

“Zapatista” as a Case of Impossible Identification: Subjectification in Rancière and the EZLN*

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ABSTRACT

The Zapatista movement that went public on January 1st, 1994, as a national liberation army occupying several towns in Chiapas, Mexico had long-lasting effects. Apart from inspiring other movements all over the world, the Zapatista movement introduced an alternative to the objective of taking political power through electoral victory or armed struggle. The alternative politics in question was based on equality that entailed a subjectification process. In this way, what allowed for the emergence of the alternative was, in Rancière's terms, politics as subject formation against the police order that attributes the proper places of the parts of society as well as defining the parts themselves. While there is a constant risk of cooptation of the moment of politics by the police order, the continuous subject formation through impossible identification in the Zapatista movement could make the movement the movement of all the excluded by reflecting the struggles of the other excluded groups into the movement and reflecting the movement into those other struggles.

Key Words: Zapatista Movement, Jacques Rancière, Politics, Subjectification, Impossible Identification

JEL Classification: H77, P32

Bir İmkânsız Kimlik Örneği olarak “Zapatista”: Rancière'de Öznelleşme ve EZLN

ÖZ

1 Ocak 1994'te ulusal bir kurtuluş ordusu olarak Meksika'nın Chiapas kentinde birkaç kasabayı işgal eden Zapatista hareketinin uzun süreli etkileri olmuştur. Zapatista hareketi, tüm dünyadaki diğer hareketlere ilham vermenin yanı sıra, seçim kazanma veya silahlı mücadele yoluyla siyasi iktidarı ele geçirme hedefine bir alternatif sunmuştur. Söz konusu alternatif siyaset, bir öznelleşme sürecini gerektiren eşitliğe dayanmaktadır. Böylelikle bu alternatifin ortaya çıkmasına olanak sağlayan, Rancière'in deyimiyle, toplum parçalarına uygun yerleri atfederken aynı zamanda parçaların kendilerini de tanımlayan polis düzenine karşı özne oluşumu olarak siyasettir. Siyaset anının polis düzeni tarafından asimilasyonu sürekli gündemde olan bir risk olsa da, Zapatista hareketindeki imkansız kimlik yoluyla sürekli özne oluşumu, hareketi, diğer dışlanan grupların mücadelelerini harekete yansıtarak ve hareketi de diğer tüm bu mücadelelere yansıtarak, hareketi dışlananların tümünün hareketi haline getirebilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zapatista Hareketi, Jacques Rancière, Siyaset, Öznelleşme, İmkânsız Kimlik

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INTRODUCTION

This paper analyzes the Zapatista Movement that formed following the appearance of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (*Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional* - EZLN) on January 1st, 1994. Despite the fact that occupation of several towns in Chiapas by the EZLN was not permanent, the movement brought about long-lasting and profound effects. Beside inspiring worldwide movements such as the World Trade Organization protests in Seattle or formation of World Social Forum, the movement rejected to pursue the aim of seizing political (or state) power through armed struggle, that belonged to traditional guerilla groups and rejected hierarchical organization while adopting an organization based on equality. Furthermore, the movement introduced an alternative to conventional politics by way of opening up political spaces. In this regard, while the movement does not aim to seize political power, it does not engage in electoral politics whether by forming or supporting a political party, either. The objective of the movement, in this sense, is creating autonomous democracy that is based on equality. Therefore, what makes the movement significant is not only exposing the exclusion and inequalities suffered by the indigenous but also introducing an alternative in the form of autonomous democracy against the conventional politics. The latter, in turn, denotes a Rancièrian understanding of politics insofar as it unmasks as well as interrupts the sedimented regimes of inequalities that are embedded in *the police* order through the presupposition of equality, which is also related to the process of subjectification since the alternative politics presented by the Zapatistas was based on the creation of new subjectivities.

In this way, after the attempts at establishing dialogue and agreement with the state reached an impasse, "the Zapatista movement completely abandons the politics of demands, and, with it, all contact with the state, and the creation of its own communal life becomes unambiguously the core of the movement" (Holloway, 2010, p. 242). The politics of demands and contact with the state signifies the traditional politics in terms of representative democracy. Yet, representative democracy appears to be neither representative nor democratic, at least for the indigenous population of Mexico since it did not represent the indigenous democratic demands of land reform. However, the creation of communal life by the movement, which in turn, can be considered "a collective claim to existence as political subjects" (Davis, 2010, p. 84) proved to be a radically democratic alternative. The claim in question, on the other hand, does not refer to a demand from the government, rather it signifies the collective constitution of the political Zapatista subject who takes her life into her hands through the creation of her own autonomous, communal life. The constitution of the "Zapatista" subjectivity, in this sense, is also the constitution of the world the Zapatistas want by their living that world. Thus, the study aims to show that an alternative to the concept of democracy limited to regular elections exists as a possibility in Rancière and as a reality in the Zapatista movement.

