KADIR HAS UNIVERSITY

SCHOOLS OF GRADUATE STUDIES

PROGRAM OF COMMUNICATION STUDIES

CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY THROUGH AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES IN CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTARY: THE POSTMODERN HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN *LOVE, DEUTSCHMARKS AND DEATH*

AYŞE GÜLSEZER

MASTER OF ARTS THESIS

ISTANBUL, AUGUST, 2024

Ayşe Gülsezer

Master of ArtS Thesis

2024

CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY THROUGH AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES IN CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTARY: THE POSTMODERN HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN *LOVE, DEUTSCHMARKS AND DEATH*

AYŞE GÜLSEZER
ADVISOR: ASST. PROF. ESİN PAÇA CENGİZ

A thesis submitted to
the School of Graduate Studies of Kadir Has University
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts in the Program of Communication Studies

Istanbul, August, 2024

APPROVAL

This thesis titled **CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY THROUGH AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES IN CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTARY: THE POSTMODERN HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN *LOVE, DEUTSCHMARKS AND DEATH*** submitted by **AYŞE GÜLSEZER** in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication Studies is approved by

Asst. Prof. Esin Paça Cengiz (Advisor)   ....
Kadir Has University

Assoc. Prof. Melis Behlil   ....
Kadir Has University

Assoc. Prof. Ayşe Toy Par   ....
Galatasaray University

I confirm that the signatures above belong to the aforementioned faculty members.

_____

Prof. Dr. Mehmet Timur Aydemir
Director of the Schools of Graduate Studies
Date: 28.08.24

DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ETHICS AND PUBLISHING METHODS

I, AYŞE GÜLSEZER; hereby declare

- that this Master of Arts Thesis that I have submitted is entirely my own work and I have cited and referenced all material and results that are not my own in accordance with the rules;
- that this Master of Arts Thesis does not contain any material from any research submitted or accepted to obtain a degree or diploma at another educational institution;
- and that I commit and undertake to follow the "Kadir Has University Academic Codes of Conduct" prepared in accordance with the "Higher Education Council Codes of Conduct".

In addition, I acknowledge that any claim of irregularity that may arise in relation to this work will result in a disciplinary action in accordance with the university legislation.

Ayşe Gülsezer

_____

28/08/24

To Ziya…

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY THROUGH AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES IN CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTARY: THE POSTMODERN HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN *LOVE, DEUTSCHMARKS AND DEATH*

ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I will examine how contemporary documentaries construct postmodern historical narratives through audiovisual archives in the example of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* (Kaya 2022). Rosenstone (1995) suggests that historical filmmaking is equal to historiography in representing history, and he accepts that only experimental films can reveal postmodern histories. However, his approach has a set of limitations since he attributed historical value only to avant-garde works. This thesis, above all, aims to broaden the contemporary understandings constricted by the last century's historical and aesthetic point of view. In this direction, I argue that contemporary documentaries can construct unique historical narratives rather than being alternatives to written history and that kitsch productions can also reveal postmodern histories. Describing contemporary documentaries through the engagement of evidential sources, I define *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* as a contemporary documentary that uses conventional codes. It reveals a postmodern history of migration using archival material creatively. The film attributes agency to the archive through editing, montage, and sound design. I view how archival evidence is juxtaposed in the film as a conversation that also involves the interaction of archives and memory. For this purpose, the film breaks the documentary filmmaking conventions by reversing or melting them into creative techniques.

Keywords: Archive, Documentary, History, Historiophoty, Memory, Postmodernism

ÇAĞDAŞ BELGESELDE TARİHİN SESLİ-GÖRÜNTÜLÜ ARŞİVLER ARACILIĞIYLA İNŞASI: *AŞK, MARK VE ÖLÜM*'DE GÖÇÜN POSTMODERN TARİHİ

ÖZET

Bu tezde çağdaş belgeselin arşivler araçlığıyla postmodern tarih anlatıları inşa etme kapasitesini *Aşk, Mark ve Ölüm* (Kaya 2022) örneğinde inceleyeceğim. Rosenstone (1995), tarih filmlerinin geçmişi yansıtma bağlamında tarih yazımıyla eşit konumda olduğunu vurgularken, postmodern tarih anlatılarının ise yalnızca deneysel filmlerle ortaya konabileceğini iddia eder. Ancak Rosenstone 'un bu yaklaşımı yalnızca avangart filmlere tarihsel bir değer atfetmesi nedeniyle birtakım sınırlamaları beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu tez öncelikle geçtiğimiz yüzyıla ait tarihsel ve estetik perspektifin kısıtladığı çağdaş anlayışı genişletmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda, çağdaş belgesin tarih yazımına bir alternatif olmaktan ziyade özgün tarihsel anlatılar inşa edebileceğini ve popüler yapımların da deneysel çalışmalar kadar postmodern anlatılar ortaya koyabileceğini savunmaktayım. Çağdaş belgeseli, kanıt niteliğinde materyallerin birbiriyle etkileşimi üzerinden düşünmekle birlikte, *Aşk, Mark ve Ölüm*'ü konvansiyonel kodları kullanan bir çağdaş belgesel olarak tanımlamaktayım. Arşiv materyallerini yaratıcı şekilde kullanarak göçün postmodern bir tarihsel anlatısını ortaya koyan film, kurgu-montaj ve ses tasarımı aracılığıyla söz konusu arşivlere bir faillik yüklemektedir. Bu bağlamda, filmde arşiv malzemelerinin yan yana getirilme biçimi, arşiv hafızanın birbiriyle etkileşiminin de dahil olduğu bir diyalog olarak değerlendirilmektedir. Filmin biçimsel yapısı analiz edildiğinde, bu diyalogu kurmak için belgesel konvansiyonlarının tersine çevrilerek ya da yaratıcı tekniklerin içinde eritilerek kırıldığı görülmektedir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Arşiv, Belgesel, Tarih, Tarih yazımı, Hafıza, Postmodernizm

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Although using of audiovisual archives in documentary filmmaking is not a new tendency, recently, contemporary cinema, including fiction, non-fiction, and experimental forms, further tends to explore archives and engage them in historical narratives with creative techniques. Moreover, filmmakers' attempts are supported by institutions and organizations such as festivals, archive foundations, cinematheques, streaming platforms, and independent events like public seminars, masterclasses, and workshops. As a result of the incorporation of personal interest and institutional supports, archive-based filmmaking practice is being gone experimental and avant-garde films, the "archival documentary" is being legitimized as a sub-genre, at least in the terminological sphere, and archival films and filmmaking process are being made accessible and recognizable for the mass of cinephiles and history buffs. Considering that contemporary works are thirsty to construct and present postmodern histories composed of interpretations, multilayered truths, and critical and suspicious points of view, the increase of these kinds of films and their receptions also democratize history by making it reachable and appealing to the subjective and micro-historical narratives by everyone.

In light of this development, this thesis examines how contemporary documentaries exhibit postmodern histories through audiovisual archives within an interdisciplinary framework comprising revisionist cinematic and historiographical approaches. In this context, my main arguments are first, that visual history, whether fiction or non-fiction, is a unique medium for history-making that constructs counter-narratives instead of only an alternative of historiography; second, that cinematic representation and construction of history are not limited to a particular genre or style, and third, that the archive is the primary raw material not only for written history. Instead, archival documentaries are subjected to this de facto rule of history. These arguments will be exemplified in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* (Kaya, 2022), a contemporary documentary that presents a postmodern history of labor migration to Germany using audiovisual archives. I have chosen this film as a case study because it built a counter-narrative of migration, an untold story, attributing subjectivity and agency to the archives. Although this film is an arthouse

work, it is also a kitsch production, a cultural element defined by Baudrillard (1970, 110). The fact that *Love, Deutschmark and Death* has attracted intense attention in international scope. The film that won the Panorama Audience Award (Documentary) at the 2022 Berlin Film Festival premiered in Turkey during the 41st Istanbul Film Festival. It was also screened in Documentarist 15th Istanbul Documentary Day within the program of archival documentaries. According to Letterbox data, the film had been watched by around ten thousand viewers and had grossed $17,702 worldwide. In addition to this success at the box office as a documentary, Cem Kaya, the film's director, has been invented for interviews by various platforms, organizations, and institutions worldwide. In this sense, *Love, Deutschmark and Death* turns an untold story into a postmodern history and makes visible an overlooked past through its popularity.

It should be noted that this research is not about the credibility of historiophoty, the term introduced by Hayden White to define visual history (1988). By categorically recognizing the cinema's status as a particular way to make history, I emphasize the capability of the medium to construct revisionist, unique, defiant historical narratives rather than attempting to demonstrate why history can be represented in cinema or to discuss the advantages of visual and cinematic means to represent the past. In this sense, this thesis' purpose is not to criticize conventional methods and approaches. Instead, this thesis challenges some theoretical limitations and gaps by reinterpreting and questioning substantial arguments called revisionist views. Although neither presenting postmodern narratives nor employing audiovisual archives in filmmaking is not unique to documentaries, non-fiction films' engagement with the archives, the primary raw material of history, is inherently more intensive than fiction. Nevertheless, using archives in documentaries does not always result in postmodern histories offering a multidimensional and critical view of the past. For instance, archives enhanced top-to-down arguments and discourses in expository mode, a conventional documentary form (Nichols 1991). Namely, conventional documentaries implement archival evidence as an illustration of interviews and arguments (Bruzzi 2000). In contrast, contemporary documentaries utilize the archive to offer more complex, subjective, and open-ended narratives corresponding to postmodern historical thought through creative codes. Therefore, this thesis attempts to examine the use of archives in contemporary documentary filmmaking to argue that

historiophoty is a unique way of history-making comprising genres and sub-genres and that credible historical narratives are not limited to either mainstream or experimental films, as suggested by Rosenstone (1995).

Indeed, my argument that postmodern historical representations are not limited to experimental films is based on a criticism of Rosenstone, while this critique stems from the examination of discussions on visual and cinematic representations of the past. *Chapter 1* introduces the origins and evolution of debates on visual history through a historical perspective. Since recognizing historical film as a way of history-making requires explaining why and how history is narrative, the chapter will begin with a brief overview of shifting in historical perspective in which historians aimed to reveal works using storytelling techniques and the claim that history is a narrative form was justified. After emphasizing the intellectual background, this chapter reveals the scope of early debates on visual history with the main lines. Although this thesis does not aim to discuss the issue through whether/not or advantage/disadvantage questions, touching on this debate is necessary since premise claims were in this direction. This chapter also sheds light on the conceptualization of visual history by Robert A. Rosenstone (1988) and justification and transformation to the "Historiophoty" by Hayden White (1988), reinterpreting their arguments. The reinterpretation of these radical ideas is one of the main pillars of this thesis. That is to say that I argue that although Rosenstone has enlarged the extent of the discussion by offering a broad theoretical framework, he has also led to strict limitations by dividing historical narratives into acceptable and inaccessible and restricting the acceptable narratives to particular film forms (1995). In this sense, the conceptual limitation driven by Rosenstone is the point that this thesis challenged, offering a counterargument through an example that falsifies his argument.

In *Chapter 2*, the evolution process of documentary around the notion of reality will be discussed by adapting the similar historical perspective in the previous chapter. This chapter will demonstrate how definitions of documentary and its source of authenticity have been transformed in parallel with shifted claims on reality under the influence of postmodern thought. In this respect, how the changed perception of reality impacted the existing documentary conventions, like voice-of-God commentary, or added new formal

conventions, like continuity editing, to non-fiction filmmaking will be stressed. Namely, I will address conventions that provide an authoritative presence to the documentaries are being left or transformed. In contrast, other conventions allowing for a reflexive narrative are further incorporated into documentaries. This scheme provides a basis for suggesting why documentaries cannot be defined only through conventions. Emphasizing the significance of reflexivity in defining contemporary documentary, how a reflexive narration is accomplished will be questioned through a theoretical comparison toward arguments of Linda Williams (1993) and Stella Bruzzi (2000). As a result of the comparison of the parameters that they implemented to define contemporary documentary, a framework in which the evidence is prioritized appears, and this result requires examining the chief evidential sources of the documentary, which are archives and memory.

In *Chapter 3*, I will focus on the nature of the archive and its usage in documentaries. In order to make sense of the archival work in documentary filmmaking, I will offer a theoretical framework based on radical approaches that define it, as suggested by Foucault and Derrida. It should be noted that although this thesis embraces the Foucauldian point of view that defines archive as a rule of historical knowledge and statements (1972), it does not mean that Foucault's argument is directly accepted and adapted to examination of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*'s use of archive. Instead, I reinterpret his description, considering contemporary archival and historiographical practices. In any case, this thesis recognizes the archive's discursivity, subjectivity, and agency, and this claim is why I criticize Derrida's framework based on psychoanalytic theory, in which he functionally equates archive and memory (1995). However, my criticism of Derrida is not a theoretical exclusion but a practical disagreement with his reductionist description that does not wholly correspond to the archive's nature. After completing the conceptual framework, this chapter explains the use of audiovisual archives in the documentary, demonstrating and comparing conventional and contemporary tendencies. This comparison provides a reference point to define contemporary documentary through its use of archival evidence while also revealing that the type of the preferred archival material is related to the documentary's historical perspective. At this point, home movie archives' importance in representing micro-histories and the role of montage in creating meaningful and

impressive narratives based on archives will be emphasized. Considering the purpose of micro-historical narratives in contemporary documentaries and the significance of testimonies of ordinary people in *Love, Deutschemarks and Death*, I will also examine the archive's engagement with memory, another evidential source of the documentary, and stress how creative form and techniques combine the evidence to convey a coherent story.

Finally, in *Chapter 4*, I attempt to formally analyze *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, focusing on the editing and sound. Defining the film as a contemporary documentary that uses conventional techniques, this analysis aims to examine how the film constructs a postmodern history through audiovisual archives. At this point, editing and sound play a crucial role. Indeed, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* employs many conventional means like talking head, written voiceover commentary, sound bridges, and linear development. However, it breaks documentary conventions by using them creatively instead of directly adapting to the narrative; thereby, the film constructs a postmodern narrative in which borders between different dimensions of reality and time and space are blurred. In this sense, this analysis aims to reveal these creative ways in which formal conventions are dissolved and archives are involved in a dialogue, emphasizing the archival material's engagement with memory.

Consequently, this analysis will demonstrate that although *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* is a popular documentary that uses kitsch elements, it creatively reveals a postmodern narrative utilizing audiovisual archives. Thus, it provides robust evidence to challenge orthodox claims that restrict the credibility of historical film with specific forms and practices. In this context, this thesis will contribute to the literature by challenging the continued theoretical limitations and offering a counterargument. Focusing on archival material in documentary filmmaking can pave the way for broader research on audiovisual archives, contemporary documentaries, and visual history. This thesis can also provide a new perspective to classical memory studies by disclosing the interaction of archives and memory.

2. FROM HISTORIGRAPHY TO HISTORIOPHOTY

2.1 White Balance in Historiography

When Hayden White published *The Burden of History* (1966), he promulgated a significant transformation for historiography, unveiling that new historians tend to position themselves at the junction point of science and art, challenging conventional theories and methodologies. White argues that historians of the twentieth century were ambivalent since they wanted to be both scientists and artists who eschew data-based analysis and aim to employ artistic creativity in their works. In his seminal work *Metahistory* (1973), Hayden White offered a more comprehensive framework by focusing on the rhetorical and literary forms. He argues that history is a narrative constructed by fictional elements like literature. He also suggests that historians not only examine historical facts but also transform these facts into meaningful narratives according to four fundamental points, which are emplotment, the literary genre that historians adapt; argument refers to the context of the narrative; the ideology that is the intellectual aspect the argument; and rhetoric that refers to the form of expression. In this sense, White challenges the conventional historical perspectives by positioning it as an artificial phenomenon. For this purpose, he analyzes the works of prominent nineteenth-century historians and philosophers and argues that their works correspond to specific literary genres.

The fact that Hayden White played a significant role in the transformation of historiography by redefining it as a narrative based on subjective interpretations and personal values. This redefinition has led to the rise of postmodern history, changing the balance in historiographical practices in several ways. Above all, White's emphasis on new historiography encouraged new historians to return the narrative history that is the archaic way of historical story telling. Thus, acknowledgement of narrative history by White provided new historians, who had already been thirsty to reveal literary works, with legitimate grounds to prioritize storytelling techniques further. White also challenged historical objectivity by showing that even the most famous historical works correspond to literary genres that require interpretation and subjectivity. This emphasis

on interpretative nature of history paved way for multi-layered historical works that challenge grand narratives and exhibit micro-histories. Even though White does not explicitly address historical film in *Metahistory* (1973), his argument has also provided a basis for the debates on visual history by emphasizing that history is a narrative. In other words, his revisionist arguments paved the way for viewing visual representations of the past as historical narratives like historiography.

2.2 Early Debates on Visual History

Until Rosenstone's conceptual discussion in his essay, *History in Images/History in Words* (1988) and White's responses to his arguments in *Historiography and Historiophoty* (1988), early debates on the visual representations of history were limited and infertile due to the lack of a theoretical framework. On the one hand, theorists naively argued that history could be represented in cinema; on the other hand, the opposing idea challenged this alternative way with an orthodox perspective, arguing that history can be conveyed only in written form. However, due to their categorical assumptions, both failed to explain why or why not films are useful historical sources and means of historical representation. Rather than addressing why and how history should be presented in a cinema, scholars focused on examining limited historical films and explaining their historical accuracy/inaccuracy. In this section, I will provide a brief history of the debates on cinema and history to make clear the evolutionary process and turning points of this debate.

In 1971, *The Journal of Film and History* provided a new domain to discuss historical representations in cinema, including film reviews and academic articles about cinema and history, while the John E. O'Connor Prize organized by the journal further made visible historical filmmaking. The journal recognized films as representations of history and evidence for social-cultural life in the past. (Hughes 2006, 4). However, shifting this issue from media foundations and organizations to academia took at least a decade for several reasons. First, there was a need for historical films that were suitable or worth theoretical and academic discussion. Second, scholars should have needed time to pay attention to the produced films. Third, scholars should have required a maturation period to embrace

this alternative field and develop arguments about the associations between cinema and history.

In early periods, responses to cinematic representations of history were moderate or critical. The theorists have attempted to debate through categorical assumptions and uncritical arguments, as I emphasized above. At this point, Jarvie first raised critical opposition, arguing that moving images have "a poor information load" and "weak discursive abilities." According to Jarvie, history is not a narrative of the past but a discussion among historians based on historical documents. However, films do not permit the critical examination of documents. Thereby, cinema is inappropriate for historical discussion, and the past can only be represented in written form (Rosenstone 1988, 26; Jarvie 1978). In contrast to Jarvie, Sorlin argues that historical film is a unique means since it incorporates cinema and history by revealing a comprehensive framework that emphasizes the influence of historical turning points over the cinema (1980). Similarly, according to Ferro and Greene, films are also historical materials, while history and cinema have multiple junction points (1988, 14). Raack further expends these inclusive and revisionist arguments, addressing the importance of films as historical materials, emphasizing their ability to represent the past, and recommending that historians realize the power of image and sound and the significance of audiovisual sources (1983, 413-425).

