

NON-VOCOCENTRIC ESSAY FILM:
THE CASE OF *ZUR PERSON*

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
OF
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

OĞUZHAN BARAN

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA AND CULTURAL STUDIES

SEPTEMBER 2016

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

Prof. Dr. Tülin Gençöz
Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of
Master of Science

Prof. Dr. Necmi Erdoğan
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully
adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science.

Assist. Prof. Özgür Avcı
Supervisor

Examining Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yılmaz Üstüner (METU,ADM)

Assist. Prof. Özgür Avcı (METU, ADM)

Assist. Prof. Ersan Ocak (Bilkent Uni.,COMD)

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name : Oğuzhan, Baran

Signature :

ABSTRACT

NON-VOCOCENTRIC ESSAY FILM:
THE CASE OF *ZUR PERSON*

Baran, Oğuzhan

MSc., Program of Media and Cultural Studies

Supervisor : Assist. Prof. Özgür Avcı

September 2016, 37 pages

This Thesis aims to provide criticism of main discourses on Essay Film which constitute idea of Essay Film with a voice over text. Unlike Expository documentaries, Essay Film offers a subjective voice. This voice is offered to let audience get role in construction of film idea with director by placing the director same place with spectator. David Harvey criticises this voice of essay film by concept of vococentrism which lets us interrogate the authority on the essay film voice. In this thesis, by criticizing essay film through vococentrism, it is aimed to reconsider Essay Film idea through the texts of Adorno, Hans Richter and thinkers whom offer film has its own tools to create its unique text. In the end of these discussions, this thesis, offers a non-vococentric Essay Film named *Zur Person* as a practical work.

Keywords: Essay Film, Vococentrism, Authority, Visual Thinking

ÖZ

İNSAN SESİ ETRAFINDA ÖRGÜTLENMEYEN DENEME FİLM: *ZUR PERSON* ÖRNEĞİ

Baran, Oğuzhan

Yüksek Lisans, Medya ve Kültürel Çalışmalar Programı

Tez Yöneticisi : Yrd. Doç. Özgür Avcı

Eylül 2016, 37 sayfa

Bu tez Deneme film fikrini bir deneme metninin filmlerde üst ses halinde belirmesi olarak kuran söylemlere karşı bir eleştiriyi niteliği taşımaktadır. Betimleyici belgelsellerin aksine Deneme filmde öznel bir üst sesin varlığından bahsedilmektedir. Bu ses, kullanımı dolayımı ile seyirci ile yönetmeni aynı düzlemde buluşturarak onları bir etkileşime sokma ve seyirciyi anlam üretimine katma iddaasındadır. Fakat 'Vococentrism' kavramı etrafında şekillendirdiği eleştirileri ile David Harvey Deneme filmin öznel üst sesini eleştirmektedir. Bu tez çalışması, Deneme filmi 'Vococentrism' kavramı üzerinden eleştiri, Deneme film düşüncesini Adorno, Hans Richter ve bir filmin metnini oluşturabilmesi için kendine has araçlara sahip olduğunu düşünen düşünürlerin önerileri ışığında yeniden düşünmeyi amaçlar. Bu tartışmaların sonucunda ise *Zur Person* isimli 'Non-vococentric' bir deneme film çalışmasını pratik olarak sunar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Deneme Film, Otorite, Görsel Düşünme

To my beloved family

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor Assist. Prof. Özgür Avcı for his support and criticism that let me focus on topic through the process of thesis.

I would also like to express my thanks to people of Media and Cultural Studies program for courage that they have gave me.

I would like to thank to Assoc. Prof. Yılmaz Üstüner for reading my thesis deeply and his supportive criticism.

I consider myself extremely fortunate to have been argue about the topic and the practical work with exceptional scholar whom is Assist. Prof. Ersan Ocak. His distinctive guidance let me beleive in my self and work determinedly on my thesis. Although he was not my advisor, he have always found a way to guide me. I hope I would always have fortune to get his mentorship through my life.

In addition, I would also give my sincere gratitudes to my friends for their support through a very tough process. They are a huge group of people that keep me calm through my thesis. I would especially give my thanks to Yağmur Koçak and Sercan Yerşen.

Finally, I could not find a word to describe the honor to be a part of my crowded and supportive family.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLAGIARISM.....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ÖZ.....	v
DEDICATION	vi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Early Documentaries	2
1.2. Essay Film.....	8
2. <i>Zur Person</i>	18
3. CONCLUSION.....	27
BIBLIOGRAPHY	29
APPENDICES	29
Appendix A: Turkish Summary/ Türkçe Özet.....	32
Appendix B: Audio-Visual Material	36
Appendix C: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu	37

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is part of my thesis which consists of a written part and an audio-visual work (Appendix B). The written part of my thesis covers the theoretical argumentations on the topic. My audio-visual work is result of this theoretical discussions. Written and practical works support each other in this context. Thus, you will engage in with a bilateral thesis composed of two related components that support each other.

My thesis aims to provide criticism of main discourses on the Essay Film. This criticism is mainly result of theories and films that insistently builds the idea of essay film with written text which is commonly appear as voice over in the films. Most of the theoreticians think of Essay film with text as main component which could be as intertitle, subtitle or commonly voice over in film. This text is mainly representing the reflective voice of the director on what is seen on screen. Most importantly, it is believed that text is voiced in a different manner than documentary which let spectator to feel real conversation with the director. Thus, it is claimed that the spectator takes part in the construction of the film idea rather than passively seeing a film.

Early documentaries, especially known as expository documentaries, are claimed to constitute objective authority on spectator. Expository documentaries use voice which is also known as 'voice of god' for creating a sense of authority. On the other hand, Essay film is claimed to be using voice in different manner. Its subjective voice is told to be removing the authority and it is argued this is one of the main roles of the essay film in the process of freeing spectator.

Some critics, however, claims that essay film reproduces authority which is subjective authority of director on images. My thesis with its written and practical work is aimed to interrogate this idea of voiceover in the essay film. I believe the main problem is the text-based construction of theories and the films that called to be essays. This

dissertation is focusing on how essay film could be freed from text which presents as voiceover in the film? How could we apply essay idea on film and video practices which are a result of a question that if we want a spectator that engages in constructing the meaning of the film and how could we think of that in considering the components of film and video?

To do that, firstly, I will explore the early documentaries. Mainly my focus will be propaganda films and especially 'voice of god' documentaries. Then, I am going to focus on the main discourses on the essay film theories, which base their ideas on the text-based construction of the essay. After that, by criticizing the text usage I am going to search if there is a way of understanding the idea of essay film different manner in film and video. To do that, I am going to focus on Adorno's essay form, Hans Richter's theorization of the essay film and his films. In addition to that, I am going to explore the theoreticians trying to produce an idea of essay without even using voiceover like David Harvey.

At the end of these argumentations, I am going to explain how I establish the form of the film named *Zur Person* in the light of these argumentations. It is important to keep in mind that this dissertation, by being a part of my thesis work, requires a bond with my practical work. That is why I am obliged to explore the content of the practical work which would be contradict with the idea of the Essay Film. In the last part, I tried to stay away from deeply reading of the imaginary in the film named *Zur Person*.

1.1 Early Documentaries

Most of the sources on the history of documentary points out the Robert Flaherty's *Nannook of the North* (1922) as the beginning of the documentary. Flaherty was an explorer and was hired to explore the Hudson Bay area in Canada. After a period of exploration, he returned and his works were appreciated. Then, even though, he did not have an idea of film making, he was offered to get a camera to shoot this strange area and the people. After having a three week course he headed the area again. His first footages burned in an accident. He decided to make another film again but he was not satisfied about these footages of the first attempt and changed his mind about the form of the film because it was like a travelogue. He decided to put a famous hunter Eskimo to the center of the story and the resulted film was the source

of the documentary film idea in that period (Barnouw E., 1993:33-39). He got worldwide success with the Nannook and then he kept exploring the world for Filmmaking. After Nannook he shot the Moana, which excited John Grierson (McLane Betsy A., 2012:4). As McLane cited, Grierson wrote a review on the film in The New York Sun that:

“Of course, Moana being a visual account of events in the daily life of a Polynesian youth and his family, has documentary value. (The New York Times February 8, 1926)”

As McLane comments, ‘documentary value’ is used by the Grierson as in the modern meaning of the documentary recording the factual and the authentic. After meeting with Flaherty and working on his aesthetic theory Grierson stated his personal definition of documentary, which is ‘the creative treatment of actuality’. After his first film he led a way to a documentary tradition (McLane Betsy A., 2012:6).

