A CONTEMPORARY CONTRIBUTION TO UTOPIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT: JACQUES RANCIÈRE'S AESTHETIC HETEROTOPIA

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

BY

NİSA DURDU

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

SEPTEMBER 2025

Approval of the thesis:

A CONTEMPORARY CONTRIBUTION TO UTOPIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT: JACQUES RANCIÈRE'S AESTHETIC HETEROTOPIA

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ABSTRACT

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September 2025, 153 pages

This thesis aims to answer the question how to reclaim utopia as an emancipatory concept in our contemporary era, which constitutes a crisis of political imagination due to the dominance of dystopian narratives. As its main argument, the study offers Jacques Rancière's philosophy, particularly his concept of aesthetic heterotopia, as a form of "enacted utopia" that presents a significant contemporary contribution to utopian political thought. Rancière's framework for aesthetic heterotopia synthesises the process-oriented qualification of iconoclastic utopias with Michel Foucault's concept of heterotopia in a refined way that emphasises temporality. An aesthetic heterotopia presents not a distant ideal but a temporary event when and where aesthetic-political acts create a dissensus, a rupture in the dominant "police order" that governs the "distribution of the sensible". This rupture provides the reconfiguration of this sensible order – of what can be perceived and said – that allows for new political subjects to perform equality in the here-and-now. The thesis investigates the evolution of utopian political thought, scrutinises Rancière's philosophy, and identifies aesthetic heterotopia's key functions: aesthetic rupture in the sensible order, juxtaposition of incompatible elements, counter-emplacement of

political subjectivation, and heterochronia, or disruption of time. Ultimately, the study explains that Rancière's concept of aesthetic heterotopia posits how radical politics are enacted through aesthetic ruptures in the here-and-now as a response to today's dystopic despair.

Keywords: utopia, aesthetic heterotopia, Jacques Rancière

ÖZ

ÜTOPYACI SİYASAL DÜŞÜNCEYE ÇAĞDAŞ BİR KATKI: JACQUES RANCIÈRE'İN ESTETİK HETEROTOPYASI

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Eylül 2025, 153 sayfa

Bu tez, distopik anlatıların egemenliği nedeniyle politik tahayyülde bir krize yol açan çağdaş dönemde ütopyanın özgürleştirici bir kavram olarak nasıl geri kazanılacağı sorusunu yanıtlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmanın temel argümanı olarak, Jacques Rancière'in felsefesi, özellikle de estetik heterotopya kavramı, ütopyacı siyasal düşünceye önemli bir çağdaş katkı sunan bir "gerçekleştirilen ütopya" biçimi olarak nitelendirilmektedir. Rancière'in estetik heterotopya çerçevesi, ikonoklastik ütopyaların süreç odaklı niteliğini, Michel Foucault'nun heterotopya kavramıyla zamansallığı vurgulayan rafine bir şekilde sentezler. Estetik heterotopya, uzak bir ideali değil, estetik-politik eylemlerin bir uyuşmazlık, "duyusal olanın dağıtımını" yöneten baskın "polis düzeninde" bir kopuş, yarattığı zaman ve yerde geçici bir olayı temsil eder. Bu kopuş, yeni politik öznelerin burada-ve-şimdide eşitlik sergilemesine olanak tanıyan bu duyusal düzenin – algılanabilir ve söylenebilir olanın – yeniden yapılandırılmasını sağlar. Tez, ütopyacı siyasal düşüncenin evrimini araştırır, Rancière'in felsefesini inceler ve estetik heterotopyanın temel işlevlerini belirler: duyusal düzende estetik kopuş, uyumsuz unsurların yan yana getirilmesi, politik özneleşmenin karşı-mevzilenmesi, ve heterokroni, yani zamanın kesintiye uğraması.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma Rancière'in estetik heterotopya kavramının, günümüzün distopik umutsuzluğuna bir yanıt olarak, radikal politikanın burada-ve-şimdide estetik kopuşlar yoluyla nasıl hayata geçirildiğini ortaya koyduğunu açıklar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: ütopya, estetik heterotopya, Jacques Rancière

Dedicated to all those who struggle for an emancipated world

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor for their exceptional guidance and unwavering support throughout this research. I am also profoundly thankful for my wonderful family and friends; their love, patience, and encouragement were my constant source of strength. This accomplishment would not have been possible without them.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To speak of utopia today is to feel out of step with the times. In a post-modern age where the "end of history", and thus the "end of politics", is declared, politics has become a rare occurrence. The slogan of "there is no alternative", as associated with neoliberal politicians like Margaret Thatcher and Angela Merkel, has marked the politics of nearly the last half-century. The pervasive logic of late capitalism has become the unspoken common sense of our era. This pervasiveness, which amounts to a seizure of the future, is reflected through visions of dystopian thinking. Not only the political discourse, but also our cultural capital is under occupation. All kinds of fictional productions, varying from cinema to literature, tend to present increasingly more dystopian visions of post-apocalyptic societies living through ecological collapses in tyrannical technocracies. This is not even fiction anymore; this is reality. The system, so to speak, forces us to think about how things can get worse, and it blocks our imagination. All imagination is lost because of the wish of advanced capitalism to conserve the existing structure, and thus, to prevent the emergence of an alternative, with the idea that the existing order functions perfectly.

In such a conservative order, going out of the frame gains utmost importance. Imagination, as a faculty that needs to be saved and taken out of this limiting frame, acquires a political meaning. It is in this context that imagining good alternatives and thinking about "another world is possible" gives birth to the idea of utopia. It is an idea that has lived in the hearts and minds of human beings for ages. Beginning from the dialogues of Plato, going until the current forms of literature, politics, and philosophy, the notion of utopia found a place for itself in a myriad of meanings, often contradictory with each other on the course of its history. The definition of utopia more or less points to a society in perfect order. As any social scientist would

ask, whose order is it? In our contemporary society, it is the order of neoliberalism and late capitalism. This is their utopia, with defining blueprints as their boundaries.

In a world where all kinds of information, necessary and unnecessary, feed the human mind through digital technologies, complex social norms are spread in a top-down manner. Though social sciences investigate this relationship thoroughly, the ideas of one particular French philosopher help make sense of the picture with all details: Jacques Rancière's philosophy relates to contemporary society more and more day by day. While his philosophy is essential, a foundational understanding of Michel Foucault's work is necessary to grasp the context and stakes of Rancière's own theoretical concepts. Our socio-political environment and different spaces we inhabit, dominated by social media-driven narratives of truth and highly developed networks of surveillance, can be illuminated by Foucauldian concepts very clearly and in detail. By analysing his interconnected theories of power-knowledge, panopticism, and heterotopia, we can trace a transitional logic from intentional creation of truth to its practical enforcement in the spaces of this pervasive order.

Throughout the socio-political history, power has been conceived as a repressive, top-down force, whether it is enforced through kings' decrees or laws passed by parliaments. However, for Foucault, power is not possessed by any person or institution; it is something that is exercised. It is a network of relations spread through all levels of society. This network of relations has a mutually constitutive relationship with knowledge, which emphasizes that power produces knowledge and knowledge legitimates power.[1] As a result of this relationship, systems of knowledge define what is normal and abnormal, legitimate and illegitimate. Such categorisation defines what the truth is, as the power-holder regime creates its own regime of truth, which allows for the control of populations. For example, by defining "madness", psychiatry gained the authority to exercise power over individuals through an institution.[2] This demonstrates that the knowledge of the definition of "madness" is the very framework that made the exercise of power legitimate. Therefore, such

[1] Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). Vintage Books. (Original work published 1975)

[2] Ibid.

functioning of power-knowledge proves that power is an instrument that shapes our reality by defining what can be known.

If we attribute power-knowledge as the strategic logic that categorises society, panopticism comes to be one of its most effective mechanisms. The panopticon, borrowed from Jeremy Bentham's design for an ideal prison, reflects a copy of the state of surveillance in its design.[3] A guard tower watches a circle of cells in which prisoners in all cells are always visible to the guard in the tower, whereas the guard is invisible to the prisoners. Hence, the prisoners do not know when they are being watched, which causes them to act as if they are constantly being watched. Such surveillance ultimately causes the automatic functioning of power. Regardless of the guard's presence, prisoners gain an internal self-discipline, which becomes the main enforcer of power, rather than the physical force of the guard as an external element. Ultimately, the prisoners turn out to be their own overseers.

Foucault argued that this panoptic model has become the principle of modern society. The same logic is evident in many areas of life, from hierarchical relationships imposed at school to the supervision of workers in factories. The proliferation of CCTV cameras, the monitoring of online activity, and the selective self-presentations on social media platforms all operate on a panoptic principle. This is power-knowledge operating at its most efficient, shaping behaviours not in an undisguised manner but in a pervasive anxiety of observation. This provides docile conformism and obedience.[4]

After setting up a perfectly dystopian picture, the critical question arises: Are there any outside of this order? Foucault answers with his concept of heterotopia.[5] The morphology of the word rings a bell for utopia and directs us to compare them inevitably. While utopias depict idealised and placeless places, heterotopias are real, physical "other spaces" that function differently from the rest of the spaces in

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Foucault, M. (1998). Different spaces. In J. D. Faubion, Ed. & R. Hurley, Trans., *Aesthetics, method, and epistemology*. (pp. 175-185). The New Press. (Original work published 1994)

society. They are spaces that contest, reflect, and invert the dominant social order. Significantly, heterotopias function in relation to all other spaces, and they are not completely separated from society. A prison, for example, is both a product of the disciplinary society as a panoptic space and a heterotopia of deviation. These "other spaces" are not escapes from the system of power-knowledge but rather are linked to it since they reflect the existing order and unveil its constructed and contingent nature. They are complex emplacements where an alternative social ordering is obtained in which power-knowledge is contested and reimagined.

Although Foucault's heterotopia can present an alternative order to our contemporary dystopian society, it does not provide a fully transforming analysis regarding the functioning of the social order. Also, his heterotopias can be instruments of a power-knowledge relationship. The previous example of prisons demonstrates this relationship very well through oppressiveness, hierarchical structure, and conspicuous enforcement of power. Additionally, it shows that heterotopias can function institutionally as well. Thus, Foucault's heterotopia only depicts emplacements that work uncommonly, and they do not necessarily represent a radical political movement, nor do they aim to transform society. This demonstrates that it can take both forms as it does not have a concrete shape of its own. It can function both against and for society. Foucault explains the dystopian social structures very well but does not offer a solution to or an exit from them.

Thus, this thesis seeks a solution theoretically that can also be implemented practically. The inspiration originates from the student movements of May 1968, to which my generation experienced a similar one in another May. Clearly, the Gezi Park protests had a different context than the May 1968 protests. However, it was when I met with Louis Althusser's students through reading an interview, and one of them had my particular attention: Jacques Rancière. Although I was only seventeen then, I promised myself to read his works extensively sometime in the future, as I admired his perspective very much. Ten years later, I had the chance to read all his works translated into English with the same excitement as on the first day I encountered him back in 2013. As a result of this profound study, I have found what I needed: a radical political theory that can be implemented practically.

For the sake of integrity, I will directly pass on to Rancière's concept of aesthetic heterotopia in comparison with Foucault's heterotopia. Foucault's heterotopia is a real physical space that exists alongside normal spaces of society. It has a tangible existence as a counter-emplacement that inverts the relations of power-knowledge and challenges the dominant social order. In contrast, Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia is not necessarily a physical space; it is more of an aesthetic and political event.[6] Although it also challenges the established order, it is not related to the relations of power-knowledge. What he is concerned about can be better explained with the reconfiguration of the sensible order. It creates a new "common" by making visible those who were invisible and making audible those who were previously only making noise. For Rancière, this is an aesthetic and political event before it is a spatial one. It is a moment of "dissensus" that challenges the established order of perception.

Moreover, the two heterotopias are different in terms of their relationship to power. Foucault's heterotopias are products of and instruments for societal power. Prisons, for instance, are products of disciplinary power. They can also be places of resistance, but their primary function is to regulate populations.[7] This makes Foucault's heterotopia dependent on control mechanisms within the established framework that mostly function institutionally.

On the other hand, Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia is a political act of disruption. It is not about regulating populations, but about bringing equality to the excluded from the "police order" (Rancière's term for the established sensible order).[8] Aesthetic heterotopia has a capacity to create a temporary community of sense, depicting an alternative space-time where the excluded are included and the previously insensible becomes sensible. This constitutes a disruptive and emancipatory act as it redefines the political, ignoring the police order.

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[6] Rancière, J. (2010). The aesthetic heterotopia. *Philosophy Today, 54*, 15-25. https://doi.org/10.5840/philtoday201054Supplement42

[7] Foucault, Discipline and punish.

[8] Rancière, J. (1998). *Disagreement: Politics and philosophy* (J. Rose, Trans.). University of Minnesota Press. (Original work published 1995)

Of course, they have similarities as well. Both concepts describe "other spaces" that interrupt everyday life and perception. They both have a disruptive function by creating a gap in the prevalent order. They both shatter reality and the sensible order, revealing the arbitrary and exclusionary character of the existing system. Ultimately, they both open up possibilities for thinking and sensing in an alternative way.

In essence, while Foucault provides an alternative way of seeing society through spatial manifestations, Rancière offers an analysis of how aesthetic and political acts can reconfigure the sensible order, which allows for new possibilities for political subjectivation. Foucault's concept is more concrete and can take an institutional form, while Rancière's is based on an event that carries the potential for social transformation. Nonetheless, both philosophers saw an oppressive regime as problematic and tried to find an alternative space-time in the here-and-now.

The idea of setting an alternative space-time while living in a dystopian society made me question the validity of the concept of utopia in radical politics. Utopia is a dream of perhaps the biggest social transformation, and to achieve such a massive transformation, there must be radical political acts. True politics is not the act of governing this order; politics happens when the excluded take to the stage. This causes the existing system to crack through an act of "dissensus".[9] It creates a rupture in the common sense that reveals the contingency and arbitrariness of the police order. It is in the intersection of aesthetics and politics that allows Rancière to reinterpret the utopian thought. Taking this idea as the starting point, this study argues that Rancière's philosophy, particularly his concept of aesthetic heterotopia, represents a significant milestone in the evolution of utopian political thought. Inspired by Foucault's idea of heterotopias, Rancière presents a radical politics which shifts Foucault's focus on spatiality to the temporality of disruption. An aesthetic heterotopia is a space-time created by an aesthetic experience, such as an artistic performance or a political demonstration, that interrupts the normal functioning of the sensible order.[10] It is an "enacted utopia", a momentary realisation

[9] Rancière, J. (2001). Ten theses on politics (D. Panagia & R. Bowlby, Trans.). *Theory & Event, 5*(3), 7-24. (Original work published 1997) https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/tae.2001.0028

[10] Rancière, "The aesthetic heterotopia".

of an alternative way of sensing that occurs in the here-and-now, rather than a distant future.[11]

The ambiguity of the term utopia brings slippery ground for its definition. A society in a perfect order comes to be the description of any conservative ideology. Plato and Thomas More did the same thing as well; they dreamed of a perfect society, and they wanted to preserve it by drawing strict boundaries. Any limiting ideology with decisive blueprints would only have its own selective utopia, which does not include everyone. Utopia with blueprints is the utopia of the grand design, perfect order, and stable consensus.[12] With these characteristics, it presents a well-constructed description of totalitarianism.

However, when Plato and More dreamed of utopias, were they thinking about being oppressive? Their narratives and patterns of thought do not tell so; on the contrary, they imagined only liberation and emancipation. Otherwise, they would not have a huge place in radical (leftist) political theory. At this point, it becomes necessary to purify utopia from the features that give it a totalitarian meaning. Therefore, the question that needs to be answered is: How can we reclaim utopia as a critical and emancipatory concept?

Although the term utopia is full of contradictions, its evolution since its very emergence is remarkable, with its improved definitiveness and adaptability. The inherent contradiction of utopia that comes and goes between *eutopia* (the good place) and *outopia* (no place) has been the main reason for the long and complex journey that enabled utopia to transform its imaginative faculty until it reaches its ultimate form as a depiction of radicality. This study aims to explore these waters, tracing the evolution of utopian political thought from its classical origins to its indomitable contemporary denomination.

Within the scope of the background information explained above, Chapter 1 provides a comprehensive investigation of utopian political thought, tracing its evolution from

[11] Foucault, M. (1986). Of other spaces (J. Miskowiec, Trans.), *Diacritics*, *16*(1), 22-27.

[12] Jacoby, R. (2005). Picture imperfect: Utopian thought for an anti-utopian age. Columbia University Press.

ancient depictions to contemporary debates. In the vast ocean of the literature of utopian thought, certain definitions and categorisations had to be made, as there is no agreed-upon definition or concept, including the term utopia itself. In this context, the historical development of the concept of utopia is divided into three categories: blueprint utopias, anti-utopias, and iconoclastic utopias. Blueprint and iconoclastic utopias have given decisive characteristics for the sake of definition. In line with this, the former one is attributed with the characteristics of perfection, stasis, order, and consensus. In contrast, the latter is attributed with the opposite characteristics of imperfection, dynamism, temporality, and dissensus. Anti-utopias, on the other hand, are positioned in between as the bridge that provides the transition from the era of blueprint utopias to the era of iconoclastic utopias. They provide the main criticism against blueprint utopias; however, this is not to offer a better theory for social transformation from outside the system, but to only offer making politics inside the relations of power-knowledge, in a Foucauldian sense, or the established sensible order, from a Rancièrean perspective. Within this scope, Karl Popper, Hannah Arendt, and Isaiah Berlin's views are discussed in this section. Lastly, in the chapter, heterotopias are examined in relation to utopias, together with their similarities and differences. The chapter aims to give a whole concept of utopias and heterotopias, showing the progression from abstract ideals to critiques that lead to concrete spaces of resistance.

Chapter 2 offers a fundamental lexicon of Rancière's philosophy with the essential concepts required to understand his unique position in radical political theory. Within this scope, the following terminology is analysed in detail: the social and the political, police and the distribution of the sensible, wrong, disagreement and dissensus, politics, equality and emancipation, aesthetics. In providing this lexicon, the main idea is to show that Rancière's philosophy itself carries characteristics that are inherent to utopian thought. The analysis starts with investigating the crucial distinction between the social and the political. For Rancière, the social is the realm of constant conflict that constitutes itself as a metapolitical body, and thus, the political is an extraction from it. However, for the political to take place, there needs to be a bordered structure in the name of the police who defines the social in its own framework. This means that the police is included in the social with its strict

borderlines that has a predetermined distribution of the sensible. Therefore, the police is more than only representing law enforcement and it implements an implicit logic that governs society through its specific distribution of the sensible which defines who can be seen and heard in the legitimate order of the police. As a result, there is a wrong emerges because of the exclusion of a segment of the population. This rupture gives rise to a disagreement with the existing distribution of the sensible and through acts of dissensus, the excluded make their claim to be seen and heard. This is how politics is set with the axiom of equality as the departure point. Equality is continuously verified through action, and this process is named as emancipation, which is essentially linked to aesthetics because it includes reconfiguring what can be perceived, ultimately creating new political subjects and possibilities. This political setting offered by Rancière shapes the foundations of his concept of aesthetic heterotopia.

Chapter 3 presents Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia as the synthesis of utopian thought (heterotopia in particular) and his own philosophy. Inspired from Foucault's idea of heterotopias, this chapter gives a Rancièrean shape to the term. The goal is to define aesthetic heterotopia as a specific practice within the extensive literature of utopian political thought. To achieve this, the chapter defines the concept through four descriptive elements. First is the aesthetic rupture in the sensible order, which defines a moment of political act that interrupts normal perception, leading to new ways of seeing, hearing and feeling. Second, this specific space-time is characterised by the juxtaposition of incompatible elements, which means the bringing together of ideas, objects, and bodies that are kept separate in the police order. Third, an aesthetic heterotopia comes to be a counter-emplacement of political subjectivation, through the productive tension generated by the incompatible elements in a space where the excluded can constitute themselves as speaking subjects. Fourth, this creates a heterochronia, or disruption of time, which leads to the shattering of police's linear time by introducing an alternative, revolutionary temporality that operates on its own clock. By explaining these elements, the chapter positions Rancière's philosophy as an "enacted utopia". Although impermanently, the aesthetic heterotopia describes a utopia that is realised in the present moment through material

acts of dissensus. It is a space-time formed within the existing world, reflecting the temporary concretisation of equality.

Through this flow, this thesis aims to position Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia as a contemporary contribution to utopian political thought.

CHAPTER 2

UTOPIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

The concept of utopia may be one of the most fascinating ideas that has been a part of human imagination for millennia. From philosophical treatises and literary masterpieces to social movements and architectural designs, the longing for a perfect world is depicted in a myriad of ways. The idea of utopia is a representation of an imagined ideal society, a time and space when and where all kinds of social hardships are eliminated, and society has come to its perfect and final form. The founder of the word "utopia", English statesman Sir Thomas More, invented it by combining the ancient Greek words οὐ (*ou* - not) and τόπος (*topos* - place), meaning "no place" (*outopia*). He was also well aware of the word ευ (*eu* - good) and intentionally pointed out the similarity in spelling as a joke, meaning "good place" (*eutopia*) at the same time.[13] This dual construction with both *ou* and *eu* constitutes, beyond More, the basis of the inherent contradictions of the word itself as much as its attractiveness.

On the opposite side of the axis, contrary to utopia, lies the concept of dystopia, with the evident quality of describing a "bad place", through the combination of the words δυς (*dys* - bad) and τόπος (*topos* - place). Although it was initially spelled as "dustopia" in 1747 in a poem by Henry Lewis Younge, it was used in direct opposition with utopia.[14] The first usage with the spelling "dystopia" was in 1782 in a letter by Noel Turner, as exposed by Patricia Köster.[15] Beginning from these very early uses, dystopia has been positioned at the direct opposite of utopia, with the

[13] Levitas, R. (2010). *The concept of utopia*. Peter Lang., pp. 2-3.

[14] Younge, H. L. (1747). *Utopia, or Apollo's golden days*. George Faulkner., p. 4.

[15] Köster, P. (1983). *Dystopia*: An eighteenth-century appearance, *Notes & Queries, 228*(1), 65-66.

intention to describe worse forms of society than the existing ones without any good-intentioned departure points or helpful criticism.[16] This is why they cannot be classified as political thought but can only stay within the framework of literature as a field, which is not a matter of discussion in this thesis. Although the concept of dystopia has been described, on and off, as the same concept as that of anti-utopia, this thesis makes a differentiation between the two. While dystopia is a contrasting concept with utopia, anti-utopia is included within the context of utopia. That is why the concept of dystopia does not have a place in this thesis – as this is a study of utopian political thought – but anti-utopia is examined as a subsection of utopia in the following pages. Having explained a key perspective of this thesis, now the full focus can be on the concept of utopia.

While More's *Utopia*, written in 1516, is the namesake of utopian thought, historically, the first utopia is depicted in ancient Greece. Dating back to the fourth century BCE, Plato's *Republic* is one of the most influential portrayals of an ideal state.[17] Through Socratic dialogue, Plato described the ideal city-state ruled by a class of philosopher-kings, individuals who possess virtue and wisdom to ensure social justice and harmony. The main emphasis of the society is given to order and reason, and individual desires are suppressed for the common good. With solid depictions, it surely presents a good political theory book, as well as representing the foundational text of utopian thought.

One of Plato's latest works has contributed to utopian thought perhaps more than *Republic*. Although a very obscure text, *Timaeus* offers a powerful primordial conception of utopias with its focus on the creation of a harmonious universe.[18] The dialogue in the book presents a narrative of cosmology that mirrors a universe created and structured by the Creator. He creates an eternal and perfect order, which

[16] Sargent, L. T. (2006). In defense of utopia. *Diogenes, 209*, 11-17.

[17] Plato. (1998). *The Republic* (B. Jowett, Trans.). [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1497/pg1497-images.html#link2H_4_0009 (Original work published c. 375 BC)

[18] Plato. (1998). *Timaeus* (B. Jowett, Trans.). [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/1572/pg1572-images.html (Original work published c. 360 BC)

is led by reason and has a teleological purpose of building the best possible world. Before this world, it is only chaos, and the Creator builds the universe out of this chaos. Since he is the one who puts an order to this chaos, his rule comes to be a hierarchical order with the Creator at the summit, governing for the good of the whole. *Timaeus* is one of the foundational texts of the idea of utopia, representing the departure point of its present manifestations.

However, it was More who originated the concept of utopia in political theory. More's *Utopia*[19] depicts an island nation isolated from the rest of the world, living in advanced social, economic, and political conditions. The society embraces productive labour and communal ownership of property with an emphasis on reason. This perfect state and societal order led most scholars to argue that More's *Utopia* is a satirical one, and he was criticising the political environment of sixteenth-century England with perceived corruption and inequality.[20] Through this contrast, More's work provides both a social critique and a blueprint for a better world. It is the same ambiguity that was pointed out at the beginning of the chapter, regarding "no place", its fictional aspect, and "good place", its desirability, that makes one imagine a better alternative while criticising the present simultaneously.

After his seminal work in what we now call utopian thought, many contributed to this literature with distinct and imaginative ideas. In the seventeenth century, Tommaso Campanella's *The City of the Sun*[21] drew us a communistic and theocratic society, while Francis Bacon's *New Atlantis*[22] depicted a scientifically advanced society. These were mostly imaginary, literary texts. In terms of the political and

[19] More, T. (2000). *Utopia* (H. Morley, Ed. & G. Burnet, Trans.). [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2130/pg2130-images.html (Original work published 1516)

[20] Morton, A. L. (1969). The English utopia. Lawrence & Wishart.; Davis, J. C. (1981). Utopia and the ideal society: A study of English utopian writing 1516-1700. Cambridge University Press.; Claeys, G. (Ed.). (2010). The Cambridge companion to utopian literature. Cambridge University Press.

[21] Campanella, T. (2001). *The city of the sun* (C. Solis, Trans.). [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2816/pg2816-images.html (Original work published 1602)

[22] Bacon, F. (2000). *New Atlantis*. [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://gutenberg.org/cache/epub/2434/pg2434-images.html (Original work published 1626)

philosophical aspect, one can surely say that utopian thought started to be investigated in the nineteenth century with the rise of socialist thought, and they went hand in hand for some time. During this initial phase, the earliest contributors were Henri de Saint-Simon, Charles Fourier, and Robert Owen, the big trio of utopian socialism carrying the title of being the first current of modern socialism. With a focus on realising what utopian socialism suggested, Ètienne Cabet's *Voyage to Icaria*[23] presented a real-life experience of creating a utopian socialist community in America. Following such a groundbreaking attempt, Marx and Engels criticised utopian socialism and its methods due to its "reactionary" and "superstitious" qualities and instead defended scientific socialism in *The Communist Manifesto*,[24] which is ironically classified as a utopian text by some.[25] This was the decisive moment for utopia to be "an intellectual problem in the world revolutionary movement".[26] What followed was Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*,[27] a socialist utopia with a centralised industrial army, and William Morris' *News from Nowhere*,[28] a decentralised, agrarian socialist utopia, illustrating two distinct types of socialisms. Each work followed a different pathway in achieving perfection, with some focusing on technological development and some focusing on political reforms emphasising egalitarianism, communal living, and the abolition of private property.

[23] Cabet, È. (2012). *İkaria'ya yolculuk* (E. Güntekin & M. Selen, Trans.). Say Yayınları. (Original work published 1840)

[24] Marx, K. & Engels, F. (1977). *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. (F. Engels, Ed. & S. Moore, Trans.). Progress. (Original work published 1848)

[25] Marx and Engels' views are not seen as utopian in general, but some communist concepts like communal property and state withering away are considered common elements of utopia. This explains why the *Manifesto* may be classified as utopia. Nevertheless, the *Manifesto* found a place to itself in an anthology of utopias as well as communism has kept being discussed in relation to utopia for at least two centuries. For further discussion, see Claeys, G. & Sargent, L. T. (Eds.). (1999). *The utopia reader*. New York University Press.; Schaer, R., Claeys, G., & Sargent, L. T. (Eds.). (2000). *Utopia: The search for the ideal society in the western world*. Oxford University Press.; Segal, H. P. (2012). *Utopias: A brief history from ancient writings to virtual communities*. Wiley-Blackwell.

[26] Manuel, F. E. (1966). Introduction. In F. E. Manuel (Ed.), *Utopias and utopian thought* (pp.vii-xxiv). Houghton Mifflin., p. ix.

[27] Bellamy, E. (1996). *Looking backward: 2000-1887*. [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/624/pg624-images.html (Original work published 1888)

[28] Morris, W. (2002). *News from Nowhere*. [eBook edition]. The Project Gutenberg. https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/3261/pg3261-images.html (Original work published 1890)

All these different worlds provided thought experiments while also presenting visions of "social dreaming",[29] nonetheless making its readers contemplate the prevailing social and political problems and critically engage with their own societies and their alternative futures.

When we come to the twentieth century, it was not only literary texts anymore, as the academic literature concerning utopia has also flourished. This also marks the beginning point of the main problems of definition and discussions of utopia that have not been agreed upon universally – with which the utopian scholars seem happy. Definitions and their scope are the main concern of this chapter. Before going into detail with the definitions of utopia (in three different concepts) and heterotopia, brief information is provided on the categories and methods of utopian studies for the sake of defining the boundaries of this study.

2.1. Categorisation and Methodology

According to the leading utopian bibliographer and academic Lyman Tower Sargent, utopia can be manifested in three different forms: social theory, literature, and practice.[30] The first manifestation is the philosophical and political thought of utopia. The second manifestation is constituted of the fictional narratives and writings of utopias, while the last manifestation is the real-life experiments of communitarian living, like Cabet's Icaria. All these forms are critical and useful in explaining utopia as a method because the main idea in all of them is to think critically about alternatives in a methodical way.

With the broadening utopian academic literature in the late twentieth century, it was not only Sargent who categorised the notion of utopia meticulously. Ruth Levitas also contributed to differentiating utopia in a very similar way to Sargent. In her guiding book *The Concept of Utopia*, she explains three different aspects of utopia:

[29] Sargent, L. T. (1994). The three faces of utopianism revisited. *Utopian Studies, 5*(1), 1-37.

[30] Sargent, L. T. (1975). Utopia: The problem of definition. *Extrapolation, 16*(2), 137-148. https://doi.org/10.3828/extr.1975.16.2.137

content, form, and function.[31] Though roughly equivalent to Sargent's social theory, literature, and practice; in detail, Levitas' differentiation is fuller of analysis. First, content constitutes the substance of utopia. It describes "what" is (in) utopia, such as social and political structures, economic models, and cultural values. Second, form is related to the medium of utopia. It signifies "how" utopia is expressed, such as in science fiction novels, religious narratives, political manifestos, communitarian experiments, paintings, music, and architectural designs, among others. Third, function concerns the purpose of utopia. It is the "why" of utopian depiction. To give examples, it can be a critique of the present, a catalyst for political action, "education of desire" stimulating critical consciousness, and so on.

Later, in her final academic book, *Utopia as Method: The Imaginary Reconstitution of Society*, Levitas develops this concept into a comprehensive methodology, showing her years of dedicated work on the sociology of utopia. The subtitle of the book, the Imaginary Reconstitution of Society, is indeed the name of her methodology. She explains three modes of this methodology: archaeological, ontological, and architectural. The significance of this book lies in its persistence in the idea that utopia should be viewed as a method, owing to its close relationship with the discipline of sociology. This thought is made obvious in the introductory sentence of the book through the quotation of H. G. Wells: "The creation of Utopias – and their exhaustive criticism – is the proper and distinctive method of sociology."[32] In line with this thought, the archaeological method involves "excavating" the desires and hopes of our society, embedded in social and economic policies and political programmes. Eskelinen, Lakkala, & Laakso associate this method with Ernst Bloch's "utopian hermeneutics" as it includes detecting the prefigurative elements of the future in the works of the past.[33] The ontological method is concerned with the historical and social determination of human nature

[31] Levitas, *The concept of utopia*.

[32] Levitas, R. (2013). *Utopia as method: The imaginary reconstitution of society*. Palgrave Macmillan., p. xi.

[33] Eskelinen, T., Lakkala, K., & Laakso, M. (2020). Introduction: Utopias and the revival of imagination. In T. Eskelinen (Ed.), *The revival of political imagination: Utopias as methodology* (pp. 3-19). Zed Books., p. 11.

and with imagining our position and identities in alternative ways. The architectural method shows us the potential for the creation of human environments, as it is mostly about constructing a world and its institutions. With this aspect, it proposes a negation and a critique. "It is an attempt to figure (and figure out) the absent presence", says Levitas.[34]

Having counted three different ways of categorising and methods of utopia (utopianism),[35] it can be declared that the focus point of this chapter will be on the social theory, as in Sargent's terms; and content, and function to a certain extent, in Levitas' terms, as well as the architectural method. That is to say, a philosophical enquiry is made in this study, based on descriptions that define how the concepts are defined, what they include and not include in terms of political, economic, and social contexts. Since these enquiries are made as criticisms of the present political conditions, functions of the utopian concepts are also included in the investigation. The notions that the architectural method can explain are not the main point of this study, yet they show themselves throughout the study in real-life examples of each concept, especially the concept of heterotopia.