In this regard, the first section will present subjectification and its place in Rancière's understanding of politics. In particular, the impossible identification in

subjectification process that allows for the reflection of all those excluded into the Zapatista movement and the reflection of the Zapatista movement into the struggles of all those excluded will be discussed. In the second section, the birth of Zapatismo with reference to the “defeat” of the FLN by the indigenous will be briefly explained. In the third and the final section, the “Zapatista subjectivity” will be analyzed as a case of impossible identification and it will be discussed how the “Zapatista subjectivity” allowed for an alternative politics.

I. SUBJECTIFICATION AND POLITICS IN RANCIÈRE

To start with, this section will present subjectification in Jacques Rancière's thought, which is inseparable from politics since after all, politics signifies subject formation. In this line, according to Rancière “Politics is generally seen as the set of procedures whereby the aggregation and consent of collectivities is achieved, the organization of powers, the distribution of places and roles, and the systems for legitimizing this distribution” (Rancière, 1998, p. 28). However, Rancière objects to this definition and instead calls it *the police* whereas he reserves “the term politics for an extremely determined activity antagonistic to policing: whatever breaks with the tangible configuration whereby parties and parts or lack of them are defined by a presupposition that, by definition, has no place in that configuration – that of the part of those who have no part” (Rancière, 1998, p. 29). In this way, politics amounts to a rupture in *the police*, a rupture which is based on a presupposition while the presupposition in question “itself demonstrates the sheer contingency of the order, the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being” (Rancière, 1998, p. 30).

The rupture, therefore, is closely related to and based on equality, however equality in question is not an objective that is to be achieved through politics, a policy that will be implemented by politics or an article written in the constitution. It is, rather, a presupposition. In this sense, the Aristotelian distinction between the capacity of speech and of voice is employed by Rancière for the discussion on politics and equality. “The voice, according to Aristotle, is an organ designed for a limited purpose. It serves animals in general to indicate or show sensations of pain or pleasure” (Rancière, 1998, p. 21). Therefore, the two categories created by this distinction refers to the category of those who have logos and those who do not have. The former denotes the possession of the capacity of speech whereas the latter are the ones who can only state pleasure or pain. This distinction, in turn, indicates inequality and politics, according to Rancière, is not based on this distinction since making this distinction the basis of politics is to assign the ones possessing the capacity of speech as proper subjects for politics while assigning the ones who do not possess that capacity as subjects who are not proper for politics. Hence the former appear as the ones who should be counted whereas the latter appear as the ones who should not be counted. Thus, this distinction “is, on the contrary, one of the stakes of the very dispute that institutes politics” (Rancière, 1998, p. 22). Moreover, it denotes the *police* order, rather than being the basis of politics since the *police* order distinguishes and speech from voice while, at the same time,

defining what is speech and what is voice. Politics, then, happens at the moment when the distinction between speech and voice is challenged and when it is shown that what is acknowledged as voice within the police order is in fact speech.

In this way, since the party that has no part does not exist prior to the moment of politics, since the party that is considered possessing only voice in the existing police order has to show that it actually possesses the capacity for speech, it has to constitute itself as an equal party to the parties that are counted within *the police* order, which leads to a rupture in *the police* order. Consequently, subjectification has a crucial place in politics. Politics, in this sense, is the process in which the party that has no part reveals the miscount of the parts in question, reveals that it actually has a part. In this way, politics does not have a subject that is proper to politics, rather, politics is the process of subject formation, of subjectification. "It occurs when those who have no recognized part in the social order, the *sans-part* who do not 'count', who are invisible or inaudible politically speaking, assert their egalitarian claim, which is always also a collective claim to existence as political subjects" and "has three main characteristics: it is (i) an argumentative demonstration, (ii) a theatrical dramatization and (iii) a 'heterologic' disidentification" (Davis, 2010, p. 84).

Following Davis, the argumentative demonstration aspect of subjectification can be exemplified by the French tailors' strike in 1833. With regard to the richness of publications by the working class after the 1830 revolution, Rancière refers to the syllogism of emancipation that revolves around the question whether the French people are equal. "The major premiss of this syllogism is simple: the Charter promulgated in 1830 says in its preamble that all French people are equal before the law, and this equality constitutes the syllogism's major premiss. The minor premiss is derived rather from direct experience" (Rancière, 2007, p. 45). The first of the three minor premises, in this sense, are that the official to whom the demands regarding pay, working hours and working conditions are directed refuses to listen to the tailors and thus he does not treat them as equals. The second is that whereas the law states that masters' organizations as well as workers' organizations are prohibited, only workers' organization is prosecuted. The third is that a French prosecutor states that workers are not equal to other people. In this line, Rancière argues that there are two ways of solving this contradiction between the premises: One is to conclude that the law is an illusion. The way chosen by the tailors, on the other hand, is that either the major premise or the minor premises has to be changed (Rancière, 2007, p. 46-47). According to Davis, however, the argumentative demonstration is not sufficient for the process of subjectification since the subject that appeals to argumentative demonstration in order to show their equality is not acknowledged as a subject that has the capacity to argue rationally in a debate. Thus, "the *sans-part* must have recourse to the ruse of the theatrical, as well as sometimes to violence, to support their rational arguments" (Davis, 2010, p. 85).

