



# Horea Poenar

## Ethics of the Commons

### Art and the Dislocation of the World

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#### ABSTRACT

In 1940 Bertolt Brecht defined the theme of art (*das Thema der Kunst*) as the “dislocation of the world (*die Welt aus den Fugen*)”. Our paper tries to test this definition in our contemporary times. In order to do this, we consider the way(s) in which images and narrative techniques contribute to the elaboration of frames of understanding and we will consider this to be their political dimension. We also take into account the relation between art and history and we ask three questions: is art a way of responding to the dislocation of the world? Is it a privileged medium through which this dislocation can be brought into visibility? Is art a way in which to *dis-locate* the world? We meditate on art as an ever-moving work of what is human and what is common. It brings us to an ethics of the commons, which we consider to be (more than ever) necessary in our contemporary globalized world.

#### KEYWORDS

Commons; Dislocation; Invention; Ethics.

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#### Je suis Aylan

The Syrian refugees crisis was symbolically contained in several images but especially in one showing the body of a dead kid on the shores of Turkey. The photo gained instant attention in the media and on the social networks, raising awareness of the cost of the way in which the crisis had been dealt with up to that point.

We soon learnt the name of the boy and his story. Aylan (later revealed to be in fact Alan) Kurdi was a three-year old Syrian boy of Kurdish origin who died on September 2, 2015 along with several other victims of an ill-fated attempt to reach the Greek island of Kos. The family of Aylan had tried before to flee Syria and made another attempt after ISIL (Islamic State of the Iraq and the Levant) attacked the city of Kobani. They had tried to obtain asylum to Canada through the boy’s aunt who was living and working in Vancouver, but the application had been denied.

The photo of the dead boy was taken by a Turkish press photographer and made the front page of a lot of Western media. It caused an international outrage and it even played a role in the Canadian elections that followed. It was also a key target for the right-wing media that either imagined a conspiracy against the Western campaigns

against the refugees and the so-called “Islamization” of Europe, or defended the privacy rights of the family and decried the publishing of the photo.

But there is something that we did not get to see. There were no heads of state marching on the streets of Paris in the name of Aylan. We were spared the spectacle of Nicolas Sarkozy elbowing his way into the front row (as he did during the march for Charlie Hebdo). There were no *Je suis Aylan* campaigns, no t-shirts, no logos, no changed statuses on social networks. The slogans of February were not repeated and no new slogans were invented. In short, the image of Aylan, although powerful and for a while ever-present in the media failed to produce an authentic political effect. Walls continued to be built, especially by the Hungarian government of Victor Orban. Racist rhetoric continued to flourish especially but not only in the US Republican debates in which candidates like Donald Trump or Marco Rubio campaigned aggressively and directly against Islam and the rights of refugees. Even beyond these right-wing attacks, (apparently) moderate intellectuals from countries not affected by the wave of refugees like Ana Blandiana or Gabriel Liiceanu felt the need to point that Europe was in danger of losing its identity. The focus on identity is relevant because it relates to problems that are not uttered with the same ease in public: what makes a community? What is the place of the people in our understanding of Europe? Why are they mostly absent when key decisions (that directly affect their lives) are taken? Shouldn't an understanding of the commons go beyond the politics of identity?

### **Where Are the People?**

According to Giorgio Agamben<sup>1</sup>, there are two ways of understanding in play when we refer to the people. The word is first of all understood as the subject of politics. It is the target and the legitimation of politicians. The democratic mechanism works by keeping the appearances that every four years politicians ask the people to make a choice and that the people act as if there really were a choice. Every decision is based on the system of representation: those in power take decisions in the name of and allegedly for the good of the people. A second understanding of the word is, however, also in use: the people names the excluded. It names the part of a community that is not actually a part<sup>2</sup>, those who are not represented or defended by anyone in power. It names, contrary to the good voting people of democracy, the bad people who have very few rights, if any at all. In the language of Agamben, they represent *homo sacer*, the bare life, which is in many ways the subject of biopolitics: the individual that is (in most cases) not a citizen, and thus not defended by any law. He or she is the subject of interdictions, the target of walls, deportations, camps, experiments, etc. *Homo sacer* is obviously the one that threatens the established identity of a community, the way of life and standard of living of those who are considered to be the good, civilized people that are citizens and, unsurprisingly, voters.

Georges Didi-Huberman considers that regardless of the two meanings of the word we are currently dealing with a problem of the (lack of) exposure of the people. The people have rarely been represented in the history of the West ethically, and presently they are either overexposed or underexposed. The overexposure is visible, for example, in the images of people inside a





soccer stadium or during a military parade or at an election meeting. There is too much of the people in these cases and, at the same time, too little. The people look uniform, organized or hysterical, even fanatic in their gathering in the name not of an Idea but of a brand, a logo, a party or a national identity. It is suggestive that this overexposure of the people can be found in the totalitarian regimes but, even more worryingly, in democracies: in the first case the people usually have no choice, but in the second one they are really caught in the web of ideology to an extent that can lead to violence or, at the very least, to the conservative policies of building walls. In the February 2015 march through Paris in support of Charlie Hebdo, the people were exposed through representation: the heads of state led the way and voiced what in their opinion represented the will of the people.

