religion, science, art all these bring their own perception of reality. Some of them cause bloody murder, some of them bring new concepts such as *relativity*. The quest of reality in art represents itself as realism and from literature to cinema it influences all branches of art. Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen emphasize the importance of realism in the Western aesthetic culture and they depict the core idea of realism, which suggests that at the very heart of art there should be a pure representation of nature (Braudy & Cohen, 2000). Although the idea of pure representation of the real world is a leading idea, realism cannot be eased to a limited understanding. As Hallam and Marshment indicates;

Realism cannot be confined to a particular style of representation; it is always contingent, always in flux. This notion, that 'the real' is 'a site of contest, of change, and redefinition' (Gledhill 1992: 132) is now a common assumption (Hallam& Marshment, 2000).

With the new inventions and developments, the quest and understanding of reality finds its place in the new formation of the modern world. Photography and shortly after, cinema, brought their own perception to this quest. While photography seen as a direct access to representation of the real world, cinema brought different approaches and styles to the quest of reality. Where as Italian neo-realists state that the purpose of cinema is transforming reality to story (Zavattini quoted in Stam, 2000), classic Hollywood realist texts create stories that looks like events in real life (Stam, 2000). Hallam and Marshment indicate that there are two main tendencies in understanding realism in cinema;

One strand embraces debate which situate realist films as breaking with or departing from the codes and conventions of mainstream, commercial film practice; the other one is inflected by ideological approaches, which treat all mainstream film texts as versions of the classic realist text developed in the nineteenth-century novel (Hallam & Marshment, 2000).

In the context of documentary realism has an important place. As Ersan Ocak indicates, the origins of documentary derive from the first shootings of Lumiere, who is also accepted as the soul of the realist movement in cinema. Thus, there is a historical intersection between realism and documentary. It can be said that they derive from the same origins. For that reason, realism movements in cinema are important to understand the core of documentary.

### **2.2.1 Reflection of Realism in Cinema**

As a new form of medium, cinema was affected by the realist approaches. In the context of cinema as it is mentioned before realist formation has two tendencies. One suggests the aim of the cinema is carrying everyday life reality to scene as a form and content of the film, and the other one suggests producing films that resemble the real events. Although there are different approaches, there are two major arguments that took place in the first years of cinema; realists who saw film as an objective reproduction of reality, and formalists who saw film as an artistic endeavor that separated it from reality (Stam, 2000). As Kracauer's expression Lumière, a severe realist, and Méliès, who fore grounded his artistic

ability, sowed the first seeds of the arguments between realists and formalists (Kracauer, 2004).

#### **2.2.1.1. Lumière & Méliès**

In his book *Theory of Film: Redemption of Physical Reality*, Kracauer introduces Lumière and Méliès as models of the subsequent notions. As a prototype of realists, Lumière is interested in the scientific part of the filmmaking, and he presented a strict contradiction to artistic endeavor in cinema. As Kracauer informs;

Lumière told Méliès that he considered film nothing more than a “scientific curiosity,” thereby implying that his cinematograph could not possibly serve artistic purpose (Kracauer, 2004).

For Lumière the aim of recording the outside world was to present it as it is (Kracauer, 2004), and he was interested in capturing the movements of nature as an observer. It is interesting that, although Lumière was not interested in storytelling one of his early work “*Teasing the Gardener*” is a prime example of comedic films (Kracauer, 2004). However, he did not prefer to produce these kinds of films. His main interest was looking at the world through the lens of the camera, and capturing the world as it is. However, his curiosity in capturing and representing the world was insufficient to keep alive the masses interest for a long time, and as a result he had to decrease his productions (Kracauer, 2004).

Méliès’ interest was different from Lumière’s. Unlike Lumière, Méliès was interested in film’s potential of presenting fantasies. As Kracauer indicates;

Yet even though Méliès did not take advantage of the camera’s ability to record and reveal the physical world, he increasingly created his illusions with the aid of techniques peculiar to the medium. (Kracauer, 2004).

Different from Lumière, instead of representing the real world, Méliès used cinematic plausibility to create another world. His fundamental supplement to cinema is replacement of constructed stages with unfolding reality before the camera (Kracauer, 2004). And unlike Lumière’s films, his films attracted masses interest, and also succeed to keep alive the people’s interest (Kracauer, 2004).

Lumière's scientific curiosity and Méliès artistic tendencies actually exposed the two main potentials of cinema; the capability of representing the world as it is and also the capability of transforming reality into a different form. These two features found their own formations and bring to the stage the advocates of two contradicting notions: realists and formalists.

### **2.2.2. Realism and Documentary: Finding Real**

“Reality changes;  
in order to represent it,  
modes of representation must change.”

Bertolt Brecht

If we trace back through history we can say that Lumière's motivation to record the world was not very different from today's documentarist: looking at the world through the lens of the camera and catching the outside world as it is. Or what neo-realists put forward as a potential of cinema was not very different from direct cinema/cinéma vérité filmmakers: melting the boundaries and bringing people together. The realist tendencies found a voice in documentary form, and they also became characteristics of documentary. To understand the realist characteristics of the genre it is essential to look at contribution of camera as a tool to represent world, and the formation of realism in documentary and fiction film.

#### **2.2.2.1. The Role of the Camera**

Theorists such as Andre Bazin think that the camera eliminates the subjective factor of representing the real world (Stam, 2000). For realists the ability of camera in producing the external world successfully as a record machine freed it from the intervention of the human being (Bazin quoted in Stam, 2000).

Scholars such as Keith Beattie, Kilborn & Izod and Dai Vaughan point out the essential role of camera and its contribution to construct realist characteristics of documentary. In the context of documentary and its relation to realism, Keith Beattie puts forward to influence of photographic image which prepares the viewers the regime of the camera;

The photochemical process of photography and traditions of photographic practice, function to rally viewers' belief in photographic image as an authentic and accurate representation of the object before the camera (Beattie, 2004).

Beattie constructs the documentary realism on this accepted influence of photographic image and she refers to indexical bond of the reality that Peirce puts forward (Beattie, 2004). Peirce declares that indexical bond of photography arose from its ability to represent real world as it is (Peirce quoted in Beattie, 2004), for Beattie this indexical bond is also the source of documentary's verification of the legitimacy (Beattie, 2004).

According to Vaughan the existence of camera as a tool of cinema departs it from other art forms (Vaughan quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 2001). Because, different from other art forms, camera needs the external world to produce (Vaughan, quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Dai Vaughan introduces the horse case in order to illuminate this difference. In this case he brings forward the difference between the work of a writer, painter and a photographer who are in charge to represent a "horse". As a consequence he came up with the fact that different from the writer and painter, the photographer must have that "horse" in order to represent it (Vaughan, quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 1997). Others can do it by just imagining a horse and describe it according to that image in their mind (Vaughan, quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 1997). What this case tells us is what we see in front of the camera is really there, because camera cannot expose anything which is not there<sup>8</sup>. Thus, as a consequence while the existence of camera departs cinema from other art forms, also it brought a new stage to understanding of reality.

#### **2.2.2.2. Realism vs. Realism**

Realist movements in cinema have influence on documentary. However, as Nichols suggests there is a difference between realism in fiction and realism in documentary;

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<sup>8</sup> With special effects and computer generated effects we are exposed to see things which are not there, like ghosts, thin light, creatures, two suns in the sky etc. however these are relevant with digital arrangements and effects that refers to editing part rather than recording.

Documentary realism has always a historical dimension because it concerns something that has occurred or is occurring.” (Nichols quoted in Izod & Kilborn, 2005).

Based on Nichols argument, the main difference between realism in documentary and fiction film is their source. As Stam puts forward in mainstream fiction films the main concern is representing imaginary world as if it is real (Stam, 2000). In documentary the main concern is maintaining the real event. In this context while construction of realism in fiction film is based on highly artificial factors such as magnificent special effects and computer-generated effects, in documentary (especially in observational modes of documentary) the realism constructs itself on the raw material<sup>9</sup>.

According to Izod and Kilborn there are two conventions that construct the documentary realism. The first one is Pro- filmic conventions that are based on the production of the sense of *being there* that increase the feeling of realism. They explain how documentary constructs this sense of *being there*:

These include such occurrences in front of the lens (i.e. pro-filmic events) as location shooting, following the action and having the presenter talk directly to the camera from the scene of events. Another device that is frequently used to encourage a sense of being there is the on- camera interview in which witnesses or participants directly relate their experiences (Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

These devices that construct the pro-filmic conventions function as a guarantee that film represents the real events in the real world (Izod & Kilborn, 1997). In addition to these devices Izod and Kilborn include the voice over among the pro-filmic device;

When the viewer trusts the narrator and the latter is giving an account of the way things were, voice-overs foster the illusion that we are being spoken to person to

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<sup>9</sup> In this context the technological developments that guarantee perfect presentation of reality in documentary field cannot be ignored (Izod & Kilborn, 35; 2005). Also we should not forget that different modes of documentary apply different understanding of realism. The realism in *Zeigst* is different from the realism in *Roger and Me*. It is essential to keep in mind that most documentaries still construct their visual regime on the capturing *the natural tissue* of the moment that gives them the sense of reality.



person. The sense of realism stems from the fact that we tend to attach credibility to someone commenting authoritatively or helpfully on events being played out before us (Izod & Kilborn, 1997).

As a second convention they introduce the filmic conventions that embody the style of the film. Poor lighting, hand held camera movements, low quality of sound, and editing style are in this group of conventions that construct the realism in documentary (Izod & Kilborn, 2005).