This brings us to the theatrical aspect of subjectification, which, according to Davis, can be inferred from the Thesis 8 of Rancière's "Ten Theses on Politics".

The eighth thesis asserts that the main objective of the police as in law enforcement in the case of a demonstration is to disperse the demonstration and to show that everything is normal, there is nothing extraordinary to see there, the only thing to do is to move along while “politics, in contrast, consists in transforming this space of 'moving-along' into a space for the appearance of a subject” (Rancière, 2001, p. 9). The appearance, or the emergence of the subject, in turn, “is always also an emergence into the realm of perception, of visibility and audibility: it is a manifestation” (Davis, 2010, p. 86).

The third aspect of subjectification, in Davis' words, is called “heterologic disidentification” as subjectification “always involves an 'impossible identification' with a different subject (*heteron*, in Classical Greek) or with otherness in general” (Davis, 2010, p. 87). In this regard, Rancière defines process of subjectification as “the formation of a one that is not a self but is the relation of a self to an other” (Rancière, 1992, p. 60), with regard to which he refers to Auguste Blanqui's statement that his profession was proletarian despite not being a worker. While *the police* neither recognizes “proletarian” as a profession nor identifies Blanqui as a proletarian, in line with the politics in Rancière's understanding Blanqui's statement was right since proletarian does not correspond to a sociologically identified social group but is “the name of an outcast”, which, in turn, “is the name of those who are denied an identity in a given order of policy” (Rancière, 1992, p. 61). “In this way, a process of subjectivization is a process of disidentification or declassification” (Rancière, 1992, p. 61). In this regard, the disidentification or declassification points out to an impossible identification. While explaining the intersection between disidentification and impossible identification, Rancière refers to his own experience, to his and his generation's “identification with the bodies of the Algerians beaten to death and thrown into the Seine by the French police, in the name of the French people, in October 1961” (Rancière, 1992, p. 61). In this way, it was impossible to identify with the dead Algerians, however, the identification with the French people invoked by the French police in order to justify the murders they committed could be questioned, which allowed for the emergence of a political subject that could assume neither the Algerian identity nor the French identity, that could only exist at the interval between these two. (Rancière, 1992, p. 61).

With regard to these, Rancière asserts that subjectification is always related to the other due to three reasons: Firstly, subjectification does not mean only to assert an identity but, at the same, to reject an identity attributed by *the police*. The “right” identity attributed by *the police* places the identified into their “right” positions while politics concerns “wrong” identities. Secondly, subjectification involves a demonstration which necessarily assumes the existence of an other. Thirdly, subjectification requires impossible identification (Rancière, 1992, p. 62). In the light of these, before analyzing the Zapatista movement's relationship with “the other” in the sense of assuming and at the same rejecting an identity, presentation of the subject in front of the other, and impossible identification, the formation of a relation between a self and an other, rather than a self, it should be

noted, albeit briefly, how the movement emerged as a movement of all the excluded and presented an alternative politics based on equality, and how that equality was connected to formation of the Zapatista subjectivity.

II. THE "DEFEAT" AND THE BIRTH OF ZAPATISMO

The First Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle roots the Zapatista movement in the 500 years of struggle of the indigenous with clear references to the fights against slavery, for independence, against imperialism, against dictatorship and for revolution (EZLN, 1993). Yet as the movement's name also indicates, it is best to trace the movement back to the Mexican Revolution and Emiliano Zapata's struggle. As a matter of fact, the legacy of Emiliano Zapata can be recognized in the movements and organizations especially in the south Mexico such as the *Coordinadora Nacional Plan de Ayala* (CNPA) that was formed in 1979 and "composed of indigenous comuneros, poor peasants, land petitioners, and agricultural workers" (Harvey, 1998, p. 132) or the National Liberation Forces (*Fuerzas de Liberación Nacional* – FLN) which was an armed guerilla organization that claimed to be the successor of Zapata's Liberation Army of the South (Topal, 2014, p. 158-159). In fact, the FLN founded in 1969 was led by Cesar German Yanez, whose brother, Fernando Yanez was the founder of the EZLN as well as a member of the FLN (Mentinis, 2006, p. 2). Moreover, the group that arrived in Chiapas in 1983, promoted armed struggle and included Subcomandante Marcos had its origins in the FLN (Harvey, 1998, p. 164). This group of six, comprising of three mestizos and three indigenous people, that formed the EZLN on November 17, 1983, in this sense, was a traditional guerilla group that aimed to take over political power through armed struggle. Yet, the group's contact with the indigenous population resulted in the "defeat" of the group.