2.2. Utopia

There is no doubt that the definition of utopia has evolved and continues to evolve since its inception. The social and political environment has played a key role in these alterations. The definition of utopia during the time of ancient Greece and its definition after the world wars are not the same. Indeed, it just turned out to be the antithetical. To discriminate between the differences of the two types of utopias, which, certainly, can be increased depending on the context, the key characteristics of them (the main antithetical elements) are explained in detail in two sections: blueprint utopias and iconoclastic utopias.

[34] Levitas, *Utopia as method*, p. 197.

[35] Utopia is used as an umbrella term here. Ruth Levitas prefers to use "utopia" while Lyman Tower Sargent and Lucy Sargisson prefer "utopianism" as they make a differentiation between utopianism (social dreaming) and utopia (the non-existent society). In this study, "utopia" is preferred when meaning "utopianism" as well.

2.2.1. Blueprint Utopia

The concept of utopia that I cover in this section is one that is commonly known as ancient, classical,[36] Platonic,[37] traditional,[38] static,[39] absolutist,[40] or blueprint[41] utopias. All these titles refer to the same concept but have only been mentioned with different names over the course of the history of utopian studies. Nevertheless, it is "the utopia", the first thing that comes to mind when it comes to utopia.

Although the very first utopia is claimed to be Plato's *Republic*, it is only classified as such due to its philosophical approach. Human imagination and what Sargent calls "social dreams" date back older than the *Republic,* so utopias in literary form existed before Plato. Myths and dreams of Eden and golden ages can all be described as the earliest ancestors of utopia, which can perhaps be named as proto-utopias, which are achieved without any effort, as they are given as a gift of nature or gods.[42] Sargent names these as "body utopias" and defines their characteristics as such: "All these utopias have certain features in common – simplicity, unity, security, immortality or an easy death, unity with God or the gods, abundance without labor, and no enmity between homo sapiens and the other animals."[43] Apparently, this utopia is a preexisting one that humans can reach somehow and cannot control, as it is an unearthly gift. This is the point where the human condition enters: They wanted

[36] Shklar, J. (1965). The political theory of utopia: From melancholy to nostalgia. *Daedalus, 94*(2), 367-381.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Kinna, R. (2011). Politics, ideology and utopia: A defence of eutopian worlds. *Journal of Political Ideologies, 16*(3), 279-294. https://doi.org/10.1080/13569317.2011.607295

[39] Suvin, D. (1990). Locus, horizon, and orientation: The concept of possible worlds as a key to utopian studies. *Utopian Studies, 1*(2), 69-83.

[40] Eskelinen et al., "Introduction".

[41] Jacoby, *Picture imperfect*; Kinna, "Politics, ideology and utopia".; Claeys, G. (2021, April 26). Utopianism as a political ideology: An attempt at redefinition. *Ideology Theory Practice*. https://www.ideology-theory-practice.org/blog/utopianism-as-a-political-ideology-an-attempt-at-redefinition

[42] Sargent, "The three faces of utopianism revisited", p. 10.

[43] Ibid.

places that they could control, so they invented what Sargent names as "city utopias". Plato's *Republic* is the earliest example, and More's *Utopia* is the one that defines it. It has the same characteristics as body utopias, yet the only difference is that the former is a metaphysical or unearthly depiction, while the latter is a realisable social dream.

Focusing more on Plato's *Republic* and *Timaeus* as well as More's *Utopia* yet also including the most well-known pieces of utopias as briefly mentioned in the beginning of this chapter and the many others not included in this study, there are four key characteristics of blueprint utopias that are recognisable within the existing utopian literature: perfection, stasis, order, and consensus. All these characteristics are highly debated in the utopian studies, and they determine the main difference between blueprint and iconoclastic utopias.

The first characteristic, perfectionism, is the most pronounced one. Considering both body and city utopias, the concept of perfection initially relied on contemplation and moral judgement. Hannah Arendt comments on the Platonic contemplation:

> It is and remains part and parcel of a fabrication process even though it has divorced itself from all work and all doing; in it, the beholding of the model, which now no longer is to guide any doing, is prolonged and enjoyed for its own sake.[44]

There lies a desire not only for perfection, but also for permanence as well. As Judith Shklar adds on this, such permanence can only be maintained through a harmonious unity which is provided by the one true moral judgement.[45] In body utopias, this is preprovided by nature or the god(s), while in city utopias, it is human made. For example, in the *Republic*, it can be said that this judgement is the understanding of justice, and in *Utopia*, it can be rationality, equality, and simplicity. There is a shared recognition of such concepts of morality that unites citizens as a totality and that may be called the truth of those citizens. Such moral judgement is also one that prevents making mistakes, or rather, one that has a discouraging effect. That is why it is

[44] Arendt, H. (1958). *The human condition* (2nd ed.). University of Chicago Press., p. 303.

[45] Shklar, "The political theory of utopia", p. 371.

closed to any fancy alternatives, as everything needs to be kept in the same order. As Sargent states: "It is perfect, and any alteration would lower its quality."[46]

The notion of unchangeability brings us to the concept of stasis. It means "standing still" in Greek, and within the context of utopian studies, it indicates a place frozen in time. It points to a final state of perfection that has no possibility for further progress. Since there is no chance of growth or even the slightest alteration, it is considered a closed utopia. Bülent Somay defines it by pointing at the notions of locus and horizon to differentiate its position: "A *doctrinaire*, or *dogmatic*, utopian text … asserts the utopian locus as 'ultimate' and drastically limits the possibilities of the utopian horizon."[47] What is brought to the fore here is the negation of change due to the claim of perfection in utopia, so change is attributed a negative meaning, which signifies an internal fear to the extent that resistance to change becomes a key element. Lewis Mumford mentions Bergson's interpretation on this matter, which is certainly a more optimistic one: To prevent change is to accommodate movement and to control all life forms so as to fight self-transformation processes.[48]

Furthermore, Zygmunt Bauman explains stasis as such:

> Utopias were the anticipated end-products of the skilful deployment of both the plasticity of the world and the new (genuine or supposed) freedom to remould human conditions for the purpose of construing a world free from the bane of uncertainty and insured against all further re-moulding: a world resistant to all further change.[49]

In other words, blueprint utopias propose such a gigantic improvement in the social structure that there would be no need for any other alteration, even for the purpose of further improvement, a situation which Bauman describes as "redolent with the

[46] Sargent, "The three faces of utopianism revisited", p. 24.

[47] All texts in italics in quotation marks are original emphases throughout the thesis. Somay, B. (1984). Towards an open-ended utopia. *Science Fiction Studies, 11*(1), 25-38., p. 26.

[48] Mumford, L. (1965). Utopia, the city and the machine. *Daedalus, 94*(2), 271-292., p. 275.

[49] Bauman, Z. (2003). Utopia with no topos. *History of the Human Sciences, 16*(1), 11-25. https://doi.org/10.1177/0952695103016001003, p. 16.

cadaverous odour of *stasis*".[50] Yet, it is also possible to take this matter without the overdo and more minimally. Northrop Frye argues that the reason for stasis is simply the urge to protect because the social ideal should be guarded against any radical shift as a precaution against degradation of the structure.[51] In any case, it is understood from the notion of stasis that there is a closed and stable structure, as well as an ideal definition of society in utopia, which leads us to the concept of order.

Mapping the ideal requires planning in detail, and this used to work only through organisation, when the ideal was depicted as a state, or rather the city-state, considering ancient Greece as the precursor. Beginning with the French Revolution and then continuing with the rise of scientific socialism, the idea of utopia was replaced by ideologies as Marxists claimed that utopia was "a thing of the past". In line with this development of thought, for Shklar, this reflects the historical point at which "ideology undid utopia".[52] Influenced by Karl Mannheim's thoughts on the relationship between ideology and utopia,[53] she discussed that the understanding of utopian thought has shifted to a more ideological one, in which priority is given to hierarchy, bureaucracy, and order. The rationality behind such an understanding is caused by a sense of nostalgia, a longing for an idealised past, and also a conservative attitude that aims to restore and preserve the status quo, as in the past social orders which were allegedly better times.[54] Perhaps it is better understood through this categorisation that Plato's *Republic* constitutes a good example for a good government of a city-state, which may help explain the longing for antiquity. All details related to the society, from social to economic and political aspects of the functioning of society, are well explained in the *Republic*. To give an example, the early education system for the guardian class is explained meticulously, including what kinds of literature are useful and what are not, after which the philosopher-

[50] Ibid., p. 22.

[51] Frye, N. (1965). Varieties of literary utopias. *Daedalus, 94*(2), 323-347., p. 329.

[52] Shklar, "The political theory of utopia", p. 369.

[53] Mannheim, K. (1979). *Ideology and utopia: An introduction to the sociology of knowledge* (L. Wirth & E. Shils, Trans.). Routledge & Kegan Paul. (Original work published 1929)

[54] Shklar, "The political theory of utopia".

kings will be selected according to another detailed process, including intellectual and moral training.[55] Such a method of training is prescriptive, and all routinised practices like this are systematised. The same can be found in Bacon's *New Atlantis*, in which the primary focus for social improvement is scientific knowledge, which is pursued by a prestigious institution relying on a strict research hierarchy. In both examples, institutionalisation is essential as these kinds of utopian states require rigid rules and plans to maintain their order. As Levitas says, utopias "visibly shape needs and match them with available satisfactions, thus moulding the individual to the system".[56] Once this order becomes a system of beliefs and routinised practices, there arises the need to categorise and thus hierarchise the subjects and objects inside. However, conformity to one model prevents diversification and only creates "totality, order, and perfection" in a harmonious environment.[57] Such a perfect, stable, ordered, and total system can only be provided by the mutual agreement of its components, ultimately leading the way to the fourth characteristic, consensus.

A closed system can only work, in the long run, with unity. Shklar emphasises the functioning of the perfect order of the community by the pursuit of social unity: "The engineered community, whose perfect order springs not from a rational perception of truth, but from a pursuit of social unity as a material necessity".[58] This is the critical juncture where "utopia become ideology" works: Ideology enables the closed system of blueprint utopia to stay homogeneous. Homogeneity, excluding diversity, is simply the lack of politics. As Fredric Jameson states, "utopia emerges at the moment of the suspension of the political".[59] This is because of the very deficit of diverse viewpoints in the social. In a place where everyone has the same thoughts on the functioning of society and where everything works in a perfect order without any error, there would not be political opposition, nor any opposition at all, found or that can even find the chance to emerge. Obviously, this is assumed as a good attribution

[55] Plato,*The Republic*.

[56] Levitas, *The concept of utopia*, p. 213.

[57] Ibid., p. 188.

[58] Shklar, "The political theory of utopia", p. 375.

[59] Jameson, F. (2004). The politics of utopia. *New Left Review, 25*, 35-54., p. 43.

since blueprint utopias seek the utmost harmony, which can only occur through homogeneity.

Such a necessity is caused by any ideology's need for a universal claim. It is "the minimal requirement" to "have universal scope and offer benefits to all" for utopia.[60] To elaborate on the relationship between utopia and ideology in this particular context, it is again conservatism and what Shklar calls nostalgia, in the sense of realising and "keeping" the past restored. The desired society here is "one where there is unquestioned loyalty to the state …, where there is hierarchy, deference, order, centralized power",[61] which also signifies a determined and structured project. Indeed, Levitas argues that "utopia refers not simply to a past state, but to the past as immanent in the present."[62] This certainly presents a nostalgic viewpoint owing to the endeavour to keep a romanticised version of the past alive. The very meaning ascribed to this constructed past becomes the wellspring of unity, so there is "a presumed consensus on shared commitments, harmonious coexistence and the internalization of moral rules".[63] This artificial consensus is the highest level of social and political achievement, yet in reality, it is a fragile construct that is made sustainable only through the systematic exclusion of difference. The silence of this utopia is only the silence of an unchallenged, and therefore stagnant, ideological totality.

2.2.2. Interlude: Anti-Utopia

At the point where Karl Mannheim correlated ideology and utopia and defined "utopia become ideology" as a dangerous concept, utopias started to be viewed with prejudice. Karl Popper, Hannah Arendt, and Isaiah Berlin were the foremost thinkers of this modern anti-utopianism. These "scholars have thrown communism, Nazism, and utopia into one tub" and they "argued that utopia leads to totalitarianism and

[60] Levitas, *The concept of utopia*, p. 212.

[61] Ibid., p. 218.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Kinna, "Politics, ideology and utopia", p. 281.

mass murder", having labelled Hitler, Stalin, and Mao "utopians".[64] Russell Jacoby explains the standpoint of these modern anti-utopianists as such: "Eventually they saw Marxism and fascism as related phenomena, different versions of totalitarianism. Inasmuch as a utopianism informed Marxism (despite the anti-utopian pronouncements of Marx and Engels), the theory of totalitarianism, which they developed, underlined the poisonousness of utopianism."[65]

For instance, it is clear in Popper's *The Poverty of Historicism* that he makes a differentiation between historicist (utopian) and non-historicist (non-utopian) ideas. While he ascribes "Utopian engineering" to the historicist perspective, "piecemeal engineering" goes for the non-historicist approach. The first one is simply the definition of blueprint utopias; it has a public character and "it aims at remodelling the 'whole of society' in accordance with a definite plan or blueprint; it aims at 'seizing the key positions' and at extending 'the power of the State … until the State becomes nearly identical with society'".[66] The second one, on the other hand, does not use the method of designing the society as a whole, but rather prefers a "phenomenon of *unplanned planning*".[67] What Popper means here is to organise society and its institutions through private reforms, piece by piece, and without a bigger picture involving a complete reconstruction.

> Blueprints for piecemeal engineering are comparatively simple. They are blueprints for single institutions, for health and unemployed insurance, for instance, or arbitration courts, or anti-depression budgeting or educational reform. If they go wrong, the damage is not very great, and re-adjustment not very difficult.[68]

Though still referring to any planning as blueprints, he does not deny their necessity and approaches them with rationality. He criticises Utopian engineering as idealistic and leading to dictatorship by their wish for "leaving no stone unturned". This

[64] Ibid., p. 13.

[65] Ibid., p. 52.

[66] Popper, K. R. (1957). *The poverty of historicism*. The Beacon Press., p. 67.

[67] Ibid., p. 69.

[68] Popper, K. R. (1945). *The open society and its enemies* (Vol. I). George Routledge & Sons., p. 140.

explains that piecemeal engineering is also committed to social transformation, but it seeks no perfection and acknowledges that it must learn from its mistakes, without any big and faraway goals. As Jacoby explains Popper's sharply rational perspective, "it is the 'sweep' of utopianism … that makes it so dangerous."[69] Hence, it can be deduced from these arguments that Popper defends a more rationalistic, reformist, and slow process for societal transformation so as to prevent greater collapse.

Furthermore, Hannah Arendt's "ideology" carries utopian characteristics. As the driving force of totalitarianism, ideology is defined as if it were a supernatural entity that has its own world, separated from reality. This is the main reason why Arendt classifies it as utopian in her seminal work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. She identifies three totalitarian elements in any ideological thinking, and these are quite in line with the characteristics given to blueprint utopias as explained in the previous section. The first one is the ideologies' orientation to history, or nostalgia as aforementioned; the second is their incapacity to renew themselves, or stasis as I named this concept before; and the third is a logical procedure that everything else is deduced from, or prescriptive and rigid order as I sorted as the third characteristic of blueprint utopias above.[70] These three characteristics lead to a closed social system, in which human beings are reduced to parts of the ideological machine, as its logic predetermines every action. This, according to Arendt, ultimately results in the wiping out of spontaneity and plurality, annihilating freedom in a society. On this occasion, the comparison to blueprint utopias clearly shows the catastrophic results of applying a preplanned, perfect order onto an ever-changing, complex reality.

In these criticisms, it seems like she shares the thought of Karl Mannheim, although she does not give any reference to him in *Origins*, in that both see ideologies as conservative and regressive. While Mannheim keeps ideology and utopia epistemologically separate, Arendt equalises them, claiming that all ideologies are utopian and unrealisable, leading to lethal totalitarianism. Mannheim, on the other hand, sees them separately and states that utopias are progressive unless they turn to

[69] Jacoby, *Picture imperfect*, p. 56.

[70] Arendt, H. (1973). *The origins of totalitarianism*. Harcourt Brace & Company., pp. 470-471.

ideologies, which is the point Arendt discusses. However, it is necessary to note that this is a very minimal and personal comment, far from finding a place in the literature, because of the very fact that they, Mannheim and Arendt, are too distinct scholars with very different focus points in their works.

In addition to Popper's historicism and Arendt's ideology, Isaiah Berlin's look at utopianism provides a criticism based on his two notions of liberty, "the liberal and authoritarian, open and closed",[71] which he later renamed as negative and positive. In this context, (blueprint) utopia is positioned within the comprehension of positive freedom as it seeks a perfect and harmonious environment set according to one truth, leading to authoritarianism. Berlin elaborates that the pursuit of a single truth unavoidably suppresses individuality and the potential for diversification in all societal aspects, preventing human development. He opines that "the notion of the perfect whole, the ultimate solution, in which all good things coexist, seems to me to be not merely unattainable – that is a truism – but conceptually incoherent".[72] For Berlin, the very idea of perfection in which everything is in a flawless order is a delusion. He argues that human values are inherently diverse and can often conflict; therefore, any attempt to impose a singular, utopian framework will necessitate the forceful suppression of some values in favour of others, leading to the loss of individual liberty. Instead, he asserts that pluralism is the essence of "what we are" since "collisions of values" are needed for an open and liberal understanding of freedom.[73] Berlin advocates negative freedom, the freedom from interference, in order for individuals to pursue their own goals even if they have conflicting values. However, this is not possible in a space where positive freedom is implemented, due to the predetermined structure of society in line with the utopian ideals. In accordance with this thought, he sees the "collisions of values" critical in the way to a free society as it stimulates dynamism, critical thinking, and individual autonomy, which are directly contradictory to the values of blueprint utopias.

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[71] Berlin, I. (2014). *Freedom and its betrayal: Six enemies of human liberty* (2nd ed., H. Hardy, Ed.). Princeton University Press., p. 79.

[72] Berlin, I. (1997). *The proper study of mankind: An anthology of essays* (H. Hardy & R. Hausheer, Eds.). Chatto & Windus., p. 11.

[73] Ibid.

The mid-twentieth-century critique of utopian thought from Karl Popper, Hannah Arendt, and Isaiah Berlin definitely reflects the suffocating atmosphere of the totalitarian post-war era. Their arguments aimed the dangers they discerned in their own epoch: Popper's "Utopian engineering" identified the potential hazards of remaking society from detailed predetermined blueprints; Arendt's analysis of ideology revealed how abstract ideas could justify inhumanity and savagery; and Berlin's caution against "positive liberty" showed how prescribed liberties have paved the way for oppression.

However, the overall evaluation of the arguments of these three scholars, knowingly or unknowingly, declares that utopias are inherently proto-totalitarian. They set a wrong equation by focusing on "radical evil" and confusing the avid dream of creating a better world with a sickly greediness. Their critiques only serve the purposes of blocking radical hope and making the differentiation between top-down imposition and bottom-up struggle more difficult. The result is a political landscape characterised by cautious pragmatism, which accepts the status quo. These thinkers unwittingly fetter the act of imagining a fundamentally different world, and thus, limit radical political possibilities. Their extreme negativity led utopian scholars to interfere and update, or rather clarify, the definition of utopia so as to prove utopia's functionality as a method in radical left politics, as it had been originally.

2.2.3. Iconoclastic Utopia

In this section, what is now commonly called modern or contemporary utopias is covered. These utopias are named as dynamic,[74] referring to only one of their attributions; critical,[75] defining its awareness of its original counterpart; transgressive,[76] emphasising its subversive potential; anti-utopian,[77] comparing its very much antithetical position to blueprint utopias; and the least known, iconoclastic

[74] Suvin, "Locus, horizon, and orientation".

[75] Moylan, T. (2014). *Demand the impossible: Science fiction and the utopian imagination* (R. Baccolini, Ed.). Peter Lang. (Original work published 1986)

[76] Sargisson, L. (2000). *Utopian bodies and the politics of transgression*. Routledge.

[77] Kinna, "Politics, ideology and utopia".

utopias,[78] a reference to its "imageless" description. Although it has been named in several different ways, focusing on different characteristics of it, approximately since the 1970s, most utopian studies scholars have preferred to call it only "utopias". The reason for this simplicity is because of their claim that utopia was interpreted incorrectly initially and later by those who relate utopia to totalitarianism just a quarter century ago.

After these modern anti-utopianists, Gustav Landauer and Martin Buber were the first thinkers who discussed the characteristics of iconoclastic utopia extensively. Landauer wrote, "What I call socialism is not perfection. I do not believe in such perfection."[79] Buber followed Landauer and remained loyal to his understanding of utopia in shaping society on the way to socialism and rejected blueprints. "Those … which undertake to deliver a blueprint of the perfect social structure, turn into systems.",[80] he stated. Starting from these discussions, the four characteristics of iconoclastic utopias as opposed to blueprint utopias that are recognisable within the existing utopian literature are discussed below: imperfection, dynamism, temporality, and dissensus.

To begin with the first characteristic, imperfection, Sargent argues that "perfection is not a characteristic of Utopias, and it is doubtful if it ever has been",[81] claiming that More's *Utopia* is not perfect either. The life of people in *Utopia* is not necessarily perfect; they do not "live happily ever after". More extensively talks about the bad or unwanted situations in his *magnum opus*, like in a condition of war or bad health. It is essentially enough to prove that life and struggle exist in utopias, and even though mistakes and problems arise, they are overcome. Such a situation renders any notion of perfection null and void, demonstrating that no society is flawless. Even if a state of perfection is achieved, it is not permanent and can only be reached after some

[78] Jacoby, *Picture imperfect*.

[79] Landauer (1911), as quoted in Jacoby, *Picture imperfect*, p. 102.

[80] Buber, M. (1958). *Paths in utopia* (R. F. C. Hull, Trans.). Beacon Press. (Original work published 1949), p. 9.

[81] Sargent, "Utopia", p. 140.

struggle. In a similar vein, Max Statkiewicz criticises Plato's *Republic* for its perfection and idealness as such:

> The deficiency of the ideal State seems to be paradoxically its 'stately' perfection. In the process of catharsis (*Rep.*, 399e) the founders of the republic, the painters of the perfectly self-same tableau (*Rep.*, 500c–e) apparently purified it of all difference, of all motion and of life. Eternal and ideal, sheltered from the contingency of becoming, the *immortal* 'heavenly model' (*Rep.*, 592b) is not *viable*. In order to live it has to be incarnated, has to enter the region of corruptible matter.[82]

There is nothing human in perfection, as it describes only a "heavenly model"; it is a concept that is not alive. Life brings imperfection; it itself is not even infinite, ultimately ends with death, which shows an inherent flaw. Flaws and mistakes are inherent in life, and without them, there would not be any progress. Lucy Sargisson comments on Tom Moylan's critical utopia that "The critical utopia does not blueprint: social change in process is privileged even in the alternative societies it presents. Difference and imperfection are retained."[83]

In all these criticisms of blueprint utopias, the main element that is criticised is not only the impossible perfection, but also the lack of diversity resulting from overly designed imaginations. Even the idea that they are overly designed indicates, paradoxically, that they are not perfect, and thus, need to be organised in detail, which is another characteristic of blueprint utopias. In *A Modern Utopia*, Wells emphasises the imperfection and the conflicting nature of utopias as it should be: "In a modern Utopia there will, indeed, be no perfection; in Utopia there must also be friction, conflicts and waste."[84] In line with this thought, iconoclastic utopias acknowledge that life has always been imperfect because it is inherently flawed. This parallel relationship between imperfection and life prompts us to examine the concept of dynamism.

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[82] Statkiewicz, M. (2002). Chora and character: Mimesis of difference in Plato's Timaeus. In J. E. Swearingen & J. Cutting-Gray (Eds.), *Extreme beauty: Aesthetics, politics, death* (pp. 56-66). Continuum., p. 58.

[83] Sargisson, L. (1996). *Contemporary feminist utopianism*. Routledge., p. 53.

[84] Wells, H. G. (2005). *A modern utopia* (G. Claeys & P. Parrinder, Eds.). Penguin Books. (Original work published 1905), p. 176.

Wells' thought on the necessity of "friction, conflicts, and waste" leads to another of his statements explicating his ideas on dynamism included in *A Modern Utopia*: "The Modern Utopia must be not static but kinetic, must shape not as a permanent state but as a hopeful stage leading to a long ascent of stages."[85] To criticise, one needs to first admit that the fixity of stasis generates boundaries of possibility, and it presumes a final state of existence with a highly structured, hierarchical, institutional organisation that does not consent to any alteration. At the beginning of the twentieth century, there was this thought shift "away from the idea of static perfection to emphasize process, conflict, temporality, and choice".[86] Rhiannon Firth clarifies the difference between iconoclastic utopias and blueprint utopias as such: "They aim to acknowledge imperfection and contingency, and embody processes for resolving these through the negotiation of difference."[87] The departure from "dissatisfaction with the status quo" needs to lead the way to "imperfect yet resistant and transformative alternatives", which perfectly explains the prominence of change and difference.[88]

As Sargent clearly explained, "a utopia that insists on conformity to one model can also be used as a tool of repression and has been all too often", referring to the modern anti-utopianists who related utopias to totalitarianism.[89] This is highly related to depictions of life, as expressed above in explaining imperfection. Furthermore, George Kateb comments in this regard: "The combination of abundance and leisure is inherently dynamic and hence is at war with the traditional utopian fondness for fixed patterns of perfection."[90] This underlines the abundance of life in a positive way and indicates the plenty of cultures and values and divergent settings due to the very essence of life itself.

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[85] Ibid., p. 1.

[86] Cooper, D. (2014). *Everyday utopias: The conceptual life of promising spaces*. Duke University Press., p. 25.

[87] Firth, R. (2012). *Utopian politics: Citizenship and practice*. Routledge., p. 5.

[88] Ibid., p. 17.

[89] Sargent, "In defense of utopia", p. 15.

[90] Kateb, G. (1965). Utopia and the good life. *Daedalus, 94*(2), 454-473.

Darko Suvin explains dynamic utopia in his locus/horizon combinatorics as "*the dominance of Horizon over Locus*".[91] According to this systematisation, Locus "interacts with Horizon", which basically means that there needs to be an "orientation toward a moving utopian horizon", in which case action gains importance over space. This is another way of acknowledging that the context of temporality needs to come to the fore. This perspective also emphasises the subject and its practices rather than the space itself, meaning that epistemology takes precedence over ontology. In this regard, Suvin quotes Umberto Eco in order to better explain dynamic utopia and its openness:

> It appears not as a finished object but rather as an open project: not a utopia as *terminus ad quem*, i.e. a state of perfection to be reached, but a utopia as a regulating idea, as a project *ante quem*, whose force stems precisely from the fact that it *cannot* and *should not* be realized in any definitive form.[92]

Such a level of "uncertainty and improvised openness" directly reflects the quality of dynamism as a significant aspect.[93] In line with this, iconoclastic utopias are "immanent and ongoing" as "the goal is not fixed and difference creates an excess."[94] Moreover, while blueprint utopias focus on timeless spaces, iconoclastic utopias contain inherent contrasts and the will for alteration toward action in line with these contrasts, rather than prescriptive system designs. The significance of "invention, improvisation, and speculative futures" is emphasised in dynamic utopias as these are the links that enable the connection between the practice of "here-and-now" and the imagined future.[95] It is closely related to what Bloch names "*docta spes*" (comprehended hope); it is a commitment to action in order to bring about the future.[96] Therefore, this dynamism is an educated and critical form of hope and its implementation in the here-and-now in the cause of social transformation. As a

[91] Suvin, "Locus, horizon, and orientation", p. 79.

[92] Eco (1981), as quoted in Suvin, "Locus, horizon, and orientation", p. 80.

[93] Cooper, *Everyday utopias*, p. 43.

[94] Firth, *Utopian politics*, p. 21.

[95] Cooper, *Everyday utopias*, p. 34.

[96] Bloch, E. (1986). *The principle of hope* (Vol. I; N. Plaice, S. Plaice, & P. Knight, Trans.). MIT Press. (Original work published 1959), p. 7.

parenthesis, it is certainly possible to see traces of Buber in Bloch: Buber believed that change should be achieved on a small scale through the coming into being of new identities and methods of practice, as well as the opening up of new political spaces in the here-and-now.[97]

Frank E. Manuel tells about the psychological history of utopias and explains that (blueprint) utopias are "stable and ahistorical, ideals out of time" before the nineteenth century, whereas they evolved to become (iconoclastic) utopias that are "dynamic and bound to a long prior historical series".[98] This historicity is why he names them as *euchronias* (good time), because of its focus on time rather than the place (*topos*), according to which, historically determinist utopias are also classified as dynamic.[99]

In line with this definition, the early utopian socialists, Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Marx, had open-ended descriptions of the future, although it seems like they had a "fixed and codified" *telos*.[100] He cites Marx as an example and notes that Marx's passages on future society reflect a dynamic realm of freedom that engenders limitless possibilities for self-actualisation.[101] Also, Marx made a revision to a Saint-Simonian statement in the *Doctrine de Saint-Simon* to reach what is considered the slogan of socialism today, "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."[102] Such a point of view reminds us once again that there has actually been one utopia all the time, but it was misunderstood, including Marx's own comments on utopia, while he indeed can be classified as a utopian to some extent.

Overall, dynamism, as a characteristic of iconoclastic utopia, starts when "the emphasis on perfection is abandoned and a turn towards an immanent philosophy is

[97] Buber, *Paths in utopia*.

[98] Manuel, F. E. (1965). Toward a psychological history of utopias. *Daedalus, 94*(2), 293-322., p. 303.

[99] Ibid., p. 295.

[100] Ibid., p. 304.

[101] Ibid., p. 305.

[102] Ibid., p. 308.

enacted … in which a utopia ceases to be utopian as soon as it is realised, necessitating further processes of change."[103] This understanding paves the way for an epistemology of the subject as well as shifting the focus point from space to time, due to the importance of the here-and-now perspective. This ultimately brings us to the topic of temporality.

In the beginning, it would be useful to remember that the matters of dynamism and temporality are highly intertwined. The reason for this is that dynamism is related to action and practice, and temporality is related to these practices in a "temporally extended present" which contains a past-present-future relationship *per se*.[104] As Shklar clarified, "It is a vision not of the probable but of the 'not-impossible'. It was not concerned with the historically likely at all. … It exists neither in the past nor in the future."[105] Here, the present becomes the reference point for both the past and the future. Michael Marder and Patricia Vieira discuss this topic theoretically in detail, referring to the concepts of possibility and finitude. According to these authors, the aforementioned modality of time creates a temporal plane in which any possibility can be actualised at any time, leading to unpredictability:

> Ex-topic dislocation is a temporary suspension of this world, with all its rules and semantic-ontological formations, that propels the subject into a gap *between worlds*, where utopia may finally be thought: a rupture that is spatial but also temporal, separating the bygone world from the one yet to come. … To submit oneself to the terrifying namelessness, to unlearn the old set of meanings and names, is already to be on the path to a utopic reconfiguration of the world.[106]

Actuality is an important term in this concept as it does not comprise any formalisation, and it also emphasises the recurring essence of action. The essence is

[103] Bell, D. (2010). Fail again. fail better: Nomadic utopianism in Deleuze & Guattari and Yevgeny Zamyatin. *Political Perspectives, 4*(1), 6-38.

[104] Davis, L. (2012). History, politics, and utopia: Toward a synthesis of social theory and practice. In P. Vieira & M. Marder (Eds.), *Existential utopia: New perspectives on utopian thought* (pp. 127-139). Continuum., p. 135.

[105] Shklar, "The political theory of utopia", p. 370.