Aufderheide states that both fiction film and documentary film apply the similar techniques to create reality effect in the film;

Some of the techniques to create the illusion of reality include (1) elision editing (editing that goes unnoticed by the conscious mind, so that your eye is tricked into thinking it is merely moving with action); (2) cinematography creates the illusion that you are almost in the scene or “looking over the shoulder” of the action and gives you a psychological stake in the action, and (3) pacing that follows the viewer’s expectation for events in the natural world. Because of its evocative power, realism has become the international language of commercial cinema, in both documentary and fiction (Aufderheide, 2007).

Aufderheide emphasizes that these techniques are preferred by documentary and fiction film; in other words fiction films and documentary are in the same shoes while it is considered creating reality (Aufderheide, 2007). She argues that documentary represents a deception of reality rather than reality itself (Aufderheide, 2007). Aufderheide emphasizes that this is the core of documentary that derived from Grierson and Flaherty (Aufderheide, 2007). Based from Aufderheide’s statement it can be said that such characteristics of documentary overlapped with Hollywood classic realist text, and have the same function. It is an ironic outcome when it is considered that as a form of film the starting point of documentary was presenting a challenge, and an alternative to Hollywood films.

Although Patricia Aufderheide points out a very crucial point, the *cinéma vérité*/direct cinema movement presents a different formation from this standard process of reality production. The direct cinema/ *cinéma vérité* arose as a

reaction to the classic objective argument of documentary (Nichols, 2001). The aim of the filmmaker was to give audience direct access to the subject. In other words their main concern was to present a subject as it is. By aspiring to do this, filmmakers aim to minimize the intervention; they tried to reduce their manipulation over the subject (Chanan, 2007).

With new technological developments camera became independent, it gained mobility and it began to involve events rather than imposing events (Chanan, 2007). It gives the filmmaker an opportunity to expose his/her subject with less intervention (Chanan, 2007). As Michael Chanan informs what Barnouw said;

Documentary had featured people talking only in brief and static scenes; mostly their movements, looks and gestures were freely subjected to the designs of montage. 'But talking human beings with their own, spontaneous speech (are) not puppets', and they begin 'to take control away from the director' (Barnouw quoted in Chanan, 2007).

With mobility of camera filmmakers get the chance to capture events at the moment; the new challenge of the filmmaker was to flow with the moment (Chanan, 2007).

The formation of realism in documentary represents different aspects. From one point of view it seems that the relationship between realism and documentary is mostly based on the realist movements in cinema rather than Hollywood classic realist text. Especially when we consider the influence of neo-realist cinema on the direct cinema/cinéma vérité movement, documentary can be seen closer to realist movements in Europe. When the classic documentary formation is considered what Aufderheide brings forward becomes essential. In this respect formation of realism in documentary films represent same pattern with the mainstream fiction films. As a consequence the contribution of realism in documentary does not exhibit a singular pattern, and it should be considered from different perspectives.

In the respect of mock-documentary, realism represents different patterns. Although mock-documentary is in the fiction category, the main aim of mock-

documentary is to create the sense of documentary realism. In some cases mock-documentary uses the conventions of documentary to increase its reality effect. The Blair Witch Project is a good example of these kinds of applications. Hand held camera, poor lighting and sound serve to increase the reality effect of the film. The usage of documentary style in The Blair Witch Project increases the sense of actuality and the sense of being there. Aim of the film is to create a plausible story, rather than create a parody of documentary. As in the fiction films, the realism serves to obscure the artificial characteristics of the film. However, in some examples of mock-documentaries, the conventions of documentary are used to disturb the realism effect within the film. The main aim is to ridicule the documentary style. For example *David Holzman's Diary* plays the codes of direct cinema, and it aims to make audience question the reliability of these codes. Rather than increasing the credibility of the film, realism in *David Holzman's Diary* serves to question this credibility.

### CHAPTER III

#### CREDO, QUIA ABSURDUM or IT IS ABSURD THEREFORE I BELIEVE

\*Consider the following statements in Italics are not true

*Mock documentary: A Cultural Phenomena of 1960's*

*Mock-documentary is a form of film that occurred as a movement in 1950s as a reaction to regulation of documentary in 1952 (Voiceover, 2007). As Leo Voiceover declares by this regulation documentary could only produced by the state. Many mock-documentarists such as Ford Truthman, Neo Fabricator and Peter Hallmark declared that with this regulation, documentary became an instrument of the state that spread the dominant ideology. Thus, as a reaction to this regulation, they decided to start a movement.*

*In order to empower the ideology of bourgeoisie, the documentary is forced to lose sight, apparently, of its own interests, and to formulate bourgeoisie world of view documentary becomes to confederate of bourgeoisie. Thus, the documentary took the mission of representing and producing historical and scientific reality for its masters (The Great Manifesto of Mock\_Documentary, 1961).*

*Most of the films within this movement addressed the American society. As Johnny Talkinghead points out, highly reflexive approach of mock-documentary towards to American life style was perceived as an invention of Soviet Union that is designed to disturb peaceful life in America (Talkinghead, 2003).*

*Although the movement started in America it spread out to Europe and Japan. The international nature of the movement brought different voices together (Voiceover, 2001). However, the extreme critical approach of mock-documentary filmmakers brought their own end, and they were sentenced to death at the end of the 1960s.*

Obviously none of the above statements are true, they are just made up statements disguised in academic style. There is no mock- manifestation, or no

such films in the film history. They were prepared to expose how mock-documentary functions as a form of forged telling.

In this chapter, I am going to discuss how mock-documentary questions the factual discourse of documentary. Here factual discourse means to claim representing reality within documentary. In this respect documentary creates codes and conventions to produce its factual discourse. Usage of hand held cameras, poor lighting, presenting interviews are popular features that are identified with codes of documentary. In addition to these, the accepted notion of the indexical bound between recorded image and the real image strengthens this factual discourse of documentary. In this context mock-documentary imitates the inhabitant codes of documentary, which are reproduced by documentary filmmaking conventions, to present a totally imaginary world. In other words, mock-documentary basically mocks the style of documentary to construct an absurd world. By doing this, mock-documentary unavoidably propounds a challenge to the position of documentary. First of all, by mocking the codes of documentary, mock-documentary exposes the artificiality of indexical bound between recorded and real images. Also by simulating the style of documentary, mock-documentary questions the stance and credibility of documentary. According to Juhasz there are three key elements that mock-documentary confront to documentary;

Fake documentaries can invoke and challenge three linked standards of documentary: (1) the technologies of truth telling, (2) the authority granted to or stolen by those who make and receive such truth claims, and (3) the need to speak untold and partial truths that have fallen outside the registers of these very technologies and authorities (Juhasz, 2006).

How mock-documentary achieves these goals is one of the main concerns of this chapter. The critical approach that is produced within these texts is also another main focus of this chapter. Within this respect, I state that the critical approach of mock-documentary has been decreased within the later examples of the form. In this context I will compare the earliest examples of the form with the later examples of the form.

In the first part of this chapter, the term mock-documentary, historical background of the form and characteristics of mock-documentary are going to be presented. In the second part I will discuss mock-documentary and its relation to documentary in terms of the modes of documentary. Lastly I will examine its relation to fiction film in terms of parody.

### **3.1. Mapping-out the Terrain: Defining Mock-Documentary**

Mock documentary does not just tell stories but it tells stories under the name of truth telling. Mock documentary is a form of fiction film that simulates the style of documentary in order to tell fictional story. As Roscoe and Hight defines:

Mock-documentary is a ‘fact-fictional form which has a close relationship to both drama and documentary. It not only uses documentary codes and conventions but constructs a particular relationship with the discourse of factuality (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

It is a form of film that takes its subject from the world of fiction and combines that subject with the codes of non-fiction (Jacobs, 2000). It is important to emphasize that mock documentary is a forgery of documentary; it does not use reality as a source of its narrative. On the contrary it usually uses the absurd stories to tell; *Zelig* (1983) and *Forgotten Silver* (1995) are good examples of these kinds of absurd stories. The aim of these kinds of films is making parody of documentary and popular cultural events. .

There are mainly three approaches that examine mock-documentary in relation to documentary, fiction film and parody. In the first approach, Roscoe, Hight and Juhasz discuss its relation to documentary. In the second approach Del Jacobs concerns its relation to fiction film. As the third approach, Paul Ward harmonizes these two characteristics, but he mainly explains the form from the perspective of parody. It is essential to indicate that none of these approaches exclude each other. They just represent the different aspects of the issues by concerning different characteristics of the form.

Del Jacobs maintains mock-documentary as films that share the same patterns of narratives with fiction. He also defines these texts as reflexive narratives, which

refers to depict the filmic process. In this context, he puts forward the reflexive elements of the form. While Alexandra Juhasz concerns the form's relation to documentary, she considers mock-documentary as a form of parody. In addition to this, Roscoe and Hight emphasize its relation and contribution to documentary. Paul Ward brings forward the parodic characteristics of the form and he tries to construct its relation to documentary as a form of comedy.

Similar to documentary mock-documentary represents ambiguous characteristics. Its ambiguous characteristic derives from its hybrid nature. Its close relationship to documentary and fiction film, make it difficult to portrait the form. As Roscoe and Hight indicate, mock-documentary is open to changes (Roscoe & Hight, 2001), and similar to documentary it does not represent stable characteristics. Even there is not a concrete consensus in naming the form. To give a coherent perspective about mock documentary, it is critical to depict the different terminologies within the definition of the form.