"At this stage the EZLN was no longer what we had conceived when we arrived. By then we had been defeated by the indigenous communities, and as a product of that defeat, the EZLN started to grow exponentially and to become 'very otherly'" (Ramírez, 2008, pp. 27-28). The defeat in question is actually the defeat of an order based on hierarchy. As Khasnabish (2010) also argues, Zapatismo emerged as the result of the encounter between the indigenous in Chiapas and the urban revolutionaries who came to Chiapas in 1980s (p. 69). These revolutionaries whose ultimate aim was to seize political power through armed struggle arrived in Chiapas to organize and revolutionize the indigenous communities perceived the indigenous in hierarchical lines and as a mass of people to be educated and brought consciousness. Yet, the result proved this perception wrong, and the encounter resulted in an interaction between the guerillas and the indigenous that presented the movement with a novelty comparing to the other guerilla organizations: not pursuing power and non-hierarchical organization. The guerillas realized that the indigenous in Chiapas did not lack political or resistance experience but needed self-defense against the paramilitary groups (Dulkadiroğlu, 2008, p. 137). Harvey (1998), in this sense, explicates the interaction by referring to Marcos's journey among the indigenous which began with the task of teaching history to the indigenous, continued with the realization that the indigenous telling of history was

quite different in terms of unclear temporalities or being based on culture not science, yet accurate. That journey taught Marcos to be patient and to listen (p.166). In Marcos's own words: "We are the product of a hybrid, of a confrontation, of a collision in which, luckily I believe, we lost" (Harvey, 1998, p. 167).

The movement's guiding principles were also born out of this confrontation: "to serve others, not serve oneself; to represent, not supplant; to construct, not destroy; to obey, not command; to propose, not impose; to convince, not defeat; to work from below, not seek to rise" (EZLN, 2016). In line with these principles, the autonomous Zapatista communities were governed by a bottom-up, direct democracy that minimized representation and was based on an egalitarian and collective decision-making process. Thus, until 2003, the ultimate authority over the Zapatista communities was vested to the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee (*Comité Clandestino Revolucionario Indígena - CCRI*), which comprised of two representatives, one male and one female, from each indigenous ethnic groups and *mestizos*. Despite comprising of mostly civilian members, the committee which governed civilian affairs until 2003, directed the EZLN's military operations as well. Every major decision whether it was a political or military decision was taken with consultation with the indigenous communities. Unless the consultations ended and all communities approved the decision in question, the CCRI could not make any decision. For instance, the decision to go on war on January 1st, 1994, was a decision taken collectively. At every level, region, municipality, and community, assemblies were held and it was mandatory to attend to the community assemblies. Good Government Juntas (*Juntas de Bien Gobierno - JBGs*) were formed in 2003 and took over the CCRI's authority over civilian affairs. In this way the JBGs directed civil and economic affairs in municipalities while also providing public services. The municipal JBGs operated autonomously while being coordinated by the regional JBGs. In order to prevent the mystification of government affairs, the JBGs were open to any member of the Zapatista community. The representatives serving in the JBGs were compensated in monetary terms but other members of the community took care of their needs.¹

All in all, the principles of the Zapatista movement as well as the implementation of these principles in the actual governance of autonomous Zapatista communities clearly reflects the alternative politics that has been brought to life by the Zapatista movement, which denotes "the politics of living now the world we want to create (or creating now the world we want by living it)" (Holloway, 2010, p. 241). These principles are principles that interrupt the *police* order by not engaging in electoral politics (or armed struggle) and showing that there is another way of doing politics. This, in turn, is based on bottom-up organization, equality, and the rejection of hierarchy. The principles, on the other

¹It should be noted that there are critics who argue that the Zapatista movement has not been as democratic and horizontal as it has been suggested by the proponents of the movement and the movement itself. For instance, Gunderson (2018) argues that the EZLN is a hierarchical and disciplined organization and that there is neither a reason to believe that the CCRI representatives were elected nor such a claim of the movement (p. 548-550).

hand, as well the alternative politics based on these principles entail a new subjectivity: Instead of the Mexican citizen who has been assimilated to the Mexican identity and rejected her indigenous roots, and engaged in electoral politics or guerilla fighter belonging to a hierarchical armed organization that aimed to topple the government through violence, the "Zapatista" who, by way of impossible identification, can reflect all those excluded into the movement while reflecting the movement into the struggles of all those excluded, which will be dealt in the next section.

III. "ZAPATISTA" AS A CASE OF IMPOSSIBLE IDENTIFICATION

In this section, the "Zapatista" subjectivity will be examined with respect to Rancière's understanding of subjectification as well as his understanding of politics. In this regard, particularly the impossible identification in the subjectification process can be observed in the Zapatista identity. On the one hand, the Zapatista identity implies membership in the EZLN, and on the other, it is an identity that is open to embrace all those excluded, invisible and inaudible. In this way, the Zapatista appears as a political subject at a continuous interval between the Zapatista as a member of the EZLN and the Zapatista as a member of the any excluded group who identifies as a Zapatista. This, in turn, might prove to be a way out of the inevitable cooptation of the moment of politics by the *police* order.

