THE ETHICAL TURN AND CINEMA POLITICS AND AESTHETICS OF JACQUES RANCIÈRE

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By
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III

ABSTRACT

THE ETHICAL TURN AND CINEMA: POLITICS AND AESTHETICS OF JACQUES RANCIÈRE

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French philosopher Jacques Rancière has worked on wide range of topics including democracy, literature, the visual arts, particularly film. After translation of his works to English, he found a wide audience and academic interest. His works are based on mostly a new understanding of equality, which gives him chance to approach both politics and aesthetics from similar point of views. This thesis aims at gaining an insight the relation between political and aesthetic theory of Rancière and to understand reflections of his notion of the ethical turn, on cinema. The ethical turn points a certain aspect of the changes in politics and aesthetics after the fall of the Soviets. This thesis aims to investigate this new ethics in cinema that emerged after the ethical turn. With this aim, the thesis scans the theories of politics and aesthetics and their relation with the ethical turn in different works of Rancière and searches for the interdependent changes in politics and aesthetics after the ethical turn. This analysis permits a new reading of Alfonso Cuarón's *Children of Men* (2006).The reading of *Children of Men* alongside of an analysis of reflections of the ethical turn in cinema, opens a room for catching the motives of the ethical turn in the world order after the ethical turn

KEY WORDS: The Ethical Turn, Politics, Aesthetics, Jacques Rancière, *Children of Men*

ÖZET

ETİK DÖNÜŞ VE SİNEMA: JACQUES RANCIÈRE'İN SİYASET VE ESTETİĞİ

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Fransız filozof Jacques Rancière demokrasi, edebiyat, görsel çalışmalar özelinde sinema'yı da içeren geniş bir alanda eserler vermiş ve çalışmalarının İngilizce'ye çevrilmesi sonrasında geniş bir dinleyici kitlesine ve akademik ilgiye kavuşmuştur. Eserleri ona estetik ve siyaset bilimine benzer bir açıdan bakmasına olanak veren yeni bir eşitlik anlayışına dayanır. Bu tez, Rancière'in estetik ve siyaset teorilerine dair derin bir kavrayış kazanmayı ve Ranicere'in etik dönüş kavramının sinemadaki yansımalarını araştırmayı hedeflemektedir. Etik dönüş, belirli bir açıdan, Sovyetlerin yıkılışı ardından siyaset ve estetikte olagelen değişime işaret eder. Bu tez, etik dönüşten sonra ortaya çıkan yeni etiğin sinemada izini sürmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç ile tez, Rancière'in farklı eserlerindeki siyaset ve estetik teorilerinin etik dönüş ile ilişkisini incelemekte ve etik dönüş sonrası siyaset ve estetikteki birbiri ile bağlantılı değişimleri araştırmaktadır. Bu analiz Alfonso Cuarón'un *Son Umut* (2006) filmin yeni bir okumasına da imkan sağlamaktadır. *Son Umut*'un bu okuması etik dönüşün sinemadaki yansımalarının yanı sıra Sovyetlerin yıkılışı ve etik dönüş sonrasında ortaya çıkan dünyaya dair motiflerin görülmesi için de bir fırsat yaratmaktadır.

ANAHTAR KELİMELER: Etik Dönüş, Siyaset, Estetik, Jacques Rancière, *Son Umut*

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INTRODUCTION

Figure 1.1. Superman declares that the world is too small and connected. Action Comics #900

1.1. Background

Jacques Rancière is one of the leading French philosophers who came with a distinct understanding of politics and aesthetics. Especially over the last decade, his philosophy became a fruitful study area for film studies. Rancière was one of the co-authors of the prominent work *Reading Capital* with Althusser. During the 68 student movements in Paris, he observed that the theory that is constructed by Althusser was

not opening enough place for the spontaneous uprisings. This becomes his departure point from the environment of Althusser and he declared his opposition to the thesis of Althusser in his book "*Leçon du Althusser*" (Althusser's Lesson, 2010). He questioned the place of knowledge between the thinker and the proletariat, and its unequal structure. His shift from the circle around Althusser is described by Rancière in terms of a shift away from a hermeneutic reading of texts towards a more affirmative view of language. *The Ignorant Schoolmaster: Five Lessons in Intellectual Emancipation* (1991) gives roots of his forthcoming philosophy.

His philosophy comes up with a presupposition of equality. According to Rancière all people are "equally intelligent." Eric Méchoulan (2004) explains it as: "Equally intelligent" , both terms are important: they lead the reflection towards the status of political equality, and the legitimacy of ordinary people appearing as intelligent. There should be a presumption of intelligence, just as we have conceived, as a right, a presumption of innocence" (p. 3).

Rancière starts with a presupposition of equality and comes up with a new explanation of politics. Politics according to Rancière, emerges when the one that has no part in the police comes up with a claim of equality. The police is in charge of the construction of the social configuration which Rancière calls "partage du sensible", distribution of the sensible. This new explanation becomes the base for his both politic and aesthetic theories.

In his last book, *Aesthetics and Its Discontents* (2009), Rancière explains what he calls the ethical turn, in politics and aesthetics. The ethical turn is the era after the fall of the Soviets, in which the law of police order acts as a natural one. After the ethical turn, what is and what ought to be become indistinguishable. Different morals of

different world views merged into one, into the moral of the police. This turn creates a consensus upon this moral and labels others as Evil. After the ethical turn the infinite evil and the infinite justice reigns the world.

Ethical turn also effects the aesthetic perception in the world. After a detailed categorization of the aesthetic regimes in the history, Rancière affirms that today unrepresentable structures the aesthetic production. After the ethical turn not only politics but also art started to imply a consensus upon a one possible moral. The unrepresentable become a mean of creating a consensus and eliminate possible disagreements.

1.2. Scope of the Thesis

The aim of the thesis is to investigate the ethical turn in cinema. However, this reading does not only aim to consider the changes in the cinema after the ethical turn, but also to understand the term itself better, by use of cinema. Cinema, which creates images in a specific distribution of the sensible, with the end of Cold War period, took an ethical form in which it implies a consensus in between the bare humans and/or it witnesses to the catastrophe of the world.

 After the ethical turn, cinema took a new shape, like other art forms, in which it either assumes a consensus among all population, or witnesses the catastrophe of the world. The consensus in cinema is mostly made through the notion of human rights, in which human is in the form of bare human. Therefore, not only main stream movies but also some critical ones, notably after September 11. imply a consensus that creates one social body and one moral of the community. The consensus be fed with the infinite evil and the infinite justice. The one moral of the police order brings

the existence of the infinite evil, which labels others that are disturbing the distribution of the sensible. Consequently, police brings justice to these others not with the laws of the states but with the law of the moral of the police. This law changes the state to a state of exception whose law is not written in anywhere but shaped according to consensus on one moral.

In cinema another form that came with the ethical turn is witnessing the catastrophe. Some movies imply the world as a catastrophic place, but do not offer anything instead. Loss of antagonisms after the ethical turn creates pessimism in such kind of movies; they show the strength of the police order and the catastrophes in it but not with an implication to the transforming forces in it but instead as a static situation. These movies mourn for the world.

Children of Men (Alfonso Cuarón, 2006) enables profound reading of the ethical turn because of the catastrophic situation and police order it is depicting. First of all the movie draws strict lines between the parts that are in disagreement, or in conflict, thus, it is possible to find the roots of the philosophy of Rancière. Secondly, the movie is not in a form of fantastic dystopia, but instead a possible future of the capitalist world. Therefore, the extreme conditions of the world give the symptoms of the ethical turn. Moreover, the way the narration of the movie is constructed becomes a comprehensive example of how human rights become a tool for the creation of the consensus.

1.3. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis contains four body chapters: Roots of The Political Theory of Jacques Rancière, The Ethical Turn, Cinema after the Ethical Turn and Case Study: *Children of*

Men. This structure first builds the roots of the theories of the Jacques Rancière, in order to have a familiarity with the concepts and language he uses. Then, it explains the ethical turn with the use of this terminology. This second chapter attempts to explain the ethical turn in both politics and in aesthetics. Third chapter focuses on the ethical turn in cinema. It tries to catch the ethical turn that has been discussed in second chapter, in cinema and the last chapter discusses *Children of Men* with this perspective.

First body chapter is separated into two. First section explains the roots of Rancière's philosophy that is based on critic of the works of Plato and Aristotle. It explains the distinction between polis and demos which is the main separation that gives rise to politics. Than the second part of the first chapter, focuses on the conditions that make politics.

According to Rancière, claim of equality is the main motive of the politics. This claim creates a disagreement between polis and demos and leads the subjectification of demos. Than a dissensus emerges that is in conflict with the consensus that is an attempt to abolish the conditions of a possible dissensus.

Third chapter explains the ethical turn in both politics and aesthetics, by using the terms that are discussed in the first chapter. This order; first ethical turn in politics and then the ethical turn in politics, is the order Rancière uses in his article. In order to explain ethical turn in politics Rancière uses the works of Lyotard – The Others Rights – and Agamben, – The State of Exception – which are also the subsections of this section.

Third chapter also focuses on the ethical turn in aesthetics, and to do so, primarily, it

focuses on the three historical regimes of art that has been discussed by Jacques Rancière in various works. By using the distinctive properties of these regimes, forth chapter combines the ideas lying behind the ethical turn in politics with the aesthetic theory of Rancière.

Forth chapter opens up a discussion on ethical turn in cinema. However, before this discussion it explains the emancipation theory of Rancière in the section Cinema and Emancipation. Than by using the discussion in the third chapter on aesthetics, it tries to catch different motives of the ethical turn in cinema. Two sections are also the main ideas that has been caught in Rancière's works that helps to discover ethical turn in cinema: Cinema of Consensus and Witnessing the Catastrophe.

Finally the fifth chapter takes *Children of Men* as a case study and investigates both political theories of Jacques Rancière that is discussed in the first chapter and the ethical turn both in politics and aesthetics. The section On the State discusses mostly the political theories and the chapter the Fishes (rebellious group in *Children of Men*) focuses on the creation of consensus by using the human rights. The last chapter also uses the works of other thinkers that are parallel with the notion of the ethical turn.

Such kind of an approach is important for cinema studies because of three reasons: Firstly, the approach of Rancière that is examined in this work gives us a thorough study of the relation between politics and cinema; which does not only show how this two relate to each other but also, the conditions of the emergence of a political cinema. Answer of Rancière to the question "what is politics?" become an answer to the "what is political cinema?". Secondly, this study shows how cinema and politics are getting shaped by the same distributions in the society, and how it is possible to read these distributions through cinema. And finally, this study underlines a general

tendency in the cinema after the fall of Soviets or the ethical turn. This tendency is to create a consensus against the "evil" and witness the world in catastrophe.

CHAPTER 2

ROOTS OF THE POLITICAL THEORY OF

JACQUES RANCIÈRE

> "*L'enfer est plein de bonnes volontés et désirs*"
> (hell is full of good wishes and desires)
> Bernard of Clairvaux

Jacques Rancière's philosophy is not based on the ontological explanations of the term political; instead it bases itself on a conflict. This new explanation of political and politics can be counted as the most original and fundamental movement of his theory. His new approach is explaining the roots of not only the political theory of his, but also the aesthetic theory. Rancière returns to the classical texts in his book *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (1998) and gives a new theory of disagreement as well as politics.

2.1. Demos vs. Polis – Rereading the Classical Texts

Rancière's reading of ancient texts has critical importance for his philosophy; what Rancière makes is through a rereading of the classical text, finding a foundation to politics and therefore political. Rancière identifies two philosophers, Plato and Aristotle with two different kinds of political philosophy: *Archipolitics* and

Parapolitics respectively.

According to parapolitics of Aristotle there are three parts of society (*axiai*): "the wealth of the smallest number (*oligoï*), the virtue and excellence from which the best derive their name (*aristoi*), and the freedom that belongs to the people (*demos*)." (Rancière, 2004, p. 6). First two parts can claim a part in the distribution of *the polis*. *Oligoï* and *aristoi,* who are the wealthiest and the most accomplished ones can be a part of calculations of sharing positions in the representative bodies of the republic (Deranty, 2010, p. 47). *Demos* for Aristotle, then includes first of all the woman and the slaves, who does not have any share in the distribution of the parts in the republic. And *demos*, and then includes all neither the best, now the wealthiest. Rancières further criticism also shows how today the workers still conceived as not a fully complete linguistic subject. From here he defines three different regimes: oligarchy of the rich, aristocracy of the good and the democracy of the people. This part become significant because, Rancière defines today's societies as oligarchy, and he takes his part by the side of democracy of people, *demos.* In the terminology of Rancière, *demos* signifies the common people or citizens and refers to people who has no part in the *distribution of the sensible (La partage du sensible).*

According to Plato's a*rchipolitics,* which defines the principles for an ideal political arrangement, there are 7 titles to rule: "parents over children, old over young, masters over slaves, nobles over commoners are the ones that are from birth. And two other, "strong over weak, intelligent over ignorant" which expresses nature (Rancière, 2009, p. 39). And the last one is the principle of randomness. Henceforth, Rancière states that the last principle is not an *arche* (a principle of rule) but a *kratos* (a prevailing) (Rancière, 2007a, p. 94). According to Rancière only this last principle

can justify democracy, rule of people.

Rancière, opposes with two different approaches of Greek philosophers, because of the place of demos in the polis that these philosophers are attributing to. Before passing to the details of his objection, I will examine what is *the police* in the philosophy of Rancière.

Rancière (2004) defines police in its relation to current politics as:

> "[P]olitics is generally seen as the set of procedures whereby aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organization of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing this distribution. I propose to give this system of distribution and legitimization another name. I propose to call it *the police*"(p. 28)

Police is the general law, the organization of the distribution of the sensible. "Police is in charge of the social configuration of what is called the "partage du sensible": the French *partage* can have two almost opposite meanings, the first is "to share, to have in common," the second, "to divide, to share out." (Mechoulan, 2004, p. 4) It is the order of ways of seeing or ways of doing, what is sayable, what is visible, and what is audible. Police is the natural order of social structure, which is the domination. Rancière explains (2009) police as "[T]he police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task" (p. 24). It should be said that there is nothing to do with the term police and police force. Police is not a form of repression but a form of distribution. In this point the term gets close to the Foucauldian approach, which states "police includes everything", and the police determines all relationships of "men and things", which

is actually a broader idea of police (McMurrin, 1981, p. 248). In Rancière "[police] embodies an order of configuration and visibility of parts, functions and positions, where particular names have been assigned to particular roles, and where the sensible is partitioned" (Tambakaki, 2009, p. 104). For Rancière police does not directly refers to a state apparatus in Althusserian sense, on the contrary, police is *sui generis*. In Althusser, state uses different apparatuses to impose an order to the society, but in Rancière, police is not something imposed, but it is a distribution of visible and sayable. This is much more looks like "rule by no one" (p. 40) that has been said by Hannah Arendt (1998) for the bureaucracy.

Therefore in ancient Greece, the hierarchical order of people and distribution of works in the utopic Greek polis of Plato in which he assigns work to do for citizens but excludes sophists and poets, assumes a kind of police order. In the same way, today's societies are govern by a specific kind of police, which is oligarchy according to Rancière. He states in *Hatred of Democracy* (2009a) that, we do not live in democracies, we live in States of oligarchic rule" (Rancière, p. 73). It has been said before Rancière makes the critic of the state in Plato based on the principle and states that democracy can be based on only *kratos* which states the randomness principle of ruling and which is not based on neither birth nor nature. Rancière calls this "scandal of democracy", because demos does not take its right to rule, its principle of ruling from its natural or inborn qualities, but without any title. However, today, all societies are oligarchic because, in all of them a minority governs a majority. It creates a police order in which the sensible is distributed through the rule of the minority.