Nannook is not the first one; there had been films from the start of the filmmaking. At the Edison and the Lumiere labs, the real life was started to captured. Louis Lumiere’s camera, the cinematographe, was invented in 1895, was only five kilograms which made it easy to carry. Unlike Edison’s, it was not dependent on the electricity (Barnouw E., 1993:33-39). So cinematographe was not imprisoned in the studio and started to record actualities. Famous examples were Workers Leaving the Lumiere Factory and Arrival of a Train the station. These were just only start, films made around the world but which is special about the Nannook is explained by Bill Nichols is:

“Robert Flaherty's Nannook of the North (1922) added plot development, suspense, and delineated character to recordings of the historical world (Nichols B., 2001:581).”

As Grierson puts, Documentary is not only related with recording reality, it is also interested in how you represent it in the film. The idea of representation changes in accordance with the filmmaker’s purpose. Documentary is purpose oriented in a sense that it aims to purpose something in addition to the entertaining spectator and gain money of it (McLane Betsy A., 2012:6).

“Its message is for a community. Its purpose is not only to persuade and interest imaginations today but several years hence. For this

reason, and for the many others dealt with later, I suggest that documentary demands greater production cares, more skilful craftsmanship and a more profound reasoning behind its choice of theme and its approach to material facts than does the story-film (Rotha P., 1939:12)."

Paul Rotha was a British filmmaker, producer and worked on the documentary theory. He was aware of the twofold face of the film for community and he was very cautious about it. As McLane reports, Rotha was working on the purposiveness of the documentary film making and lists the traditions which is identified by Rotha in his book on documentary theory as naturalistic(romantic), newsreel, propagandist, and realist (McLane Betsy A., 2012:7).

Naturalist (romantic) tradition is expressed by McLane using the parallel development of the anthropology in the social science. She states that even though he was not anthropologist, Flaherty's films are produced in a way that he planned the field work closely, probably more than any other filmmakers before him, he was living with and observing the folks in the Hudson area before taking the film footages. Realist (continental) tradition is sprung from the Avant-garde cinema especially from the Parisian filmmakers around 1920s. As McLean argues, these filmmakers were eager to find an artistic means for dealing with the 'real' which is a result of the interrelatedness of the time and space. (McLane Betsy A., 2012:9). Rotha finds these filmmakers' efforts childish and he supposes that their works lack deeper understanding of what is really going on. Rotha also claims that these films are only for the film society in which the art is for art.

The newsreel tradition is emerged as an expansion of journalism in the beginning of twentieth century. They were weekly shown regularly in movie theatres from 1910 (McLane Betsy A., 2012:8). According to Rotha, in a limited time, daily events were presented in a descriptive manner without any intervention of a special viewpoint or bias. Thus, the only thing it had in common with documentary was the material that they share which were the filmed actualities (Rotha P., 1939:91). On the other hand, Vertov is specially mentioned who is responsible from the changes in the way news reel normally work. He describes what Vertov did as follows:

"The material of newsreel, however, shot on the spot, has at various times given rise to pointed reportage and montage films that fall within the broad interpretation of documentary (Rotha P., 1939:91)."

Historical moments that Russians passing through was the reason behind the shift in the newsreels. After the October 1917, Vertov became the editor of the newsreel Film Weekly (Kino-Nedelia). He was on the editing table, from all fronts, film footages were coming to his table because they were in war with Germany and the allied forces who were trying to defeat the people fighting for revolution (Barnouw E., 1993:52).

"Vertov's task was to assemble incoming bits of film-fragments of struggle, crisis, disaster, victory- and send them forth again, subtitled and in meaningful organization. The newsreel issues went all directions-by "agit train" back to the various fronts to be seen by revolutionary fighters (...) (Barnouw E., 1993:52)."

Lenin gave importance to the film because of the power that it has to reach the masses. Thus, these newsreel footages carried more than actualities which is why it has documentary impulses at the same time it is criticized about being propagandist. As, Joshua Malitsky informs us about a film named The Red Star which was a film about a voyage of a ship named The Red Star and which was a propaganda ship travelling through Volga River 1919. Agit trains were also the question of propaganda (Malitsky J., 2013:37-40). On the other hand, as Malitsky cites from Georgi Plekhanov:

"Agitation presented few ideas to a much wider population with the goal of rousing them in action (Malitsky J., 2013:37-40)."

Although Vertov's newsreel had propaganda impulses, his position is not same with the other filmmakers after the revolution. Vertov's early works were said to be not belong to Vertov that we know as Malitsky argues:

"(...) marking these early films simply as reportage forceless consideration of some of productive capacities of the film, namely their effort to shape subjectivities and, in turn, build citizeners by projecting, modeling, and instilling new visions of collectivity (Malitsky J., 2013:40-41)."

Propaganda tradition is mostly related with the documentary films. Rotha claims that it has a very effective persuasive characteristics and this leads documentary to be a

suitable tool for propaganda (Rotha P., 1939:97). Rotha also claims that propaganda could also be the tool for illumination but he also has doubt on that:

“it may have been gathered that illumination and propaganda are closely related. Propaganda, also, in a long-range sense, is very near to education and may be wisely interpreted as a task of development. In fact, so closely are the two interbound that in most cases it would be extremely difficult to define where instruction begins and propaganda ends (Rotha P., 1939:47).”

Soviet filmmakers, with experiments that they did on the film, gave rise to the propaganda. Eisenstein and Pudovkin are the most influential filmmakers after the revolution with their films such as *Potemkin*, *October* and *Mother and end of St Petersburg*. They used different methods on the filmmaking but they were constructing soviet reality on film. The filmmaker was given freedom in the filmmaking process but the main goal was to rise people in action and convince them to digest the new beliefs of the state.

“In its first phase, Soviet cinema possessed an underlying ideology quite different from that of European and American production, its whole aim being propaganda in the strongest sense for the newly established Union. (Rotha P., 1939:49).”

During the war and after, in constructing the nation, films were seen as a great tool for propaganda. In Russia, Lenin was giving importance to the film to spread the ideas of the newly nation to the masses. In Germany, in the hands of Goebbels and the director Leni Riefenstahl the cinema was used as a tool for giving rise to the Nazi ideal. Moreover, Italy was using the cinema and Radio for political purposes, too.

“The War undoubtedly began this era of mass persuasion but the rapid development of the radio and the cinema, as well as the increasing influence exerted by the press, has subsequently trebled the importance of this new factor in the social structure (Rotha P., 1939:48).”

Unlike these countries, in Britain, private enterprises were over the control of the propaganda tools except the radio. They were exercising propaganda in an indirect way. On the other hand, there was inevitably, in a way or another, power, which is unsurprisingly State, over these tools (Rotha P., 1939:49).

In this point it would worth to explore formal characteristics of the documentaries especially ‘Voice of God’ documentaries of British filmmaker Grierson. Bill Nichols tries

to categorise this mode as Expository documentaries according to their formal characteristics. Expository mode is generally mentioned by "voice of god" in which voice is covering the form powerfully. In these documentaries, there is a non-diegetic voice outside frame which is directly addresses the spectator with a commentary on the visuals. This voice is mostly well trained, richly toned male voice which is the mark of the mode (Nichols B., 2001:105). This addressing could be in a direct or indirect way (Ward P., 20015:13). Most of the films that made by Grierson and his followers show the characteristics of the expository mode. Nichols gives Why We Fight series as an example for this mode (Nichols B., 2001:105). In this mode commentary carries the logic and idea of the film and images serve as a supporting object of these ideas. (Nichols B., 2001:107).

"The commentary, in fact, represents the perspective or argument of the film. We take our cue from the commentary and understand the images as evidence or demonstration for what is said (Nichols B., 2001:107)".

Nichols, in his work, *Representing the Reality*, also states that with all its effort, commentator of this mode is persuasive and the text follows this demand of the commentator (Nichols B., 1991:35). Nichols says that commentary is presented distinct from the images and thus it is separate from the world of actuality. Commentary is organized in a way to give meaning to the images, make sense of them by guiding our attention on them.

"The commentary is therefore presumed to be of a higher order than the accompanying images. It comes from some place that remains unspecified but associated with objectivity or omniscience. The commentary, in fact, represents the perspective or argument of the film. We take our cue from the commentary and understand the images as evidence or demonstration for what is said. (Nichols B., 2001:107)."