To start with, then, the argumentative demonstration aspect can be observed in the First Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle which contains Zapatistas' declaration of war. The Declaration refers to the Article 39 of the Constitution of Mexico: "National Sovereignty essentially and originally resides in the people. All political power emanates from the people and its purpose is to help the people. The people have, at all times, the inalienable right to alter or modify their form of government"² (The Political Constitution of the Mexican United States, Article 39). The explicit reference to the constitution might be perceived as a tactic to show that the struggle was legitimate, however, following Rancière, it might be read as a case of argumentative demonstration. The reference, in this sense, denotes presupposition of equality since declaring that the government is illegitimate and invoking the inalienable right in the article clearly show that the Zapatistas constitute themselves as part of the people referred in the constitution. The indigenous people whose history was appropriated are neither taken into account nor counted as Mexican citizens unless they accept assimilation. In this line, constituting themselves as such and presenting themselves as equals through the reference to the constitution interrupts *the police* order in which they are not counted.

Moreover, the reference to the constitution might be read as a syllogism in which the major premise is that we are part of the people and the right to modify government form belongs to us as well: "We are the inheritors of the true builders of our nation. The dispossessed, we are millions" (EZLN, 1993). When it comes to

² The English translation is taken from the English translation of the First Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle.

the minor premise, it runs as follows: on the one hand, we are denied work food, healthcare, education, and land, and on the other, we cannot modify the government whose responsible for denying these to us: “They don't care that we have nothing, absolutely nothing, not even a roof over our heads, no land, no work, no health care, no food nor education. Nor are we able to freely and democratically elect our political representatives” (EZLN, 1993). We, the people, declare this government and one-party system illegitimate while we are excluded from political participation. On the one hand, the major and minor premises contradict: Do we, the people, have the right to modify or alter the form of government or not? On the other hand, as in the case of French tailors in which “the minor premiss would run something like this: now Monsieur Schwartz, the head of the master tailors' association, refuses to listen to our case. What we are putting to him is a case for revised rates of pay. He can verify this case but he refuses to do so. He is therefore not treating us as equals. And he is therefore contradicting the equality inscribed in the Charter” (Rancière, 2007, p. 46); the Zapatistas demand the satisfaction of their basic needs as land, work, health care, food, and education while the government refuses to listen their case. Therefore, the Zapatistas “after having tried to utilize all legal means based on our Constitution” (EZLN, 1993) refer to the Article 39, since they are not treated as equals, which contradicts with the Article 4 of the Constitution³ although the Zapatistas do not refer to that article. Thus, the reference to the Constitution might be considered as an argumentative demonstration.

With respect to the second aspect of subjectification, theatrical dramatization, in the case of Zapatistas, as stated, the perceptible is determined by *the police* order and there is no place for the indigenous within this perceptible. Furthermore, President Salinas' statement that “there is a stable social climate across the country” (Montemayor, 1997 in Mentinis, 2006, p. 6) and the statement of Minister of Interior, Patrocinio González, that assures there are no guerillas in Chiapas (Grange and Rico, 1997 in Mentinis, 2006, p. 6) after the discovery of a guerilla camp in Chiapas in May 1993 in addition to the declaration made just after the uprising's beginning that the indigenous are not capable of using weapons or even of rebellion and that the rebellion has foreign connections point out the partition of the sensible. Besides, the same statement of the Minister of Interior that says, “a delicate situation has presented itself in just four of the 110 municipalities of Chiapas, in the remaining 106 conditions are normal” (Ramírez, 2008, p. 108) and other numerous statements that argued everything was normal in Chiapas show affinities with Rancière's argument that the police's main objective is to assert that there is nothing to see: “Move along! There is nothing to see here!” (Rancière, 2001, p. 9).

³ “Men and women are equal under the law. The law shall protect family organization and development...Every person has a right to live in an adequate environment for her development and welfare. Every family has a right to a dignified and decent household... Children's need to nourishment, health, education, recreation and integral development shall be fulfilled” (Political Constitution of the Mexican United States, Article 4).

Against these displays of *the police*, the initial uprising of the Zapatistas that began on January 1st, 1994, might be considered as a creation of spectacle in the sense that appearing in a space in which the perceptible determined *the police* designates that there is nothing to see or hear presents that there is indeed something to be seen or heard there.

And so we took up arms and we went into the cities where we were considered animals. We went and we told the powerful, "We are here!" and to all of the country we shouted, "We are here!" and to all of the world we yelled, "We are here!". And they saw how things were because, in order for them to see us, we covered our faces; so that they would call us by name, we gave up our names; we bet the present to have a future; and to live..we died. (Marcos, 2004, p.115).