### **3.1.1 Naming Matters**

As Aufderheide emphasizes, naming is important, because it tells us how to categorize and perceive things (Aufderheide, 2007). There are different terms that describe these kinds of narrative forms. Pseudo, fake and mock are mostly preferred terms to describe these kinds of texts. Roscoe and Hight list a few of those terms such as.

‘faux documentary’ (Francke, 1996), ‘pseudo-documentary’, ‘cinéma un vérité’ (Ansen, 1997’, ‘black comedy presented as in- your-face documentary’ (Roscoe & Hight, 2001),

Different from Roscoe and Hight, Alexandre Juhasz calls it ‘fake documentary’, which refers:

A fake documentary engages disingenuousness, humor, and other formal devices to create critical or comic distance between itself and documentary's sobriety, truth, and rationality (Juhasz, 2001).

In addition to this Del Jacobs, introduces the term ‘pseudo-documentary’ that suggests.

A unique form combining elements of fiction and nonfiction film is the *pseudo-documentary*... The pseudo-documentary has the shape, content and formal components of pure documentary. Yet, it is known, or revealed, to have been scripted and acted in the manner of a fictional film (Jacobs, 2000)

Among all these different terms, **mock-documentary** is preferred, since it depicts the aim of the form better than other terms. ‘Cinéma un vérité’ addresses a particular type of mock-documentaries such as *The Office* that uses fly on the wall style for their narratives. However, ‘cinéma un vérité’ as a term is not adequate to represent the form as a whole. In addition to this ‘black comedy presented as in your face’ (is too long to use as a name of a term) also addresses the particular type of the form such as “Man Bites Dog” that uses a serial killer’s life as a core of its parody, and create a dark comedy. Different from these terms, faux documentary, pseudo documentary and fake documentary represent the form as a whole since faking, faux and pseudo give the meaning of mimicking or deception. However, they do not sufficiently represent the core of the form, which refers to teasing or ridiculing characteristics of the form. Roscoe and Hight explain their reason to prefer the term ‘mock’ in their book, *Faking it*. As the first reason they declare:

1 because it suggests its origins in copying a pre-existing form, in an effort to construct (or more accurately, re-construct) a screen form with which the audience is assumed to be familiar (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

As second reason they put forward the relation of the term *mock* to the documentary.

2 the other meaning of the word ‘mock’ (to subvert or ridicule by imitation) suggests something of this screen form’s parodic agenda towards the documentary genre. This is an agenda, which we argue is inevitably constructed (however inadvertently by some filmmakers) from mock-documentary’s increasingly sophisticated appropriation of documentary codes and conventions (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In addition to this, it is important to determine the area of mock-documentary to get a comprehensive understanding of the form. To do so, it is important to



understand what kinds of narratives are in the zone of mock documentary, and their relations to other forms.

### **3.1.2. Finding the Origin**

Similar to documentary, mock documentary stems from the advances in the visual regimes, techniques of filmmaking, and the quest of new forms of telling stories. There is no manifestation or deliberate intention to create a form named as “mock-documentary”. In fact there is almost seventeen years between first mock documentary “*David Holzman’s Diary*” (1967) and its definition as mock documentary with “*This is Spinal Tap*” (1984). One of the reasons for that late recognition of the form can be the people’s undeveloped perspective of documentary that should lead them to recognize the difference between these two forms. Another reason can be the marketing issues. As Aufderheide declares market needs striking names to sell its products, for that reason giving a name to a production is important. In this context, the commercialization of television in 1980s may have led the producers to create a name for this form. Thus, the form can be scheduled within the programs and genres.

Although Roscoe and Hight declare it is not possible to find out the origins of the term ‘mock-documentary’ (Roscoe & Hight, 2000), Doherty puts forward that “*This is Spinal Tap*” (1984) gives the inspiration of the term “mock-documentary” (Doherty, 2003). However, it is interesting that the first symptom of the form did not come from the visual field, but from a radio program, which is also very famous for its impacts on its listeners. As Doherty indicates;

Whatever title marks the genesis of the genre, the locus classicus—the first truly authentic exemplar of the fake documentary in American cinema—was conjured by that media con artist par excellence, Orson Welles, whose fake radio news bulletins in the Mercury Theatre’s production of H.G. Wells’s *The War of the Worlds* traumatized an invasion-wary nation in 1938 (Doherty, 2003).

Roscoe and Hight share the same opinion with Doherty. According to them *War of the Worlds* (1938) propounds the earliest prototype of mock documentary by applying the news bulletin’s format of interrupting a programme. (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). However, before the radio programme of Welles people met these

kinds of hoaxes within the print media. One of the most successful of that hoaxes is *The Great Moon Hoax (1835)*, which was the series of made-up articles about the life in moon that was printed in New York Sun magazine, with the name of the famous astronomer *John William Herschel* (NTV Bilim, 2009). People did not know the articles were fake, and of course Herschel himself was not informed about those articles, the magazine sold many copies till the hoaxes was turned out (<http://www.museumofhoaxes.com/moonhoax.html>). However, before famous moon hoaxes Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's famous novel *Don Quixote* arose as the earliest predecessor of these kinds of texts (Stam, 1992).

In the audio-visual field, the first symptom of the mock-documentary again comes from Orson Welles. As Doherty indicates 'The News on the March' sequence which is the subversion of "The March of Time"<sup>10</sup> screen magazine in Citizen Kane' (1941) represents the first symptom of the form (Doherty, 2003). However Roscoe and Hight put forward a different frame and they suggest a genealogy that suggests the precursors of the mock-documentary. In this context they divided audio visual field into two categories as television and cinema. As television precursors they introduce three television programs. The first one is Monty Python's *Flying Circus* (1960s) BBC comedy program that was formed by sketches that tease the BBC's factual discourses (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). As second precursor they introduce Hill Street Blues (1980s), which was an American TV series that adopt the documentary style as its narrative (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). Finally and as the third example they introduce April Fools' Day news stories format that adopt the TV news style and present fake information (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). In the case of cinema they introduce Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove (Or how I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb)* (1963) that uses the expository modes of documentary in some part of its narrative, and Orson Welles's *F For Fake* (1974), that represents the style of the self reflexive documentary are introduced as precursors of the mock-documentary in cinema.

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<sup>10</sup> March of time was a kind of screen journalism that arose in mid 1930s in U.S. (Ellis & McLane, 2005).

According to Roscoe & Hight these texts are the precursors of the mock-documentary that prepared the audience style of the mock-documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

It is essential to denote that while Roscoe and Hight constitute the genealogy of mock-documentary, they prefer to exclude the earliest example of the form such as *David Holzman's Diary* (1967), *Take the Money and Run* (1969), and *Rutles: All You Need is Cash* (1978);

we are looking outside the these early texts, to outline a number of the significant strands within cinematic and television media, in the United States and Britain in particular, which have fostered the creation and continued growth of the mock-documentary form( Roscoe & Hight, 76, 2000).

Although Roscoe & Hight construct a useful genealogy schema, to process the historical background of mock-documentary I am going to follow a different path. I regard Jim McBride's *David Holzman's Diary* as an earliest example of mock-documentary.

### **3.1.2.1. The Pioneers and Followers**

The first examples of mock-documentary arose in 1960s. *David Holzman's Diary* (1967), *Take the Money and Run* (1969), and *No Lies* (1971) are the pioneers of the form. These early examples usually addressed the direct cinema style. Kilborn, Izod and Chanan indicate direct cinema/cinema verite arose as consequence of technological developments in film industry in 1960's (Kilborn & Izod, Chanan). As Chanan indicates about this new phase;

The new documentary came in different shapes, sizes and styles; we can agree that its common basis was technical without falling into technological determinism (Chanan, 2007).

Within these technological developments the quarry of representing the world as it is, become the main concern of the documentary filmmakers. This quarry

creates direct cinema in America and cinema vérité in Europe<sup>11</sup> (Chanan, 2007). Although they represent different styles, the motivation of these forms was led by exposing the real world, real life events and real people (Ellis & McLane, 2005). And both of these forms constitute the main branches of what Nichols calls as observational modes of documentary (Nichols, 2001). In the 1960s this mode of documentary was dominant, and it became one of the popular forms of the genre. Within this respect, the earliest mock-documentaries usually addressed this popular form.

Late in the 1960s, Jim McBride's *David Holzman's Diary* came to the scene. In his film, McBride portrays a man who tries to find out the truth about his life by recording it. The narration of film is based on direct cinema style, and the main character portrays the naïf quarry of the direct cinema filmmakers. The successful simulation of the direct cinema style obscures the fictional characteristic of the film. Hand held camera and poor lighting constitute the style of film.

Woody Allen's *Take the Money and Run* (1969) is another example that belongs to same period. In his film, Woody Allen portrays an awkward, but at the same time, very dangerous criminal named Virgil Starkwell. The film combines expository and observational modes of documentary, and mainly addresses the didactic structure of the expository mode that is based on voice of God narration. The film explicitly presents its parodic characteristics. Fake interviews and quasi documentations construct the film's narrative.

Peter Watkins' *Punishment Park* (1971) is another mock-documentary that addresses the direct cinema style. The film is about the detention of a group of activists in the punishment park. This mock-documentary is one of the most striking examples of the form that successfully simulates the style of direct cinema. The aim of the film is to present a critique towards the political system of America, rather than documentary itself.

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<sup>11</sup> While Micheal Chanan suggests there are not radical differences between two forms (Chanan; 2007), Ellis and McLane point out the differences between two forms that depend on the differentiate approaches of their first appliers.