As Paul Ward says, its strength becomes the weakest point of this mode. Commentary of these modes is too didactic, too sure of itself and has too much authority to push his perspective of the world to the spectator (Ward P., 2012).

Documentaries, especially early examples, are accused of being a tool for persuading spectator towards intended meaning as a result of formal and production purposes. Before, after and during the war, it served as a propaganda means for most of the

countries. Almost all forms of documentary, kept spectator as a passive audience with leaving no room for them to engage in what they see. These thoughts are especially claimed for those films that produced in early years of the cinema.

1.2. Essay Film

At the same time, there have been filmmakers and film traditions through the film history that aiming to free spectator from effects of these early films. Avant-garde cinema is just one of the examples of this idea. Vertov with his manifestation clearly aims another type of film that let spectator get away from the bewitching effects of the mainstream cinema to engage in critically thinking on the everyday reality (Vertov D.,1984).

Nichols in his classification of documentaries mentions about types of documentaries. Observational documentary, which would be corresponded with the naturalistic tradition as mentioned by Rotha, can be treated as another attempt to free spectator. Although it reduces authority by standing on the giving spectator free space to interpret what they observe in the film, it is claimed that in reality, what 'real' is bewitching. Lefebvre, claims reality has an effect of ambiguity which keeps us away from seeing relations that constitutes reality. Thus, it again misleads spectator to show them everyday reality as it is (Lefebvre H., 1991:15-17).

In this respect, transgressing the classical formal laws of the documentary and establishing a form that let spectator get critically engage in everyday reality have become an interest lately in film theory. Essay film is a result of an argumentation that springs from these necessities. In this section of my dissertation, I will explore the essay film literature and the criticisms on the form.

The term "essay film" is started to use widely in film reviews, academic writings and between filmmakers to define new type of films which are unorthodox, personal and self-reflexive like Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1983), Agnes Varda's *The Gleaners and I* (2000), Haron Farocki's *Images of the World and The Inscription of War* (1989) and so on.

Essay film occupies a narrow space in film studies that is why it is hard to find writings on the subject. Most of the writings on the topic try to work on the subject via specific movies and try to widen the definition of the essay film. Some is working on the topic

by the terms of literary essay some places it into the documentary genre. In addition, for some, it is between the fiction and non-fiction because essay film also has fictional impulses and as Brink argues he sees essay as a separate genre (Brink J.; 1999).

Though, these films mostly carry documentary characteristics, the way they use the material is different from the classical documentaries. It is generally hard to define them because they carry different modes of documentary impulses. Bill Nichols categorizes the modes of documentaries as poetic, expository, observational, participatory, reflexive and performative modes (Nichols B, 2001:33-34). On the other hand, an Essay film could carry almost all these modes characteristics in just one film like Agnes Varda's *Gleaners and I*. That would be one of the reasons why it is hard to define Essay film by considering its formal construction. For instance, Nora Alter notes that essay film is not a genre. As it attempts to not to be formal, conceptual and to be beyond social constraint. She believes that Essay film has a form like in the Adornean literary essay that refuses the traditional rules. Its concept and form is transgressive and it is self-reflexive and self-reflective (Alter, 1996:171). Moreover, one of the main ideas in the essay film is the subject positions of the medium, Filmmaker and the audience during the construction of the film idea. Though, it is hard to define it as a genre or even as fictive or nonfictive, these films have some characteristics in common as Rascaroli quotes:

"Galvanized by the intersection of personal, subjective rumination and social history, the essay emerged as the leading nonfiction form for both intellectual and artistic innovation... the essay offers a range of politically charged visions uniquely able to blend abstract ideas with concrete realities, the general case with specific notions of human experience (Arthur, 2003: 58)."

Another aspect is the idea of "self" in the essay. Most of the arguments on the essayistic accounts mentions about its personal and almost autobiographical nature. Gianetti for example, argues that essay is not a fiction or fact but a personal investigation of author (Giannetti, 1975). As Brink claims, subjectivity is one of the most important things in an essay as Montaigne says "everyone recognizes me in my book, and my book in me" (Montaigne, Upon some Verses of Virgil, 2015), and "I have no more made my book than my book has made me" (Montaigne, of Giving Lie, 2015). Self is one of the main points that also insisted on by the thinkers like Lukacs. It is coined by George Lukacs (as cited by Rascaroli, 2009), "the essayist must now

become conscious of his own self, must find himself and build something of himself” (Lukacs, 1974:15).

Joram ten Brink tries to explain the essay as a shape of triangle and puts the author (“self”), the writing process, and the reader to the corners of the triangle. He believes that essay is the relation between these three corners of triangle and gives the reader an active role in reading process. (Brik J. T., 1999:16). Graham Good, as cited by Brink, claims about essay that it is generally written in prose and its language is relatively informal whereas the length of the essay is always flexible. It presents knowledge, however it does not aim to present complete systematic and organized scholarship. The quotations in an essay are used to create a bond or dialogue between the writer and the reader. Unlike the disciplined study, they are not meant to have lent authority to the work. Although, Montaigne’s early essays seem to have been written to reach to a truth on a topic by the help of the quotations of the other writers, in the later essays of him, he uses the quotations not for an authoritative support but to establish a new voice in the conversation (Good G., 2014).

Rascaroli while she tries to theorize essay film focuses on especially onto the reflectivity and subjectivity of the essay film and she offers that essay aims to express personal, critical reflection on a problem or set of problems. As giving reference to the Paul Arthur, she claims that all the essays carry a special feature that they all have a self-searching, blatant authorial presence (Rascaroli R., 2008:35).

The first attempt, in 1940, that could contribute to essay film is the Hans Richter’s “Der Film Essay, Eine neue Form des Dokumentarfilms,” (The Film Essay: A New Form of Documentary film). Richter, in his article, proposes a new type of documentary film that gives the filmmaker a possibility of making the “invisible” world of thought, concepts visible on the screen. Moreover, Richter argues that these films transgress the rules of traditional documentary. Nora Alter comments on that these films unlike the documentaries which presents facts and information allow the filmmaker to create complex thoughts that are not needed to be connected to reality, could also be contradictory, irrational and fantastic. As Rascaroli quotes, Nora Alter comments on essay film as:

“This new type of film, according to Richter, no longer binds the filmmaker to the rules and parameters of the traditional

documentary practice, such as chronological sequencing or the depiction of external phenomena. Rather, it gives free reign to the imagination, with all its artistic potentiality. The term essay is used because it signifies a composition that is in between categories and as such is transgressive, digressive, playful, contradictory, and political. (Alter N.; 2002:7-8)."

Richter may be the first who explains the word "essay" to but when we consider the form we could see that there are films showing essayistic impulses like first movies in the cinema history till Chris Marker who becomes the symbol of the essay film. As Nora Alter states Alexander Astruc necessarily made contribution to the essay film in 1948(Alter N., 1996:170). As Nora Alter cites Astruc's concept of camera-stylo offers that the filmmakers must:

"Break free from the tyranny of what is visual, from the image for its own sake, from the immediate and concrete demands of narrative, to become means of writing just as flexible and subtle as written language... the cinema is now moving towards a form which is making it such precise language that it will soon be possible to write ideas directly onto film. (Astruc A., 1948)"

Vertov is seen as one of these examples. Vertov states that "I am a film writer. A Cinepoet. I do not write on paper, but on film" (quoted in Brink, 1999:59-60). Furthermore, while he was introducing the term 'Kino-Eye' he describes it as: "Kino-eye is the documentary cinematic decoding of both the visible world and that which is invisible to naked eye" (Vertov D., 1984). The man with the Movie Camera was an example or an experiment to his manifestation of the notion in the cinema. Vertov's purpose by these avant-garde movements is reaching invisible via visible as he says:

"Kino-eye is understood as 'that which the eye does not see,' (...) Not Kino-eye for its own sake, but truth through the means and possibilities of the film eye. (...) Kino-eye as the possibility of making the invisible visible, the unclear, clear, the hidden manifest, the disguised over, the acted, nonacted; making falsehood into truth." (Vertov D., 1984).