2.3 The Rise of Historiophoty

In *History in Images/History in Words* (1988), Rosenstone suggests that cinema can represent history through a broader conceptual framework. Rather than focusing on whether or not the question is, he examines the advantages of cinematic representations of history to reshape the point of view toward the past. In this direction, he suggests that historical films are valuable as historiography representing the past instead of being simply secondary sources of historical discussions, providing emotional engagement that historiography is incapable of, offering a multidimensional perspective toward the past due to presented intangible notions and circumstances that cannot be expressed in historical text. Rosenstone positions historical film in an equal place with historiography

but emphasizes that it achieves what written history is incapable of making. In *Historiography and Historiophoty* (1988), White directly addresses the points raised by Rosenstone, focusing on the methodological similarities between historiography and visual history that he calls "Historiophoty." White's framework compares historiography and historiophoty, arguing that both are subjective and interpretative representations of history. According to White, they construct narratives using specific techniques like selection, classification, and interpretation of historical materials. In this work, White critically considers the weak aspects of cinema while emphasizing the unique strengths of historiophoty that overcome the historiography. Consequently, he shares a common ground with Rosenstone, recognizing visual representations' credibility.

Indeed, how early scholars discuss the issue through the whether or not question, both Rosenstone and White define historical film's credibility through its advantages over written history and offer a framework in which historical film overcomes the deficiencies of historiography. In this sense, much as they position written and visual history in a parallel line, their advantages/disadvantages discussion ultimately make cinematic representation of history a substitution for written history. Even though its substitutive and supplementary function does not reduce the value of visual history, this definition overlooks its distinctive existence, purpose, capacity, and motivation. Nevertheless, viewing their definition as reductionism is an anachronistic approach if we consider the academic environment and period in which they attempted to incorporate cinema and history while powerful influences of scientific history maintain to overcome the revisionist fields that aim to adapt postmodern thought to historiography. Consequently, their discussion focused on the advantage/disadvantage question, a requirement within a restricted academic sphere. However, the problem is adapting their definition of visual history without any reinterpretation in current works. This is the approach that I view as a reductionist rather than Rosenstone and White's framework.

Consequently, how White led to a radical transformation for historiography in *Metahistory* (1973), he also further legitimized the visual representation of history, giving a place it in academic terminology and encouraging historians to consider the value of visual mediums, in *Historiography and Historiophoty* (1988). In other words, White

reinforced the recognition of film studies within the discipline of history by introducing the concept of "historiophoty." This terminological position provided a strong theoretical framework that scholars can employ and develop. Nevertheless, visual history was not the agenda of only historians. For instance, In *From Hitler to Heimat* (1989), Kaes demonstrates how the New German Cinema exhibited unique histories, implying that films reflect and respond to the socio-political conditions of the given period (1989). He mainly argues that films are also historical texts that provide insight into the social and cultural dimensions of the period when they were produced. Therefore, they should be considered in historical contexts to understand their message and argument (1990). Films are also an indispensable part of material culture since they reflect a particular period's cultural, social, political, and economic conditions, according to Kaes (1995). It should be noted that, differ from Rosenstone, who points out the emotional and visual engagement provided by historical films, Kaes views the representation of socio-economic transformations in films as historical materials.

2.3 History as Experimental Artwork

Although studies on cinematic representations of history have been justified in one way or another, historians usually tend to prefer documentaries over historical fiction due to their methodological associations with historiography based on archival work. At this point, Rosenstone offers a broad framework equating documentary with fiction film to represent reality and challenges this approach by suggesting that documentaries are constructed narratives like fiction and that audiovisual archives in nonfiction films can create a sense of nostalgia similar to fiction (1995, 52). Nevertheless, he acknowledges that written history and documentaries share a common point in using historical material to construct facts. Therefore, documentaries are more associated with written history than fiction films; this similarity leads historians to recognize the historical value of nonfiction films. Opposing this claim, Rosenstone emphasizes that documentaries utilize conventions of fiction films to touch on emotions and reinterpret the arguments rather than indicating a pure reality (Rosenstone 2006, 71–72). Namely, every depiction of reality is created for various purposes, reflecting subjectivity according to Eitzen (Eitzen 1995, 81).

In this framework, Rosenstone offers to classify historical films as mainstream and experimental films instead of fiction and nonfiction. He simply defines the experimental film as "opposition to mainstream practice, to Hollywood codes of realism and storytelling." Mainstream films present history as a linear narrative through a chronological order, focusing on notable figures and grand narratives while failing to present complex historical structures (1995, 54-60). These films are also absent from historical significance since they dramatize events, prioritize protagonists, and address the fetish of the past within a periodic structure (Guynn 2006, 145). As a contradiction to mainstream historical films, Rosenstone argues that these films that approach the history as an experiment area are "analytical, unemotional, distanced, multicausal; historical worlds that are expressionist, surrealist, disjunctive, postmodern; histories that do not just show the past but also talk about how and what it means to the filmmaker today." (1995, 61). Experimental or avant-garde films, which are out of any medium or category, challenge conventional cinema concepts by independent filmmakers who aim to exhibit subjective perspectives and examine the limits of the filmmaking practice through poetic and visual aesthetics (Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith 2017, 369). In experimental films, history is a closed, emotional, and personal story of moral progress and of individuals, and it is also a process. These films offer a unique perspective of history and emphasize ignored subjects without dramatizing or blessing the past. Thus, experimental films redefine history creatively by avoiding conventional theories and practices (Rosenstone 1995, 61-64). This creativity in experimental film mainly appears in its use of found footage films, which I will describe in *Chapter 3* deeply, to reflect emotions and thoughts (Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith 2017, 370).

At this point, the question arises as to why we must classify historical films according to their form and style. Rosenstone proposes a "shift in perspective" that leads us to reconsider the purpose of history and our expectations from it. He suggests that recognizing methodological transformation in history does not mean rejecting historical accuracy. Shifting historical perspective allows us to understand that historical films stand with written history instead of challenging or replacing it (Rosenstone 1995, 77). In Rosenstone's conceptualization, visual history is a form of narrative that does not destroy

historiography's accuracy or value. However, contemporary examples are capable of challenging written history by damaging its authority, reversing its arguments and evidence, and revealing controversial perspectives, as seen in the example of *Love, Deutschemarks and Death* (Kaya, 2021) that constructs a unique narrative of migration encountering with the past through archival images.

Indeed, by positioning historical films with historiography in a parallel line, Rosenstone seeks a solid ground for postmodern history that challenges traditional notions of historical knowledge and representation (Hutcheon 1988, 81). According to Hutcheon, postmodern history has several vital principles, including historical relativism, intertextuality, meta-fictionality, irony, and parody. It offers multiple perspectives that question grand narratives and blur boundaries between fact and fiction, history and literature, and past and present (1988, 91-110). Acknowledging the postmodern historical approach, Rosenstone criticizes postmodern scholars and their works, including White, Derrida, and Foucault, arguing that they failed to adapt to the postmodernist thought since the written form of history cannot employ the principles of postmodernism due to the limitations of literary and scholarly conventions. According to him "the examples of the so-called postmodern history touted by the theorists are, to anyone who has a taste for the new, a real disappointment" (1995, 205). Rosenstone explicitly argues that postmodern history "exists not on the page but on the screen, and it is the creation of filmmakers and videographers." In this context, the "real" historical films are unique mediums that reveal postmodern narratives "telling the past self-reflexively, recounting it from a multiplicity of viewpoints, eschewing traditional narrative with" linear development since they are not subjected to limitations of literary forms, unlike texts; filmmakers are also postmodern historians. Indeed, history only refers to the postmodern narratives for Rosenstone while he quests for postmodern history in cinema. In other words, the "real" postmodern historical films, according to Rosenstone, can construct self-reflexive, multidimensional, and non-linear histories, reversing grand narratives and using ironic language (1995, 206). What I problematized here is that the sample that Rosenstone defined as "real" historical films. Indeed, he offers a categorical framework to define the postmodern historical film, indicating that only experimental films as postmodern histories, through particular examples including *Far from Poland* (Godmillow, 1983), *History and Memory* (Tajiri,

1991), *Camera Natura* (Gibson, 1986), *Surname Viet Given Name Nam* (Trinh T. Minh-ha, 1989). These experimental films reveal postmodern historical narratives using non-linear narratives, subjective perspectives, and multiple evidence, including interviews and archival footage, emphasizing memory's significance in challenging traditional historiographical methods. (1995, 202-224).

However, Rosenstone's argument and examples raise several contradictions inside his framework. First, although Rosenstone emphasizes that emotional engagement with the past is an advantage of historical film over historiography, experimental films touch on the senses rather than feelings. Second, despite these films utilizing several components of postmodern thought, the significant junction point is that they are also nonfiction films (Nichols 1981) that employ archival material intensively. In this sense, on the one hand, he classifies historical films as mainstream and experimental instead of fiction and documentary; on the one hand, he prioritizes nonfiction narratives among experimental films. This is reasonable since nonfiction films tend to have more experimental qualifications than fiction films. However, in Rosenstone's framework, nonfiction films overcome fiction in the last instance and become a proper ground for postmodern narratives. Nevertheless, another problem in Rosenstone's approach arises when considering the films he addressed. Although experimental films are not always synonym with avant-garde works in contemporary terminology, examples addressed by Rosenstone obviously refer to avant-garde films that appeal to only a limited audience group. Thus, Rosenstone confines the postmodern history within the borders of the avant-garde sense of art. In other words, the "real" postmodern histories are avant-garde works consumed by knowledgeable audiences and only accessible through particular organizations or places like festivals or galleries. This point causes a contradiction in Rosenstone's framework. While he criticizes the limitations of written history, he supports another limitation based on social and intellectual status by defining "real" history as only experimental and avant-garde works that are not all that accessible. This exclusivity raises questions about the availability of historical knowledge and the purpose of history: For whom is history made?

2.4 Historians not Allowed

Despite accepting that postmodern historical films, opposite to the mainstream historical dramas, were limited in the period when he wrote this book, it is evident that Rosenstone tends to exclude popular narratives in a general framework. He does not touch on popular documentaries like *The Thin Blue Line* (Morris 1988), a significant example and pioneer work for postmodern historical documentaries, conveying different dimensions of reality instead of addressing an absolute truth and engaging memory and history (Williams 1993, 9-21). In this context, why does Rosenstone eschew incorporating the best-known postmodern documentary in his argument?

The fact that Rosenstone targets revisionist historians who have not acknowledged the legitimacy of visual history yet, rather than conventional historians or film theorists. For this purpose, initially, he shines a light on his counter-view colleagues, exemplifying his argument through familiar films for historians like *Return of Martin Guerre* (Vigne 1982). This film is popular among historians because Natalie Zemon Davis writes its script and is a prominent historian of narrative history. Nevertheless, although Davis states that "film has countless possibilities for showing more than one story" (1988 280), she also published the script as a book in 1983, thereby converting a historical film into a book has given room to discuss the incapability of visual history. That is to say that Rosenstone draws attention by offering a framework in which he attributes counter-arguments to rightfulness. Second, his emphasis on experimental films that correspond to a postmodern historical approach paves the way for consensus, and he further makes remarkable the discussion for his colleagues, exemplifying such as *Reds* (Beatty 1981), and *Walker* (Cox 1984) which he has taken part as history advisor, *JFK* (Stone 1992) and *Sans Soleil* (Marker 1983). Although Rosenstone gets an advantage through examples that ensure his advantageous position, this suggestion has been open to opposition since many revisionist historians are familiar with these films, at least for examining their association with contemporary historiography. It means that even though this framework provides consensus for a while, it has the potential to face the risk of confusion in the long term. In the last phase, suggesting that experimental or avant-garde films are the only way to create postmodern histories, Rosenstone avoids opposition by shifting the debate to an

area where his addressees are unfamiliar and weaker. In other words, since even contemporary historians cannot discuss these films that require particular knowledge to review and examine, they cannot raise counter-arguments toward Rosenstone's framework. In this sense, Rosenstone blocks probable controversies by excluding or eliminating the opposing party and creates a safe area for himself.

In any case, Rosenstone's approach paves the way for replacing one form of dominance with another, making accessible the experiences of ordinary people only for superstructure and for theoretical and practical limitations both for cinema and history. Within this context, acknowledging that documentaries are a unique form of history-making utilizing the archive, which is the raw material of history, I argue that popular productions can be postmodern historical films that present micro-histories with a subjective and multidimensional perspective like arthouse works. In this direction, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* (Kaya 2022), a contemporary archival documentary that exhibits a postmodern history of migration by employing lots of archival evidence and memory, is a proper example for this discussion.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF DOCUMENTARY

3.1 From Creative Actuality to Charming Pornography

Eitzen points out that reality is the most formidable problem for the definition of documentary (1995, 82). Although Eitzen touched on this problem three decades ago, discussions on reality in documentaries are still being kept up by reproducing theory and practice. In this context, it can be said that Grierson had ignited the wick of an interminable debate among theorists, categorizing documentary as a unique medium and defining it as a "creative treatment of actuality" (Hardy 1966, 13). For him, unlike studio films, a documentary that shoots real people and places allows for an interpretation of the actual world and reveals a creative work, and he exemplifies his argument through Nanook of the North. (Hardy 1966, 147). Grierson's definition that emphasizes "actuality" and "creativity" provided a basis for the theory and practice of documentary filmmaking over a few decades and led to direct cinema that focuses on observation and the Cinema Verite that offers documentaries in participatory mode.

Nichols' definition of the documentary is based on its relationship with reality. According to him, documentaries are about something that happened, and real people tell stories about what happened in the real world. Nevertheless, even though the documentary is "about reality," he also stresses that it is a "representation of reality" instead of a "reproduction" of it. This means that nonfiction films depict real-life experiences and events that involve real people or social actors (2017, 9). Although Nichols shares a common ground with Grierson, emphasizing the documentary's claim of reality and differentiating it from fiction, he does not refer to "actuality" while using the notion of reality. Acknowledging the documentary's concern for reality, which continues even today, the contemporary understanding of reality is changed by the postmodern thought I described in *Chapter 1*; thereby, reality is an ambiguous and complex notion in contemporary terminology. Nichols stresses that documentary does not have a "fixed territory" in which it utilizes de facto methods and forms; instead, it touches on specific problematics and builds narratives engaging our way of perceiving the world (1991, 4-16). As a consequence of the changed perception and meaning of reality, the notion of

actuality, which Grierson emphasizes, is replaced by "truth," which refers to a subjective, relative, and interpretative level of reality, as it is seen in the works of Williams (1993) and Bruzzi (2000).

In early periods, the documentary's claim of reality is based on the authenticity of photographic images. According to Winston, the scientific status of photography influenced the documentary's suggestion of reality, while the ability of photography to physically create an image provided authenticity for documentary filmmaking (Winston 1993, 37). The photographic image's authenticity provided the documentary's ontological legitimacy; hence, its claim of authenticity is based on the photographic image, allowing it to define itself as reality (Screibler 1993, 141). In this direction, Spence and Navarro emphasize the power of photographic images due to the camera's capability to record events while they occur. For this reason, photographic images were viewed as accurate reflections of actuality in front of the camera. That is the "profilmic reality" defined by Spence and Navarro (2011,11). Nichols introduces documentary modes in Representing Reality as expository, observational, participatory, and reflexive. According to this classification, documentaries in expository, observational, and participatory modes have revealed conventional examples suggesting the reality of the scene in front of the camera (1991).

However, as the authenticity of photographic images is discussed, conceptual and formal shifting for the documentary is inevitable since its significant source of legitimacy becomes questionable. For Barthes, although a photograph cannot be distinguished from its referent, it is a secondary outcome of another agency (1982, 5). Barthes and Heat state that the image is not reality but also emphasize that the photographic image is an "institutional activity" like every representation (1997, 17). In a company with the institutional aspect of moving image, Eitzen suggests that it has been constructed by social dynamics even if there is reality (1995, 82). Recently, Jill Godmillow, who embraces the idea and practices of post-realism in the documentary, uses the phrase "pornography of reality" to define the conventional manner of actuality. In her definition, pornography means an abused visual representation, limited to showing fundamental dimensions of reality, ignoring the subject's agency. Within this framework, it is clear

that while Grierson rhapsodized Nanook of the North, Jill Godmillow, a postmodern filmmaker, calls this filmmaking practice "charming pornography" (2022, 13).

Today, as a consequence of AI technology, it is possible to produce moving images that are almost like live action, and this progress, the so-called revolution, allows us to further question the reliability of photographic images. Considering the development of moving image technology, it is subjected to an evolutionary process in which documentary is not free. According to Nichols, definition of documentary can transform depending on the institutional sphere that support documentary production, filmmaking practices, influence of particular films, and the audience's expectations. All these elements together shape and redefine the concept of documentary over time (Nichols 2017). At this point, the question arises: how did these changes impact the conventions in documentary form? In the next section, I will examine the conventions of documentary, focusing on "voiceover commentary," which is the hallmark of the expository mode, and editing that is associated with fiction films to reveal how documentary form evolved. Thus, understanding the transformation of documentary conventions will provide a basis for comparing traditional and postmodern documentary filmmaking practices.

3.2 Turning Down the Voice of God

As Bartes (1997, 17) describes the photographic image as an institutional activity. Similarly, Nichols argues that documentary filmmaking is an institutional practice intervening in production and consumption processes that engage filmmakers and audiences. In other words, since documentaries are shaped by the organizations and institutions that create them, the narrative and form of the documentary are not independent of influences of the superstructure. At this point, a significant influence is voiceover commentary (Nichols 2017, 11-12). The voiceover in "classical" documentaries of the 1930s and 1940s corresponded to the "Voice of God," a spiritual and wise voice that suggests knowledge about the represented world (Wolfe 2016, 40). According to Spence and Navarro, documentaries, whether produced by institutions or independently, "are authorized." Documentaries convey authority by displaying potent figures, crucial sources of our trust for its authenticity. Questioning the source of this

authority and its identity, Spence and Navarro emphasize that authority is recognizable in documentaries through voiceover commentary or the filmmaker's presence on screen. In these cases, the authority is perceived as coming from a particular source (Spence and Navarro 2011, 59). Nichols states that despite the voice-of-God convention, the hallmark of the expository mode, has utilized professionally trained, deep-toned male voices, some documentaries can prefer soft voices to enhance credibility (2017, 124). Nevertheless, Nichols emphasizes that "the voice of a documentary is not limited to "Gods" or visible "authorities" that convey the filmmaker's perspective. Instead, it includes verbal or nonverbal indicators that arrange sound and images (2017).