1970s are the years when the first mock- documentaries began to arise in television. Also these were the years that television documentaries became matured and branded television programs. The first examples of television mock- documentaries came into scene in England.

*The Rutles: All you Need is Cash* (1978) is the earliest example of the television mock-documentary. It is a mock-documentary that directly addresses the legend of The Beatles by representing a fake music band named as 'Rutles'. The sober factual form of BBC programs and films about The Beatles such as *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) are parodied explicitly within this film. Film addresses the classic documentary journalistic format to ridicule. And it is the precursors of the later example of *mock-rockumentary*.

In the 1980s mock-documentary began to be defined as a different form of film, the name of the form arose in these years with *This is Spinal Tap* (1984). But before this film the new examples of form continued to come to the scene. *The Comic Strip Presents' Bad News Tour* (1983) in England and Woody Allen's *Zelig* (1983) in America joined the form. Similar to the previous mock-documentary of Woody Allen's *Take the Money and Run*, *Zelig* is based on a protagonist. This time the hero of the film represents a chameleon personality. Film uses the expository mode of the documentary style in 1930s. Newsreels, voice of God narration and experts are used as subversion elements to construct the narration. In 1983 *The Comic Strip Presents: Bad News Tour* took place in Channel 4. *Bad News Tour*, which can be seen as a pioneer of *This is Spinal Tap*, represents a fake music band in rockumentary format. However, *Bad News Tour* also addresses to the process of documentary filmmaking.

In 1984 *This is Spinal Tap* came to the stage and with this film the form began to be known as 'mock-documentary' (Doherty, 2001). *This is Spinal Tap* addresses the conventions of rockumentary by representing the unsuccessful fake music band. The observational the mode of documentary is again in the zone of the film.

When it came to 1990s mock-documentary represents its dark side with films such as *Man Bites Dog* (1992) and *Blair Witch Project* (1999). While *Man Bites*

*Dog* presents a highly ethical and critical approach towards the documentary genre, *The Blair Witch Project* uses the codes and conventions of documentary to construct a more realistic narrative. These years also brought forward successful and joyful mock-documentaries such as Costa Botes and Peter Jackson's *Forgotten Silver* (1994), and Christopher Guest's *Waiting for Guffman* (1996). As well, the 1990s are the years that mock-documentary began to represent itself in other countries such as New Zealand and Belgium.

Within the 2000s mock-documentary continues to develop. Most of the mock-documentaries in recent years are based on the observational modes of documentary. Television series such as *The Office*, *City*, films like *Mighty Wind* (2003), *Chalk* (2007), and *Gamers:Movie* (2002) use the observational expository mode of documentary as a form of their narratives. The new examples of the form represent more entertaining characteristics rather than representing reflexive characteristics. In this context it can be said that what Ellis and McLane indicate for documentary in television era, is also valid for transformation of mock-documentary. As Ellis and McLane claim, with television documentary divorced from the social and national concerns, it became more entertainment centered (Ellis & McLane, 2008). A similar side effect of television affects mock-documentary and departs it from its reflexive nature.

When the formation of mock-documentary is considered through time, it exposes us that it derived from where documentary is a well-known genre. The first examples of the form represent a reflexive and critical approach to documentary filmmaking process. With the emergence of the television it transformed into more of an entertaining area. As a hybrid form it fulfills the expectations of market as a new form of entertainment (Chanan, 2005). As documentary, mock-documentary has always been in transformation..

### **3.2. Scope of Mock-documentary**

It is important to determine the area of mock-documentary to get a comprehensive understanding of the form. To do so, it is important to understand what kinds of narratives are in the zone of mock documentary, and their relations to other forms.

To determine the zone of mock-documentary Roscoe and Hight suggest eliminating films and programs that are *not* categorized as mock-documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In doing so they do not only determine the field but also they expose the relationship of mock-documentary with other forms. In this context they emphasize the differences between mock-documentary and documentary-drama, reflexive documentaries, news hoaxes and documentaries that use fake sequences to create a faith in their stories (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). They do not consider these forms as mock-documentary, since their formations and intensions are different from the mock documentary.

In addition to Roscoe and Hight, Jacobs emphasizes the differences between films that use fake sequences to create faith in audience and mock-documentary.

The use of pseudo documentary theory implies responsibility. Its products inform, persuade, entertain, and influence. They may mislead but they in some way, shape, or form, debrief the audience and own up to the fabrication. This is what sets pseudo-documentary apart from many other media manipulation (Jacobs, 2000).

In mock-documentary, the fake sequences are used, however, their main intention is not to mislead audience, rather their aim is to expose the fake construction of the film. For that reason, mock-documentary differs from other forms that use fake sequences that aims to deceive audience.

As it is mentioned above, both documentary and fiction film are in the scope of mock-documentary. As Jacobs indicates mock-documentary is a *parasitic* form of narrative that nourishes itself from documentary and fiction (Jacobs, 2000). It is difficult to determine characteristics of mock-documentary as a pure form. While the strong resemblance of mock-documentary makes it closer to documentary, it is in the category of fiction. To make a comprehensive reading, it is important to examine the relationship of mock-documentary between documentary and fiction. In doing this, I will focus on the specific forms of documentary and fiction films in relation to mock-documentary, rather than a broader perspective. Within this respect, I will focus on the relationship between

mock-documentary, drama documentary and reflexive documentary. Later on, I will focus on the relationship between mock-documentary, parody and fiction.

### **3.2.1. Mock-documentary, Documentary and Fiction**

Roscoe and Hight emphasize the similar characteristics of the form with modes of documentary. They declare the similarities between modes of documentary and mock-documentary that cause misinterpretation as mock-documentary is one of the modes of documentary and vice versa. They highlight two forms of documentary; documentary-drama/drama-documentary and the reflexive mode of documentary.

#### **3.2.1.1. Documentary-drama/ Drama documentary and Mock-documentary**

According to Keith Beattie documentary-drama and drama documentary are the forms that are created by television, and they are also accepted in the film industry (Beattie, 2004). He describes these forms as the meeting point of fiction and fact (Beattie, 2004). Although there are two different names for these kinds of texts, they do not have sharp differences. However, Roscoe and Hight indicate that while drama documentary is a preferred term in UK, documentary drama or *docudrama* is the preference of the US (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In this context although they refer to similar forms they do not share the similar historical background (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). They also indicate differences between these two forms. They describe drama documentary as fiction films that represent real events;

*Drama- documentary* is best described as the form that attempts to stay closest to the actual historical event or persons. It follows the sequences of events from a real historical occurrence or situation. ... This form uses drama to overcome any gaps in the narrative, and is intended to provoke debate about significant events (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Also they indicate that documentary drama does not intend to represent real events, but use the styles of documentary;

Documentary drama tends to use an invented sequence of events and individuals to illustrate features of real historical events and issues. This form does not



necessarily conform to a realist narrative. ... In this form, 'documentary' is just as likely to refer to style as to content (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Similar to Roscoe & Hight, Beattie puts forward the difference between these two forms. He uses Caughie's term *dramatized documentary* instead of drama documentary;

Dramatized documentary is an approach based on facts derived from investigation and research. ...In this form factual material, such as that contained in court transcripts, or the biographical details of a well known historical figure, for example is communicated through conventions of drama (Beattie, 2004).

As documentary drama he introduces Caughie's approach that states documentary drama can use fictional texts (however they usually refer to real events) in documentary format (Beattie, 2004). In other words documentary drama inspires the real events and they usually use documentary style.

Roscoe, Hight and Beattie indicate these two forms are not very different from each other. Regarding these scholars' works "drama documentary" is preferred to represent this particular form.

In the context of mock-documentary Jacobs indicates that mock-documentary and drama documentary should be considered as two different forms;

It is distinguishable from docudrama, which is a term for any dramatization that seeks to recreate, using performers, actual people and events. ... While docudrama overtly acknowledges its mimicry of documentary content, pseudo documentary strategies are more covert (Jacobs, 2000).

Roscoe and Hight put forward four identical features of this relationship. The first one explains the difference between mock-documentary and drama documentary depending on their stance towards documentary. Later they put forward the difference between purposes of filmmakers. As a third key point they bring forward the differences in their texts. And finally they examine these two forms in their relations to audience.

According to Roscoe and Hight both drama documentary and mock-documentary share a similar narrative structure;

Like drama-documentary, mock documentaries are fictional texts, but they position themselves quite differently in relation to the discourses of fact and fiction (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

As they stated, the main difference of mock-documentary and drama documentary lies in the old pattern of fact and fiction dichotomy attitudes to their subjects. Roscoe and Hight indicate that drama documentary despite its close relationship to documentary formation, it represents fictional characteristics;

Although drama-documentary openly acknowledges its representation of information in narrative form, the stance taken toward the projected worlds is assertive rather than fictive (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

For Plantinga drama documentary is a fiction of narrative that claims to present an accurate world (Plantinga quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Unlike drama documentary, mock-documentary is based on fiction;

Mock-documentary is situated quite differently along the fact-fiction continuum, taking instead a fictive stance toward the social world, while utilizing documentary aesthetics to 'mock' the underlining discourses of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001)

Secondly, they indicate the purpose of filmmakers. They indicate that the motivations of filmmakers are different from each other. While a Filmmaker of a drama documentary claims to represent an accurate story, a mock-documentary filmmaker totally rejects this claim in his/her work (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). With this respect in drama documentary the filmmaker's intention is to make a film that derives from the true events, they have an argument about the real world;

Drama documentary filmmakers tend to accentuate the relationship with documentary, positioning their work as a journalistic endeavor (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In mock-documentary the filmmaker's intention is to create a parody of the documentary and social and cultural critics (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

As another key point they introduce the differences in text structures of these two forms. They emphasize that drama documentary does not represent

characteristics of documentary in its style. However, the background of the text represents the documentary conventions (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). They introduce Corner and Paget's approach to subject;

Drama documentary attempts to mimic documentary with regards to the level of research, the unwritten rules casting (which typically aim for a broad resemblance to the original social actor) and the favouring of a 'low key' acting style (Corner, Paget quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In the context of mock documentary they highlight the nature of mock-documentary. They emphasize the fictional characteristics of these texts without any reference to the actual world, and their intense usage of the documentary codes to construct their narrative (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In the case of narrative structure they depart from each other.