As it is stated before, Essay films have characteristics in common and some theoreticians list these characteristics that an essay film should have. Philip Lopate, as being one of them, insists on the fact that an essay film should have text and while

trying to explain essay film via literary essay he lists some of the features of the essay film (Lopate P., 1992:19):

- First and above all, there must be words in the essay-film, which would be subtitled, spoken or as intertitle.
- The text should be represented by single voice. It would be the director, scriptwriter or a collaborative(enunciator). The key point in this choice is that there should be a single perspective. Using collage is not the same thing with the essay. As in the case of Walter Benjamin who were thinking about making an essay which is consisted of quotes, it could trigger the thinking process but it would not be the thing that attracting us towards the Benjamin.
- The text must embody the speaker's effort to formulate some reasoned line of discourse on a problem.
- The text must be a pass on to the audience more than knowledge. Strong personal point of view must be imparted in the text.
- The language of the text must be clear, moving and interesting.

For Lopate making an essay film is not an easy work. He is giving more credits to the text because he believes that the essay must create a situation that let audience feel in a real conversation and "audience must be allowed to follow the rough mental process of contradiction and digression and yet aware of formal shapeliness developing underneath.". For Lopate, essay is a process of asking questions rather than finding solutions. It evokes the struggle for truth in full view. This text is generally grants the presence of the author, filmmaker in the film and lets her/him to create the space for conversation with the audience and argues about the images that we see in the film. As Lopate states, it would be polemical to focus on text but his essay film idea is shaped around it (Lopate P., 1992).

Essay film is mostly thought to be constructed by a text. By this text, as Rascaroli offers, essayist in the film aims to express personal, critical reflection on a problem or set of problems (Rascaroli R., 2008:35). How the text is being interpreted in the film depends on the formal preference. As it is stated above it could be the director or representative voice which is called as enunciator. Authorial presence is needed as

it is mentioned before. This presence is not meant to present factual data on the subject but so as to create a space to share the thought provoking reflection, essay film creates an enunciator that is very close to the real author. The enunciator is obliged to share declaredly the thoughts of the real author. According to Rascaroli this could be in different ways; for example, enunciator may be visible or stays physically invisible in the film. In these movies, which have an enunciator, like Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil*, voice establishes a dialogue with the audience. The audience is expected to interact with the film images via author's self-reflective interpretations. At this point, the audience is supposed to get into dialogue as a result of being the direct address of the enunciator while watching the movie. The enunciator directly calls the audience as "you" by creating a text as "I" by which the author shares his personal thoughts. She states that space is created for enunciator and the audience which is claimed to be an embodied spectator, and created text in that space has a rhetorical structure which does not answer all the questions but guides the spectator through the emotional and intellectual impulses and it starts a debate and interrogates the spectator (Rascaroli R., 2008:34-35):

"In perspective and experimental terms, the enunciator is on the same plane as the audience, because he is here spectator of his own film, and watches the images with us at the same time as us; the effect is strengthened by quality of the voice over, which does not sound studio-recorded, and is therefore suggestive of a private, intimate dialogue. In cognitive terms, of course, the enunciator knows more than spectator, and guides him/her in the analysis of the film's true meanings and characters' motivations and feelings, attracting attention to his shortcomings, and highlighting mistakes and problems with the shooting." (Rascaroli R., 2008:35).

Essay film is claimed to remove the authority of 'voice of god', the unseen man from above, and replaces the director to an equal place with the spectator. Unlike the documentaries' well trained voice, essay film's voice is subjective and even free to make mistakes in words or sentences while sharing the thoughts just like an embodied person rather than an unseen voice of god.

Chris Marker has been marked as being the leading figure in essay film. His films have a text mostly with enunciation. How the text is used in the film is offered as a mark that makes them different from documentaries. The basic premise of the voice is to establish a dialogue with spectator and remove the objective authority of

documentary on them. Thus, spectator changes their passive position and actively engages in a conversation with the director.

David Harvey offers a different perspective on the text and voice-over that could change the way of the debate. By referring Michel Chion's term 'Vococentrism', he discusses the voice used in the essay films especially in Chris Marker's films. Vococentrism is giving prioritization in the film to the soundtrack that contains human voice-over (Harvey, 2013:7). Thus, Harvey claims that Essay films, which are theorized to be essay film nowadays, are vococentric when we consider the term Vococentrism. Human voice generally dominates their soundtrack regime and they are formed and constructed on the voice-over (Harvey,2013:7).

Hence, Essay films share a common characteristic with the documentaries especially with the expository documentaries originated by Grierson. They both are vococentric. Expository documentaries by reducing the subjectivity, tries to establish an authorial objective presence. In contrast, essay films stand upon a highly, subjective authorial position of a specific perspective (Harvey, 2013:7).

In this respect, could removing objective voice of documentary remove the authority on spectator or do vococentric essay films establish a new type of authority? Essay films are claimed to have spaces that let audience constitute their own point of views. It is proposed that they do not offer answers whereas they ask questions to make spectator engage in problems. On the other hand, vococentric essay films carry the risk of introducing the problems from the subjective perspective of the director.

If we consider the Chris Marker's films, which are mostly vococentric, we could see that we are mostly engage in images from the perspective of Marker. It does not open up space to the spectator it keeps us around what the voiceover wants us to see or look at. David Harvey claims Marker's authorial presence covers the films that his authority does lead rhetoric which do not allow the spectator to interpret (Harvey, 2013:7).

"Marker's authorial presentation in his essay film is equal parts self-abnegation and forceful torrents of commentary that inscribe the logic of the self within the logic of the image. In other words, the voice(-over) is determinative, directional and strong (...)
(Harvey,2013:12)."

Authority is reproduced in subjective perspective of Marker. The production of the meaning on the images imprisoned under what Marker reflects about the images. This is also same for other text based vococentric essay films like *Letter to Jane* of Godard and Gorin. Their film is an essay about a picture of a Hollywood star Jane Fonda visiting Vietnam. Their voice dictates what to think and how to see the picture that spectator looking at and through this process, they leave no space for the spectator's opinion. On the other hand, essay film is offered to be an open form. Harvey, by considering the Marker's films, states that he agrees with Jaques Ranciere and quotes:

"[Marker] falls prey...to an obvious paradox: he feels compelled to punctuate all these images that speak for themselves... with an imperious voice over commentary that tells us what it is they say...That is what [Marker's] voice is constantly spelling out for the audience: don't forget this image, be sure to connect it to this image, look at this image a little closer reread what there is to read in this image. (Ranciere J., 167-168)"

Thus, although the way of the text used in vococentric essay films is different from the expository documentary, they mostly constitute the authority on the images that are being shown. Whereas essay film is proposed to place spectator in a position that the spectator is able to interpret meaning on the images they see, but text based vococentric essay films seem to be reproducing authority of the filmmakers on the interpreting process of the images. These theories, by considering Marker as the leading figure in the essay film, ignore the possibility of the other ways that could create spaces for spectator to get engage actively in film. Keeping bound with the written essay, they also ignore the tools of the film medium which can also create its own reflectivity with its differentiating capacities.

David Harvey believes that vococentric essay was not in mind when Essay film was theorized by the Hans Richter and *camera-stylo* by Astruc. He proposes that essay film is more likely to be a non-vococentric when we consider these theoreticians and their films.

"Astruc's *camera-stylo* is more in line with a mode of abstract intelligence available within specifically cinematic characteristics of the film medium: namely its image and non-vococentric soundtrack, or elements uneasily likened to literary modes of signification. (Harvey,2013:8-9)."

Same could be observed according to Harvey if we analyse the films of the Hans Richter especially the short film named *Inflation* (1928). It is totally edited as non-vococentric even there is no voice-over in the movie. It uses the all possible features of the medium to create the text of the Richter. In this way, images are used to create the text. As Harvey states, film does not produce constructed film reality or it poses a fixed argument. Film with its formal construction is aiming to get spectator engage in critic of unsteady German economic system (Harvey,2013:16). By keeping in mind that Richter was the first one who coins the term film essay and he was working on the film theoretically and practically, what is the result is an essay film with no voiceover and a film aiming to trigger spectator's attention on the text which is created by juxtaposition of images.