Rancière (2004) does not equate all police orders; "there is a worse and better police

order" (p. 30). One should not think that Rancière is opposing with the existence of an order, but instead actually he is trying to show why we should oppose the idea that "some police order proves unavoidable" (Deranty, 2010, p. 62) On the other hand he persistently strips the police of from its inequality "From Athens in the fifth century B.C. up until our own governments, the party of the rich has only ever said one thing, which is most precisely the negation of politics: there is no part of those who have no part" (Rancière, 2004, p. 14). Those who have no part is demos, and demos, which is the root of democracy, was never have a part, therefore actually, there was never a democratic state. He (2004) also states that, the police order may take a shape that, it can make a certain part of society invisible, because police also decides what is visible and what is sayable (p. 29). Rancière's approach to police helps him to link his thoughts on aesthetics and politics.

2.2 Politics

In the works of Rancière, politics comes out when *demos* opposes to the current police order. When *demos*, the ones who have no part, ask for their *equality* from the police order, politics occur. The claim of equality means claim for a totally different logic. Rancière (2004) defines politics as follow:

> "politics primary conflict over the existence of a common stage and over the existence and status of those present on it. … Politics exist because, those who have no right to be counted as speaking being make themselves of some account, setting up a community by the fact of placing in common a wrong that is nothing more than this very confrontation, the contradiction of two worlds in a single world"(p. 27)

Therefore according to Rancière politics is not something existing all the time: it

finds its existence in its standing against the police. It might be said that politics may not exist at all in a police order. It needs claim of a different logic of equality which is claimed by the ones who have no part. According to Rancière politics occurs when ones who has no right to talk oppose his silence.

The philosopher defines democracy as the essence of politics (Rancière, 2007a, p. 94). Democracy, linguistically comes from *demos* and *kratos,* therefore, it based on a principle of arche, but instead the randomness, which is not based on any natural principle. However, democracy does not mean what the first sense of the word implies, which is representative democracy. On the contrary, Rancière (2009b) states that "representation is an oligarchic form" (p. 57). Democracy is a state of equality of the ones who have no part. Therefore, according to Rancière, democracy is not a regime, because all regimes are oligarchic (Deranty, 2010, p. 67). On the contrary democracy comes into scene with politics, while asking for a fundamental equality. Rancière (2004) affirms that democracy

> is not a regime or a social way of life. It is the institution of politics itself, the system of forms of subjectification through which any order of distribution of bodies into functions corresponding to their 'nature' and places corresponding to their functions is undermined, thrown back on its contingency.(p. 9)

Tambakaki (2009) highlights that

> "thus, so far as Rancière is concerned, the democratic framework comprises: first, a body politic (a demos) as an entity separate from the state apparatus, yet empty, in the specific sense we described above, namely, as a community of equals (who nevertheless are not); second, a constitutive dispute within the demos as a result of the given (ac)count of its parts; and third a realm where this dispute could be made visible." (p. 106)

For Rancière any democratic action risks to fall into oligarchy, in the way Plato

affirms as every democracy risks being reduced to tyranny. Pessimism of Rancière comes from here, because he thinks eliminating police into politics is impossible. Moreover, every democratic struggle becomes mere adjustments in police. Therefore, it is impossible to change oligarchy with democracy. This paradox is what Rancière calls "quandary of oligarchy".

In his book, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (1998), Rancière states three different major types of political philosophy. In archipolitics of Plato, that has been discussed above, every single piece of the society is assigned a role. Therefore, the demos of democracy is changed with the communal body. As an example Rancière states that republican project in France, like Plato's archipolitics, "is the complete psychologizing and sociologizing of the elements of the political apparatus" (Rancière, 2004, p. 69). Also the examination systems in most of the countries, whose aim is to distribute specific jobs to the ones who have talent to do, favour the creation of such an order of police. Bosteels asserts that "this is an understanding of politics as the disruptive effect of equality when verified as the freedom of anyone whatsoever to speak in the name of the people" (Deranty, 2010, p. 85). Archipolitics does not leave any space in which political moment may occur. This is why Plato, does not give any place to poets.

The second kind of politics is parapolitics of Aristotle, which is defined by Slavoj Zizek as follows:

> one accepts the political conflict but reformulates it into a competition, within the representational space, between acknowledged parties for occupation of the place of executive power (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 71)

In Rancière's words (2004), parapolitics transforms the actors and forms of political conflict into the parts and forms distribution of the policing apparatus (p. 72). Therefore, parapolitics acknowledges the existence of different antagonisms in the society, including poor and rich and wars. Parapolitics, is the "problematization of the origins of power and the term in which it is framed- the social contract, alienation, and sovereignty- declare first that there is no part of those who have no part. There are only individuals and the power of the state."(Rancière, 2004, p. 77) Rancière adds that modern parapolitics starts with the invention of the "individuality", instead of the *demos*.

The third and final major kind of politics is Marxist metapolitics which assumes an underlying infra-political truth. Therefore, the political conflict becomes a shadow theater. The meaning of metapolitics in Rancière oscillates between the meaning behind the substances and the empty operators through which the ones who have no part identify with the whole society; which is to say, between a positive and negative meaning. There is also one last term that Rancière mentions which is ultra-politics. Ultra-politics, rather than a kind of political philosophy, is the attempt to depoliticize conflicts through bringing it to an extreme via the direct militarization of politics (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 71).

Rancière criticizes political philosophy, because in all its forms it becomes a way of suspending the possibility of the emergence of the political. Today in the time of post-politics, Zizek says that

> the conflict of the global ideological vision embodied in different parties who compete for power is replaced by a collaboration of enlightened technocrats (economists, public opinion specialists..) and liberal multiculturalists; via the process of negotiation of interests, a compromise is reached in the guise of a more or less universal

consensus.(Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 72)

When one is thinking on politics, it is possible to read it in an archipolitical way (Rancière sees Pierre Bourdieu in this school) or/and parapolitical way (like Habermas or Rawls) or/and in a metapolitical way (Marxist reading of politics). Rancière's unique approach to politics gives a totally different perspective which is based on the claim for equality. It has been said that, according to Rancière, politics starts when the ones who have no part come with a claim of equality.

> Police, as power practices and social life styles, builds inequalities, but such a construction has to appear natural. Politics is a precarious momentum, when a few illegitimate people affirm their fundamental equality with others. (Mechoulan, 2004, p. 4)

We have seen the meaning Rancière is giving to people or *demos;* now what French philosopher means by equality will become the focus of question.

2.2.1 Equality

Todd May (2010) states that "the central divide in traditional political theory run between those theories that advocate for liberty and those that advocate for equality"(Deranty, p. 69) On the one hand, classical liberal theories may be the ones which are valuing the autonomous nature of human being as the reason for all creativity. On the other hand, classic Marxist theories may be the ones that are seeing inequality (in the access to goods or income, or social services) as the reason of an unjust society. Both of these two approaches take equality as something that is received from the State. The State gives equal chance of opportunity and liberty or income and goods. Rancière's approach opposes this idea. For Rancière equality is not something that is given but something which is created *by* demos, *in* demos. In

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Disagreement Rancière (2004) states that:

> "There is order in society because some people command and others obey, but in order to obey an order at least two things must are required: you must understand the order and you must understand that you must obey it. And to do that, you must already be the equal of the person who is ordering you. (p. 16)

This is the very first dilemma in inequality. A speaking being is equal with another just because of this nature of ordering and obeying. However, one should not understand this as an affirmation of an essence of human being. He, of course, knows what Foucault showed for history, Deleuze for ontology, Levinas for ethics, Derrida for language: that there is neither unity of humanity nor a concept of essence. What Rancière is offering us is a presupposition of equality. His book *Ignorant Schoolmaster* (1991) explains his project and this presupposition which actually requires nothing but accepting the assumption that all people are equally intelligent. This being equally intelligent does not mean the IQ charts or talent, but only being able to run his or her own life. It starts from the very first dilemma of inequality, that every single person is able to speak with the other in the same way. Therefore, this presupposition of equality is the equality of every speaking being, not because of any essential feature, but because of being able to be a part of society, to speak with others, to run his/her life. For Rancière (1991) "[O]ur problem isn't proving that all intelligence is equal. It's seeing what can be done under that presupposition. And for this, it's enough that the opinion be possible" (p. 46). Therefore, it is not an ontological claim, but a political assumption. This presupposition of equality also assumes the equal capability of all for political action. According to May (2007):

> It is simply to assume that people are capable of political action on their own behalf. In this sense, it is an assumption without which

progressive politics cannot even be conceived. Without   assuming this, without "trusting the people" to this minimal extent, one cannot even begin to critique the hierarchies and dominations of a given social order. (p. 27)

This is also the main critique of Rancière to Althusser. Althusser claims that revolutionary movements definitely need a prior political theory. However, Rancière considers this as raise of the authority of knowledge of theory. Namely, he believes that in Althusser, the authority of the class shifts to the authority of knowledge.

The presupposition of equality does not offer a specific target group, like Marxism and workers class. But instead, it depends on the political movement and the character of *demos*, and leaves the right to claim for equality to the ones who have no part in any particular situation. In this way, his theory gets close to the notion of power relations and domination as elaborated by Foucault. "The essence of equality is in fact not so much to unify as to declassify, to undo the supposed naturalness of orders and to replace it with the controversial figures of division"(p. 32), says Rancière (2007a). Therefore, for him, politics is actually a matter of claiming for the fundamental equality. This also shows his belief in Democracy, which means the equality of every single being in *demos*. There may be different kinds of inequality and different groups of people having no part in different areas of the police order : in the society workers may claim their equality from the capitalist logic of economy; women and homosexuals from the patriarchal sexist society or exploited people from imperialists. In all conflicts in the society, there is a group who are deciding and others who are exposed to the decisions. *Demos* asks for its fundamental equality and opposes to all principles that are based on *arkhe:* it asks for democracy based on *kratos*. And this equality is not something which gets distributed, but it is

presupposed in the *demos*. Politics, then, does not lye under the actions that are asking for equality but rather, in the ones who are presupposing that they are already equal. If they ask for equality it means they are looking for a distributor to share equality, however, on the contrary, *demos* should have the equality in themselves.

There are two important terms that Rancière is using while explaining a political conflict that is a result of the claim of equality. These terms are "disagreement" and subjectification.

2.2.2   Disagreement

Claim of *demos* in order to reach equality results with a conflict between the ones who are taking their share from the distribution of sensible and the ones who does not have a part. Rancière calls this conflict, disagreement (*mésentente*). In the book *Disagreement* (2004), he starts from Aristotle. According to the Greek philosopher, speech is something different from voice. Voice belongs to slaves and animals, but speech belongs to mankind. Slaves cannot use speech "by nature", therefore, in the writings of Aristotle men cannot understand slaves, by nature. Rancière states that the disagreement between the ones who are governing and others that have no part still continues. Disagreement in not based on Habermasian competing views but, on whose voice counts. As Zizek showed, now we are living in a world of ultra-politics in which "compete for power is replaced by a collaboration of enlightened technocrats (economists, public opinion specialists..)". Thus, the others, the people does not have a voice anymore in this political scene. May recalls the words of President Bush after 9/11 when he said that the best thing people could do at that

moment was to go for business and especially shopping (Deranty, 2010, p. 74). The people, *demos*, do not count as a speaking being anymore. There are specialists of economy, of law-making or different parts of 'politics'. From this perspective, what Aristotle was observing about slaves seems not that far. Other examples can be taken from discussions about nuclear energy: governments generally say to leave the issue to specialists as if others does not have a voice: this is called a disagreement in Rancière's terminology.

It has been stated that according to Rancière politics does not happen in *police,* but between police and demos. Rancière (2004) continues: "An extreme form of disagreement is where X cannot see common object Y is presenting because X cannot comprehend that the sounds uttered by Y form words and chains of words similar to X's own. This extreme situation – first and foremost – concerns politics."(p. 12). Politics is a result of extreme or not, disagreement. First of all, the part Y, by talking with X, presupposes an equality, which makes him try to talk with X. Therefore, the fact that Y is talking with X is a claim for equality. Secondly, X cannot understand the chain of words and logic that is created by Y, therefore, there is a disagreement. Furthermore, the fact of talking and disagreement becomes a claim for a voice, through which, politics occurs. This claim of *demos* forces people to accept the fact that police is not covering the situation in itself; there is an outside of the police. Dean (2009) explains that

> Rancière introduces in disagreement as internal to the political, as a division within politics between two perspectives linked by the gap between them (a parallax gap wherein the same object appears slightly different when looked at from the perspective of each division). Politics, then, is the manifestation of this gap or division. Examples of the division between politics and the police in the history of political thought appear as divisions between legislation and execution, between constituent and constituted power, and between

the people as sovereign and as subject. (p. 24)

When there is a situation of disagreement, a relation between the police and the *demos* emerges. Rancière calls this relation a *wrong* (*le tort*): "A wrong can only be treated by modes of political *subjectivization*" (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 93). Wrong becomes a specific form of equality, and Rancière (2004) calls wrong, "a polemical universal, by tying the presentation of equality, as a part of those who have no part, to the conflict between parts of society" (p. 39). With wrong the people manifests itself as a part which is excluded by police. Wrong, shows in a way, the ones who have no part exist. This is why it is a mode of subjectification, which is different from victimization that will be discussed later. Like the concept of equality, wrong, comes from *demos,* it does not expect victimization from a hierarchical up, or from the ones who are policing.

2.2.3   Subjectification

If wrong is a mode of subjectification, then it is needed to understand what Rancière means by it: "By treating a wrong and attempting to implement equality, political subjectification creates a common locus of dispute over those who have no part in the established order"(Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 92) When a group of people comes with the presupposition of equality, they create a locus, through which individuals of *demos* emerge as a part of the disagreement, that makes them a *we.* Therefore, subjectification unites the individuals of demos through a claim of equality. This is why, the wrong itself is "*a singular universal"*. it is related to the

ones who have no part and it creates a specific locus of those people. This is how politics emerges: "Politics does not happen just because the poor oppose the rich. It is the other way around: politics (that is, the interruption of the simple effects of domination by the rich) causes the poor to exist as an entity." (Rancière, 2004, p. 11). This existence of (in this specific context) poor proves their existence as a *we*: they become visible by police through the politics. Moreover, subjectification reconfigures the field of disagreement. Rancière states (2004) that "By subjectification I mean the production through a series of actions of a body and a capacity for enunciation not previously identifiable within a given field of experience, whose identification is thus a part of the reconfiguration of the field of experience" (p. 35). This is exactly what Mechoulan underlines as reconfiguring the sensible. Rancière (2004) affirms that main ways to build modes of subjectification (a wrong) are figuration, configuration, refiguration, which also brings the vocabulary used as a meeting point between the visible and the sayable (since, sayable is determined by the police order, it comes toward the visibility of *demos)* (p. 5).

The term "we are all Armenians" that is used by people marching after the assassination of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink may be an example of this situation. It is worth to remember that this expression has been used for Jews before. The claim "we are all Armenians" was first of all totally an egalitarian claim, since Armenians are exposed to violence in the society. So the claim for being an Armenian was aiming : first, to show that although we are Turks (or from a different origin), we can be Armenian, consequently Armenians are equal with others. Second, to show although we are also a part of larger demos, that is shared with Hrant Dink (they may be intellectuals, journalists, socialists, or activists), and we are screaming for equality

with other citizens that are not oppressed. Therefore, through the massive cortege that was held after the assassination of the journalist and through the motto "we are all Armenians" what was happening was the subjectification of the ones who have no part. Different people, with different common points have been visible to police. Maybe they found the unifying reason of *demos* in different points, but finally they created a feeling of *we* and wrong and finally a disagreement.

Before passing to next chapter there is one last point to stress about the disagreement, the widely used way of eliminating the ones who have no part from demos by creating a consensus over a issue.