As a final important issue they mention the role of the audience. They emphasize that the role of the audience is the most decisive element in constructing relations of these two forms (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Drama documentary's relation to audience is based on confidence. It requests faithful audiences that have confidence that what it represents an actual world (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Most of the discussions about drama documentary focus on its relation to audience.

Much of the discussion around drama-documentary has focused on whether audiences are duped by this mixing of fact and fiction and the possible implications of this (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In the context of its relationship with audience, drama documentary represents a similarity with mock-documentary. Both forms present a challenge to their audience by using documentary and fiction codes together. While mock-documentary aims to challenge its audience, drama documentary is not in favor of creating such challenge;

In contrast with drama documentary (and the reflexive documentary representation), it is the deliberate play between the factual and fictional modes of reading which generates reflexive potential (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Mock-documentary aims to confuse its audience mind by presenting sober form of narrative with an absurd story. Mainly these texts depend on the recognition of audience, otherwise there is a risk to misunderstandings (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In this context while drama documentary aims to create a confidence in audience, mock-documentary invites its audience to question this confidence.

In addition to drama documentary reflexive documentary is another essential form of narrative that is important to characterize mock-documentary.

### **3.2.1.2. Reflexive documentary and Mock-documentary**

As it is mentioned previous chapter reflexive mode of documentary constructs itself through exposing the process of filmmaking. It questions the problems of representing others in the project of film, and the problem of reality, which is one of the main challenging concerns of documentary (Nichols, 2000). Similar to mock documentary, reflexive documentary creates a deception for its audience, and it constructs its narrative on breaking the established rules of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). By doing so it aims to depict the constructed nature of documentary and how it can be subverted. It plays the codes of documentary and it destroys the inviolable conventions of documentary. Reflexive documentary tells a true story, but it destructs its narrative form in order to question the truth form of documentary. Both reflexive documentary and mock documentary create awareness of constructed nature of documentary. They affect the established opinion towards the documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Most of the mock-documentaries are usually misinterpreted as a reflexive documentary. David Holzman's *Diary* (1967) is a good example of these kinds of misinterpretations (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

Roscoe & Hight, Del Jacobs and Paul Ward indicate the reflexive feature of mock-documentary. Although all of them emphasize that mock-documentary represents reflexive characteristics they also emphasize that mock-documentary should not be categorized as reflexive documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001, Ward, 2005).

Although Jacobs does not present an argument about the relationship of reflexive documentary and mock-documentary (pseudo documentary), he states that mock-

documentary represents reflexive characteristics in its nature (Jacobs, 2000). For mock-documentary he states that;

Two film traditions; narrative and fiction, merge and fuse in the pseudo-documentary form as reflexive elements (Jacobs, 2000).

Different from Jacobs, Roscoe and Hight maintain the relationship of mock-documentary and reflexive documentary. They state that there are differences and similarities between these two forms. According to them both forms represent a critical stance towards sobriety of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). However they emphasize that there are important distinctions between these two forms;

The differences derive from the degree of referentiality that each constructs towards the social-historical world; reflexive documentaries are constructed from images with a *direct relationship to the real*, while mock-documentaries' content is purely fictional (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

They also indicate that while reflexive documentary is one of the subgenres of documentary, mock-documentary is not in the category of documentary, it is the category of fictional film (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Thus, their conducting of reflexive features in their work is different from each other. Also Roscoe & Hight state that although reflexive documentary use fictional sequences in its narrative, it still has claim of representing truth about actual world (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In addition to this, while some mock-documentaries such as *David Holzman's Diary*, *Bad News Tour* or *No Lies* represent the filmmaking process by showing camera or crew, their function is different from reflexive documentary. While reflexive documentary invites us to face the constructed nature of documentary by showing us the process of filmmaking, mock-documentary imitates this reflexivity to cover its own constructed nature. In other words mock-documentary imitates the reflexive codes of documentary to create an artificial reflexivity. For that reason reflexive construction in reflexive documentary and mock-documentary departs from each other.

To sum up, although mock documentary and reflexive documentary are different from each other in their approaches to documentary, they share a similar function towards documentary. They both invite their audience to question to their attitudes towards documentary. As Roscoe and Hight declare while reflexive documentary is in the category of documentary and claim to represent real world, mock-documentary is out of this categorization and it does not have such a truth claim.

In addition to these, another way for mock-documentary to present reflexivity is applying parodic elements.

### **3.2.1.3. Mock-documentary in relation to Fiction Film**

Jacobs mainly mentions three mock-documentary which are *David Holzman's Diary*, *Zelig* and *Bob Roberts*. His characterization of mock-documentary depends on these three films. He analyzes mock-documentary according to Erving Goffman's frame *analysis*. He uses Goffman's starting point, which brings forward the elements that construct the understanding of reality (Jacobs, 2000). Framing refers to a particular understanding and practice of the reality (Jacobs, 2000). According to Jacobs, mock-documentary (pseudo-documentary) reframes the existing frame in fiction or non-fiction films by creating another level of understanding (Jacobs, 2000). In addition to Goffman's frame analysis, Jacobs also uses the David Bordwell's reflexive narrative analysis. According to Bordwell's reflexive narrative analysis, any film that exposes its own process or questions its relation to reality is '*self-reflexive*' (Jacobs, 2000).

Jacobs explains that for Goffman, the actual life is the referent frame that refers and creates other frames (Jacobs, 2000). He uses *key* as a term to define existing frame that is already defined in the social context, and open to interpretation to other meanings for the members of society (Jacobs, 2000). Jacobs uses the *key* term in relation to narrative film, documentary and mock-documentary. He claims that key is open to *rekeying*, and a narrative form can be rekeyed by documentary and later on by mock-documentary (Jacobs, 2000). He explains that rekeying in mock-documentary needs to collaboration between film and viewer.

The rekeying into pseudo documentary film requires collusion between the filmmaker and audience, and that is managed through framing cues, variations of “winking” at the audience (Jacobs, 2000).

As with Ward, Jacobs indicates the importance of audience to understand the process of mock-documentary. There should be a qualified audience to understand the difference between documentary and mock-documentary. In other words mock-documentary, similar to other forms of parody strongly, depends on the audience reorganization of the joke (Hutcheon, 1985). If audience does not know the original of what is being parodied, they probably would not get the aim of the film (Hutcheon, 1985)

In addition to these, Jacobs emphasizes the reflexive characteristics of the form. Jacobs maintains reflexivity in the context of the purpose of commercial and entertaining films (especially Hollywood films) to manipulate and obscure the pattern of propaganda. He positions reflexive work as opposed to these formations. For him although mock-documentary embraces the entertaining and commercial features, the reflexive nature of mock-documentary is still in process (Jacobs, 2000). Jacobs argues reflexivity in relation to cinema in America. According to him reflexivity in art began to arise with the radical changes in postwar period (Jacobs, 2000). The major reasons were European cinema that treated the Hollywood films, the reign of Hollywood studio system that excluded the artistic endeavor and rising of television industry (Jacobs, 2000). Also he mentions the role of film journals, structuralism that lead to a rise in sophisticated audience profile (Jacobs, 2000). All these developments nourished the reflexivity in film. Jacobs also indicates the academic contributions that nourished the reflexive movements in these periods<sup>12</sup> (Jacobs, 2000). In addition to these he exposes the effects of cinéma vérité and direct cinema movements in

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<sup>12</sup> In the context of mock-documentary, academy had essential role in the formation of first mock-documentaries. The first mock-documentaries such as *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies* were created by the students from NYU. As Mitchell W. Block indicates in those years (late 1960s and early 1970s) academy created an environment that courage to question the classic mainstream cinema. (Block, 2002). These two films were the first outcomes of these critical approaches

documentary (Jacobs, 2000). He positions mock-documentary within all these paradigms and within the social context of 1960s;

The wave of introspection that accelerated in the 1960s is partially sustained today in the pseudo-documentary tradition, shaping film and television forms in 21<sup>st</sup> century (Jacobs, 2000).

He introduces Jay Ruby's reflexive classification in fiction film;

(1) comedies that are satires and parodies about movies and moviemakers; (2) dramatic films that contain subject matter of movies and moviemakers; and (3) modernist films concerned with exploring the parameters of form, thus exploring conventions such as the blurring of fictional and non-fictional events (Jacobs, 2000).

Jacobs positions mock-documentary within the third group. He made a distinction between parodies that explicitly imitate the style of narratives and mock-documentaries that hide their imitated nature (Jacobs, 2000). According to him mock-documentaries do not apply parody to undermine their subjects, but apply it to represent their subjects (Jacobs, 2000). However it is important to remember that Jacob mainly mentions three examples of the form. In this context although Jacobs' point is suitable for some mock-documentaries, it does not comprise all mock-documentaries. For example '*The Rutless: All You Need is Cash*' presents an explicit usage of parody, and while it uses parody to represent its subject, while it also uses parody to undermine and ridicule the films about '*The Beatles*'. For that reason when we consider the other examples of the form we cannot apply what Jacobs suggests to the whole form.