In this respect, we should reconsider the idea of essay film by keeping in mind what is the premises of the essay and how could these be possible while we think about the film medium, unlike the Lopate's idea of the essay film who insists on the existence of a text. Rascaroli gives reference to the Arthur's idea that Literary essay's single authorial voice could let itself be sensed through the multiple discursive levels of the film such as image, speech titles, music, montage or camera movement and so on. Rascaroli comments on that this idea makes it a complicated matter but it does not mean that the essay film is the expression of an authorial voice that establishes a dialogue with spectator. If the film is able to convey this text to visual images and if the enunciator establishes a dialogue via visual means by expressing her thoughts into the filmic means, we can call it as an essay film. Yet, Rascaroli also thinks that it would not be easy for the spectator to get into that dialogue through images in the same way with commentary on. On the other hand, film can create its own conditions via visual means, montage, sound or so on (Rascaroli L., 2008:37).

"The essay film creates its own discourse by using the tools of cinematic language- image, sound, editing and the organization of time and space- to create the cinematic 'text'. It creates narrative and non-narrative structures, "methodically unmethodically' edited together. This is bound together with the notion that filmmaker is present inside the work and introduces it to audience, asking them to take part in the construction of the film's meanings. As a result, the cinematic 'text' becomes the 'reflective text', the mediating medium between the filmmaker and the spectator (Brink J., 1999:75)."

Brink focuses his work on the position of the director and spectators' place. He thinks that essay film creates a reflective text with the tools of the film and replaces spectator from the position of the consumer to the place which lets her/him to join creating the idea of the film in the filmic space with the director.

Next part of this dissertation will be searching the motivation of the essay and how could we translate this to the filmic medium by the case of film named Zur Person which is a film of me and also the other part of my thesis. With its form, it is tried to be achieved to create a self-reflective text to let the spectator join to constructing the meaning process.

CHAPTER II

Zur Person

Zur Person is a nonfiction film that can occupy a significant place in argumentations on essay film. After reconsidering the essay film through the theoretical and practical works, it is an attempt to make a film that offers spectator a mind of a person to let them engage in interaction of the calls, images-imagelessness, sounds-soundlessness of this mind. The film is aiming to let the spectator and director get in a dialogue through the means of the medium and offers spectator ellipses to let them fill these ellipses and correlate images through perspective of their own. The film does not dictate what to think about the images, rather it offers spaces for spectator to actively join to the interpreting the various meanings of footages. In this section of dissertation, in the light of the essay film's premises, I will be analysing the film *Zur Person*.

Scholars come around the fact that essay film has a subjective, self-reflective and self-reflexive nature. As it is stated before, author builds something on his self. As Nora Alter states that meaning of "to essay" is "to assay", "to weight" as well as "to attempt" which offers an open-ended evaluative search and she claims subjectivity is required to surround this search (Alter N., 2003:12). In this respect, when we see the *Zur Person*, spectator will face with memories, fantasies, dreams and actualities of the director. It is a journey between the past and present, real and surreal images of the mind and also the sounds from the past and present. In a footage, the spectator is directly aimed and told:

"I am here in front of the camera..." (*Zur Person*)

The name of the film '*Zur Person*' means about a person. The director's being is recorded and projected with means of the video on the screen not only physically but also mentally. It is a self-searching journey from today through the mind of the director to his childhood home, memories, and dreams. As it is mentioned by Lukacs before, essayist creates something on his self. What the spectator is going to engage

is the director's self. For example, spectator engages in a specific memory of the director which is told by his mom:

"There was a Gulf War when you were child. And there was only one channel on TV we had to see what is shown. And you were sneaking around home like a fox. Suddenly, you told 'I am not going to join the army'. I asked why? You replied 'they die'. You were hiding in the wardrobe because of the war... We were trying to keep you away from hearing that people are dying (...)" (Zur Person). "

The film is organized around this memory and the memories that linked to this memory as images, sounds and places in the director's mind. The house which was the mother talking about is the place where director's first memories belongs. And the war, which was taking place at doorsteps of the childhood, has strong impact on memories of this house. As the mother states, the kid was trying to escape from the reality, which is taking place by hiding in the house. That is why the spectator sees lots of doors, some is closed, and some is open to nowhere that is connected to this memory. Only one door is opened to outside but the thing that is faced is the death by going outside this door.

Alongside these doors, spectator also engages in images, sounds, texts that reproduced in different forms as represented in cycles. Music has three cycles. There is a whistle sound repeats through the film, which was connected to father, who were outside and waited to come. The mother also tells the story of how the kid was waiting his father to come and sensing him from the sound:

"Your dad was away from home on the road, we were all along at home: Yasemin, you and me (...). You were hanging a photo of your father and waiting for him to come. You were sensing his arrival from the sound of truck (Zur Person: 9'32")."

The cycles are also seen in the images like in the graveyard. For example; the dust in the graveyard is cycling on the water on the grave to let birds to drink it. They all turn in the water by creating a huge cycle. In one point, also the camera looks around and starts to turn around. These cycles also show themselves in a memory of a voice, which is in German.

"sweeping over the centuries...

With going back and forth as in the past.

Now, I think only day by day.
My heroes are no longer...
The warriors and kings...
But the things of peace.
But no one has so far succeeded...
Singing an epic for peace. (...) (Zur Person)."

It is also claimed for the essay that voice over should be director or collaborative but only one perspective is necessary. *Zur Person* is a polyphonic essay film even in different languages. These voices are mostly found footages that are used in the *Zur Person*. First hypnotherapy session is from *Mirror* of Tarkovsky, a footage from *Room 666* of Wim Wenders where Godard talks about cinema, another one from an interview in TV program named *Zur Person* which is in German and lastly from a film *Der Himmel Über Berlin* of Wim Wenders. Using found footages in film have the possibility of endangering the total form of film. Lopate emphasizes that the text in the essay film is not a creation which uses quotes by confronting to the Benjamin's idea of polyphonic essay that consists of quotes of others (Lopate P., 1992:19). On the other hand, found footages in the *Zur Person* are offered as director's memories. In this way, they are seen connected to the director's own memories. Thus, these voices become reflective voice of director in the film by becoming a part of his mind correlating with directors' memories. As Richter theorized, Film is organized around the thoughts on concepts of war, peace, death and cycles. Film is strongly personal and self-reflective as essay film is offered.

By rejecting organising essay film with reflective voiceover text of the director, *Zur Person* is formed to create this reflectivity and subjectivity in different layers of the film. Spectator could feel the presence of the director's being not only in images that are shown but also in other materials. Camera is one of the examples. In *Zur Person*, camera in some scenes becomes a subjective eye of the director. *Zur Person's* materials are collected by a smartphone. It's used in a way that to give the feeling that we see what the director see, dream or think. With its possibilities to become a part of a user smartphone used to reflect the directors mind in some footages of the

film. The last scene is a good example for this. As it is stated before for the essay film, they work with the concepts and war, death and cycles are some of these concepts that Zur Person thinks about. In the last scene, which is a long take, camera follows person who is searching for grave then we see other people around who are doing the same. After a while we see face of that person looking and then camera adds the second line of argument and starts spinning around to make cycles. Without even editing, while shooting the scene, usage of the camera becomes the reflective tool of the director to create additional imaginary to bond between the concept of death and cycles (Zur Person). It could be told about the scene of cycling dust on the water. Again in a long take, spectator is shown a cycle of dusts on the water. At first, it could be felt like a fixed frame what they see. On the other hand, after a while camera moves. This movement becomes the director's look. Spectator first sees cycle then in the movement they are shown that dust cycling on the water connected to grave then at the end of the movement frame shows two women waiting in the graveyard (Zur Person). Furthermore, spectator also engages with the director's being in frame as in the door memories. As in the *Gleaners and I* of the Agnes Varda, director performatively engage with what is scene in the images.

How the film form emerges is the most important thing while thinking about the essay film if we consider the footages of the essay would intervene with the other film forms especially documentary film modes. The form of the film, how the film material is treated is the key to establish the conditions that are premised for the essay film. These premises mainly come around the idea of subjectivity, self-reflectivity, transgression and how the spectator will engage with the film. Most importantly, every essay tries to establish a form to accomplish these premises. Thus, in every essay, it should be considered that how these materials of the film are going to be composed.

"Essayist practice is highly self-reflexive in that it constantly reconsiders the act of image making and desire to produce meaning (...) it consciously engaged in activity of representation itself. (Bieman U., 2003:10)."

Different from literary essay, how essay film approaches to the material is represented with the means of the film and it is a critical question for the essay filmmaker. Film has its own tools and motivations while representing the topic.

Bordering essay form around clash of text and image would bound filmmaker to the preconditioned rules. On the other hand, transgression is the main characteristic of the essay form and as Adorno states essay gives the essayist a childlike freedom to work on the material freely (Adorno T. W., 1984:152).