[106] Marder, M. & Vieira, P. (2012). Existential utopia: Of the world, the possible, the finite. In P. Vieira & M. Marder (Eds.), *Existential utopia: New perspectives on utopian thought* (pp. 35-49). Continuum., p. 40.

not fixed; it is unique to the action, as the possibilities are endless. Possibility, as a constituting element of utopia, has a self-deconstructive aspect and is free from potentiality and actuality. "In this sense, utopia is neither limited to this-worldly immanence nor bound to an other-worldly transcendence; it discloses the temporality and the finitude of the world."[107]

In this context, it is essential to understand the concept of the here-and-now in order to better analyse the notion of temporality. Although the past sheds light on the present, and the present on the future, iconoclastic utopia is future-oriented and actualises this future-orientedness through action and practices in the present. Jacoby says that "it yearns for the future and values the present", which puts forward the prominence of the present a little more than the future.[108] This significance given to the present is described by the understanding of here-and-now. Susan McManus' "Truth, Temporality, and Theorizing Resistance" is of particular usefulness in this regard, as she analyses temporality as an epistemological form and questions its effectiveness. She argues that the temporality of the utopian impulse is complex and does not follow a straight line, "mapping instead time's layered excess as the overlap of future into both present and past, and of past into present and future."[109] The changes predicted and expressed by utopian impulses, the utopian Not Yet, "*inflects* the lived present", which means that there is an active search for alteration to deploy a force that is capable of transforming the hegemonic rationality of the present.[110] This transformation would be within and against the present; while "within the present" implies the temporality of the present, "against the present" implies the temporality of the future. Thus, the here-and-now has a dialectic composition. This also proves "*multiple* temporalities", which enable possibilities to remain "always open and contested (to be fought for)".[111] The critical thing, therefore, is an active

[107] Ibid.

[108] Jacoby, *Picture imperfect*, p. 141.

[109] McManus, S. (2007). Truth, temporality, and theorizing resistance. In M. J. Griffin & T. Moylan (Eds.), *Exploring the utopian impulse: Essays on utopian thought and practice* (pp. 57-81). Peter Lang., p. 59.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid., p. 60.

role and interlacing past and future in the present by political subjects through "illuminating the heterodox and the extraordinary in the seemingly ordinary".[112]

Bauman brings another perspective to the comprehension of utopia with his understanding of liquid modernity, and it is reasonably interrelated with the notion of temporality. He says that "the undefined 'future' itself" is against blueprint utopias since liquid modernity, with its fluid, rapidly changing, and unpredictable nature, disengaged trust from the future.[113] While time was seen as a progressive force that had always advanced from bad to good, it has changed to become only a loss of opportunities for improvement. Delaying gratification is replaced by the here-and-now, happiness is no longer waited for to be achieved until the future and has gained the meaning of a present-day experience. This is the effect of "rational choice" according to Bauman, which also helps explain Suvin's statement "'our *hic et nunc* [*here and now*]' has 'a preferential status'".[114]

This rational choice and the importance of the present is explained by Terry Eagleton as well and led to the questioning of the position of the future. He establishes the equation that declaring the present as the future is to declare the end of history because "the only future we shall ever witness will be a repetition of the present."[115] While saying this he does not mean that the future is continuously delayed, but that it is already happening here-and-now, perhaps unnoticeably. The part where he claims that it is "a repetition of the present" is a problematic one because it is not the same kind of action each and every time the future is pulled forward into the present. No moment is the same as another, and this prevents the actions and practices that happen in the here-and-now from being distinctive from each other, if not very unique. Although this topic is debatable, his stance reflects the general iconoclastic utopian thought well. He further explains that "the future, in the 'pure' temporality of modernism, is just a way of describing the present's lack of coincidence with itself,

[112] Davis, "History, politics, and utopia", p. 136.

[113] Bauman, "Utopia with no topos", p. 22.

[114] Suvin, "Locus, horizon, and orientation", p. 78.

[115] Eagleton, T. (2000). Utopia and its opposites. *Socialist Register, 36*, 31-40., p. 36.

the way its truth lies in its ceaseless self-surpassing", which means that it is the same for socialism, too, in that the present divides itself so as to surpass itself.[116]

As discussed earlier, when utopias aim to transform society, their purpose is not to implement a flawless order, but rather to promote a society that transcends its limitations. Within this context, utopias should be perceived as based upon the historical situation, and by that means they are "necessarily *in relation* to their own time".[117] They are historical counter-images that reflect the present rather than representing universal and timeless goals. The primary purpose of generating utopian counter-images is not to achieve perfection and harmony, but to create a critical, intellectual environment for alternatives and to establish a distance from the existing world. Keijo Lakkala names this concept as "disruptive utopianism" and develops it to tell what he names as "utopian counter-logical practice", which basically means practices applied in the present against the existing status quo with a prefiguration of a better future, as is the main argument of iconoclastic utopias discussed in this section.

All in all, the temporality function of iconoclastic utopias operates through distancing us from the present temporally. This separation is achieved not through spatial means, such as mapping out a geographical space, but by steering time in the desired direction. This perspective reveals that iconoclastic utopias are situated temporally, rather than spatially, in real time. Since the plane of motion is time, it provides fluidity, enabling utopia to "shift backwards and forwards in time".[118] In doing so, there is a challenge to and denial of the unilinear nature of change and causality, and this is the exact reason that allows utopias to present alternative futures. The temporal flexibility provides a way to break the vision of iniquities of the present to turn into alternative futures in the here-and-now. This standpoint obviously has a speculative understanding of the future, and it provides the best tool for critique and social imagination. In essence, the main function of temporality is to

[116] Ibid.

[117] Lakkala, K. (2020). Disruptive utopianism: Opening the present. In T. Eskelinen (Ed.), *The revival of political imagination: Utopias as methodology* (pp. 20-36)., p. 24.

[118] Levitas, *The concept of utopia*, p. 198.

question, challenge, and ultimately transform the present by disrupting the existing state. For temporality to be effective and to imagine an alternative, disagreement with the present conditions is necessary, so this shows us the way to dissensus, as disruption can only happen through the opposite of consensus.

To begin with Eagleton's ideas on Marx's "immanent critique" as the focus point, he argues that Marxism is not against the utopian idea of a radically transformed society, but rather against the idea that it comes into being from nothing, without any process. Such a situation would leave the realised state indescribable because of the great difference that would happen in a very short time. Utopia can only have a force through an interrogation of the present, which helps bring the alternative of that particular moment to light. For utopian thought to be authentic, it needs to expose itself to the dynamics of the machine, which has the power and tries to purposefully eliminate it. Against the system of the machine, it acts within contradictions without the strict identity of being utopian so as to convert the negative state of the present into the positive image of the future. Eagleton says that this is the essence of the traditional "immanent critique", which is now basically named as the contemporary "deconstruction".[119] This makes us define utopia as the dismantling force of the opposition between the future, which is external to the present, and the post-modern conjecture "that there is no 'outside' at all", which also means that utopia as the dismantling force has the power to disintegrate not only the system, but also "the very opposition between 'inside' and 'outside'".[120]

From this perspective, the importance of multiple possibilities resurfaces, as they are the ones that cause tension in the consensual system. As Valérie Fournier states, utopia "lives in dissensus rather than in the search for consensus".[121] Dissent and the existence of multiple possibilities constitute key characteristics of iconoclastic utopias as they are potent instruments against totalitarianism, which is the arrival point of consensus. Such conformism is the enemy of alternatives which establish

[119] Eagleton, "Utopia and its opposites", p. 34.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Fournier, V. (2002). Utopianism and the cultivation of possibilities: Grassroots movements of hope. In M. Parker (Ed.), *Utopia and organization* (pp. 189-216). Blackwell., p. 209.

themselves against the constituent elements of the system. This is a stage where politics has an extremely prominent role; indeed, "it is politics that is always utopian" as Jean-Luc Nancy claimed.[122] The reason for this lies in the idea that wants to realise and transform the reality of the here-and-now as desired for the future. Realisation of social desires can only happen through action and practices; it depends "upon not only wishful thinking but will-full action".[123] The meaning utopia gains through this characteristic is the very effect that makes it real(ised), which is only through collective action as "the agency of transformation".[124] Hence, there can be a simple path drawn as follows: Utopia requires transformation, transformation requires dissent, dissent requires politics, politics is only through (collective) action.

Bauman also thinks similarly in that there needs to be "deliberate collective action" "involving a measure of hazard" for his definition of utopia.[125] Collective action is key in keeping this level of criticism to further the practices of meeting societal needs and to defeat the hierarchical order of the existing society. These political practices prove that it is not "states" or destinations that is significant; on the contrary, it is the process or the journey that helps to move forward. It is about movement and setting up conditions for developing alternatives. Therefore, as Fournier concludes, utopia "cannot end with a critique of the present, nor even with the construction of a better future; it cannot end at all."[126] It always needs to create another alternative, and the best one at that moment, so that it cannot settle into a stable order which would eventually lead to totality. Here, "utopia's disruptive potential" in Kinna's terms, takes to the stage; disagreement with the existing reality gets included with social and political practices, which ultimately paves the way for disruption of the order.[127]

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[122] Nancy, J. L. (2012). In place of utopia. In P. Vieira & M. Marder (Eds.), *Existential utopia: New perspectives on utopian thought* (pp. 3-13). Continuum., p. 8.

[123] Levitas, *The concept of utopia*, p. 231.

[124] Ibid., p. 198.

[125] Bauman, Z. (1976). *Socialism: The active utopia*. George Allen & Unwin., p. 17.

[126] Fournier, "Utopianism and the cultivation of possibilities", p. 192.

[127] Kinna, "Politics, ideology and utopia", p. 282.

One of the main criticisms made by iconoclastic utopias against blueprint utopias is about the implementation of politics. As explained above, it is a key characteristic of the former, while for the latter, it is simply something that needs to be got rid of since it aims for the ending of politics. As Krishan Kumar criticised, "the frequently noted contempt for politics in utopian theory is the logical complement of its belief in perfectibility".[128] From this perspective, politics certainly equates to chaos and instability, which explains the blueprint utopias' preference for consensus and homogeneity. However, for iconoclastic utopias; imperfection, difference, and dissensus are critical to maintain the practices and the process. The main idea is to "shatter the present" through disagreement in order to progress to a better alternative.[129]

2.3. Heterotopia

Originally a medical term meaning a tissue developing in an abnormal place, heterotopia was first introduced to the social sciences by Michel Foucault in 1966, in his preface to *The Order of Things*.[130] He later briefly discussed it in a radio broadcast that same year. These two revelations were mostly related to the topic of utopia and literature. For the third time, he presented a lecture to a group of architects in 1967 in which he analysed social spaces and places. Although the lecture was not published initially, Foucault later agreed to its publication shortly before his death in 1984. The lecture titled "Des Espaces Autres", translated to English as "Of Other Spaces"[131] in 1986 and as "Different Spaces"[132] in 1998, is the main discussion point in this section.[133] It should also be noted from the outset that there are no other

[128] Kumar, K. (1991). *Utopianism*. Open University Press., p. 29.

[129] Moylan, *Demand the impossible*, p. 27.

[130] Foucault, M. (1989). *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences* (A. Sheridan, Trans.). Routledge. (Original work published 1966), p. xix.

[131] Foucault, "Of other spaces".

[132] Foucault, "Different spaces", pp. 175-185.

[133] The second translation is preferred in this study since it is closer to the French original in terms of word selections and the meaning is better preserved. For a detailed explanation on the comparison of the two translations, see Johnson, P. (2006). Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces'. *History of the Human Sciences, 19*(4), 75-90.

writings on heterotopia by Foucault himself, which establishes the point of departure for all discussions related to heterotopias in the academic literature thus far.

It is necessary to describe heterotopia through Foucault's descriptions before any commentary or comparison between any kind of utopias. Foucault explains six principles of heterotopia. The first principle is the fact that each and every human group or society has a heterotopia reflecting its culture, which inevitably cancels out the idea of a universal heterotopia. He then classifies heterotopias into two types: crisis heterotopias and heterotopias of deviation. The first one indicates advantaged, sanctified, or prohibited places for individuals who are in a state of crisis, e.g., a boarding school, military service for men. The second one represents places in which people are put because of their abnormal behaviours, e.g., psychiatric hospitals and prisons. The second principle is that a society can change the way a heterotopia functions. For example, until the end of the eighteenth century, cemeteries were placed in the city centre, but beginning with the nineteenth century, they were moved to outlying districts. The third principle, heterotopias can collocate several contradictory emplacements together, like the traditional Persian garden, which represents different parts of the world with its four corners and the middle fountain as the centre of the world, a sacred microcosm. The fourth principle, heterotopias function by temporal discontinuities through their access to heterochronias. Foucault here divides this principle into two subcategories: First, there are heterotopias that accumulate time infinitely, like museums and libraries, and second, there are transient, chronic heterotopias, like festivals and vacation villages. The fifth principle, heterotopias, always have a precondition for opening and closing, which makes them isolated from their environment. For instance, entry to prisons is compulsory, and exit can only happen after certain "purification" activities are performed. The sixth and last principle, heterotopias function in relation to the remaining space, which can occur in two distinct ways: they can create a space of illusion which decries all real emplacements, e.g., brothels, or they can make a different real space, e.g., colonies.[134]

[134] Foucault, "Different spaces", pp. 175-185.; Foucault, M. (2014). Heterotopias (P. Johnston, Trans.). *AA Files, 69*, 18-22. (Original work published 2009)

In all these categorisations and descriptions, the striking common element is that heterotopias are "spatio-temporal units",[135] understood as sites of resistance, or in Foucault's words, counter-emplacements. This is the main line of relation to utopian political thought, so it is mainly within the scope of socio-political space and political movements in relation to a complex sense of time.

Yet, heterotopias' perspective on utopias is negative, if not antinomic. This is because of their criticism of blueprint utopias solely, and they have no viewpoint about iconoclastic utopias. Foucault says:

> Utopias are emplacements having no real place. They are emplacements that maintain a general relation of direct or inverse analogy with the real space of society. They are society perfected or the reverse of society, but in any case these utopias are spaces that are fundamentally and essentially unreal.[136]

He mainly stresses the unreality of utopias based on their social position, which is based on constant deferral and imagination. Following Foucault, other scholars have also criticised utopia in the same way. For example, Benjamin Genocchio stressed their fictional nature, without any real place, while comparing the reality of heterotopias as existing places of difference, challenging the notion of a consistent and universally shared spatiality.[137] These counter-emplacements are far from being fictitious, as they are in a relationship with all remaining places. Nevertheless, it is important to remind once again that they are differentiated, and sometimes even separated, from all other emplacements in reality, yet they are in relation to all places. This point of view emphasises its spatiality – prioritising space over place – which also emphasises its socio-political aspect. To elaborate, the notion of space inherently includes the social and political effects of the system on places, whereas place merely depicts a frozen physical site, disconnected from any social concept. In relation to this, Genocchio explains that we do not know anything about the total ordering of the spatial systems, and that is why, through heterotopias, space is

[135] Defert (1997), as cited in Johnson, "Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces'", p. 78.

[136] Foucault, "Different spaces", p. 178.

[137] Genocchio, B. (1995). Discourse, discontinuity, difference: The question of 'other' spaces. In S. Watson & K. Gibson (Eds.), *Postmodern cities and spaces* (pp. 35-46). Blackwell., p. 38.

produced as "transient, contestory, plagued by lapses and ruptured sites" so as to resist the unknown.[138] "For Foucault, heterotopias constitute a discontinuous but socially defined spatiality", Genocchio says, emphasising the transiency of these counter-emplacements as a practice of resistance against the system.[139]

Another important contribution of Genocchio is his insistent views about the ambiguity of heterotopia. He argues that the concept of heterotopia relies on being undefined and incomparable, and that is why identifying emplacements as heterotopia is self-denying. Naming spaces as heterotopias just refuses any "otherness" and trivialises this complex concept. Thus, he is against an ontology of heterotopia and suggests keeping the focus point on spaces rather than places – on spatiality. This would not only expose the idea and maybe the practice itself but also challenge the common social ordering of space and refuse to get involved in that order, shining more through its difference. This approach emphasises the radical and resistant aspects of heterotopia, while undermining its potential relationship to power and knowledge to present a more structured ordering, as discussed by Kevin Hetherington.[140] What Genocchio criticises implicitly is that the concept of heterotopia needs to depend more on similitude rather than resemblance since the former can provide a dynamic relationship that constantly challenges its connections, while the latter provides only a fixed and superficial context, as is told extensively by Foucault in *The Order of Things*.

Hetherington is another important scholar who contributed to heterotopia studies with his one-of-a-kind monograph, *The Badlands of Modernity: Heterotopia and Social Ordering*. For him, heterotopias "reveal the process of social ordering"; hence, it is "a process rather than a thing".[141] It is an alternate social ordering and in defining the margins, he benefits from Henri Lefebvre's representational spaces as they "are not sites as such but temporal situations, events, which occur in particular

[138] Ibid., p. 43.

[139] Ibid., p. 38.

[140] Hetherington, K. (1997). *The badlands of modernity: Heterotopia and social ordering*. Routledge., pp. 47-48.

[141] Hetherington, *The badlands of modernity*, p. ix.

places that open up the possibilities of resistance within society to certain marginal groups or social classes."[142] Having said that, it is critical to remember Foucault's examples of heterotopia which includes places like prisons and military service, i.e. places which are known for their strict discipline and order. Hetherington thinks about that and explains this as the paradox of heterotopia; they can be both spaces of total freedom and spaces of total control. The significant thing is the juxtaposition of incommensurate objects, which defy the way we think and how our thinking is ordered. In other words, heterotopias' distinct way of ordering makes a shock effect.[143] For Foucault, this is the most important principle of heterotopias: the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements without an order or integration, just through resemblance. The ordering process consists of a series of similitudes that create bizarre combinations, interrupting the normal flow. However, this bizarreness is not inherent; their identity is only set up by their difference when compared to other emplacements. From the inside, the internal arrangement might appear to be utterly normal. It is only heterotopic when the emplacement's relationship to the outside is viewed from another perspective, so the external standpoint plays a characteristic role here, rather than internal elements.[144]

Heterotopias are complex spaces that are difficult to locate since they cannot be represented in existing systems very easily, but this does not mean that they are very unique either. They exist in the way things are arranged and related to one another, and they are not found innately in the order of things. Regardless of their standing either as a space of total control or a space of total freedom, they are emplacements for everything that is "displaced, marginal, novel or rejected, or ambivalent."[145] For organising these very conditions in an alternative system, heterotopias serve as compulsory points of transition. Ultimately, it is through their direct comparison and contrast, juxtaposed in everyday spaces around them, that they are recognised as heterotopias.

[142] Ibid., p. 22.

[143] Ibid., p. 42.

[144] Ibid., p. 43.

[145] Ibid., p. 46.

Heterotopia as an emplacement comes into prominence with its unusual and transforming performances, connected to other emplacements. They represent heterogeneous ways, which help them perform a unique way of social ordering. The heterogeneity causes disruption; thus, all heterotopic relationships disrupt. It challenges what is normal, i.e., the order with all its fixity and certainty. The juxtaposition of incommensurate objects through its challenge to all representations of the system is a process of similitude, which sets forth the incongruous and presents it as a foundation for an alternative ordering.

Hetherington analyses Foucault's concept of heterotopia and explains that for him, heterotopia is about the relationship between difference and otherness and connecting them. How that otherness is presented as a way of "(dis)ordering" is the most crucial aspect of heterotopia. From Foucault's perspective, emplacements of otherness are represented as such by the power holders in society. That is why creating alternative social orderings and heterotopic emplacements hold an important role in the way to social improvement. The effects of power and resistance are interlaced just like the relationship between freedom and social control; freedom is a feature of social control, and social control is hidden in freedom. Resistance is due to the position of power in society. In relation to utopian thought, these Foucauldian perspectives make Hetherington conclude that:

> This paradox of freedom as control and control as freedom is the paradox of the utopianism of modernity and the paradox that defines heterotopic conditions: no matter how much we wish to be free, we will always create conditions of ordering if not order itself.[146]

He continues to talk about the relationship between utopia and heterotopia, and explains that heterotopia is born when utopian ideals arise from differences that present alternative social orderings. He also states that utopia is not solely about freedom, yet it is more related to new forms of discerned freedom built by new categories of social ordering. Yet, these expressions do not give an extra importance to utopias as modern forms of social ordering are a result of "heterotopic uncertainty"

[146] Ibid., pp. 52-53.

where order and disorder are mixed together in a continuous negotiation between the competing values of freedom and social control.[147]

In establishing the relationship between utopia and heterotopia, Hetherington meticulously interrogates social order and its relationship to modernity, arguing that modernity establishes social order through spatial arrangements that are characteristically ambiguous and ambivalent due to their difference. Trying to eliminate the ambiguity and ambivalence is something that can be called (blueprint) utopian, so that explains why heterotopia embraces difference and includes it in its alternate ordering whenever it encounters difference. These alternative social orderings have their own unique structure, which is based on a process with all its unpredictability and repercussions. While being critical of utopia, heterotopia utilises it as Hetherington explicates that the utopian impulse is attained by the agency of the "other" – the "other" meaning spaces of ambiguous and differing forms of order. By incorporating and structuring this difference, these processes present alternative models of social order, making the unfamiliar seem normal and controllable. As a result of the juxtaposition of ambiguous characters, new social identities emerge within a socially structured framework. In this process, utopian ideals are realised through a spatial organisation, which separates the ambivalent in order to define what is normal and orderly. Agents can use these differentiated spaces to transform themselves through interaction with the otherness. This process shows that not all (blueprint) utopias are limited or restrictive, and they simply utilise difference so as to establish unity and order, yet this does not necessarily mean eliminating difference.[148]

Although Hetherington's analysis of utopia is relatively more objective, he has this underlying idea that utopia is unreachable because it always defers. Against this, he defends heterotopia, claiming that they, as spaces of alternative social ordering, can be bridges to the utopian horizon. It is crucial to remember Suvin's combinatorics here. He classified heterotopia as a concept that has "*Locus alone*, without a utopian

[147] Ibid., p. 54.

[148] Ibid., pp. 55-71.

Horizon".[149] The same formula applies here as heterotopias externally use utopian visions "in order to ontologize the gap between the no- and the good".[150] They represent efforts to build a connection. "Heterotopia are spaces of the 'not yet' as Ernst Bloch might have called them, spaces that seek to turn that 'not yet' into a 'there' but never achieve their place in an order of things."[151] Heterotopias are defined by their relational character rather than their ontological nature, and they are not directly about the difference itself, but rather how the difference relates to alternative social orderings. Because of this, the concept of heterotopia is in tension with the concept of utopia. They occur when utopian visions spatially emerge and take the form of differences that present an alternative ordering of society.

Bruno Bosteels questions modernity in terms of its relation to time and space by analysing contemporary French theory in one article and mentions that Foucault developed his idea of heterotopia as a critique of modernity, obtaining it from the here-and-now, "as opposed to the 'not-here' of utopia".[152] This argument is obviously a perspective of iconoclastic utopia criticising blueprint utopia, to interpret it simply within the context of traditional and contemporary utopian thoughts. He further develops his analysis more with a focus on deconstruction and shares Jacques Derrida's views on the task of deconstruction, which is to uncover the non-place or non-lieu as the "other" by placing the focus on what does not take place or an event whose arrival is not yet. In essence, there is an attempt to realise a utopia, which is described as a "non-place" of otherness that would ultimately cause the end of history. The closure of the system here is an important factor as it constitutes the opening of the otherness. This represents an "immanent excess" and carries the possibility of an event adventing within it.[153] Bosteels' arguments provide a context focusing on an event that is yet to come and on the process of deconstruction in relation with the ontology of heterotopia. His main question comes to be the

[149] Suvin, "Locus, horizon, and orientation", p. 79.

[150] Hetherington, *The badlands of modernity*, p. 141.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Bosteels, B. (2003). Nonplaces: An anecdoted topography of contemporary French theory. *Diacritics, 33*(3/4), 117-139.

[153] Ibid., p. 126.

existence of heterotopia as a development of the "non-place" of utopia, which uses deconstruction as its method of realising itself as otherness. Ultimately, Bosteels' arguments find a radical force through this very dialectical relationship, by positioning "the end of history" not as a fixed closure, but as a condition of possibility that leads the way to a never-ending deconstructive opening to the otherness.

Peter Johnson is another scholar of heterotopia studies. His views, particularly on the comparison of the relationship between heterotopia and utopia, are significant in locating these notions. He positions heterotopia as an active antagonist of utopia, rather than an alternative. He asserts his idea as follows: "Heterotopia not only contrasts with utopia, but actually undermines or unsettles it. In particular, heterotopia contests utopian forms of resistance and transgression based on a space of liberation."[154] What this means for him is that "heterotopias unstitch, undermine and transform utopias",[155] precisely by challenging their greatest longing and promise: liberation. Johnson argues for figuring space outside or against any utopian impulse because, unlike the idealised, visionary nature of utopias, heterotopian spaces have no promise of liberation. "They offer no resolution or consolation, but disrupt and test our customary notions of ourselves."[156] They do not have a horizon or a destination; they simply illuminate the path for our imagination.

As explained before, the disruptive potential of heterotopias is not because of their differentiation or separation from society. Although they are distinct emplacements, they are found in every culture, and their principal aim is to "mirror, distort and react to the remaining space."[157] As Foucault acknowledges the discontinuity and changeability of heterotopias, this allows them to present a dynamic tension rather than a static escapism. Johnson argues that "they are not necessarily radically 'Other'" in that normality is not found at all.[158] They are complex spaces that offer

[154] Johnson, "Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces'", p. 82.

[155] Ibid., p. 85.

[156] Ibid., p. 87.

[157] Johnson, P. (2013). The geographies of heterotopia. *Geography Compass*, *7*(11), 790-803., p. 794.

[158] Ibid., p. 799.

not only opportunities, but also dangers. Therefore, they are not always sanctuaries, but unsettling, disruptive reflections of reality.

Heidi Sohn provides a detailed rereading of the term heterotopia. She comments on Foucault's heterotopias by emphasising the disorganising effect: Their first and foremost goal is to abolish fixed systems, to disarrange language and senses, to go against homogeneity, and to mirror the "other" side of society. "They are the spaces reserved for the abnormal, the other, the deviant."[159] This is the essence of heterotopia; without the mirror effect and the wish and will to challenge the order of things, heterotopia cannot be realised. However, the paradox of such a relationship lies in the fact that heterotopia requires a homogeneous order to realise itself, yet this homogeneous order also needs the anomaly created by heterotopia so that it can draw its borders and locate the normal in its rightful place. Based on this paradoxical situation, she detects two aspects of heterotopia: "on the one hand the determination of orthotopological orders against heterotopological ones, and on the other, the delineation of homotopia over and against heterotopia."[160] The first aspect is explained by Foucault himself through his six principles of heterotopia, as Sohn claims. She expresses the second aspect relying on "difference", which is understood as "otherness" against "sameness". The "other" here has the potential for radical transformation by representing an alternative way of thinking and thus, it may be the remedy for homogeneity through inventing spaces which challenge "the conventional modes of spatial homotopia".[161] The critical thing is to deconstruct what is normal. Against the progress of homogeneity, the only remaining chance is the undiscovered and the unusual spaces, which can turn into spaces of material and social possibilities that "cannot be fitted and fixed into any rigid taxonomy", and hence, can lead to radical social transformation.[162]

Recalling Lefebvre's representational spaces once again, Marco Cenzatti makes a comparison of the idea of heterotopia with Lefebvre's concept and states that

[159] Sohn, H. (2008). Heterotopia: Anamnesis of a medical term. In M. Dehaene & L. De Cauter (Eds.), *Heterotopia and the city: Public space in a postcivil society* (pp. 41-50). Routledge., p. 44.

[160] Ibid., p. 45.

[161] Ibid., p. 48.

[162] Ibid., pp. 48-49.

heterotopias are more than representational spaces. What Lefebvre taught us is that space itself is a part of social action, and it is not an immobile pillar of social action. Heterotopia is further than that; it shows the process of producing space, which is a disintegrating, mobile, and altering one. As stated before, heterotopias are characterised by the juxtaposition of several incompatible elements in a single real place, which makes them the "other". However, this otherness does not stem from the fixity of physical space or heterotopias being counter-emplacements but owing to an infinite set of differences in these representational spaces.[163] Here, he stresses the diversity and plurality as a key characteristic, which is a rightful point of view.

Sylvia Borissova investigates the relations between possibility and reality in aesthetic heterotopia. She emphasises the double function of heterotopias as "utopias in practice" since heterotopias both represent and reverse real spaces. She continues her research in comparison with the concept of utopia and explains that heterotopias are the tangible results of utopian thinking. "The *cultural phenomenon of heterotopia, but also of heterochronia, marks a rupture, a break, inversion, discontinuity, suspension, or sublimation of its environment, either spatial or temporal*."[164] This explains why the concept of heterotopia has been used increasingly more for almost sixty years, which is a result of the "postmodern shift". Normativity, authority, and centralisation left their place to marginality, self-actualisation, and decentralisation. It has been described as a "radical plurality" and "aesthetic diversity", referring to its heterogeneity and incompatibility. She explains heterotopia's relation with its environment; aesthetic heterotopia as the "other" space creates itself by subsuming the usual social space and setting its own rules within it in the here-and-now, reflecting the societal aspirations depicted through utopia.

Ultimately, Foucault's heterotopia and the literature written on this concept unveil that its productive ambiguity is the main value rather than a decisive and organised ontology. The fact that Foucault did not have a well-settled discourse on it, though

[163] Cenzatti, M. (2008). Heterotopias of difference. In M. Dehaene & L. De Cauter (Eds.), *Heterotopia and the city: Public space in a postcivil society* (pp. 75-85). Routledge., pp. 81-82.

[164] Borissova, S. (2016). The play of the possible and the real in aesthetic heterotopia. *Balkan Journal of Philosophy, 8*(2), 159-164., p. 161.

sounding very disadvantageous, comes to be its greatest strength, as its vagueness is the main reason why it transformed into a flexible analytical instrument, rather than a fixed system of places. The different comprehensions of heterotopia, as explained above, display that the indecisive dialectic with utopia – whether heterotopia is a practical realisation of utopia, its disturbing antagonist, or the continuum in which utopian impulse is processed – is a critical part of its functioning. The most discerning alteration is the repositioning of the view that heterotopias represent static "different spaces" into the perspective that they are dynamic processes of alternative social ordering. While Foucault himself also argued, other scholars emphasised the essence of heterotopia as the way it juxtaposes incongruous elements to mirror and disrupt what exists as the normal order of things, rather than only focusing on the otherness of the space. This perspective elucidates its paradox: Heterotopias are spaces of total control as well as total freedom, and also, they are spaces of exclusion, defining what inclusion is. Although they are sometimes separated, they are contained in the functioning of society by creating alternative forms of ordering that aim to generate freedom and liberation. Therefore, heterotopia has evolved to become a critical lens reflecting social life and its relation to power and knowledge, which are perceived as normal, in a way that deconstructs and exposes them as contested and transient, rather than simply being a label for bizarre locations.

To conclude the chapter, it would not be wrong to claim that the concept of utopia, since its very birth, has created not only good, wishful imaginations, but also problematic ideas. Throughout this chapter, its varying faces, from the rigid, prescriptive blueprint utopias to its disobedient, spontaneous equivalent iconoclastic utopias, are covered. The monstrosity of anti-utopias, which were born as warnings against idealistic orders of society that later turn into oppressive regimes, is encountered. Finally, the ambiguous, liminal spaces of heterotopias, "different spaces" in Foucault's terms, that exist within our own reality, reflecting and at the same time twisting it so as to open up a time and place for criticism, were unveiled. When all these concepts are put side by side, it is seen that they are not separated from each other; on the contrary, they are intertwined internally, and they give us a very controversial discourse on the functioning of society, perception of space-time, and human imagination and aspiration for a better future. To conclude this unique

network of relationships is not to reach the end of the journey, but rather to cherish the continuing tenseness of these ideas as they represent the never-ending human impulse to dream of better worlds, the critical necessity of questioning those dreams, and the requirement for finding spaces to instantly realise difference and liberation within our existing real world.

The traditional blueprint utopia, from Plato's *Republic* to More's *Utopia*, stands for a deep desire for a perfect, stable, ordered, and harmonious society. Such longings are a representation of a profound dissatisfaction with the injustice of the existing world. Their power lies in their comprehensiveness as they present an entire system of social, political, and economic structure built to eliminate any possible hardship. Every aspect of life is considered and planned in detail, from the arrangement of cities to the scheduling of daily routines. However, this comprehensiveness, at the same time, is its lethal mistake. The blueprint utopia is based on a static and universal understanding of the "good life", and there is no place for dissidence or deviation. Any unpredictable or contradictory act would be suppressed in line with the principle of perfection. The individual is absorbed by the collective, and the understanding of freedom is acknowledged by all in relation to the willingness for perfection. This internal rigidity is exactly how anti-utopia found a place to grow itself.