In addition to these Jacobs points out that mock-documentary and fictional film represent highly similar features in terms of their construction of narrative;

Narrative films and pseudo-documentaries can inhabit the same framework of storytelling. The three-act paradigm is derived from Aristotle's notion that all dramas have a beginning, a middle, and an end. It is a structure that most effectively engages the audience and adheres to its experience of a story (Howard & Mabley quoted in Jacobs, 2000)



According to Jacobs similar to fiction film mock-documentary contains elements of three-act paradigm. Similar to fiction film, in its narrative structure it presents dramatic conflicts, the solvent, a plot, a crisis structure. He examines Bob Robert's in order to expose how three-act paradigm and dramatic conflict function in the film. He uses five basics of conflicts; which are proposed by Madsen;

1. Individual vs. Self. ...
2. Individual vs. Individual. ...
3. Individual vs. Institution. ...
4. Individual vs. Elements. ...
5. Society vs. Society (Jacobs, 2000).

He examines Tim Robbins' *Bob Roberts* to expose how mock-documentary applies these five basics. Although Jacobs exposes the fictional and reflexive characteristics of mock-documentary, his intention to restrict mock-documentary with three examples of the form presents a reductionist approach to mock-documentary.

While Jacobs focuses on generally the relationship between fiction and mock-documentary, Paul Ward brings forward the relationship between mock-documentary and parody. He identifies mock-documentary as a meeting place of comedy and documentary (Ward, 2005). The parodic purpose in mock-documentary cannot be ignored and in order to understand mock-documentary it is essential to understand function of parody within the form.

As Simon Dentith indicates parody is one of the old forms of narrative that stems from Ancient Greek, and takes variety of forms and meaning through its voyage to today (Dentith, 2000). Parody exposes a complex relationship from the literature to the cinema. In the context of mock-documentary it is useful to restrict the field of parody with cinema.

Dan Harries indicates that parody quickly adapted to cinema, and cinema in itself developed a parodic agenda (Harries, 2000). As Paul Ward points out in order to create a parody, the subject of the parody has to be well known by the readers; otherwise the effect of parody is reduced (Ward, 2005). In this context in cinema parody constructs itself through the entrenched genres and forms (Harries, 2000).

In the first years of the cinema, the social situations were usually the subject of the parody such as Lumière's "*Teasing the Gardener*", and Edwin S. Porter's "*Uncle Josh at the Moving Picture*". Both of these films were constructed on the experiences of social life (Harries, 2000). Later on, with the development of new narratives within the cinema, parody began to address these previous narratives (Harries, 2000). As Paul Ward explains:

A parodic text can be summed up as one that invokes another highly recognizable text by mimicking it, but at the same time in some very important ways it differing from the original (Ward, 2005).

In this context Paul Ward suggests to look at the parody and its process as narrative (Ward, 2005). According to Harries there are mainly three stages in texts, which he indicates as lexicon, syntax and style (Harries quoted in Ward, 2005). *Lexicon* refers to visual symbolism and he gives horses and guns as examples, *syntax* refers to where visual symbolism inhabit to construct a narrative, and *style* refers to method of the telling stories such as camera movements (Ward, 2005). As a consequence he indicates that in order to create a successful parody, syntax or lexicon should be successfully created within the parody (Harries, quoted in Ward, 2005). In the context of mock-documentary Ward emphasizes that in order to create a successful parody of documentary, mock-documentary should create an absolute real world where the parody takes place (Ward, 2005). Ward points out that not all mock-documentaries represent the same level of parody or comedy in its narrative (Ward, 2005). In addition to this as Roscoe and Hight, Ward indicates the importance of audience participation in such texts. Since parody constructs itself over the well known forms, audience has to have an acquaintance with those texts in order to map out the parodic formation of the text, otherwise they cannot understand the essence of the film (Ward, 2005).

In addition to this, for Jacobs mock-documentary is a hybrid text that applies style of popular modes of documentary to create fiction (Jacobs, 2000). Since mock-documentary grounds its narrative style on documentary, it subverts and ridicules the most popular modes of documentary (Jacobs, 2000, Roscoe &

Hight). Roscoe and Hight declare that there are mainly three modes of documentary that are addressed by mock-documentary. In this context there is the observational mode of documentary, which also refers to direct cinema/cinéma vérité; the expositional mode of documentary that usually represents the scientific argument. Also there is the interactive/participatory mode of documentary that present the filmmakers' direct interaction are the main modes targeted by mock-documentary filmmakers (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). According to Roscoe and Hight these three modes of documentary also represent the characteristics of *Classic Objective Argument* of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). Since knowing the previous form and recognizing it as an element of ridicule is the basic requirement of parody (Hutcheon, 1988). As a form of parody, mock-documentary uses the popular modes of documentary. Otherwise there is a risk that mock-documentary cannot be understood.

As a consequence according to Roscoe and Hight, mock-documentary represents different types of narratives mainly based on its relationship to documentaries. In addition to these, Paul Ward highlights the parodic characteristics of the form, and its relation to audience with this parodic text. Subverting the popular modes of documentary is one of the essential characteristics of the mock-documentary.

Mock-documentary takes place between fiction and non-fiction. It presents ambiguous characteristics and to use Jacobs' term, a parasitic characteristic. For mock-documentary it is difficult to define a line between the modes of documentary and fiction films. While mock-documentary challenges the position of documentary, it also benefits from it to create its own core. For that reason mock-documentary is also ingrate in its nature. While some mock-documentaries represent highly parodic features, some of the others are away from parodic representation. There are different approaches that give us a different perspective about the form. Also by representing different aspects of the form they justify the ambiguous and complex nature of the form.

### **3.2.2. Degrees of Mock-documentary**

Mock-documentary represents different characteristics. There are different formations within the form that address documentary in different perspectives.

According to Paul Ward, there are mainly two types of mock-documentary: mock-documentaries that aim to satirize the convention of documentary while construct a fictional story and mock-documentaries that aim to satirize cultural events by using the convention of documentary (Ward, 2005). Although he indicates that the distinction between two forms is not clear, this distinction is important to understand the form in itself (Ward, 2005). Roscoe and Hight classify mock-documentary in three categories, as they indicate their classification comprise mainly three factors:

We suggest an initial schema of three degrees, a model which approaches mock-documentaries according to the intersection between the intention of the filmmaker, the nature and degree of the text's appropriation of documentary codes and conventions, and the degree of reflexivity consequently encouraged for their audience (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

In this sense as first degree Roscoe and Hight introduce "parody", as second degree "critique", and finally and as the third degree they introduce "deconstruction" as degrees of mock-documentary.

Degree one comprises of films that mainly focus on making parody of cultural events (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). In this degree filmmaker intention is not directly making parody of documentary codes. In other words, filmmakers deal with popular cultural events rather than the conventions of documentary. In this degree narrative is usually based on the modes of expositional, interactive and observational subgenres of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). Parody in these texts reveals itself through an absurd story within a sober form, but in some examples such as *"The Rutles: All You Need is Cash"* (1978); the style of the documentary can be explicitly parodied. In this degree mock-documentaries usually address the well known cultural subjects, but they lack depth of critique towards their subjects (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). This degree of mock-documentary intersects with what Ward indicates as mock-documentaries that use documentary codes in order to address cultural events. As Roscoe and Hight state;

These texts feature what could be termed the ‘innocent’ appropriation of these codes and conventions; their filmmakers do not intend to make explicit the inherent reflexivity of the mock-documentary form (Roscoe & Highti, 2001).

Roscoe and Hight introduce “*The Rutles: All You Need is Cash*” (1978) that parodies The Beatles as a popular cultural event, “*Zelig*” (1983) which creates a phenomena over the character of *Zelig* , “*Forgotten Silver*” (1995) that introduces a genius of his time that is unknown to modern world, and a rock mock-documentary such as “*This is Spinal Tap*” (1984) that represents a story of an unsuccessful rock band are in this degree of mock-documentaries. Although their filmmakers do not intend to address the sobriety of documentary, the texts unintentionally represent reflexivity towards the genre. While some of the films in this degree represent an explicit parody of documentary such as *The Rutles* and *Zelig*, others can represent implicit humor towards to genre such as *Forgotten Silver* and *This is Spinal Tap*. This degree is divided into three categories according to general tendencies of the films: nostalgia, mock-rockumentaries and mock-docu-soap (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

As first tendency Roscoe and Hight introduce the nostalgia to define the films that represent a nostalgic manner to their subjects (Roscoe & Hight, 200).

The mock-documentary texts which we group in degree 1, however, tend not to carry their parodic intent through to a detailed and explicit critique of their subject. Instead, many in this group of mock-documentaries adopt a strong frame of nostalgia in their presentation of fictional representatives of an era or cultural idiom (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

*The Rutles: All You Need is Cash* (1978), *Zelig* (1983), *Man With A Plan* (1996), and *Forgotten Silver* (1995) are all films in this category.