"A major consequence of reading essay through the literary is the magnification of the role of the voiceover as the ultimate location of the subjectivity of the filmmaker (...). Stressing the relation to the written text such conceptions of the essay film restrict the possibility of visual thinking as hinted by ten Brink and Montero (Gegisian A., 2014:22-23)".

It is aimed to stay away from bordered form of the essay in text and voiceover. Yet, Zur Person's form is composed as a world of thought as Adorno offers "In the essay concepts do not built a continuum of operations, thought does not advance in a single direction; rather the aspects of argument interweave as in a carpet." (Adorno T. W., 1984:160). In Zur Person, the spectator is offered to experience the director's world of thought. "The fruitfulness of the thoughts depends on the density of this texture. The thinker does not actually think but rather transforms himself into an arena of intellectual experience, without simplifying it." (Adorno T. W., 1984:160). It is aimed to create a form which is not dependent on essay ideas that is directly bound with written essay and to pursue the premises of the essay especially the spectators' active engagement with the film is enabled by establishing a mind like form. This world of thought is organized around the memory of the war and is composed around memories and fantasies which this memory calls as images, sounds, colors etc. form is also tried to be around the ellipses which lets the spectator engage in to create meanings of their own perspective in these spaces between and in materials. Thus, Zur Person is constituted on the world of thought of the director to establish the essay form and in the film spectator is told:

"I'm here in front of the camera...

And yet in my body and in my head I am behind it.

My world is imaginary...

Imaginary is a journey between forwards and backwards" (Zur Person).

As it is mentioned before, the main premise of Zur Person is to let spectator float through the memories and it is aimed that spectator could produce meaning with their own experience and perspective. By this way, as Harvey stated, non-vococentric essay is tried to be formed with removing the authority of director by keeping subjectivity and self-reflectivity.

To let the audience, engage with the film there are calls for them to join to the world of thought with their own memories. How the spectator engages with the film is problematic and even early argumentations argue about it such as Vertov. He claims that movies are poisoning spectator and they should be freed from these effects. We do not need bewitched public (Vertov D., 1984). On the other hand, in most of the cases films are pushing an authority on the spectator. In Zur Person, the spectator is expected to cooperate with the director. They are expected to get in the world of thought actively and produce meaning with their own experiences within this world of thought.

First and above all, spectator faces with a voice without image, directly addresses the spectator to join. There are cuts on the voice then suddenly it stops and calls continue as subtitle. Spectator reads the subtitle and film wants them to speak. It is a hypnotherapy session that tries to give hints of actively engagement is needed for film from the spectator. Unlike the films that Vertov mentions and films that pushes the authority on spectator; it is an attempt to free spectator from the pre-experience of being passive spectator.

"When I say "three" your hands will become rigid.

One...Two...Three!

Your hands are rigid. You cannot move your hands. You are trying to move them, but you cannot. I'll relieve the tension now...and you will speak clearly and effortlessly. You will speak loudly and clearly all your life. I'll remove the tension from your hands and speech.

One...Two...Three!

Say, "I can speak!" (Zur Person).

These calls continue through the film. The spectator is expected to join the journey through the memories. In the film, there is a part that memories of the childhood

home are shown. How these memories are served is aiming to trigger the spectator's own memories of childhood. Before this part, spectator is again directly addressed: "Do you remember what it was like as a child?" (Zur Person). This phrase is repeated three times over and over again in different channels. First it is a voice, then voice starts to diffuse, in the end, there is only subtitle. There are no images on these parts. Without an image, the spectator is supposed to create the images of their own childhood. After a silence waiting without image, the spectator is again asked: "To start with, your personal memories" (Zur Person). After this invitation they are shown the images of the childhood house of the director. There is no storytelling, or a voice over about what images can mean. Mostly frame is close up frame that is aiming not to show whole construct of home but to show some fragments of it to let audience establish their own construct of home with their own memories. As it is mentioned before and in the film, it is a journey through the imaginative world of director that spectator could walk inside. They are not faced with a strong commentary on these memories. On the contrary, these memories of director are formed to trigger the spectator's own memories.

Moreover, sound and music are also another means of the film medium to construct film idea. Mostly in the films whether it is fiction or non-fiction, they serve as an accompaniment to images but essay film could create conditions of shifting from accompaniment to element of creating the form. In, Zur Person, for instance, the father's whistle is formed to create the shift from real and imaginary and it also serves as a link that memory of repetitive waiting for father while he was away from home. (Zur Person). It also, mediates us between the past and present.

"Non-fiction essay films, by their very nature, are assumed to be grounded in the "real." Non-diegetic music, however, contradicts the logic of this filmic genre, for it does not belong to the ostensibly factual representation of the diegesis. Hence the non-diegetic music layer in non-fiction essay films produces a tension not only between the on-screen and the off-screen, but also between the real and the imaginary. (Alter N., 2012:25)."

Another aspect about this idea referring to elsewhere, even though Nora Alter writes it about sound and music, found footages that are used in the Zur Person also serves as a references to the 'elsewhere'. She states that "These sound cues provide access to the tenor of different times and spaces; they allow us to "hear elsewhere," as Jean-

Luc Godard would put it, which in turn enables us to see and understand elsewhere as well (Alter N., 2012:25)". In her another work named *Memory Essay*, Alter also mentions about the mediums correspondence of presenting the history and memory (Alter N., 2003:15). In *Zur Person* these sounds from found footages especially the old man's voice from *Der Himmel Über Berlin*, by being connected to the director's memories of war, refers to 'elsewhere' in the history. This elsewhere is memory of World War. Thus, keeping in mind that the film is also interrogates the cycles, these references for the audience, from present where a war taking places, to the past where memory of a Gulf War of the director (*Zur Person*), and also brings another memory of 'elsewhere' which belongs to different space and time together (*Zur Person*).

About the montage of the essay film, Andre Bazin self-possessedly offers a new type of montage for the films of Chris Marker, which he names as 'Horizontal' montage. According to Bazin, Marker's films have montage that is different from classical montage idea that works shot to shot through playing with the sense of duration. As he states, it is not the images that precedes or follows works together, it is the what is said refers to the image. This voiceover track is a reflective text of the director, source of which is intelligence, according to Bazin and this intelligence flows from text to image (Bazin A., 2003:2-3). On the other hand, intelligence that is mentioned about the text is underscores the authorial inscription (Harvey D.; 2012: 13). There is the danger of reading image through the perspective of the director in the way of Bazin offers as he describes meaning flows through audio to visual element. Thus, it should be considered another type of montage if we want to make an Essay film that interacts with the spectator because, systematic montage ideas contradict with the essay form. Adorno, while talking about the essay form indicates the heretic, anti-systematic construct of essay (Adorno, 1984:158). Gegisian also says that essayistic expression of thought is an attempt uses free association, discontinuity and experimentation by considering the essay form of the Adorno (Gegisian A., 2014:24). Jörg Huber claims that essayist montage works with the referential nature of the image. He says essay makes a shift from the what is shown as images to what these images could refer. Thus, essay makes a shift from the vertical orientation to horizontal orientation that constitutes the meaning production (Huber J., 2003:96).

It is the attempt that makes it possible to create a reflective and reflexive text to let spectator get engage with the thought of the author critically. This attempt is not creating a narrative story but a process to play with the material to test the meaning. As a result of these attempts, spectator is also waited to reconsider meaning in horizontal orientation that is mentioned.

“Since the essay is a type of knowledge and thinking rooted in experience, Adorno places the essayist inside the text attempting to find its subject from within, a structure that enables both reader and writer to test the production of meaning (Gegisian A., 2012:24).”

Correspondingly, in *Zur Person*, it is aimed to compose the material as described to use the referential nature of the footages. Main idea in the film form is to create the conditions to construct a mind which is thinking about a memory. Without a text that flows from audio to visual, it is aimed to create a horizontal orientation by compositions of every material. Thus, spectator is given space to cooprate in the horizontal orientation.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

As being first one using the term Essay as a new documentary form, Hans Richter offers a film form that represents the world of thoughts on the screen. However, lately some theoreticians working on the topic focuses on films of directors whose films mostly organized around human voice. They also, by taking reference of literature essay, insist on the written reflective text of the director.