Anti-utopia is not only a rejection of utopia, but also a catastrophic critique of the inner logic of blueprint utopia. The narrative of anti-utopia inverts the notions of stability, happiness, and collectivity, revealing its potential to transition into totalitarian control. Achilles' heel of blueprint utopia is exposed by anti-utopia: its reliance on a centralised authority, to which the individual will is inferior. The dream of a better world becomes a nightmare of a world without freedom. Through this vision, anti-utopia shows us a warning that even good and noble intentions can lead to the very nightmares that are sought to be averted. The eradication of social problems is not possible through total control, and indeed, the result is far worse than the problem itself. It leads us to ask ourselves if we really need perfection. The anti-utopian answer is unambiguous: The price is always high.

In response to this deadlock between an imperfect reality and a totalitarian ideal, the concept of iconoclastic utopia arises. It advocates a utopia that does not provide any

detailed plan for a perfect society but promotes criticism and direction toward the present. The iconoclastic utopia is not a destination, but an orientation. It dwells in the "not yet", in the latent possibilities and unfulfilled promises within our current reality. It exists not through detailed, systematic plans, but through action and practice of resistance and solidarity, and through artistic creation in a constant dream of a better way of being. This type of utopia is dynamic, disruptive, and process-oriented. It rejects the static perfection of the blueprint utopia and instead embraces the continuous struggle for emancipation. Its function is not to prescribe, but to provoke; not to draw borders, but to remove the existing ones. It is a utopia of hope, rather than one of reason and order.

However, while iconoclastic utopia extricates utopia from totalitarian perspectives, it may also lead to impracticality. As a possible restoration, the concept of heterotopia offers a productive ambiguity with its evolution as an analytical instrument. Originally, Foucault's lectures only provided a categorisation of "different spaces", yet the idea of heterotopia evolves into a dynamic context through later contributions of several scholars. The evolution is from the comprehension of heterotopias as mere counter-emplacements or bizarre locations to the concept of dynamic processes of alternative social orderings. Hetherington's perspective is especially important in that it positions heterotopia as an instrument that arranges modernity's paradoxes, like the opposition between freedom and control. This brings a potent resolution to Foucault's contradictions in his examples, such as disciplinary prisons and liberating festivals representing both heterotopias. Moreover, the relationship of heterotopia to utopia is very diverse, ranging from being a "realised utopia" and practical realisation of utopian impulses in which heterotopia becomes a medium of spatially realising utopian visions, to being utopia's disruptive antagonist. Thus, there is a dialectical relationship between the two notions, and this tension has become the main characteristic of the concept itself. The tension and the ambiguity ultimately represent the strength of heterotopia as they prevent it from turning into a rigid typology. The function of heterotopia lies in its critical lens and flexibility, which enables the deconstruction of the normal order of things. What heterotopia does is to juxtapose incongruous elements to reflect the society and its social norms, and create a rupture in this order. In terms of deconstruction and creation of a rupture, they sound very

similar to iconoclastic utopias, yet their differences are more than their similarities. First and foremost, they can also be spaces of total control, but such a classification is not possible for iconoclastic utopias. Secondly, they are focused more on spatiality when compared to iconoclastic utopias, for which the functioning of time, rather than space, is more important, although the notions of time and space are existent in both concepts with different degrees of significance. Thirdly and lastly, heterotopias function as mirrors and disturb society through this method, while for utopias, there is no such method, and the only significant criterion is to be in dissent with the system.

In conclusion, the journey from blueprint utopia to heterotopia is a journey from prescription to criticism, from wishful thinking to wilful action, from desire to critique, and from abstract ideals to concrete spaces. The blueprint utopia expresses a longing for an emancipated world from any suffering. The anti-utopia provides a counter-narrative, reminding us of the wicked potential for our noble aspirations to turn into evil doctrines. The iconoclastic utopia gives us the spirit of hope and resistance by encouraging action to change the order. Finally, the heterotopia ensures a method of realising utopian visions through its lens that enables a critique of the complex social reality.

Engaging with utopian thought and these concepts means that it is not a linear path that goes to the ideal of seeking a better, emancipated world. It is an ongoing, complex interlocution between the grand vision and the localised acts of resistance. The future of utopian thought does not lie in perfect, absolute designations, but in establishing, growing, and bridging heterotopian spaces that practice different ways of being in the here-and-now. These spaces are probably imperfect, transient, and disturbing, but they are real, and they provide a stage for imagination and radical alterations to take place. In this journey of wandering through “different spaces”, there is no final answer. It, indeed, would be antithetical to the idea of heterotopia. Instead, it needs to make its agents ask new questions each and every time: How can we create more just and free spaces for all? The answer will not be found in any single blueprint, but in the perpetual, critical, and hopeful practice of building them.

CHAPTER 3

THE PHILOSOPHY OF JACQUES RANCIÈRE

Rancière's philosophy means a confrontation with our most essential aesthetic and political presumptions in a radically disturbing way. In a world of policy debates and commentary for reforms, Rancière forces us to think outside the box by asking the very basic question: What if "politics" in its common sense is not politics at all? What if it is its very negation? The French philosopher, initially a student of Althusser, designs a philosophy of emancipation away from the grand traditions of political philosophy as a result of his engagement with the May 1968 movement. He criticises theories of Plato, Aristotle, and Marx in a way that positions them as mechanisms for the suppression of politics itself. For Rancière, true politics is not the administration of the state or the competition between political parties. It is a rare, disruptive, and scandalous event, depicting the momentary disruption of radical equality into a world structured by its denial.

This chapter digs into the core components of Rancière's philosophy, a distinguishing conceptual framework. To do this, it will first explore the main divergence positioning his theoretical scheme, namely the social and the political. Second, it will explain the notion of the police and its distribution of the sensible, which are concepts that help to antinomically define the previous concepts of the social and the political. Third, the concept of wrong from a police's perspective will be explained in order to lead the way to the political back again. Fourth, the progression of wrong into disagreement and dissensus is explained. Fifth, politics in the sense of the political is investigated deeply. Sixth, defining characteristics of politics – equality and emancipation – are examined with a focus on political subjectivation. Lastly, aesthetics and art's relations to politics are discussed. Through this comprehensive investigation, an attempt is made to set the focus on the idea that

equality is not a goal to be achieved, but a presupposition to be enacted through aesthetic and political practices. This axiom is the starting point that needs to be verified in the present, so it is not a utopian promise for the future. By pursuing these ideas that constitute a whole political epistemology, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive lexicon of Rancièrean philosophy, i.e., the very essence of politics of emancipation.

3.1. The Social and the Political

The notion of political philosophy is something discredited in Rancière's understanding since the very description of political order addressed by any school of political philosophy means only the visible, neat, harmonious order of an existing community, with the ultimate aim of eliminating politics.[165] To understand "what is political" in Rancièrean theory, it is necessary to analyse this harmonious order first. By its common meaning, what most people understand from the word "politics" is the activities and relations in order to influence decisions and make changes in the social order among given options in a society with borders drawn. Rancière incites us to think about outside of these borders so as to define "the political". In this context, inside the borders is the norm, for it describes what is normal in a society, and it is named as "the police" in Rancière's philosophy. The encounter of the police with the outside of the borders is named as the political; therefore, it occurs at the border lines. While politics happens all over this domain, consisting of both inside and outside the borders, real politics is only on the outside, as inside the borders consists of a constructed reality of the police.

In Rancière's philosophy, the social is the name of this commonplace situation. The social constitutes the building block of Rancière's theory by preceding the political, and thus, creating a fundamental division.

> The social is several things at once, it is the metapolitical body that explains politics, and it can also be the object of a utopia, or of philosophies of the compactness of the social body, of the social bond. But the social is also the

[165] Chambers, S. A. (2014). Police and oligarchy. In J. P. Deranty (Ed.), *Jacques Rancière: Key concepts* (pp. 57-68). Routledge.

> place of constant conflict, the place where the political can always surge up again, in the work of reconfiguring the givens which we might call the work of the imagination.[166]

Hence, one could argue that, for Rancière, the social ontologically consists of everything, including the political. However, the political is only an extraction from the social; it is not a part. He argues that "there is a whole that constitutes itself other than as a collection of existing parts",[167] clarifying the idea that the given system of the social is a whole to be divided by, or extracted as, the political. The political can be any difference that is caused between the interacting individual political actors.[168] Their interaction enables "the other" that is different from the rest of the social, and this difference ultimately causes this partition of the other to be extracted from the social as the political. The existence of the other as the difference is necessary for the social as a whole since it helps to build and define the boundaries of the whole as well as to construct the wholeness of the whole. Although it is originally within the whole, it is extracted for the existence of the whole, which means that the whole depends on it in order to define its form.[169] Hence, the whole is impossible as it is already divided at least into two from the very beginning.

The management of the whole is provided through policing "the community of equals". Despite the name "community of equals", there is a hierarchical order maintained in which only arithmetic equality is provided, meaning bureaucratic progression favours steady reforms. As a result of this highly bureaucratised and structured equality, the excluded are extracted from the order as a sacrifice for the general well-being of the multitude. The political exists by the social as a form of denial – a denial of this bureaucratised equality. It forms a "community as a way of occupying a place and a time, as the body in action as opposed to a mere apparatus of

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[166] Rancière, J. (2016). *The method of equality: Interviews with Laurent Jeanpierre and Dork Zabunyan* (J. Rose, Trans.). Polity Press. (Original work published 2012), p. 125.

[167] Rancière, J. (2003). Politics and aesthetics: An interview. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities, 8(*2), 191-211. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725032000162657, p. 198.

[168] Dişci, Z. (2020). *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat: Jacques Rancière'in politik düşüncesi*. Çizgi Kitabevi., pp. 19-20.

[169] Ibid.

laws; a set of perceptions, gestures and attitudes that precede and pre-form laws and political institutions".[170]

Occupying a place and a time takes shape within the void, in spaces where the whole cannot cover. The void is the space where the part of no part exists as they are excluded from this whole structure. A division occurs constantly because of the structure of the whole; it is a result of the functioning of the whole, as the whole does not allow some parts in.[171] Thus, the actors that function in the void do not take part in the whole since they are stuck in the void. Actors who do not take part are allowed to speak up regarding how the social functions, and they open up a place for discussion and criticism of the social, for it is a constituent element that determines how the social functions.[172] As a result, the social creates a space between its actors, which Rancière calls "dissensus", regarding the difference or the conflict. "A dissensus is not a conflict of interests, opinions, or values; it is a division put in the 'common sense': a dispute about what is given, about the frame within which we see something as given."[173] It is a conflict over the "common sense" that each community describes for itself regarding how they perceive the social and the political, so it is related to "the presence or absence of a common object".[174] Therefore, there is no commonality found in the encounter of the two processes, and they are of different kinds. It is important to reiterate that politics arises from the meeting of two distinct and unrelated processes. The first one is the process of governing, which involves constructing a structured and hierarchical communal agreement through the organisation of roles, positions, and responsibilities. Rancière names this process policy. The second process centres on the principle of equality. It involves actions guided by the belief that all individuals are inherently equal, and

[170] Rancière, J. (2009). *The emancipated spectator* (G. Elliott, Trans.). Verso. (Original work published 2008), p. 6.

[171] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, pp. 22-23.

[172] Ibid.

[173] Rancière, J. (2004). Who is the subject of the Rights of Man? *The South Atlantic Quarterly, 103*(2/3), 297-310. https://doi.org/10.1215/00382876-103-2-3-297

[174] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. xii.

also, efforts to demonstrate and support this belief in practice. Rancière names this process emancipation.[175]

The police is the name of the existing order and the representative of the social. However, it cannot represent the whole despite its claim, for it is the embodiment of the elite and all inequalities. Since it cannot represent the whole, the unrepresented parts form void spaces and time in the social, causing them to stay out of the police. In this context, politics functions as an assistant in constructing the structure of the elite. It exists within the police, yet the police separates and divides from itself to exist. When this division meets the police, the political takes place. However, the police and the political, although separated, are both included in the social insofar as they are included in the same whole. They are heterogeneous processes. The possibility of the political does not depend solely on the police or on politics; it is found in dissensus as a heterogeneous whole in which the police and politics coexist.[176]

In the idea that the police and politics coexist, Rancière investigates the Foucauldian thought that power relations are found everywhere; therefore, everything is political. Rancière interprets this idea with the following proposition: "Everything is policing." He uses the term police to address what Foucault "used the terms biopolitics and biopower interchangeably".[177] However, the two philosophers' idea of "politics" does not align since Foucault built politics around the question of power, while Rancière mainly questions political subjectivation.[178] As for the police:

> Foucault conceives of the police as an institutional apparatus that participates in power's control over life and bodies; while, for me [Rancière], the police designates not an institution of power but a

[175] Rancière, J. (1992). Politics, identification, and subjectivization. *October, 61*, 58-64., p. 58.

[176] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat,* p. 26.

[177] Rancière, J. (2010). *Dissensus: On politics and aesthetics* (S. Corcoran, Ed. & Trans.). Continuum., p. 93.

[178] Rancière uses the French word "*subjectivation*" in his texts, while it has been translated into English with different words: subjectivation, subjectification, subjectivization. In this study, subjectivation is used throughout, excluding quotations.

> distribution of the sensible within which it becomes possible to define strategies and techniques of power.[179]

Rancière criticises Foucault with regard to the police's infinite control over everything without any void, which ultimately cancels the possibility of change. From a Rancièrean perspective, if everything is policing, then everything is political. Where everything is political, nothing is actually political. For Rancière, "for a thing to be political, it must give rise to a meeting of police logic and egalitarian logic that is never set up in advance."[180] Politics is about the relationship between different worlds; it is not about power relationships within.[181] More precisely, it is not solely about power. The relationships take place in the social; it is the stage where all things happen between different actors. However, the political happens only when the police and politics meet. Therefore, Rancièrean philosophy puts forward an alternative that limits the role of power and allows for a possibility for change, unlike the impassable Foucauldian theory.

Another important claim of Rancière is about the distinction between the police and politics. The philosopher explains: "The politics/police says that politics always come after, even if its principle – equality – is logically prior; that it is never an originary act, but a paradoxical identity of contraries."[182] What this means is that equality loses its meaning in the order of the police. Equality becomes only a word "inscribed in the texts of laws and on the pediments of buildings"[183] whenever it is institutionalised and exposed to hierarchy. Hence, the meaning of equality is dependent on the distribution of functions and identities provided by the police. The sensible is the given; it is the reality of the police. In the realm of the police, politics is adapted to the distribution of the police; it becomes politics whose rules are provided by the police. There is no real opposition; the opposition is also a distribution of the police. "There is no world of pure politics … There is one

[179] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 95.

[180] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 32.

[181] Ibid., p. 42.

[182] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 206.

[183] Ibid., p. 207.

distribution and re-distribution."[184] The distinction between the police and politics inside the police contains indistinction, as politics is actually the politics of the police. That is why the political can happen at any time and place, since it does not have its own sphere, for the effects of the political depend on separating individuals from the realm of sensory experience. The roads going to the political are rare and temporary because the police continuously function to protect its order. Therefore, the police is seen more frequently than the political and it is the one that seeks continuity.[185]

3.2. Police and the Distribution of the Sensible

With its modern meaning, police refers to a state organisation assigned with the duty of maintaining public order and security by enforcing laws. In his theory, Rancière uses this word to describe any institutionalised, bureaucratic, and hierarchical social order. As previously mentioned, Rancière takes the word "police" from Foucault and deconstructs its meaning to adapt to his own theory. For Foucault, the police is not only a modern state institution but also the organiser of all things and relationships. It includes everything from the social and cultural to the political and economic, without any chance of interference. The police institution can even constitute a scientific domain in the name of *Polizeiwissenschaft* that aims for the happiness of its society.[186] It has a rational power over individuals and calculates every intervention so as to protect and develop the state's forces. This process is like the circle of life of the state because the strength of the state depends on it. Foucault explains:

> That is to say, this circle, with all that this implies, means that police must succeed in linking together the state's strength and individual felicity. This felicity, as the individual's better than just living, must in some way be drawn on and constituted into state utility: making men's happiness the state's utility, making men's happiness the very strength of the state.[187]

[184] Ibid

[185] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, pp. 30-31.

[186] Foucault, M. (2009). *Security, territory, population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977-78* (M. Senellart, Ed. & G. Burchell, Trans.). Palgrave Macmillan. (Original work published 2004), p. 326.

[187] Ibid., p. 327.

Therefore, there is a more generalised sense of the police order in Foucauldian theory, representing the aim of an institution to control society and ensuring that there is no escape, as it includes everything. Rancière's police order, on the other hand, is limited only to policy-making. As Samuel A. Chambers notes: "Most of what we would take to be politics turns out to be police: from the principles of interest-group liberalism to the actions of bureaucrats and executives; from elections to welfare."[188] Rancière expresses in the seventh thesis of his "Ten Theses on Politics" that "the police is not a social function but a symbolic constitution of the social. The essence of the police is neither repression nor even control over the living."[189] Here, the difference between Foucault and Rancière becomes clear in terms of the role that they perceive from different perspectives: Foucault uses power for repression and control of society, while Rancière uses power as something to be divided equally in society, since this division constitutes how the social is regulated.

In the seventh thesis, Rancière continues to explain that "... the police is a 'partition of the sensible' [*le partage du sensible*] whose principle is the absence of a void and of a supplement."[190] In other words,

> A police order is not just an abstract order of powers (of laws or principles), it is '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; it is an order of the visible and the sayable'.[191]

At issue is the "vertical organization of society"[192] as the division of society is, in fact, hierarchical. The division of the social whole is through the partition of the sensible. Policing also includes making visible some parts of society, while some parts remain invisible, according to the rules determined by the police order. All positions are predetermined in order for the police to prevent any remainders. Hence,

[188] Chambers, "Police and oligarchy", p. 61.

[189] Rancière, "Ten theses on politics".

[190] Ibid.

[191] Chambers, S. A. (2011). Jacques Rancière and the problem of pure politics. *European Journal of Political Theory, 10*(3), 303-326. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885111406386, p. 306.

[192] Ibid.

it is not a random, unmethodical division but "a particular type of partition of the sensible".[193] In addition to that, the police must also prevent any supplement from being counted; it must exclude the probability of any supplement to its order.

> There can be nothing more to count; the police must count all. … The police order distributes bodies without remainder and without exclusion (*à l'exclusion de tout supplèment*); there is nothing it does not account for, nothing left over or external to its process of counting.[194]

Elaborating on the meaning of the distribution, or partition, of the sensible (*partage du sensible*) might be useful. In French, the word *partage* has two meanings: to share and to separate. To share means to make available for the benefit of all, and this can only happen by separating, or dividing into pieces, according to the predetermined order of society. In addition, the *sensible* means the perceptible order of preformed objects that are allowed to be visible. This means that there are imperceptible and invisible parts that are not allowed in this order. This antinomy causes a dissent to be formed due to the inequality between the perceptible and the imperceptible. As a result, a dissensus occurs as the site of political struggle, as Rancière defines it. The goal of dissensus is to change the conditions for the perceptible objects of the governing order in order for the imperceptible to be made perceptible, i.e., "to determine the perceptual conditions for a political community and its dissensus".[195] Since there would be a contestation to found a new order, the distribution of the sensible would need to be changed. From this, one could infer that the distribution of the sensible is the means to determine the governing political order.

The distribution of the sensible is a key concept in understanding Rancière and his political analysis with an aesthetic perspective as well. The aesthetic side lies in dissensus as the space of political contestation. The reason why it constitutes a political act is because of the very fact that there is a political incompatibility which pushes for an interruption of the order of sensible knowledge. This incompatibility

[193] Ibid., p. 307.

[194] Ibid.

[195] Panagia, D. (2014). "Partage du sensible": The distribution of the sensible. In J. P. Deranty (Ed.), *Jacques Rancière: Key concepts* (pp. 95-103). Routledge., p. 96.

occurs because of the set criteria of the governing order as a "break *of* epistemology"[196] in which the set criteria describe proper knowledge and perspective of that order of sharing (*partage*) the inequalities. This proper knowledge and perspective are designed by dividing (*partage*) the sensible and insensible objects. Dissensus constitutes the beginning of equality of intelligences, and therefore, the idea of intellectual emancipation. This is where dissensus, as the political gains its aesthetic quality; the emergence of politics is an aesthetic part-taking as a reconfiguration of the sensible.[197] Among the sensible, there are words and images circulated consistently that depict the origins of disagreement coming from the insensible, and these are the ones to be reconfigured so that a community can grow out of and around that idea coming from the insensible. These communities form the main political subjects to question the distribution of the sensible in the governing order.[198] Ultimately, it would not be wrong to claim that the distribution of the sensible results in dissensus by enabling an inappropriate part-taking.

Another important point is that the possibility of disrupting the given distribution of the sensible is always there, meaning those who have no part can interfere anytime. The randomness of time and space inherently claims an inappropriateness, and thus, making it more meaningful in terms of the position of emancipation, since emancipation itself is inappropriate and not compatible with the rules of the established order. Since this disruption would be caused by the excluded, by those who have no part in the sensible, and since the excluded can be anywhere, anytime, the possibility for any act of emancipation to occur would be infinite. The most crucial factor that affects this infinite possibility is the fact that equality is insensible.[199]

The existence of two different worlds, in the names of the police and *oikos* (home), creates two different political subjects.[200] The first one is the false subjects that are

[196] Ibid., p. 98.

[197] Ibid., p. 99.

[198] Ibid., p. 100.

[199] Ibid., pp. 100-103.

[200] *Oikos* is the component of the police as its space of exclusion, where the uncounted are silenced. The police establishes and maintains *oikos* itself to determine the political and the apolitical.

found in the police. They are only political subjects so long as they are part of the police. In other words, they are the subjects of the police, and their freedom is limited to the extent that they abide by the rules of the police order. *Oikos*, on the other hand, is the space of the excluded found within the police. They are non-existent in the police because they lack specific qualities to be political subjects and to be qualified as free.[201] They belong in the space of *oikos*, not the police, so that is why they are non-existent in the police.

The same logic strikes once again: The whole is divided within itself. The police is the visible side of the whole, while *oikos* is the invisible side of the other, as the reason for the existence of the police. As mentioned previously, the police constitutes a space where there is no politics because it is a place of agreement and consensus. *Oikos*, here, represents the space of politics as it includes the excluded from the police. The critical thing is that *oikos* is within the police, which means that the police is the only sphere of existence. The excluded are not spatially excluded; they are included in the police as a different part with a different name that is not a part of the perceptible police. "In other words, the police, which claims to be One, is actually divided into Two."[202]

The reason for this division into Two lies in the very distribution of the sensible shaped by the rules of the police. The police itself makes this division of labour in order to protect and stabilise its functioning. The stabilisation of the system depends on its actors to operate in a single job; the same actor does the same job repeatedly. This is how the police guarantees its continuity. This false dialectic suppresses the emergence of politics. Rancière expresses that "the dialectic of worked matter on which is inscribed human projects is in fact only a simulacrum of dialectic. Things give the people who devoted themselves to them no future other than repetition."[203] Ultimately, the lack of difference in the daily working life prevents creativity from being invoked, and as a result, politics is suppressed.

[201] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, pp. 36-38.

[202] Ibid., p. 38.

[203] Rancière, J. (2004). *The philosopher and his poor* (A. Parker, Ed.; J. Drury, C. Oster, & A. Parker, Trans.). Duke University Press. (Original work published 1983), p. 143.

The lack of difference is actually because of the absence of time. In the police, it is the order of the superior who has time to make politics. The excluded, on the other hand, are the inferior who do not have time to make politics, and that is why they are excluded and stay in the sphere of *oikos*. They only have to do one thing, and it is the work that they are assigned to by the police. This is how the police subjugate and exclude the excluded; they subject them to the absence of time so that they cannot think of anything aside from their occupation. The time in question here is *schole* (leisure, free time): "The factor of exclusion is the absence of time, or absence of leisure, *ascholia*."[204] If someone from the *oikos* pretends to have time, despite not having it, it threatens the existence of the police because they imitate the ones in the order of the police, whereas it is against the order of the police since everyone should act according to what their occupation requires. Thus, imitators are negated by the police to protect its structure. It is, indeed, a result of the police's superiority.

Since the police is aware of this division in the social, it represents itself as the One although it is constituted of a multitude. This functioning actually represents the political reduction of the social. "Thus, the police becomes the space of the Same, the area of consensus or compromise, and is identified with order, which is the name of the non-existent wholeness of society."[205] As the place of the Same, the police is the totality of classifications based on equality within themselves. However, there is no equality between these classifications, which ultimately creates an order of inequality with a passive equality, i.e., the police constitutes a place of equality based on inequalities.[206] The police order is aware of the different qualifications of individuals, but it feels the need to order society in a hierarchy so that all constituent parts are known, counted, and named. The ordering process draws a regulatory framework in which the aim is to set up the most harmonious arrangement.[207] Therefore, the police has a space in which the parties, their shares, and the relationship between them are defined. It is "an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of

[204] Ibid., p. 6.

[205] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, p. 46.

[206] Ibid., p. 54.

[207] Davis, O. (2010). *Jacques Rancière*. Polity Press., pp. 78-79.

being, and ways of saying, and sees that those bodies are assigned by name to a particular place and task".[208] As a result, any act or practice that would be against this order would be counted as wrong.

3.3. Wrong

The order of, or in, the multitude arranged by the police is based on a hierarchy founded on a miscount; a double count, or a false count. The reason for this miscount is the very lack of freedom; freedom is not proper to the *demos* (people).[209] *Demos* has the freedom of the kind that those who have no qualifications can have; the kind that an undefined mass can enjoy. At this point, it is important to define *demos*. Plato describes it as the existence of a force that has the power to act at the stage of the political community with collections of individuals and without being a single subject.[210] Here lies a fundamental contradiction: Taken by themselves, individuals are apolitical subjects and yet making politics as a political community requires acting collectively. For the sake of differentiation, Rancière encourages us to think about *ochlos* (mob) at the same time: While *ochlos* represents the disorganised mass of individuals, *demos* represents the people who have the power to interfere and change the order of the police. Therefore, "the *demos* exists as the power to divide the *ochlos* … the power to undo all partnerships, gatherings and ordinations".[211] In other words, the qualification of *demos* comes from *ochlos*. *Demos* is the name of the anonymous many as the cardinal against the ordinal – it is against any ordination as an autonomous power. *Demos*, as the primal force of the multitude, cuts across and divides any legislative configurations. Collection is not its duty since each One needs to be equalised with any other One, through the power of the Two of division. The reason for this can better be explained through the false wholeness of the police; since the police claims that it is a whole as one body, it would be meaningless for an individual One to collect and unite other Ones as it would cause the creation of

[208] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 29.

[209] Ibid., p. 8.

[210] Rancière, J. (2021). *On the shores of politics* (2nd ed.; L. Heron, Trans.). Verso. (Original work published 1992), p. 12.

[211] Ibid., p. 32.

another police. Hence, dividing each One for them to find equality between each other is necessary to prevent any hierarchisation and institutionalisation.

At this point, it is necessary to bring about the problem politics presents for the idea of "community". In any police order, there is an inevitable inequality due to the hierarchy within. The relationships between the police and the citizens define the hierarchical relations between the superior and the inferior. Rancière uses Aristotle's *sumpheron* (useful, just) and *blaberon* (harmful, unjust) to describe profits and losses of citizens in their hierarchical relationships with each other within the community, which is configured according to the police order.[212] This means that profits and losses are also configured by the police based on its justice understanding. Since all configurations are miscounts, profits and losses are also counted falsely. To better describe the situation, we can look at the definition of community: It gains its meaning based on the police's configurations; it is only a community within the standards of the police order. However, "a *true* community is a consensual community, not one in which everybody is in agreement, but one in which sense is 'in agreement' with sense."[213] What this means is that the community under the police rule is not a consensual one because of the very fact that it is not a true community, since a community of the police cannot be a true one, based on the epistemology of the police and not that of the community itself. Therefore, it is a community in which politics shares no borders with any other parts of life, e.g., art, economics, and religion. This level of separateness causes domination and, thus, hierarchy.

On the other hand, there is *demos* inside this community, waiting to realise itself. That is also why freedom belongs to this community (*demos*) as it is a common virtue in the police order because the police wants its community to think that they are free, while they are not. *Demos* identifies itself with the community as a whole through homonymy, and this becomes the main impediment in the way of the harmful (*blaberon*) to manifest itself against the police order. Homonymy here is the

[212] Rancière, *Disagreement*; Rancière, *On the shores of politics*.

[213] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 81.

demos' appropriation of the common quality as its own. This naturally causes "the nonexistence of those who have 'no part in anything'"[214] as the police pushes for it. Therefore, the community is nothing without *demos*, but since *demos* is always there, it is all at the same time, so nothing is all. This is the exact same reason why the community is political; there is an inherent dispute within its being. The people "are the class of the wrong that harms the community and establishes it as a 'community' of the just and the unjust".[215]

Going back to the distinction of *sumpheron – blaberon*, it would be useful to clarify that *blaberon* is the thought that is against the mainstream; an interruption in the natural order of things, while *sumpheron* is the common sense represented by the police. The police order only seeks the negation of politics by repetitively claiming that "there is no part of those who have no part".[216] Politics, then, becomes the name of nothing, as it identifies with policing, which is the denial of equality.[217] Equality loses its influence on the social order because of the police rule. The role of wrong is significant here as it alters the configuration of the social so as to form a community in conflict. This form in conflict constitutes the base structure of politics; it allows equality to assert itself as political subjectivation. Therefore, politics becomes owing to wrong, wrong as a specific representation of equality. The police order naturally resists this representation, so it becomes an infinite contestation because equality as political subjectivation will continue to seek its verification. The wrong cannot be resolved, but it can be processed within a regulatory conduct – by changing the political stage in which individual subjects play their role.[218]

From the above descriptions, there is only one community deducted ontologically – the community with *demos* inside. It needs to be clarified that although there is one community, there are two different phases of this community, which are

[214] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 9.

[215] Ibid.

[216] Ibid., p. 14.

[217] Ibid., p. 35.

[218] Davis, *Jacques Rancière*, p. 83.

interchangeable. The determining factor of these two phases is whether they are initially formed with consensus or not. Rancière defines a community that is formed by consensus as a hierarchical one, namely the police, as it was covered in detail in the previous section. This community is in harmony and accepts the established order together with the distribution of the sensible. In such a context, politics is reduced to the management of society only to maintain order and suppress any dispute. On the other hand, a community that is not formed by consensus constitutes a dissensus, and Rancière names the event of this as politics. It is the disruption of consensus as actors in the community who are part of no part give a struggle for recognition and emancipation. It creates a space and time for political action by revealing inequalities within the consensus of the police and reconfiguring the sensible for the uncounted to be counted. Hence, true politics emerges through dissensus, which is initiated by wrong, while politics in consensus is a false one.

As stated by Suhail Malik and Andrea Phillips, "wrong is the name for the conflictual conjunction of the police order and politics. … Wrong is how equality occurs in the police order, its political appearance or, more stringently, it is the appearance of politics."[219] Hence, it is critical to stress the bilateral functioning of wrong in Rancière's philosophy. Although wrong is a political subjectivation that emerged in order to demonstrate equality in the form of politics, it is caused by the police and its order. Hence, there is a dialectical relationship: The police causes the emergence of the wrong only to create its own dissidence. In the next section, the notions of disagreement and dissensus are explained in detail to better describe this dialectical relationship.

3.4. Disagreement and Dissensus

Before going into detail with the notions of disagreement and dissensus, it is worth describing the meaning of consensus. Consensus (agreement) refers to the correspondence between sense (sensation) and sense (meaning), that is, between a

[219] Malik, S. & Phillips, A. (2011). The wrong of contemporary art: Aesthetics and political indeterminacy. In P. Bowman & R. Stamp (Eds.), *Reading Rancière* (pp. 111-128). Continuum., p. 119.

mode of sensory presentation and the regime of interpretation of its data.[220] Whatever our differences in thought and expectation, we perceive the same things and give them the same meaning. Rancière does not believe in such universal harmony, and this is the main reason why he criticises the police order, as it is not possible to include all senses and parts of the sensible. "The essence of consensus is not peaceful discussion and reasonable agreement as opposed to conflict or violence."[221] Its essence is the reduction of politics to the police. The police is the place of consensus and it has a hierarchical structure. As well as being an area of agreement, consensus is a kind of reduction; it is the reduction of several "various 'peoples' into a single people",[222] hence the reason why there is a miscount. The police annuls any surplus subjects and reduces "the political community to the relationship of interests".[223] However, the sum of a population can never be homogeneous as it consists of many different parts. The miscount is the beginning point of the conflict between these different parts. While there is an undeniable dispute that can be demonstrated at the legal and political levels, heterogeneity and disagreement come to be elements that are hard to be absent.

The opposition of perspectives is named as disagreement (*mésentente*). It is about whether something is understood as an argument or not, or rather, the presence or absence of a common object, its visibility or invisibility.[224] This visibility or invisibility depends on one's perspective, whether one sees the other as oneself or not. It is "the contradiction of two worlds in a single world": the world of the uncounted and the world of those who count.[225] It highlights the refusal of the terms set by the police, so it is a challenge to the authority of the dominant power by the marginalised.