2.2.4   Dissensus

Dissensus in the works of Jacques Rancière is "a political process that resists juridical litigation and creates a fissure in the sensible order by confronting the established framework of perception, thought and action" (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 85). The term dissensus can be explained as the first step of a disagreement, which is the situation of the slaves in the example of Aristotle, who understand language but do not possess it. If disagreement is the conflict that gives birth to politics, then dissensus is the situation of the parts that are in disagreement. Rancière states "dissensus is slaves understand language but don't possess it". In order to let politics emerge, first of all a dissensus should be expressed. "The appearance of Demos is because of the verification of that equality, the construction of forms of dissensus" (Bowman & Stamp, 2011, p. 5) says Rancière.

It is not possible to think about dissensus without a disagreement. Two parts in a situation of dissensus make a disagreement. In the previous sections the details for the creation of a dissensus in order to open the ways to politics is discussed. Before passing to the concept of ethical turn, it is needed to focus on how police prevents politics to occur.

2.2.5   Consensus

In the previous section it has been exposed how politics emerge. The other side of the coin is how *polis* carries on its existence in a specific police order. Rancière uses the term *consensus* to indicate the de-politicization of this process. *Consensus* for Rancière is simply the production of police. Through consensus, a specific police order sets the rules for distribution of what is visible and sayable, and different hierarchies in the society. Consequently it is also consensus that sets these hierarchies. Consensus is "a specific regime of sensible, a particular way of positing rights as a communities arche" (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 84) says Rancière. Consensus bans the subjectification and reduces politics to police, by abolishing *dissensus*. *Consensus* assumes that all parts of political conflicts, disagreement, can be incorporated into political order (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 84). Tom Conley (2005) states that "consensus is what turns a political community into an ethical community. It is a world of one, in which everyone counts" (p. 103). Therefore, consensus eliminates the political through totalization of people into one body. This is what Rancière (2004) calls "the utopia of postdemocracy", which would express "total of 'public opinion' as identical to the body of people"(p. 103). For Rancière, most common way of creating a consensus over an issue is identification of

democratic opinion with pools and simulation. Through pools and simulations, public opinion, that silences other voices and erases democracy, works as a tool of de-politicization. Consensus, finally become a way of legitimization of the current "democratic" politics. Rancière (2004) states, what consensus presupposes is "the disappearance of any gap between a party to a dispute and a part of society" (p. 102). It is the disappearance of mechanisms of appearance. Consensus vacuums the freedom of people and convinces them everything can be resolved by objectifying problems. However, this process of objectification uses the terms of the current police which act as politics.

Creation of consensus in the current politics then leads also what Dean (2009) calls a "democratic drive". He states that, in a situation of disagreement, which is the emergence of gaps between the demos and police, the contemporary setting is not the one of simple opposition between post-political consensus and the eruption of irrational violence (and Rancière sees eruption as a return of the archaic). Rather than that, it involves the satisfaction of the democratic drive as its aims remain inhibited (Dean, 2009, p. 35).

In this perspective, democracy works as an *objet petit a,* explained by Zizek (1993):

> Spatially, *a* is an object whose proper contours are discernible only if we glimpse it askance; it is forever indiscernible to the straightforward look. Temporally, it is an object which exists only qua anticipated or lost, only in the modality of not-yet or not-anymore, never in the 'now' of a pure, undivided present (p. 156).

Consensus, which is dismissing the dissensus, at the same time, dismisses the democracy constantly. Democracy becomes *objet petit a,* it is never able to be in "now" of a pure, undivided present. Since, the creation of consensus actually

totalizes the people in one body, and then democracy has already got lost. Dean (2009) adds that "there can be past democratic ideals – nostalgic fantasies of Athens, town meetings, our days in the resistance – or there can be hope for the future, justification of present acts in terms of this future, but there isn't responsibility now" (p. 26) . Moreover, Dean calls this situation as a drive that generates satisfaction while circulating around democracy, which is never reachable. According to him (2009), for "democracy thus takes the form of a fantasy of politics without politics (like fascism is a form of capitalism without capitalism): everyone and everything is included, respected, valued, and entitled. No one is made to feel uncomfortable. Everyone is heard and seen and recognized and has a place at the table" (p. 21) Consensus tries to include everybody and stabilize them into their place in police order and secures the feeling of comfort in the part they have been settled.

Finally, consensus does not let different parts of the people emerge in the people. Rancière (2009) summarizes this other kinds of people as the ones embodied in the state, inscribed in the existing forms of the law and constitution; the ones by this law or whose right the state does not recognize etc. (p. 115). All possible forms of the people create one body of people, which does not leave any space for dissensus. What Rancière calls de-politicization becomes de-democratization in Wendy Brown's terminology. Although his approach is not a philosophical but a more political one, Brown (2006) states that

> "democratic subjects who are available to political tyranny or authoritarianism precisely because they are absorbed in a province of choice and need-satisfaction that they mistake for freedom. From a different angle, Foucault theorized a subject at once required to make its own life and heavily regulated in this making—this is what biopower and discipline together accomplish, and what neoliberal governmentality achieves." (p. 705)

If in Rancière's theory, freedom vacuumed for the sake of being a part of the social body, in this case it is by neoliberalism. Neoliberal governmentality dismisses democracy by offering a choice of being a part of consensus, and while taking the freedom of people, rewards them with being a part of the public body. Therefore consensus turns the people or demos into a population. And population takes people as a pure biological being. Agamben observes:

> "this is something we must be aware of: we live in an era when the transformation of people into population, or of a political into a demographic entity, is an accomplished fact. The people is today a biopolitical entity strictly in Foucault's sense and this makes the concept of movement necessary."("Giorgio Agamben on the movement," n d)

Along with Agamben, Rancière also considers the transformation from the people to population as an accomplished fact. Agamben (1998) adds "it can even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power" (p. 6). The production of consensus is then the main activity of what Agamben indicates as the sovereign power. The term Sovereign power in the way Agamben uses it, corresponds to the police in Rancière. The main activity of police is creation of consensus, elimination of possible dissensus. This era that we live in takes a specific form notably after the fall of the Soviets, which is to say, after the ethical turn.

CHAPTER 3

THE ETHICAL TURN

3.1.   Ethical Turn in Politics

Rancière explains what the ethical turn is in the last chapter of his book, *Aesthetics and its Discontenst* (2009). He separates the ethical turn into two: ethical turn in aesthetics and ethical turn in politics, which are connected to each other. In this section what he means by ethical turn in politics will be examined.

He starts with stating what could the ethical turn mean according to explanation of the word morals. The ethical turn would mean "there is an increasing tendency to submit politics and art to moral judgments about the validity of their principles and consequences of their practices" (Rancière, 2009, p. 109). However, this is not what Rancière is trying to say. The ethical turn is not related to judging the way how we make politics or art with moral norms. "On the contrary", says Rancière (2009), "it signifies the constitution of an indistinct sphere" (p. 109). It is not the reign of moral judgments over politics and art, but elimination of the distinction that separates these two spheres. There is another separation which is getting lost, the distinction between "what is and what ought to be". Rancière calls this the distinction of fact and law. We cannot say what should have been because there is not distinction between what is going on and the judgment on it. This creates the inclusion of "all forms of discourse and practice beneath the same indistinct point of view." Then Rancière (2009)

defines the ethical turn as: "On the one hand, the instance of judgement, which evaluates and decides, finds itself humbled by the compelling power of the law. On the other, the radicality of this law, which leaves not alternative, equates to the simple constraint of an order of things" (p. 110). After the ethical turn, the judgement merges with the fact, then law occurs. This law behaves like the order of things that we all are in consensus upon. Therefore, the judgment abolishes, or gets into law which leaves no alternative to other point of views, through which politics can emerge. After the ethical turn, then, there is no space for politics, since there is no space for other points of views rather than order of things that mimics the life. Rancière adds that as far as this indistinction between fact and law grows, "an unprecedented dramaturgy of infinite evil, justice and reparation" comes into scene. The law, or the law of police, that acts like the fact, also starts to signify the justice. Before it was possible to judge a fact as it is just or not, but after the ethical turn, the justice becomes something in the police, belongs to the things that seems like they are in their natural order. Therefore, this extended meaning of law, creates the feeling of infinite evil and infinite justice.

In order to explain the concept of infinite evil, Rancière uses the film *Dogville* (Lars von Trier, 2002). He says the film is a transposition of Bertolt Brecht's story, *Die Heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfer* (1929-1930). In the original story everything is divided into two between the capitalist jungle and the Christian morality. The story explains how the morality is ineffective against capitalism's violence and finally transformed to a militant morality against oppression. Rancière (2009) affirms, "the opposition between two types of violence was therefore also that between sorts of morals and of rights" (p. 111). And Rancière adds that this division is exactly what politics is. Politics is not the opposition of two morals but their division. A division

that creates the disagreement. However, in *Dogville*, which is new version of *Die Heilige Johanna der Schlachthöfer,* what one cannot see is the reason of the evil. The evil that Grace is exposed to "refers to no other cause but itself" (p. 111). Grace is the excluded "who wants to be admitted into the community, which brings her to subjugation before expelling her" (p. 111). The local community creates the evil in itself, because of the evil. Therefore, there is no system of domination any more. Finally, if there is no specific reason of the violence, a moral that legitimize the violence, then the only way to abolish it is the "radical annihilation" of the community. This brings us to infinite justice, which can be reached only by violence against the infinite evil. A complete annihilation of the community that, the evil comes out. Rancière remind us, the rejection of the movie from Cannes, with the reason lacking of humanism. He (2009) affirms we should understand humanist fiction as elimination of the justice (justice of Grace), by hiding the opposition between just and unjust (p. 112). Afterwards Rancière states this is why we can think on the Clind Eastwoods *Mystic River* (2003). Jimmy executes Dave, with accusation of murdering his daughter. The crime of Jimmy stays secret in between him and his friends including police officer Sean, because, Rancière (2009) states, what they share "exceeds anything that could be judged in a court law" (p. 112). The guilt exceeds a judgment because in the common past of them, Jimmy and Sean witnessed the kidnapping of Dave in which he has been raped and stay silent. This event in which there is a guilty of Jimmy and Sean creates a trauma in Dave that made him the ideal culprit for the murder of Jimmy's daughter.

In *Mystic River* the key term for Rancière is trauma. It is the trauma that makes Dave the ideal murderer, and again it is trauma the cause of Jimmy killing Dave. Also it is possible to think of the possible trauma of the ones who have kidnapped Dave in his

childhood. From this point of view, Rancière (2009) underlines that "today, evil, with its innocent and guilty parties, has been turned into the trauma which knows neither innocence nor guilt, which lies in a zone of indistinction between guilt and innocence, between psychic disturbance and social unrest" (p. 112). Trauma now takes the place of justice. Rancière adds that it is not a sickness that we know from the movies of Alfred Hitchcock and Fritz Lang that can be cured with reactivation of childhood memories. Now the trauma "become the trauma of being born, the simple misfortune that befalls every human being for being animal born too early" (p. 113) From this misfortune nobody can escape, it is a infinite trap, and consequently it is above the notion of justice. Thus the endless trauma eliminates the idea of justice. Rancière (2009) affirms that "infinite justice then takes on its humanist shape as the necessary violence required to exorcise trauma in order to maintain the order of community" (p. 113) This already implies a social body of the community, a social body of population. Rancière turns to the Lacanian explanation of the trauma by using *Antigone.* In the case of Oedipus, father and brother of Antigone, trauma cured by reactivation of the past memory. However, in the case of Antigone, trauma does not have an end or beginning (Antigone buries her brothers against the will of the ruler Creon, supports her action with a moral discussion on the edict and her actions, then was punished by Creon). In this case there is no end or cure. Rancière states that according to Lacan, Antigone is the terrorist because she witnesses the secret terror that underlies the social order (p.114). Therefore terror is the name for trauma in political matters. Rancière (2009) adds that terror "designates a reality of crime and horror" but also "throws things into a state of indistinction" (p. 114). When we think of the current order, terror is not only the crime of a singular event but it is also "the fear that similar event might recur" (p. 114) If we turn back to the example *Mystic*

River, trauma or terror can only be eliminated by infinite justice from Jimmy, which is actually another form of terror. Terror can be eliminated by a war against terror which includes preventive justice to stop the terror, and also continuous as far as terror does. Therefore, Rancière (2009) says that "this is a terror which by definition never stops for beings who must endure the trauma of birth" (p. 114). The search for infinite justice puts itself above the law. It tries to protect the social body that law is in and leads to a permanent terror.

The ethical turn is the imperative schemes of our experience in the misfortune of Grace and the execution of Dave (p. 114). Now it is possible to turn back to the first explanation of the ethical turn: indistinction of law and fact or elimination of the division between different forms of morality. The example of *Dogville* shows that there are no more two moralities in opposition, but instead, the evil that emerge from itself, and affects the social body. There is no good and bad moral but instead infinite evil and infinite justice. It is the same notion of infinite justice that is used by G. W. Bush after September 11 attacks. Infinite evil does not have a moral root, it is out of nowhere and because of misfortune, it can be only eliminated by infinite justice, termination of all. More "humanitarian" approach of the *Mystic River* adds that this infinite justice actually is the result of infinite circle of trauma or terror in politics. Infinite justice assumes one singular body of society and this one body owns the moral as well. The only moral possible over the law: it includes both law and the fact which are inseparable.

This is exactly what Rancière calls consensus. For him (2009), consensus "defines a mode of symbolic structuration of the community that evacuates the political core constituting it, namely dissensus" (p. 115) Thus, in that community in consensus law

and fact are merged into each other. There is no distinction of different morals or rights but instead a moral of all. If we recall the politics, which emerges with the claim of equality of *demos* and creates a disagreement with the police, consensus does not let politics to come out anymore. In the time of the ethical turn, disagreement is called terror, which is sickness from birth. There are no different rights anymore, since there is only one right: the right of the global community and its parts. There is only one kind of people which is not a political subject anymore but a mere part of the population.

Rancière (2009) states that "[consensus] strives to reduce the people to the population, consensus strives to reduce right to fact" (p. 115). This is what Rancière calls transformation of a political community into an ethical community. This is the de-politicization of the community through consensus. The people that are looking for their rights become the ones that are the radical *other*, since the community is the great equality of all. They are equal to each other as singular parts of the social body. After the ethical turn, the social body tries to include everybody and every part of society. The ones that are excluded become not the people that are looking for their right but the ones who have the infinite evil. This creates the search for an infinite justice which is actually another face of the terror. If we turn back to Lacan, the people who are witnessing the terror of the social body become the terrorist and the excluded at the same time, since social body includes every single being. The feeling of a social bond that binds all parts of society is not able to reach the excluded or the radical other. Rancière states that "the de-politicized national community, then, is set up just like the small society in *Dogville* – through the duplicity that at once fosters social services in the community and involves the absolute rejection of the other (p. 116). Therefore, even if there is an obvious abuse of rights, the community rejects the

absolute other.

According to Rancière, the increasing indistinction between fact and right is at national level. Nevertheless, at international level, this process takes a rather tortuous way: via the constitution of a right above all other rights – the absolute right of the victim – we can observe the disappearance of the right itself (p.116). This absolute right of the victim is human rights. Rancière points out the transformation of the concept of human rights. During the 1980's the concept of human rights have been rejuvenated by the dissident movements of Eastern Europe and after the fall of Soviets these rights became the "ostensible basis for a new national consensuses could also serve as a basis for a new international order" (Rancière, 2009, p. 117). Human rights became the rights of the all victimized populations of ethnic wars, religious wars, raped women and massacred men. Finally, human rights became "the absolute rights of those without rights" and "absolute response beyond all formal and juridical rights" (Rancière, 2009, p. 117).