Nichols examines broader to the "voice of documentary" and categorizes it by focusing on genre conventions. He explains that representing the world from a specific perspective requires using a voice that shares the characteristics of this perspective. While genre conventions help describe these characteristics. Although these conventions describe the documentary's voice, they cannot wholly define it since each is unique. Namely, the voice of the documentary reflects a perspective depending on its explicitness. The most explicit form is conveyed through spoken or written words, often referred to as "voice-of-God" or "voice-of-authority" commentary (Nichols 2017, 53). For instance, although *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* does not use a spoken "voice of God" commentary, they interact with the audience through textual commentary. Thus, the film maintains the genre convention but in a less explicit way. It is important to note that, despite following this convention, the film's use of voice does not correspond to the expository mode that indicates the message (Nichols 1991, 34). Nevertheless, not all documentaries employ voiceover commentary, and in these cases, the sources of authority are more complicated. For Spence and Navarro, the incorporation of multiple components gives these films their authoritative voice. Documentarians usually prioritize expert knowledge or various evidential sources to support the argument. In this case, the interviewees' speech is

significant in conveying the knowledge; thereby, in many documentary films, it can be a crucial pillar (Spence & Navarro, 2011).

3.3 Editing in Documentary

Nichols expresses that from *Nanook of the North* (Flaherty, 1922) to *The Act of Killing* (Oppenheimer, 2012), all significant milestones in documentary filmmaking have engaged certain documentary conventions. For him, using conventions is necessary for documentaries to be defined and classified; thereby, certain conventions include "voice-of-God commentary, interviews, sound recording, cutaways, B-roll footage, and real social actors," characteristics of nonfiction. In other words, the documentary is inherently subjected to its genre's conventions. However, according to Nichols, it is also free of fiction film conventions due to the explicit divergence between fiction and nonfiction. For instance, he suggests that continuity editing is less critical in documentaries. In his lines, the engagement of time and space in documentaries is established through historical linkages instead of continuity editing. In this sense, documentary editing emphasizes real-world linkages rather than serving for smooth and seamless transitions between shots (Nichols 2017, 14-18). He also suggests that, even if there is continuity, it is merely evidentiary editing utilized in expository mode to ensure rhetorical continuity, not spatial or temporal associations (Nichols 1991, 35). Although the distinctions Nichols stresses help define the genre, it is clear that this strict divergence conflicts with postmodern documentaries since they aim to coalesce fictional and nonfictional components. If we remember Rosenstone's discussion on cinematic representations of history, he states that documentaries and fiction films are both constructs that aim for emotional engagement with the historical world (1988). Considering that contemporary documentary filmmaking embraces postmodern narrative forms and techniques, how can we mention absolute conventions that separate nonfiction and fiction genres? If nonfiction and fiction films engage the world similarly, can we still mention that continuity editing is a convention that belongs to fiction while it is less critical in documentaries? If continuity

editing is significant for documentaries instead of being unique to fiction, is it a convention for documentary filmmaking like fiction?

Editing establishes graphic, rhythmic, spatial, and temporal associations between shots and creates continuity by manipulating time and space. (Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith 2017, 212-262). Nevertheless, editing not only manipulates time and space but also the material, and if the material is nonfiction, a documentary reshapes sociohistorical reality through editing, according to Spence and Navarro. Furthermore, they stress that "some documentaries are created in the editing room" (2011, 161). It means that the narratives in the documentary can be constructed during the editing process. At this point, considering the significance of editing in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, the film corresponds to this description stated by Spence and Navarro. However, above all, this case demonstrates that editing is not less important for documentaries, as suggested by Nichols.

Indeed, Spence and Navarro disagree with Nichols regarding editing in the documentary, suggesting that early nonfiction films have represented a continuous view of time and place. (Spence and Navarro 2011, 162). Around 1900-1910, filmmakers explored using editing to incorporate the shots to tell a story, and this paved the way for the development of continuity editing that aims to convey knowledge smoothly and clearly along the following shots. The continuity editing essentially seeks graphic similarity between shots, coherence of rhythm of cuts, and coherence of time and space to present a seamless story (Bordwell, Thompson and Smith 2017, 230-231). According to Spence & Navarro, continuity editing constructs a narrative by creating a perception of continuous time and space in Hollywood-style fiction films and early documentaries aimed to exhibit continuous narrative, temporally and spatially. In contrast to Nichols, they argue that documentaries are not independent of the conventions of fiction filmmaking and that continuity is essential in nonfiction storytelling to create a smooth and coherent narrative. (2011, 165-166). Unlike Nichols, John Ellis suggests that digital video enhanced the

significance of editing strategies in documentaries by simplifying the practices and allowing for collective actions that reinforce creative forms (2012, 83).

Stylistically, the cut is the most recognized way of transition in a documentary to provide continuity. Nevertheless, if there is a gap in the image, this is compensated through a "cutaway." The cutaway might be shallowly related or include crucial details about the story world. Even though cutaways are less necessary conventions in documentaries, this technique still enhances the perception that there is a smoothly continued action. Another conventional editing technique in documentaries is linear development, where actions are engaged successively, and particularly historical documentaries follow a chronological order (Spence and Navarro 2011, 167-172). In this sense, the editing techniques of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* corresponds to the descriptions of Spence and Navarro. The film employs continuity editing to provide smooth transitions between cuts. It also follows a periodic development line, a convention for historical documentaries, to clarify the phases of labor migration from Turkey to Germany. Above all, it is a documentary created in the editing process, as Spence and Navarro suggested. In this context, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* is a convenient example of their emphasis on the importance of editing in nonfiction filmmaking. However, the question is, does employing conventional techniques make the film a conventional documentary? Furthermore, can postmodern historical narratives be created using documentary conventions like continuity editing, linear development, or voiceover commentary? In other words, can filmmaking conventions be broken down by using them in creative ways? In order to answer these questions, the hallmarks of contemporary documentary filmmaking and what distinguishes contemporary documentary form from conventional modes should be examined.

3.4 Hallmarks of Contemporary Documentary

Contemporary documentaries explicitly differ from conventional modes through creative perspectives and techniques that challenge traditional narrative forms. Nichols introduces documentary modes in *Representing Reality* (1991) as expository, observational, interactive, and reflexive while he offers a broader classification updating this framework

to expository, poetic, observational, participatory, reflexive, and performative modes (2017). In this classification, expository and observational modes refer to the conventional documentary practices of direct cinema and Cinema Verite, while reflexivity and performativity correspond to contemporary documentary understanding. For Nichols, "reflexive mode primarily explores how we discuss the historical world… These documentaries are highly self-aware… They do not only focus on form and style but also strategies, structures, conventions, expectations, and impacts." (1991, 56-60). He states that "reflexive documentaries eschew conventional methods such as continuity editing or character development….As a most self-conscious and self-questioning mode of representation, it leads the viewer to question represented world and authenticity of evidence" (Nichols 2017, 125-131). Above all, this mode reflects the filmmaker's subjectivity and its influence over narrative. Similarly, "performative documentaries highlight the complexity of our understanding of the world by focusing on its subjective and emotional aspects. These films stress the personality of experience, prioritizing knowledge's emotional aspects. Instead of trying to indicate the event, performative documentaries aim to touch on strong emotional responses" (Nichols 2017, 149-155). In contrast to conventional documentaries that aim to convey the actuality directly, performative documentaries embrace the notion of "truth," as a subjective phenomenon, acknowledging the documentary's constructed nature (Bruzzi 2006, 186). That is to say that performative documentaries emphasize the relativity of experiences, claims, and emotions, engaging non-fiction storytelling techniques with creative perspectives. Therefore, documentaries in this mode offer a framework in which borders between different dimensions of reality and its interpretations are blurred through a subjective point of view.

In this context, contemporary documentary can be defined through its subjective and complex relationship with reality. These hallmarks of contemporary documentary filmmaking emphasize a multilayered narrative and truth, allowing the audience to think about the different dimensions of reality. As I described in the first chapter, postmodern historical thought challenges objectivity, emphasizing the ambivalence of fiction and non-fiction. (Hutcheon 1988). Within this framework, reflexive and performative documentaries correspond to the postmodern point of view by constructing subjective

narratives, questioning the possibility of truth, and employing interpretation. Thus, the reflexivity in contemporary documentaries is closely related to postmodernist thought.

In *New Documentary* (1993), Linda Williams focuses on the influence of postmodernism in the example of *The Thin Blue Line* (Morris, 1988), which represents the past from multiple points of view and reveals the multilayered nature of historical narratives, engaging past experiences and present interpretations, Although the film employs specific conventional techniques like talking heads, it intervenes to the historical world through creative forms and techniques like reenactments coalescing non-fiction and fictional levels. In this sense, contemporary documentaries can break the genre conventions by melting them into postmodern narrative techniques. Nevertheless, *The Thin Blue Line* is a popular documentary, unlike the examples of the postmodern historical films emphasized by Rosenstone (1995). In this sense, the film demonstrates that postmodern histories are not only limited to experimental films. Instead, popular works are also capable of achieving this goal. In her analysis, Williams argues that the photographic image has lost its capability to reflect the truth and its authenticity while testimony and memory become primary evidence of postmodern historical documentary. However, Stella Bruzzi criticizes Williams, suggesting that she aims to demonstrate how the "final truth" has been broken through a limited sample that constructs its narrative on testimony and memory, intentionally hiding the images of events. Rejecting that the authenticity of photographic representation has been destroyed, Bruzzi describes the documentary through "reassessment," "reappropriation," and "manipulation" of the document, which is the backbone of the documentary. For Bruzzi, the main question with the documentary is our way of engagement with the "document or record" through representation or interpretation," transforming archival material from a constant material into a flexible component. In this sense, Bruzzi prioritizes the archive in the documentary to represent the truth while acknowledging its nature as open to interpretation. She emphasizes that the reality represented in documentaries is a construction based on documents instead of being and. Positioning the archival evidence at the core of the documentary, Bruzzi classifies non-fiction films as conventional or contemporary according to their way of using archives. In her framework, contemporary documentaries use archives in

unconventional ways, while there are exceptions in which archives are utilized or "reconstructed" within contemporary documentaries (Bruzzi 2006, 15-46).

Consequently, Williams (1993) emphasizes testimony and memory as evidence in documentaries, while Bruzzi (2006) argues that the distinction between conventional and unconventional documentaries lies in using archives. Both perspectives, however, have limitations. How Williams reduces postmodern narratives to outcomes of memory, Bruzzi similarly restricts contemporary documentary filmmaking to the use of archives. In other words, Williams overlooks the significance of archival evidence, while Bruzzi excludes testimony and memory from her documentary. Moreover, both miss an important point: how should we define the documentary when archives and memory are engaged? Should this kind of film be classified as a postmodern historical documentary due to the presence of memory, or should its form be defined according to archival evidence? At this point, the nature of both evidential sources should be examined, and their ways of engagement within the narrative should be clarified instead of defining the documentary through only one of them. Nevertheless, I argue that it is possible to reveal postmodern histories incorporating both archive and memory using conventions such as voiceover, talking heads, or continuity editing. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will focus on philosophical explanations of archives and memory, examining their use in documentaries.

4. ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTARY

4.1 Archives as Discursive Systems

Archive is the primary raw material of history, directly or indirectly, and this is a de facto principle for historical research. I attribute an agency to the archives instead of viewing them as simply remnants of the past since working with archival material is a mutual manipulation process. Although I acknowledge the Foucauldian point of view to describe the archive, it does not mean that Foucault's definition will be directly adapted to examining *Love, Deutschemarks and Death*. Instead, my purpose is to offer a reinterpretation of radical thoughts that shape the existing works in this field.

In *Archeology of Knowledge*, Foucault argues that statements are organized by historical a priori, which is a part of discursive formations. Nevertheless, he differentiates formal and historical a priori and explains that the historical a priori is not about confirming judgments; instead, it is about determining the accuracy of statements. According to him, historical a priori refers to circumstances in which statements appear, coexist, change, and vanish. Historical a priori is related to the history of what has been stated rather than abstract truths. In contrast to formal a priori, it is not a static phenomenon above events, but it offers the rules that define discursive practices. Foucault suggests that statements are shaped by historical a priori and discursive formations, which are complex systems of discursive practices. Rather than viewing history as a continuous narrative that translates the past into the present text, Foucault regards discursive practices as systems that make statements about the past as meaningful events and things. In this direction, he calls these systems the "archive." According to Foucault, the archive is not only a collection of texts demonstrating societies and institutions' past, or it does not directly reflect reality or thought. Instead, it explains why statements have emerged under various circumstances. He states that "the archive is first, the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events" (Foucault 1972, 143-146). It should be noted that this conception does not imply a document fetish that scientific-conventional historiography embraced strictly. Instead, he highlights the regulatory role

of the archive in shaping historical discourse and knowledge. In other words, in Foucault's conception, the archive defines how statements occur and function, forming and transforming them according to particular rules. Therefore, the archive is not a formal a priori. Indeed, Foucault equivocates by using the term "law" to define the archive. Namely, on the one hand, the archive, as a law, functions as a regulatory mechanism that determines the limits of knowledge and discourse. On the other hand, the archive, as a law, is also subject to interpretation and reorganization. According to the nature of "law," the archive is inherently fluid and evolving eventually rather than being a static phenomenon throughout history. Thus, this fluidity and flexibility allow the archive to be reinterpreted, stretched, and even manipulated within certain limits accompanying transformations in discursive practices. In this context, Foucault implies the dual nature of the archive, defining it as a law.

In this direction, Foucault suggests that the archive also represents the practices that generate statements about events and manipulable things. Nevertheless, it does not carry the burden of tradition and is not a "library of libraries." Instead, the archive reveals the rules that allow statements to continue and evolve. In this sense, the archive systematizes the generation and transformation of statements. For Foucault, since describing the archive entirely is impossible because of its temporally fragmented nature, we need to understand the borders between past and present, pointing out the temporal discontinuities, to examine the archive. Nevertheless, its fragmented nature allows for challenging grand narratives, emphasizing the contrasts of discourse, knowledge, and time (Foucault 1972, 146-167). Within this framework, how the archive governs statements and thoughts can also impact how we remember the past or repress the recollections. Namely, if the archive determines the limits of historical statements and knowledge, it can evoke the memory for preserving, repressing, or vanishing past experiences. Since the archive organizes events and things selectively, it can also play a role in organizing memories, which points out an interaction between the archive and memory. However, the engagement between archive and memory is a complex and multilayered discussion that combines the natures of these two phenomena.

In *Between Memory and History* (1989), Pierre Nora analyzes the transformed natures of memory, history, and archives, illustrating their significance in contemporary society. Nora states that in a conventional context, history is a reconstruction of the past and an intellectual process that seeks to organize, interpret, and analyze historical data, unlike memory. Although there was such a divergence between history and memory once, he suggests that history and memory have a complex relationship in contemporary society. This shift means that when we mention memory, it refers to personal history. In other words, "the quest for memory is the search for someone's history." Nevertheless, "modern memory is, above all, archival" for Nora (1989, 7). In his framework, the relationship between memory and archive is subjected to transformation as well as history and memory. When memory becomes archival, it becomes an output of external factors such as documents, recordings, and images (1989, 7-13). Therefore, what is remembered about the past is directed by archival materials. Despite this association of memory and archive, which implies the Foucauldian perspective that allows us to suggest that the archive can shape memory when Nora describes the nature of the archive, an explicit contrast with Foucault appears.

Nora deals with the archive as a repository for preserving historical records, driven by a social obsession with losing cultural and historical heritage, offering the term "sites of memory" to define it. In this context, archives become the physical forms of memory that avoid destroying historical events and experiences (Nora 1989, 13). At this point, Nora differentiates from Foucault in terms of the conceptualization of the archive. Foucault sees the archive as a fundamental structure that shapes our knowledge and determines our statements about the past. For him, archives are not only historical records or repositories but agents that define the limits of statements and knowledge (Foucault 1972). In contrast, Nora (1989) conceptualizes the archive as both an input and output of memory. He also positions the archive as a static phenomenon by arguing that archives are a physical form of memory. Indeed, by suggesting that, on the one hand, memory is reshaped by the archive, on the other hand, the archive is an illustration of memory, Nora leads to a chicken and egg problem, as the phrase goes.

4.2 Archive as Drive

Derrida expands Nora's framework by examining the archive concept through an etymological deconstruction and psychoanalytical approach. Initially, he examines the archive's etymological origins and stresses that "archive" comes from the ancient Greek language "arkhe," which refers to the concepts of "commencement" or "commandment." In addition, the archive's association with the ancient Greeks extends beyond its linguistic conceptualization. In ancient Greece, public archives and documents were stored in a building called "arkheion." This place was also the residence of the "arkhons," who were the governors of the city-states and members of the oligarchy. In this context, Derrida explains that "arkheion" refers to where official documents have been kept and the domain of the political authority that had the power of archiving process (1995, 1-5). Deconstructing these notions, Derrida shows that this dual meaning indicates an inherent association between the archive and power, reminding us that the archive is not simply a physical repository or "a library of libraries" (Foucault 1972). Instead, he offers a framework that the archive is a place of power (Derrida 1995) that rules historical discourse. Although Derrida touches on the archive's institutional and hegemonic dimensions, he theoretically and methodologically differs from Foucault, who traces its power through its discursivity (1972), describing the archive through the deconstructive method. Nevertheless, the divergence between their analyses is beyond theoretical and methodological disagreements.

After explaining the etymological roots of the archive, Derrida attempts to examine its working principles through psychoanalysis. At this point, he fills the gap left by Foucault (1972) while extending the connection between the archive and memory, as suggested by Nora (1988). In this phase, Derrida describes the association of the archive and memory from a Freudian point of view, suggesting that the archiving practice stems from a fundamental human desire to control and manage memory. In psychoanalytical terminology, this desire is explained as the "death drive." Derrida calls the obsession toward archive "archive fever," which refers to the tendency to preserve the past due to the death drive. In this direction, he implements Freud's metaphor of the "mystic writing pad" to illustrate how the archive and memory function similarly (1995, 7-15). The

"mystic writing pad" is a metaphor used by Freud to describe the working principle of memory through conscious and unconscious processes. The writing pad that keeps traces of writings on it exemplifies how memories are reposited and how retroactive experiences and unconscious influence the present and conscious levels (1924). According to this analogy, the archive functions like memory by preserving traces of the past (1995, 7-24). Although Derrida's analogy provides a broad framework to describe the archive theoretically, his psychoanalytic perspective causes some limitations and gaps in practice. Steedman states that adapting Derrida's analogy to the archive and memory discussion is problematic since the archive does not function like "human memory." According to her, in contrast to memory, the archive does not stem from "everything," and it is not an eternal and unlimited space. Instead, the archive is a construction generated from "chosen fragments of the past" (Steedman 2002, 68). Following Steedman's critique, the archive is not about the moment when the event occurred, unlike memory. Instead, the archive is produced after the event while recording or representing it; thereby, it is an artifact created at a conscious level rather than unconscious drives. In other words, the archive indicates the scene after the event, representing its selected parts through human-made devices such as writing, painting, image, or sound, while memory is about the whole process, including before, during, and after the event. This is why we can mention the "absence of archive" in historical research, while we cannot use the exact phrase for memory, at least when examining an event in which witnesses are still alive. In this framework, the divergence between the nature of the archive and memory raises two problems for Derrida's argument.