It is significant how Subcomandante Marcos states that they are considered as animals in the cities. Together with the demonstration of "they are there", this bears significances to the distinction between the speech belonging to humans and voice belonging to animals. The fact that they appear in a space where they are considered animals having voice and presenting themselves as humans with the capacity to speech, consequently as equals, is the political interruption of *the police* order.

The following appearances of the Zapatistas such as their appearance in thirty towns of Chiapas and declaring these towns autonomous rebel municipalities and their silent march, entrance to "the cities of San Cristóbal de las Casas, Ocosingo, Las Margaritas, Comitán, and Altamirano, and occupying their central squares" (Oikonomakis, 2012), the same cities occupied on January 1, 1994, should also be considered as creating spectacle, where *the police* order partitions the sensible in a way the Zapatistas have no place while, in turn, they present their places by marching.

The presence of wooden guns during the initial uprising "as the Zapatista soldiers (some wearing boots but most in huaraches and a few barefoot) marched before the platform, most carrying wooden rifles, not real firearms" (La Botz, 2014) and their symbolic bombing the military headquarters with paper planes (Ramírez, 2008, p. 191) might also be considered as creating spectacles. When looked at a war, one does not expect to see wooden guns or paper planes, the sensible is limited to the real guns, planes and bombs in the case of a war. The symbolic use of wooden guns and paper planes challenges this partition of the sensible. Their place is not a war just as the indigenous' place is not the streets of cities, neither she is in a position to use guns or to rebel. This symbolic use of wooden guns and paper planes inserts the wooden guns and paper planes into a place where they should not be just as the indigenous insert themselves into a place where they should not be.

In this line, the masks denote a crucial symbolic meaning, in addition to the ensuring security, as well. In an interview conducted on January 1, 1994, Subcomandante Marcos is asked about the masks, to which he replies:

The mask is so that there is no protagonism,.. So now, since it is not well known who is who, probably in a little while another will come out, or it could be the same one... We know that our leadership is collective and that we have to submit to them. Even though you happen to be listening to me here now because I am here, but in other places others, masked in the same way, are talking. This masked person today is called Marcos here and tomorrow will be called Pedro in Margaritas or Josue' in Ocosingo or Alfredo in Altamirano or whatever he is called. Finally, the one who speaks is a more collective heart, not a caudillo. (Autonomea, 1994, p. 49).

What is more, the masks are crucial in the sense that through covering their faces with masks, they become visible. In addition to the visibility of a subject, mask signifies the visibility of struggle, or subjectification in struggle. For instance, a Zapatista states that “With my mask, I'm a Zapatista in a struggle for dignity and justice...Without my mask, I'm just another damn Indian!” (FAQ About Zapatismo, in Kien, 2019, p. 150). In this respect, the mask appears as a significant part of Zapatista subjectification, which leads us to the last aspect of political subjectification, that is impossible identification,

In this sense, Rancière defines the process of subjectification as “the formation of a one that is not a self but is the relation of a self to an other” (Rancière, 1992, p. 60). Recalling Blanqui's self-identification as a proletarian, while for the prosecutor, who reflects *the police* order, profession means job putting one in her place and function, for Blanqui it is the declaration of belonging to a collective, which not identifiable by a social group but is “the class of the uncounted that only exists in the very declaration in which they are counted as those of no account” (Rancière, 1998, p. 38). The logic of political subjectification is, in this sense, a logic of the other since subjectification is never a simple assertion of identity but also a denial of the identity given by *the police* order, it is also a demonstration that supposes an other, and always requires an impossible identification.

In this regard, the mask signifies both an assertion of identity as a Zapatista struggling, and the denial of identity given by *the police* order as another damn Indian. It might be argued that if the Zapatistas had taken the streets of cities without masks they would have been characterized as another group of damn Indians, therefore their identity as Indians, which was nevertheless not taken into account, would have been reproduced, whereas wearing masks worked for their denial of identity as Indians and constituted them as struggling Zapatistas. They appeared in the streets not as identifiable to the sociable group of Indians, but as the class of uncounted.

Of course, the argument for denial of the identity as Indians might be objected by arguing that the Zapatista movement is an indigenous movement. However, as John Holloway argues, the Zapatistas have never declared themselves

as an only an indigenous movement. They have stressed they had a more extensive cause. "Its struggle is for all those 'without voice, without face, without tomorrow', a category that stretches far beyond the indigenous peoples. Their demands—work, land, housing, food, health, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace—...are demands for all" (Holloway & Peláez, 1998, p. 167). Moreover, the "national" in the Zapatista Army of National Liberation "has more a sense of moving outwards than of moving inwards: 'national' in the sense of 'not just Chiapanecan' or 'not just indigenous', rather than 'national' in the sense of 'not foreign'" (Holloway & Peláez, 1998, p. 167).

The masks, in addition to being a demonstration and denial of the identity given by *the police* order, might be considered as a tool for impossible identification. "The anonymity afforded by the mask is thus not merely practical, but also symbolic. It 'represents' those who are not currently represented: the faceless, voice-less minorities—which in numerical terms is the vast *majority*" (Tormey, 2006, p. 150). Actually, this posits only one way of impossible identification: the Zapatista can form a one that is not merely herself, an indigenous, but that is a relation of herself to an other, the faceless and voiceless, by wearing a mask.

However, there is a second way of impossible identification through the mask as it allows anyone to be a Zapatista in the sense that a person can form a one that is the relation of herself to a Zapatista through the symbol of mask: "Marcos says to those who seek him out that he is not a leader, but that his black mask is a mirror, reflecting each of their own struggles; that a Zapatista is anyone anywhere fighting injustice, that 'We are you'" (Klein, 2002, p. 211). The mask as a mirror, in this regard, works in two directions. On the one hand, it reflects all those excluded, all those not taken into account, all those invisible into the Zapatista movement, and on the other hand, it reflects the Zapatista movement into anyone struggling against injustices, inequalities and exclusion. Moreover, "by covering their faces as a political action, the Zapatistas are able to create a unique political anonymity (open to anyone, and yet unambiguously against neoliberalism) that rejects identity-based models of subjectivity in favor of a collective subject of the event itself" (Nail, 2013, p. 36). The mask is the declaration of membership in a collective, which is not identity-based, not identifiable by a social group, which, on the contrary, is the class of the excluded, invisible and uncounted.

In the light of these, Subcomandante Marcos' famous declaration appears as the perfect demonstration of impossible identification:

Marcos is gay in San Francisco, a black person in South Africa, Asian in Europe, a Chicano in San Isidro, an anarchist in Spain, a Palestinian in Israel, an Indigenous person in the streets of San Cristóbal,...a dissident against neoliberalism, a writer without books or readers, and a Zapatista in the Mexican Southeast. In other words, Marcos is a human being in this world. Marcos is every untolerated, oppressed, exploited minority that is resisting and saying, "Enough!" He is every minority who is

now beginning to speak and every majority that must shut up and listen. He is every untolerated group searching for a way to speak, their way to speak. Everything that makes power and the good consciences of those in power uncomfortable-this is Marcos (Subcomandante Marcos in Autonomedia, 1994, p. 320).

Through his identification with all those listed above, Marcos constitutes not a self but a relation of a self to an other. Further, the use of “Enough” here or of “*Ya Basta*” (Enough already) in other communiques and declarations is significant considering the distinction between speech and voice. Despite the fact that it is not a slogan specific to the Zapatista movement, its use along with reference to invisibility and imperceptibility makes it possible to argue that *the police* order might consider “*Ya Basta*” as an example of voice indicating pain. However, Zapatistas' argumentative, logical demonstrations that a wrong exists through the syllogism of emancipation, their emergence into realm of visibility and perceptible through theatrical demonstration, and their presupposition of their equality to the counted parts of the society as well as to all those unaccounted through impossible identification indicate that their “*Ya Basta*” is actually speech pointing out the injustices and inequalities within the social order. Moreover, not only Marcos' words but also other Zapatistas such as Zapatista Major Ana María's words prove to be examples of impossible identification:

Behind us are the we that are you. Behind our balaclavas is the face of all the excluded women. Of all the forgotten indigenous people. Of all the persecuted homosexuals. Of all the despised youth. Of all the beaten migrants. Of all those imprisoned for their word and thought. Of all the humiliated workers. Of all those who have died from being forgotten. Of all the simple and ordinary men and women who do not count, who are not seen, who are not named, who have no tomorrow. (Zapatista Major Ana María in Holloway & Peláez, 1998, p. 189).

Therefore, referring to the Zapatista movement as only an indigenous movement would actually not be true as Holloway argues. The Zapatista movement is of all those forgotten, of all those excluded, of all those not being into account and of all those invisible.

Recalling Rancière's identity at interval between the dead bodies of Algerians and the French people, the “Zapatista” subjectivity might be interpreted as an identity always at interval both through the use of masks and the movement's careful non-identification with only one excluded group. The mask allows for the rejection of an identity, any identity, given by the *police* order to the wearer of the mask while at the same time allowing for the adoption of the “Zapatista” identity by the wearer. Just like the *police* order does not comprehend Blanqui's identification as a proletarian, the identification of, say, an immigrant as a Zapatista cannot be comprehended by the *police* order. In this way, the rejection of the

immigrant identity and adoption of the Zapatista identity through the use of masks appears as impossible identification. Yet, since the Zapatista identity is not a fixed one that is connected to any determinate group, any excluded group can be reflected into the Zapatista identity, which stresses the possibility of the adoption of the Zapatista identity by any excluded group. On the other hand, just as the other example given by Rancière, "the 1968 assumption 'We are all German Jews'" (Rancière, 1992, p. 61) is an impossible identification since it was a shouted by the French, the immigrant who self-identifies herself as a Zapatista is not a member of the EZLN. Nevertheless, the Zapatista saying "Be a Zapatista wherever you are" (Ryan, 2008, p. 118), together with the use of the masks and the embracement of all those excluded allow for the possibility of the adoption of the Zapatista identity by any excluded group.