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[220] Rancière, *The emancipated spectator*, pp. 74-75.

[221] Rancière, "Ten theses on politics".

[222] Rancière, J. (2009). *Aesthetics and its discontents*. (S. Corcoran, Trans.). Polity Press. (Original work published 2004), p. 115.

[223] Rancière, "Ten theses on politics".

[224] Ekinci, Ö. (2023). *Jacques Rancière'de hiyerarşilerin yıkımından eşitliğin inşasına*. Çizgi Kitabevi., p. 200.

[225] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 27.

It is already given that the terms set by the police constitute the norm and they are understood by its community. In explaining the notion of "understanding", Rancière refers to Aristotle's *logos* (reason, speech) – the community of the police has *logos*, while the uncounted do not have it. This is the point where the political roles of citizens are assigned: The counted have the right to "express" themselves because they have *logos*, while the uncounted only have voice (*phone*), which only helps them to "indicate" themselves, like an animal expresses its pleasure or pain.[226] Thus, the uncounted cannot express themselves because they do not have the reason to "understand" the terms of the police order. *Logos* of the police community defines what is useful and just, and what is harmful and unjust, so this is why the uncounted are excluded from this private community that has its own logic. Such *logos* orders and confers the right to order. However, there is a contradiction: "There is order in society because some people command and others obey, but in order to obey an order, at least two things are required: you must understand the order, and you must understand that you must obey it."[227] Hence, there is an inherent equality, as one needs to be equal to the other to understand their orders, which means that inequality can only exist within the framework of equality.

Even though there is equality between the counted and the uncounted in terms of recognising (*aisthesis*) the *logos*, this does not grant the uncounted the right to possess (*hexis*) it. Inclusion in the community is bound up with possession of the *logos*. This also demonstrates the basis of equality in the police order because, on the surface, everyone in the community has an equal share of *logos*, while in reality, it all depends on possession. The uncounted can understand *logos*, but they cannot have it. They participate in the community of *logos* only with the qualifications to understand, comprehend, and sense (*aisthesis*) and without the qualification to possess (*hexis*). Since they do not have this right, they are nameless beings, and those without a name lack the ability to voice themselves or be heard. The police order "recognizes no logos capable of being articulated by beings deprived of logos, no *speech* capable of being proffered by nameless beings, beings of no *ac/count*".[228] To

[226] Ibid., p. 2.

[227] Ibid., p. 16.

[228] Ibid., p. 24.

make their voice heard, they must ensure that any sound that comes out of their mouth is understood as a word that is appropriate to express what is just. This is where politics begins. If their voice is not heard, they stay nameless in their community of the excluded, preventing them from being counted.

As mentioned previously, the essence of Rancière's work is based on the idea of dissensus – the disruption of established orders and hierarchies to create spaces for equality and freedom. It is the production of a given that is heterogeneous to the sensible world.[229] However, it does not signify a clash between different interests or opinions; it simply aims to cause a rupture in the political order to restructure it. The restructuring process includes "the juxtaposition of two forms of the sensory implementation of collective intelligence".[230] What this means is that the disruption comes from within, by framing its own sensory world that implements a generic intelligence. "It means that every situation can be cracked open from the inside, reconfigured in a different regime of perception and signification."[231] It acts against the networks of collective intelligence within them, so it always carries the risk of being absorbed by these structures. Politics "frames a network of discourses and practices by actualizing the 'communism of intelligence' via the construction of a dissensus".[232] This is why dissensus is a construction, and also, why and how politics is a supplement. There is an active struggle going on for transformation, which qualifies it as a construction and a supplement, since it becomes an additional part to the order of the normal.

Although a sharp line cannot be drawn between the terms "disagreement (*mésentente*)" and "dissensus", it is possible to claim that disagreement has a minor scale while dissensus means the broader disruption and transformation of the social and political order. Disagreement represents a focus point on the conflict between perspectives, and dissensus, while including disagreement, represents the holistic

[229] Rancière, *The philosopher and his poor*, p. 226.

[230] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 80.

[231] Rancière, *The emancipated spectator*, p. 49.

[232] Ibid.

stand against the police order as a whole. Dissensus is active with a live spirit that has the aim of recreation, constantly on the move against an antinomy. Disagreement happens inside this antinomy as a primary event and as a qualification of dissensus.

Ultimately, dissensus has the goal of creating a heterology in which a subject does not fit properly into its environment. What heterology means in Rancièrean terms is the denial of the police and its order, so it is proof that you are not what the police assumes you are. It is the state of taking action and being in opposition to what exists. It contains *aisthesis* as an infinite sensation and as the power of the potential. All these processes of dissensus and disagreement lead us to the main conflict point: politics.

3.5. Politics

Before explaining what politics is, it is first required to explain what it is not. In the very beginning of the chapter, it is announced that the concept of political philosophy is nonsense in Rancièrean context as politics loses its meaning to the police. What this means is that once politics is identified with the police, or vice versa, an imitation of politics is constructed. Rancière defines that:

> Political philosophies … are philosophies that offer a solution to the paradox of the part of those who have no part, either by substituting an equivalent role for it, or by creating a simulacrum of it, by performing an imitation of politics in negating it.[233]

In line with this definition, he raises questions concerning "the three great figures of political philosophy"; namely, archipolitics, parapolitics, and metapolitics. In all three of these concepts, politics is reduced to a logic of order, consensus, or philosophical interpretation, eliminating the disruptive potential of true politics. Archipolitics, mostly associated with Plato, defines a hierarchical order of knowledge, referring to a preassigned structure in harmony. In this tradition of politics, the political community is defined as an organic whole with the distribution of roles also designated in detail. The philosopher-king safeguards such a

[233] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 65.

harmonious order. Parapolitics, on the other hand, is mainly related to Aristotle, as parliamentary regimes express it. Political conflict and disagreement are found in this type of politics, but procedures and institutional boundaries limit them. Politics is recognised as being suppressed since the established order needs to be maintained. Metapolitics, finally, is rather more critical and mostly associated with Marx. Rancière describes this type of politics as subordinated to ideology since it presents the truth of an illusion. Illusion is because of political action occurring at the surface level as class struggle, rather than the hidden truth that lies in changing the economic mode of production, which is a deeper contradiction. In all three figures of political philosophy, dissensus is denied as there is only the government of society and no disruption of the police order. Rancière states that these three categories demonstrate how politics is misunderstood, ultimately causing the end of politics.[234]

Now is the time to define what politics is. Politics occurs as an expression that cancels the sensible order of the police by the assumption that all speaking beings are equal. Political event is a result of the meeting of two heterogeneous processes, that of the police process and the process of equality. The mechanism of the police needs to cease functioning because of an alien idea, that is, the presupposition of equality, so that politics can occur. It is the verification of the presumption of equality and the proof that the order of the police is an arbitrary regulation.[235] "The foundation of politics … is the lack of foundation, the sheer contingency of any social order. Politics exists simply because no social order is based on nature, no divine law regulates human society."[236] This is also a reflection of the absence of *arkhe* since rejection of any hierarchy means that anyone can occupy any other one's position – a demonstration that is ultimately based on "an-archy". In this sense, politics is always a possibility that can be anywhere and anytime. Politics occurs very little because of this possibility; as it is not found everywhere and every time, so it is not a common thing, but only a rare event.[237] This political moment of interruption is the very act

[234] Ibid., p. 86.

[235] Davis, *Jacques Rancière*, p. 79.

[236] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 16.

[237] Davis, *Jacques Rancière*, p. 79.

that reconfigures the existing order. Although Rancière does not go into detail with the process of reconfiguration, it can certainly be claimed that there needs to be a struggle going on over the existence of political and legal institutions and the actors playing on the stage.[238] Therefore, it is once again made clear that politics does not carry its common meaning in the sense of dispute over public policy, contention between political parties or interest groups, or any players in search of implementing power. On the contrary, these practices only constitute acts of the police in Rancièrean terms, and to realise the annihilation of such order is politics itself, with the ultimate goal of making the invisible visible and the noise an understandable discourse.

Equality can be demonstrated in two forms: first, as the presupposition of a challenge to inequality, and second, as collective action of the uncounted. The arriving point needs to be an interference in the mechanism of the police and to put it into question.[239] As Paul Patton explains: "Politics, as a term of art in Rancière's work, finds expression in a variety of more or less fleeting episodes of conflict, contestation and revolt."[240] It is "an evanescent moment"[241] of disruption and a rupture through collective action. This rupture is one that divides the property, and this division itself is the one that provides that there is politics.[242] The "property" here can mean any hierarchical structure or institution. However, such institutions mean only the elimination of politics. At this point, it is significant to clarify that Rancière is not against institutions *per se*; he is only "against the 'spontaneity vs organization' claptrap".[243] What he means by "institution" is a proclamation and confirmation of the uncounted by appearance in a public space, or rather, the construction of a public

[238] Patton, P. (2012). Rancière's utopian politics. In J. P. Deranty & A. Ross (Eds.), *Jacques Rancière and the contemporary scene: The philosophy of radical equality* (pp. 129-143). Continuum., p. 129.

[239] May, T. (2008). *The political thought of Jacques Rancière: Creating equality*. Edinburgh University Press., p. 40.

[240] Patton, "Rancière's utopian politics", p. 131.

[241] Panagia, D. (2001). Ceci n'est pas un argument: An introduction to the ten theses. *Theory and Event, 5*(3), 1-6.

[242] Rancière, *The method of equality*, p. 122.

[243] Ibid., p. 123.

space by coming into sight.[244] Such "institutions" (e.g., cooperatives, newspapers, political parties, schools, universities) should keep their politics anarchic and prevent them from creating any hierarchy and authority or any forms of government.[245] Hence, there is already a presumption that there have to be political institutions as "politics needs to be given its own institutions".[246] This also proves that pure politics is not possible at all, even in the context that political institutions are strictly different from state institutions in their mode of existence and in terms of their structure.

These basic descriptions lead us to the idea that politics is a creative event. It is not something that can be allocated to certain groups or communities, as is generally done. The way to reveal this creativity is hidden in not accepting things as given, but in being able to reconstruct them.[247] Unlike police logic, politics is based on problematising the existing forms of relationships and boundaries. It allows the identification of common objects as an activity of reconstructing sensible frames. The first step starts with the disruption of the existing naturalised order and its sensible framework. Thus, the starting point of politics is a state of conflict in which those made to "exist" on the basis of the common are questioned.[248] Here, "the common" is in the sense that it belongs to the police, and "those made to 'exist'" means those who have *logos*, i.e., those who are included in the police; those who are capable of speaking meaningfully. It is once again clearly understood that the police implies both speaking and counting. Those who are allowed to speak and are counted are the citizens of the police, and therefore, they are the only ones who have *logos*. Even expressing that there can be a certain group of individuals included in the police and allowed to have *logos* means that there is "the other" that is not included in the police and not allowed to have *logos*. Those who have no *logos* are the ones who have nothing to say, and even if they have something to say, they are not worth listening to. Immigrants, slaves, women, workers, and colonised peoples can be

[244] Ibid., p. 122.

[245] Ibid.

[246] Ibid.

[247] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, p. 68.

[248] Ibid., p. 69.

given as examples to those who do not have a *logos*. In this context, the police indicates a whole coherent structure in which everything is counted and in order, while politics constitutes a place where the performative act of counting is interrupted and revealed as a false one. The police has its own boundaries and acts through a performative and pure politics based on compromise within its borders. However, for Rancière, politics also rejects this assertion of "pure politics" as it does not have such an aim because politics cannot be pure as this would mean drawing boundaries and placing *arkhaï* on it, just like the police does. The police claims that it makes pure politics by drawing a framework and defining who is included and who is not included, yet while making this, it claims that it covers everyone. This is a proclamation of the rejection of the excluded while admitting their existence. "Politics is the sphere of activity of a common that can only ever be contentious, the relationship between parts that are only parties and credentials or entitlements whose sum never equals the whole."[249] This miscounting is the reason for politics and provides its existence. The excluded are the surplus included in the social; they constitute a potential as an unknown, and they cannot be subjected to representation. The police implements a common denominator based on the miscount and on the wrong, and this environment provides for the creation of parties through "the introduction of an incommensurable at the heart of the distribution of speaking bodies".[250] This incommensurability disrupts the order of the police by damaging its equal value system of profits and losses, and it destroys the city, which is structured based on the *arkhe* of the community.[251] In terms of its goal to displace things, politics carries the qualification of being anarchic; it cannot be attached to any *arkhe* and this is how it provides for the contingency of the social order. By the contingency of the social order, it is meant to be variable, particular, uncertain, unexpected, irregular, unsafe, and continuously risky rather than being mandatory, universal, certain, stable, expected, regular, safe, and guaranteed.[252]

[249] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 14.

[250] Ibid., p. 19.

[251] Ibid.

[252] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, p. 71.

The foundation of politics is its very lack of foundation. This is why the police lacks politics because it has a foundation of an understanding of politics based on the hierarchical regulation of *arkhaï*. This hierarchical regulation is naturalised and far removed from being questioned. The estrangement is provided by the principles (*arkhaï*) of the police, which are artificial preconceptions such as the idea of the inequality of minds reflected as human nature.

Politics makes the arbitrariness of the police order visible by affirming the contingency. Contingency causes separation from the order while leading the steps to emancipation and breaking the obligations of the police. It is all about breaking the pure imitation that rules over the police order and creating new ways of being, and this is the only way of complete dissociation from the police.[253] Politics is the distribution of power that is based on a series of identicalness. By these figurations, Rancière informs his readers about the timing of politics:

> Politics occurs when those who 'have no' time take the time necessary to front up as inhabitants of a common space and demonstrate that their mouths really do emit speech capable of making pronouncements on the common which cannot be reduced to voices signalling pain.[254]

Politics happens as a form of experience by the involuntary support of and within the borders of the police's distribution of the sensible, as the boundaries set by the police, such as delimitation of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, determine the object, the time, and the place of politics. "Politics revolves around what is seen and what can be said about it, around who has the ability to see and the talent to speak, around the properties of spaces and the possibilities of time."[255] It constitutes a play of the uncounted at the stage with the claim to visibility, so the police becomes the place of the political. Therefore, the police is questioned with this call to the political. Politics originally is side by side with the police, and it does not have a specific objective. Hence, the existence of the police also bears the chance for

[253] Ibid.

[254] Rancière, *Aesthetics and its discontents*, p. 24.

[255] Rancière, J. (2013). *The politics of aesthetics: The distribution of the sensible* (G. Rockhill, Ed. & Trans.). Bloomsbury Academic. (Original work published 2000), p. 8.

the existence of politics. As explained previously, the police constitutes a false wholeness in which there are no void spaces. In this context, politics is the name of nonexistence, as those who carry the name of existence are the ones included in the police. The excluded make themselves visible to the police with their act of equality. This act of equality is a form of expression that destroys the distribution of the sensible of the police order, and this reflects that politics acts over the police, or rather, it acts over the common properties of its own and of the police in order to alter the status of these properties to break down the police order. Thus, politics is problematising the relationships that are or are not established within the police system. For this reason, politics is only the name of the interruption to the order, and it can never establish an order like the police.

It is also crucial to express that, as mentioned previously, politics is not about power relations; thus, it cannot be their result. It is not related to any system of power relations, such as political parties and their power struggles or the government of a community. It arises owing to "relationships between worlds".[256] "Politics is not the art of governing political communities; it is a form of human action based on dissensus. It is an exception to the rules determining the collection and governance of human groups."[257] Governance belongs to the logic of the police as it lies in a hierarchical order. Politics is the resistance to this logic. The way the police operates covers up the fact that all beings are equal and alienates people from the idea of equality. Yet it is this equality between people that enables social inequalities to operate in the police order. Those who realise the "equality of intelligences" and become conscious of themselves and their capacities construct encounters that will constantly undermine the foundation and functioning of the police.[258] Hence, there needs to be a constant challenge and interruption of the inegalitarian logic.[259] This questioning process is one that aims to display the antinomies of visible and

[256] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 42.

[257] This translation is my own. Rancière, J. (2007). *Siyasalın kıyısında*. (A. U. Kılıç, Trans.). Metis. (Original work published 1998), p. 13.

[258] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, p. 75.

[259] Rancière, J. (2004). Introducing disagreement. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities*, *9*(3), 3-9. https://doi.org/10.1080/0969725042000307583, pp. 5-6.

invisible, audible and inaudible, so there is a requirement for supplementary subjects that cannot be reduced but can stay as "collectives of enunciation and demonstration".[260] These supplementary subjects are political subjects in excess of society, and they always carry the risk of vanishing or incorporating, or rather, being absorbed by society. Therefore, it is required to emphasise that "politics is a local, precarious, contingent activity – an activity which is always on the point of disappearing, and thus perhaps also on the point of reappearing."[261]

The form of conflict that belongs to politics is based on disagreement, and it is intended to make the police, who has an inegalitarian attitude on purpose, count those who are not accepted as parties, i.e., the uncounted. Accordingly, disagreement happens by displacing the forms of discussion between equals that rule over the police and by questioning the notion of equality in favour of the uncounted. Therefore, it can be interpreted as the transformation of discussion into a dispute. As Rancière states: "It is not a discussion between partners but an interlocution that undermines the very situation of interlocution."[262] Through this dispute based on questioning the police, politics verifies "the contradiction of two worlds in a single world".[263]

While the act of counting makes the audible visible, and leaves the rest as inaudible and invisible, politics as an act is a process of making the inaudible audible. It is a form of litigation in which the common, consisting of the visible, which is the audible, is problematised.[264] This process of problematisation makes the borders of the police blurred, and the dichotomy of the police is revealed. However, at the moment of this display of the wrong, politics ends itself as it is only momentary. In other words, its existence brings its destruction with it.

[260] Ibid., p. 6.

[261] Ibid., p. 8.

[262] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 100.

[263] Ibid., p. 27.

[264] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, p. 76.

After this questioning period, in a condition where the police is replaced with another wholeness negating the previous one, it only creates a new crisis. Rancière is not in defence of a wholeness overrunning or eliminating another wholeness and he rejects the idea that the police can be defeated with another police. What he problematises is the boundaries of the wholeness and those who are not included in the wholeness. The main concern is how the excluded challenge the police and how they make and maintain politics. Rancière names this differentiation as true and false dialectic; true dialectic being the politics against the police and false dialectic being the police against the police.[265] Yet, Rancière does not use this terminology, and he prefers to use dissensus to emphasise politics and the political. Dissensus is the separation of the self from the self, and therefore, an experience of disorderliness. It is a reaction against consensus by the marginalised, i.e., those who are seen as having no ability to speak. The consensus system is built on the inequality of the parties. Acceptance of inequality catalyses the system of domination, and that is how the consensus system based on inequality and domination is continued through reconciliation. Consensus is not just about negotiation; it is about establishing a harmoniousness between the thing and the image of the thing, and to make everyone's perception of things the same.[266] There is a constant reproduction of this chain of domination produced by inequality, and what Rancière suggests by politics against the police is exactly to get rid of this very chain. The way to do this is to differentiate from the given system, and the first condition for this is the idea of equality of intelligences and capabilities.

Politics as the creation of dissensus is the problematisation of the common, of what is naturalised or assumed by the police. It is the problematisation of compatibility and agreement, and then turning them into incompatibility and disagreement. Everything in the police order can be the subject of this problematisation. This is the reason why not everything is political, but the possibility of politics is found everywhere. Therefore, the difference between dissensus and politics is of particular importance here: While dissensus is the conflict between different regimes of sensibility, politics is the event for reconstructing those sensible frameworks that allow the identification

[265] Rancière, *The philosopher and his poor*, p. 143.

[266] Dişci, *Uyuşmazlığa sadakat*, pp. 80-81.

of common objects. It is the disruption of the structure based on domination in the police order, which consists of power relations. Thus, it is not an activity aimed at the exercise of power and the struggle for power. Politics cannot be settled by laws or institutions. On the contrary, politics exists by suspending already existing frameworks. As Rancière explains: "Political activity is whatever shifts a body from the place assigned to it or changes a place's destinations."[267] Politics does not begin with policing practices; it begins when a rupture emerges in the distribution of capabilities and incapabilities; when beings who are destined to remain in the invisible space of work, which leaves no time to do anything else, can take the time to declare that, with the aim of making the invisible visible or making what is understood as a noise heard as a word, they are the ones who share a common world and need to discuss what is common.[268] Hence, it is understood that politics is about opening new spaces. For Rancière, the main issue is not about becoming conscious of the domination of the police; it is to become emancipated by becoming conscious of oneself and to be "out of order". Politics, because it is "out of order", is undetermined and about creating fiction. Only in this way is it possible to interrupt the visible and to construct relationships that are different from the visible.

As it was previously explained in detail, "politics begins with a major wrong: the gap created by the empty freedom of the people between the arithmetical order and the geometric order",[269] arithmetical order referring to the police order and geometric order referring to *demos* and its politics. It is not a gap that needs to be filled or repaired. "It is the introduction of an incommensurable at the heart of the distribution of speaking bodies."[270] For Rancière, it is a paradox in the name of wrong that starts politics and that cannot be eliminated, as it is a paradox, inherent in the political itself. The existence of politics depends on this paradox, which is a miscount that includes no *arkhe* within it. Thus, the absence of *arkhe* is the paradox itself. There is no "the ideal" for politics because politics emerges as a process of problematisation

[267] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 30.

[268] Rancière, J. (2009). *Özgürleşen seyirci* (E. B. Şaman, Trans.). Metis. (Original work published 2008), p. 57.

[269] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 19.

[270] Ibid.

of the uncounted in any order, which assumes that every part is counted. For this reason, the wrong that politics depends on is a paradox that does not need to be resolved. Rather, it is the condition for the existence of politics. It is the absence of any basis that makes politics possible; the absence of political power to affirm an ideal order.

"Politics acts on the police. It acts in the places and with the words that are common to both, even if it means reshaping those places and changing the status of those words."[271] What Rancière means here is basically explaining the space of politics: The borders, identities, spaces, and subjects of the police are the existence spaces of politics. Although the logic of politics and the police is contradictory, there must be a police order for politics to exist. While Rancière states that politics and the police are antithetical, he does not try to destroy or eliminate the police because Rancièrean politics is not a politics with certain subjects, places, and boundaries. We cannot talk about politics on its own, separate from the police, because politics only emerges in interventions into the police logic with egalitarian demands.[272]

Overall, in a precise sense, politics occurs through momentary acts that accomplish alterations in the society without a governing principle and with only collective action based on dissensus. True politics happens when individuals become political subjects who disrupt the naturalised order by exposing the false reality of the police. This anarchic pursuit of emancipation uses the force of disagreement to counter the controlling logic of the police. The notions of political subjectivation, disagreement, and emancipation evoke a single concept for Rancièrean politics: equality.

3.6. Equality and Emancipation

It has already been declared that politics, in its common meaning (i.e., parliamentary government, voting procedures, all legal bureaucratic processes, etc.), is policing, and what politics is in Rancièrean philosophy, on the other hand, is the idea that questions all these traditional mechanisms. The primary concern of politics is

[271] Ibid., p. 33.

[272] Ekinci, *Jacques Rancière'de hiyerarşilerin yıkımından eşitliğin inşasına*, p. 53.

equality, and it only occurs through the presupposition of equality. The idea of supposed equality in these traditional mechanisms can only be named as passive equality. As Todd May explains:

> In these theories, people are passive in regard to their own political equality. They do not create, ensure, or protect their equality. They are the objects rather than the subjects of equal consideration. And, as we will see, to be the object of equality is, in the end, to be less than equal.[273]

What this means is basically that citizens in representative political systems remain only as recipients of equality, and they cannot be active agents. Since equality is given to people by a central distributor, it is positioned at the end of the political process, and it is formed as the final element of justice.[274]

Active equality, on the other hand, requires direct participation and action with the presupposition of equality. It is the presupposition of equality that starts dissensus with the order of the police, and from the time dissensus is created, equality of intelligences, or intellectual emancipation, is provided. Although equality is inherently found in the police order, dissensus is required for it to come to the surface. As previously explained, the reason for the inherent equality is due to the position of *logos* – the police has its own *logos* and purposefully excludes some parts to possess this *logos*. Such a mechanism causes a relationship of superiors and inferiors, in which inferiors are expected to obey the orders of the police. This means that inferiors can "understand" and "speak", which ultimately provides the equality between the two parts. Thus, the foundational mechanism of the police is itself contingent (on equality) and self-contradictory.[275] However, this does not mean that equality is the basis of inequality; it just means that "inequality can only function through equality", which signifies that inequality cannot function on its own and it needs the collaboration of the unequal.[276]

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[273] May, *The political thought of Jacques Rancière*, p. 32.

[274] Ibid.

[275] May, *The political thought of Jacques Rancière*, p. 58.

[276] Rancière, *The method of equality*, pp. 111-112.

Politics is a process of disrupting the order of the police and ruining the roles assigned by the police, and in this process, individuals question and abandon their marginalised identities assigned to them by the police. Rejecting being marginalised is only for the sake of equality, and not for claiming a different role in the police order.[277] Otherwise, it would cause the creation of another police order. With this characteristic, politics is a process of declassification, or rather, declassification is the initial step of politics. All the established hierarchies and classifications of the police order are rejected and undone in this step. To give an example, when workers, who are supposed to work only and not do anything else, begin to speak about justice and act politically, they simply disrupt the police order by rejecting their assigned roles, and thus, declassify themselves. "The essence of equality is not so much to unify as to declassify, to undo the supposed naturalness of orders and replace it with the controversial figures of division."[278] As explained by Rancière, declassification is necessary in creating a rupture in the existing order. This also explains why a divisive act is required rather than a unification, as unification cannot lead to a rupture, and thus, a big change in society. Therefore, a negative moment is key in backdropping the stage.[279]

Another implication of the "discourse of the other", other than declassification, is disidentification. Through declassification, a gap is formed in the present order, and it needs to be filled so that a collective subject is created as a new political identity.[280] As Rancière defines: "A political subjectivation is the constitution of a collective capable of speaking in the first person and of identifying its affirmation with a reconfiguration of the universe of possibilities."[281] The key point here is the transformation of subjects and creation of new spaces in the demand for equality for

[277] May, *The political thought of Jacques Rancière*, p. 49.

[278] Rancière, *On the shores of politics*, pp. 32-33.

[279] May, *The political thought of Jacques Rancière*, p. 50.

[280] Marques, A. C. S. & Prado, M. A. M. (2022). The subjectivation and political emancipation processes in Jacques Rancière. *Psicologia & Sociedade, 34*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1590/1807-0310/2022v34265750-en, p. 13.

[281] Rancière, J. (2011). Against an ebbing tide: An interview with Jacques Rancière. In P. Bowman & R. Stamp (Eds.), *Reading Rancière* (pp. 238-251). Continuum., p. 250.

the stages of experience of a dispute.[282] In explaining the process of disidentification, Rancière argues that:

> It is a multiplication of connections and disconnections that reframe the relation between bodies, the world they live in and the way in which they are 'equipped' to adapt to it. It is a multiplicity of folds and gaps in the fabric of common experience that change the cartography of the perceptible, the thinkable and the feasible. As such, it allows for new modes of political construction of common objects and new possibilities of collective enunciation.[283]

That means a demonstration needs to be addressed to an other, which forms "a community defined by a certain wrong".[284] Collective action and reconfiguration of the existing order of the sensible are of particular importance in this step, signifying the realisation aspect of politics rather than only staying as a principle.[285] Therefore, the rejection of the self needs to be supplemented with the production of a new people and the construction of an other communal space and a new common because political agency can only take place by "the construction of a *we*" which divides the community, while supplementing it at the same time.[286]

The last implication of "the cause of the other" is named as "impossible identification" by Rancière.[287] It is the state in which one identifies oneself with an other identification that is not possible under normal circumstances, e.g., identifying with Palestinians massacred by the Israeli state. A wrong is surfaced, the uncounted are counted, and the invisible becomes visible; the political subject is uncovered. This process also explains that politics does not occur because of a faith in emancipation but does occur owing to "the cause of the other", as citizenship is not

[282] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 36.

[283] Rancière, *The emancipated spectator*, p. 72.

[284] Rancière, J. (1998). The cause of the other (D. Macey, Trans.). *Parallax, 4*(2), 25-33. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/135346498250217, p. 29.

[285] Malik & Phillips, "The wrong of contemporary art", p. 120.

[286] Rancière, "The cause of the other", p. 29; Rancière, *The method of equality*, p. 120.; Rancière, J. (2009). Afterword / The method of equality: An answer to some questions. In G. Rockhill & P. Watts (Eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, politics, aesthetics* (pp. 273-288). Duke University Press., p. 284.

[287] Rancière, "The cause of the other", p. 29. Oliver Davis names this dimension as "heterologic disidentification". See Davis, *Jacques Rancière*, p. 87.

self-identical.[288] Openness to "the cause of the other" is essential in a social community, and it is what leads to transformation. In the previous example, the subject of "Palestinian" is separated from its identifying meaning, and it becomes a figure of citizenship, providing a disjunction between political subjectivity and social community.[289] Subjectivation, therefore, always includes a *heteron* (a different subject, an other) and an interval which is the place of a political subject: "being *together* to the extent that we are *in between* – between names, identities, cultures, and so on."[290]

Having counted three different but closely linked aspects of subjectivation (declassification, disidentification, and impossible identification), it is important to point out that these concepts do not happen in any sequence, and they all complement the process of subjectivation simultaneously. The integration of these concepts allows for the exercise of the capacity of a subject who is not one by taking to the stage and speaking up, denying the differentiation between speech (*logos*) and noise (*phone*) in praxis.[291] Rancière states that "All political subjectification is the manifestation of a gap of this kind."[292] This explains why political subjectivation is a supplementary process, since "political subjects are *surplus* subjects that inscribe the count of the uncounted as a supplement."[293] In a nutshell, the logic of political subjectivation is a heterology, a logic of the other.[294]

It is not possible to separate the notion of equality from Rancière's politics because politics can only happen through "the contingent dramatization of a disruptive equality" in which an unsanctioned and spontaneous play of the *demos* is staged.[295]

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[288] Ibid., p. 30.

[289] Ibid., p. 32.

[290] Rancière, "Politics, identification, and subjectivization", p. 62.

[291] Rancière, *The method of equality*, p. 72.

[292] Rancière, *Disagreement*, p. 36.

[293] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 70.

[294] Rancière, "Politics, identification, and subjectivization", p. 62.

[295] Hallward, P. (2009). Staging equality: Rancière's theatrocracy and the limits of anarchic equality. In G. Rockhill & P. Watts (Eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, politics, aesthetics* (pp. 140-157). Duke University Press., p. 142.

Since this act is always spontaneous, the supposition of equality as an-*arkhe* must be verified incessantly.[296] The police order sets up everything in order to dominate the *demos* so that any possible subjectivation is prevented. To illustrate, workers are kept busy with their work without any chance for them to be involved in any intellectual activity; they are assumed to be incapable of any activities outside of the work that they are assigned. Rancière explains this tautology created around the police's own configuration of knowledge and ignorance as such:

> People are where they are *because* they are where they are, because they are incapable of being elsewhere. … People are not *unable* because they ignore the reason for their being there. They are *unable* because being *unable* means the same as being *there*.[297]

In providing equality, it is essential to confront this given distribution of the sensible in order to reconfigure a new common. There needs to be a performance of equality, and only then would it be called "emancipation". This performance of equality needs to have an aim for subversion that invalidates all given sensory relationships and space-time regulations in which these sensory experiences take place.[298] This is also why politics, and thus the conflict of equality and inequality, are everywhere, carrying the possibility of emerging at any time. Therefore, "the method of equality is a method of untimeliness."[299]

Against the tautology of the relationship between knowledge and ignorance in the police order, the only remedy is the presupposition of equality, after which follows the declaration and verification of equality. Rancière names this entire process as intellectual emancipation and he owes this method of equality to the early nineteenth-century pedagogue, Joseph Jacotot. Jacotot's story, which is told extensively in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, is fundamental in Rancière's

[296] Rancière, J. (2011). The thinking of dissensus: Politics and aesthetics. In P. Bowman & R. Stamp (Eds.), *Reading Rancière* (pp. 1-17). Continuum., p. 15.

[297] Rancière, "Afterword", p. 275.

[298] Ibid., p. 277.