The absolute rights of the victim can be exercised only by another party. Therefore, people whose rights have been abused, become the passive objects for another party who acts like the responsible right distributor This gives to this other party the absolute right to intervene for humanitarian reasons in order to bring infinite justice to populations against the invisible absolute evils: "that absolute right then became identified with the direct demand to protect the security of a factual community" (p. 117). Like the feeling of infinite justice in *Mystic River*, the concept of humanitarian war against terror and the feeling of infinite justice come into scene: an endless trauma, which does not have a beginning or end, the evil which comes into scene again and again, and finally an endless warfare. According to Rancière (2009),

"What is opposed to the evil of terror is, then, either a lesser evil, simple conservation of what is, or waiting for salvation to emerge out of the very radicalization of catastrophe" (p. 118). He underlines that there are two major forms of this transformation: first, it brings affirmation of the rights of the forces and a philosophical justification to such kind of an intervention; second, a hope for salvation from this reign of continuous terror. These two assumptions are connected to the works of two other philosophers: Jean-François Lyotard with his essay "The Other's Rights", and Giorgio Agamben with his concept of *state of exception*.

3.1.1.   The Other's Rights

Rancière states that the article of Lyotard explains one of the aspects of the ethical turn. The article has been written after the question of Amnesty International: what happens to human rights in the context of humanitarian intervention? By using ideas of Arendt and Burke, Lyotard explains that bare human being has no right but a citizen has:

> A human being has rights only if he is other than a human being. And if he is to be other than a human being, he must in addition become another human being. Then "the others" can treat him as their fellow human being. What makes human beings alike is the fact that every human being carries within him the figure of the other. (Shute & Hurley, 1994, p. 136)

This figure of the other that stays in us, makes the other a human being for us. There is no bare human being; one needs the existence of the other to be a human. Human rights then, are always in somewhere else than in their place. Now it is worth to

remind the place of the term equality in Rancière's terminology: a speaking being is equal with another just because of this nature of ordering and obeying. And politics emerges as a claim for this equality. Now, by using Lyotard, Rancière states that political action sets in the gap between the human and the citizen, as a form of dissensus. However, after the ethical turn, Rancière (2009) states "this 'other than human' being undergoes a radical mutation" (p. 119). Citizen turns into what Lyotard calls *inhuman*, which is a part of ours on which we have no control. Inhuman is an incomplete human. Rancière states that "inhuman is that radical dependency of human on an absolutely other which cannot be mastered" (p. 119). What is called the right of other becomes the right to bear witness to our subjection to the law of the Other (p. 119).

After the ethical turn, in the time of humanitarian action and consensus, there is no gap anymore between the human and the citizen, since citizen turns into an unmasterable inhuman. Inhuman may be childhood dependency, or obedience to an absolute other. And when citizen turns into inhuman, right of others become right to bear to witness what they are exposed to. In the time of consensus our rights as a citizen become our rights as an inhuman, and the relation between human and the other become unmasterable, so one can only witness to the law of the other. When somebody tries to master this unmasterable relation what happens is the violation of human rights. Jews in Nazi camps, who were respectable citizens before, become people that bear witnessing to the law of the Other, and their extermination was actually mastering to the unmasterable.

3.1.2   State of Exception

Rancière (2009) affirms "[Agamben's] analysis, however, sums up well what I call

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'the ethical turn' (p. 120). The state of exception is a series of essays that have been written after *Homo Sacer*. In one sentence what Agamben says is "the state of exception or state of emergency has become a paradigm of government today" (Raulff, 2004, p. 1). Before it was possible to see the limits of police, and there were situations, which could be called exceptions. However now, the state turned to the state of exception, which does not have any exceptions anymore. Nazi State and extermination camps for example, could have been declared as a state of exception; however, today Guantanamo and American democracy is not that different, Agamben says. He states that camp is the *nomos* of the society.

Agamben starts with the idea of Carl Schmitt who defines sovereign as "he who decides on the exception" (Schmitt, 2006, p. 5). Agamben takes this argument and states that the sovereign "creates and guarantees the situation" that the law needs for its own validity". Sovereign is the one who decides the limit of the Law, so if a situation is a state of exception or not. The sovereign, thus, draws the border between the order and the exception. Mills (n d.) states that "the sovereign determines the suspension of the law vis-à-vis an individual or extraordinary case and simultaneously constitutes the efficacy of the law in that determination." (p. 44)

Moreover, Agamben adds that, even during the situation of the exception in which the Law is suspended, there happens a relation between the Law and the exception. What makes a rule is the very existence of the exception. Agamben (1998) states that "the exception does not subtract itself from the rule; rather, the rule, suspending itself, gives rise to the exception and, maintaining itself in relation to the exception, first constitutes itself as a rule. The particular force of law consists in this capacity of law to maintain itself in relation to an exteriority" (p. 18). To have an inside you need

an outside; to have an outside you need an inside. And the inside of Law determines what is in the outside, where is the border line. Sovereign rests exactly on that border.

After the ethical turn, the State of exception becomes the rule itself. It does not leave any empty areas for politics to exist. Rancière (2009) affirms that, "as a result, this situation comes to appear as the accomplishment of an ontological destiny that evacuates the possibility of political dissensus and the hope of future salvation bar the advent of an improbable ontological revolution" (p. 120). What Rancière was calling disappearance of the gap between fact and law again reigns: In the state of exception rule becomes the rule of everything, it includes the fact as well. We can not talk anymore about two different morals, but the state of exception which in Rancière's words (2009) "erases the difference between henchmen and victims, including even that between the extreme crimes of the Nazi State and the ordinary everyday life of our democracies" (p. 120). The differences between inside and outside, police and *demos*, got lost in the state of exception: "together with the process by which the exception everywhere becomes the rule, the realm of bare life—which is originally situated at the margins of the political order—gradually begins to coincide with the political realm, and exclusion and inclusion, outside and inside, bios and zoē, right and fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction." (Agamben, 1998, p. 9). Rancière (2009) adds that after the ethical turn "all differences simply disappear in the law of a global situation" (p. 120). In this state of indistinction, the law, according to Agamben (2000), then, "is valid precisely insofar as it commands nothing and has become unrealizable".

3.2   The Ethical Turn in Aesthetics

3.2.1   Regimes of Arts

"Regimes of arts" is the door to the aesthetic thinking of the philosophy of Jacques Rancière. Regimes of arts are broad categorization of the history of aesthetics which has been shaped by economic, social, political and cultural revolutions. However, this categorization is not a linear and mono-causal one. Deranthy (2010) states that, "a regime of arts thus specifies how a given epoch thinks of the ways in which human expressions stand in a relationship to the world, what words and other expressions capture from it" (p. 117). Therefore, the regime of arts focuses on the relation between understanding and the language and meaning in historical context. However, these regimes are not strictly historical because in a specific period more than one regime can coexist. Rancière states that regime is "a specific relation between the practices, forms of visibility, and modes of intelligibility that enable us to identify the products of these...". Gabriel Rockhill (2006) proposes, in Rancière's writings: "a regime of art is a mode of articulation between three things: ways of doing and making, their corresponding forms of visibility, and ways of conceptualising both the former and the latter" (p. 91). According to Rancière aesthetics is not a discipline but rather a particular "regime of identification of art". What Rancière is doing with this categorization is, thus, categorizing the aesthetics. On the other hand, this attempt of Rancière is in accordance with his political philosophy. Actually, by categorizing the regimes of art, Rancière, gives an interpretation to the distribution of the sensible ("*partage du sensible"*), in a broad sense. Deranthy (2010) states that according to Rancière, the meaning and the value of artistic expression is

"characterized in relation to the respective significance given to other activities, but also in relation to the significance of the different elements making up social reality (for instance the home, the workplace, the market, the political institutions), as well as the significance of modes of being (for instance the qualities deemed to be attached to the conditions of worker or political leader), and of socially defined times and spaces."(p.118)

All this significances in Rancière are shared in a specific way in a specific time, which is the distribution of the sensible. Therefore, distribution of the sensible is the term that connects the politics and aesthetics into each other. Eric Mechoulan (2004) states that "far from folding back aesthetics onto sensory data and human nature (or even culture as our very nature), aesthetics supposes a play between police and politics" (p. 6). And this play is due to the distribution of the sensible, a sharing on visibility, functions and positions of parts in an order. For Rancière politics is than, an aesthetic activity. While the police order, attempts to protect a certain distribution of the sensible, the dissensus forces to change the lines of that specific distribution. The police configures the sensible, and the politics refigures it. Differences in the distribution of the sensible gives base for the identification of regimes in art. However, instead of this broad definition of the distribution of the sensible, Deranty (2010) identifies five basic different structural elements, that Rancière uses to separate regimes of arts.

the world itself, in its material and human dimensions; what in the world is significant (both meaningful and socially valuable) and thus, worthy of representation; language, or speech, or text, as the discursive articulation of meaning; the artefacts in which meaning is expressed for which Rancière uses the term image; and finally cummunity to which the artist addresses himself/herself, effectively as an actual audience (p.118)

A regime of art defined in the writings of Rancière according to the five elements that are listed above. These properties also bring contradictions that are specific to that regime of art and these contradictions define the regimes. Rancière identifies three regimes of art: Ethical regime of images, representative regime of art and the aesthetic regime of arts. Among these three regimes, the aesthetic regime of arts is the main interest of Rancière. The ethical turn in aesthetics as well is related to this regime.

The ethical regime of images is articulated from the view of Plato on art. In this regime, the artworks are conceptualized according to their distance to the ideal model. Most important feature of the art work is its truthfulness to this ideal model. This regime is called ethical, because as Plato stated the art works has a certain influence on the ethos of the community. Therefore, the artwork has to be educative. Rancière (2002) states "In the ethical regime, works of art have no autonomy. They are viewed as images to be questioned for their truth and for their effect on the ethos of individuals and the community," (p. 135, note 1). This regime has not ended still, it is possible to see it in modern art forms, particularly in films. Discussions about the impact of movies on audiences is an appearance of this regime.

The representative regime of arts is covered more in the works of Rancière; because the shift from the representative regime to the aesthetic regime gives crucial clues on how to approach art today. The representative regime of arts liberated art from the moral and religious criteria. This regime is based on the *poetics* of Aristotle, however, it is the name of general system of representation. Deranty (2010) states that, in the work of Aristotle; the "invention," the choice of a "right topic" was the foremost element, ahead of "disposito," the crafting of narrative, and "elocution," the

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actual linguistic expression of the topic"(p. 121)

Figure 4.1 An example to moral and educative intentions of the ethical regime of images. *Laocoön and his sons*, Hellenistic original. 200 BC

Therefore, the story becomes the most important part of an art form. The representational regime of art values the characters and the general narration of the art work, which includes the stories of the characters. In this regime a story can be told via various different artistic forms. Therefore, the essence of the poem is the story it tells, not the use of the language. Rancière (2009) highlights that "Insofar as it is seen as the mere accomplishment of a religious or therapeutic ritual dance is not an art … Something else is required to be counted as an art. This something else was, until Stendhal's time, called a story" (p. 6). In Rancière's terminology mimesis is the synonym of representation. The representative regime of the arts, which consists of threefold relation: *mimesis*, *poetics* and *aisthesis*. Rancière states that it is mimesis which distinguishes the artist's know-how from artisans and entertainer. He continues "Fine arts were so named because the law of mimesis defined them as a regulated

relation between a way of doing – a poesis – and a way of being which is affected by it – an aesthesis" (p. 7). Second distinguishing property of this regime is its hierarchical classification of different genres of art. The genres in this regime are settled depending on the nature of the subject of the story (for instance noble characters in noble genres of tragedy). In representative regime of art there are rules, categories and hierarchies, which define the genres and subject matter of art. For Rancière (1998), this property of the representative regime is analogous to oligarchic ordering of society (p. 27). Also specific characters in this regime have to be depicted in certain attitudes or behaviours – like princess cannot say this and that words etc. Deranty (2010) identifies four different criteria specific to representative regime of arts, to define what is proper and what is not:

> whether the actions are depicted correspond to nature of human passions in general; weather they conform to the good spirit of the people or the main character as reported by the "good authors" (the classic of the canon); weather the current audience's sense of decency and taste is respected; weather the action and speech follow a pattern commensurate with the logic that can be expected, and the logic of the particular character. (p. 122-123)

Finally, the representational regime of art privileges language over the visible imaginary that supplements it (Rancière & Rockhill, 2006, p. 91). This brings a dilemma that, in order to empower the cause-effect relationship of narration and the logics of morality, the narration neglects some of the details of the story.

In the last regime of art, the aesthetic regime, Rancière states that the mimesis ends, while figuration does not. The aesthetic regime of art prevailed in Western culture for nearly two centuries. After the revolutions and the rise of principle of equality, the hierarchical distribution of the sensible of the representative regime of

art as well has changed. Meanwhile, the police made up new orders which created new hierarchies, therefore art as well, did not become totally egalitarian. However, new logic of art inverted the old one: mimesis leaves its place to expression. This brings the equality of the represented subjects, the way of representation and to the immanence of meaning in things. Finally, in this new distribution of the sensible, distinction between art and other activities become ambiguous. Therefore, art gains its autonomy in this regime. However, as stated before this autonomy is not absolute; "the aesthetic regime of art institutes a relation between … autonomous art and heteronymous art, art for art sake and art in the service of politics, museum art and street art" (Rancière, 2010. p. 32). By identifying these contradictions as a part of distribution of the sensible in modern times, Rancière, cancels them out. The new distribution of sensible brings the autonomy of sensory experience. Rancière (2009) affirms that there is no conflict between art for art's sake and political art (p. 34). Since the distribution of sensible brings no distinction between art and art object, there is no anymore separation of the representative regime of arts. Rancière states that the idea of Hegel, Schelling and Hölderlin was to manipulate the free appearance of art through a consensus upon how to approach it. Namely, to "render ideas sensible, to turn them into a replacement for ancient mythology; in other words, into living tissue of experiences and common beliefs in which both the elite and the people share". This is what Rancière called metapolitics, which aims to overcome dissensus, by replacing them with the infrastructure of the political scene. The distinction between art for art's sake, sublime of Lyotard and the political art then is a conflict only in appearance. The autonomy of art erases the separation between life, art, politics and religion. Rancière gives the example of Greek statue, which has been made for religious reasons, not as an art form in the specific distribution of the

sensible of its time. However, in the aesthetic regime of art, this statue is an artistic form because of the autonomy of art. Therefore, now, the artistic forms have become forms in the upper level, but in infrastructure there is no difference between them. Rancière (2009) reminds us the Soviet painters who transform their works from abstract paintings to the artisans of new Soviet life (p. 33).
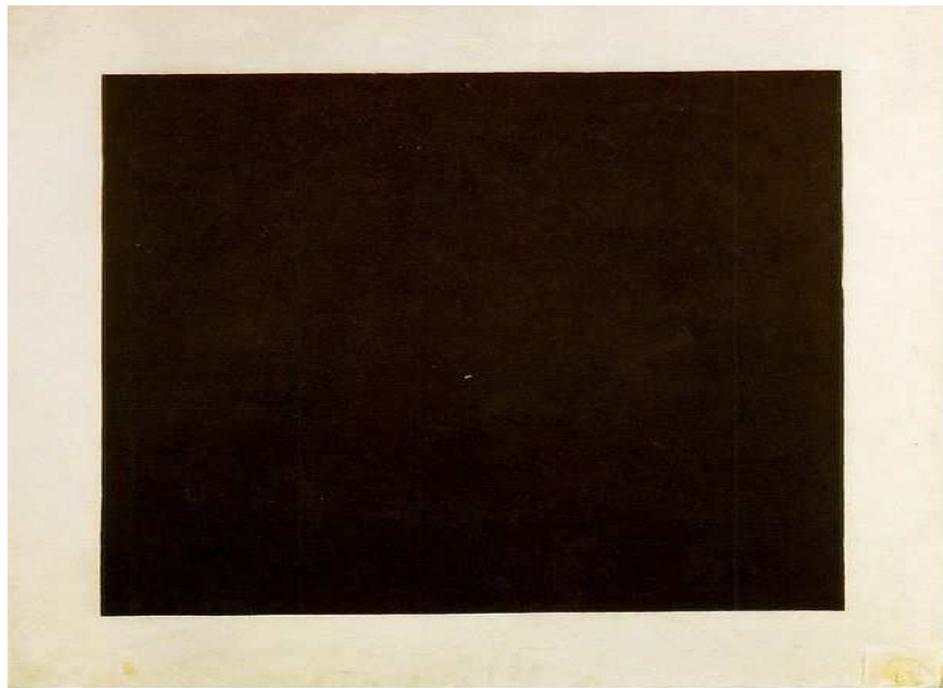
Figure 4.2 Kazimir Severinovich Malevich, *Black Square*, 1915, Oil on Canvas

Deranthy (2010) adds that "famously for Hegel, the power of art to capture a whole epoch is a dream gone by, which today is replaced by the prosaic languages of the positive sciences and philosophy" (p. 128). In the free play of the art, there is no meaning to think a form as if it is the expressions of the owners. The dream of German Romantics is invalid now, because the artistic and the historic are linked in the aesthetic regime of art. The meaning of objects changes in this regime, and common objects become artistic. In the time of metapolitics the hermeneutic of signs

is important. "Prosaic" objects become signs from history whose meaning is waiting to be solved. The artist now, becomes an archaeologist, who is excavating the artistic potential of objects.