First, although memory can be explained by a psychoanalytical perspective emphasizing the role of the unconscious, archives are not only created because of an obsession stemming from death drive. Instead, conscious factors, including administrative and legal processes, economic and social structures, cultural elements, personal motives, and purposes, generate and transform the archive's production, collection, and preservation ways. In this sense, the psychoanalytical perspective not only limits understanding the creation of institutional archives but also ignores other human motivations to produce personal archives such as memoirs, photograph albums, or home movies. Even though it is true that human beings tend to preserve recollections, conscious reasons like the

purpose of proving family history to guarantee legal rights, the economic welfare of future generations, or creating a personal history cannot be explained simply with drives. Therefore, defining the archive through its similarities with working principles of memory is a reductionist approach. Second, since the psychoanalytic perspective offers a grand narrative for human beings, Derrida's analogy tends to ignore the significant role of the historical process in which archiving practices are transformed in company with the cultural, social, political, and economic transformations. Namely, since archives are produced, collected, preserved, and conveyed by institutional and personal capabilities, the archive and archiving have a social and cultural history as well as other phenomena, practices, and structures in the history of humanity. However, the psychoanalytical approach inherently overlooks the transformations at the historical level, explaining human beings through only one reason. When archiving is defined simply as a drive, the historical process in which archives have been produced and its transformed production ways are inevitably ignored.

Until the first half of the nineteenth century, personal archives were mainly composed of paintings and written documents such as letters, memoirs, and autobiographies. It means that the archiving practice was associated with the upper classes of society, which had sophisticated understandings and were literate. However, in the early nineteenth century, photography allowed people to capture particular images like portraits or family photographs taken by professional photographers. Thus, it became a significant but rare part of personal archives. In the first half of the twentieth century, this recording practice was enhanced through 8mm and Super 8 cameras, motion picture formats pioneered for home movies, enabling people to create moving images individually. In the following decades, the moving image technology advanced by spreading VHS-C camcorders. This video format, an essential part of personal archives, allowed amateurs to shoot footage representing detailed aspects and more intimate moments of their lives. The practicality of VHS-C cameras and the accessibility of videocassettes led people to record images as far as possible, while this format also provided better preservation conditions than film stock. In the 1990s, analog devices were replaced by digital video, making further accessible recording practice for the masses and making video editing easier since it is a computer-driven format. John Ellis defines this development as a revolution allowing "the

democratization of photographic processes" (2012, 24). Digital video has transformed not only video production and editing but also preservation. Especially after DV cassettes are replaced by more practical storage systems like memory cards, preserving home video archives becomes a computer-based experience. And yet, today, almost every moment of our lives can be recorded via smartphones and shared via social media, an indispensable part of our daily life, and preserved via cloud storing technologies free of time and space. It is a fact that, at this point, visual archiving is playing a more critical role for human beings than ever before. However, the nature of the archive is transforming, and archiving practices are being enhanced among people, while the Freudian approach still describes memory with the methodologies employed a hundred years ago. Within this framework, the nature of archive and memory can be associated conditionally, but their working principle cannot be wholly equated. Considering that personal and institutional needs and desires to produce and preserve archives have increased throughout history, the factor that allowed for this change is the cluster of macro and micro-historical level transformations in the social, cultural, economic, and technological spheres rather than specific drives coming from the unconscious level. In other words, today, individuals and institutions produce and preserve more archival material because they are capable of this. In this sense, the focal point should be identifying the extent of archive-memory similarity, depending on context and conditions, rather than suggesting a categorical conclusion that offers whether the psychoanalytical analogy can completely define the archive.

4.3 Use of Audiovisual Archives in Documentary

Thus far, I have aimed to demonstrate the logic and function of the archive through its connection with history and memory to establish a reasonable ground for discussion about how audiovisual archives are employed in documentaries and for which purposes. The audiovisual archives utilized in documentary filmmaking are broadly still and moving images, music and recordings, newsreels, government-sponsored documentaries, military collections, ephemeral films, television news, and documentaries", found footage films and home videos (Bernard and Rabin 2009, 15-24). In this sense, institutional and personal archives can be evidential documentary materials. As I described in *Chapter 2,*

Bruzzi's divergence between conventional and unconventional documentaries is based on their archive use (2006, 17). Although contemporary documentaries are further interested in archives and seek creative ways of using this treasure, implementing archival footage in cinema, whether fiction or nonfiction, is not a recent tendency and phenomenon. Throughout cinema history, archival footage has been used for various purposes, from early films to experimental and avant-garde works. It has been used to provide authenticity and to highlight the politics of representation. Some filmmakers have used film images for propaganda, resulting in skepticism towards the image and its status as visible evidence (Brunow 2016, 101). Particularly after World War II, moving image archives and other visual sources became essential for understanding and shaping the history of post-war reconstruction. These images, including newsreels, institutional documentaries, and amateur films, illustrated the extent of the work that had to be done in the immediate post-war era and showed the historical turning point that the reconstruction represented (Val 2021, 36-37). Under these circumstances in which audiovisual archives have been primarily perceived as political propaganda tools, the purpose of using archival material in the documentary was to shape the historical knowledge and statement, as addressed by Foucault (1972), rather than express unconscious drives (Derrida 1995). This logic and practice toward the archive should have paved the way for creating a set of conventions that determine the place of archival evidence within the narrative and formal structures of the documentary.

Bruzzi highlights two conventional methods of using archives in documentaries that reduce the archive to only an indication of a message or argument. The first is the television documentaries that use archives with non-dialectical ways to show what has previously been indicated by other sources of knowledge, including the voiceover or the testimonies (Bruzzi 2006, 37). Expository documentaries aim to directly indicate a claim to the audience (Nichols 1982) and prefer to employ archives to portray verbal statements. In this direction, Desmond Bell calls archives in conventional television documentaries a "habit" that illustrates other elements (2011, 10). The second method Bruzzi demonstrated is using archives to insert images that can be associated with memory (2006, 38). In this case, the interview shot is juxtaposed with an archival shot displayed through intercuts, and sometimes, the interview voice is superimposed on the image via

sound bridges. Yet, the archive takes a part as only an illustration of another evidential material. In this sense, Michael Chanan emphasizes that when a documentary implements the archive only for illustration, it comes up with the danger of distorting the facts by stimulating well-known traditions (2013, 15–32).

Documentary filmmaking indeed has a complex relationship with archives and archival practices, according to Baron. This complexity refers to different modes and forms of the documentary utilized to represent the same historical experience. However, contemporary documentaries have an advanced relationship with the archive by resolving the material and engaging the viewer. Thus, this contemporary tendency allows the audience to make sense of events and experiences of the past (Baron 2007, 13). Baron also shares a similar point of view with Rosenstone (1989), acknowledging that documentary filmmaking utilizes similar methods to historiography. In this line, she suggests that the documentary should be discussed within a historical context. Considering both the development of theories that combine cinema and history and the methodological closeness of historiography and documentary, which I have described in the first chapter deeply, Baron claims that contemporary documentaries use archives according to the techniques of New Historicism (2007, 24). In this framework, even though new tendencies in documentary filmmaking are crucial to embrace the perspective of history from below, the capability of producing personal archives and preserving them is another determinant for engaging contemporary documentaries with postmodern history due to personal stories and micro-histories becoming accessible for filmmakers. Namely, as I described above, the spread of home movie technologies allowed ordinary people to record their daily lives, while home video archives made it possible for filmmakers to explore the personal experiences of people. Therefore, home video practice was a turning point for incorporating documentary and history.

Home videos, above all, provide insights and access into how social and cultural components (Zimmerman 2007, 4). In this context, Aasman emphasizes that although home movies have been a personal archival practice since the 20th century, these films took a long time to be seen as a significant part of archival evidence. According to Aasman, in parallel to the rise of social history that seeks to combine macro and micro-

historical levels, the value of home movie archives has transformed yet become indispensable sources for artworks and documentary filmmaking (2014, 250-251). The engagement of home movie archives with contemporary historical approaches results from intellectual and methodological transformations. At this point, Cuevas argues that home videos are not only visual materials of historical narratives but also significant sources of "history from below" since they reflect past experiences of ordinary people. When home video archives are employed in contemporary documentaries, they can allow new points of view for historical periods or make visible ignored historical agencies by mainstream narratives (2014, 139-150). Even though home videos are regarded as unfunctional by those mainstream and unconventional approaches, embracing the Foucauldian perspective (Foucault 1972), Zimmerman views home movies as "live," "active," and "open to new possibilities," and she claims that home video archives have an evolving nature instead of being constant materials. In addition to the fact that home movies have archival and historical value in their own right if they are assembled with other images and historical materials, the connection of evidential sources allows for new perspectives toward the past (2014, 257-262). Moreover, when documentaries employ home video archives and personal memories, they play a crucial role in compensating for an "unfinished" past. Juxtaposing archival shots and testimonies through montage (Portugues 2001, 108), documentaries can explore a micro-historical world that has not come to light yet and can transform unknown stories into postmodern histories.

If the nonfiction material comprises archival footage, montage becomes essential to constructing a historical world in documentaries. According to Spence and Navarro's description, montage refers to cutting archival shots. (Spence and Navarro 2011, 181-182). Ellis states that montage is a very efficient apparatus for utilizing audiovisual materials since it creatively juxtaposes different perspectives, allows viewers to engage various sources through visual mobility, and condenses contrasts and contradictions (2012, 90). According to Bell, when archival footage is juxtaposed through the montage, an engagement is created with the history that provides a representational dimension to the narrative instead of providing indexical access to the past and indicating an argument. (2011, 15). Particularly for juxtaposing several archival footage, montage sequences are an indispensable technique in documentary filmmaking. While archival shots are cut

successively along the montage sequences, time and space are incorporated to construct historical associations. Spence and Navarro suggest that montage sequences in documentaries offer a quick historical overview, in contrast to the more conventional elements like talking heads or sound bridges. Montage sequence also attributes a fictional dimension to the nonfictional narrative through swift transitions, music, and accelerated rhythm and tempo (2011, 183-184).

Nevertheless, montage is not only used for a single purpose via the same techniques. Beyond the cuts that provide continuity and montage sequences that reinforce the historical narrative, experimental documentaries offer creative montage techniques that juxtapose archival shots with unfamiliar styles and present more subjectivity. Harun Farocki is one of the most prominent filmmakers since had produced many experimental documentaries using archival material according to avant-garde styles. In this scope, Nora M. Alter examines Harun Farocki's *Images of the World* (1989), where he employs a cinematic strategy of montage, compilation, and footage. In this documentary, Farocki uses various archival sources, including photographs, industrial films, and commercial video records, to create a visual and musical layer linking critical images to social practices. In Alter's examination, the film primarily suggests that photography's historical purpose is to record, preserve, and deceive. Thus, Farocki's film demonstrates the power of photography in capturing and preserving historical truth (2015, 439). Similarly, Hochberg analyzes Al Jafari's *Recollection* (2015) and focuses on the film's use of archival footage from Israeli films shot in Jaffa between the late 1960s and mid-1990s. The film, about the memory, evokes 8mm home movies but using digital technology. In this sense, it is a personal home movie produced by collecting images and references from popular culture. Through shooting and montage, Al Jafari reconstructs a city that no longer exists. Hochberg states, "Al Jafari uses avant-garde montage techniques to heal a wound" (2021, 65-66). Indeed, the filmmaker's perspective toward the archive determines the film's montage techniques. For instance, Jean-Gabriel Periot expresses that he aims to understand the historical context and conditions that allowed the creation of the archival image instead of focusing only on faces or emotions portrayed on the screen. His point is to see the reason for these facial expressions and acts in the footage. For this purpose, he reads many written materials to understand the political,

economic, and social conditions within a specific historical context. Periot says that when he looks at the archival image, he is already aware of its historical value and meaning.[1] Alternatively, Cem Kaya states that he does not regard the archive simply as material, and this perspective appears in the montage of his documentaries. For him, the archive is already indicating where it should be used within the film (Gülsezer and Bölükbaşı, 2022).

4.4 The Conversation of Archive and Memory

In *Chapter 2*, I have demonstrated that Williams defines the "new documentary" through its engagement with memory and testimony (1993). According to Spence and Navarro, testimony and memory are indispensable evidence in documentaries rather than historical data that professionals should analyze (2011, 44-47). In the case of testimony in the documentary, MacDougall equates the term "commitment" in the documentary to the commitment to testimony." It refers to finding hidden experiences, while the filmmaker's responsibility is to explore those experiences, making them visible and emphasizing their importance (1998). Nevertheless, Spence and Navarro suggest that testimony depends on conditions (2011, 44), while Spence and Avcı stress that "memory does not take place in a void." For them, when memory is subjected to a storytelling or filmmaking process, it is turned into history. Although memory is falsified during the film, the audience still tends to accept the memory as credible. (2013, 300). In line with Nora (1991), it can be said that the history presented in the documentary is incorporated with memory through specific components like music that evoke it. Since *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, which will be analyzed in the last chapter, is also defined as a music documentary, I will first touch on the incorporation of music with memory and examine the engagement of archive and memory in documentary filmmaking.

Music is classified as diegetic and non-diegetic in fiction or nonfiction films. Diegetic music originates within the story world, while non-diegetic music originates outside the story world (Bordwell, Thompson and Smith 2017, 285). Diegetic sounds are also further

---

[1] Periot expressed these words in a masterclass organized by Documentarist during the 17th Istanbul Documentary Days on 08.06.2024.

divided into internal and non-simultaneous sounds. Internal diegetic sound comes from within a character's mind, while the non-simultaneous sound is introduced earlier or later than the accompanying image (Bordwell, Thompson and Smith 2017, 291-297). However, in documentary filmmaking, the music sets the atmosphere and place and triggers memories, which differs from fiction films. Diegetic music in documentaries is usually associated with real-life occurrences and circumstances in the frame, while non-diegetic music mainly conveys atmosphere, narration, or knowledge. Non-diegetic music, labeled "background music" or "mood music," establishes a unique social setting or reinforces the arguments. (Spence and Navarro 2011, 254-255). In this case, non-diegetic music becomes a reflection of emotions, an expression of memory, or an invisible basis while conveying arguments in documentaries. Accordingly, MacDougall emphasizes music's capability to evoke memories and argues that music is a pretty expressive way to engage with the memory; therefore, music is an intentional preference in filmmaking (1998, 244).

The other factor that reshapes the memory is the archive. Nora argues that archives are constructed as a substitution for a memory; archives can reconstruct the memory and suggests that "the modern memory is archival" (1989). Considering that nonfiction films can combine memory and archives, Nora's definition sheds light on understanding the complex relationship between archives and memory in documentaries. Diana Allan suggests that the archives, which she calls "physical remnants," like pictures, news articles, or footage, are symbolic components of cultural and personal memory (2012, 157). Furthermore, MacDougall points out that filmmakers use archival images as if they are the memory itself since the recollections cannot be reached eternally. Therefore, in documentaries, archival shots are juxtaposed with interviews as if they are memories (MacDougall 1998, 231). For creative documentary filmmaking, the archival image is not the only evidence. Instead, it serves as a carrier of memory. Moreover, when the photographic image, whether still or moving, comes across with memory, it becomes a particular remnant of history (Bell 2011). In *Chapter 2*, I criticized Williams and Bruzzi for questioning how we should define the condition in which archives and memory are combined in the documentary. Spence and Navarro state that juxtaposing the archival footage with current shots allows us to consider the present in conjunction with the

context of historical events and to contrast and compare the past and present. They also suggest that documentaries can create a "conversation" between archive and memory, linking archival footage with currently recorded testimonies (2011, 42). In this context, documentaries can establish a conversation in two ways: first, a conversation among various types of archives constructed through montage, and second, a conversation between archive and memory created during the editing. Following this line, in the next chapter, I will examine *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, focusing on how the archive has been used to create "conversation."

5. *LOVE, DEUTSCHMARKS AND DEATH:* A CHALLENGE TO THE "REAL" HISTORICAL FILMS

This chapter presents a formal analysis of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death,* with a specific focus on the components of editing, montage, and sound, and it also offers a brief overview of the film's narrative structure. Rosenstone claims that historical filmmaking is an alternative to historiography, while he further argues that only experimental films can construct postmodern histories. As previously emphasized, visual history offers distinct methods of constructing historical narratives rather than simply functioning as an alternative to traditional historiography, and the creation of postmodern histories in cinema is not limited to avant-garde and experimental films. Instead, popular productions, including documentaries, can achieve this objective. In this regard, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* first is an arthouse but also a kitsch production since it comprises popular "mass production" (Baudrillard 1970, 12) elements, like arabesque, folk music, and R&B genres. The film is a contemporary archival documentary that employs conventional codes. It constructs a postmodern history of migration, destroying conventional concepts of linearity and reality. In this sense, the film allows us to question theoretical frameworks that restrict the practice of postmodern historical filmmaking. The film's postmodern structure primarily utilizes the archive through formal elements. It should be noted that employing archives does not inherently make documentaries into postmodern history. However, incorporating archives in *Love, Deutschemarks and Death* reveals a multilayered, subjective, and open-ended narrative in which the dimension of reality and temporal borders are blurred. The film is also a postmodern history due to its ironic and nonhierarchical narrative. In this context, this analysis aims to reveal how the film combines archival practice, postmodern historical narrative techniques, and documentary conventions to manipulate the perception of time and reality. Considering that archival and testimonial evidence artificially communicate in the film, I will also examine how

these archives smoothly and harmoniously interact with each other and memory through traditional documentary techniques.

According to Hutcheon (1988) and Rosenstone (1995), the postmodern historical thought aims to coalesce fiction and non-fiction, rejects the linearity, employs irony and memory to create unofficial narratives. Within this framework *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* exhibits a postmodern history by breaking the limits of time and space, playing the sensation of reality, challenging cliché discourses with an ironic language, building a counter-narrative based on audiovisual archives, reversing conventional documentary codes within creative techniques. Nevertheless, due to the lack of a written historical text, the film encounters a world of representations. The historical significance of labor migration has been underestimated in Turkish and German historiography. In Turkey, official history overlooks migration, while contemporary historiography does not touch on this field because its social, cultural, and economic consequences are more related to Germany. Although there are a few studies on migration like Germany in Transit (Göktürk and Kaes 2007), which is a comprehensive anthropological and ethnographical work, and Turks in Europe (Abadan 2011), the seminal book focuses on the migration experiences, the contemporary historiography is not interested in this field sufficiently. However, labor migration has been intensively represented through popular culture, particularly in arabesque music and Yeşilçam. Not only the viewer's imagery about migration but also the director's understanding of being a migrant must shape through music and cinema. Cem Kaya, a member of a second-generation migrant community, explains that he listened to Turkish songs and watched Yeşilçam films via VHS tapes that had been brought to Germany from Turkey when he was a child (Gülsezer and Bölükbaşı 2022). This experience led him to explore Yeşilçam, Turkish folk, and arabesque music and to integrate a hybrid culture derived from the circulation of audiovisual media, an indispensable part of the material culture. However, Kaya attempts to challenge *de facto* discourse in archives instead of maintaining it, and his integration of audiovisual representations of migration is subjective but distant.

In this context, this is a fact that the conception of labor migration is constructed through audiovisual representations including songs and movies, which built a dramatic story

reflecting migrants' suffering and introduce the discourse of "Germany, Bitter Home." That is to say that our knowledge and thoughts about migration have been created by audiovisual archives, which are discourses on labor migration, as emphasized by Foucault (1972). Methodologically, I do not view archives as simply remnants of the past or materials that are absent from an agency. According to Foucault, archives are discursive systems that shape our understanding of the past, functioning as a regularity mechanism for events and things (1972). Reexamining Foucault's line, I argue that if the archive is a law, it is inherently subject to interpretation, revision, stretching, or manipulation. Recognizing the discursivity and agency of the archive, I describe its use in the film as a "conversation" that comprises various archival and contemporary materials (Spence and Navarro, 2011). At this point, editing and sound are significant components of the film since allowed to the engagement of archival and testimony evidence within a conversation.

Following a brief synopsis, I will explain the basis *of Love, Deutschmarks and Death*'s narrative structure, even though my major point is the film's formal structure. This section will review the film's sources of authenticity, evidence, and authority. Considering the significance of archives and testimony as essential sources of evidence, I will classify the archival materials according to their ways of production and introduce the witnesses and experts. In the second part, I will offer an overview of the film's formal structure, particularly examining editing, montage, and sound. According to Spence and Navarro (2011), documentaries employ editing techniques to ensure continuity and development or to create contrast and contradiction. *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* utilizes editing, montage, and sound to achieve different purposes, depending on the message and argument. Within this framework, I will analyze how the formal component creates an example of postmodern history engaging with archives. In *Where is History*, I will reveal the film's arrangement and historical approach to the audience. In *Talking Archives*, I will demonstrate how the film breaks the temporal and spatial borders and plays with senses of reality through binaries like linear-nonlinear and fictional-nonfictional resulting from the conversation of archives as addressed by Spence and Navarro (2011) and how a nonlinear development is constructed within a periodic structure. In *Ambivalence of the Past*, I will emphasize the multiple dimensions and subjectivity of historical truth

stemming from the complex relationship of archive and memory. In brief, I aim to establish a broad framework that combines the notions of archive, history, and memory in the context of contemporary documentary, stressing the arguments of Foucault, Derrida, and Nora.

5.1 Synopsis

Love, Deutschmarks and Death exhibits the unknown story of labor migration from Turkey to Germany in 1961, focusing on the music culture developed by migrants. The film is divided into three episodes corresponding to different generations' experiences. The first episode, *Love*, is about the beginning of the migration. It reveals the acceptance, arrival, adaptation process, and working conditions of first-generation migrants. The focal point of this episode is how the money has been earned. The second episode, *Deutschmarks*, is about the music and entertainment culture that originated among the second generation due to the prosperity that the first generation provided. This episode primarily unveiled how the money earned was spent. The third episode, *Death*, reflects how rising xenophobia in Germany led to the consolidation of the third generation around rap music. The point of this episode is to show how struggle and challenge are maintained.

The film shows that different phases and dimensions of the migration paved the way for different musical genres created by migrants. In other words, it is conveyed that three generations responded to the circumstances by performing music. Accordingly, as a response to the conditions, while the first generation expressed itself with protest music, the second generation adapted to Turkish disco music. Yet, the third generation created Turkish rap music in Germany, and it became visible that the antecedents had never been before. *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* uses lots of archives and testimonies to construct its narrative, incorporating both personal and institutional records and intimate interviews

with members of the migrant community. Furthermore, the film reverses the claim of "Germany, a bitter country," using humorous language.

5.2 Narrative Structure

Spence and Navarro stress that documentaries offer authentic representations of sociohistorical reality and that significant knowledge is shared through voiceovers or interviews (2011, 15-18). *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*'s authenticity primarily stem from the testimonies of the migrant community in Germany rather than a "Voice of God" commentary representing the institutional authority (Nichols 2017). Nevertheless, the testimonies are from individuals who have directly experienced migration. Even if it is employed rarely, the film's authenticity is further reinforced by reenactment or recreation of past experiences by the migrants. While recreations are sometimes seen as introducing fictional elements into documentaries, they can also enhance a film's legitimacy by filling gaps where evidence is absent or unclear (Spence and Navarro 2011, 26).

In *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, the historical narrative is built on two primary evidential sources: archives and testimonies. The archival material is divided into institutional archives, like documentaries, newsreels, music albums, feature films, newspaper reports, and personal archives, including home videos and photographs. The film avoids a hierarchy between these materials, combining macro and micro-historical elements by juxtaposing different types of archival evidence in sequences. Nevertheless, the postmodern narrative of the film does not only aim to destroy the historical hierarchies but also to stretch, blur, or break the limits of reality and temporal levels through the juxtaposition of fiction and non-fiction archival shots produced in different times and spaces. Spence and Navarro call the linking of evidence through editing and montage "conversation" (2011, 42). In this direction, fictional and non-fictional archival materials involve conversation to blur the lines of reality, while non-fictional archives are juxtaposed nonlinearly to play temporality. For instance, fictional material from Yeşilçam movies is followed by non-fictional archives, and interview footage of the German chancellor is followed by a concert record of Cem Karaca as if they are in the same space. These artificial conversations also enhance the continuity, providing smooth transitions

to the next shots or sequences. The film juxtaposes different types of archival footage and archival and contemporary shots, including testimonies and interviews. However, unlike conventional methods, archival footage is not employed to illustrate verbal testimonies or indicate arguments (Bruzzi 2003). Instead, the conversations of archives and testimonies create a smoothly continued narrative. This creative approach changes the conventional functions of testimonial and archival materials in historical documentaries. Considering the transformed role of testimonies and archival material in the film, archives sometimes lead the witnesses to focus on specific aspects of the past. For instance, Hatay Engin, a Turkish-German singer called the Sun of Art in Berlin, talked about himself after watching archival images that presented his performance when he was young. This interaction between archive and memory combines Foucault's description of the archive, which rules the ways of thinking about the past (1972), and Nora's concept of archival memory (1989).

Love, Deutschmarks and Death, also utilizes archives and testimonies as sources of authority. How their ability to work with archives provides legitimacy to historians, using archives within a historical context and creating ways to process, reinterpret, and discuss enhance the filmmaker's authority. Like many documentaries, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* also gives place to experts' commentaries. However, unlike the expository mode of documentary that prioritizes influential figures, this film utilizes experiences and interpretations of ordinary people from musical communities, such as singers, virtuosos, music producers, and collectors, who are funny and iconic characters. Considering that there are documentaries that reverse hierarchies (Spence and Navarro 2011, 64), the film corresponds to such a group since it takes account only testimonies and commentaries of ordinary people who are the essential agents of the migration instead of figures who approach the story from distant, point such as scholars or politicians. In this sense, the film eschews top-to-down narratives and power relations, presenting personal histories through these testimonies. Due to such narrative strategy, micro-histories and multi-dimensional truth are constructed, avoiding definitive judgments about migration. This multilayered representation of the migration experience is the backbone of the film's postmodern structure. Nevertheless, the filmmaker's credibility is another source of authority in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*. Although Cem Kaya, who is the director,

does not intervene in the film directly, it is known that the represented world in the film is also a part of his personal history since he is a second-generation migrant, and he has intimate relationships with witnesses. This relationship provides film reflexivity even though the director does not interact with experts directly. Moreover, some characters explicitly have a dialogue with Cem Kaya calling his name during the shooting. In addition to the director's credibility and reflexivity, his expertise in using archives, as it is seen in his previous works *Arabeks* (2010) and *Motör* (2014) and the positive reception of these films, further reinforces the authority of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death.*

As I described in *Chapter 2*, the voice of god or voice-over commentary is a strong convention in expository documentaries utilized to indicate arguments or messages, reflecting the authority of the filmmaker (Nichols, 1991). This convention is similar to conventional historiography that offers categorical suggestions emphasizing objectivity based on scientific data. In contrast to conventional historiography, postmodern historical thought claims that history cannot be objective. Instead, it is a narrative based on a subjective interpretation of the past (White 1973). In this sense, contemporary documentary filmmaking practices and postmodern thought avoid utilizing the voice of authority that offers an objective interpretation of the past with an authoritative tone. It should be noted that despite *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* does not use the audial voice of god; it employs this convention through titles and intertitles, which are defined as the written form of the "voice of authority" by Nichols.   (Nichols 2017). Thus, the film speaks with the audience through titles and intertitles instead of a charismatic and authoritative voice. Nevertheless, the written knowledge is presented in colored fonts using unofficial rhetoric that expresses subjective interpretations like "Germany accidentally became a country of migration" and allusions to the Holocaust. In this sense, the film constructs a nonlinear development within chronological order and creates contrast and contradiction within continuity; it implements the written voice as a tool for interaction with the audience rather than indications and authority over the narrative. Thus, it turns the convention that reinforces authority into the means that enhances the film's reflexivity. In this context, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* breaks the convention by transforming it, so I define the film as a contemporary documentary that uses conventional forms and techniques.

5.3 Formal Structure

In *Love, Deutschemarks and Death,* the aspect ratio is the primary indicator differentiating contemporary and archival shots. Archival footage is exhibited in a 4:3 aspect ratio, while contemporary shots are displayed in 16:9 due to differences between analog and digital shooting formats. Unlike the archival footage, photograph archives, whether digital or 35mm, are also displayed in 16:9 and are used as indexical images to give the first sights about episodes and sequences. While photographs are presented in company with the camera shutter sound effect, the superimposition of image and sound layers that refer to different times creates a perception that the photos are being taken at that moment. Despite enhancing the film's nonlinear development, this technique does not simply link the past and present. As a consequence of overlapping the archival images and sound effects, the film allows viewers to question the authenticity of its ways of representation. The realization of differences between what we see and hear leads us to question the ambivalent nature of time and reality, such as past and present, fiction and non-fiction, and natural and artificial. In addition to constructing binaries through aspect ratio, the film plays with senses of reality using other formal components like framing. For instance, fictional materials, such as shots from Yeşilçam movies, are added customized frame effects, while non-fiction shots are displayed with standard frames. Nevertheless, a few exceptions exist in which non-fiction archival shots are framed similarly to fiction material to attribute the story to an epic dimension and reinforce the film's ambivalent narrative. For instance, this technique is used in the sequence of the Ford Worker's Strike in 1973 to present resisted workers as heroic figures to create a fabulous past, as it is seen in the sequence of money demonstrating entertainment culture. When the successively juxtaposed archival footage comes from various sources, the film changes the scales of shots to distinguish them without another aesthetic marker like voice, image quality, exposure, or color palette.

Spence and Navarro state that many documentaries utilize linear development and that historical films usually prefer constructing the story according to a chronological development line (2011, 172). As I described in the synopsis, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* is divided into three episodes corresponding to different migration phases.

However, this development line does not imply that the materials are juxtaposed chronologically. Instead, the periodic structure of the film functions as an illusion that plays with our temporal senses and expectations. Above all, the film's story world does not have a clear beginning and ending. Namely, the opening and ending scenes are directly related, while each episode's first and last scenes are similarly linked through smooth transitions. In the opening sequence, İsmet Topçu states that he imagines playing the baglama while viewing Earth from the moon. His scene is followed by a high-angle shot that displays an Earth model, evoking a point of view like watching the Earth from space. In the film's last scene, Topçu's dream is turned into reality through VR technology, providing him with a 3D experience like he is on the moon. In addition, transitions between episodes are provided smoothly, which melts the temporal borders between shots. For instance, the first episode begins and ends with scenes of Ömer from Germany, while the second episode, Deutschmarks, also continues with Ömer's scene that has been cut in the previous episode. The transition from the second to the third episode is provided through an L cut that carries the argument and message instead of a continued shot. Thus, the film offers a historical narrative without a beginning or end, dissolving the chronological order within a cyclical development that enhances its postmodern presence. In this sense, I categorize *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* as a contemporary documentary that utilizes conventional codes since it reveals a story periodic but nonlinear.

Like many documentaries, continuity editing is a significant part of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*'s formal structure, and the prominent component of this continuity is sound bridges that juxtapose shots and sequences smoothly, making the cuts invisible. The film uses L and J cuts in transitions between archival and contemporary shots. Although this technique is indeed a documentary convention, it breaks conventions in this film. Namely, the superimposed sound and images from different times and spaces build a strong connection between testimonies and archival images, allowing a conversation between memory and archive rather than ensuring the illustration voices. The film also creates continuity by juxtaposing repeated acts in archival shots according to graphic similarities. In other words, the shots in which images, acts, and dialogues repeat each other are cut successively. For instance, after similar shots from Yeşilçam films presenting characters

moving to Germany are cut consecutively, they are followed by non-fiction shots repeating similar actions. This creative technique that differentiates the film from conventional documentaries is the director's hallmark, as seen in his previous works, *Arabeks* and *Motör*. Cutaways or inserts, another conventional method in documentary editing, also contribute to the film's continuity, even if they are rarely used. The most significant moment cutaway has been employed is in the scene Ömer, which I will examine below profoundly.

On the one hand, sound bridges and cuts provide smooth transitions; on the other hand, they emphasize contrast and contradiction, which is the film's other editing strategy, depending on the purpose of the message and argument. Indeed, each episode of the film comprises counterarguments inside, and this contrast is achieved by juxtaposing various archival shots that represent different historical discourses. Although the contrast and contradiction are significant parts of the film, continuity is maintained, even in this case, through invisible cuts. For instance, toward the end of the Ford Strike sequence, an interview footage of the German chancellor in which he was talking about migrants is displayed. Then, it is followed by footage of Cem Karaca's concert, where he criticized Germans through the song's lyrics. These shots explicitly reveal argument and counterargument but seek continuity between shots and sequences introducing the sequence of Cem Karaca. Similarly, the second episode contrasts the fantasies and traumas of the past, disclosing different aspects of the migration experiences of the second generation.

Love, Deutschmarks and Death frequently utilizes montage sequences to provide continuity, contrast, and contradiction. Spence and Navarro state that documentaries use montage sequences to offer a quicker historical overview of the event than conventional techniques like talking heads or sound bridges (Spence and Navarro 2011, 184). It should be noted that the film explicitly employs those conventional techniques in montage sequences. In this sense, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* engages more and less conventional codes in the same segment to melt the convention within contemporary understanding. The montage sequences provide a seamless transition to the following sequence, implying knowledge about the next theme through music that accelerates the

tempo and rhythm. Music used in montage sequences connects two successive themes, whether related or unrelated, through J cuts that carry the sound of the following sequence. While montage sequences in the film ensure smooth transitions, they are also composed of the principle of continuity provided inside the sequence through repeated cuts accordingly action and graphic similarities, as seen in the example of sequences composed of shots from Yeşilçam films and engagement of various archival and contemporary shots in a conversation like in the sequence of money, in the second episode. Nevertheless, montage sequences also sometimes serve for contrast and contradiction. For instance, in the sequence presenting the workers' strike as a glorious resistance, institutional and personal archives are juxtaposed to construct contrast and contradiction among historical discourses. Sound is a significant component in montage sequences in company with archival material, whether for continuity or contrast. Namely, continuity, contrast, and contradiction are provided by sound bridges, while the rhythm and tempo in montage sequences are organized according to music. In this context, sound is definitely another significant component of *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*.

The primary types of sound in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, are speech, music, and sound effects. Unlike the documentaries in expository mode that use the "Voice of God" commentary, the speech only comes from interviews and archival materials. However, many documentary archives in the film employ the voice of Gog commentary, allowing us to compare conventional and contemporary documentary forms. When contemporary speech superimposes with archival footage via sound bridges, testimonies, and experts engage with the archival images, their speech turns to voiceover commentary.

Indeed, music is the chief element in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*, and it is the backbone of the film's story world. The film utilizes diegetic music from the story world and non-diegetic music from outside the story world (Bordwell, Thompson and Smith 2017, 285). Nevertheless, the divergence between the two types of sound is quite blurred. Namely, whether the music is diegetic or non-diegetic is only realized at the end of the sequence due to using the music frequently as the offscreen sound formally attributes an ambiguity to the sequence since we cannot ensure that sound is diegetic or non-diegetic at first sight. For example, in a scene that displays Ömer in Germany, we hear the song

Gurbet Treni and assume it is playing on the stereo. However, we understand that a different song plays through a cutaway showing the stereo and revealing that *Gurbet Treni* is heard from offscreen space. Diegetic music in the film can also be divided into internal diegetic sound originating in the characters' minds and non-simultaneous sounds heard earlier or later than the image (Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith 2017, 291-297). In this sense, *Gurbet Treni* can also be considered an internal diegetic sound due to its association with personal and cultural memory.

The montage sequences in the film intensively utilize non-simultaneous sound. At the beginning of the sequence, the music is added to the sound layer, but without any indication implying it is diegetic. When the montage sequence ends with an archival shot in which the singer performs the song, we realize that the music is a non-simultaneous sound involved in the whole sequence via J cuts. Furthermore, by blurring lines between diegetic and non-diegetic sounds, the film plays with our expectations toward the source of sounds and leads us to question what we see and hear throughout the story. The film's nonlinear development is further enhanced by changing tempo and rhythm according to the music, and the fluctuating tempo and rhythm create an up-and-down narrative. *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* also implements camera shutter sound effects in company with the photographs displayed. Despite the photos being captured in the past, the sound effect creates a perception that they are being taken at that moment. Moreover, the superimposition of multiple sound layers in the sequences that refer to different times and places further breaks the temporal and spatial limits of the film's development line.

5.4 Where is History

The film begins with the poem *Love, Deutschmarks, and Death* by Aras Ören, a Turkish writer who has lived in Germany. As I mentioned above, the film consists of three episodes, *Love*, *Deutschmarks* and *Death*, each representing a specific period of migration. The director expresses that the names of the episodes stem from the poem since the historical context of the films directly corresponds to the poem's lines. (Gülsezer and Bölükbaşı 2022). Displaying a material independent of time and space in the opening shot

points out the film's temporal development while using colorful fonts enhances the film's kitschy style *(Figure 5.4.1)*.
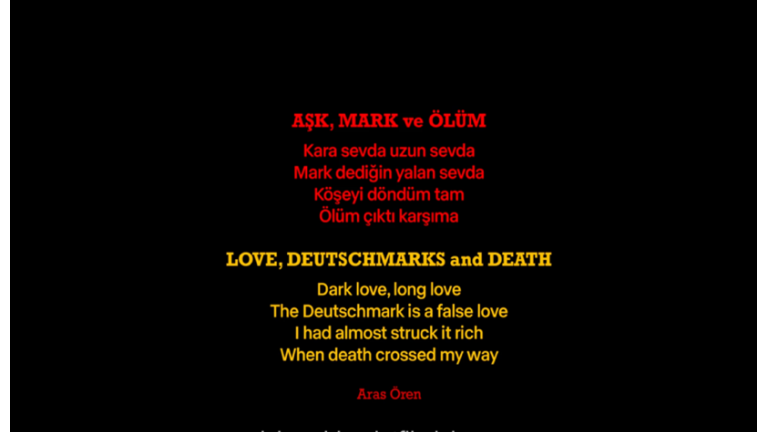

Figure 5.4.1

This shot is followed by an interview with İsmet Topçu, a second-generation baglama virtuoso. Topçu dresses in colorful suits, exhibits interesting behaviors and expressions and is presented as an iconic figure. He is being shot in a room full of archival materials, including photographs, music albums, and posters. Inside the frame, Topçu speaks while looking at another point from the camera, unveiling an interaction with a second camera or another person in offscreen space. After a short musical recital, Topçu says he imagines playing baglama on the moon while viewing the Earth. The scene is followed by a cutaway that displays a globe model through the sound bridge that turns the music to non-simultaneous diegetic sound while the high-angle shot generates a composition like viewing Earth from the moon corresponding to Topçu's words *(Figure 5.4.2)*. Due to the balanced exposure setting, musical instruments and albums can be seen in the mise-en-scène, and these remarks provide an insight into the space, even though the scene does not explicitly share details of the setting. In addition to illustrating Topçu's voice, this shot refers to the film's ending scene, where he will be shot while playing the baglama and viewing Earth from the moon through VR technology.

Figure 5.4.2

The opening credits, composed of wedding footage in company with dance music and intense flicker effects, come to the screen (Figure 5.4.3). Unlike the expectations about the film that promises a history of migration, we view a sequence composed of traditional wedding shots, which offers an irrelevant framework. In addition, since knowledge about the time and space is not shared, the audience is unaware of when and where these footage were shot. Although the only distinctive indicator is the wedding hall, it does not explain why we see these images. The irrelevance of the sequence raises significant questions: how can a bizarre musician, wedding ceremonies, and ecstatically dancing people be recognized as a part of the history of labor migration? How can such a kitsch style engage with an arthouse documentary? Broadly speaking, where is history?
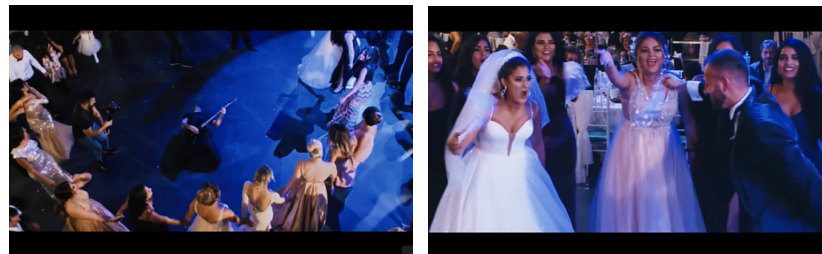

Figure 5.4.3

The examined part of the film thus far discloses some essential points to define *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*. Firstly, a poem is independent of time and is introduced at the very beginning. Secondly, the opening scene, in which İsmet Topçu is displayed and expresses his dream, points out the film's last scene. Thirdly, the opening credits, out of the historical context, refer to the film's second episode, which presents similar themes, images, and sounds. However, this knowledge is not shared with the audience. In this framework, the opening sequence and credits are all arranged with the audience (Nichols,

2017), explaining that this is neither an experimental film nor a conventional historical interpretation of migration that only focuses on the migrants' suffering and challenges. By referencing the next episodes and the film's end at the beginning, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* includes a nonlinear development line to the arrangement and declares that the history of migration is free from time and space. At this point, the question repeats where the history should be searched in this film if it is out of the temporal and spatial limitations. As I described deeply in *Chapter 3,* Pierre Nora argues that memory and history are equated in contemporary society. Therefore, memory is synonymous with personal history. Nevertheless, modern memory has been created by archives according to his framework (1989). Derrida broadens this association by equating the working principles of archive and memory. (1995). In this context, the history in the film should be a quest in the archive and its engagement with memory.

The film's first scene reveals the association between archive and memory. Ömer from Germany, a music collector, appears in a bedroom filled with music albums. In this scene, while Ömer introduces his collection exhibiting many tapes, Gülcan Opel's *Gurbet Treni*, a famous song about migration, begins playing. The camera expressively shoots the room, demonstrating the collection while Ömer acts. Although music is perceived as diegetic since it is being played in the stereo, when a cutaway reveals that different tapes are playing, we realize that the music is indeed non-diegetic (Figure 5.4.4). Despite the heard music being non-diegetic, it is not simply "mood music" that enhances the impressiveness of the ambiance in the documentary (Spence and Navarro 2011). Throughout the film, non-diegetic music is a significant part of archival material that provides an understanding of migration. By using the concept of "sites of memory," Nora suggests that the archives are also produced to preserve the memory, and he shares the common ground with Derrida, viewing archives as an output of obsession towards preserving the past (1989). In this direction, audiovisual archives carry traces of the material culture and function as memory's expression. Following Foucault's lines (1972), audiovisual archives are unique discursive systems that shape knowledge and thought about the historical world if there is no written document. In this context, the song, thereby the archive, engages with memory in this scene, one way or another. Due to this engagement, the music is not out

of the universe of narrative, even if it is in offscreen space, and it is a creative way to transform the non-diegetic music into internal diegetic music.

Figure 5.4.4

5.5 Talking Archives

While analyzing the engagement of different types of archives in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death,* I employ the Foucauldian perspective and view the archives as "historical a priori," which refers to discursive systems that provide knowledge about a historical period and shape our statements and ways of thinking and about the past. Nevertheless, I claim that if the archive is the law of statement and thinking about history, it is inherently subjected to interpretation, regulation, and manipulation. (Foucault 1971). In this film, archives are, above all, the primary evidential source. Nevertheless, instead of simply functioning as an illustration of verbal argument as seen in conventional documentaries (Bruzzi 2003), various types of archives engage each other through a creative montage in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*. Namely, the archival evidence establishes a conversation through montage (Spence & Navarro 2011), so I label this section "talking archives," implying the talking heads, a conventional technique in documentary filmmaking. In this section, I will focus on the sequences in which archives are involved in conversations by

repeating, responding, or rejecting each other. I will also examine how archives interacted for the various purposes of editing and montage.

5.5.1 Factual but fictional

The film's first montage sequence, composed of archival footage, introduces the beginning of labor migration. The sequence opens with a shot from non-fictional footage that presents people waiting in front of the labor exchange office to be accepted as guest workers. This sequence provides historical context and temporal information through textual indication, described as Nichols's written voice of authority (2017). The next shot is from a Yeşilçam film, portraying fictional characters expressing their aims to go to Germany. This is followed by another shot from the fictional *film Horasan'ın Üç Atlısı* (Başaran and Baytan 1965), starring Cüneyt Arkın. Arkın's character is seen riding his horse at full gallop in the shot. Here, the historical context is also conveyed through superimposed text on the image. Indeed, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* includes lots of material from Yeşilçam movies about migration to Germany. However, *Horasan'ın Üç Atlısı*, a film about Ebu Müslim Horasani, is entirely out of context. Firstly, while the recruitment treatment corresponds to the 1960s, the film's story world is in the 7th Century. Secondly, the guest workers were ordinary people, while the film's protagonist is a heroic figure from Turk, Arab, Persian, and Kurdish mythologies. Considering that I have pointed out the importance of questioning what we see and hear throughout the film, there is no direct or indirect connection neither between Islamic heroes and migrant workers nor between a horse and a train. Indeed, juxtaposing all these irrelevant materials is explicitly ironic. Namely, in the second shot, one of the characters says: "I am going to take off to Germany," and the third shot responds to his words by displaying the horse as if saying, "Is it like this?" *(Figure 5.5.1.1).* The irony is also maintained in the following archival footage that presents workers leaving in taxis and a driver shouting, "Taxi to Germany! Will set off immediately!" This artificial conversation emphasizes that guest workers took modern vehicles instead of horses to Germany with ironic language. This sequence is critical to understanding the film's postmodern narrative within this framework. First, it employs irony, a hallmark of postmodern thought. Second, by juxtaposing fictional and non-fictional materials, the film engages different dimensions

of reality and constructs a binary of fiction and non-fiction; thereby, this montage technique allows us to define historical reality in the film as "factual but fictional."

Figure 5.5.1.1

The irony and playing with a sense of reality *in Love, Deutschmarks and Death* functions for different purposes. One primary purpose is to provide continuity between shots and the different dimensions of reality. For instance, the sequence about concerts in Germany begins with an interview in which Turkish migrants express their favorite music genres and singers. When they stated that they liked listening to Ferdi Tayfur, it was cut to fictional material from *Yadeller* (Gürsu 1978), a Yeşilçam movie starring Tayfur. This film is about a famous singer who is preparing to go on a tour in Germany. In the given shot, a conversation between Hulusi (Hulusi Kentmen) and Ferdi (Ferdi Tayfur) is presented:

Hulusi: *Will touring in Germany take a long time?*

Ferdi: *Yes, a very long time*

This shot is smoothly linked to the footage of Ferdi Tayfur's concert in Germany via an L cut; thus, the line between fiction and non-fiction is blurred. This segment shows that the documentary's postmodern narrative is not only based on its humorous aspect. In the story world of *Yadeller*, factual and fictional levels are coalesced through characters created by adapting from the nonfictional universe, and the dissolved fictional and nonfictional surfaces not only reinforce the ambiguity between different dimensions of reality in the film but also emphasize that the nonfictional evidence itself can stem from fictional level. At this point, the attached nature of different levels of reality is revealed by juxtaposing two types of archival material.

Figure 5.5.1.2

This binary can be observed in the first episode through the montage sequence that displays the journey from Turkey to Germany, juxtaposing various fictional and non-fictional archival footage. Along the sequence, repeated shots from Yeşilçam movies, including *Dertler Benim Olsun* (Önal 1974), *Dönüş* (Şoray 1972), *Uzakta Kal Sevgilim* (Erakalın 1965), and *Hayatımın En Güzel Yılları* (Duru 1972) are juxtaposed according to action and graphic similarities. The fictional material is followed by non-fictional footage that shows real people repeating the similar actions of fictional characters (Figure 5.5.1.3). Here, the film presents together fictional and non-fictional representations of reality, engaging them within the same segment, and this montage technique reminds us of postmodern thought, which views the borders between fact and fiction as ambiguous. The audience can compare different aspects and representations of reality in this montage sequence composed of various fictional and non-fictional materials.

Figure 5.5.1.3

Cem Kaya says that he likes to cut images that repeat the action and have graphic similarities and to use irony in order to provide a smooth transition and fluent narration (Gülsezer & Bölükbaşı 2022). This technique, seen in his previous documentaries, *Arabek*s (2008) and *Motör* (2014), is frequently employed in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* during the montage sequences. In this direction, repetition and irony appear in another montage sequence (Figure 5.5.1.4), composed of broadcast archives. In this

footage, anchors repeat words those words: "to close today's program," "… with modern Turkish song," "…with a Turkish chanson," and "…a love song…." However, the last shot disappoints the audience by implementing Turkish folk music. Indeed, this is the film's response to Germans who regarded Turkish songs as primitive and unqualified in a musical manner, playing their expectations toward what they wanted to hear with an ironic tone.

Figure 5.5.1.4

Although the conversation of archives through repetition is the director's hallmark, the purpose of using this montage technique is not always ironically criticizing social and cultural biases to provide continuity. Indeed, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* has a confrontational approach toward the past, and this attitude appears in editing and montage, creating contrast and contradiction between shots and sequences. In other words, the repeated footage also functions for encountering the past. At the beginning of the third episode, newsreel archives that display neo-Nazi attacks against Turkish migrants in 1984, 1985, 1988, 1991, 1992, and 1993 are repeatedly cut, seeking action and graphic similarities (Figure 5.5.1.5). In this segment, all material comes from ARD's broadcast archive, the chief institution in German media. The repeated footage ends with the Solingen Attack in 1993, in which children of a Turkish migrant family were murdered. The film's message is open against this attack. The juxtaposition of the newsreel footage repeatedly means that the Solingen Massacre did not occur abruptly. Instead, the catastrophe was coming step by step over the years, similar to the historical context in which the Holocaust was experienced. In this sense, Therefore, on the one hand, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* encounters with German institutions, focusing on mainstream media through images and discourses that they produced themselves, on the other hand, points out to a temporal and spatial cycle in which similar conditions that led to Holocaust repeated.

Figure 5.5.1.5

5.5.2 Periodic but nonlinear

The fact that the previous example is not the first time in which *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* encountered the past addressing the Holocaust. Instead, there is an offensive attitude toward the past throughout the film, and this is achieved by creating a counter-narrative through visual representations produced by hegemony. This confrontation appears in the film's different segments in different ways. In the first episode, the depiction of the recruitment process of workers implicitly reminds us of the Holocaust images. This sequence includes footage from two documentaries that are differentiated in voiceover, frame size, and color. Although they come from different sources, archival evidence shares a single discourse. In the first footage, a female voiceover describes a health examination procedure for women, speaking German: "They take your blood and your weight and measure you. To see whether everything is working, all the bones, all of them!" This documentary utilizes reenacts in which the female character represents a candidate, and the voiceover creates a perception that she speaks in German. The voiceover overlaps with shots in which a woman is numbered like livestock, giving blood frightenedly and attempting to follow instructions confusedly. Although the woman and nurse share an equal proportion on the screen, their position in the frame emphasizes the power relation between workers and authority figures. The last shot, in which women do squat exercises according to the officer's instructions, is linked to the following footage

60

from the other documentary via a sound bridge, seeking graphic similarities. In this colored footage, a male voiceover describes the examination of workers speaking in English: "This is now the second stage of the German doctors' evaluation of these bodies they are hiring. They have survived the X-rays. The Germans are not looking for Olympic athletes. However, they are seeking durable factory fodder." Here, men are being subjected to physical examinations, including a squat exercise like women, and to genital control, likely to understand whether they have venereal diseases (Figure 5.5.2.1).

Figure 5.5.2.1

Although the two nonfictional materials differ formalistically, they use similar rhetoric and convey similar messages since both are institutional archives that reflect a hegemonic discourse and perspective that define migrants only as working bodies, how the German institutions and society viewed Jews once. In this sense, the film reveals the hegemonic approach toward migrants by utilizing images that remind the Holocaust. Considering that these documentaries were produced only after a few decades the Holocaust, in which silence was maintained, *Love, Deutschemarks and Death* implies that what continued was not only the silence but also the attitudes that paved the way for the Holocaust, one of the most significant traumas in the history of humanity. In other words, by associating the images from the examination of migrant workers with Holocaust representations, the film critiques the continuity of oppressive attitudes and practices of the Holocaust era; by using

graphic similarities that recall images of concentration camps, the film expresses a quite confrontational and an accusatory message: "You have committed this crime."

Love, Deutschmarks and Death challenges Nazism in different segments of the film cyclically instead of presenting the argument in chronological order. In the sequence that demonstrates the Solingen Massacre in 1993, several footage from newsreel archives reveal the event's aftermath. In contrast to previous attacks recorded and presented by ARD, this event was announced by various broadcast institutions, shooting the scene from different angles (Figure 5.5.2.2). However, discourses of German media are far from being critical, while the images are examples of a "pornographic reality" (Godmillow 2022) exhibiting only dramatic images of burned homes, bodies, and suffering people instead of criticizing or addressing the xenophobia and neo-Nazism that led to this pogrom. Indeed, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* displays these images to challenge the hegemony in two ways. Firstly, it unveils the media's unconcerned attitude while attacks of neo-Nazis were increasing, asking where they had been until the Solingen. Secondly, it encounters the German mainstream media using these pornographic representations and manipulating discourses that work around the essential problem. In both cases, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* attempts a confrontation against German institutions using their material and creating a counter-discourse based on visual representation.

Figure 5.5.2.2

Indeed, *Love, Deutschmark and Death* creates contrast and contradiction, not only disclosing institutional ignorance but also directly responding to it. This means that the arguments and discourses in institutional archives are responded to or challenged by personal archives; thereby, the film constructs a narrative where macro and micro-level discourses overlap. The newsreel footage that shows images of the massacre is cut to other archival footage that presents the demonstrations of an angry crowd that protested

the massacre by shouting "murderers." The sound in this footage is carried into the next archival shot of a Karakan concert via an L cut, and from now a montage sequence begins that connects the previous and next sequences, emphasizing the cause-and-effect relationship between xenophobia and the rise of rap music. Along the montage sequence, footage from the rap music concerts and demonstrations are juxtaposed according to graphic similarities (Figure 5.5.2.3). In the sound layer, diegetic sounds from the demonstrations superimpose with the non-diegetic music, *Defol Dazlak*, by Karakan, and the film's tempo and rhythm accelerate according to the music. This song also reflects a common discourse among migrants against neo-Nazis. By juxtaposing footage from demonstrations and concerts, the film indicates alternative ways of resistance against xenophobia. Namely, in *Defol Dazlak*, Karakan implicitly challenges neo-Nazis with these words: "Get out, skinhead, get out of my sight!" and "You skinhead, we are not like the Jews. We are Turks! Either we are free, or we die!" The fact is that Karakan's song is not only a reaction to the Solingen attack. Instead, it responds to a reinforced discourse that equates with Turks and Jews. At the end of the second episode, archival footage shows a migrant girl reading a note from a neo-Nazi, and she articulates this statement: "What is the difference between Jews and Turks? The Jews had their share already." Considering the discourses of both the neo-Nazis and Karakan as conversation constructed through the film's nonlinear montage, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* not only addresses historical cyclicity but also emphasizes that these cycles do not always generate the same results. Instead, the ways of responding to events determine how they will transform. In this sense, the film also offers an alternative historical narrative that the dynamics of the Holocaust are reversed. Consequently, such a conversation among archives that they challenge each other leads us to consider the debate of archives created in montage.
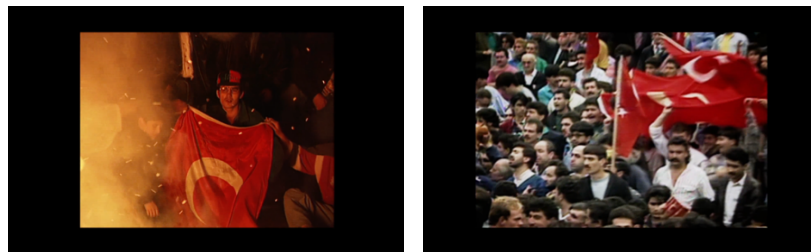

Figure 5.5.2.3

5.5.3 Debate of Archives

The sequence of the workers' strikes in 1973 begins with a skit from *Die Rudi Carrell Show*, a TV show produced and presented by Rudi Carrel, a famous Dutch entertainer between 1965 and 1973 in Germany. In this skit, Carrell acts as an elegant German man handcuffed to a ladder and asks guest workers constructing a building to release him. The conversation that proceeds in the form of a duet, impolicy includes humiliating elements offering stereotypes according to workers' national and religious identities:

Carrel: *Hello, hey you! Can you release me?*

Worker: *I do not understand. I am a guest worker!*

Carrel: *It takes a Greek, all healthy and neat, to empty the waste bins and sweep off the street. And it takes a Turk from Constantinople, or else we would have no Volkswagen and no Opel.*

Workers: *We need guest workers so we can progress, so busy, hard-working, and good. Oh yes, we need guest workers so we can progress -or the economy would soon be kaput.*

Carrel: *It takes the playboys from Milan and Rome to fix up the water and gas in your home. The waitress in Germany can only speak Spanish. The postman says hello in Muhammedan. Workers: We need guest workers so we can progress so busy, hard-working, and good.*

Figure 5.5.3.1

This fictional dialogue between Rudi Carrell and the workers has some critical points that address labor migration in Germany. In the skit, Carrell represents a top-class German citizen and indicates different worker profiles, and their conversation implies Germany's economic dependency on guest workers. The skit that represents the cultural barriers through a satiric comedy indeed criticizes German society's attitudes toward guest workers. Nevertheless, it should be noted that we do not know whether this representation directly refers to worker strikes. The strike began in 1973s August, and the show ended that year. What associates this representation with strikes is the engagement of discourse and the historical context instead of the chronology. In this sense, the archival material in the film does not always point to specific historical events. Rather, the archival evidence emphasizes a comprehensive historical context in which facts were shaped and discourses were produced. Within this framework, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* uses archival evidence to provide a reference point about a historical period by emphasizing how discourses and representations are constructed, in line with the Foucauldian perspective. The sound from the skit is smoothly carried into the next archival shots that present women workers' strikes through an L cut. In this footage, women shout "One more Mark" slogans, similar to the conversation in the skit (Figure 5.5.3.1). Additionally, in this segment, the written voiceover conveys the knowledge about historical context, and indexical images that display the women workers are cut successively in the company with a shutter click and non-simultaneous diegetic sound that comes from strikes.

This segment enhances continuity within the sequence, providing a smooth transition to the themes of the Ford Worker's Strike. From now on, the sequence utilizes archival footage representing the Ford workers' demands and slogans during the strikes. Among these archival shots are interviews of Baha Targün, the strike leader, and other workers. In these interviews, workers articulate their problems and demands in fluent German. Although these archival footage are nonfictional materials, they are displayed with frame effects that invoke fictional interpretations or fantasies about the past. Using such cinematic language, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* portrays the strikes as a fabulous resistance movement of workers, challenging the "constructed truths" by German institutions. In the footage, when strike leaders Baha Targün and Dieter Heinert

announced that "the strikes go on," the music, *Es kamen Menschen an* by Cem Karaca, is added to the sound layer, and a montage sequence that creates a fiction film aesthetic to the narrative begins.

The overlapping of diegetic and non-diegetic sound on the same visual layer throughout the montage sequence creates an epic atmosphere in which ordinary people turn into heroic figures, and the strikes are redefined as glorious resistances. In contrast to the limited representations of mainstream media, amateur black-and-white photographs are inserted, exhibiting invisible aspects of the strike and humanitarian aspects of the workers (5.5.3.2). While the details in the photographs are further made visible through panning and zoom-in effects, the passage from Cem Karaca's song that expresses the contradiction against macro-level discourses creates a harmony between image and sound. As Karaca sings, "They called for workers, but human beings arrived," the daily activities of the workers are presented in photographs through visual effects. Thus, a graphic and audial match is established. In this sense, contrast and contradiction against official representations are based on the harmony of sounds and images, revealing how institutional and personal archives represent and convey the past. Even though *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* does not establish a hierarchy between personal and institutional archives, it changes their functions. Namely, institutional archives provide a broad historical context, while personal archives unveil details about the historical world, shedding light on the experiences of ordinary people that have been underestimated by superstructure.

Figure 5.5.3.2

Along the montage sequence, footage that presents the strikes is cut successively in company with the rhythm of the music, and photos from the covers of *Der Spiegel*

magazine and the first page of *Bild* newspaper are superimposed on the archival footage. Thus, the engagement of different types of archival evidence creates a multilayered narrative in each shot. By overlapping various sound and image layers, thereby overlapping various representations and interpretations of reality in one segment, the film points out multiple dimensions of historical reality and indicates the differences between what happened in the past and how it was presented. The superimposition of print media on archival footage also implies the eventual conflict between discourses in written material and representations in visual material. Furthermore, considering the dates in magazines and newspapers, the film does not employ a linear development line while juxtaposing archives. Instead, it cuts these materials nonlinearly according to the context and the message.

Figure 5.5.3.3

The strike shots are connected to footage from a broadcast archive in which a German speaker promulgates that guest workers will no longer be recruited due to the global energy crisis, and it is cut to an interview of Willy Brandt, the West German Chancellor,between 1969 and 1974. In this footage, he says, "Of course, this is not a hostile attitude towards foreign workers. In this situation, we must naturally think of our citizens first." However, his words are sharply criticized by Cem Karaca through the song, which expresses the discrimination towards guest workers:

> *"As long as there was a lot of work to do,*
>
> *They gave us the dirty jobs.*
>
> *But when the big crisis came,*

They said it was our fault."

The juxtaposition of Brandt's interview and Karaca's song explicitly constructs a contradiction both discursively and formalistically (Figure 5.5.3.4). In addition to the content of the conversation, the axis of action in which we see both figures from medium close-up and eyeline match a Kuleshov effect created that leads us to consider they are in the same space (Bordwell, Thompson and Smith 2017). In addition to providing a smooth transition between shots, this technique, a common convention in fiction filmmaking, creates contrast and contradiction in the film's formal structure. This is also an efficient example for my argument that *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* is an unconventional documentary that uses conventional codes. In the film, archival materials converse through various ways and techniques. At this phase, the juxtaposition of shots generates an artificial debate in shot B (the opposition party), which rejects and negates the arguments of shot B (the government party). Thus, this kind of conversation reminds us of debate tournaments in the British parliamentary style. It should be noted that there has not been such a debate historically since the song was produced a decade after Brandt's retirement. However, due to crosscutting that seeks the axis of action, spatial and temporal borders are blurred (Bordwell, Thompson, and Smith 2017), and the counterargument raised by the singer against the governor is as if they were simultaneously debating in the same place. This framework in which macro and micro-historical levels came across offers the understanding of history from below and nonlinearity, two principles of postmodern historical thought. Furthermore, this segment serves as the film's postmodern narration due to the utilized fiction film aesthetics and conventions, such as the axis of action and partly crosscutting. In other words, the film offers a nonfictional historical narrative using formal fiction codes. This reminds us that history is a narrative that employs fictional methods (White 1973) and is also a construction (Rosenstone 1989). In addition to the constructed past, it is realized that the music, initially perceived as non-diegetic during the montage sequence, is, in fact, external diegetic that provides continuity to the following sequence via J cut. Concluding the sequence with Cem Karaca's footage allows a smooth transition to the sequence of Karaca's exile years in Germany, revealing lots of archival and testimonial evidence. This transition also emphasizes that there is no definite beginning and conclusion between sequences and enhances the continuity editing in the film.
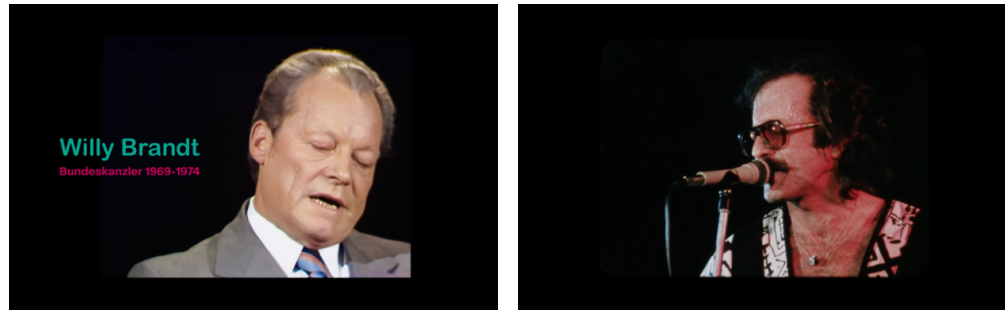
Figure 5.5.3.4

5.6 Ambivalence of the Past

Love, Deutschmarks and Death not only challenge German discourses and representations but also aim to create contrast and contradiction while revealing how migrants remember their past. This section, above all, offers a framework in which different dimensions of migration experience are presented and examines how archival and testimonial evidence are engaged to build a postmodern historical narrative. In the first half of the second episode, second-generation musicians convey the magnificent aspects of a particular period. However, in the second half, second-generation children and youth encounter difficulties that are exhibited in contrast to the fantasies about the past. In this sense, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* offers a multilayered narrative instead of reflecting a standardized past by utilizing the Rashomon effect, an editing technique often used in fiction films.

5.6.1 The other side of Deutschemarks

The fantasies of the past peak in the montage sequence about money in the second episode. Along the montage sequence, contemporary shots and home video footage that demonstrate entertainment culture and ways of spending money are juxtaposed via sound bridges that engage archival and testimonial evidence. In the sequence, temporal lines and sense of reality are blurred through intercuts, the tempo and rhythm accelerate with the non-diegetic music, and coalesced image and sound layers generate complex transitions. Additionally, experts and witnesses transform into voiceover commentaries

that articulate the images viewed in the archival footage through sound bridges. For instance, while Cavidan Ünal mentions the burning raki, a part of entertainment culture, it is cut to an archival shot depicting the act. Her interview speech becomes the voiceover commentary of the story via L cut. Then, this footage is followed by a reenactment of Rüştü Elmas, a musician, burning raki in the wedding hall, which is part of the setting for interview shots. Thus, a recreation of the act in the same place reproduces history and memory, freeing them from temporal and spatial limitations. Moreover, the archival shots displayed with frame effects imply that this past is a nostalgia constructed as a consequence of the engagement of the archive and memory through editing. At the end of the sequence, photos demonstrating magnificent nightlife are displayed through intercuts, followed by archival footage of a dark, dirty street while the music volume is turned down. In this footage, the camera pans to Barış Manço's ripped poster on the wall, and the sequence ends (Figure 5.6.1.1). The message is clear: Look at the back streets of nightclubs where upbeat music was played, people danced, champagnes were popped, rakis were burned, plates were broken, and the money flew in the air in order to see the overlooked truth, which is the other side of "coin." At this point, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* attempts to reveal young and children's migration experiences, employing various non-fiction archives to create a contrast within the episode. This contradiction also includes contrasting representations of second-generation youth and children's social problems and challenging experiences.

Figure 5.6.1.1

The following sequence begins with archival footage that demonstrates the lifestyle of second-generation migrants in Germany. The camera shoots a doner shop in a wide shot, then cuts to inside the bar, demonstrating Turkish customers smoking and drinking beer through close-ups. Turning to the outdoors, it follows a group of Turkish young walking around the streets and exhibiting their favorite social activity: betting. The sequence continues with daylight shooting that presents pointless and stray Turkish youth in

Germany. Despite the lower image and sound quality, the shooting is cinematographically in observational documentary aesthetic. This segment, likely composed of home video archives, implies that while adults had alternative ways of living, young people and children were in ambiguous positions, and interviews with second-generation Turkish-German rap singers Killa Hakan and Kabus Kerim enhance this argument. Killa Hakan's voice overlaps with the last archival shot through J cut, and he states: "At the age of 12, 13, 14, we were outside on the streets. You can guess the rest. All of the Turkish youth were on the streets. We kept to ourselves. We did not have German friends." This shot is followed by another interview with Kabus Kerim, a second-generation rap musician who shares similar memories: "Most of us, of this lost generation, were only considered laborers or unskilled workers. Without education, without knowledge."

The next segment, the archival footage, likely comes from a German documentary in expository mode, which presents wandering migrant children on the street. In company with dramatic external diegetic music performed by Derya Yıldırım, a male voiceover commentary indicates that "these children have been here for five, six years. Without significant help or a supportive environment. Without grandparents. They are left to themselves, or siblings watch them. Many cook, run the household, and interpret for their parents. Straying between the norms of their home country and the rules on German streets." Much as the documentary touches on a social issue, its approach is problematical, on the other hand. Namely, it has a top-down perspective, appearing in its formal and narrative structure. Above all, the camera eschews presenting the children's faces through wide shots, and even though it attempts to zoom in only for a moment, it quickly zooms out again when the child realizes the camera's existence (Figure 5.6.1.2). This cinematographic preference that views children as only subjects inside the frame expresses social and political discourse that views them as a stray population.

Figure 5.6.1.2

The following segment continues with the other archival footage demonstrating Turkish children and youth on the streets but shooting their main concerns through medium close-ups that make their faces and expressions visible in contrast to the previous documentary. It should be noted that the changed scales of the shot point out that this footage comes from different nonfiction sources. The first shot presents children shooting him in a medium close-up and capturing their cheerful yet vulnerable moments, in company with a female voiceover commentary emphasizing their conditions with a critical discourse: "What are these children? No longer Turks. Not yet, and certainly never, Germans. They should have the possibility to choose." The second shot is an interview with a Turkish child who explains when he came to Germany. After he explains that his words end when he comes to Germany, he gazes hopelessly, and his expression is more notable than his words. The following interview archive displays a young person expressing her concerns about the future and her experiences with discrimination (Figure 5.6.1.3). Toward the end of the sequence, archival footage that depicts the challenging living conditions of migrant children is juxtaposed in company with the external diegetic music. Considering the images in the previous sequence about money, this sequence offers a radical contrast between different aspects of reality, emphasizing an ambiguous past constructed by subjective truths. While one group of second-generation migrants remembers joyful moments of a fabulous past, the other conveys a story full of challenges. It does not mean that the first group's memories are only fantasy or that the second group only has traumatic experiences. This contradiction and ambivalence stem from the two reasons. First, history is a complex, multilayered, and ambivalent construction that allows interpretation and manipulation. Second, how history is a construction; memory is a constructed area (Nora 1989). In *Chapter 3*, I have discussed the association of the archive, memory, and history. In the following subsection, I will focus on how archives evoke or reproduce memory.
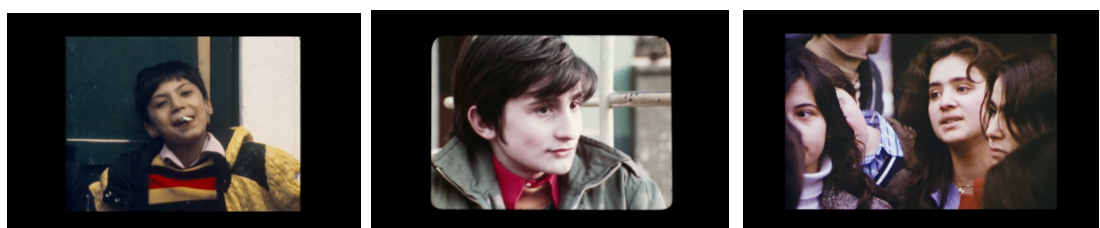

Figure 5.6.1.3

5.6.2 Archive and memory

Archives in *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* have a complex relationship with testimonies, unlike conventional documentaries that simply employ archival material to illustrate arguments and interviews (Bruzzi 2013). In the film, how the archives create conversation among each other through montage techniques, while archives and testimonies engage in a similar conversation (Spence and Navarro 2011) in editing. Indeed, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* highlights this attitude at the beginning of the narrative by displaying rooms full of archives where interviews are recorded. If we remember the opening scene, the room in which İsmet Topçu talks about his dream comprises various types of music and ephemeral archives. Similarly, Ömer from Germany appears in the home where music archives are almost furnished. Although Derrida's psychoanalytical analogy toward the archive is partly reductionist, Ömer's collection can be described through the concept of "archive fever" stemming from the drive for preservation. (Derrida 1995).

The engagement of the archive and memory becomes apparent in the sequence about Metin Türköz, a protest singer from the first generation. At the end of the previous sequence, an archival shot from fictional material displays a man who speaks in German, looking directly into the camera and repeating these words, "I am a stranger here; I am foreign." This shot is cut to a contemporary shot that displays Türköz. The footage is recorded in a room, and he is shot in a medium close-up that demonstrates his face. The respect towards Türköz can be observed through the low-angle shot, while the light behind him attributes an ethereality to the figure (Figure 5.6.2.1). In the first shot, he looks at an unseen point sorrowfully but carefully while the voiceover overlaps with his image through L cut and repeats the words, "I am a foreigner." If we had not seen the previous shot, the speech of the voiceover could have been perceived as Türköz's statement due to the coherence between sound and image. In this sense, the sound bridge also connects the different levels of time and reality. Namely, a sound from a fictional material produced in the past coalesces with a non-fictional contemporary image; thereby, temporal borders and levels of reality are blurred among editing layers. Although the sound bridge is a conventional technique while juxtaposing archival and contemporary shots, it builds a postmodern narrative in this film, enhancing the temporal and spatial ambiguity and

playing with the senses of reality. In this respect, *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* again breaks this convention by using it.
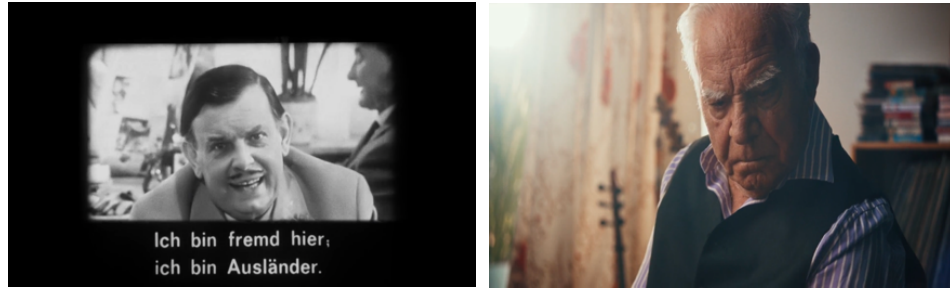

Figure 5.6.2.1

In the following shot, the camera tilts below, and *Alamanya Destanı*, a famous migration song by Metin Türköz, plays as non-diegetic music. In addition to being a significant element of material culture, this song functions as a part of his expression. When the camera tilts, it is inserted that Türköz is looking at archival materials spread on the table, including tapes and photographs from his musical career. In this high-angle shot, the camera pans slowly, demonstrating the archival materials from his point of view. This shot is followed by a montage sequence composed of multiple layers, including non-diegetic music, various non-fictional footage, and Türköz's voiceover commentary. His voice is superimposed on the archival footage presenting the migrants' journey to Germany. In this sequence, the significant point is that archives and memory, which are primary evidential sources of the film, are harmoniously juxtaposed, without leaving the gap for personal history, and both share the similar discourse instead of simply illustrating or articulating each other. This audial and visual coherence is kept throughout the film while juxtaposing archival and contemporary shots.

The sequence of the Türkische Basar reveals different ways of engagement between archive and memory. It begins with Cavidan Ünal's interview, in which she shares her memories of nightlife in Berlin. The interview is followed by archival footage through an L cut that depicts nightlife and clubs, and Ünal's speech becomes a voiceover commentary that describes the places. Considering the film's language, frame effects imply a fictionalized or imagined past despite archival materials from nonfiction sources.

In the following interview, the first outdoor shoot in the film, Nihat Yersaloğlu, and Dede Deli convey their knowledge about nightclubs as experts. When Yersaloğlu points out toward the Türkische Basar, a significant place for nightlife in Berlin once, it is cut to archival footage that demonstrates the indicated point in the previous shot. Similarly, while Cavidan Ünal mentions stores and activities in Türkische Basar, her voice overlaps with archival footage that illustrates her speech through L cuts. For instance, when she mentions young couples who visit the Türkische Basar to buy rings and jewelry, it is cut to the archival footage demonstrating what she says (Figure 5.6.2.2). At this point, the question arises: what allows for this extent of harmony among evidential materials? Even though the archival material can be seen as only intercuts that follow interviews to illustrate the verbal expressions at first sight, if this conventional editing method is reversed, testimonies become the articulation of visual representations at this phase. However, to achieve this, witnesses and experts who need to interpret the archival images should see the material to understand its context and discourse. This means the witnesses might be exposed to the archive or directed to indicate specific details before shooting. This possibility raises other questions about the authenticity of the documentary and the memory.

Figure 5.6.2.2

In the following part of the sequence, Dede Deli and Nihat Yersaloğlu introduce the inside of the train station where the Türkische Basar once was. While they are walking around and describing the place, this shot is cut to a black-and-white photograph that presents the derelict condition of the building, and their speech turns to voiceover commentary through an L cut. Color footage recorded by a German cameraman is superimposed on the photograph and displayed on the screen. This superimposition adds a fantastical dimension to the narrative, as if a portal opens to the living past. When the scale of the superimposed footage is enlarged, it covers the screen and replaces the photograph. Thus, a narrative is created as if we have passed through the portal and entered the historical world. However, this world is not limited to the past. Instead, it occurs at the past and present junction points. After a contemporary intercut that indicates the location of Neşet Ertaş's music store only for a moment, it is returned to the archival footage of Türkische Basar via L cut, and the voiceover commentary continues to describe the path to Ertaş's store. When the camera arrives at the store, it stands at the door, and we catch eye-to-eye with Neşet Ertaş while he plays baglama. This temporal and spatial illusion derives from the engagement of archival footage's shooting aesthetic and *Love, Deutschmarks and Death*'s montage technique. The archival footage utilizes a documentary aesthetic in reflexive mode. When the camera stands at the door, Ertaş gazes at it momentarily and continues playing the baglama as if unaware of the shooting but reminding us of the camera's existence. In today's terms, this means "take a photo of me looking natural" (Figure 5.6.2.3). In this sense, realizing the artificiality of archival evidence allows us to question the authenticity of the documents in addition to the documentary.

Figure 5.6.2.3

Considering that both archives and memory are constructions, as I described in *Chapter 3*, the position of these constructions should be examined in the face of each other within

the documentary, which is another construction. This framework is clarified in the sequence of Hatay Engin, who was called "Berlin's Sun of Art." At the beginning of the sequence, Engin is viewing archival footage on a computer screen that shows his performance in a nightclub when he was young. After he viewed the footage, he began to interpret his past from today's point of view. This moment emphasizes the film's decisive engagement with the archive and memory. Namely, Hatay Engin's reflections on his past are impacted by the archival material he was exposed to before speaking, and this interaction is not already hidden offscreen. Instead, the audience is led to realize the contact through an insert shot demonstrating both the archival footage and Engin inside the screen. Although this analysis focuses on the film's editing, montage, and sound, this shot requires a broad cinematographic examination. The over-the-shoulder shot emphasizes Hatay Engin's presence inside the frame while both Engin and the computer screen share similar portions on the screen. Thus, it implied that both types of evidence are equally significant in the film. This equality is enhanced through eye-level shots while the camera's height adjusts, allowing the audience to engage directly with the archival footage from his point of view. This setting adds new layers to the film's narrative by exhibiting the subject's relation to his personal history. From there, it is cut to the archival footage we have seen on the computer screen in the previous shot, allowing the audience to view both the raw footage and its processed and edited version. Thus, the film presents the archival material, incorporating it with interventions and interpretations through formal means like color grading and framing. Thus, the first shot emphasizes the principle that the archive governs the statements about the past (Foucault 1972) by shaping memory and personal history (Nora 1991), while the second shot reveals that this law can be reinterpreted, reorganized, or manipulated *(Figure 5.6.2.4)*. Furthermore, in this sequence, it is disclosed that witnesses interact with archival material before or during the shooting. This direct interaction reveals to what extent the archival representations they are exposed to impact their ways of remembering. This explains why some second-generation migrants commemorate a magnificent past while others mostly remember suffering experiences and what makes possible the harmony between archival and testimonial shots along the film.
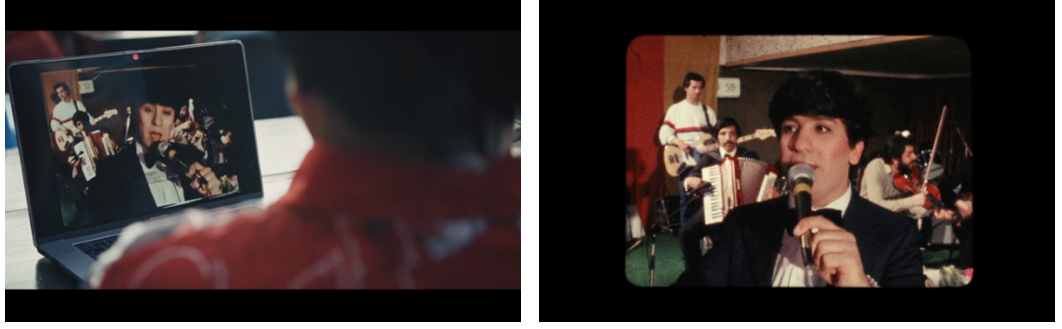
Figure 5.6.2.4

The interaction between characters and archives is not limited to seeing the images in the archival material. Instead, subjects are exposed to the archive's representation and discourse. Nevertheless, Hatay Engin and Metin Türköz's exposition of the archive does not indicate that all characters have interacted with archives before shooting. Moreover, Cem Kaya states that all witnesses in the film already have their personal archives, even if he did not share a specific archive with each of them.[2] Their engagement with the archive extends beyond the film's narrative world. In this context, their personal memory already has a complex relation with the archive, even if it is not represented in the film. The most significant example of those characters' bond with archives is Ömer's second scene, displayed at the end of the first episode *(Figure 5.6.2.5).* In this shot that covers the room, it seems that archival material physically takes place even in the most hidden corner of his apartment. Moreover, in both scenes, he constantly touches the archival material physically while conveying his memories about the music culture of the past.

Figure 5.6.2.5

---

[2] Ayşe Gülsezer, E-mail to director, April 25, 2024.

6. CONCLUSION

This thesis aims to demonstrate contemporary ways of historical filmmaking. By criticizing the claim that only arthouse films can reveal real historical narratives, I argued that popular works can construct unique postmodern histories using creative techniques. I exemplified this argument with *Love, Deutschemarks and Death*, a contemporary documentary that exhibits a postmodern history of labor migration to Germany through audiovisual archives.

In this work, I have first presented the theoretical framework of visual history. In order to make clear how history can be a narrative form, I briefly introduced shifting to narrative history, focusing on Hayden White's arguments and suggesting that he paved the way for visual history discussions defining history as a literary form. However, early debates on visual and cinematic representations of history show that perspectives and explanations were categorical due to a lack of theoretical background. At this point, Rosenstone filled this gap, offering a broad conceptual framework that ensured credibility for the claim that history can be represented in films. By confirming his attempt, Hayden White provided a robust legitimacy for visual history while also attributing this form of history to a terminological identity, calling it "Historiophoty." Although Rosenstone is a significant figure in this revisionist academic environment, suggesting that real postmodern history can only be conveyed through experimental films, he indirectly offers a restrictive and exclusionist perspective. In this context, my main argument that popular productions can construct postmodern histories is based on a critique of Rosenstone's approach.

Second, I briefly touch on the reality question in documentary and its evolution from Grierson to the contemporary documentary filmmaking practice. At this point, it is seen that postmodern thought transformed the claim of reality from a suggestion of actuality to the perception of subjective truth. Namely, a documentary's authenticity is based on the reliability of the photographic image once weakened due to the changed perspectives about reality. The shifted understanding of the documentary's nature impacted the use of its conventions and external forms and techniques. In this framework, the voice of God commentary, an identical convention of expository documentary that provides it a source

of authority, has left or transformed to less authoritative forms while editing, a convention that belongs to fiction film, becomes crucial also for non-fictional narratives by further engaging to the documentary. Considering that a documentary is subjected to an evolutionary process, I argue that its description and classification relate to how it engages evidential sources within fluid forms and techniques.

Third, I focused on the nature and function of the archive, which is significant evidence for the documentary. For this purpose, above all, I revealed mainstream theoretical and philosophical approaches to archives, examining Foucault, Nora, and Derrida's definitions. Instead of categorically agreeing or disagreeing with them, I applied an interpretive and critical perspective toward their arguments. After explaining how archives should be treated, I revealed how audiovisual archives are used in documentary filmmaking. It is seen that conventional documentaries employ archival material as an illustration of argument or voiceover commentary, while contemporary documentaries attribute archives an agency within the narrative through creative ways. In this sense, montage is a primary component of engaging archival evidence, and the montage techniques in documentaries reflect the filmmaker's subjective perspective toward archives and history. Through creative editing styles, documentaries can allow an intensive interaction between archival and testimonial evidence. In this context, I called this interaction a conversation that has a context and meaning, suggesting that *Love, Deutschmarks and Death* presents such a conversation.

Fourth, I attempted to make a formal analysis of *Love, Deutschemarks and Death*, focusing on editing and sound. Acknowledging its narrative as a postmodern history is based on archival evidence, I defined the film as a contemporary documentary that uses conventional codes. The film reveals a postmodern history breaking the temporal and spatial limits, blurring the level of reality, focusing on ordinary people's experiences, and using ironic language and kitsch elements. This narration is achieved through archives, the primary evidence of the film, and its engagement with memory. Different surfaces of reality are dissolved by the juxtaposition of non-fictional and fiction archives, while the linear development line is melted into the cyclical structure in which archival material is linked independently from its temporal origins. Although the film employs written

voiceover commentary, it turns this convention into a part of its ironic language, presenting texts with a kitsch style, and these texts are the film's way of interacting with the audience instead of indicating the arguments. How the film interacts with us through written voiceover commentary, it encounters with the past through visual representations come from institutional and personal archives. Indeed, its contradiction is towards German institutions and the migrant community. For this purpose, the film exhibits different aspects of the migration experiences, leading us to question the historical truth. This ambivalent past results from testimonies' different ways of engagement with archival evidence. In other words, how the archives are reinterpreted and manipulated throughout the film also has the power to reorganize and manipulate the memory.

Consequently, this multilayered narrative is based on the film's formal structure. However, the formal component of the film also uses conventional techniques such as continuity editing, talking heads, or sound bridges. In this context, *Love, Deutschemarks and Death* breaks the conventions, reversing or transforming their function. In this sense, it is explicit that credible historical narratives are not limited to experimental representations. Instead, popular films are capable of creating unique histories in creative ways.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Aasman, Susan. 2014. "Saving Private Reels: Archival Practices and Digital Memories (Formerly Known as Home Movies) in the Digital Age" *Amateur Filmmaking: The Home Movie, the Archive, the Web.* ed. Rascaroli, Laura & Monahan, Barry & Young, Gwenda Bloomsbury Academic. 250-251.

Abadan, Nermin. 2011. *Turks in Europe: From Guest Worker to Transnational Citizen.* Berghahn Books.

Allan, Diana. 2012. From Archive to Art Film: A Palestinian Aesthetics of Memory Reviewed," *Cairo Papers in Social Science* 31, no. 3/4: 149–166.

Alter, Nora M. 2015. One, "Two, Three Montages ... Harun Farocki's War Documentaries" *A Companion to Contemporary Documentary Film.* ed. Juhasz, Alexandra & Lebow. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.

Barthes, Roland. 1981. *Camera Lucida*. London: Macmillan.

Barthes, Roland. 1977. *Image, Music, Text.* Translated by Heat. Stephan. London: Fontana Press.

Baron, Jaimie. 2007. "Contemporary Documentary Film and 'Archive Fever': History, the Fragment, the Joke." *Velvet Light Trap: A Critical Journal of Film & Television*, 60: 13–24.

Baudrillard, Jean. 1970. The Consumer Society Myths and Structures. London: SAGE Publications.

Bell, Desmond. 2011. "Documentary Film and the Poetics of History" *Journal of Media Practice* 12, No.1: 3-25.

Bernard, Sheila Curran and Rabin, Kenn. 2009. *Archival Storytelling: A Filmmaker's Guide to Finding, Using, and Licensing Third-Party Visuals and Music*. London: Routledge.

Bordwell, David; Thompson, Kristin; Smith, Jeff. 2017. *Film Art: An Introduction.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Bruzzi, Stella. 2006. *New Documentary: A Critical Introduction*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.

Chanan, Michael. 2012. The Role of the History in the Individual: Working Notes for a Film. *The Cinema of Me: The Self and Subjectivity in First Person Documentary.* ed. Lebow, Alisa New York: Columbia University Press.

Comolli, Jean-Louis. 1980. "Machines of the Visible", ed. Teresa de Lauretis and Stephen Heath. *The Cinematic Apparatus*, London: Macmillan.

Cuevas, Efren. 2014. Change of Scale: Home Movies as Microhistory in Documentary Films. *Amateur Filmmaking: The Home Movie, the Archive, the Web.* ed. Rascaroli, Laura & Monahan, Barry & Young, Gwenda Young Bloomsbury Academic. 139-150.

Dagmar, Brunow. 2016. *Remediating Transcultural Memory Documentary Filmmaking as Archival Intervention*. Vol. 00023. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Davis, Natalie Zemon. 1988. "Any Resemblance to Person Living or Dead: Film and the Challenge of Authenticity." *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 8:3: 269-283.

Derrida, Jacques. 1996. *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Eitzen, Dirk. 1995. "When Is a Documentary? Documentary as a Mode of Reception." *Cinema Journal* 35, no.1. 81–102.

Ellis, John. 2012. *Documentary Witnesses and Self Revelation.* London: Routledge.

Forgacs, Peter. 2007. "Wittgenstein Tractatus: Personal Reflections on Home Movies" *The Home Movie Movement: Excavations, Artifacts, Minings.* ed. Ishizuka Karen L. & Zimmerman Patricia R. University of California Press. 48-50.

Foucault, Michael. 2017. *The Archeology of Knowledge* New York: Routledge Classics.

Göktürk, Deniz and Gramling, David and Kaes, Anton. 2007. Germany in Transit Nation and Migration, 1955-2005. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Guynn, William. 2006. *Writing History in Film*. New York: Routledge.

Gülsezer, Ayşe and Bölükbaşı, Musa. 2022. "Aşk, Mark ve Ölüm: Almanya, Göç ve Müzik" Nov 2022. Podcast, Spotify, 45 min., 57 sec. https://open.spotify.com/episode/1N5pB1mIdwTvKsCpaQFDJH?si=u7yavw_tQTudk3 pOWaVoJA.&nd=1&dlsi=06eebeb820154e12&flow_ctx=23ed7422-29af-4363-9cf4-df2c09e2b236%3A1727966715.

Hardy, Forsyth. (Ed.) 1966. "First Principles of Documentary." *In Grierson on Documentary.* University of California Press. 145-156.

Hochberg, Gil Z. 2021. *Becoming Palestine.* London. Duke University Press. 65-66. Hughes-Warrington, Marnie. 2006. *History Goes to the Movies: Studying History on Film.* New York: Routledge.

Kaes, Anton. 1990. "History and Film: Public Memory in the Age of Electronic Dissemination" *History and Memory.* 2, No. 1: 111–129.

Kaes, Anton. 1992. *From Hitler to Heimat: The Return of History as Film.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Kaes, Anton. 1995. "German Cultural History and the Study of Film: Ten Theses and a Postscript" *New German Critique*, no. 65: 47–58.

MacDougall, David. 1998. *Transcultural Cinema.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

MacDougall, David. 2006. *The Corporeal Image: Film, Ethnography, and the Senses.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Nichols, Bill. 1991. *Representing Reality Issues and Concepts in Documentary.* Indiana University Press.

Nichols, Bill. 2008. "The Question of Evidence the Power of Rhetoric and Documentary Film" *Rethinking Documentary New Perspectives, New Practices* ed. Austin, Thomas and Jong, Wilma New York: Open University Press. 29.

Nichols, Bill. 2017. *Introduction to Documentary*, 3rd ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Nora, Pierre. 1989. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire." *Representations,* no. 26: 7–24.

Portuges, Catherin. 2001. "Home Movies, Found Images, and Amateur Film as a Witness to History: Péter Forgács's 'Private Hungary.'" *The Moving Image: The Journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists* 1 (2): 107–23.

Rosenstone, Robert A. 1988. "History in Images/History in Words: Reflections on the Possibility of Really Putting History onto Film." *The American Historical Review* 93 (5): 1173–85.

Rosenstone, Robert A. 1995. *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Rosenstone, Robert A. 2006. *History on Film/Film and History: Concepts, Theories and Practice.* Longman/Pearson.

Scheibler, Susan. 1993. "Constantly Performing the Documentary: The Seductive Promise of Lightening Over Water." *Theorizing Documentary* ed. Michel Renov. New York: Routledge. 135-150.

Sorlin, Pierre. 1980. *The Film in History: Restaging the Past*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publications.

Spence, Louise and Navarro, Vinicius. 2011. *Crafting Truth: Documentary Form and Meaning.* New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

Steedman, Caroline. (2002) *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History.* New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.

White, Hayden V. 1966. "The Burden of History." *History and Theory* 5, no. 2: 111–34.

White, Hayden V. 1975. *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe.* Johns Hopkins paperback ed. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Williams, Linda. 1993. "Mirrors without Memories: Truth, History, and the New Documentary" *Film Quarterly.* 46, no. 3: 9–21.

Winston, Brian. 1993. "The Documentary Film as Scientific Inspiration." *Theorizing Documentary.* ed. Michel Renov. New York: Routledge. 37-57.

Val, Perine. 2021. "From Moving Images to Archival Films: Contemporary Uses of Non-Fiction Cinema in the Promotion of Rebuilt Cities" *Iluminace* 33, No.4: 33-49.

Zimmermann, Patricia. 2007. "Introduction" *The Home Movie Movement: Excavations, Artifacts, Minings.* ed. Ishizuka Karen L. & Zimmerman Patricia R. University of California Press. 1-28.

Zimmermann, Patricia R. 2014. "The Home Movie Archive Live" *Amateur Filmmaking: The Home Movie, the Archive, the Web.* ed. Rascaroli, Laura & Monahan, Barry & Young, Gwenda Bloomsbury Academic. 257-262.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Information

Name and Surname   : Ayşe Gülsezer

Education

Bachelor's Degree   : Istanbul Bilgi University (2016-2020)

Graduate Education   : Kadir Has University (2021-2024)

Foreign Languages   : English

Work Experience

Institutions Served and Dates : Istanbul Bilgi University: History
Research Assistant (2021-2022)