[299] Ibid., p. 282.

philosophy.[300] Exiled in Belgium in 1818, Jacotot was given the duty of teaching French to Flemish-speaking students who knew no French. Since he did not speak Flemish, he could not teach students in a traditional manner. As a solution, he gave students a bilingual edition of Fénelon's *Les Aventures de Télémaque* and just told them to learn French by comparing the original text and the Flemish translation. The students succeeded without any explication provided by him, and they learned to read and write French simply by comparison and repetition by themselves. From this experience, Jacotot derived his revolutionary principle: the equality of all intelligences. However, "this does not signify the equal value of all manifestations of intelligence, but the self-equality of intelligence in all its manifestations", as clarified by Rancière.[301] The fact that everyone learns their native language without any master explicator, by themselves alone, shows that every person has the same, equal level of intelligence. The master plays no role other than a stupefying, stultifying one. This causes students to believe that they are incapable of learning new things and dependent on the explanations of a master. With his unique method, Jacotot became an emancipatory master. He did not explicate and did not transmit any knowledge; he simply forced his students to use their intelligence and capacity to understand. Through methods of presupposition, declaration, and verification, the process of emancipation is a starting point, rather than a goal to be reached. Thus, the axiom of equality provided by Jacotot proves that an ignorant person can teach another ignorant person, as all have the capacity to learn themselves.

Alain Badiou, depending on Rancière's formalisation, summarises the method of Jacotot in two theses: "1. Under the condition of a declared equality, ignorance is the point from which a new knowledge can be born. 2. Under the authority of an ignorant master, knowledge can be a space for equality."[302] Of these two theses, the first one emphasises the dialectical relationship between knowledge and ignorance while providing an ontological ground for the production of knowledge, and the

[300] Rancière, J. (1991). *The ignorant schoolmaster: Five lessons in intellectual emancipation* (K. Ross, Trans.). Stanford University Press.

[301] Rancière, *The emancipated spectator*, p. 10.

[302] Badiou, A. (2009). The lessons of Jacques Rancière: Knowledge and power after the storm. In G. Rockhill & P. Watts (Eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, politics, aesthetics* (pp. 30-54). Duke University Press., p. 42.

second one emphasises the egalitarian and transformative feature of knowledge in a space of ignorance. Badiou confirms that, based on these conclusive theses, equality can never be programmed and it is only spontaneously declared. Badiou's elaboration of the Rancièrean concept of equality highlights the invariability of equality as the axiom of all patterns of the politics of emancipation. Each time the axiom of equality is declared, a new pattern of emancipatory politics is switched on.[303]

This also renders equality as the condition of a new way of knowledge transmission, which also undoes the dialectical relationship between knowledge and ignorance. Equality is a creative, productive process in which the production of spaces and collective commons is pursued. Through these functions, equality is characterised by a double incident: condition and production. Yet, causality and being result-oriented are important in this characterisation rather than the means; the entire process should be constructed based on the consequences of the declaration of equality.[304]

Overall, the concept of equality shows that Rancièrean philosophy is based on this radical idea. As the root of politics, equality is a starting point rather than a goal to be achieved. As a presupposition, it challenges all kinds of hierarchies in knowledge. It is a philosophical axiom that asserts the idea that all intelligences are equal and that anyone is capable of thinking, speaking, and acting. It is a critique of domination and power relations, or in his own terms, the distribution of the sensible that determines who can be seen and who can speak in a given order. To change this given order, reconfiguration of the sensible is essential. This can be provided by a disruption of the established patterns of visibility and a challenge to the hierarchy of sensibility. In this method, art is a critical actor as it has the power to alter the senses. This is why aesthetics plays a key role in Rancière's thought, and it is indeed an extension of his politics of equality. Reflecting the egalitarian impulse, Rancière's aesthetics and his perspective on art are explained next.

[303] Ibid.

[304] Ibid., pp. 47-49.

3.7. Aesthetics

Aesthetics, in Rancièrean terms, neither refers to the discipline that investigates art as its object nor is it about art theory. It extends beyond the borders of the realm of art as it is highly related to the realm of politics. It is "a mode of articulation between ways of doing and making, their corresponding forms of visibility, and possible ways of thinking about their relationships".[305] It is "at the core of politics" "as the system of *a priori* forms determining what presents itself to sense experience."[306] According to the definitions set by aesthetics in the perception of time and space, the visible and the invisible, speech and noise, politics takes place as a form of experience. Through the method of the distribution of the sensible, it symbolises a particular mode of organising what can be seen, thought, and said. Rancière differentiates three different regimes of art that describe distinct concepts of functioning of art in relation to the social order and politics: the ethical regime of images, the representative regime of art, and the aesthetic regime of art.

The ethical regime of images is the oldest functioning of art, presenting the foundational regime of all three regimes with its roots in classical antiquity. Reflecting the writings of Plato, Rancière describes this function of art not as an autonomous practice, but as an evaluation in terms of its social and moral effects. Art is assessed in relation to the *ethos* of the community by its ability to support ethical behaviour and social values, rather than its form, quality, or accuracy in representing the society. With such a narrow definition, it presents only the question of images, and it is not really an identification of art. These images are distinguished by their origin and their end or purpose, with the ultimate aim of education. The following question is asked: "In what way images' mode of being affects the *ethos*, the mode of being of individuals and communities", which prevents art from tailoring itself.[307]

For instance, in the *Republic*, Plato bans poets from his ideal city because poems are imitations that mislead and corrupt. It does not contain any truth; on the contrary, it

[305] Rancière, *The politics of aesthetics*, p. 4.

[306] Ibid., p. 8.

[307] Ibid., p. 16.

imitates the visible world, which is only a shadow of the true forms. Thus, the poem represents a copy of a copy; an imitation of a flawed imitation of the real world. Such artistic images are dangerous because they carry the risk of causing disorder. For images to be counted in the ethical regime, they need to tell the truth and lead the soul to the good. Such a perspective subordinates art to a moral order by measuring its propriety with truth and the virtues of the community.

The representational, or poetic, regime of art is initiated by Aristotle as a criticism of Plato in the classical age. In this regime, art reigns over its own norms and accords, constituting a distinct field. It is still conducted as imitation, or *mimesis*. However, as opposed to Plato, Aristotle defends poetic imitation, arguing that art is a method of revealing truth through representations, which declares "that the arrangement of a poem's actions is not equivalent to the fabrication of a simulacrum."[308] It ceases to be a simulacrum as the art of imitations becomes a technique.[309] Although such representations depict fictional events, they display universal truths like human nature. The evaluation of art is through identifying how well it complies with the existing rules of representation, such as the unity of time and place, the hierarchy of genres, the principle of verisimilitude, or appropriateness (e.g., the depiction of social classes with appropriate subjects).

The key characteristic of this regime is that it separates artistic techniques from other techniques and modes of production, demanding a strict hierarchy. According to this organisation of functioning, art can only be in certain forms and styles with particular subjects, representing actions and social roles in proper ways. The difference between art and non-art is specified in a limiting manner. Therefore, art possesses a certain place within a hierarchical system, and the artist reproduces the world according to this predetermined setting. Although it is liberated from ethics, it is pursued by constraining rules of representational fidelity.

The aesthetic regime of art has come to play a role in the last two centuries. This is the regime, as claimed by Rancière, that characterises modern and contemporary art

[308] Ibid., p. 32.

[309] Ibid., p. 40.

since he correlates it with the politics of aesthetics due to its radical disruptiveness. Its disruptiveness comes from its defiance of traditional limitations as a specific form of the sensible. It is against any rules of representation, ethical values, or systems of hierarchical genres. It refuses to obey any boundaries between beautiful and ugly, high and low, and several other contrasts. As Rancière explains: "The aesthetic regime asserts the absolute singularity of art and, at the same time, destroys any pragmatic criterion for isolating this singularity."[310] Thus, art is characterised by its ability to open up new spaces for perception and distinct experiences of the sensible, declaring the autonomy of art.

Through the inception of the aesthetic regime, equality of subjects became an important aspect. The daily life of workers gained the same worth as depictions of royalty. Such a perspective brought an end to the hierarchy of themes, obscuring the lines between visible and invisible, audible and inaudible. Hence, it redistributes the sensible by creating new ways of sensing the world, by making visible what was previously suppressed. This is the point where aesthetic experience becomes political. However, this does not mean that art must always be political and activist. In contrast, Rancière refrains from such a standpoint as it means reducing art to a particular utility. The important thing is for art to keep its potential capacity to create a dissensus because the politics of aesthetics values disrupting the established order of things by generating alternative ways of being, seeing, and acting.

Having counted three different regimes of art, it is necessary to note that there is no chronological order, and they can exist simultaneously in different periods of time and contexts. Therefore, it does not mean that the ethical regime of images is no more, and now it is only the reign of the aesthetic regime of art in contemporary times. There is an ongoing tension between these regimes, which Rancière finds productive due to art's possibility to interfere in the political configuration of the world at any time by altering the framework in which reality is perceived.

Inferring from these descriptions, it can be concluded that aesthetics is always political because art determines the distribution of the sensible and shapes the

[310] Ibid., p. 19.

conditions of visibility and intelligibility in society. The process of transition to the aesthetic regime of art shows how societal experience is contested and organised. Through these classifications, Rancière does not aim to answer what art should be; rather, he invites us to think about how artistic experiences take part in reconfiguring the sensible.

In conclusion, Jacques Rancière's philosophy without doubt makes us contemplate politics in a radically reoriented way, which results in aesthetics emerging as a byproduct of a radical redefinition of politics. Unlike its traditional meaning as the management of power relations and the structured state governance, he retrieves politics as a rebellious force: a contingent event of disruption, an intervening act within the stable order of the police. His understanding of politics constitutes a challenge to the Western political theory from Platonic archipolitics and Aristotelian parapolitics to Marxist metapolitics. He questions the very basic ideas of what it means to be counted and to speak, ultimately emphasising the processes of these struggles with a focus on reconfiguring the distribution of the sensible, rather than confining to the given rights as predetermined by the system itself.

At the heart of Rancièrean philosophy lies the radical argument of the equality of all intelligences. For Rancière, this is an axiomatic argument that verifies equality through presupposition. It is the principle and the beginning point of politics and not a goal or destination to reach. This presupposition is the very concept that causes a rupture in the police order and its hierarchical structure of roles and capacities. This is what determines the positions of the social and the political; the first presents the general realm of all kinds of knowledge, and the second presents a moment of interruption where those who have no part in the police order stage their equality through acts of subjectivation.

Political subjectivation is not merely for recognition, but for a transformation of the perception and aesthetic reconfiguration of the sensible. This is only possible by the intersection of politics and aesthetics, as their coalescence can disrupt the order of the police. The order of the police means the distribution of the sensible by the police, and it refers to the rules that determine who can speak and what can be said,

what is visible and audible, and what is not. This is how the police constructs its order in a coherent way; by the partition of the sensible, it decides what is included and what is excluded in its social reality. Even the order of the police proves that politics and aesthetics are inseparable, and the reconfiguration of the sensible is necessary in order to create a disagreement and to lead to political acts that turn noise into speech. A worker who writes poems, a student who teaches their master, or an immigrant who acts as a citizen constitute figures of disruption of political-aesthetic convergence.

French philosophers love to play with words, and Rancière is not exempt from this either. His vocabulary plays a critical role in understanding concepts related to the social order. One of these critical concepts is "wrong", which signifies the miscount of the police order: the exclusion of those who have no account. The manifestation of this wrong is the spark that makes the fire of politics grow, which allows staging equality as an act that transforms the sensible. The miscount is not an error to be corrected by better governance or more inclusion; it is the necessary condition for politics to exist at all. It cannot be resolved; it can only be presented as a structural tension. After all, there is politics because there is wrong.

This understanding of politics as the display of wrong is in contrast to the traditional figures of political philosophy that try to shape politics in rational consensus, legitimate representation, or the perception of the good life. Archipolitics, parapolitics, and metapolitics all suppress politics by subordinating it to knowledge and order. Rancière's concern is to bring the disruptiveness of politics and to save it from hierarchical and institutionalised limitations. Politics needs to lead to a scandal by setting the stage for the uncounted as equal beings so that the contingency and arbitrariness of the police order are exposed.

Such a comprehension of politics requires a theory of emancipation that is closely linked with equality. Joseph Jacotot's pedagogical experiment influenced Rancière to the extent that he borrowed Jacotot's method to proclaim the concept of intellectual emancipation. Rejecting the logic of explication and transmission of knowledge, emancipation occurs through the affirmation that everyone has the same capacity to

understand and think. The goal is not to eliminate the lack of knowledge, but to disrupt the hierarchies of the police order; not to level up to a better condition, but to provide equalisation. It is a method of untimeliness that interrupts the temporal logic of development and progress, replacing it with the immediacy of action.

In his theories of politics and emancipation, another critical element is the lack of definition of political agency. Political subjects are not defined in advance as they are not identities that suit certain categories or structures. They are processes of subjectivation that are comprised of acts of disidentification, declassification, and impossible identification. In these acts, there is no identity formation; on the contrary, there is rejection and breaking of identities imposed on individuals by the police. By saying "we, as those who are supposed to be silent, are here and we speak", political subjects demonstrate an act that alters the distribution of the sensible by creating an alternative way of thinking and being.

This is how we must understand Rancière's aesthetics as well; not as an art theory, but as a reflection on how forms of visibility and invisibility are produced, contested, and transformed. The aesthetic regime of art mirrors the political logic of dissensus, suspending traditional, hierarchical representation. Both cause disruption in the system and reveal its arbitrary structure. The reason why aesthetic experience is political is due to its opening up a space where the uncounted can take place. It does this because it problematises the existing distribution of the sensible and what is counted as common sense and knowledge. The political potential of art lies in its form rather than its content and its capacity to reconfigure what can be sensed.

These theoretical concepts are not meant to be implemented within a program anyhow. Rancière is cautious against any institutionalisation. Politics, in his view, should be anarchic, refusing any *arkhe* – any foundational principle of authority. Politics occurs when those who do not have the authority to speak and make politics take their time to act and speak. Politics is not continuous, but temporal; it is always on the edge of disappearing, yet capable of reappearing at any time. Because of this, it cannot be stabilised or institutionalised. If such an effort is made, it immediately turns into policing. This is why politics is rare and precarious as well as necessary to rupture the distribution of the sensible.

This chapter explained how Rancière deconstructs common conceptions of politics and equality, replacing them with rupture, heterology, and contingency. His distinct concepts from wrong to dissensus shape political thinking from a conventional way of state-centred governance toward an emancipatory staging. His understanding of aesthetics provides a complementary political vision by showing how the sensible order is always open to disruption and reconfiguration. In all these concepts, the presupposition of equality is clearly seen as the solid foundation of his thought.

To conclude, Rancière's philosophy is a philosophy of interruption. It interrupts the common sense of the police order, the hierarchy of intelligences, and the distribution of the sensible. It demands the impossible in the beginning – to act as if we are equal, even though we live in an order of inequalities. Yet, this is how it all begins – such an act disrupts the partition of the police, creating possibilities for alternatives. In a world of consensus, Rancièrean philosophy remains a necessary and immediate mnemonic of equality, reminding us that it is not a goal to be reached but a principle to be enacted, whenever and wherever the police logic dominates.

CHAPTER 4

RANCIÈRE'S AESTHETIC HETEROTOPIA

Having extensively covered the two building blocks of the thesis, the concept of aesthetic heterotopia can now be better understood, as it stands in the intersection of utopian thought, politics, and aesthetics. The combination of these distinct concepts causes the radicality necessary to create an interrupting event within a stable social order, namely the police, i.e., the entire framework governing social existence.[311] This radicality constitutes the main disagreement that is the source of both Rancièrean politics and utopian thought. Therefore, both concepts originate from the same feeling of disturbance against the existing conditions, and that feeling of disturbance is the critical force that leads to a search for an alternative. Both are stimulated by a counter-logical practice that challenges the functioning of the current structure, seeking not only to alter it but to reconfigure the elements of shared, common sense.

To understand the mechanics of this disagreement, this chapter synthesises the dynamic temporality of iconoclastic utopias, Foucault's spatial concept of heterotopia, and Rancière's philosophy, focusing on the distribution of the sensible. As explained in detail in the previous chapters, Foucauldian heterotopia focuses on real and lived spaces, and this provides the main material grounding for the abstract process of aesthetic and political rupture, ultimately ensuring the embodiment of the theory. It is a journey that has its roots in the "no place" of blueprint utopias and leading towards the tangible "here-and-now", where collective action takes place. The goal is not to construct a perfect future, but to maintain a continuous process of critique, creating alternative ways of being in the present moment.

[311] Rancière, "Ten theses on politics".

The central argument of this chapter is that this synthesis presents aesthetic heterotopia as a powerful theoretical tool and provides a contribution to the literature of utopian political thought. This concept describes a temporary, enacted emplacement where the police order is cracked through an aesthetic-political rupture, which is the fundamental reconfiguration of the sensible.[312] It is a form of "enacted utopia", one that creates disruptive political events in the present. In this chapter, I argue that this process is built upon four interconnected pillars. First, I will explore the initial moment of the rupture itself, the aesthetic rupture in the sensible order, which challenges the very logic of the existing perception. Second, I will analyse the primary mechanism that ensures the achievement of this rupture: the juxtaposition of incompatible elements, which creates an impact of dissensus. Third, I will examine the physical and spatial demonstration of this event; the counter-emplacement of political subjectivation, which encourages the emergence of new political actors. Fourth and last, I will investigate the temporal dimension of this process; the heterochronia, or disruption of time, which creates an alternative conception of time by interrupting the existing linear functioning of time.

4.1. Aesthetic Rupture in the Sensible Order

In any kind of utopian thought, there is a common, sensible order that constitutes the main counter-position against the utopia itself. The same thing applies to Rancière's philosophy, in which politics can only happen through the police, i.e., there would be no politics without the police.[313] Being critical and a search for an alternative lies in the foundation of the emergence of both these philosophies – utopian thought and Rancièrean thought. There is a counter-logical practice that seeks to challenge and transform the functioning of the current structure, if not to put an end to it. Therefore, disagreement with the existing system is key to imagining an alternative.

The disruption of sensible order takes place through social and political practices, and it is not limited to an unrealisable dream. As Zygmunt Bauman was mentioned previously on this issue, there needs to be a "deliberate collective action" and it

[312] Rancière, "The aesthetic heterotopia".

[313] Rancière, *Disagreement*.

needs to involve "a measure of hazard" to defeat the hierarchy.[314] This should be implemented in a process, as movement is significant in taking a step forward and composing alternatives. It is not only about critiquing the existing conditions or constructing a better future; it is about maintaining the process without an end. That is why composing alternatives has a significant position; it is the main point of disruption that allows for a constant search for a better alternative at that moment in that place, or to say it in essence, in the here-and-now. This is to prevent it from becoming a totality, which refers to the concept of the sensible order that is being disrupted. In Kinna's terms, "utopia's disruptive potential" is the main reason for disruption of the sensible order as it is realised through real-life practices.[315]

This is where the notion of heterotopia comes into play. It describes an emplacement, which includes transformative performances.[316] The key element for transformation is the heterogeneous elements that function as distinct ways of social ordering in heterotopia.[317] These distinct ways are the exact reason for disruption because heterogeneity itself disrupts by challenging what is normal. It is only a disruption and a challenge to the system, not a resolution to the problems occurring in the sensible order.

Also, in this sense, heterotopia contrasts with the sensible order as it does not have any horizon, unlike other elements found purposefully in the given order. Rather than being perfectly functioning elements in the order, heterotopias reflect, twist, and respond to the remaining place and do not function in the order.[318] They have dynamic structures; they are changeable and not continuous because they are not placed in order, and they need to protect their placelessness. They constitute complex spaces full of both opportunities and dangers. With all their complex and contradictory qualities, heterotopias represent disruptive mirrors of reality.

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[314] Bauman, *Socialism*, p. 17.

[315] Kinna, "Politics, ideology and utopia", p. 282.

[316] Foucault, "Different spaces".

[317] Hetherington, The badlands of modernity.

[318] Foucault, "Different spaces".

The fact that heterotopias are dynamic structures prone to change discontinuously makes them precarious.[319] They have the possibility to disrupt the given distribution of the sensible at any time. This randomness is the very reason for its improperness. It means that any act that disrupts the system can lead to emancipation in that specific space and time. This is an important aspect because it highlights the disagreement with the rules of the established order, which is a necessary condition for emancipation to take the stage. Because of this randomness and improperness, the possibility of the enactment of emancipation is infinite. In Rancièrean terms, the part of those who have no part can be anywhere, anytime, and therefore, they can start the process of emancipation unpredictably.[320] The root cause of this unpredictability is that the notions of equality and emancipation are insensible, so they do not have a place in the existing sensible order of the police, which ultimately leads to their infinite possibilities.

As explained in detail in the previous chapter, Rancière's philosophy is based on this very idea of disruption and disagreement. It is the production of a specific heterogeneity that is not included in the sensible order, as it aims to create spaces of equality and freedom. Rancière calls this heterogeneity dissensus and defines it through the aim of restructuring the political order by disrupting it.[321] However, the disruption is not against any clashing interests or opinions. It rather comes from within by a reconfiguration of the sensible in a different perception. The collective intelligence provides such an arrangement in order to crack open the given order. Yet, this collective intelligence is included in the police order, which means that any reconfiguration carries the risk of being absorbed.[322] That is why politics is significant in terms of leading to the emergence of political actions and practices through dissensus. In this sense, dissensus is a construction because it is an active process of political struggle for transformation.[323] Also, politics comes to be a

[319] Johnson, "The geographies of heterotopia".

[320] Rancière, The philosopher and his poor.

[321] Rancière, The emancipated spectator.

[322] Ibid.

[323] Ibid.

supplement to the given sensible order since it can only be abnormal. Politics is an aesthetic term in Rancière's philosophy, and it represents a temporality of conflict and revolt. It is an aesthetic rupture through collective action, which has the goal of destroying the *arkhe* of the community. This is how politics, and therefore, the idea of disruption, is an an-archic act, providing the contingency of social order.

Division is key in the process of the rupture, and this can be provided by declassification. The naturalness of the given sensible order should be replaced by figures of division, providing a negative and ephemeral moment. In the name of equality, all hierarchies are rejected through declassification, which renders it as the first step of politics.[324] Its exact opposite, unification, is not applicable in any part of politics as it does not have the effect of disrupting the established order. Therefore, the reconfiguration of the sensible does not include any unification, as opening up new spaces is only possible through an aesthetic rupture that covers creating political subjects and practices.

The distribution of the sensible is not a conscious, top-down imposition of rules, but rather a tacit agreement about the division of space, time, and identities which will provide the main ground, or rather counter-position, for the emergence of true politics. This spatio-temporal ordering, provided by the established order of the sensible, shapes the constitutions and perceptions of its members. This shows that our experience of reality is deeply impacted by this order, making it more than just a perception by depicting an embodiment in real life.

In such an order, aesthetics provides the necessary potential for disruption. Here, it is important to remember Rancière's definition of aesthetics: Aesthetics is not simply the study of art, but rather a regime of identification of art that is inherently political.[325] In line with this, aesthetics as dissensus, or aesthetic rupture, has a parallel in utopian thought where disagreement with the existing system provides the possibility for imagining an alternative. Imagination is the key to creating aesthetic,

[324] Rancière, On the shores of politics.

[325] Rancière, The politics of aesthetics.

and therefore political, forms which disrupt the existing order. Art can make visible what was previously unseen or make audible what was dismissed as noise. This is not about constructing a perfect future, but about maintaining a continuous process of critique in the here-and-now. Davide Panagia explains the relationship between aesthetics and political action as such: "The task of political action, therefore, is aesthetic in that it requires a reconfiguration between perception and meaning is disrupted by those elements, groups or individuals in society that demand not only to exist but indeed to be perceived."[326]

The political significance of this aesthetic disruption lies in its capacity to create new political subjects through concrete social and political practices. Political subjectivation has the main role in this process of realizing actions. When the excluded make their voice heard in meaningful words rather than a noise, they actively construct themselves as a political subject through the very act of speaking.[327] Thus, it is not simply a passive demand for recognition of a preexisting identity. Rather, it is an assertion of their existence and their right to be counted and to take part.

This is where the notion of heterotopia gains significance. Heterotopias are real emplacements, or sites, where the disruption of the sensible order takes place.[328] The disruption is provided through the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements, meaning contradictory functions and principles of social ordering. Heterotopias act in a disruptive way as mirrors reflecting reality, and they twist the sensible order. They are emplacements in which the uncounted can appear and declare their existence. For instance, a squatted building can function as a heterotopia, and so, as a manifestation of a reconfigured distribution of the sensible. To elaborate, a squatted building can be the literal definition of a void existing in the order of the police, because although the building physically exists as a property of the police, it is not used and is of no use, as it is an abandoned public building. Such places allow for alternative social

[326] Panagia, "'Partage du sensible'", p. 95.

[327] Rancière, "Against an ebbing tide".

[328] Rancière, "The aesthetic heterotopia".

orderings by enabling new forms of collective action, which contain both opportunities and dangers due to the inherent ambivalence.[329]

All in all, Rancière's sophisticated philosophy, synthesised with the concept of utopian thought and the subtle understanding of heterotopia, offers a powerful and enlightening perspective through comprehension of politics and political processes of change, which are inherently recurring. The distinction of this synthesised theory lies in the analysis of aesthetics, which engages attention to art's capacity to disrupt and reconfigure the established sensible order, rather than focusing on the content or subject matter of art. This analysis is provided by Rancière's meticulous work, which uncovers the political potential of the realm of aesthetics.

Through the process of aesthetic rupture, art plays a dynamic role, constituting the formation of the political itself. For this process to be transformative, it should not be understood as passive or mimetic as a reflection of preexisting political structures or ideologies. Such a relationship can be provided in a reciprocal way, so it cannot be static. It does not provide only abstract conceptualisations; it realises those concepts and brings them into being through continuous aesthetic disruption, which is a process practically engaged in heterotopias. The aesthetic rupture provides for a reconfiguration of the sensible by challenging existing hierarchies and creating spaces for marginalised voices to be heard, and therefore, a more equal and just world can be realised.[330] Thus, the political is not a fixed state but a continuous rejection of the established order, and it is intervened and shaped by aesthetics very often, particularly within heterotopian grounds.

4.2. Juxtaposition of Incompatible Elements

Although the juxtaposition of incompatible elements cannot be thought of separately from the aesthetic rupture, since it is a part of the process of disruption, this point still deserves its own place in the flow of this chapter. It has been mentioned in the previous section that critical thinking and political action are not grand theories of

[329] Hetherington, The badlands of modernity.

[330] Rancière, "The aesthetic heterotopia".

realising political change, but rather they bear a torch on the extraordinary hidden within the ordinary, revealing the heterodox.[331] The most significant aspect of this concept is the juxtaposition of incommensurate objects without an order and through resemblance, as explained by Foucault.[332] Heterotopias are real places that exist outside of all other places, yet they are locatable. Their ability is to shock and disorient us in order to make us reevaluate and contemplate the sensible world. The shock effect is not made through any integration or opposition, but through the resemblance of distinct heterogeneous objects. This bizarre combination is to disrupt our perception of reality so that we can realise how the sensible is distributed in a specific order and how we can generate an alternative social ordering against this limiting, arbitrary normality.[333]

A critical thing about the juxtaposition of incompatible elements is that its heterogeneity is not obvious from within. The internal arrangement might look very normal; however, its look from the outside is its main attribute that makes it abnormal and disruptive.[334] This external perspective on the relationship of heterotopian space to the outside world is crucial for understanding how heterotopias function and constitute a disruptive force. They are dynamic spaces that flash through their transforming performances, which signifies the role of political, collective action. They are unique and separated from other places, yet they are also in relation to them, which is the exact thing that provides a disruption within the established order. The heterogeneity within these spaces causes a collapse and disintegration in what is considered normal. The juxtaposition of incompatible objects challenges all representations of the sensible order, and it creates a process of similitude that establishes the incompatible as a new foundation for an alternative order.[335]

[331] Davis, "History, politics, and utopia", p. 136.

[332] Foucault, *The order of things*.

[333] Hetherington, The badlands of modernity.

[334] Foucault, "Different spaces".

[335] Hetherington, The badlands of modernity.

Heterotopias inherently possess "radical plurality" and "aesthetic diversity" due to their heterogeneity and incompatibility with the outside world.[336] Their "otherness" is provided by absorbing the common space and defining new rules of functioning in that specific space and time, within the here-and-now. This new functioning represents societal aspirations, making heterotopia a realised utopia, through the enactment of alternative social orderings, which are in dispute with the dominant social norms.

Rancière's philosophy focuses on the same disruption of the established order through the differentiation between the police and the political. While the police represents the harmonious order of the normal, the political represents the abnormal. Thus, it is the disruption of the harmonious order of the police. The possibility of a heterogeneity, through the juxtaposition of incompatible elements, is found in dissensus. Therefore, the possibility of politics is dependent on this tense relationship of disagreement between the police and the political. There needs to be a production of a given that is heterogeneous to the sensible world with the aim of restructuring the sensible order.[337] This restructuring process is defined as "the juxtaposition of two forms of the sensory implementation of collective intelligence".[338] By "two forms", Rancière refers to the sensory worlds of the police and the political as two distinct concepts. Since they are very distinct, and indeed opposite, to each other that their juxtaposition bears an "other" space-time as a restructuring of the sensible order.

Furthermore, politics is an expression that cancels the sensible order of the police by starting from the radical presupposition that all beings are equal. The presupposition of equality leads to the halt of the police logic because of the heterogeneous idea of the political. It is through this presupposition that politics can occur. The powerful effect of the presupposition of equality comes from its insensibility; it is an alien and heterogeneous concept to the sensible police order.[339] In other words, politics cannot

[336] Borissova, "The play of the possible and the real in aesthetic heterotopia", p. 161.

[337] Rancière, *The philosopher and his poor*.

[338] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 80.

[339] Davis, Jacques Rancière.

happen through negotiation within the existing framework as there needs to be a challenge against this very framework by asserting equality, which is a concept that the police disregards. In paving the way to the process of the political, these opposite concepts provide the necessary heterogeneity and the juxtaposition of incompatible elements. This idea aligns with Foucault's expression that the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements is the exact reason for disruption.[340]

Both philosophers use disruption and its characteristic of the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements as a critical tool in understanding how change can emerge within a stable system. Both concepts introduce a new voice into the political arena, reconfiguring what is seen, heard, and spoken. The common ground is the wish to challenge the sensible order and the will to reconfigure it. Both concepts emphasise the prominence of the "extraordinary in the seemingly ordinary".[341]

These intersections provide the ground for the reconfiguration of the shared, common, sensory world. Since the reconfiguration process can start with an aesthetic rupture, the role of political art is significant here. Political art aims to create "dialectical collision or dissensus" that combines heterogeneous elements and "two politics of sensoriality".[342] The combining of heterogeneous elements is in order to escalate a clash. The clash consists of two natures:

> On the one hand, it is the flash that enlightens. The connection of the heterogeneous elements speaks out of its legibility. … But on the other hand, the clash is produced insofar as the heterogeneity of the elements resists the homogeneity of meaning.[343]

What Rancière means here is that a clash can create a moment of insight where the connection between these unrelated objects becomes clear and meaningful. On the other hand, the clash is also functional because these elements resist being forced into

[340] Hetherington, The badlands of modernity.

[341] Davis, "History, politics, and utopia", p. 136.

[342] Rancière, J. (2009). Contemporary art and the politics of aesthetics. In B. Hinderliter, W. Kaizen, V. Maimon, J. Mansoor, & S. McCormick (Eds.), *Communities of sense: Rethinking aesthetics and politics* (pp. 31-50). Duke University Press., p. 42.

[343] Ibid.

a simple, single meaning. Such incomprehensibility, or ambiguity, is the main cause that generates political energy. Ultimately, the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements provides political power.

This paradoxical relationship causes the artistic "dissensual community" to have a double body, as it is a combination of different means that can produce impacts by itself for creating a new community with political people.[344] An aesthetic community is defined by the shared experience of disconnection to the extent that it is a dissensual community, rather than a consensual one. In line with this, art becomes the site of the production of heterogeneous knowledge, "ambivalent, incommensurable, and singular", that is different from the common knowledge of the established order.[345] This is due to the functioning of art as a disturbance of sensible knowledge structures because it is a part of unveiling the power structures.

The sensible police order and society operating within this order in consensus need to be challenged through art, and thus, politics. The emergence of politics in this preassigned partition of the sensible is the same as the emergence of Foucault's heterotopia. Like heterotopia, a work of art can create forms of "collision" that bring heterogeneous elements into a provocative clash. This clash both "enlightens" by unveiling the contingency of the established order and remains incomprehensible by resisting a singular meaning. As Peter Hallward quotes and translates from the original French text by Rancière, "the particular feature of political dissensus is that the partners are no more constituted than is the object or the very stage of discussion''.[346] The artwork becomes the heterotopic stage, an "other" space where the invisible can be visible and the inaudible can be audible.