In the aesthetic regime of arts, meaning can be found in every layer of reality but it cannot be captured wholly. This is what Rancière calls immanence or logos in pathos, or the intelligible meaning in the passive presence. New art is totally active but still passive. This is parallel to post-structuralist philosophers; however Rancière focuses on not how to read the different meanings but the very existence of the contradiction, which takes the art form out of control.

3.2.2   The Ethical Turn in Aesthetics

It has been said that the ethical turn in politics is the ambiguity in the separation between "what is and what ought to be" or "fact and law", which comes into scene after the fall of the Soviets. After the ethical turn the law of the state of exception, started to be conceived as if it is a natural one through consensus. The ethical turn is signifying dissolution of different points of view or different morals, which is also dissolution of the disagreement, namely politics. Under the light of the previous section it is possible to say that, this new distribution of sensible brings a new form of artistic experience, however this does not mean that it is out of the aesthetic regime of arts. The autonomy of image is still on scene, anything can be subject of art, and anything can be art in theory. The distribution of the sensible however, like in the case of before and after revolution in the Soviets, can create specific forms of art in a metapolitical level. Metapolitics of art, which is a result of a specific distribution

of the sensible, thus, creates unrepresentable subjects and representation ways in the aesthetic regime of arts which presupposes the equality of subject matters. Rancière (2002) states:

> In this fashion the opposition of the aesthetic regime of art to the representational regime can be ascribed to the sheer opposition of the art of the unrepresentable to the art of representation. 'Modern' works of art then have to become ethical witnesses to the unrepresentable. (p. 149)

He (2009) underlines that parallel to the ethical turns reflections on politics, "art and aesthetics reflection tend to redistribute themselves between a vision of art whose propose is to attend the social bond and another of art as that which interminably bears witness to catastrophe" (p. 120). To explain this fact Rancière compares two works; one from Chris Burden on Vietnam war, that constructs a monument for Vietnamese victims on which arbitrary Vietnamese names from the phone book are written. And the second, from Christian Boltansky, which is two large sets of shelves that are containing the phone books from all around the world, and visitors can take a name and call anybody in the world. According to Rancière (2009) the first example monuments the counter movement but the second one is "a space that counts as a mimesis of common space" (p. 121). Yesterday, art was giving names to the ones whose life is taken by State power, but today art approaches the masses as "specimens of humanity", which are bound together to a large community. The ethical turn was the introduction of a body to the population via consensus. Now it takes a form in which it "restores lost meaning to a common world or repairs the cracks in the social bond" (Rancière, 2010, p. 122). The aim of yesterday's art was to underline the contradictions of the world, however now, art aims to cancel them. It works to create consensus and restore it. Yesterdays committed art leaves its place to

the art that accepts one moral of the state of exception: "Although, there are exceptions now, we are a part of whole that obeys the law" artist says.

In this respect Rancière focuses on the works of Jean-Luc Godard. He claims that the works of Godard before the 80s were a collage that is depicting the clashes in the society, especially between the high culture and world of commodity, but after the 80s they took a form that fuses images. Rancière (2009) affirms that "and what that fusion of images simultaneously attest to is the reality of an autonomous world of images and its community-building power" like in the case of *Histoire(s) du Cinema* (p. 122).

What happens to the committed art of counter movements of today then? Any attempt to create art of contradictions again, the consensus is able to declare it as evil. Thus, it forces the committed artist to a self-censorship, to tune their work to single moral of the society. It is not easy to declare the contradictions in the war between the Palestine and Israel; the law forces the artist to have a perspective which is overvaluing human rights, therefore to have same distance to both sides while looking at the glasses of humanitarianism. Human rights that are used as a mean of creating consensus, in art as well become a way of creating social bond among all. Rancière (2009) states this as "yesterdays polemical violence tends to take on a new figure. It gets radicalized as a testimony to the unrepresentable, to endless evil and catastrophe"(p.122) Rancière adds that the unrepresentable in aesthetic reflection becomes what terror is in political level. The distribution of sensible in today's world, uses unrepresentable to create a consensus, and it prisons the works that are issuing these unrepresentable under the name evil. When the police attempts to stop the 'violence' of the unrepresentable, then actually art starts to wait for another one

and become ethical witnesses to this circle of doing and undoing, evil and justice. Unrepresentable indicates an inconvenience between the subject matter of art and its means. Rancière gives the example of television series *Holocaust* (Chomsky M. 1978) which is describing the henchmen and the victims through fictional bodies. The reactions to that movie, according to Rancière, show the pain in the camps is unrepresentable by such and such a mean. Therefore, this brings another question to art, how to represent the unrepresentable? Consequently, this new task of art becomes the norm of modern art. In the representative regime of art, Rancière (2010) states, it is possible to depict the Holocaust, because, this regime deals with conflict of personalities, their aims and the ways which they are transformed in accordance with the logic of situation (p. 125). However, the aesthetic regime of art runs with the restrictions of unrepresentability and after the ethical turn this unrepresentable erases the committed art. Rancière (2009) states that, this impossibility of representation is the lack in the representative regime of arts; the aesthetic regime of arts, on the contrary is "dedicated to testifying to the unrepresentable" (p. 127). Therefore, by doing so, Rancière opposes postmodern aesthetics; since in the aesthetic regime of art, the substance leaves its place to empty moralism. The unrepresentable becomes both the border and the substance of the art. The distinction between the modern art and postmodern art is at metapolitical level. However, in the core, Rancière (2009) underlines that "core linking the autonomy between the autonomy of art to the anticipation of a community to come, and therefore linking this autonomy to the promise of its own suppression" (p. 127).

Rancière (2009) states that the avant-garde movements were having this dilemma in a different form: on the one hand, they were dreaming of transforming the forms of art like constructing the forms of a new world in which art is not separated from

reality; on the other hand, they were preserving the autonomy of artistic sphere although they inscribe "the unresolved contradiction between the aesthetic promise and the realities of oppression in the world" (p.129). Finally, after the fall of the Soviets, namely, after the ethical turn these dreams turned into demonstrations of the social body, the consensus. Some of them give birth to artists that are designing new cities or introducing the art forms to suburbs of cities that Rancière calls the "soft" ethical turn. After the ethical turn, the avant-garde dream lost its link to future emancipation but instead to "an immemorial and never-ending catastrophe"(Rancière, 2009, p.129). Therefore, according to Rancière (2009), what is called resistant becomes "nothing but the endless work of mourning" (p. 130). The art that aims to recover the social bond in the community then merged the avant-garde in it, in the mourning the dream of emancipation got lost.

The ethical turn's aesthetic and politic dimensions are in a strong relation. The right and the fact emerge in one dominant moral in the ethical turn of politics. Parallel to that, two figures of avant-garde, struggle for promise of emancipation and prisoning of art into its own sphere, merged into one dominant dimension that tries to recreate the social bonds of the community. These two faces of ethical turn reproduce each other. Moreover, Rancière categorizes the exact changes in aesthetics after the ethical turn. Yesterday's radicality transformed into two different forms; according to this categorization the soft ethics of consensus in the result of adaptation of the radicality to today's conditions. And the exact overturning of the radicality gives lead to hard ethics of infinite evil or art devoted to the mourning of catastrophe. This ethical radicality, before looking for a future revolution as an orientation point of history, but now it looks back, for instance to the emergence of Nazi genocide that came to scene four or five decades after the discovery of camps (Rancière, 2009, pp.130-140).

When the hope of revolution got lost after the collapse of the Soviets, the order of events got linked to radicality in history. This historical radical catastrophe become the genocide says Rancière (2009), and "only a god could save us" (p. 131).

The ethical turn is not a necessity of history according to Rancière. The power of the ethical turn is its power of transformation. The transformation of forms of thought and attitudes which yesterday aimed at bringing about a radical political and/or aesthetic change. Thus, the emancipatory potential of arts, after the ethical turn, transformed into a way of erasing the dissensuses in the society and restoring consensuses parallel to the structure of the police.

CHAPTER 4

CINEMA AFTER THE ETHICAL TURN

"It amazes me that they [critics] pay so little attention to the subject matter.
They are always more interested in style and technique"
Ken Loach

4.1   Cinema and Emancipation

Rancière was always interested in films, and wrote *Film Fables*, in which he explains the place of cinema in his politic-aesthetic theory. According to Rancière, cinema is a "thwarted fable." What he means by this is that cinema contains both representational regime of arts and the aesthetic regime of arts. On the one hand as Bazin speculated, the realism, or the essence of cinema lies beneath its ability to record and techniques of long shots, deep focus, through which it invites the spectator to an independence of thought. However, narrative ordering techniques like montage imposes a hand of the director (Bazin, 1968, p. 35). On the other hand, Rancière (2006) gives Epstein as an example and states that "records things as the human eye cannot see them, as they come into being, in a state of waves and vibrations, before they can be qualified as intelligible objects, people, or events due to their descriptive or narrative properties" (p. 2). Therefore, cinema as a development of aesthetic regime, invariably reverts the movement because of its nature (Rancière, 2006, p. 1). According to Rancière, cinema's nature is its ability to

operate independent from the hand of the artist. On contrast to other plastic arts cinema offers passivity and the director tries to thwart this passivity by using montage or camera placement etc. In the one hand it is the ultimate medium of the modernist dream with its ability to bring the small details of reality, however on the other hand, the director forces it to have a fable. This is why Rancière calls cinema "thwarted fable." It belongs to representative regime but because of its very nature, cinema constantly thwarts the logic of fable and brings the aesthetic regime on stage. When it comes to political cinema Rancière states that:

> Art is not political owing to the messages and feelings that it conveys on the state of social and political issues. Nor is it political owing to the way it represents social structures, conflicts or identities. It is political by virtue of the very distance that it takes with respect to those functions. It is political insofar as it frames not only works or monuments, but also a specific space-time sensorium, as this sensorium defines ways of being together or being apart, being inside or outside, in front of or in the middle of, etc. It is political as its own practices shape forms of visibility that reframe the way in which practices, manners of being, and modes of feeling and saying are interwoven in a common sense, which means a 'sense of the common' embodied in a common sensorium.
>
> ("ARTicles: Rene -- Rancière -- The politics of aesthetics," n d, para. 2)

This paragraph should be considered parallel to the emancipation theory of Rancière. Emancipation for Rancière is based on his opposition to Althusser, because of the inequality understanding. He writes in *Althusser's Lesson* (2011), "Althusser needs the opposition between the 'simplicity' of nature and the 'complexity' of history: if production is the affair of the workers, history is too complex a thing for them and must be left to the specialists: the Party and Theory" (Rancière & Battista, p. 33). If the domination is changing its owner from owner of capital to owner of knowledge,

than according to Rancière, we are coming to the same place. When it comes to political cinema, in accordance with his understanding of equality, Rancière opposes the ideas that political cinema is political because of the representation of the social structures, conflicts or identities. On the contrary, showing them, or in other words teaching the spectator, brings a form of inequality.

He states "The ethical regime separates artistic simulacra from the true arts, i.e. imitations modelled on the "truth" whose final aim is to educate the citizenry in accordance with the distribution of occupations in the community" (Rancière 2004,p. 86). First of all, it is worth to remember what he learned from Joseph Jacotot who is "asserting that an ignorant could teach another ignorant what he did not know himself , proclaiming the equality of intelligences and calling for intellectual emancipation against the standard idea of the instruction of the people (Emancipated spectator)" (Rancière, 2009b, p. 3).

A political film that shows the "truth" assumes there is a spectator; now for Rancière (2009b) being a spectator

> means looking at a spectacle. And looking is a bad thing, for two reasons. First, looking is deemed the opposite of knowing. It means standing before an appearance without knowing the conditions which produced that appearance or the reality that lies behind it. Second, looking is deemed the opposite of acting. He who looks at the spectacle remains motionless in his seat, lacking any power of intervention. Being a spectator means being passive. The spectator is separated from the capacity of knowing just as he is separated from the possibility of acting. (p. 5)

Rancière offers emancipation from this definition of spectator. Emancipation is "the process of verification of the equality of intelligence". The equality of intelligence

means that "there is no gap between two forms of intelligence". From this point, the ignorant in a spectacle, which is the spectator, is getting questioned by Rancière (2009b).

> But why not turn things around? Why not think, in this case too, that it is precisely the attempt at suppressing the distance that constitutes the distance itself? Why identify the fact of being seated motionless with inactivity, if not by the presupposition of a radical gap between activity and inactivity? Why identify "looking" with "passivity" if not by the presupposition that looking means looking at the image or the appearance, that it means being separated from the reality that is always behind the image? Why identify hearing with being passive, if not by the presupposition that acting is the opposite of speaking? (p. 5)

By using his idea on equality of intelligences, Rancière (2009b) speculates:

> Emancipation starts from the opposite principle, the principle of equality. It begins when we dismiss the opposition between looking and acting and understand that the distribution of the visible itself is part of the configuration of domination and subjection. It starts when we realize that looking is also an action that confirms or modifies that distribution, and that "interpreting the world" is already a means of transforming it, of reconfiguring it. The spectator is active, just like the student or the scientist: He observes, he selects, he compares, he interprets. (p. 6)

Therefore, the political cinema is political not because it teaches to the spectator, but instead it is political because it is able to offer another distribution of sensible than the police order, which disturbs the current one. Therefore, this approach to spectator, changes the meaning of political cinema from an educative one in Brechtian sense to an emancipated one, since emancipation is both the emancipation of the spectator and the film.

How can we read the ethical turn in cinema then? The ethical turn is a result of a

specific distribution of sensible. It is possible to consider specific movies one by one and search for the motives of the ethical turn. The film *Children of Men* (*Alfonso Cuarón*, 2006) will be analysed under this light in next chapter. However, it is also possible to discuss the general tendencies parallel to definition of the ethical turn. According to Rancière, there are two branches of ethical turn in aesthetics: first, the artist indicates a unity, which is in general the police order in the state of exception, and second artist witnesses the catastrophe of today or yesterday.

4.2   Cinema of Consensus

The first tendency is the one, which is opposing the antagonisms in the world. Most of the times this unity of one moral is provided by the notion of human rights, which will be discussed in detail in the next section. This tendency assumes a bare human as a common point of all population, and underlines the violation of the human rights, or the rights of bare human. This violation in the movies becomes the knot that binds everybody to each other. However, as shown in the section the Ethical Turn in Aesthetics, these rights have already lost their fundamental meaning, on the contrary become means of making consensus, through which the state of exception rises.

A striking example to such kind of a tendency is the movie *In a Better World* (Susanne Bier, 2010) which is the Oscar winner of 2010 in best foreign language film. The movie show two stories one in Africa and the other in Denmark. Protagonist of the movie makes choices between the revenge and forgiveness in both

of the stories. In both of the cases the protagonist faces with the violation of his right and the cruelty of the others. However he chooses to stay silent instead of fighting against the violence. Telling two stores permit the movie for a generalization of the speech to all the world; we have similar cases in all parts of the world and our side should be to stay silent instead of fighting for our rights. The protagonist glorifies the bare human who is the innocent and should stay innocent, or bare human. The movie gives a strong feeling that, people, where ever they are living, should take the side of human being who is in conformity with the police order. Even if there are violence of rights, still one cannot use violence, because this puts the one into the side of the evil. This approach assumes and recreates a consensus upon the sacredness of bare human. It equates the humanitarian approach to life with the state of bare human.

The list made by Boggs and Pollard in *Hollywood and the Spectacle of Terrorism* (2006) also lists some of the movies like *Die Hard* (1995), *The Rock* (1995), that are taking the violation of human rights before September 11. as a central issue which will be underlined in the next chapter.

4.2.1   After 9/11

Another point that Rancière stated is the transformation of dream of revolution to radicality in history. This is what Rancière means when he says that time started to flow through back. When the hope from future got lost, the reference point becomes the radicality of past events, and artist structures his work in reference to the historical catastrophe. Rancière gives the example of Nazi genocide, and the appearance of the genocide in art decades after their acknowledgement.

This approach of Rancière reminds Naomi Klein's argument in her book *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (2008). She states:

> Without a story, we are, as many of us were after September 11, intensely vulnerable to those people who are ready to take advantage of the chaos for their own ends. As soon as we have a narrative that offers a perspective on shocking events, we become reoriented, and the world begins to sense again. (p. 458)

Films offer a narrative through which the spectator can reorient himself in front of the shocks. This shock is what Rancière calls the radicality of the past. The shock, which is an event in Deleusian sense, a breaking with causality, continues with a catastrophe. On the one hand what we have is, in Rancière's terms, an unrepresentable: Nazi genocide or for this example, 9/11 attacks. What makes the unrepresentable in these events is the moral of the police order which lets the artist to represent such and such a topic in only one perspective. In the genocide example the horror of the victims is unrepresentable. As Rancière quoted from Lanzmann no image can be adequate to the horror of the extermination camp (Rancière & Corcoran, 2010, p. 41). The image of the unrepresentable normalizes the unrepresentable, consequently, such kind of a thinking bans visibility of some images. On the other hand, the shocking event, according to Rancière, creates an era of historical catastrophe, from which only god can save us: it is what Agamben states as a messianic salvation from the constant catastrophe. When we think about the movies after the ethical turn, besides the Nazi genocide, 9/11. bombings become the subject of the unrepresentable. The catastrophe after the bombings, which created a social body among western societies, also lead to a consensus on the one kind of moral of the state of exception. The future revolution that breaks the linearity of

events is now the 9/11, a past catastrophe. Time flows through past not future.

Loin du Vietnam (1967) gives us a good example of this change of the unrepresentable after the US bombings. It shows six antiwar movies from six directors (Alain Resnais, Claude Lelouch, Jean-Luc Godard, William Klein, Joris Ivens and Agnes Varda). The documentary shows Fidel Castro, while stating that a guerilla war that has the support of the people is the only force stronger than the new technology. Or Godard states on the movie; "I wanted to show everything- revolution etc … But we are far away, so the best we can do is to make films – Let Vietnam invade us" (Monaco, 2004, p. 203). Obviously this is a political movie that states itself in a side which is in a disagreement with the American invasion in Vietnam.

It is possible to compare *Loin du Vietnam* with similar attempts that try to oppose with American invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. First of all, one should note that the protestation against the American invasion to Iraq was nearly comparable with the ones against Vietnam. However, in the time of consensus after the 9/11 the directors were not able to situate themselves in an obvious opposition with the American war. The ways of creating such a consensus will be discussed in detail in the next section. However, it is possible to consider the collection of films *11'09'01 – September 11* (2002) made by different directors from Ken Loach to Alejandro Gonzales Inarritu. None of these movies had the motives of *Loin du Vietnam*, although they also claim to be anti-militarist. Only three movies, from Ken Loach, Youssef Chahine and Sean Penn were able to bring noticeable critique to the US. Other movies are mostly talking about the personal stories of pain that is shared by the US citizens. These two movies as well are stating the violence is also coming from the US; however, do not place themselves in a part that is in disagreement with the police order, since there is

no such a part after the fall of the Soviets.

Another wave of films after 9/11 is the ones on the American soldiers in their fight against what Bush state as "axis of evil". In most of these movies we are faced with soldiers that are trying to protect human life, that are trying to bring justice to the world, in fear and chaos of the war zone. Oscar winner *The Hurt Locker* (Kathryne Bigelow, 2008)*, Restrepo* (Tim Hetherington, Sebastian Junger, 2010), *Jarhead* (Sam Mendes, 2005), *The War Tapes* (Deborah Scranton, 2006) and *In the Valley of Elah* (Paul Haggis, 2007) are example of such kind of movies: showing about soldiers fighting against the evil to bring the justice. In most of these movies there is the strong sense of bringing justice to these lands. According to Rancière's point of view, this is a part of the catastrophe, the terror of this world. A continuous fight against the evil.

Several books have been published on the films after 9/11 including *Rethinking Global Security: Media, Popular Culture, and the "War on Terror* (eds. Andrew Martin and Partice Petro, Rutgers University Press, 2006), *Reframing 9/11: Film, Popular Culture and "War on Terror"* (eds. Jeff Birkenstein, Anna Froula, Karen Randell, Continuum, 2010) and *The Selling of 9/11: How a National Tragedy Become a Commodity* (ed. Danna Heller, Palgrave, 2005). These editions are focusing on the movies after 9/11 to a great extent. However, Rancière's approach shows how cinema is turning back to representative regime although it is a production of aesthetic regime through the unrepresentable. The unrepresentable of current times is the attempts to break the social body that has been created in these examples by war on terror.

4.3.   Witnessing the Catastrophe

In the second tendency in films after the ethical turn, film positions itself in a position in which it witnesses the catastrophe of today or yesterday. A police system which is like a network and covering all the possible antagonisms itself, inevitably, includes all the catastrophe of the world. The police, which bases itself on the possibility of catastrophes, works like a machine in which human being is not able to breathe. Films show the misery in the police but they cannot come up with an antagonism to it, since consensus abolishes all conflicts already. Some examples of such kind of a tendency might be *Babel* (Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, 2006) and *Crash* (Paul Haggis, 2004). Both of the movies focus on the interconnectedness of things and the misery in the police order. A great system the people are in and sadness of the people is showed in the movies but they do not disturb the distribution of the sensible. In *Babel* the problem of the world is the lack of communication. The movie shows the great misery of the world and its interconnectedness, however, stays in this very point. In the Crash as well, somehow all characters meets with the others and there are no villains in the movie. However, there is a misery in the world that the movie shows. The way these movies depict the police order is totally different from the social realist movies. Lukacs defined realism as a literary mode, "in which the lives of individual characters were portrait as part of a narrative which situated them within the entire social dynamics of their society" (Lunn, 1984, p. 78). Namely, the social realism, which portrays the cruelty of capitalism, imitates the social dynamics of the police order. Thus, the existence of the social dynamics, which are shaping the stories of the character in the movies, becomes a stage for the clash of these dynamics. As Frederic Jameson stated "thus, realism is dependent on the possibility of access of the forces of change in a given moment of history"(*Writer*

and Critic, and Other Essays, n d, p. 115) However, in the movies after the ethical turn the main motivation is not forces of transformation but the *status quo*. *Lebanon* (Samuel Maoz, 2009), *Waltz With Bashir* (Ari Folman, 2008) are two examples that Zizek identifies in this kind of tendency.

Turkish director Aslı Özge made the movie *Men on the Bridge* (2009), which has been shown in many festivals including *32th Festival Internazionale Cinema e Donne*, in Florence. After the movie Aslı Özge and Emre Erkmen, the cinematographer of the movie gave clues on the mind of the artist after the ethical turn.

Aslı Özge stated that she never wanted to make a political movie. The movies that she made are in general related to her personal stories. When I asked about the motivations of making such kind of a movie, which shows the worlds of three low class people that are working on the same bridge, she answered:

- One of the reasons why I chose Fikret [gypsy character in the movie] and turned into fiction is Fikret told me about his experience. While they were looking at phones, they throw him out of the shop. This situation made me angry.

Emre Erkmen added:

- In the political movies in this sense [movies that wants to be political] the movie vomits; if you make a move just because he is Kurdish or under oppression, then you oppress him one more time. One more time he got excluded, one more time he became the citizen of second class. Therefore, it ruins the movie as well. Anyway, these kinds of movies

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never become successful, or become successful only in a part of society. If you make a movie on Kurdish issue, only people who are interested on that issue watch it. One shouldn't make a movie because he is Kurdish but instead because he is what he is. Otherwise, people who are not interested in Kurdish issue do not go to watch that movie. There is no point in this. The aim is to universalize this job (Kamiloğlu, 01.09.2010, Florance).

They made movies because of anger to the police order; this is exactly what Rancière is talking about while saying witnessing the catastrophe of today. The artist witnesses the world and shows the misery. This is a kind of mourning according to Rancière. Making a move to show the sadness of the world and try to make it attractable for everybody is the film after the ethical turn.

The approach of Rancière can be traced in the details of quite a lot of movies after ethical turn. This should be pointed out that the reflections of the ethical turn can be found in the details of movies, even if the main narration does not indicate it. A piece of dialogue, world view of a character, might be carrying these reflections, since what we can say and what we can see is determined by the distribution of the sensible in the times after the ethical turn.

CHAPTER 5

A CASE STUDY :

Children of Men

"So now what will become of us, without barbarians.
Those men were one sort of resolution."
Constantine Cavafy
"Waiting for the Barbarians"

(Cavafy, 2001, p. 93)

5.1   Dystopia of The End

The movie *Children of Men* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2006) is a dystopia in which people are not fertile anymore, and there are pandemics, violence, war, pollution and various threats against human life in a catastrophic world. It is possible to focus on two different parts in the movie, in order to catch the politics of Rancière: The *police* and the *demos* in the movie. However, first I would focus on the plot, so it would become easier to understand the politics in it.

The movie opens in a coffee bar where we are able to understand the youngest person in the world is dead in Buenos Aires. A few minutes later, the coffee bar explodes. From this scene, we understand that death and bombings are quite common in this London of the future. The hero of the movie, Theo Faron (Clive Owen) is kidnapped by a group of rebels, whose head is his ex-lover, Julian. The

group asks for travel papers from Theo in order to smuggle out Kee (Clare-Hope Ashitey) from the country. Then, Julian dies and we understand that she has been killed by a fraction in the group. Actually she has felt such an occasion before getting murdered so she chose Theo to take the papers and told Kee to trust only Faron. This point is important because we understand that the main reason of this assassination is a conflict inside the rebels group. The reason of the conflict is what to do with Kee and the future baby: a fraction of the rebels (the Fishes) wants to use this baby as a flag in order to reach the aim, which is freedom in Britain, rights for immigrants. However, Julian, the head of the group wants to give the baby to a vessel belonging to another organisation called the Human Project. After this point the movie becomes hide-and-seek: Faron and Kee are running away from the rebels, from government and bullets around in order to catch a ship (or a hope) called *Tomorrow.* They succeed to do so.

Children of Men draws a world order which is not an alternative world or a metaphor, but more likely a possible near future. It is like an exacerbation of today's world. Fisher (2009) states that "what is unique about the dystopia in *Children of Men* is that it is specific to late capitalism" rather than totalitarian dystopias like *V for Vendetta* (Jean McTeigue, 2005)" (p. 1). What we are facing in the movie is not like the world of George Orwell's *Animal Farm,* it is more like a world at the end of capitalism. Therefore, the movie gives us a chance to speculate not only on the description of the world in the movie but also on capitalism of today.

One of the screens in the movie, after showing the scenes of catastrophe from different cities of the world (like Paris, Moscow, Kuala Lumpur, Boston etc.) says "The world has collapsed; only Britain soldiers on." There is terror in all around the

world but in Britain. During the movie it is not possible to have an idea about what is exactly this terror that reigns on the other parts of the world. However, the images are showing fires, cries and people in pain. The catastrophe in other parts of the world creates massive migration to Britain and the reaction of the government in the movie, against the waves of people is to declare all the foreigners illegal. This declaration of course, spreads catastrophe to Britain as well. The movie shows us foreigners who are thrown out from their houses and caged by the police in the suburbs of London. Foreigners are in different colours and screaming in different languages. However, capitalism still reigns: it is possible to see franchise coffee bars and internment camps together. This is why the movie is on the end of the capitalism. The sentence which is attributed to Zizek states that "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than it is to imagine the end capitalism." Last breaths of capitalism, which is the imaginable of the movie, seem like the end of the world. The British state in *Children of Men* shrinks to its core military functions, and a strictly protected governing place. However, it seems there is still a public order. State is still in power with capitalism.

5.2   On the State

The state in *Children of Men*, is a specific police order. As it has been said before, according to Rancière (2004), police is "the set of procedures whereby aggregation and consent of collectives is achieved, the organization of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing this distribution" (p. 28). This

description is applicable for Britain in the movie. It is possible to see a specific kind of distribution of power, places and roles: Police is powerful, oligarch is small but strong. There is no clue about elections, or any other tools of representative democracy, however, it seems that the state has the consent of people. British citizens are going to their work, to streets and obeying the rule in their close circus. Therefore, the natural like order of the police continues with the domination it is having. This situation of the state can be explained through archipolitics of Plato rather than the parapolitics of Aristotle. We are seeing citizens in their place without any claim for democracy. It is possible to observe people working in different specific jobs but still without any place for art. Archipolitics does not leave any space in which political moment may occur, and this is what we are seeing in the movie. Although there is an unjust image of the world, it is not possible to see any protestation whatsoever. Even the old activist, Theo, seems totally tuned in the police order.

Agamben's term, the state of exception catches the core of what Rancière calls the ethical turn. It identifies the state as a state without borders, since the law includes the exceptions as well. Moreover, Agamben states that "not only as private/public, but also the house and the city, the exception and the rule, to reign and to govern, etc. But in order to understand what is really at stake here, we must learn to see these oppositions not as "di-chotomies" but as "di-polarities," not substantial, but tensional" (Raulff, 2004, p. 612). Also he adds that in these dipolarities, the government, the rule, and the city become more and more powerful in today's world. In the movie as well, we are not able to see a head of the government or government at all. What we are able to see in the spatial time of the movie is a country that is ruled by governing rather than reigning. It is worth to remember Deleuze while

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indicating Kafka (because of *The Trial*) as the prophet of distributed, cybernetic power that is typical of control societies. In *The Trial* it is not anymore possible to talk about a definite acquittal. Actually this is also specific to the archipolitics of Plato: everybody does his/her job and bureaucracy become "rule by no one" as Arendt said. Even the private space seems like something related to past. We are not able to see any scenes related to the house but only to city. The house and private is visible only in the world of rebels and old school Jasper, who seems like in outside of the police.

Exception States of today are therefore including the contradictions but these contradictions are actually not outside the law. The law brings also other contradictions. Alain Badiou observed in 'We live in a contradiction':

> a brutal state of affairs, profoundly inegalitarian - where all evaluated in terms of money alone - is presented to us as ideal. To justify their conservatism, the partisans of the established order cannot really call it ideal or wonderful. So instead, they have decided to say that all the rest is horrible. Sure, they say, we may not live in a condition of Goodness. But we're lucky that we don't live in a condition of Evil. Our democracy is not perfect. But it's better than the bloody dictatorships. Capitalism is unjust. But it's not criminal like Stalinism. We let millions of Africans die of AIDS, but we don't make racist nationalist declarations like Milosevic. We kill Iraqis with our airplanes, but we don't cut their throats with machetes like they do in Rwanda, etc. ("CABINET // On Evil: An Interview with Alain Badiou," nd)

What the police is advertising in the movie, is the chaos in other cities: Yes, we are not perfect, but in other cities terror reigns. This is what Badiou observes: "our democracy is not perfect. But it's better than the bloody dictatorships." In its extreme, this speech brings the justification to all kinds of exceptions. Yes there are cages all around in the move but government LCD screens are constantly reminding,

we are better than other cities. Only we are up. You have to take what we are giving you under the name of order.