The second tendency is “mock-rockumentary” that converts the codes of rockumentary which is one of the popular forms of documentary. Rockumentaries use the observational modes of documentary (Sarchett quoted in Roscoe & Hight, 2001) and they address the music bands as their subjects. *This is Spinal Tap* (1984) is one the best examples of this category (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

As final tendency they introduce the “mock-soap-documentary” that plays the codes of docu-soap to present a story such as *Waiting for Guffman* (1996). Although this three sub-categorization, within degree one is useful, these films cannot be restricted within this degree. There are other texts that share the same feature with these texts. For example, as we shall see “*Bad News Tour*” which is categorized as a degree two mock-documentary is another mock-rockumentary that represents a parody of a music band and can be categorized within first degree of mock-documentary.

The second degree ‘*critique and hoax*’ departs from the first degree of mock-documentary in terms of addressing the codes of documentary more explicitly (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In this degree the codes of documentary are used to construct a pseudo argument that supports the filmmakers’ intention; in doing so it implies how these codes can be applied to manipulate both audience and subject itself (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). Similar to degree one mock-documentaries, the reflexivity in these texts becomes independent from the intention of the filmmaker. Although criticizing the codes of documentary is not the main focus of these kinds of mock-documentaries, the reflexivity through the factual discourses of documentary cannot be ignored.

These mock-documentaries, while not necessarily containing messages which are deliberately intended to be reflexive towards factual discourse, still trigger reflexive interpretations among viewers because of the subsequent uncovering of their fictional status (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

Different from degree one mock-documentaries, films in this degree represent a critical approach to their subjects. In order to make clear the difference between two degrees Roscoe and Hight compare similar films such as “*This is Spinal Tap*” and “*Bad News Tour*”:

Unlike its predecessor, however, *Bad News Tour* more directly explores the tension and contradictions inherent to any collaboration between a documentary filmmaker and his/her subject (Roscoe & Hight, 2001).

In this degree the institutionalized formation of documentary that claims to represent detached, truthful representation of the world is satirized (Roscoe & Hight, 71, 2001). *Bad News Tour* (1983) represents an unsuccessful music group and their relationship with the filmmakers, and *Bob Roberts* (1992) criticizes the election system of America. These are the main examples of these kinds of texts.

Based on their reflexivity films in this degree represent three different approaches to their subjects: “muted critique of media practices” represent critique towards to media practices, “political critique” addresses the political subjects and “hoaxes” construct this three levels of approaches (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

The first-category “muted critique of media practices” comprises of films such as *Bad News Tour* (1983), *ER* (episode entitled ‘Ambush’, 1997), and *The Games* (1998). The common point of these films is expressing criticism towards to practices of the filmmaking. They usually address the relationship between filmmaker and his/her subject as the subject of critique. Films in this category expose the violation of the ethical principles by the film crew.

The second category of critique is “political critique” that addresses the political issues as a subject of critique. *Bob Roberts* (1992) is the best example of these kinds of texts. As in *Bob Roberts*, while the political issues are criticized, stance of media is another issue to criticize. Also, *Punishment Park* (1971) can also be placed within this categorization, since the film directly addresses the politics of Nixon.

The final category of this degree is “hoaxes” that refer to films, which intentionally or unintentionally make believe their audience the factuality of their subject (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). The audience attitude towards to film is the signifier roscoe & Hight, 2000). Although it is defined as degree one mock-documentary *Forgotten Silver* is also identified with this category since the film unintentionally convinces its audience about the factuality of the story. *Alien Abduction: Incident in Lake Country* (1998) is another example of this category that intentionally hoaxes its audience about the story. Although Roscoe and

Hight do not mention *This is Spinal Tap* and *David Holzman's Diary*, they also can be included in this level of degree.

As third degree “deconstruction” refers to texts that directly address the codes of documentary:

Their central distinguishing characteristic is that even if they focus on other subjects their real intention is to engage in a sustained critique of the set of assumptions and expectations which support the classic modes of documentary (Roscoe & Hight, 2000).

This degree of mock-documentary also refers to what Paul Ward puts forward as mock-documentaries that mainly address the codes of documentary itself (Ward, 2005). The ethical issues that expose the conflicts in documentary filmmaking and the notion of “camera tells truth” is usually focus of the critique in these films and (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). Observational mode, or cinéma vérité style is mostly targeted styles (Roscoe & Hight, 2000). *David Holzman's Diary* (1967), presents a man who makes his own film in order to find out the truth about his life; *The Falls* (1980), which directly addresses the codes of British documentary; and *Man Bites Dog* (1992), which represents a highly ethical subject about a group of filmmakers that try to make a documentary about a serial killer are the best examples of these kinds of texts.

### **3.2.3. Changing critical content of mock-documentary**

As Roscoe and Hight indicate, mock-documentary creates different narrative forms (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). While some mock-documentaries directly address the codes and conventions of documentary, other examples of the form focus on creating parody of popular events (Ward, 2005). The relationship between mock-documentary and documentary represents an unsteady characteristic. And the levels of critics and parody changes within different examples. Thus, it is difficult to portray a unified characteristic of the form.

Within time mock-documentary comes to represent a shift from being critical to entertaining. The later examples of the form usually address the entertaining subjects, such as a wedding contest in *Confetti* (2006), or an event as a folk



music concerts in *A Mighty Wind* (2003). The shift within documentary can be the main reason for this change in mock-documentary. As it is mentioned in chapter 2, documentary became another form of entertainment within the formation of television. And popular forms of documentary are produced within this frame. The critical approach that represented by *David Holzman's Diary* or *Punishment Park* has not continued. Within this respect I am going to examine *David Holzman's Diary, No Lies* as the earliest examples of mock-documentary, and following them I am going to examine *A Mighty Wind* and *Confetti* as recent examples of mock-documentary, in relation to their critical approaches.

### **3.2.3.1. David Holzman's Diary (1967)**

The earliest examples of the form arose as a critique towards the documentary. The academic formations in this period also affected the formation of mock-documentary as critical text. *David Holzman's Diary* (1967), and *No Lies* (1973), arose as outcomes of these academic formations. Both of these films' directors question the role of camera in representing reality. These films do not only criticize the documentary as a form, but they also –and may be most importantly– criticizes the whole factual discourse of documentary. This whole factual discourse refers to practices of documentary filmmaking, motivation of filmmaker, motivation of audience and relation of audience to documentary.

The film is about a man who tries to find out the truth about his life by recording it. The filmmaker becomes the subject of the film, and directs his camera to his own life. Jacobs mentions about the social context of the film;

*David Holzman's Diary* was filmed in 1967 in New York City, a time during which young men the age of the main character contended with the draft and the Vietnam War

In this context Jacobs indicate that David Holzman (*L. M. Kit Carson*), is the character that is the typical example of that.

An increasingly film-conscious generation grew up in the 1960s, and Holzman is an archetype for the soul-searching film artist convinced that his tools will bring him the truth that will set him free (Jacobs, 2000).

The narration of the film is based on direct cinema, which became popular through the 1960s. This timing is not a coincidence and it reveals the close relationship of mock-documentary with the popular forms of documentary. This foregrounds the parodic characteristics of the form since many theoreticians indicate that the parodic elements can function through the popular codes.

As Roscoe and Hight indicate film represents a direct critique towards to attitudes of direct cinema (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). As it is in direct cinema, camera almost records everything; it captures the moments as they fall into the camera. This manner of usage camera obscures the constructed nature of the film. We think that everything in the film in their natural order. However, *David Holzman's Diary* is a screen-based film that is designed to be look like direct cinema. Film emphasizes the power of camera and as a director Holzman's camera drive. As Jacobs indicates above Holzman sees camera is perceived as a tool to reveal reality (Jacobs, 2000). This motivation controls him through the film, and he chased truth with camera. Through the end of the film he blames his camera for not showing him the truth and also he makes responsible his camera for make him behave like he did. In his sense film criticizes direct cinema as an obsession to capture everything. Also it puts forward to direct cinema's exaltation of the camera as an instrument of truth. The usage of camera in some scenes as a tool of voyeurism or persecution increases the critique towards to direct cinema. The scenes about his neighbor whom he named as *Miss Schwartz* and her girlfriend Penny are good examples of this kind of penetration of the camera. In this context, Jacobs emphasizes that the scenes that shot his neighbor not only criticize the direct cinema but also it addresses the Hollywood fiction film Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (Jacobs, 2000). He emphasizes the voyeuristic characteristics of the film.

Holzman represents a life watching another life watching a Hollywood film about a historical character's life. And the audience is observing Holzman! ... they are certainly layered at this moment in a round-robin of voyeurism (Jacobs, 2000)

Nora Sayre indicates *David Holzman's Diary* not only addresses the direct cinema, but it also addresses its times political issues (Sayre, 1973). She indicates film uses such media like radio to catch our attention to politic background of the film;

We get a pungent flash on the past when a radio announces the numbers killed in the Newark riots, or refers to "the new Israel-Egyptian cease-fire," or quotes the Pentagon on the probable increase of American forces in Vietnam next year (<http://movies.nytimes.com/movie/review?res=9903E0DA1239E73ABC4F53DFB4678388669EDE>, last visited: 06.05.2010).

As an earliest example of mock-documentary *David Holzman's Diary* still one of the most striking examples of the form.