These approaches on voiceover of the text on images rise an argumentation on premises on the Essay Film. As being offered as a new type of documentary film, essay may have a danger of reproducing authority on images that spectator see. Early documentaries, especially the expository documentaries have been considered pushing an objective authority on the spectator. Essay films formulated around the same organization of the confrontation between the sound and the image which is theorized as vococentric, would produce subjective authority of filmmaker. This is a new thing if we consider the point that the documentary produce objective authority but it is not the thing that essay truly offers as a 'new'.

In this respect, if we consider the form of the essay freed from the literary essay and focus on the film of directors who are working on topic theoretically and practically, we faced with an another 'new' unlike the vococentric and text based essay films. Essay form is mostly organized around the author's self-reflective evaluative search on the topic. Most importantly essay offers a spectator that engages in meaning production process.

Adorno states that essay form gives author childlike freedom to play with the material. If we restrict the essay form into the borders of the thought of vococentric essays while we considering it in the film studies, we would reduce the possibility of premises that essay offers. Unlike literary essay, film could reflexive and reflexive tool with all

the means that it has. Thus, we should think about form with its every possibility to pursue the essay's premises.

Under these discussions, as it is mentioned by some theoreticians, essay film could create its own form in every single film. Essay film could not be specified with its formal characteristics as it is coined by Adorno heresy and transgression is the crucial characteristics of the essay. It disrespects the traditional conditions and creates its own form.

It is an open ended, evaluative and a subjective search on thought that lets the spectator get interact with the essay and join this search with their own perspectives. The essay, basically with these motivations, aims to trigger spectator to get involve in constructing the meaning process. It is not the form that creates the essay but the attempts of director create the form.

Zur person, in the light of these arguments, tries to create world of thoughts of the director. It is a journey between the past and present, real and surreal, fantasies and dreams of the director. Like in the carpet as Adorno states, it is an attempt to compose the world of thoughts around a childhood memory of war with images, sounds, colours, texts that this memory calls. In the film there are also calls for spectator to actively join this journey with their own memories. The film also has a motivation to create spaces for spectator to join the meaning construction period with their own perspective. Thus, the film is aimed to remove the authority on spectator by creating ellipsis in director mind to let them join. It is not a text based, non-vococentric, polyphonic essay film in that sense.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adorno, T. W. (1984, Summer). The Essay as Form. *New German Critique*, pp. 151-171.
- Alter, N. (1996). The Political Im/perceptible in the Essay Film: Farocki's "Images of the World and the Inscription of War. *New German Critique*, 165-192.
- Alter, N. (2002). *Projecting History: German Non-fiction Cinema 1967-2000*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Alter, N. (2003). Memory Essay. In U. Biemann, *Stuff It* (pp. 12-23). New York: Springer Wien.
- Alter, N. (2012, 2). Composing Fragments Music in the Films of Resnais and Godard. *Substance*, pp. 24-39.
- Arthur, P. (2003, Jan/Feb). Essay Questions. *Film Comment*, pp. 58-62.
- Astruc, A. (1948). The Birth of a New Avant Garde: La Camera Stylo. *L'Ecran Francoise*.
- Barnouw, E. (1993). *Documentary: A History of the Non-fiction Film*. Oxford University Press.
- Bazin, A. (2003). Andre Bazin on Chris Marker. *Film Comment*.
- Biemann, U. (2003). The Video Essay in Digital Age. In U. Biemann, *Stuff It* (pp. 8-12). Springer Wien .

Brink, J. t. (1999). *the Essay Film (unpublished doctoral thesis)*. London: Middlesex University.

Gegisian, A. (2014). *The Essay Film Space: The Essayistic Filmic Space as a Location of Thought (unpublished doctoral thesis)*. Wesminster University.

Giannetti, L. (1975). *Godard and Others: Essays on Film Form*. brooklyn: Associated University Press.

Good, G. (2014). *Observing the Self: Rediscovering the Essay*. Routledge Revivals.

Harvey, D. O. (2012). The Limits of Vococentrism: Chris Marker, Hans Richter and the Essay Film. *Substance*, 6-23.

Huber, J. (2003). Video-Essayism. In U. Biemann, *Stuff IT* (pp. 92-97). New York: Springer Wien.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *Critique of Everyday Life Vol. I*. New York: Verso Books.

Lopate, P. (1992). In the Search of a Centaur: The Essay Film. *The Threepenny Review*, 19-22.

Lukacs, G. (1974). *Soul and Form*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Malitsky, J. (2013). *Post-Revolution Nonfiction Film*. Indiana University Press.

McLane, B. A. (2012). *A New History of Documentary Film: Second Edition*. Continuum International Publishing Group.

Montaigne, M. d. (2015). of Giving Lie. In W. C. Hazzlit, *Essays of Montaigne*. Adelaie.

Montaigne, M. d. (2015). Upon Some Verses of Virgil. In W. C. Hazzlit, *Essays of Montaigne*. Adelaie.

Nichols, B. (1991). *Representing Reality: Issues and Concepts in Documentary*. Indiana University Press.

Nichols, B. (2001). *Introduction to Documentary*. Indiana University Press.

Rascaroli, L. (2008, Fall). The Essay Film: Problems, Definitions, Textual Commitments. *Framework*, pp. 24-47.

Rotha, P. (1939). *Documentary Film*. W. W. Norton & Company, INC.

Vertov, K.-e. T. (1984). *Dziga Vertov*. University of California Press.

Ward, P. (2012). *Documentary: The Margins of Reality*. Columbia University Press.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Turkish Summary/ Türkçe Özet

Bu tez çalışması, görsel işitsel bir ürün ve bu ürün üzerine yazılmış bir inceleme yazısından oluşmaktadır. İnceleme yazısının üzerine teorik tartışmayı ve pratik ürünün yapısının bu tartışmalar sonucunda nasıl oluştuğunu içermektedir. Tez çalışmasının bu iki parçası birbirini destekleyen bir bütünü oluşturmaktadır. Bu anlamda tezi okurken birbirini destekleyen iki parça ile muhattap olunacaktır.

Bu tez çalışması Deneme Film literatüründeki ana akım söylemlere karşı bir eleştiriği niteliği taşımaktadır. Bu eleştirinin temel sebebi ise bir çok metnin ve filmin deneme film düşüncesini bir metnin imajlar üzerinde üstses olarak kuruyor olmasından kaynaklıdır. Bir çok düşünür deneme metnini deneme filmin en temel ögesi olarak göremekte ve bu metnin filmde üstses, alt yazı veya ara metinler olarak bulunması gerekliliğini öne sürer. Bu üst ses, yönetmenin imajlar üzerine olan öznel, özyansıtımlı düşüncelerini temsil eder. Bu düşünürler, bu metnin deneme filmlerdeki üst ses olarak varlığının belgesel filmlerden daha farklı olduğuna dikkat çeker ve bu yapıdaki bir sesin seyirci ile yönetmen arasında bir dialog kurulmasına olanak sağladığı ifade edilmektedir. Bunun sonucunda ise seyirci filmi izlerken daha aktif bir konuma geçerek anlam üretiminde yönetmenle birlikte bir rol üstlendiği sonucuna varılmaktadır.

Erken dönem belgesellerin, özellikle betimleyici belgeseller olarak bilinen filmler, seyirci üzerinde bir otorite kurdukları iddaa edilmektedir. Betimleyici belgesellerdeki üst ses, tanrının sesi olarak da anılmaktadır, bu otoritenin kaynağı olarak gösterilir. Fakat deneme filmin sesi kullanma biçimi betimleyici belgesellerin objektif sesinin aksine öznel bir ses kullanımınıdır ve iddaa edildiği üzere seyirciyi özgürleştirme sürecinin temelinde bu sesin yattığı savunulmaktadır.

Ancak bazı eleştiriler deneme filmin otoriteyi yeniden ürettiğini öne sürmektedir. Buna görüşlere göre, deneme film imajlar üzerinde yönetmenin öznel perspektifine seyirciyi hapsedme tehlikesi taşımaktadır. Bu tez çalışması, teorik tartışması ve pratik ürünü ile birlikte, deneme filmin ses kullanımını sorgular. Deneme filmi bir metnin üst ses olarak

filmde belirmesi çerçevesine sıkıştırılan düşünceleri burada temel problem olarak alır. Tezin temel amacı, deneme filmi yönetmenin metninin üst ses olarak varolması halinden kurtulabilmesinin yollarını arar. Film ve video pratikleri düşünüldüğünde deneme filmin temel amaçları göz önünde bulundurularak bir deneme filmin nasıl kurulabileceğini sorgular.