This leads to the question of what leads to a "dissensual community", which is formed within heterotopia. Such a community is inherently paradoxical due to the structure based on disconnection and heterogeneous elements within. Political

[344] Rancière, *The emancipated spectator*, p. 59.

[345] Busch, K. (2007). Artistic research and the poetics of knowledge. In D. Lesage & K. Busch (Eds.), *A portrait of the artist as a researcher* (Issue 179, pp. 36-45). AS.

[346] Rancière (1998) as quoted in Hallward, "Staging equality", p. 149.

subjects do not get unified based on a shared identity, but through a shared break from the sensible order.[347] This community is both the means of art and the impact created by art. The art is not only about a community; it is the heterotopic formation of a community. The artwork creates an indecisive collective of spectators by functioning as an ephemeral heterotopia of the here-and-now.

Therefore, the political aspect of the artwork lies in its rejection of presenting a message or a display within the sensible framework. This power comes from its heterogeneity. Rancière notes that "It is the dream of an art that would transmit meanings in the form of a rupture with the very logic of meaningful situations."[348] The political act reconfigures the given sensible forms; thus, it introduces a heterology. The sensible needs to be disturbed as such: "A spectacle does not fit within the sensible framework defined by a network of meanings, an expression does not find its place in the system of visible coordinates where it appears."[349] This is the essence of juxtaposition: The artwork speaks, but its speech is a form of noise within the established system, opening a space for new political subjects to emerge.

In conclusion, the transformative power of art lies in its capacity for dissensus, which is realised through the creation of aesthetic heterotopias. Art performs a political act in the stage of heterotopia by reconfiguring the sensible through the juxtaposition of incompatible elements. By challenging the established distribution of the sensible, it reveals the arbitrary arrangement of it. Dissensual community is promoted through "dialectical collision" and dissensus. A paradoxical and ephemeral collective of political subjects dependent on a shared rupture is born within this "other" space that art shapes.

4.3. Counter-Emplacement of Political Subjectivation

The idea of spatiality, presented as counter-emplacements, is the main focus point for understanding heterotopias. They are real, physical sites that make contact with all

[347] Rancière, The emancipated spectator.

[348] Rancière, *The politics of aesthetics*, p. 59.

[349] Ibid.

other places through complex and contradictory relationships. They are simultaneously connected to and separated from society. This contradictory concept emphasises how the spatiality of social and political life is shaped, how the established system functions, and how the organisation of sensible is maintained. It signifies the role of places that carry social and political significance, and which are shaped by people within.

As described by Foucault, heterotopias are inherently unstable and unsettling.[350] They are contestory, ruptured, and transient sites. They constitute potent counter-emplacements which function under different rules from the sensible order. A squatted building or an occupied square both depict a heterotopia to the extent that they suspend, or even invert, the norms of the existing order with all their reality in an alternative way. They do not promise or have any sense of liberation as a final solution, nor are they escapist fantasies.[351] In this sense, they do not give any answer; on the contrary, they encourage asking questions. They need to force us to confront social conventions so that a rupture can occur and reveal the arbitrariness of those social conventions. Therefore, they present an alternative logic, illuminate the path for our imagination, and show that the existing order is not the only way. Demonstrating radical alternatives is possible owing to the existence of real spaces. The wish to realise alternative social structures highlights the dual function of heterotopias. This duality is the fact that heterotopias hold up a mirror to society to show the arbitrariness of the sensible order, yet the reflection is often distorted due to its internal incompatibility.[352]

Following the cultural shift of post-modernism, aesthetic heterotopia comes to be a result of the collapse of normativity, authority, and centralisation.[353] For example, a radical art installation or a subversive stage performance creates its own reality with its own logic and rules, subsuming a specific social space placed in the established

[350] Foucault, "Different spaces".

[351] Johnson, "Unravelling Foucault's 'different spaces'".

[352] Johnson, "The geographies of heterotopia".

[353] Borissova, "The play of the possible and the real in aesthetic heterotopia", p. 161.

sensible order, and it reflects the societal aspirations of those who create it. Reflecting societal aspirations is the exact point of intersection of heterotopia with utopian thought, only with the difference that heterotopias focus on the realisation of societal aspirations in emplacements.

When we look at Rancière's police and politics, it is understood that the police is the one that assures everything, and everyone stays in their proper places. It has the logic of a governance that seeks to create a society that is fully accounted for by eliminating any void or supplement. Politics, in contrast, is an act that interrupts the police order. This interruption is committed by a group of individuals who have no assigned place within the police. Their existence is based on nothingness – no visibility, no voice, no time, no place. Politics occurs when this nothingness turns into a visible act and a meaningful speech in a recognised place in the sensible order. This recognised place is the field of perception, and it is being reshaped by the intervention itself, reconfiguring the sensible order of the police. With the emergence of such a performance of political action or speech, a political subject is created from a gap that the police cannot fill.[354]

The spatialisation, the emergence of a heterotopia, simultaneously happens with political subjectivation. This process is an exclamation of the demand to be counted, declaring existence. For example, when people who are treated as invisible by the state occupy a public square and declare, "we are the people", they are engaging in political subjectivation. They are creating a new "we" that did not exist in the police's calculations. By doing this, heterotopian spaces become the stage for acts of political subjectivation. A social place that operates with autonomous principles or a squatted house are all heterotopias that disrupt the police order. The critical point is to create a new, collective political subject. The marginalised can come together and create a common, other space, demanding equality. This constitutes an act of true politics, which challenges the foundations of the police order. With these characteristics, heterotopias are crucial in forming new, alternative political realities.

[354] Rancière, *Disagreement*.

For Rancière, the notion of the political is an event, a staged performance that, for a moment, disrupts the ordinary routine.[355] It is about constructing a temporary sphere where new political subjects can emerge, rather than discovering preexisting identities. When we say "we are the people", it is not a static and unified entity that we are referring to; on the contrary, it is a dynamic and divided entity. In an interview conducted by Yves Citton, Rancière explains that:

> For me, politics is never a question of identity; it always stages a gap [*un écart*]. When one says ''we are the people,'' I would say precisely that ''we'' and ''the people'' are not the same thing; politics takes place in the gap between the two.[356]

This gap is the space where the political takes to the stage and transforms the place into a scene of reality. Theatrical framework is essential to social and political transformation. Rancière says "a political subject is a type of theatrical being, temporary and localized", and then compares political agents to a theatrical troupe, contrary to a military troupe.[357] Here, Rancière's metaphor is more than a semantic play because a political troupe, like a company of actors, is a bottom-up formation of a self-organisation, while a military troupe is a preordained organisation with a hierarchical structure. It is through this convergence that individuals turn to collective political subjects that have their own autonomy in temporary and localised spaces.

Hallward interprets that any political act is not performed "for" the people as a passive audience, but it is performed "of" and "by" the people. "Every theatrical or political sequence must invent its own stage.", which explains the inherent idea that it is a bottom-up act, and its subjects are not predetermined.[358] In the police order, there is no location arranged for politics, it has no "proper" place, which ultimately makes any political action and practice precarious and temporary. They are moments

[355] Rancière, The politics of aesthetics.

[356] Citton, Y. (2009). Political agency and the ambivalence of the sensible. In G. Rockhill & P. Watts (Eds.), *Jacques Rancière: History, politics, aesthetics* (pp. 120-139). Duke University Press., pp. 129-130.

[357] Ibid., p. 130, 134.

[358] Hallward, "Staging equality", p. 149.

of rupture in which new configurations are made possible, suspending the established order. It is a spatio-temporal point where art and politics intersect. Both are essentially about creating new ways of seeing and being seen, and thus, the configuration of space. As Rancière says: "Art is made by the configuration of space more than it is made by the collection of artworks in those spaces."[359]

The reconfiguration of space is an iconoclastic utopian act. It emphasises the here-and-now concept, rather than deferring the dream to a far space and time, as the main aim is the overlapping of spaces and communities. Rancière critically explains that:

> Utopia for me is not the place that exists nowhere, but the ability of overlapping between a discursive space and a territorial space; the identification of a perceptual space that one discovers while walking with the *topos* of the community.[360]

What he means is to discover a new way of seeing and sensing through the place of the community in the here-and-now, which is an inherently political act. It is about making visible those who are not counted, who are "surplus subjects" treated as a supplement to the whole.[361] Politics, in this sense, cannot be a distinct sphere, as it is an intervention that separates the community from itself. The community can be counted in two opposite ways: The police way of counting, which determines the place of everything and everyone, and the political way of counting, which defends the inclusion of those who are not counted. As the police categorises everything, it has distinct spheres for its functioning. Politics, on the other hand, is not a sphere; it is a process. It is not a process of integration, but of separation; a process that uncovers the inherent paradoxes within the community.[362]

Heterotopia, including *topos* in its name, obviously carries a special place in itself for the notion of spatiality. Both Foucault's and Rancière's heterotopias depict active

[359] Chowdhury, D. (2019). Disruptions - an interview with Jacques Rancière. *Lateral, 8*(1). https://doi.org/10.25158/L8.1.7

[360] Rancière, J. (2004). *The flesh of words: The politics of writing* (C. Mandell, Trans.). Stanford University Press. (Original work published 1998), p. 18.

[361] Rancière, *Dissensus*, p. 70.

[362] Ibid.

counter-emplacements that possess the power to disrupt and reconfigure. They are physical stages where politics can unfold. The part of no part performs a political act that disturbs the established sensible order, so it is not merely a territorial occupation of a specific location. The squatted house or the occupied square becomes the solid embodiment of a new collective political subject demanding to be seen and heard. Squatting in an abandoned public building or occupying the empty square makes the invisible visible and reveals the arbitrariness of the established order. These spaces can gain meaning only through experiences of subjects, yet they are left empty because the police wants them to remain empty. The police has its own specific places of making politics and when political subjects go out of those specific places, it becomes scandalous. From the perspective of the police, that abandoned public building needs to remain abandoned until the police decides how to use it; no one can use this space, even though it does not function. The same applies to the square; it is not a suitable place for making politics from the police's perspective, but the parliament is. Therefore, space is a crucial frailty of the police that needs to be taken advantage of in order to cause a rupture in the established order.

This convergence of a specific place with political performance highlights the inseparability of spatial and political transformation. The theatrical troupe of political actors sets their own rules and own reality in the gap between a declared identity ("we") and a political name ("the people").[363] In this process, heterotopia functions as the stage where the arbitrariness of the police order is revealed. The power of heterotopian spaces is in their immediate function; they share the here-and-now concept of iconoclastic utopias. They are ruptures in the here-and-now, demonstrating that other ways of living, community, perception, and sense are possible.

Ultimately, linking spatial analysis of Foucault's heterotopia with Rancière's political framework proves that true politics is an inherently spatial practice. It is a process of forming a temporary, autonomous emplacement within the world of the police. The act of reconfiguring affects not only the space but also the community, which allows for the counting of the previously uncounted. Therefore, heterotopia is

[363] Citton, "Political agency and the ambivalence of the sensible".

a radical confrontation with the reality of the police through temporary and localised political acts. These performative events temporarily overlap between a discursive space and a territorial space in order to open a horizon for alternative social orders and prove that the given order is not the only way society operates, that another world is possible.

4.4. Heterochronia, or Disruption of Time

Heterochronia, being the fourth principle of Foucault's heterotopia, is an important function as it leads to temporal discontinuities. It can be defined as the "otherness" of time, and it is a fundamental constituent part of the concept of heterotopia. It describes the temporal dimension of heterotopia, and it is the way in which heterotopias function to disrupt our traditional, linear experience of time. Heterotopia can only function fully when there is a radical break in the flow of time; it is an "other space" because it operates on a different temporal frequency.[364] In short, heterochronia is the temporal logic that makes a heterotopia work.

It is crucial to analyse the root of heterochronia and where it comes from. As a criticism of blueprint utopias' detachment from historical reality, Judith Shklar underlined their "vision not of the probable but of the 'not-impossible'", emphasising their atemporality and distance from both the past and the future.[365] This approach lacked the catalyst for action, which followingly led to a search for a more dynamic alternative. Hence, this criticism can be named as the main starting point of the path to change by creating alternative spaces and times, which ultimately resulted in the implementation of a past-present-future relationship in a "temporally extended present" by itself through disruption of time.[366]

While defining temporality, the term "actuality" gains significance, with its focus on action and possibility. It provides a variable nature and a self-deconstructive aspect to iconoclastic utopias. In this sense, this is where iconoclastic utopias and

[364] Foucault, "Different spaces".

[365] Shklar, "The political theory of utopia", p. 370.

[366] Davis, "History, politics, and utopia", p. 135.

heterotopias intersect with each other and share the concept of the here-and-now. They both reveal the temporality of the world as well as its finitude.[367] The present is seen as an open-ended potential full of different possibilities. Such open-endedness provides suitable conditions for the disruption of time, leading to a rupture in the regular flow of time. The future-orientedness in the present constitutes a dialectic configuration. This understanding does not take the present as a given and interweaves past and future in the present, creating "*multiple* temporalities".[368] This is a way of distancing us from the present world momentarily. The unilinear nature of change and causality is challenged and denied, ultimately allowing for presentation of alternative social orderings. The flexibility offered by the multitude of possibilities provides the disruption.

On the way that goes to disruption of time, the process holds an important place. "It is the process that constitutes the social, that constructs differences and similarities across space and time.", says Martin Parker, emphasising dynamism and the "impatience with the present".[369] This is how the concept of here-and-now is shaped and based on the relationship between past-present-future. There are a creative tension and an inherent dissatisfaction with the existing distribution of the sensible. The dissatisfaction that leads to this level of dynamism originates from the inheritance of the past and the many possibilities of the future that are imagined by society. Hence, it is like the intersection point of political history and social aspirations. All designs, configurations and events that happen in the present carry a touch of the past and a glimpse at the future. Such events occur in the present, yet they are essentially shaped by our perception of what has been and our imagination for what will be. "What has not yet been" has its source in a temporal scene.[370] For instance, a call for social justice is both a refusal of past historical inequities and also

[367] Marder & Vieira, "Existential utopia", p. 40.

[368] McManus, "Truth, temporality, and theorizing resistance", p. 60.

[369] Parker, M. (2002). Utopia and the organizational imagination: Outopia. In M. Parker (Ed.), *Utopia and organization* (pp. 1-8). Blackwell., p. 2.; Parker, M. (2002). Utopia and the organizational imagination: Eutopia. In M. Parker (Ed.), *Utopia and organization* (pp. 217-224). Blackwell., p. 223.

[370] Griffin, M. J. & Moylan, T. (2007). Introduction: Exploring utopia. In M. J. Griffin & T. Moylan (Eds.), *Exploring the utopian impulse: Essays on utopian thought and practice* (pp. 11-18). Peter Lang., p. 13.

a future plan for a more egalitarian society. In this regard, "what has not yet been" is a horizon that we continuously shape.

Having explained heterochronia's relationship to heterotopia, it is possible to criticise Foucault's and Rancière's heterotopias in a way which determines that Foucault's concept gives more importance to spatiality. While the temporal dimension is still crucial since it is a constituent part of heterotopia, heterochrony can merely be a principle that helps to define the main concept of heterotopia, remaining rather weak or inferior. For Rancière, on the other hand, it is *vice versa*. Just as heterotopias are spaces of otherness, heterochronias are moments of otherness, too. Indeed, Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia is more located temporally, rather than spatially. They are moments that happen when the linear timeline of the police order is disrupted and a new, open-ended temporality emerges. Such a concept of politics shows that it is not about waiting for the future for a better social order, but about realising goals in the present. It is about making the voices of the uncounted heard in the here-and-now, without any delay, to actualise a genuinely egalitarian society. Disrupting the normal flow of time through radical political acts is a call to action, a call to become involved in the ongoing struggle for a more just and equitable world. In a Rancièrean sense, heterochrony, or a rupture in time, includes the reconfiguration of time as well, together with all the sensible entities. It is a time of "otherness" of time; a moment that is out of the chronological progression of past-present-future.[371] Such linear conception of time is the time of the police order, and it dominates a predictable flow of time. What "predictable" means here is a reference to blueprint utopia's characteristic that define stasis; such a functioning of time includes a stable and fixed order in which social roles and political practices are predefined and limited. Therefore, heterochronia comes to be the temporal equivalent of a political event; it creates a temporary suspension in the established order. Within this rupture, the uncounted have the chance to make their voice heard and emerge as political subjects in an alternative configuration of the sensible. Such an alternative existence depicts a moment where those who have no part assert their presence by having a part, something that is not supposed to happen.

[371] Reedy, P. (2002). Keeping the Black Flag flying: Anarchy, utopia and the politics of nostalgia. In M. Parker (Ed.), *Utopia and organization* (pp. 169-188). Blackwell.

Therefore, the roots of heterochronia lie in the present and it reconfigures the relationship between past, present, and future. This is the temporal condition of politics – there needs to be the creation of a "common" time that belongs to everyone and no one so as to interrupt the arbitrary time of the police. This is what allows for the opening up of spaces for the creation of equality; once the sensible order is altered in a different way, new and alternative spaces are generated. This shows the significance of the distribution of the sensible and its reliance on spatio-temporal conditions. As Ben Highmore explains: "What is an appropriate and understandable discourse in one place becomes inappropriate disclosure (and unlistenable-to) in another."[372] In this sense, "the social, for Rancière, is the orchestration of times and spaces, of sense and non-sense."[373] To know one's place in the social also means to know one's partition of time: "a time for work, a time for rest".[374] Hence the reason why interruption of time, together with the other senses, is essential in making changes in the social. This idea alone explains the reason why temporality is over spatiality in explaining Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia.

Moreover, this "amalgam of past, present and future" constitutes a paradoxical relationship, which creates favourable conditions for a radical and aesthetic rupture.[375] The social imagination and aspiration is rendered the artwork itself because only the event and the following process sparked by a common social imagination can provide such level of radicalness to the extent that it causes great changes in the sensible order. Rancière explains this idea concisely: "The art work is the people to come and it is the monument of its expectation, the monument of its absence."[376] This perspective directly aligns with the temporality concept of iconoclastic utopias. Susan McManus explains the issue very well: "Figuring untimeliness may reveal many utopian 'elsewheres' here and now", theorising temporality as an affective and dramatic figuration that leads to alternative

[372] Highmore, B. (2011). Out of place: Unprofessional painting, Jacques Rancière and the distribution of the sensible. In P. Bowman & R. Stamp (Eds.), *Reading Rancière* (pp. 95-110). Continuum., p. 97.

[373] Ibid.

[374] Ibid., p. 98.

[375] Reedy, "Keeping the Black Flag flying", p. 175.

[376] Rancière, *The emancipated spectator*, p. 59.

possibilities.[377] This is indeed necessary for any politics of resistance because of "that time is not reducible to its historical production, and that time is even non-synchronous with itself, speaks to subversive possibilities."[378] This commentary by McManus directly refers to the paradoxical relationship between past-present-future because only such a relationship can provide an irreducible and self-synchronous sense of time. Additionally, transformative politics is untimely on all occasions. All these conceptions hint at the infinitude of true, transformative politics. It depicts an intersection point of iconoclastic utopia, with its concept of temporality, and heterotopia, with its concept of heterochrony, both of which include a political context of the here-and-now.

To summarise, heterochronia is a foundational principle of Foucault's heterotopia, meaning "other time". It functions through disruption of time, which is a radical temporal break from the dominant temporalisation. Heterochronia creates a "temporally extended present" by synthesising the past and the future in the present, allowing for new possibilities of alternative social orderings to flourish in the here-and-now.[379] Furthermore, in an effort to compare Foucault's and Rancière's heterotopias, it can be declared that the former has a more spatial concept while the latter has a more temporal concept. Such a leaning on temporality in Rancière's philosophy is because of his understanding of the political – a disruption in time and a reconfiguration of the sensible is the only way to break down the police order. Politics, for Rancière, is about realising egalitarian goals in the present, causing dissent against the police and the existing sensible order. Leading to a temporary suspension of the established sensible order provides the pathway to transformative political action.

In conclusion, this chapter provided an analysis of Rancière's concept of the aesthetic heterotopia, presenting it as a robust theoretical instrument for understanding the intersection of utopian thought, politics, and art. In investigating

[377] McManus, "Truth, temporality, and theorizing resistance", p. 62.

[378] Ibid., pp. 70-71.

[379] Davis, "History, politics, and utopia", p. 135.

the political potential of aesthetics, the framework has been established through the connection of iconoclastic utopias and Foucault's spatial analysis, heterotopias. What Rancière brought into this analysis is shifting the locus of heterotopia from a mostly spatial concept to a more temporal concept through his reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible which happens in the here-and-now. This chapter argued that Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia functions as a form of "enacted utopia", without any blueprints for a future society, with a focus on creating disruptive political actions in the here-and-now. This process is built upon four interconnected pillars: the aesthetic rupture of the sensible order, the juxtaposition of incompatible elements, the creation of a counter-emplacement for political subjectivation, and the generation of a heterochronia, or a disruption of time.

The aesthetic rupture of the sensible order is the beginning point of the whole process of politics. In Rancière's philosophy, the antagonism between the police, an ordered system of preassigned roles and functions, and the political, the an-archic force that challenges this order, is the main focus point. This challenge is inherently aesthetic because it is a struggle over perception itself – a fight to make the invisible visible and the inaudible heard. However, this rupture is not a clash of interests; it is rather a dissensual act that unveils the arbitrariness and contingency of the existing order. By reconfiguring the sensible order and generating new sensory experiences, art and political acts ensure declassification against hierarchies in the police order. They open transient spaces where equality can be verified momentarily. Therefore, the aesthetic rupture is the act that initiates the process of emancipation and transforms a space into a political scene.

The aesthetic rupture happens through the juxtaposition of incompatible elements. As Foucault stated, the power of heterotopia comes from its capacity to place dissimilar objects together in order to object to the common sense of the established order. Rancière also uses this principle to suggest that radical art and political acts create a "dialectical collision" as a result of such a complex combination. This collision is of two natures: It sheds light on power structures and hidden connections while at the same time resisting a single meaning. This ambiguity is its strength. Such a combination leads to the creation of a "dissensual community", a community of

shared experience of disconnection from the sensible order. Political acts or artwork thus becomes a heterotopic stage where incompatible worlds of the police and of the political collide with each other, creating a new knowledge based on dissensus.

The stage for this dissensual practice is the counter-emplacement of political subjectivation. Heterotopias are real emplacements where the established logic of space is suspended, and new rules apply. For Rancière, these emplacements are places where new political subjects are born, such as a subversive art piece or a squatted building. Politics takes place when the part of no part claims their part through political subjectivation and presents their existence. Political subjectivation here is provided by the creation of a new performative act, and it is not a recognition of a preexisting identity. Politics happens within the gap between "we" and "the people", when a group of people declare "we are the people". This process is inherently theatrical; a temporary stage and a self-organised political troupe are required. Heterotopia is exactly this stage, a temporary and localised space, separated from the police order, while inside it, where equality is enacted. It is the concrete embodiment of an alternative social ordering, proving that another world is possible.

Heterotopia opens up within a heterochronia, through a disruption of the linear and regulated time of the police order. It is a concept that has more place in Rancière's thought than in Foucault's. The police order regulates the flow of time for everything: a time for work, a time for rest, a time for speaking. Politics happens as an "untimely" event that breaks this chronology. In this respect, it rejects the deferring of equality to the future and insists on a radical perspective of the here-and-now. This understanding leads to a "temporally extended present" where the past and the future intersect in the present as a transformative act. The artwork, in this sense, is both a "monument of its absence" and the harbinger of a "people to come." The temporal rupture disrupts the predictable flow of history as it contains a multitude of possibilities. It is this reconfiguration of time that allows for politics to take place with a new common sense, making aesthetic heterotopia an alternative spatio-temporal entity.

These four pillars demonstrate that Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia brings a sense of utopian thought to contemporary philosophy. It stresses the political power of art to

reconfigure the established sensible order. The aesthetic rupture, operated by juxtaposition, staged in a counter-emplacement, and sparked through a heterochronia, collectively defines the political power of art. Within this context, politics only acts through temporary and localised practices that do not aim to establish a new order; it is a continuous demonstration of the contingency and arbitrariness of the existing order. Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia connects aesthetics and politics, or more specifically, sensory experience and the practice of emancipation as a method without any final destination. It is a way of acting and sensing that constantly opens up alternative possibilities for a more just and equal world.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study began with problematising the contemporary political condition of a crisis of imagination. In an era dominated by the neoliberal slogan that "there is no alternative", which exterminates the political horizon for favouring late capitalism as the perfect end, imagining a better world has become a radical thought. The dystopian patterns in our everyday lives reflect this political extortion. The central problem this thesis has addressed is how to reclaim utopia as an emancipatory act in dystopian times. The question is not simply if another world is possible, but how we can think, sense, and enact it in the here-and-now. To answer this, the thesis has put forward the argument that the philosophy of Rancière, particularly his concept of aesthetic heterotopia, represents a step in the evolution of utopian political thought. This thesis has argued that Rancière provides a powerful theory for what can be termed an "enacted utopia" by synthesising the process-oriented nature of iconoclastic utopias with a more developed understanding of Foucault's heterotopia. This is not a utopia of blueprints that belongs to a distant future, but a utopia that breaks out momentarily and locally through aesthetic-political acts that disrupt and reconfigure the dominant distribution of the sensible. This study positions Rancière's work as a cure to the condescending despair of our post-modern age.

This thesis took us on a journey that led to three different but interconnected stages, moving from an extensive history of utopian thought to a meticulous examination of the philosophy of Rancière, and ending up in the synthesis of aesthetic heterotopia.

Chapter 2 established the necessary historical and theoretical groundwork. It differentiated utopias in two distinct ways: blueprint and iconoclastic utopias, with anti-utopias providing the transitory framework between the two. Blueprint utopias

were defined with the characteristics of perfection, stasis, order, and consensus. From Plato's *Republic* to More's namesake text, the desire for justice in a strict sense was depicted. This strictness became the main critique of the anti-utopian thinkers of the twentieth century – Popper, Arendt, and Berlin – who argued that the pursuit of a perfect, preplanned society inevitably leads to oppression and totalitarianism. Then, iconoclastic utopias emerged as a result of these harsh criticisms, rejecting blueprints in favour of imperfection, dynamism, temporality, and dissensus. They function not as a destination but as a critical orientation toward the present, a "not yet" that sparks continuing struggle. Finally, the chapter introduced Foucault's concept of heterotopia, "different spaces", that mirror, contest, and invert the dominant social order. This helped build a bridge between abstract utopian desire and concrete spatio-temporal practice.

Chapter 3 provided a focused lexicon, examining the key concepts that are necessary to understand his original contribution to the literature of radical politics. The relationship between the terms that form the main line of the study was defined: The stage covering the social and the political; how the police is positioned and the distribution of the sensible is set; what are the determinants of wrong; what acts lead to disagreement and dissensus; how does politics take shape and place; how do equality and emancipation occur; and what is the position of aesthetics in this whole equation are discussed to ultimately arrive at the idea that Rancière's political logic is inseparable from aesthetics, specifically the aesthetic regime of art, which disrupts the hierarchies of representation and creates new, egalitarian sensory experiences.

Chapter 4 represented the core synthesis of this thesis. It argued that Rancière's concept is the combination of iconoclastic utopias and heterotopias, creating a new framework for the practice of utopian thought. Within this scope, Rancièrean concept of aesthetic heterotopia was defined through four pillars. First, an aesthetic rupture in the sensible order as a moment of dissensus reconfigures all perception and sensation. Second, this rupture is achieved through a juxtaposition of incompatible elements, which creates a dialectical collision that prevents a singular, total meaning. Third, this rupture and collision occur within a counter-emplacement of political subjectivation – a temporary and self-organised stage where the "part of no part"

emerges as new political subjects and perform equality. Finally, this event unravels within a heterochronia, a disruption of the regulated, linear time of the police, persisting on the radical conception of the here-and-now. This chapter concluded that Rancière shifts Foucault's spatial concept onto a temporal and aesthetic one, offering an "effectively enacted utopia" and helping us better understand our times.

The contributions of this thesis are twofold: They carry significant implications for both political theory and practice. Theoretically speaking, there are three contributions. First and foremost, this study contributes to utopian studies by offering a vigorous defence of utopia as a critical and emancipatory concept. It reclaims the term from blueprint models and totalitarianism, as argued by anti-utopian pragmatists. Aesthetic heterotopia, in this sense, provides another way of depicting utopia as a repetitive practice of disruption. The focus is shifted from what a perfect society would look like to how equality and emancipation are enacted temporally within an imperfect society.

Secondly, this study forms a link between the philosophies of Foucault and Rancière. Of course, the relationship between the two was referred to before in different contexts. Yet, this study has put forth that Rancière actively transforms the concept of heterotopia to reach a concept that combines its spatial analysis with temporality, aesthetics, and politics. The concept of aesthetic heterotopia demonstrates that it is not merely about contesting the social ordering in space, but about disrupting the space-time wholly in which the order is perceived. This ensures a more refined understanding of the relationship between space-time and political subjectivation.

Finally, this study presents a reinterpretation of the relationship between aesthetics and politics. According to this, political art is taken not as a vehicle for a specific ideology, but as a potent form for the reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible. This brings a more advanced conception of how performative acts, from theatre to squatting an abandoned house, can have political effects by changing the way we see, hear, and feel, unlocking new possibilities for collective action.

Practically speaking, the concept of aesthetic heterotopia offers a tangible, even if ephemeral, model for radical social change. It makes the temporary and localised

acts and forms of protest stronger by giving theoretical weight as they come to define contemporary social movements. In line with this, this study suggests that the most effective political acts today are the ones that create temporary and autonomous emplacements of a new sensible configuration, rather than acts that aim to seize state power. The occupation of a public square, the establishment of a protest site, a subversive art installation, or a theatrical performance can all mean the creation of aesthetic heterotopias. They are "enacted utopias" where a different community is formed with a different social ordering, rules, and practices. They are sensible manifestations of the axiom of equality. This provides a valuable framework for seeing protests against the established order as prefigurative constructions of a new, alternative social ordering, despite its transience. It emphasises that the goal is to alter the current sensible order for a different reality in which the invisible becomes visible and the noise of the excluded is heard as political speech, so the aim is not only to make social and political demands, but to actualise those demands. In a world that claims that "there is no alternative", aesthetic heterotopias provide concrete, practical proof that alternatives are not only possible but also are constantly being built, dismantled, and rebuilt in the aesthetic and political ruptures of the present.

This thesis has aimed to present an exhaustive theoretical argument, yet it is necessary to acknowledge its inherent limitations. These limitations can certainly pave the way for future research. First, the focus of the study is narrow as it is centred on Foucault and Rancière. Although this provided a coherent discussion, the thesis necessarily excluded many contemporary thinkers whose work is related to utopian thought, the intersectionality of aesthetics and politics, and prefigurative politics. Theories of autonomist Marxism, anarchism, and even decoloniality could broaden the discussion with additional support, nuance, and critique for the central argument.

Second, Rancière's abstract philosophy poses a challenge. His terminology, like "the distribution of the sensible", although very powerful, may be elusive, making it difficult to implement. The thesis has tried to clarify his concepts, but it is required to acknowledge that there will always be a gap between the philosophical intensity of Rancièrean concepts and the reality of political events, which creates a productive

tension. I would name this tension as the "inevitable Rancière", or the ignorant schoolmaster themself, because every student has their own way of learning and applying. Rancière, as the ignorant schoolmaster, cannot give instructions as he is also in the same space-time with us; meaning he does not have any extra information or solution either. Hence, the lack of instructions might create a potential limitation for those who seek a straightforward methodological toolkit.

The future research that these limitations can lead to is of promising quality. The most essential one would be empirical case studies that apply the concept of aesthetic heterotopia to specific artistic and political events. Analyses of the Gezi Park protests, Occupy Wall Street movements, or the artistic performances of collectives like Pussy Riot would enrich the literature by strengthening the ground of the theory, especially in relation to prefigurative politics.

Another possible research topic would be to expand it in order to include its relevance to, for example, ecology or the digital realm. One could ask if "ecological heterotopias" are possible by investigating the politics of the environment with its non-human subjects and objects, trying to eliminate a human-centric model of political subjectivation, which generates another configuration of our sensory relationship with the natural environment. Another question would be whether online spaces, virtual communities, or digital activism can function as aesthetic heterotopias or not.

In conclusion, this thesis has tried to show that the journey from the rigid blueprints of classical utopia to the transient ruptures of Rancière's aesthetic heterotopia is a journey from prescription to practice, from a wish for a perfect future to the will to enact in the imperfect present. The main argument of this thesis comes to be the maturation of utopian impulse from an idealised vision to a concretised praxis. The blueprint utopia presented us a world without pain, its anti-utopian shadow warned us that the price of such perfection could be freedom itself, and the iconoclastic utopia recovered hope and redirected it toward process. Finally, aesthetic heterotopia, as a concrete method, provides a stage for the struggle for emancipation to actualise momentary visions of an egalitarian world.