### **3.2.3.2. No Lies (1973)**

As a student of NYU MFA program Mitchell W. Block made *No Lies* as his thesis work (Block, 2002). Similar to *David Holzman's Diary* Mitchell Block's *No Lies* (1973) is another mock-documentary that addresses the direct cinema form. This is a 16 minutes short film that addresses a crucial subject as rape. The camera follows and interviews with a woman while she was preparing for going outside. We learn her story through the questions that she answered. As audience we witness the penetration of camera and director into the woman's life to get the truth. As a social critic this film represents the attitude towards these kinds of issues, by directing camera into a woman's private life. The director of film explains that he inspired by *American Family* (1972-1973) TV program that is about everyday life of a family (Block, 2002). The ethical issues about this program such as influences of camera on the people's life in front of the camera, made the essence of his work (Block, 2002). Also he declares that he was mostly influenced by *David Holzman's Diary* (Block, 2002). As a result he came up with the idea that make a film to expose the process of filmmaking (Block, 2002). For Block film represents three essential characteristics in relation to filmmaker's relation to subject and audience, and the audience and film;

(1) abuse the subject with an insensitive filmmaker, (2) undermined the audience's relationship with the filmmaker by makin the latter unlikeable and

unethical, and (3) abuse the spectator by pretending to present the truth but lying (Block, 2002)

For Nichols this film belongs to reflexive mode of documentary. However as *David Holzman's Diary* this film is screen-based film and does not refer to real life. In both *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies* we realize the constructed reflexivity of the film process. In other words, these films introduce and expose us the filmic process. However, while doing this they prevent us to see the *real* filmic process. In this sense there is an artificial reflexivity, that obscures the real filmic process itself. Thus while mock-documentaries reveals the constructed nature of documentary, they cover their constructed nature.

In these earliest examples of the form codes of documentary and cultural & social issues are in the focus of the films. *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies* present a critical approach to nature of process of documentary filmmaking. After these films television mock-documentaries came into the scene and the characteristics of mock-documentary began to change. *A Mighty Wind* (2003) and *Confetti* (2006) are taken as later examples of the form.

### **3.2.3.3. A Mighty Wind (2003)**

Although Christopher Guest does not define his works as mock-documentary, his famous film *A Mighty Wind* is accepted one of the examples of mock-documentary. *A Mighty Wind* is about a folk music concert that is organized after the death of a famous folk musician, Irving Steinbloom. His son organizes the concert, and tries to get together three of his father's favorite folk music groups. The film focuses on these folk music bands and the relationship of group members.

The film's narrative is based on the direct cinema style. Fake interviews, fake news and fake public and private archive footages are used to increase the effect of documentary look. Whereas in *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies*, film does not distort the style of documentary and keep the style as it is. Film caricaturizes the folk music artists and the folk music tradition. There are three groups that are identified with three archetypes of folk music classics. The Folksmen which includes a three man trio, The New Main Street Singers that derives from the

New Street Generation, the main figures of this group are a married couple that also devote themselves to the path of color. The third group is a couple, Mitch and Mike who broke up dramatically, and come back together for this concert. Film introduces these groups and their past and today is represented as a part of folk music. In this respect the main aim of the film is to make a parody of a cultural formation, rather than documentary itself. The relationships between group members and the relationships between the family members of Irving Steinbloom are subjected to parody. Since film deals with specific subject, and for that reason it targets a specific group of audience who enjoy and know the folk music in America. Different from *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies*, *A Mighty Wind* does not refer anything about the process of filmmaking. Also film does not represent any critics about its subject 'folk music'. As the film's director Christopher Guest indicates the aim of film to make fun and laugh (Guest, 2010). In this respect, the usage of documentary style becomes only a tool to create another form of entertainment. In other words, *A Mighty Wind* extracts the critical characteristics of mock-documentary and brings forward the comedic characteristics of the form. For that reason the critical approach of the mock-documentary is not manifested.

#### **3.2.3.4. Confetti (2006)**

Another recent example of the form is *Confetti* which was directed by Debbie Issitt in 2006. The film is about a wedding contest that is prepared by a magazine. The aim of the contest is picking out the couple that prepares the best conceptual wedding. In this respect the magazine team will pick out three couples. The winner gets a house and the honor to be cover-couple of the magazine. As in *A Mighty Wind*, film caricaturizes the archetypes of couples. The first couple Sam and Matt portrays a classic romantic couple that is found in musicals. The second couple consists of tennis players that are highly ambitious. The third couple is naturists and they are usually naked. Through the film we are presented with these three couples' conflicts and their efforts to overcome these conflicts. As in three films mentioned above, *Confetti* also uses direct cinema style and it keeps the style as it is. Similar to *A Mighty Wind*, *Confetti* creates a situation comedy, couples, their families and friends, and the magazine teams are

subjected to comedy. The film does not raise a question about the documentary crew, or the contest itself. It presents flow of comedy and strange events. It presents different life styles in an exaggerated level. Although the film is not a television mock-documentary and produced for cinema, the film makes fun of these kinds of television contests. However, similar to *A Mighty Wind*, filmmakers have fun with these programs, rather than criticize them. The entertainment characteristic of mock-documentary is dominant within the film. Both *A Mighty Wind* and *Confetti* unavoidably present a critical approach, since they play and ridicule the social and cultural formation, however, they lack intentional criticism towards their subjects. For that reason these films differ from *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies* in terms of their approach to their subjects.

Consequently, mock-documentary represents a change in its formation within time. While the first pioneers of the form aim to criticize the inhabitant patterns of documentary, and raise questions about the genre, the later examples depart from these intentions. The changing focus of film industry and television to the more entertaining subjects might have triggered this change within the form. As it is indicated in previous chapter, television has changed the formation of documentary to a more entertaining formation. When the relationship between documentary and mock-documentary is considered, the changes in mock-documentary become a reflection of these changes. In other words changes in documentary have affected the changes in formation of mock-documentary. Mock-documentary is also subjected to the same market rules as documentary, for that reason the recent transformation in media also affected the mock-documentary as form of media. However, if mock-documentary could have preserved its critical stance towards documentary, changing formation of documentary itself would become a subject of critique and ridiculing. Although, recent formations in mock-documentary cannot be reduced to this single frame, the mainstream examples of the form represent a decrease in critical approach within the form. Within this respect, the recent examples are far from being critical to documentary unlike their predecessors.

The earliest examples of the form arose as a critique towards the documentary. Especially *David Holzman's Diary* and *No Lies* arose as outcomes of their filmmakers' reflexive stance to documentary. Both of them question the role of camera in representing reality. These films do not only criticize the documentary as a form, but they also –and my be most importantly- criticize the whole factual discourse of documentary. This whole factual discourse refers to practices of documentary filmmaking, motivation of filmmaker, motivation of audience and relation of audience to documentary.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

It is good to have an end the journey towards,  
but it is the journey that matters in the end.

Ursula K. Le Guin

This thesis aimed to study the mock-documentary in relation to factual discourse of documentary. How mock-documentary addresses the codes and conventions of documentary has been the main question of this study. To make apparent the relationship between documentary and mock-documentary, the characteristics of documentary and mock-documentary have been examined.

Within this study it has been argued that mock-documentary represents a critical stance towards factual discourse of documentary by imitating its codes and convention. In this context, first of all the characteristics of documentary, and how documentary constructs its factual discourse have been examined. Also it has been stated that within the later examples of the form, the critical characteristics of the form have been reduced. Following these, the characteristics of mock-documentary and its relation to documentary have been examined.

In this context, it is indicated that, although documentary started as an independent film movement, it was institutionalized with the attempts of the earliest documentary filmmakers. As a result of these attempts, documentary was identified with the purposes of modernization. In this context, the factual discourse of documentary was constructed on a specific point of view, which represents the perspective of Enlightenment (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In this context, documentary became a medium of education and information. In addition to these, the close relationship of the genre with science and journalism conveyed its position as a reliable form of truth telling (Roscoe & Hight, 2001). In these years documentary presents a didactic narrative that aims to teach and inform. Voice over was one of the important components of the narrative. Later on, with the technological developments in 1960s, documentary began to involve



into daily life. Portable cameras and sound recording facilities gave opportunity to represent actual events easier than before. Direct cinema/ cinéma vérité movement occurred as a result of these technological facilities. Within these movements documentary was seen as a part of a real life that could represent actual world as it is. However, with postmodern discourses that arose in late 1950s, the position of documentary began to be discussed. With postmodern discourses documentary was positioned as a tool of modernization. The main target of these discourses was the truth claim of documentary. Scholars and filmmakers such as Trinh T. Minha criticized documentary for naturalising a specific point of view as a universal worldview (Minha, 1991). Mock-documentary arose in this period and the earliest examples of the form presented a critical approach to documentary. The academic environment, in terms of film schools that raised critics towards the function of mainstream films, triggered the creation of these kinds of texts. The critical approach that is represented by earliest mock-documentaries, did not only address the style of documentary, but also addressed the socio-historical position of documentary. However, changes in social, cultural and economic fields affected the formation of mock-documentary. Especially, the development of television as a new market has changed the critical face of mock-documentary to a more entertaining form. Within this respect it has been stated that the critical approach of mock-documentary has been decreased within the later examples of the form. In order to make apparent this discussion, the earliest examples of mock-documentary and recent examples of the form were compared. In this context, while *David Holzman's Diary* (1967) and *No Lies* (1973) were taken as the earliest examples of mock-documentary, *A Mighty Wind* (2003) and *Confetti* (2006) were taken as the recent examples of the form.

Within the line of these examples it has been understood that, while the earliest examples of mock-documentary convey a critical approach to documentary, later examples of the form do not represent such critical approach. Their main aim is to make fun of cultural and social situations rather than make a critic of documentary. In this respect it is understood that the critical characteristics of

mock-documentary cannot be reduced to just imitating the style of documentary, but there should be also a contextual level of criticizing.

For this study popular examples of mock-documentary are preferred rather than independent or avant-garde examples. Future studies can take in consideration these examples. Also the parodic characteristics of the form can take in consideration.

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