İnceleme yazısı bölümünde, öncelikle erken dönem belgeselleri gözden geçirilmektedir. Burada odak noktasını propaganda filmleri ve 'Tanrının sesi' olarak da adlandırılan betimleyici belgeseller oluşturmaktadır. Sonrasında deneme film üzerine yazılan ve edebi denemeyi temel alarak deneme film fikrini bir metin üzerinden değerlendiren düşünürlerin metinleri incelenecektir. Bu düşüncelere eleştiriler dile getirilecek ve deneme film fikrinin izi Adorno, Hans Richter gibi düşünürler tarafından yazılmış temel metinler ve Richter'in yapmış olduğu filmler ışığında yeniden gözden geçirilecektir. Bununla birlikte, deneme filmi bir metin üzerinden değil filmin kendi araçları üzerinden yaratılan bir metinle kurmayı öneren David Harvey gibi düşünürlerin metinleri temel alınacaktır.

Bu tartışmaların sonucunda ise, Bu tez çalışmasının görsel işitsel parçası olan Zur Person isimli filmin formunun nasıl şekillendiği üzerine bir tartışma yürütülecek. Burada belirtilmesi gereken bir nokta ise, tezin bir parçası olan inceleme yazısı ile görsel işitsel çalışma arasında bir organik bağ olması gerekliliği neticesinde film üzerine tartışılan bölümde bazı açıklamalar yapılması zorunluluk haline gelmiştir. Bu açıklamalar deneme filmin anlamı seyirciyle kurması fikri ile ters düşmektedir. Fakat belirtildiği üzere tez çalışması olması nedeniyle çok derinlemesine bir içerik analizi yapmaktan tezin elverdiği ölçüde kaçınılmıştır.

Erken dönem belgesellerinin büyük bir bölümünün bir çok düşünür tarafından devletlerin propaganda aracına dönüştüğü düşünülmektedir. Bu dönem ve içinden geçilen süreçler düşünüldüğünde belgesel devletler açısından kitleleri örgütlemek için önemli bir araç olarak kullanılmıştır. Filmler kitleleri belirlenen bir doğrultuda yönlendirmeyi hedeflemiştir. Böyle bir dönemde deneme film fikrini ilk olarak ortaya atan Hans Richter, artık belgeselin sınırlarının dışına taşılabilceği yeni film formunu öne sürer. Bu film formu ile düşüncelerin dünyasını, soyut kavramları

tartışabileceğimizi savunur. Denem filmin önemli önerisi ise bu tartışmayı seyirciye dayatmak yerine seyirci ile birlikte tartışma niyetinde yatar.

Ancak son dönemde bazı denem film üzerine yazılmış metinler ve deneme film olarak tanımlanan bazı filmler deneme film fikrini edebi deneme temelinde değerlendirdikleri için yönetmenin özyansıtımlı düşüncesini yazılı bir metnin imaj üzerine üst ses olarak kurmaktadır. Bu gibi yaklaşımlar bazı eleştirileri de birlikte getirmektedir. David Harvey insan sesi etrafında örgütlenen deneme filmlerin otoriteyi yeniden ürettiğini savunur. Özellikle Deneme filmin öncüsü olarak kabul edilen Chris Marker filmlerinde, Marker'ın kendi filmlerini imajların kendi adlarına konuşturduğunu savunmasına rağmen filmlerinde sürekli olarak imajların ne anlama geldiğini söyleyen bir üst ses ile seyirciyi belirli bir çerçeveye sıkıştırdığından bahseder.

Erken dönem belgesellerinden betimleyici belgeseller de bir üst ses ile tanınır. Bu ses genellikle 'Tanrı'nın sesi' olarak anılmaktadır ve her yeri gören, her yerde olan bir perspektiften iyi eğitilmiş düzgün konuşan bir ses seyirciye gördükleri imaj üzerinde bilgiler verir. Betimleyici belgeseller objektif bir otoriteyi dayatmaktadır. Deneme film ve Betimleyici belgeseller insan sesi etrafında örgütlenmektedir. Betimleyici belgeselin objektif sesinin otoritesinin aksine denem filmde subjektif bir otoriteyle karşılaşma tehlikesi bulunmaktadır. Evet, ses farklıdır fakat deneme filmin temel amaçlarından sapma tehlikesi taşımaktadır.

Bu bağlamda deneme filmi edebi denemeden ve kendini insan sesi etrafında örgütleyen (vococentric) filmlerden bağımsız bir biçimde; deneme film üzerine hem teorik hem de pratik olarak çalışmış düşünürlerin çalışmalarını incelersek başka bir 'yeni' ile karşılaşırız. Hans Richter filmlerinde metnini filmin farklı katmanlarını kullanarak bir özyansıtımlı metin yaratmaya çalışmış ve seyirciyi burada anlam üretmeye davet etmiştir.

Adorno deneme formu üzerine yazdığı metninde, denemenin yazara elindeki materyal ile çocukça oynama özgürlüğü verdiğini, denemenin geleneksel sınırlara karşı saygısız, sınır tanımaz olduğunu öne sürmüştür. Eğer deneme filmi bir metin imaj karşılaşmasına hapsedersen onu sınırlamış ve denemenin temel amaçlarına ulaşmak adına sahip olduğu araçlarla oynama yetisini elinden almış oluruz. Film, edebi denemenin aksine, bir metni yaratmak adına kendine has bir çok aracı

barındırmaktadır ve edebi denemenin sınırlarına sıkıştırılmış bir film fikri bu araçların kullanımını kısıtlamaktadır.

Deneme film her yeni bir filmi kurarken kendine has bir form geliştirebilme olanağına sahiptir ve bu bağlamda deneme filmi formal özellikleri ile tanımlamaya çalışmak aynı şekilde formun temel amaçlarından birini görmezden gelmek anlamına gelmektedir. Çünkü Adorno'nun belirttiği üzere varolan sınırları yıkmak ve kendi formunu oluşturmak denemenin temel özelliklerinden birisidir.

Deneme film "açık"tır. Keskin cevaplar üretip tartışmayı kapatmaz; tam tersine meseleleri açar, düşünme eyleminin sürmesini sağlar. Bir düşünce üzerine öznel bir düşünme eylemidir ve bu düşünme eylemi izleyenin üzerine kıvrılır. Film yapan da izleyen de kendini gözden geçirir. Denem filmin materyali ile olan bu ilişkisi seyirciyi kendi perspektifleri ile bu eyleme katılmaya iter ve anlam üretimine seyircinin aktif bir biçimde katılması beklenir. Deneme film belirli bir formun sonucunda oluşmaz, yönetmenin materyal ile ilişkisi deneme filmin formunu oluşturur.

Bu tartışmaların ışığında Zur person isimli bu tezin görsel işitsel bölümünü oluşturan filmde yönetmenin düşünce dünyasının kompose edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Film, geçmiş ile gelecekte, real ve sürreal arasında yönetmenin fantazilerini, hayal dünyasını yansıtır. Adorno'nun deneme formu hakkında önerdiği üzere bir halının üzerindeki desenler gibi yönetmenin düşünce dünyasını savaş üzerine olan bir çocukluk hatırasının etrafında bu hatıra ile ilintili imaj-imajsızlık, ses-sessizlik, renk-renksizlik ile kurmaya çalışır. Film seyircinin aktif biçimde bu eyleme kendi perspektifi ile katılabilmesi için çağrılar ve elipsler yaratılmıştır. Temel olarak, yönetmenin otoritesini minimum seviyeye çekerek seyirciyi alanlar yaratmak, onları savaş, ölüm ve bunların döngüsellik üzerine düşünen yönetmenle birlikte bir tartışmaya çekmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Film insan sesi etrafında örgütlenmez, çok seslidir ve tek bir perspektife sıkıştırılmamıştır. Deneme filmin temel amaçlarını film ve video araçlarını kullanarak yaratmayı hedeflemektedir.

Appendix B: Audio-Visual Material

Zur Person

Password for online screening: journey

Barcode:



Appendix C: Tez Fotokopisi İzin Formu

ENSTİTÜ

- Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü
- Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
- Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü
- Enformatik Enstitüsü
- Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

YAZARIN

Soyadı :
Adı :
Bölümü :

TEZİN ADI (İngilizce) :

TEZİN TÜRÜ : Yüksek Lisans Doktora

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.
3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ: