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Research Article

"ARE YOU READY TO BEAR WITNESS?": MEMORY OF CINEMA IN THE SILENCE OF OTHERS

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"TANIKLIK ETMEYE HAZIR MISIN?": DİĞERLERİNİN SESSİZLİĞİ FİLMİNDE SİNEMANIN BELLEĞİ

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ABSTRACT: Since their first screenings, motion pictures have also functioned as documents. This recording of life is also an emphasis on the witnessing feature of cinema. Through movies, societies are witnessed to events that they usually do not witness through scenarios or documentary images. And documentaries are one of the film genres that enable witnessing in this way. The documentary film "The Silence of Others" (Carracedo and Bahar, 2018) tells the story of people who witnessed the social traumas during the Franco era in Spain and their struggle against the "Pact of Forgetting" in the country. The director is also involved in this process. This situation is important in showing how social traumas are represented in cinema and how films turn into a tool of remembrance. The aim of this study is to reveal how cinema creates witness memory through documentary film. Thematic analysis will be used as a method in the research. As a result of the research, important conclusions were reached about how cinema as a means of documentation witnesses societies to narratives about the past. One of the most important things that can be suggested based on this study is that narratives of the past should be examined not only as narratives of the past but also as narratives of the future. As a result of the research, it was determined that the documentary contributes to the formation of the audience's memory by referring to testimonies.

Keywords: Cinema Memory, Documentary, Trauma, Film Studies, Collective Memory

ÖZ: *Sinema filmleri ilk gösterimlerinden bu yana belge bırakma işlevi de görmektedirler. Yaşamın bu şekilde kaydedilmesi aynı zamanda sinemanın tanık olma özelliğine de yapılan bir vurgudur. Sinema filmleri aracılığıyla toplumlar genellikle tanık olmadığı olaylara senaryolar veya belge görüntüler aracılığıyla tanık edilirler. Belgeseller de bu şekilde tanık olmayı sağlayan film türlerindendir. "Diğerlerinin Sessizliği" (Carracedo ve Bahar, 2018) adlı belgesel filmde İspanya'da Franco dönemindeki toplumsal travmalara şahit olan kişiler ve onların ülkedeki "Unutma Anlaşması"na karşı gösterdikleri mücadele anlatılmaktadır. Filmde yönetmen de bu sürece dahil olmuştur. Bu durum toplumsal travmaların sinemada nasıl temsil edildiği ve filmlerin hatırlama aracına nasıl dönüştüğünü göstermesi bakımından oldukça önemlidir. Bu çalışmanın amacı sinemanın belgesel film aracılığıyla tanık belleğini nasıl oluşturduğunu ortaya koymaktır. Araştırmada yöntem olarak tematik analiz kullanılacaktır. Araştırma sonucunda belgeleme aracı olarak sinemanın geçmişe dair anlatılara toplumları nasıl tanık ettiğine dair önemli sonuçlara varılmıştır. Yine bu çalışmadan yola çıkarak önerilebilecek en önemli şeylerden biri geçmiş anlatılarının aslında sadece geçmişin değil aynı zamanda geleceğin*

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anlatısı olarak da incelenmesi gerekliliğidir. Araştırma sonucunda belgeselin tanıklıklara başvurarak seyircinin belleğinin oluşumuna katkı sunduğu tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Sinema Belleği, Belgesel, Travma, Film Çalışmaları, Kolektif Bellek*

Introduction

The Silence of Others, directed by Almudena Carracedo and Robert Bahar, is a 2018 documentary film that aims to bring to the agenda the human rights violations committed in Spain under Francisco Franco. Under the "Pact of Forgetting" issued after Franco's death, those who were responsible for these violations during the Franco dictatorship cannot be prosecuted. Since the relatives of the victims and those affected by the violence of that period cannot sue in Spain, they bring up the possibility of doing so in Argentina. A prosecutor in Argentina will investigate their claims, but he needs more witnesses. There is a possibility to attend the trial in Argentina by video, but the Spanish judiciary does not allow this. Because of this reason, some of the witnesses go to Argentina and give their testimonies and their experiences. The case is officially opened in Argentina. The film aims to explain how concepts such as remembering and forgetting are experienced in everyday life. As the line from the movie quoted in the title of this study suggests, the movie actually questions whether we are ready to bear witness.

Objective, Method and Research Questions

This research will reveal how traumas are represented in cinema through the documentary film Silence of Others. In the research method, a thematic analysis will be used to explain how remembering and forgetting are reflected in the film. Based on the focal points in the film, we proceeded by identifying various common themes. The thematic highlights of the film are the reasons for the destruction of memory, witness narratives and discourses, social context and memory transmission. In selecting these themes, the narratives in the film, the historical context and experiences of struggle in the field of memory were taken into consideration.

The aim of this research is to reveal how the practices of remembering social traumas find a place in cinema through the documentary film "The Silence of Others". In this context, it is aimed to seek answers to the following questions:

- How does the act of remembering and forgetting manifest in the documentary film "The Silence of Others"?

- What contributions does the film offer at the point of remembering and confronting traumas?

- What is the film's relationship with reality?

- What does the film use to convey the experience of remembering?

- Which visual and contextual points are emphasized in the elements of remembering? How do these points impact the language of the movie?

Why is There a Need for Forgetting?

The "Pact of Forgetting" enacted after the Franco regime in Spain shows that there are reasons for not confronting some of the traumas of the past. First of all, it is necessary to discuss why there is a need for forgetting even after the end of the Franco regime. Among the reasons for this situation are the following: The refusal to accept the accusations of the past. Therefore, there is a need for forgetting. It is easier to construct a new historical narrative after the events that have been made the society forget. In order to construct a new historical narrative, it may be necessary to make people forget the events of the past and construct a new historiography. When generations do not have the historical transmission of the past, the transfer of memory to future generations can be through this new history. The new history narratives now make more use of data emerging from daily life and testimonies instead of grand narratives.

The need for oblivion may arise due to the possibility that some methods that were considered criminal and practiced in the past may be needed by the authority in the future. Even if the methods used were criminal, they may be needed in the future, and therefore they should be prevented from being remembered. In addition, there is also pressure from circles close to the authority in the past. In order to prevent their own historiography from being discussed and questioned, a situation of blocking different historical narratives arises. The socialization and widespread dissemination of trauma narratives brings a demand for new generations to pay more attention to the desire to learn about the past. The larger the communities that are willing to learn about the past, the more information can be disseminated. In order to prevent this situation, the past may be wanted to be forgotten. They are aware that if the youth learned what happened in the past, they would not be able to manage this group.

"Now My Sculpture is Complete"

In the movie, sculptures made for the victims of the period are occasionally seen. These sculptures are almost like the silent responses of the victims. In the post-film interview, the directors quoted the sculptor who made the bullet-riddled sculptures as saying "now my sculptures are complete". The fact that the sculptures, which create a "memory space" describing this period, were shot shows how remembering poses a danger to Franco supporters.

Özgür Yaren states that "waves of films focusing on the problems of specific immigrant communities emerged with a sense of 'duty'" (2015:

209), indicating the emergence of cinema based on social identity. The female director of the film stated that she was engaged in a political struggle during her youth. Thus, the documentary film was made as an ideological, conscientious "duty" of the director. The effects of this understanding of cinema called "cinema of duty" can be seen in directors from Turkey who went abroad or had to go abroad, as well as in directors who make films in Turkey. In a sense, they too have to make "cinema of duty". Therefore, even if the forms, contents and priorities of identity cinema change periodically, it seems that identity cinema will continue to be made in a strong way as long as the process of constructing identity continues.

These documentaries are shaped by the issue of identity, traumatic events of the past, verbal history studies, and are generally used as a tool for the social opposition to speak out. Documentary filmmaker and academic Hakan Aytekin calls the post-1990 period the "multiculturalism period" (2017: 157) in documentary cinema in Turkey. After 1990, with the dissolution of the Soviet Union, identity debates became more dominant in the world. For this reason, documentaries emphasizing multiculturalism started to be filmed. This situation started to strengthen even more in the 2000s during the European Union membership negotiations. Depending on the political context of the period, the subjects of some documentaries, their broadcasting and the support they receive will also be shaped. Akbulut summarizes the relationship between the recent increase in documentary films and the proliferation of personal narratives in the world and in Turkey as follows:

> "The increase in documentary film production in the world as well as in Turkey can be read in relation to the prominence of small, personal narratives against large, official and historical narratives in a postmodern environment that claims the end of grand narratives in general. When the need to tell the personal and private coincided with developments in cinema and television technology, the result was an increase in film production" (Akbulut, 2010: 120).

The fact that art is highly influenced by the political context makes it a field of conflict within political struggle. This applies to all branches of art. There is an emphasis on this in The Silence of Others. The shooting of sculptures commemorating those who were killed during the Franco era is an example of this. Enzo Traverso writes that "traditionally, the writing of history was not seen as a polyphonic narrative, and the reason for this was simple, because the subalterns were excluded from this writing. As a result, the narrative of the past was reduced to the story of the victors" (2019: 37). The exclusion of the subaltern in traditional historiography that Traverso states has gradually started to disappear with the development of digital tools of cinema and the widespread use of filming. To the extent that cinema is socialized not only in terms of audience but also in terms of film

production, an alternative history to the traditional historical narrative has begun to emerge.

Silence of Others as The Witness of The Subaltern

Traverso's statement that traditional historiography has been reduced to the story of the victors and the powerful (2019: 37) shows that the stories of the subaltern have not been taken into consideration. Nevertheless, the emergence of subaltern narratives has gradually begun to develop through various means. Documentary cinema plays an important role at this point. With the massification of digital filmmaking tools, the camera's ability to convey the narratives of the everyday, the subaltern, and those who are not in the public eye has accelerated. "The subaltern, as a category stigmatized by status and silence, is a person whose attempt to speak and speak on their own behalf often ends in failure" (Köse and İpek, 2015: 12). Therefore, as in "The Silence of Others", documentary cinema conveys the story of the subaltern, who tries to be forgotten through silence and even a "pact of forgetting", to new witnesses. Here the audience is in the position of a new witness. The directors of the documentary are the parties here. The Silence of Others sees itself on the side of the witnesses. It pushes the audience into this testimony and directs them to take sides. Being a party is not used here as a negative concept. On the contrary, the task of taking sides is very important for documentaries that aim to make witnesses. On the contrary, the task of taking sides is very important for documentaries that aim to bear witness. The filmmakers take the side of those who oppose the "pact of forgetting". This is something that can be questioned by those who argue that documentary should remain on the side of objectivity. On the contrary, the task of taking sides is crucial for documentaries that aim to bear witness. Filmmakers take the side of those who oppose the "pact of forgetting". This is something that can be questioned by those who argue that documentary should remain neutral. On the other hand, filmmakers who use witness narratives often wanted to make this film because they felt that the truth was being forgotten. On the contrary, the task of taking sides is very important for documentaries that aim to bear witness. The filmmakers take the side of those who oppose the "pact of forgetting". This is something that can be questioned by those who argue that documentary should remain on the side of objectivity. Documentaries aiming at witness accounts may vary according to the historical context of each country and society. This is different in the case of Holocaust narratives, whereas it may be different in Spanish narratives. While such witness and victim narratives generally point to a point of sadness, the ending of the film in The Silence of Others emphasizes hope. The work has been accomplished and the pact of forgetting has been broken.

From The Testimony of The Director to The Testimony of The Audience

The process of transferring memory in documentary cinema involves the director's social belonging and identity. This is more dominant in documentary cinema than in other genres. The director's individual memory is also a reflection of his/her social environment. The individual's act of remembering is also related to the act of remembering and memory transfer of his/her environment.

"When an individual wants to talk about his or her past experiences and bring them into the public sphere (for example, when a soldier decides to write his or her memoirs), this act of remembering is on the one hand a personal act of his or her own volition, and on the other hand, it takes place within the framework of the social environment in which that individual is situated" (Beşikçi, 2019: 49) The director's act of remembering can also be formed under the influence of the social group around him or her. He is often able to construct his memory about events that he did not witness personally as a result of a social influence. "The claim of documentary reality actually relies on the power of narrative" (Yılmaz, 2016: 71). The power of cinematic language and narrative increases the documentary's power of reality. What is problematized here is not the reality of the narrative that is the subject of the documentary, but to make the audience a witness with the narration language of cinema.

Can Silence Make One Forget?

The rulers of the Spanish state at the time wanted to forget the crimes of the Franco era by creating a silence through a pact of forgetting, but as the quote below shows, not even the Nazis could do that.

> "The past may not be mentioned. A family, a state, a government can impose a ban on it, but memories can only be eradicated to a certain extent and formally, unless the subjects who carry them are completely destroyed (which even the Nazi Holocaust failed to do). Under subjective conditions and when "normal" policies are implemented, the past always returns to the present" (Sarlo, 2012: 10).

The prohibitions Sarlo refers to are manifested in "The Silence of Others" as the "Pact of Forgetting". As the title of the film suggests, there is a reference to the community that does not see, does not know and remains silent rather than the relatives of the witnesses. The society supported the authorities of the Spanish State, who issued the Pact of Forgetting, by remaining silent. One of the main points that the movie questions is whether silence can make people forget the pain.

Anderson explains the creation process of the nation as follows: "the nation is imagined as a community, as a congregation, because whatever the relations of inequality and exploitation that actually prevail in every nation,

the nation is always conceived as a deep and horizontal comradeship" (2017: 22). In the film, there is a struggle against the construction of a nation where there is no contradiction or conflict through forgetting. It is possible to say that such a nation created would lack a pluralistic understanding and would not remember the past.

Living The Past Now

"The return of the past is not always a moment of redemptive recollection, it is the emergence of the present, the capture of the present" (Sarlo, 2012: 9). Capturing the present emerged as a judicial struggle in *The Silence of Others*. When one of the witnesses said "I live only meters away from my torturer", it shows that the events of the past also affect the present, and that suffering will continue unless the guilty are dealt with.

Confronting the past is a step towards guaranteeing the future. Convicting the crimes and criminals of the past will mean preventing future crimes. "Because when the distant or recent past is not remembered, when the pain of past traumatic experiences is not reckoned with, when these experiences are not transformed into narrative and visual representation, the past will continue to appear sometimes from underground, sometimes from the dust of the neighborhoods demolished by bulldozers, sometimes in dreams, sometimes in a misshapen morel tree, sometimes in a song" (Akbulut, 2018: 27).

Remembering through documentary means adapting the tools used in the past for collective remembering to the present. Common and collective historical narratives, which are usually common among different communities, can reach all segments of society through documentary. Making a documentary of remembering or forgetting can, of course, involve tensions, just like any other subject.

"There are tensions between the memory of the state imposed through the national historical narrative and what is known or suspected to have happened to minorities" (Mills, 2014: 52). The example given by Mills, in The Silence of Others, is between those who lost relatives in the Spanish Civil War and the Spanish government. The tension point appears as the attempt to make people forget on the one hand and the sadness of the losses on the other. After traumatic situations in different societies, whether it is the victim or the traumatizer, the transmission of the past may not always be very healthy. The transmission of the past also brings about a confrontation behavior. Most of the time, it is this confrontation behavior that is avoided. Relatives of the witness may avoid confrontation out of sadness, victimization, defeat, powerlessness or fear of being harmed. The perpetrators of the trauma do not want to confront because of the exposure of behavior that could be seen as criminal. Sebald stated that in his childhood and for the rest of his life, he had the feeling that something was being hidden

from him in the books of some German authors that he read to gain knowledge (2016: 75). These secrets may be things that are not wanted to be transmitted.

The Necessity of Remembering and "Collective Crying" to Share Suffering

Being able to experience pain collectively can help alleviate suffering. To give an example from the Anatolian geography, laments burned together at funerals, traveling to the funeral home and providing support help to alleviate the pain. In The Silence of Others, on the other hand, the witnesses' narration of what they have witnessed and their conveying it to the masses through the documentary film is an action that can help alleviate their pain even if it does not eliminate it.

The reason why pain loses some of its sharpness in some cases is not because we think of nature and mechanism, its parts and the relationship between them, as separate from each other. Rather, when we imagine that it can be felt and understood by more than one person (which would not be possible if pain remained a purely personal and therefore unique impression), it is as if we are transferring some of the burden of pain to others and they are helping us to carry it (Halbwachs, 2018: 120). As Robert Fulford puts it, "life spreads stories around, while stories create lives" (2014: 27). Therefore, trauma, remembrance and collective crying have become a necessity. As Draaisma emphasizes, "being alone with memories is a paradox in itself, as it includes good memories, moments that we would prefer to write down in a 'book of forgetting'" (2018: 251). This also applies to bad memories. There are memories that we would like to forget when remembered alone. However, collective remembering has the function of preventing forgetting.

Even if neither the lawsuit filed against the perpetrators of the period nor the documentary film has the power to eliminate the pain completely, trying to be the voice of the voiceless and disappeared makes the witnesses stronger, even if only to a certain extent. Almudena Carracedo, one of the directors of the film, said in the post-screening interview that she believes in "the necessity of collective crying", emphasizing the power of overcoming pain together, collectively.

"Look, Mom, Where It Says 19"

In the movie, the mass grave where people killed by Franco are buried will be opened and the bodies will be identified. During this process, the girl points to the bone skull to her mother and says "look mom, where it says 19". This is a reminder of the loss for which tears are shed and no funeral is held. A death without a funeral is in fact a death whose pain is not fully experienced.

Facing traumas, mourning the pain, having a tombstone also leads to a confrontation. Seeing the tombstone concretely and seeing that death has a material reality will require confronting the pain and overcoming it. At this point, cinema also plays an important role. “Cinema can be a medium that can function as a social treatment or a large group therapy in telling the story of trauma and mourning it. Cinema is more effective than other mass artistic fields in creating the narrative of trauma through the narratives it presents to the audience visually and aurally” (Sönmez, 2015: 28). For those who form their memory through witnesses, this has become a duty. The mission to convey what their grandmothers and grandfathers experienced is on their shoulders. Marc Augé expresses this situation as follows: “the task of remembrance is the task of those who continue the lineage, and it has two fronts: Remembrance and vigilance. Vigilance is the updating of the memory, striving to resemble the past, to revive the present” (2019: 73). In documentary cinema, the information conveyed by the witness has a function that revives the past.

Transmission of Memory Through Films

“The increase in documentary film production in the world as well as in Turkey can be read in relation to the prominence of small, personal narratives against large, official and historical narratives in the postmodern environment, which generally claims the end of grand narratives'' (Akbulut, 2010: 120). Instead of the narratives of big states and individuals, small personal narratives have become valuable. At this point, memory studies play an important role. ''Memory studies allow history to be revisited through individual experiences'' (Neyzi, 2014: 4). Documentary film, on the other hand, as Akbulut states, “It would not be wrong to say that most of the recent documentaries adopt oral history as a method. People whose voices are not heard in the official construction of history, and whose voices are mediated on their behalf by more “knowing” voices, now find their own voices through the method of oral history” (2010: 122). In The Silence of Others, it can be said that an oral history study was conducted in the natural flow of life. In everyday life, the Memory Association founded by the witnesses provides explanations to the society through conferences, while at the same time functioning as oral history. For those of us who watch the documentary film, the witnesses verbally express their past. The history they tell is both the communities, members of the press, prosecutors who listen to them in real life and the audience in front of the screen.

Çimen Günay Erkol for the novels of 12 March “tries to be the voice of those who remain 'below' and 'silent'; she endeavors to bear witness not only to what is visible but also to what is invisible. Testimony is the only weapon people have against the forces that try to dominate them” (2014: 51). The victims in *The Silence of Others* are also silent. They are invisible just

like statues. Just like the writers in the novels of March 12 and the directors who made films about the tragedies of September 12, the director tells about those who cannot be heard.

Cinema is important not only because it is an art that contains social imaginaries but also because it creates identity through representations. The massification of cinema in terms of content and technique has also increased its power. Walter Benjamin states that "the reproducibility of the work of art with the help of technique changes the relation of the mass to art" (2013: 69). He goes on to state that the "direct and intense" (2013: 69) relationship between the masses and the work of art is seen as an important social indicator in terms of the reproducibility of the work of art. The reproducibility of cinema has also enabled it to be used as a method of activism.

Considering that social memory is a field of struggle, "collective representations belonging to the field of history are more important today than ever in terms of how the past is remembered" (Susam, 2015: 16). Looking at the pact of forgetting from this perspective can help to grasp the issue in a general way.

How Does Memory Construct Cultural Identity in Cinema?

According to Stuart Hall, representation is "an essential part of the process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. It involves the use of language, signs, and images which stand for or depict things. But as you will soon discover, this is far from being a straightforward or transparent process" (2017: 23). In a world where representation is directly linked to culture, it is inevitable for cinema to have a role in cultural representation. Considering that memory plays a significant role in shaping representation, it is also unavoidable for it to contribute to representations of cultural identity. Leyla Neyzi states that "autobiographical narratives, while pointing to suppressed or ignored events (and identities) in our recent history, allow us to examine how history is interpreted, remembered—or not remembered—through memory. This is essential in understanding current quests for identity and selfhood" (Neyzi, 2016: 2).

Thus, memory appears to be an essential source in constructing cultural identity. Here, the following effects can be discussed in the broadest sense:

1. Memory itself is a tool of witnessing, and similar to what Çimen Günay Erkol (2014: 51) argues regarding the authors of *12 March novels*, the director, too, is a witness. Therefore, they seek to translate this into film and ensure it is not forgotten. They aim to transmit their individual memory to the collective memory of society.

2. The collective memory of society can influence the individual memory of the director. They may recount an event they did not personally experience through testimonies, sometimes by directly incorporating witnesses or by creating a narrative of witnessing within fiction.

3. If memory is a tool for remembering, it is also a tool for forgetting. Cinema, at this point, can be used as a medium of forgetting. In shaping cultural identity, forgetting is as significant as remembering.

4. The film that conveys memory can also be described as a "place of memory." A film recounting a trauma from centuries ago, with no living witnesses, becomes a "place of memory" (Nora, 2006) as conceptualized by Pierre Nora. The audience, in this "place of memory," becomes a witness.

5. Films can construct not only the past but also the present through memory. As seen in *The Silence of Others*, the aim is to use cinema as a social device, recalling the past through testimonies to prevent similar events from happening in the future.

6. Cinema can be considered a tool for constructing identity for future generations. Accessing stories that were not previously told to them is a step in determining whom they will stand against. At this point, identity is reformed. A social group emerges, capable of hearing what the witnesses remembered and narrated, instead of the silent masses of the past.

7. Visuals and witnesses always hold a more concrete function in the eyes of society. Therefore, they are more credible, which enhances cinema's power of influence.

8. Documentary cinema can be used by the director and society as a tool for remembering. As in *The Silence of Others*, it can convey not only a past event but also bear witness to the present.

9. Documentary cinema, as seen in *The Silence of Others*, encompasses a process in which the director, along with the audience, becomes a witness to witnessing itself.

10. The director plays a role in experiencing existing processes in life, ensuring the film reaches a broader audience and thus socializes the witness's accounts. This way, the audience is also included in the process.

11. In *The Silence of Others*, both the narrative of official history and the micro-historical narrative of daily life are presented. While the narrative of official history reveals itself through the pact of forgetting, the micro and counter-historical narrative becomes evident through the accounts of witnesses. Thus, documentary cinema has become an instrument aimed at the socialization of a micro-historical narrative. "History is more modest; it begins with bodies and objects; for instance, with living brains, fossils, texts, and buildings" (Trouillot, 2015: 56). The witnessing in documentary cinema,

therefore, is the process of recording oral history to perpetuate the "living brains" continuously.

Conclusion: Making the Audience a Witness

The capacity of cinema to make the audience a witness is directly proportional to its social influence. The desire to convey the reflections of social events to different people has led to cinema's use as a tool for witnessing. Like other documentaries that focus on social traumas and the devastation caused by war, *The Silence of Others* aims to make the audience a witness. The person who becomes a witness bears the weight and pain of those lost. In the most neutral sense, they will feel compelled to share what they have learned with others. The documentary film is regarded as a tool for witnessing.

The words of a witness in the film who lost her mother are striking: "I need to speak with the judge because I may die soon." Indeed, what the elderly woman said came true. She passed away without being able to testify or retrieve her mother's remains. The audience witnesses the disappearance of a real-life witness. Those who watch the film have now become witnesses to this history. This underscores the importance of memory studies and oral history as one of its tools. Documentary cinema has become one of the tools used by oral history. The director, who collects data through oral history, has undertaken the role of transmitting the past to the present and the future. What remains of the elderly woman are the images in the documentary film. The audience has now taken on the weight of being a witness. In this sense, *The Silence of Others* is not merely a completed documentary; it is a film that continues beyond its production phase and is ongoing as it is viewed. The subject matter highlighted by the documentary retains its relevance. Thus, the documentary also maintains its relevance and assumes a living position. "Memories add depth to their photographs, a third dimension; for a fleeting moment, they draw viewers into the photograph, as if they were peering inside to see what could be observed there" (Draaisma, 2018: 242). *The Silence of Others* pulls the audience into the experience as witnesses to the events. With the places shown and stories told by the characters, it takes the audience on a journey. The audience listens to and sees the story along with the director. Narrators who venture through streets and prisons make the audience their witnesses. Through the memories of those interviewed, the audience constructs the act of remembering. The memory of the interviewee is transmitted to the memory of the viewer.

At the end of the film, it is emphasized that the struggle against the injustices of the Franco era continues. This also serves as a means of bearing witness. This witnessing becomes visible through cinema. This research and analysis have presented various suggestions on how documentaries can be used as tools for witnessing. Clara Dupont-Monod states, "We, who are

embedded in the wall, look at their lives. We have been witnesses for centuries. Children are always the forgotten ones in stories" (2024: 11-12). Documentaries of this kind, which narrate stories of traumas and collective memory, are the narratives of a new era that seeks to tell what the past attempted to erase. Therefore, witness narratives and documentaries on traumas are crucial for shaping future narratives. Examining such analyses and works as narratives of not only the past but also the future is the most important recommendation of this research. The social power of cinema is further enhanced by such documentaries. Films are important tools for transmitting memory in a stronger way. The spread of testimony documentaries like "The Silence of Others" in other countries will further increase the social transmission power of cinema. "It would not be wrong to say that memories are small islands in a sea of forgetting" (Tekrin and Bozkurt, 2023: 25), witness documentaries are islands of remembrance in the middle of a sea of forgetting. Just like making people forget, popularizing remembrance is an action that cinema can do quite powerfully.

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