CONCLUSION

According to Rancière, what is known since the antiquity as politics is in fact *police* order, which is the order that counts, names, and allocates places and shares to the parts comprising the society. The partition of the sensible, which is the main function of a *police* order, decides on which parts are the parts that form the society, which means that *the police* does not only determine how the shares and places are allocated to the parts, but also which parts are counted as parts. Politics, on the other hand, happens when a rupture in this logic of *police* is interrupted, which is an interruption that rests on equality. What is referred as equality here is not the equality that is distributed from above, nor is it something that will be achieved through politics. It is something presupposed. Politics implements "a basically heterogeneous assumption, that of a part of those who have no part, an assumption that, at the end of the day, itself demonstrates the sheer contingency of the order, the equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being" (Rancière, 1998, p. 30). Politics, in this sense, points out that *the police* order is based on contingency. Although *the police* presents a world in which that order is natural, inevitable, and unchangeable; politics presents the possibility of another world by showing that *the police* order is not naturally given and it is, in reality, changeable.

"The equality of any speaking being with any other speaking being", on the other hand, is a presupposition and it has to be constituted and points out to the process of subjectification. As stated, then, there is no subject proper to politics, on the contrary, politics itself is a formation of subjects. Politics occurs when those who have no recognized part in the social order, the *sans-part* who do not 'count', who are invisible or inaudible politically speaking, assert their egalitarian claim, which is always also a collective claim to existence as political subjects" (Davis, 2010, p. 84). In this regard, the Zapatista subject denotes a subjectification process in a Rancièrian sense. First, the reference to the Mexican Constitution, through formation of a syllogism of emancipation, is an example of argumentative demonstration. Second, the very act of taking to streets and occupying several municipalities on January 1st, 1994, in addition to the symbolic use of wooden guns and paper planes by the Zapatistas are forms of theatrical dramatization. Third, the

use of masks by the Zapatistas allows for a possibility of impossible identification, which lets the Zapatista movement move beyond being only an indigenous movement towards a movement of all those excluded.

As Holloway argues “The open-ended nature of the Zapatista movement is summed up in the idea that it is a revolution, not a Revolution... It is a revolution, because the claim to dignity in a society built upon the negation of dignity can only be met through a radical transformation of society. But it is not a Revolution in the sense of having some grand plan, in the sense of a movement designed to bring about the Great Event which will change the world” (Holloway & Peláez, 1998, p. 168). The Zapatistas do not consider themselves as vanguards who shows the way to emancipation to others. They consider themselves as a part of a greater struggle that fight in their own way. Rancière, in turn, suggests that politics might arise anywhere, by anyone and every political struggle, despite being based on the presupposition of equality, is fought in its own way. In this regard, neither the Zapatistas nor Rancière suggests a program, a schedule for political struggle. What they have common is the struggle to be visible and heard; the struggle to show the exclusion and marginalization, which are based on the presupposition of equality of anyone to anyone.

In this sense, this study shows that although democracy is somehow reduced to an understanding that is based on regular, supposedly fair elections, an alternative exists both in Rancière's thought and in the Zapatista movement. This alternative posited against what Rancière calls *police* orders is based on equality of anyone to anyone. This equality, or rather the presupposition of equality brings the hope that anyone excluded, marginalized, anyone that are not taken into account can act from the presupposition of equality can challenge *the police* order in which they live. As there is no proper subject of politics, anyone can engage in politics. While in Rancière we see the possibility of this hope, the Zapatista movement shows us the reality of the hope, albeit neither suggests only one way to realize this hope.

Finally, Rancière claims that politics is something that happens rarely and momentarily: “... to grasp the concept of *police* reveals the impossibility of eliminating *police* in favor of politics. Any effort to disrupt *the police* order will always be subject to co-optation by that very *police* order” (Chambers, 2010, p. 68). However, it might be argued that the Zapatista movement seems open to challenge any *police* order that might arise and that eliminating *police* in favor of politics might be possible as the Zapatista movement becomes the movement of all those excluded, invisible and not taken into account through the Zapatista subjectivity that is constituted through impossible identification and allows for the reflection of all those excluded into the Zapatista movement while also reflecting the Zapatista movement into the struggles of all those excluded.

In this sense, the analysis of Zapatista subjectivity by employing Rancière's conceptualizations of politics and subjectification shows a way out of identity politics through the movement's constant process of impossible identification. In

this way, the movement, despite the seemingly fixed appearance of the Zapatista “identity”, shows the potential to rally all the excluded, invisible and unheard groups behind the Zapatista subjectivity and the Zapatista mask through the ability to identify with any other oppressed minority.

Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Beyanı

Makalenin tüm süreçlerinde Yönetim ve Ekonomi Dergisi'nin araştırma ve yayın etiği ilkelerine uygun olarak hareket edilmiştir.

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