While showing possible catastrophes of the worst, the police order also implies the possible repetition of these facts. Rancière (2009) exposes what Badiou points out to be one of the characteristics of the ethical turn: "So, there are two features that characterize the ethical turn. The first is a reversal of the flow of time: – progress, emancipation, or the other – is replaced by that turned towards the catastrophe behind us. But it is also a levelling out of the very forms of catastrophe"(p. 119) This catastrophe might be the Nazi State or the 9/11 attacks at different levels. In Lyotard (1992) a spatio-temporal repetition may be built into cultural texts, such as music, and in Paul Ricoeur (1990) the literary plot is in its essence repetitive. Repetition in the case of the ethical turn becomes a repetition of possible disaster, therefore repetition of the same anxiety again and again. This is exactly what Rancière means by permanent terror. It has been said before, terror is not only the crime of a singular event but it is also "the fear that similar event might recur"(Rancière, 2009, p.114). Efraim Sicher and Natalia Skradol (2009) state that:

> After the worst has already happened (the Bhophal disaster in India, Chernobyl, 9/11, or the SARS epidemic), the future can be imagined as a replay of disaster scenarios, in which we compulsively repeat past imagining of the future. This is a distinctly postmodernist marker of an end to the Western tradition of looking forward to the terminal transformation of the world either into a prelapsarian edenic state (a regression to a primeval paradise) or into a radically new political reality (a revision of history or rewriting the future). (p. 159)

Now, the police order justifies itself always through the past, however this justification also puts the past into the place of future. State of exception becomes a different form of past catastrophes, while taking these catastrophes as a touchstone.

This is why Agamben was defining the extermination of the European Jews as a *nomos* of today's society. He adds that Guantanamo is not that different from extermination camps of Nazi State (Raulff, 2004). In this aspect, 9/11 can be the last big thing of today's societies. Sicher and Skradol (2009) declare that "What 9/11 has shown is that the relationship of the real and the imagined in dystopian fiction has been reversed, since hypermediated image has eclipsed the event and fiction has become lived experience" (p. 153). Fisher (2009) states that in *Children of Men* "the focus shifts from the Next Big Thing to the last big thing - how long ago did it happen and just how big was it?" (p. 4). Adorno (1990) states that "The Holocaust has imposed a new categorical imperative on human beings: 'to arrange their thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself, so that nothing similar will happen'" (p. 365). The last big thing is the death of the youngest child in the movie. After this, an atmosphere of catastrophe dominates the society: all the people in the movie are listening to the news carefully and crying. This event is like recurrence of the start of infertility in the movie. The society always looks through past. There is no dream about future; the lack of protestations or people with different ideals comes parallel with this flow of time through past. The law puts itself as the only rule which can protect the society from the repetition of the evil, repetition of the last big thing. This is what Rancière calls eternal justice: this infinite recreation of the eternal evil and the justice making possible the consensus.

In different people we are able to see a certain tendency to religion in the movie. There are different Christian organizations in the movie, who consider infertility as a punishment of the God. They are gathering in public places. We are also seeing the raise of superstition and religious meditation in the movie. Belief to destiny is really strong, even in the mind of Jasper, who is living in the forest, out site of the city.

This proliferation of the superstition and religion is related to the loss of hope, hope for a different world. This fact is quite similar to today's democracies in the form of the loss of utopias. While Francis Fukuyama stated the collapse of the Soviet bloc as "the end of history", it was a euphemism for the end of utopias. According to Frederic Jameson, utopias have a tendency to raise "transitional periods," when major social changes are accompanied by a kind of political stasis, where the political will or means are lacking to give shape and direction to the changes. However, after ethical turn, the law started to act like above all. The separation, the distinction between "what is and what ought to be" is getting lost. What ought to be is the very fundamental question for utopias. Different morals, that are supposed to create politics, merge into one moral of the state through consensus after the ethical turn. The law acts as if it is the created through the consensus. If there are no different morals, then there is no place for utopias as well. Consensus, in the time of the ethical turn, also makes people believe that there is no need for a different moral. This is why Rancière underlines a certain tendency to nihilism. There is no need for utopia. If we consider the conditions of emergence of utopia that is stated by Jameson, it is possible to say that the police order also acts as if there is no transition even in the case of a natural disaster like infertility in *Children of Men*. Because, actually, the police strictly convinces us the transition is always in the police, since the law seems nearly like natural. Utopia as well, become possible only under the law, than, it is not a utopia anymore but mere wishes. This belief in the universal law is the very reason that creates the loss of utopia. Jameson (2007) observes:

> "what is crippling is not the presence of an enemy but rather the
> universal belief that the historic alternatives to capitalism have been
> proven unviable and impossible, and that no other socio-economic
> system is conceivable, let alone practically available. The Utopians
> not only offer to conceive of such alternate systems; Utopian form is

itself a representational meditation on radical difference, radical otherness, and on the systematic nature of the social totality, to the point where one cannot imagine any fundamental change in our social existence which has not first thrown off Utopian visions like so many sparks from a comet." (p. xii)

In the world without utopias, without a hope, meaning of life got lost in the mind of people. Jasper asks to Theo, what he did for his birthday. Theo answers "wake up, felt like a shit, went to work, felt like a shit". Jasper comments, "that is called hang over." "At least", says Theo, "with a hangover I feel something." In another point Kee talks about her pregnancy to Theo. When she felt the kick of the baby, Kee says "I felt like I am alive." She was not feeling alive till the baby. People in the streets are not talking; there is no single cheerful character. People are using antidepressants and a suicide kit called Quietus with the advertisement "there has been no cases of anyone surviving". All these drugs are given by the government. All this shows that the police order is not caring about the life of people anymore but in how they live. Police is organized in a way that actually it is based on management of how people will live, like biopolitics of Foucault. Foucault (2003) affirms that "sovereignty took life and let live. And now we have the emergence of a power that I would call the power of regularization [that] consists in making live and letting die" (p. 247). In *Children of Men* as well, the police chooses who will live and die between British and foreigners. Foreigners do not have a chance for life for the sake wellbeing of the state. Also British citizens, who have no hope or will to live, can kill themselves. The state makes people believe that these all are for the sake of community. Foucault (2003) states that the ultimate tendency of biopolitics is to control "relations between the human race, or human beings insofar as they are a species" (p. 245). Consequently, biopolitics also nurtures a growth in racism. Foreigners are destined to

death in the Britain of *Children of Men*. The huge masses of immigrants are empoweres the racism, since the police has to find a way for the order to continue. Foucault (2003) states that "[Racism] is primarily a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control: the break between what must live and what must die" (p. 254). The foreigners do not have right to live for the order than. Police introduces this break: it says in order to let British people live, others have to die. Thus it "make[s] the relationship of war function in a way that is completely new and that is quite compatible with the exercise of biopower" (Foucault, 2003, p. 255). Racism gets integrated to the system without problem. In *Children of Men* as well integration of racism into the police is observable. In the old newspapers stick on the wall of Jasper's house, the headlines are stating "All Immigrants are Illegal". When foreigners are taken to camps and destined to misery, there is no demonstration against, or any democratic movement. In the discussion in between the Fishes, Theo offers them to make the existence of a new baby public. However, Fishes replies to him, in this case government would take the kid and make it public as if the baby is from a British lady. They would never let such a manifestation that declares jugies are humans too. This is the state of exception; all citizens take this new era as if it *has* to be like this. All foreigners have to go to prisons as the police order says. The mechanic sound from the speakers in the movie say: "they are your neighbour, they are your relatives, do not protect the illegal immigrants!". Neighbours of Brits become an illegal immigrant in the day after. This is what happened in Nazi State. Foucault (2003) states that "The Nazi state makes the field of life it manages, protects, guarantees, and cultivates in biological terms absolutely coextensive with the sovereign right to kill anyone, meaning not only other people, but also its own people" (p. 260). This is intrinsic in the ethical turn;

police which exists with the consensus, turns this consensus on the minorities that it wants to eliminate. The consensus of the people can be hold easily by using racism which states that for the wellbeing of the majority, the minority is the problem. The scene in the movie is looking like what is happening in Europe, after the Arab revolutions of 2011 and war in Libya. Thousands of people are trying to reach to Italy and other countries of Europe. All Italians and Europeans know that people are dying while trying to come to the coasts of their countries. However, there is no strong movement to protect the immigrants in Europe. The police states that for the wealth of the society, these immigrants are danger. The police prevent people to think about the order itself instead, it creates states of exception and states of contradictions. The consensus of the population to the naturalness of the law lets the police to do so, since there is no other alternative. Theo says to Jasper, "world went to shit, even if fertility comes back". This words show the possibility of only one police order in the mind of Theo. The existing neoliberal world order collapsed, we can not build it again; therefore, there is no way of other possible other ways of living, not even another police order. Without the police order, there is only 'shit', according to Theo. The ethical turn has only one moral, there is no other ways of dreaming, other ways of believing what is and what ought to be. Thus, when we have collapsed what we have is nothing but a catastrophe. When law diminishes, there is nothing to put instead.

This fact reminds the mirror stage of the Lacanian theory. Mirror stage in Lacan defines first time the infant faces his mirror image. Magrini underlines that the mirror phase

> is the point at which the self-image of the child, fostered and nurtured
> through maternal identification, is disrupted by the unwelcome

intrusion of language, as a direct result of the child's encounter with the paternal (phallic) Other. Nevertheless, this agonizing "disruption," which exposes the child's former notion of a unified personality as illusory, is a necessary stage in the process of socialization, with its venerable principles of communication ("OTHERZINE : issue 10," n d para. 3)

This first encounter with the language creates a distance between the child and the social order. This encounter sets up a difference between the self and the parent and the self and society. This gap is like the gap between Theo and the society after the catastrophe. Before Theo was a piece of the police order, like the infant and the mother. However, then Theo feels a distance between him and the global society. Although he is obeying to the rules of the national police order, he feels a distance between him and the former international society. Collapse of the international police order works like facing with the language of the kid Theo was already a part of the international police order, however, now, he is totally distant to new form of society. Since, after the ethical turn, the law which rules to everything, it's nonexistence in some areas of the world is like losing this material relation with it. Therefore the gap in a situation of disagreement is visible from both sides of the conflict.

It has been stated that the movie is starting with the bombing of a coffee shop in the city centre. Theo asks to Jasper who might be responsible of the bombing. Jasper answers, "every time one of our politicians is in trouble, a bomb explodes". It is possible to approach this fact with the need for an endless terror in order to maintain current police order, since police order raises from the idea of infinite evil and justice. Bombs that are exploding time to time create a feeling of common faith like in the case of last big thing. Big disasters create a social body who has right to look for infinite justice in consensus. Same function for the bombings: they create a

common fear and a common consensus to justify trials to stop these feelings by any mean. One of the members of the Fishes in *Children of Men* says to Theo: "we do not bomb, that is what they [government] do to spread fear". Community believes that these bombings are because of the evil without a moral, consequently, "infinite justice than takes on its humanist shape as the necessary violence required to exorcise trauma in order to maintain the order of community" (Rancière, 2009, p.113). When the society believes there is an evil which pops up out from nowhere (without a moral), then the British society can justify the caged and beaten foreigners in *Children of Men*. This is the very reason that racists believe that there is an inborn evil in the people they want to exterminate. Jews in Nazi State or immigrants in Europe can be examples who are carrying the inborn evil. Racism comes with the idea that the others, has something missing to be a citizen. In order to stop the evil, terror starts, "which by definition never stops for beings who must endure the trauma of birth" (Rancière, 2009, p. 114). In the state of exception police order needs these bombings or at least the very possibility of bombings. The probability of these bombings works as a tool to create consensus upon the reactions of Government. This fact has two facets: first the community feels like a victim of the same disaster, so it is unified again; second the community feels the same responsibility to stop the violence. When we think of the 9/11 bombings not only US citizens but also all western society felt as if they are the victim. The responsible was first Al-Quaida, however in following years we witnessed the accusation to all fundamentalist Muslims. More conservatives started to claim being Muslim is the problem. Consensus on the need for justice used by the western politicians and armies of coalition were able to commit violent attacks against innocents, under the claim of bringing justice and restoring the international order. This is why a place like

Guantanamo was able to exist. When it comes to exception people do not ask questions, the fact loses its meaning, instead the law rules. Theo's questions to members of Fishes show this situation: Theo constantly accuses them for bombings and shows them an old event as a proof. However, Fishes tell him that they are not bombing for years now. In fact, the ignorance of Theo is showing the success of the propaganda of the government. In *Children of Men,* the police order is standing with the help of the bombings whose only responsible is the government. As a last point it is worth to remind some people like a group of scientist in Purdue University claims that US government is responsible for 9/11.("Purdue creates scientifically based animation of 9/11 attack," n d)

5.3   The Fishes

One of the Fishes in the movie says to Theo: "Fishes fight for equal rights for every immigrant in Britain". This claim is very fundamental for the creation of first a disagreement, which leads to politics. Rancière (2007) was stating that the essence of equality is to "undo the supposed naturalness of orders and to replace it with the controversial figures of division" (p. 32). The naturalness of the order is the racist British police, which bars foreigners and abandon them to misery in camps. Any claim of equality to undo this police order creates the dissensus. However, what is important in here is the method of this claim: according to Rancière violence is not a method because of its unequal character. Violence, as a method of communication with the domination of police, aims to reverse the distribution of power. Any violence against civilians then actually tries to force them to acknowledge the power

of the rebels. However, a claim for equality cannot use violence as a mean, because, as May (2007) stated, if those who have no part are to see themselves as equal to those who have a part, then they must also see those who have a part as equal to them (p. 34).

If the claim for equality is two-sided, then exposing the ones who have a part to violence, via bombing does not make sense. May (2007) adds that "What nonviolence can achieve is something else: not a reversal of power, but an effacing of the terms in which a context of power has been conceived" (p. 35). In *Children of Men*, the Fishes start to create dissensus in the police order only when they change their method from bombings to talking with people. One of the Fishes in the movie states that "we stopped bombing and we start speaking to people". Rancière states that political dissensus "is a conflict about who speaks and who does not speak, about what has to be heard as the voice of pain and what has to be heard as an argument on justice."(As cited in Bowman & Stamp, 2011, p. 1). Rancière was starting from Aristotle, he asserts that "dissensus is slaves understand language but don't possess it". The Fishes then, after choosing the method of speaking instead of bombing, what they made was a presupposition of equality. Before, by bombing public places, although in one hand they were trying to show their power to the society, on the other hand, it was a declaration of despair, it was the voice of pain. When they started to talk with people, they started to posses the language. This was a claim for their place in the society, their share from the visible and audible. Also such a claim instead of asking for share from the distributor, accepts this share as a presupposition. However it the case of bombing, what is on stage is instead of claiming what they already should have, a demand of having a share from the distribution from the distributor, or police.

However, government of course does not let them to change the distribution of the sensible. Police reacts against all possible treats against the order. Moreover, after the ethical turn, police uses its ability to manipulate the facts. In the one hand it shows the possible threats as if they are from a moral of evil. On the other hand, they manipulate the speech of the others; like the example in the movie, they blur what the rebels are saying by using old bombings. They again and again put them on trial in front of the moral of social body. Since the difference between the fact and the law got disappeared, police can manipulate both the fact and the law in an ambiguous area. They can create facts, like bombings, and judge the rebels. The fact becomes the law, and the law becomes the fact after the ethical turn.