This pattern of thought is not an escape from reality but a crucial tool for planning our present. It demonstrates that radical politics does not include grand plans but localised acts of resistance. The future of utopia lies in the construction and propagation of heterotopian spaces – spaces that are imperfect, transient, and disturbing, but are nonetheless real. They are the stages where new political subjects can speak, and a different imagination is enacted. In this never-ending journey, there is no prescription showing the way nor a destination set to be reached. Instead, there is the continuous, hopeful, and critical practice of building “other” worlds right here, right now.

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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Bu tez, çağdaş bir hayal gücü krizini teşhis ederek başlamaktadır. Gündelik hayatlarımızda köklü bir şekilde yerleşmiş olan bu mantık, geleceğe el konulması anlamına gelir ve hem politik söylemde hem de popüler kültürde distopik düşünceyi teşvik eder; bu da farklı bir dünya hayal etme yeteneğimizi engeller. Böylesine muhafazakar bir düzende, daha iyi alternatifler hayal etme eylemi radikal politik bir anlam kazanır ve ütopya kavramına yeni bir soluk getirir. Çalışmanın sorguladığı temel soru, ütopyayı eleştirel ve özgürleştirici bir kavram olarak nasıl geri kazanacağımız ve onu katı, totaliter planlarla olan tarihsel bağından nasıl arındıracağımızdır. Tez, Jacques Rancière'in felsefesinin, özellikle de "estetik heterotopya" kavramının, burada-ve-şimdi ortaya konulan, "gerçekleştirilen ütopya" olarak adlandırılabilecek bir çerçeve sağlayarak bu soruya güçlü bir yanıt sunduğunu savunur.

Bu argümanı geliştirmek için, çalışma öncelikle modern kontrol mekanizmalarını anlamak için bir araç olarak Michel Foucault'nun teorilerine yöneliyor. Foucault'nun iktidar-bilgi ilişkilendirmesi (iktidarın kendi hakikat rejimlerini yaratan üretken bir ağ olduğu) ve panoptisizm (içselleştirilmiş gözetimin itaatkar bir uyum ürettiği) kavramı, mevcut sosyo-politik düzeni analiz etmek için temel oluşturuyor. Buradan hareketle, Foucault'nun heterotopya fikri ele alınıyor: toplum içinde var olan ancak egemen toplumsal düzene meydan okuyan, onu yansıtma ve altüst etme işlevi gören gerçek, fiziksel "öteki mekanlar". Bu mekanlar, iktidarın tüm zaman-mekana yayılmış egemenlik alanına potansiyel bir "dışarı" sunuyor.

Fakat Foucault'nun heterotopyası muğlaktır; yansıttığı gücün bir aracı olabilir (hapishane gibi) ve radikal dönüşüme giden net bir yol sunmayabilir. Rancière'in

felsefesi, tam da bu teorik çıkmazda, gerekli ve daha dinamik bir alternatif olarak ortaya çıkar. Çalışma, Foucault'nun mekansal kavramını Rancière'inkiyle doğrudan karşılaştırır. Foucault'nun heterotopyası fiziksel bir mekanken, Rancière'in estetik heterotopyası daha çok estetik ve politik bir olaydır. Öncelikli kaygısı iktidar-bilgi ilişkileri değil, duyusal düzenin yeniden yapılandırılmasıdır. Görünmeyeni görünür, duyulmayanı duyulur kılarak mevcut düzene içkin algı çerçevesine meydan okuyan anlık bir uyuşmazlık eylemidir.

Tezin temel argümanı, Rancière'in kavramının ütopyacı siyasal düşüncede önemli bir evrimi temsil ettiğidir. Foucault'nun mekansallığa odaklanmasını, mevcut düzende "çatlak"lar oluşturmanın zamansallığına kaydırarak Rancière, "gerçekleştirilen ütopya" için bir model sunar. Bu, uzak bir gelecekte mükemmel bir toplumun planlandığı büyük bir tasarım değil, burada-ve-şimdide meydana gelen alternatif bir algılama ve varoluş biçiminin anlık ve yerelleştirilmiş gerçekleştirilişidir. Bu çerçeve daha sonra tezin yol göstericisi olacaktır: Tez, ütopyacı düşüncenin katı "taslak" modellerden daha dinamik "ikonoklastik" biçimlere doğru evrimini izler, Rancière'in temel kavramlarının ayrıntılı bir sözlüğünü sunar, ve son olarak bu fikirleri sentezleyerek estetik heterotopyayı çağdaş radikal siyaset için güçlü bir araç olarak tanımlar.

Bu doğrultuda birinci bölüm, ütopyacı siyasal düşüncenin kapsamlı bir tarihsel ve kavramsal analizini sunarak, ütopya düşüncesinin klasik kökenlerinden çağdaş yorumlarına kadar evrimini izler. Geleneksel nitelikli taslak ütopyalar, eleştirel ve modern ikonoklastik ütopyalar ile ikisi arasında tarihsel bir köprü kuran anti-ütopya konsepti, ütopya başlığı altında ele alınırken, heterotopya kavramı gerçekliği ve mekansallığı itibarıyla ütopya kategorisinden ayrıştırılır. Temel amaç, mükemmel bir toplumun katı ve dayatmacı modellerinden uzaklaşarak günümüzde radikal alternatifleri hayal etmek ve hayata geçirmek için dinamik, süreç odaklı çerçevelere doğru entelektüel bir yolculuğu haritalandırmaktır.

Ütopyanın analizi, Thomas More tarafından Yunanca "hiçbir yer" (*outopia*) ve "iyi yer" (*eutopia*) kelimelerinden türetilen terimin etimolojisini inceleyerek başlıyor. Hiçbir yerde var olmayan arzu edilir bir toplum düşüncesinin içkin belirsizliği

ütopyanın merkezinde yer alıyor. Çalışma; ütopyayı, "kötü yer"i tanımlayan distopyanın karşısına koyuyor ve daha da önemlisi, distopyayı, yalnızca kötü bir toplumun tasviri değil, ütopik dürtünün doğrudan bir eleştirisi olan ve bu nedenle ütopyacı düşüncenin bir parçası olarak kabul edilen anti-ütopyadan ayırıyor. Tarihsel olarak More'un *Utopia*'sı isim öncüsü olsa da gelenek, filozof-krallar tarafından yönetilen ve aklın düzeni üzerine kurulu ideal bir şehir-devletini tanımlayan Platon'un *Devlet*'iyle başlıyor. Ütopya literatürünü incelerken kategorilendirme ve metodoloji de ele alınarak Lyman Tower Sargent'ın üç ütopyacı tezahür biçimine – toplumsal teori, edebiyat, ve pratik – ve Ruth Levitas'ın üç analitik bakış açısına – içerik ("ne"), biçim ("nasıl"), ve işlev ("neden") – atıfta bulunuluyor. Bu çerçeve doğrultusunda, ütopya düşüncesi, şimdiki zamanı eleştirmeyi amaçlayan (işlev) felsefi ve politik bir kavram (toplumsal teori ve içerik) olarak nitelendiriliyor.

İncelenen ilk ütopya türü, klasik, geleneksel veya durağan ütopya olarak da bilinen "taslak ütopya"dır. Bu, tanımlayıcı dört özellikle karakterize edilen mükemmel bir toplumun arketipik bir görüntüsüdür. Öncelikle bu ütopyalar, mükemmellik arayışıyla yönlendirilen kusursuz ve eksiksiz toplumsal düzenler olarak tasarlanır. Platon'un *Devlet*'indeki adalet veya More'un *Utopia*'sındaki akıl gibi, toplum için kalıcı ve uyumlu bir temel sağlayan tekil ve gerçek bir ahlaki yargıya dayanırlar. Herhangi bir değişim, bu mükemmel durumdan bir gerileme olarak görülür. Bunun doğrudan bir sonucu, zamanda donmuş olma hali olan durağanlıktır. İdeale ulaşıldığı için, daha fazla ilerleme olasılığı veya ihtiyacı yoktur ve bu da değişimi önlemek için tasarlanmış kapalı bir sistem yaratır. Bu istikrarı korumak için taslak ütopyalar; kuralcı bir planlama ve organizasyon ile genellikle bireylerin sistemin ihtiyaçlarına uyacak şekilde şekillendirildiği katı hiyerarşiler ve bürokrasi içeren sıkı bir düzen anlayışına dayanır. Son olarak, uyumu sağlamak için, toplumsal birlik ve homojenlik yoluyla elde edilen tam bir uzlaşıya dayanırlar; bu da politik muhalefeti etkili bir şekilde ortadan kaldırır.

Taslak ütopyanın içsel katılığı, yirminci yüzyılın ortalarında, özellikle ütopik mükemmellik arayışı ile totalitarizmin yükselişi arasında doğrudan bir bağlantı gören düşünürlerden güçlü bir tepkiye yol açtı. Örneğin Karl Popper, "Ütopyacı mühendislik" olarak adlandırdığı, toplumu tek ve kapsamlı bir plana göre yeniden

şekillendirme girişimini eleştirdi. Bu yaklaşımın özünde tehlikeli ve idealist olduğunu savunarak, bunun yerine kademeli, rasyonel ve küçük ölçekli reformlar süreci olan "parça parça mühendislik" düşüncesini savundu. Benzer şekilde Hannah Arendt de totaliter ideolojinin kendisini bir ütopik düşünce biçimi olarak tanımladı. İdeolojilerin gerçekliğe katı, mantıksal ve tarih dışı bir çerçeve dayattığını ve bu süreçte insanın kendiliğindenliğini ve çoğulculuğunu ortadan kaldırdığını savundu. Isaiah Berlin, sorunu özgürlük bağlamında ele alarak, iyi yaşamın tek ve mükemmel bir versiyonunun peşinde koşan taslak ütopyaların, kaçınılmaz olarak bireysel tercihi ve insan değerlerinin doğal çoğulculuğunu bastıran "pozitif özgürlüğe" (belirli bir amaca ulaşma özgürlüğü) dayandığını savundu. Bu eleştiri, taslak ütopyaların mantığını etkili bir şekilde çürütürken, aynı zamanda radikal hayal gücünü kısıtlayan ve politik olanakları sınırlayan temkinli bir pragmatizme de yol açtı.

Bu çıkmaza yanıt olarak, klasik modele doğrudan zıt olarak tanımlanan modern, ikonoklastik ütopya ortaya çıktı. Bu eleştirel tür, taslak ütopyaya zıt dört özellikle tanımlanır. Kusurluluğu benimser; mücadelenin, farklılığın ve hataların yaşamın ve toplumsal ilerlemenin doğal ve gerekli yönleri olduğunu kabul eder ve durağan cennet tasvirlerini reddeder. Statik bir son nokta yerine, dinamizme değer verir ve ütopyayı nihai bir varış noktası olmayan, kinetik ve devam eden bir dönüşüm süreci olarak görür. Çatışma ve sürekli bir farklılık müzakeresiyle tanımlanır. En önemlisi, zamansallık algısı, odağı uzak bir gelecekten burada-ve-şimdiye kaydırır. Şimdiki zaman, geçmiş ve geleceğin yeni olasılıklar yaratmak için aktif olarak iç içe geçtiği, zamansal olarak genişletilmiş bir eylem alanı olarak anlaşılır. Son olarak, bu model uzlaşı arayışından ziyade fikir ayrılığı ile var olur. Muhalefet ve anlaşmazlık, çözülmesi gereken sorunlar değil, siyasetin özü ve toplumsal dönüşümün tetikleyicisidir.

Bu gelişen idealleri somut gerçekliğe oturtmak için, son olarak Foucault'nun heterotopya kavramı ele alınıyor. Heterotopyalar, toplum içinde var olan ancak farklı kurallara göre işleyen, hakim toplumsal düzene meydan okuyan, onu yansıtan ve altüst eden alanlar olarak hareket eden gerçek, fiziksel "öteki mekanlar"dır. Foucault, heterotopyaların paradoksal doğalarını betimleyen altı ilkeyi şöyle özetler: İlk ilke, her insan grubunun veya toplumunun kültürünü yansıtan bir heterotopyaya sahip

olmasıdır; bu da kaçınılmaz olarak evrensel bir heterotopya fikrini ortadan kaldırır. Daha sonra heterotopyaları iki türe ayırır: kriz heterotopyaları ve sapma heterotopyaları. İlki, kriz halindeki bireylere yönelik mekansallıkları belirtir; örneğin yatılı okullar, erkekler için askerlik hizmeti. İkincisi, insanların anormal davranışları nedeniyle yerleştirildikleri yerleri temsil eder; örneğin psikiyatri hastaneleri ve hapishaneler. İkinci ilke, bir toplumun bir heterotopyanın işleyiş biçimini değiştirebileceğidir. Örneğin, on sekizinci yüzyılın sonuna kadar mezarlıklar şehir merkezlerinde konumlanmışken, on dokuzuncu yüzyıldan itibaren dış mahallelere taşınmışlardır. Üçüncü ilke, heterotopyalar birbiriyle çelişen çeşitli yerleri bir araya getirebilir; örneğin bir mikrokozmosu temsil eden Fars bahçeleri. Dördüncü ilke, heterotopyalar, heterokronilere erişimleri aracılığıyla zamansal kesintilerle işlev görür. Foucault burada bu ilkeyi iki alt kategoriye ayırır: İlk olarak, müzeler ve kütüphaneler gibi zamanı sonsuza dek biriktiren heterotopyalar ve ikinci olarak, festivaller ve tatil köyleri gibi geçici heterotopyalar vardır. Beşinci ilke, heterotopyaların her zaman açılıp kapanma ön koşulu vardır, bu da onları çevrelerinden izole eder. Örneğin, hapishanelere giriş zorunludur ve çıkış ancak belirli arınma faaliyetleri tamamlandıktan sonra gerçekleşebilir. Altıncı ve son ilke, heterotopyalar kalan mekanla ilişkili olarak işlev görür ve bu iki farklı şekilde ortaya çıkabilir: Tüm gerçek yerleri kötüleyen bir yanılsama mekanı yaratabilirler (örneğin genelevler) veya farklı bir gerçek mekan (örneğin koloniler) yaratabilirler. Sonuç olarak, kavramın gücü, belirsizliğinde ve alternatif bir toplumsal düzenlemenin dinamik bir süreci olarak işlevinde yatmakta ve ütopik dürtülerin dünyamızda nerede sorgulanıp hayata geçirildiğini görmek için somut bir mercek sağlamaktadır. Taslak ütopyadan heterotopyaya doğru olan evrim; reçeteden eleştiriye, soyut ideallerden somut alanlara ve mükemmel bir gelecek arzusundan, kusurlu şimdiki zamanda alternatifler inşa etmenin umutlu, eleştirel ve devamlı pratiğine doğru bir geçiş olarak çerçevelenerek sona eriyor.

İkinci bölüm, Rancière'in felsefesinin kapsamlı bir sözlüğünü sunarak, onu geleneksel siyasal düşünceyle radikal bir yüzleşme olarak sunar. Rancière felsefesi, Platon, Aristoteles ve Marx'ın büyük geleneklerini eleştirerek, nihayetinde analiz ettiklerini iddia ettikleri şeyi bastırmaya hizmet ettiklerini savunur. Rancière için gerçek siyaset, devletin sıradan yönetimi, partiler arasındaki rekabet veya kamu

politikalarının uygulanması değildir. Bunun yerine, inkarı bizzat kendisi tarafından yapılandırılmış bir dünyada radikal bir eşitliği anlık olarak sahneleyen nadir, yıkıcı ve skandal bir olaydır. Onun felsefesi, eşitliğin gelecekte ulaşılacak bir hedef değil, yıkıcı estetik ve politik eylemlerle sürekli olarak doğrulanması gereken, şimdiki zamana dayalı bir ön kabul olduğu aksiyomu üzerine kurulu bir özgürleşme epistemolojisidir.

Rancière'in kavramsal çerçevesi, toplumsal ve siyasal olan arasında önemli bir ayrımla başlar. Toplumsal, yaşamın tümünü kapsayan alandır; çıkarların yönetildiği ve çatışmaların yaşandığı sıradan durumdur. Ancak siyasal olan, bu durumun bir parçası değil, ondan daha nadir görülen bir çıkarımıdır. Toplumsal yapıyı kesintiye uğratan ve yeniden yapılandıran istisnai bir olaydır. Bu kesinti, Rancière'in polis olarak adlandırdığı yapının sınırında meydana gelir. Polis yalnızca kolluk kuvveti değil, aynı zamanda bir topluluğun kapsayıcı sembolik düzenidir; rolleri, yerleri ve varoluş biçimlerini tanımlayan ve dağıtan kurumsallaşmış, hiyerarşik bir düzendir. Birincil işlevi, hiçbir kalıntı veya ek olmadan eksiksiz ve uyumlu bir toplumsal yapı yaratmaktır. Bunu başardığı mekanizma, duyusal olanın dağıtımıdır; algının görünür ve görünmez olanı, anlamlı konuşma ile anlaşılmaz gürültünün ne olduğunu ve ortak dünyada kimin meşru bir katılımcı olduğunu belirleyen önsel bölünmesidir. Bu dağılım, duyum ile anlam arasında bir uzlaşı, bir uyum yaratır ve var olan hiyerarşileri normalleştirir.

Gerçek siyaset tam da bu polis düzenine meydan okumak için ortaya çıkar ve her zaman temel bir haksızlıkla başlar. Polis, toplumun her kesimini sayma girişiminde yapısal bir yanlış sayım üzerine kuruludur: parça olmayan parçanın dışlanması. Bu, toplumda fiziksel olarak mevcut olan ancak polis düzeni içinde tanınmış bir çıkarı veya sesi olmayan nüfus kesimlerini (yoksullar, işçiler, göçmenler) ifade eder. Haksızlık, düzeltilmesi gereken bir hata değil, siyaseti mümkün kılan temel bir paradokstur. Bu yanlış sayımın tezahürü anlaşmazlığa yol açar. Rancière için anlaşmazlık, basit bir fikir veya çıkar çatışması değildir. Duyusal olanın kendisi üzerine derin bir çatışma, tek bir alanı işgal eden iki dünya arasındaki bir anlaşmazlıktır. Sayılmayanların çıkardığı seslerin, acıyı ifade eden bir hayvanın sesi mi (*phone*), yoksa adaleti dile getiren bir politik öznenin akılcı konuşması mı (*logos*)

olduğu konusundaki bir mücadeledir. Polis düzeni sayılmayanlara söz hakkı vermeyi reddeder, ancak onlara buyurabilmek için, onların bu buyruğu anlayacak zekaya sahip olduklarını varsayması gerekir; bu da kendi hiyerarşisinin kendi içindeki çelişkili temelini ortaya koyar.

Bu anlaşmazlık süreci, toplumsal düzenin daha geniş çaplı bozulması ve dönüşümü olan uyuşmazlıkla sonuçlanır. Uyuşmazlık, polisin mutabakata dayalı dünyası içinde heterojen, mantıklı bir dünyanın inşasıdır. Siyaseti oluşturan temel, bu aktif ve dönüştürücü mücadeledir. Rancière, bu siyasetin ne olmadığını tanımlamak konusunda dikkatlidir ve Platon, Aristoteles ve Marx'ın siyaset felsefelerini anti-politik olarak nitelendirir. Arkipolitika (Platon), siyaseti önceden belirlenmiş, uyumlu bir düzene tabi kılar; parapolitika (Aristoteles), yerleşik düzeni koruyan kurumsal sınırlar içindeki politik çatışmayı içerir; ve metapolitika (Marx), siyaseti daha derin bir ekonomik gerçeğin yüzeysel bir yanılsamasına indirger. Buna karşılık, gerçek siyaset, eşitliği sahneleyen beklenmedik, anarşik (temel bir *arkhe*'den yoksun) ve geçici bir olaydır. Konuşan tüm varlıkların eşit olduğu aksiyomunun doğrulanmasıdır.

Tüm bu çerçevenin özü eşitlik aksiyomudur. Rancière, eşitliğin ulaşılması gereken bir hedef değil, tüm siyasetin başlangıç noktası olduğunu savunur. Bu, ilan edilmesi ve sürekli olarak doğrulanması gereken bir ön kabuldür. Rancière bunu, on dokuzuncu yüzyıl pedagogu "cahil hoca" Joseph Jacotot'nun öyküsünden alınan entelektüel özgürleşme kavramıyla örneklendirir. Jacotot, öğrencilerine konuşmadığı bir dili başarıyla öğretebileceğini keşfederek, açıklayan bir öğretmen ile cahil bir öğrenci arasındaki hiyerarşinin toplumsal bir kurgu olduğunu kanıtlamıştır. Bu deney, temel argüman olan "zekaların eşitliği"ni ortaya koymuştur. Dolayısıyla özgürleşme, öğrenmiş olma süreci değil, kişinin zaten sahip olduğu kapasiteyi fark etme ve gösterme eylemidir. Eşit kapasitenin doğrudanlığıyla ilerleme ve gelişmenin polis mantığını kesintiye uğratan bir zamansızlık yöntemidir.

Bu özgürleşme politik özneleşme yoluyla gerçekleşir. Politik özneler önceden var olan kimlik grupları değildir ve uyuşmazlık anında ortaya çıkarlar. Bu süreç, sınıf-dışılaşma (felsefe yapmaya başlayan bir işçi gibi, kişinin kendisine atanmış

toplumsal rolünü reddetmesi), özdeşleşmeme (polis tarafından dayatılan kimliklerden kopması) ve imkansız özdeşleşme (bir öznenin, kendine özgü toplumsal kategorisini aşarak evrensel bir haksızlık ilkesiyle özdeşleşmesi) eylemlerini içerir. Politik özneleşme, polis düzeninin sayımını bozan tamamlayıcı bir "biz" yaratan bir heterolojidir (ötekinin mantığı).

Sonuç olarak bu politik mantık estetikten ayrılamaz. Rancière için estetik, yalnızca sanat teorisi değil, duyusal olanın dağıtımıyla da eş anlamlıdır. Politikanın yeniden yapılandırmayı amaçladığı algı sisteminin ta kendisidir. Filozof, sanatın üç tarihsel rejimini ana hatlarıyla belirtir: imgelerin ahlaki etkilerine göre yargılandığı etik rejim; türler ve özneler arasında katı bir hiyerarşi üzerinde işleyen temsili rejim; ve sanatın estetik rejimi. Bu modern rejim, temsil hiyerarşilerini paramparça ettiği için özünde politiktir. Tüm öznelerin radikal eşitliğini öne sürerek sanatın anlaşmazlık yaratan yeni duyusal deneyimler yaratmasına olanak tanır. Sanatın politik gücü mesajında veya içeriğinde değil, biçiminde yatar: yerleşik görünürlük ve anlaşılabilirlik kalıplarını bozma, görünmeyeni görünür ve duyulmayanı duyulur kılma kapasitesi. Rancière'in felsefesinin nihayetinde bir kesinti felsefesi olmasının nedeni budur. İmkansızı talep eder: sanki zaten eşitmişiz gibi davranmak. Polis düzeninde bir kopuşa yol açan, farklı, daha adil bir dünya için geçici ama gerekli olasılıkları açan da tam olarak bu eylemdir.

Üçüncü bölümde, estetik heterotopya kavramı ütopyacı düşüncenin, Foucault'nun mekansal analizinin ve Rancière'in felsefesinin estetik-politik bir sentezi olarak sunulmaktadır. Bu sentezin radikal değişimi anlamak için güçlü bir teorik araç sağladığını ve onu bir tür "gerçekleştirilen ütopya" olarak çerçevelediğini savunmaktadır. Bu, uzak bir geleceğe dair planlardan oluşan bir ütopya değil, burada-ve-şimdide geçici ve yıkıcı politik olaylar aracılığıyla gerçekleştirilen bir ütopyadır. Bu kavramın özü, mevcut toplumsal düzene karşı paylaşılan bir rahatsızlık duygusundan kaynaklanır; bu, hem ütopik özlemin hem de Rancièreci siyasetin kaynağıdır. Bu bölüm, argümanını birbiriyle bağlantılı dört sütun üzerine inşa eder: duyusal düzende estetik bir kopuş, uyumsuz unsurların yan yana getirilmesi, politik özneleşmenin karşı-mevzilenmesi, ve heterokroni, yani doğrusal zamanın bozulması.

Süreç, duyusal düzende estetik bir kopuşla başlar. Hem ütopyacı düşünce hem de Rancière'in felsefesi, Rancière'in polis dediği egemen sisteme alternatif bir arayış üzerine kuruludur. Bu kopuş, mevcut yapının işleyişine bilinçli kolektif eylem yoluyla meydan okuyan karşıt-mantıksal bir pratiktir. Estetik bir olaydır çünkü özünde algının kendisi üzerine bir mücadeledir; görülebilen, duyulabilen ve hissedilebileni yeniden yapılandırma mücadelesidir; böylece görünmeyeni görünür kılar ve gürültü olarak reddedileni anlamlı bir politik söyleme dönüştürür. Bu, mükemmel bir gelecek inşa etmekle ilgili değil, yeni politik özneler yaratan ve eşitlik için yeni alanlar açan sürekli bir eleştiri sürecini sürdürmekle ilgilidir. Bu kopuş, parça olmayan parçanın özgürleşmesini sahnelediği ve mevcut düzenin kurallarına meydan okuduğu, her an öngörülemez bir şekilde ortaya çıkabilen heterotopyaların dinamik yapısı sayesinde mümkün olur. Dolayısıyla estetik kopuş, özgürleşme sürecini başlatan ve belirli bir mekanı politik bir sahneye dönüştüren eylemdir.

Bu kopuş, uyumsuz unsurların yan yana gelmesiyle sağlanır. Foucault'nun heterotopyaların farklı nesneleri bir araya getirerek şok etkisi yarattığı yönündeki söyleminden yola çıkan bu nitelik, radikal sanat ve politik eylemlerin diyalektik bir çarpışma yarattığını savunur. Bu çarpışma, polis ve politik olanın uyumsuz dünyalarının kışkırtıcı bir çatışmaya sokulmasıyla üretilir. Sonuç iki yönlüdür: Bir yandan çatışma aydınlatıcıdır, çünkü yerleşik düzenin örtük iktidar ilişkilerini ve keyfiliğini ortaya çıkarır; diğer yandan, tek ve homojen bir anlama direnerek muğlaklığını korur. Bu muğlaklık, olayın polis düzeni tarafından kolayca özümsenmesini engeller. Bu süreç, ortak bir kimlikle değil, duyusal düzenden kopukluğun ortak deneyimiyle birleşen politik öznelerin paradoksal bir kolektifi olan muhalif bir topluluğun yaratılmasına yol açar. Böylece sanat eseri ya da politik eylem, bu uyumsuz dünyaların çarpıştığı, uyuşmazlığa dayalı yeni bir bilgi biçiminin sergilendiği heterotopik bir sahneye dönüşür.

Bu muhalif pratiğin sahnesi, politik özneleşmenin karşı-mevzilenmesidir. Heterotopyalar, mevcut düzenin mantığının askıya alındığı ve yeni kuralların uygulandığı gerçek, fiziksel mekanlardır. Rancière'e göre bu mekanlar – huzur bozucu bir sanat eseri, bir protesto mekanı, bir işgal evi, vs. – yeni politik öznelerin doğduğu yerlerdir. Siyaset, parça olmayan parça bir mekana sahip çıktığında ve bu

süreçte varlığını sahnelediğinde gerçekleşir. Örneğin, marjinalleştirilmiş bir grup insan bir meydanı işgal edip "biz halkız" dediğinde, yalnızca bir talepte bulunmakla kalmaz, aynı zamanda polisin hesaplamalarında daha önce var olmayan yeni bir politik "biz"i aktif olarak yaratırlar. Bu süreç doğal olarak teatraldir, ve geçici bir sahne ve kendi kurallarını icat eden, kendi kendini örgütleyen bir politik topluluk gerektirir. Heterotopya tam da bu sahnedir: eşitliğin hayata geçirildiği geçici ve yerel bir mekan. Alternatif bir toplumsal düzenin somut örneğidir ve eylem yoluyla başka bir dünyanın mümkün olduğunu kanıtlar.

Son olarak, tüm bu olay bir heterokroni içinde, polis düzeninin doğrusal ve düzenlenmiş zamanının bozulmasıyla ortaya çıkar. Foucault heterotopya kavramını, mekansallığını vurgulayarak ortaya atmıştır; Rancière'in estetik heterotopyası ise mekansal olmaktan ziyade zamansaldır. Polis düzeni, zamanın akışını düzenler ve her faaliyete uygun bir an atar: çalışma zamanı, dinlenme zamanı, konuşma zamanı. Buna karşılık siyaset, bu kronolojiyi bozan zamansız bir olay olarak gerçekleşir. Eşitliğin geleceğe ertelenmesini reddeder ve burada-ve-şimdide radikal bir şekilde gerçekleşmesinde ısrar eder. Bu, geçmişteki adaletsizliklerin anısının ve alternatif bir gelecek özleminin dönüştürücü bir eylemde kesiştiği zamansal olarak genişletilmiş bir şimdiki zaman yaratır. Zamansal kopuş, tarihin öngörülebilir akışını kesintiye uğratarak çok sayıda olasılığı ortaya çıkarır ve yeni bir ortak aklın ortaya çıkmasına olanak tanır. Zamanın bu yeniden yapılandırılması, estetik heterotopyayı gerçek anlamda alternatif bir mekansal-zamansal varlık haline getiren şeydir.

Sonuç olarak bu dört temel sütun, Rancière'in estetik heterotopyasının çağdaş ütopyacı düşünceye önemli bir katkı sunduğunu göstermektedir. Yan yana koyma yoluyla işleyen, karşı-mevzilenmede canlandırılan ve bir heterokroni aracılığıyla tetiklenen estetik kopuş, kolektif olarak sanatın ve uyuşmazlığın politik gücünü tanımlar. Bu çerçevede siyaset, yeni ve kalıcı bir düzen kurmakla ilgili değil, mevcut düzenin keyfiliğinin sürekli bir göstergesidir. Duyusal deneyimi özgürleşme pratiğiyle birleştiren ve daha adil ve eşit bir dünya için sürekli olarak alternatif olanaklar açan bir eylem ve algılama yöntemidir.

Bu çalışma, neoliberal "başka alternatif yok" sloganının daha iyi bir dünya tasavvur etme yeteneğini körelten distopik bir politik manzara yarattığı çağdaş bir hayal gücü

kriziyle yüzleşerek başladı. Ele aldığı temel sorun, ütopyanın zamanımız için eleştirel ve özgürleştirici bir eylem olarak nasıl geri kazanılacağı idi. Rancière'in felsefesinin, özellikle de estetik heterotopya kavramının, "gerçekleştirilen ütopya" olarak adlandırılabilecek şey için güçlü bir teori sunduğunu savundu. Bu, uzak bir gelecek için bir plan değil, duyusal olanın burada-ve-şimdide egemen dağılımını bozan ve yeniden yapılandıran estetik-politik eylemler aracılığıyla anlık ve yerel olarak "çatlak"lar oluşturan bir ütopyadır.

Tez, ikonoklastik ütopyaların süreç odaklı yapısını, Foucault'nun heterotopyasına dair daha gelişmiş bir anlayışla sentezleyerek, odak noktasını mekansal analizden politik kopuşun zamansal ve estetik boyutlarına kaydırmaktadır. Teorik olarak, bu çalışma ütopyayı totalitarizmle olan bağından kurtarır ve Foucault ve Rancière felsefeleri arasında eleştirel bir bağ kurar. Pratik olarak ise, radikal toplumsal değişimi anlamak için somut bir model sunarak, çağdaş toplumsal hareketleri tanımlayan geçici ve yerel protesto biçimlerine teorik bir ağırlık kazandırır. Bir kamusal alanı işgal etmek veya huzur bozucu bir sanat eseri sergilemek gibi eylemler, eşitlik aksiyomunun tezahür ettiği alternatif bir toplumsal düzenin önceden belirlenmiş yapıları olan estetik heterotopyaların yaratımı olarak çerçevelenir.

Ütopyacı düşüncenin Rancière'in estetik heterotopyasına uzanan bu yolculuğu, mükemmel bir gelecek arzusundan kusurlu günümüzde değişim yaratma iradesine geçişi temsil ettiğini göstermektedir. Ütopyanın geleceğinin büyük planlarda değil, kusurlu ama gerçek "öteki" dünyalar inşa etmenin sürekli, umutlu ve eleştirel pratiğinde yattığı sonucuna varmaktadır.

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TEZİN ADI / TITLE OF THE THESIS (**İngilizce** / English): A CONTEMPORARY CONTRIBUTION TO UTOPIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT: JACQUES RANCIÈRE'S AESTHETIC HETEROTOPIA

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