The police has to cut the voice of the demos, because if they have a voice then they take a name. Rancière (2004) states "Whoever the nameless can not speak"(p. 23), like the slaves for Aristotle. If somebody has a name, then he/she becomes equal with others who are having a name or a part in the distribution of the sensible. Actually the word terrorist is used for this sake as well; first the word terrorist get filled with a lot of bad signifiers, like lawless murderers, baby killers or mad fundamentalist, then the police shows the crimes of the others again and again. Therefore, media becomes fundamentally important for the police order. This point becomes interesting for various thinkers. Jürgen Habermas (1991) states that "the world fashioned by the mass media is a public sphere in appearance only" (p. 171). The work of Herman and Chomsky (2002), *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* also discusses the role of media in consent making. In the case of terrorists, the state draws a picture of them as if they are not human with speech and voice but a demon. Boggs and Pollard (2006) writes on the appearance of the terrorist in Hollywood:

the demonized Other appears as a monolithic culture of thuggish male warriors who relish violence, directed mostly against innocent civilians, and who lack motives beyond hatred and jealousy. Despite their lack of intellectual sophistication and political strategy, however, such warriors are depicted as a grave threat to the very foundations of civilized society. (p. 347)

Boggs and Pollard also enlisted the other films with image of demonized terrorist in their book *Hollywood and the Spectacle of Terrorism* (2006) till 2002:

> *Navy Seals* (1990), *American Ninja 4: The Annihilation* (1991), *Patriot Games* (1992), *Chain of Command* (1993), *True Lies* (1994), *Under Siege 2* (1995), *Die Hard with a Vengeance* (1995), *The Rock* (1995), *Executive Decision* (1996), *G. I. Jane* (1997), *Air Force One* (1997), *The Peacemaker* (1997), *The Siege* (1998), *The Sum of All Fears* (2002).

In the case of *Children of Men* as well, the movie is depicting a part of the Fishes with a certain demonization. What divides the Fishes in this aspect is humanitarianism of some of them. Next section will focus on the analysis of this aspect.

5.4   Humanism as a Mean of Consensus

Slavoj Zizek published an article in the blog of *London Review of Books*, on the preference of academy between Kathryn Bigelow's *The Hurt Locker* (2008) over James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009). He was stating that "*The Hurt Locker* presents the US army in a way which is much more finely attuned to its own public image in our

time of humanitarian interventions and militaristic pacifism". He was also putting Ari Folman's animated documentary *Waltz With Bashir* and Samuel Maoz's *Lebanon* into the same side with *The Hurt Locker* and criticizing these movies as "ideology at its purest: the focus on the perpetrator's traumatic experience enables us to obliterate the entire ethico-political background of the conflict"("Green Berets with a Human Face LRB blog, n d, para. 1). What Zizek is criticizing in his essay may be called zooming to the victim human and the sacrificing *other*, in order not to show the whole picture of the conflict. These movies are forcing us to choose *life of human* if we are in between two sides of the war, which can also be a form of disagreement. The point is that the side of the *human life,* side of the ones that are trying to protect human rights seems like protecting the right to live or the "infinite justice". Although this emphasis on human rights itself has already a side, these movies show it as a subject of an ultimate consensus.

What we see in *Children of Men* is the conflict between two sides in Fishes upon what to do with the baby to born. Fishes are in a disagreement with the police for a better world: a world that gives equal rights to immigrants, to others, and a world which shares the welfare. However, there is another disagreement in between the Fishes; what to do with the kid. One part wants to make him a flag for their aim, for the equality between immigrants and British. The other part, including the protagonist of the movie, Theo, supports to give the new born baby to the Human Project in order secure his life. Finally, the movie puts the first part of the conflict on the side of "bad" and the second part on the side of "good". However, this distinction upon the life of the kid is quite problematic.

Alain Badiou gives a new approach to the issue of human rights, and the idea

of Evil that lies beneath it. According to Badiou, modern understanding of ethics is the main reason of the creation of a new understanding of universal human rights. He (2002) states that "ethics is conceived here both as an a priori ability to discern Evil (for according to the modern usage of ethics, Evil – or the negative – is primary: we presume a consensus regarding what is barbarian), and as ultimate principle of judgement, in particular political judgement: good is what intervenes visibly against an Evil that is identifiable a priori. Law itself, first of all law against Evil" (p. 8). Therefore according to Badiou, modern ethics that makes the law exist is actually based on the idea of Evil, the negative of Good. What makes the law is primarily the existence of the Evil and it presupposes a certain kind of consensus in defining what the Evil is. He (2002) highlights that this approach always considers human in its pure animal form, and he adds that "ethics thus defines man as a victim". Therefore this contemporary understanding of Ethics brings the idea of universal human rights. According to Badiou, this universal human rights understanding is then always far from the very nature of the situations because it always "ethically" tries to protect the right of the victim-man. Sam Gillespie states that according to Badiou, "ethics simply presumes a vague foundation on which judgements concerning singular situations are to be made. Since it always at an indeterminate distance from the situation, ethics can only ever be limiting or restrictive"(Brassier, 2001, p. 260). Moreover, Badiou states that capitalism is the main winner of this kind of an understanding of human rights: "who cannot see that this ethics which rests on the misery of the world hides, behind it's victim-Man, the good-Man, the white-Man?". This approach of Badiou is linked to Rancière's. It has been said that according to Rancière (2009) after fall of Soviet, human rights became the "ostensible basis for a new national consensuses could also serve as a basis for a new international order"

(p. 117). This attitude of overvaluing human rights became a subject for the creation of an international consensus, which helps to create a public body.

In the case of *Children of Men*, Kee and her baby are the victims. Ethics in the movie says that these victims should be protected according to their basic rights. One can not neglect the rights of the mother and the child for any aim. Even the name of the hope for their salvation is ironic: the Human Project. What Badiou and Rancière observe as a symptom of the ethical turn is visible in the movie: the baby and the mother are the symbols of "victim-Man, the good-Man, the white-Man". All the ethics that make the choice of Faron plausible is based on this understanding: human is a victim, and he has to be protected against the Evil. This is the ethical base that, according to Badiou, creates the human rights in today's world.

Faron, in *Children of Men*, never uses a weapon, but his courage. He never hurts others even for the sake of his aim, to protect Kee. Film gives the impression that he is fighting for the good, the human life in its very basic form. In this point it is possible to turn back to the argument of Zizek "humanitarian interventions and militaristic pacifism". Kee is actually the most crucial weapon for both rebels and the government. However, the hero is choosing a military pacifism and "ethical" fight for the life of the baby.

Of course there is no way of knowing what will happen if the baby is used for the aim of Fishes and if a new distribution of the sensible comes into scene. In this point the politics of Rancière is getting close to Deleuze. In the case of Rancière, political action is not foreseeable because new distributions of sensible always creates new possibilities for a new form of political action. Chesney (2010) states that political action for Rancière "is always in a sense unanticipated, since the notion of political

agency and action is always at stake. And a new partition of the sensible or the polis always results which in turn creates new possibilities of action and understanding this is in fact a point of very close contact between Deleuze's thought and Rancière's."(p. 33). However, for Deleuze there is no presupposition for the emergence of politics which is equality in the philosophy of Rancière. For Deleuze new configurations create new deterritorializations or new lines of flight, which is totally non-dialectical. In "*68 Did Not Take Place*", Deleuze (2007) writes:

> In historical phenomena such as the revolution of 1789, the Commune, the revolution of 1917, there is always one part of the event that is irreducible to any social determinism, or to causal chains. Historians are not very fond of this aspect: they restore causality after the fact. Yet the event is itself a splitting off from, or a breaking with causality; it is a bifurcation, a deviation with respect to laws, an unstable condition which opens up a new field of the possible. (p. 233)

The baby in the hands of Fishes may open up new fields of possible or new distributions of sensible. The ultimate aim of Fishes, equality, makes it a political action in Rancières sense, without it depending on how the movement will end.

The movie identifies the first part among Fishes with violence and the other part with pacifism of being a victim. Therefore this fact comes like an obstacle for the subjectification of Fishes. When they were fighting with the claim of equality, they were able to become a subject; however victim part of Fishes does not have such a claim. They are just victims that are exposed to the violence of police order and the first part of the Fishes. This is where the movie is creating consensus on what is good and what is bad: through the use of basic human rights which is a result of the ethical turn. The movie is creating a kind of consensus in the mind of spectators throughout

the choice of the heroes: the political distinction between different camps of the conflict becomes an ethical one finally. Then, the movie is creating a kind of consensus with the spectator upon the life of the victims. Consequently, human rights become a tool for the elimination of the political. Rancière claims that consensus on human rights is a good example of creation of consensus by the police order: they are constructed on egalitarian rhetoric, but current politics shows that they become just a tool of legitimization of the politics of dominant power. Zizek states the misuse of human rights as "the "right to privacy"— the right to adultery, done in secret, where no one sees me or has the right to probe into my life. The "right to pursue happiness and to possess private property"— the right to steal (to exploit others). "Freedom of the press and of the expression of opinion"— the right to lie. "The right of the free citizens to possess weapons"— the right to kill" ("Slavoj Zizek - How to Read Lacan - From Che vuoi? to Fantasy: Lacan with Eyes Wide Shut," n d, para. 5).

This process of the creation of consensus brings a kind of depoliticization. This is what Chantal Mouffe (2005) in her work *On the Political* is trying to explain. "Yes, after the fall of Soviets a change through the protection of human rights comes into scene but this change is not bringing prosperity, peace" (p. 1). Her claim is "contrary to what post-political theorists want us to believe, what we are currently witnessing is not the disappearance of the political in its adversarial dimension but something different. What is happening is that nowadays the political is played out in the moral register. In other words, it still consists in a we/they discrimination, but the we/they, instead of being defined with political categories, is now established in moral terms" (p.1). This is what Rancière is defining as Ethical Turn.

Badiou (2002) objects to this approach to ethics after the ethical turn,: "No! You are

forgetting the active subject, the one that intervenes against Barbarism! ... we are dealing with an animal whose resistance, unlike that of a horse, lies not in his fragile body but in his stubborn determination to remain what he is that is to say precisely something other than a victim, other than a being for death, and thus: something other than a mortal being". Badiou offers a new kind of ethics which is based not on the victimhood of the Man, but on his power to resist. The very fundamental fear of modern ethical view, the death, and therefore, the protection of life, would not be anymore the main concern. Therefore a new kind of human rights or rights of man is possible :

> If rights of Man exist, they are surely not rights of life against death, or rights of the survival against misery. They are the rights of Immortal [in resistance in Badiou], affirmed in their own right, or the rights of the Infinite, exercised over the contingency of suffering and death. The fact that in the end we all die, not only dust remains, in no way alters Man's identity as immortal at the instant in which he affirms himself as someone who runs counter to the temptation of wanting-to-be-animal to which circumstances may expose him. And we know that every human being is capable of being immortal- unpredictably, be it in circumstances great or small, for truths important or secondary. (Badiou, 2002)

From this new understanding of ethics and human rights, it is expected our heroes in *Children of Men*, not to try to protect the powerless victim but on the contrary, to mobilize her in order to protect rights of Man. Opposition to the dominant, should be the main motivation of Kee and Faron. The movie is zooming not on the main political struggle between the dominant and the resistant, but on the conflict of the rebels, and showing this as if it is related to an ethical right and wrong, which is constructed by the neoliberal police order after the fall of Soviets. Therefore, the movie is reproducing the dominant ideology and its discourse that aims depoliticization and condemnation of political resistance.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Figure 6.1. Obezler Terörist Olamaz (Obeses can't be terrorist) Nalan Yırtmaç

Jacques Rancière, with his unique definition of politics, shows the relation between politics and aesthetics. Politics and aesthetics both effect and are affected by the distribution of the sensible. Theories of Rancière are based on an axiom of equality. This emancipation theory does not only look for a political emancipation but also shapes itself as a piece of this emancipation and presupposition of equality. Moreover such a theory brings emancipation from the distribution of sensible of arts, because of the relation between art and politics. This emancipation theory struggles against domination of the police order and also the domination of the knowledge. It calls for new configurations of the social and political relations, education and art.

In the first body chapter of the thesis, I have focused on the roots of the theories of Jacques Rancière. The main aim was to give a general overview of his political theories, in order to develop following sections. As a main motive, the first chapter

has focused on the relations between police and demos and finally it developed the conditions of emergence of politics.

In the third chapter, which is the second body chapter, I have focused on the term the ethical turn in two different perspectives: the ethical turn in politics and the ethical turn in aesthetics. This section based on the main article that Rancière discusses the ethical turn, however, at the same I have tried to clarify the general aesthetic theory of Rancière and different thinkers that he mentions in the main text. Also in this chapter I have tried to show the connections of the term ethical turn with the political theory of Jacques Rancière.

In the fourth chapter I have analyzed the ethical turn in cinema. To do so I have explained the ideas of Rancière on cinema and tried to combine it with the notions that he is using in the main article of the ethical turn. I have tried to categorize movies depending on these notions and find similar points among movies that resembles with these points.

In the last chapter I have tried to combine what is discussed in previous chapters in a case study of *Children of Men.* This discussion of *Children of Men* enabled me to comprehend and conceptualized not only the movie but also the theories of Jacques Rancière. Also this reading of the movie gave me chance to integrate theories of different thinkers to the ones of Rancière. In the second section of this chapter I have focused on the structure of police in the dystopia of Children of Men. In the last section the focus was on the demos, consensus and infinite justice. I have tried to uncover the use of human rights as a means of consensus making.

The perspective of the this work identifies the regimes of art which are results of

certain changes in the distribution of the sensible in the world. However this regimes are very broad views on the history of art; rather this work shows that it is possible to read the motives of the certain distribution of the sensible even in a single movie. If the political is to create disturbances in the political order and the distribution of the sensible, political movies should as well. However, it does not mean to witness to the catastrophe of the world but to depict it in other words that does not appropriate for the police order. The concept of the ethical turn shows that even in the aesthetic regime of arts there are unrepresentables and the ways of representing such and such a topic. Therefore, it is possible not to do so, which brings the political into the cinema. Even *Children of Men*, which is an appreciated movie with its critical position, actually represents what is representable. Therefore the perspective of Rancière shows that still there is a place for the political, or for antagonisms, although the current police order tries to show there is no meaning of it, through consensus and the infinite evil.

The approach of Rancière that is examined in this work gives us a thorough study of the relation between politics and cinema; which does not only show how this two relate to each other but also, the conditions of the emergence of a political cinema. Answer of Rancière to the question "what is politics?" become an answer to the "what is political cinema?". Secondly, this study shows how cinema and politics are getting shaped by the same distributions in the society, and how it is possible to read these distributions through cinema. And finally, this study underlines a general tendency in the cinema after the fall of Soviets or the ethical turn. This tendency is to create a consensus against the "evil" and witness the world in catastrophe.

The approach of Rancière to aesthetics and politics may seem pessimistic, but he

(2002) explains why he is not:

> In sketching out these entropic scenarios of the politics of aesthetics, may seem to propose a pessimistic view of things. That is not at all my purpose. Undeniably, a certain melancholy about the destiny of art and of its political commitments is expressed in many ways today, especially in my country, France. The air is thick with declarations about the end of art, the end of the image, the reign of communications and advertisements, the impossibility of art after Auschwitz, nostalgia for the lost paradise of incarnate presence, indictment of aesthetic utopias for spawning totalitarianism or commodification. My purpose has not been to join this mourning choir. On the contrary I think that we can distance ourselves from this current mood if we understand that the 'end of art' is not a mischievous destiny of 'modernity', but the reverse side of the life of art. (p.150)

The theories of Jacques Rancière that are based on the principle of equality give us a chance to consider art, notably cinema and politics with a theory of emancipation. The method of Rancière does not let spectator feel as a passive subject that is exposed to images and ideas in cinema theater, but instead an active subject because of the ability of thinking, seeing, creating relations and bonds. Such an approach brings an important critique of not only grand theories such as the postmodernism. It is possible to see effects of different thinkers and resemblances in the works of Rancière. But it is important to underline that, he comes up with a complete theory of politics and emancipation, and an egalitarian logic which is unique.

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