There is, at the same time, an underexposure of the people. This is done, according to Georges Didi-Huberman, by carefully veiling the problems of inequality, misery or lack of rights. The old racist discourse of segregation is no longer in use, but it has been replaced by new words: affordability, homeowners, identity, meritocracy<sup>3</sup>, etc. Through underexposure, the people are blamed or ideologically represented, while through overexposure they are presented in gangs, troupes and are included in types and categories. Neither case is an ethical representation of the people. In Didi-Huberman's view, this also happens because we live in a society that is aggressively promoting the idea and the rights of the individual. Almost every ad and almost every political discourse (if they have not become entirely the same thing) accentuates the freedom and the difference of each individual, opposed to the dangers of the group. The individual is continuously and hysterically exposed to the extent that this

insistence seems to try to create what the system fails, in fact, to offer: the real freedom of individuals beyond the market-oriented choice between two or more products. According to the French author, the thing to do is to turn this situation upside down: only through a correct exposure of the people can individuals really attain their freedom. "Ce sont les peuples qu'il faut exposer et non le moi"<sup>4</sup>.

The relation between the individual and the people is also discussed by Jacques Rancière. In 1992, in his *Les mots de l'histoire. Essai de poétique du savoir*, an analysis of how the discourse of history has changed in the second part of the 20th century, he returns to the question of truth and notices that "la vérité signifie plus que l'exactitude des faits et des chiffres, la fiabilité des sources et la rigueur des inductions, qu'elle concerne la modalité ontologique à laquelle un discours se voue"<sup>5</sup>. Historians desiring to transform their discipline into a science find an obstacle in what they perceive to be the limits of the language, too close to the literary fluidity, where words do not have stable meanings and can escape the grasp of a rigorous analysis. Against them, Rancière considers that it is only this ability of literature that gives history a possible access to truth, albeit understood differently: "le côté de la vérité, c'est celui où les paroles ne sont plus écrites sur du papier ou du vent, mais gravées dans la texture des choses"<sup>6</sup>. As such, the truth is not the one grasped by an historian capable of stabilizing meaning, but it is always in relation to the potential voice of a witness on the verge of being excluded. "Seul parle celui qui parlerait"<sup>7</sup>. The identity of the witness capable of exposing the truth is firstly "le déni d'une exclusion fixée par la parole" and then "l'identification à celui qui est désigné comme l'exclu"<sup>8</sup>. It is essential to understand that the academic frames of understanding



history are generally built in order to limit this witness and with him the unscientific laws of literature that refuse to let words carry the same meaning and point to the same reality. The one who is excluded, who is not visible or is refused access to a voice is however the only one that could really speak the truth. There is history because there exists this supplement, this excess, never completely caught in types, fixed identities or parcellated in a structured mechanism of the world. It is the target of art to get to this silent witness, to uncover the words he or she keeps in reserve.

### **What are the Commons?**

The problem of exposure is, at its heart, the absence (or even the denial) of the commons. The term has recently been defined by Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt in several of their works, but especially in *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* as “the shared substance of our social being, the privatization of which involves violent acts which should also, where necessary, be resisted with violent means”<sup>9</sup>. There are three types of commons: the commons of culture (the results of ideas and creativity), the commons of external nature (which are nowadays under threat from pollution and exploitation) and the commons of internal nature (which name the biogenetic inheritance of humanity).

All these types of the commons are the target of neo-liberal strategies of capital. They are continuously privatized so that they are increasingly not accessible to the people. Lands, forests, water, minerals and so forth are becoming the legal property of individuals or companies. Rain forests and the natural habitat itself are exploited for profit (of the few) and thus destroyed. The concept of intellectual property transforms the area of culture and ideas to a territory

ruled by capitalist mechanisms. And with the new technologies, the possible change of human nature has become a realistic prospect. The possibility of making a decision upon these things is limited to representatives of the people (politicians) or even cut completely from the people in the name of scientific and economic experts of all kinds. Less and less does it belong to the commons and thus less and less does it belong to the people. And along this accelerated phenomenon of privatizing the commons, we are witnessing the parcelling of the world. Space is privatized and enclosed through powerful interdictions from systems of visas to walls of all kinds. While the circulation of merchandise is freer than ever, the circulation of people is regulated and limited according to a politics of identity and to the economic (un)reason of our times. And when the people try to break from this parcellated mechanism, a dislocation of the world occurs.

### **What is the Dislocation of the World?**

In 1940 Bertolt Brecht defined the theme of art (*das Thema der Kunst*) as the “dislocation of the world (*die Welt aus den Fugen*)”<sup>10</sup>. It is essential to test this definition in our contemporary times. If art is more than just entertainment and even diversion from the serious world of everyday life, it cannot escape its relation with history, with the confusion and complex stratification of each present. It can enter various forms of dialogue with reality. In some instances, as explained by Jacques Rancière in the case of writers such as Gustave Flaubert, art is political not through themes and ideas but through a different mode (regime) of using forms and mechanisms. In other cases, an artist can assume this task of dealing with the dislocation of



the world directly. Perhaps there are few works of art closer to Brecht's definition than Jean-Luc Godard's 1991 movie *Allemagne année 90 neuf zéro*. The movie follows Eddie Constantine (previously used by Godard in *Alphaville*) across Berlin and Germany in a meditation on the meaning of ruins, radical changes of history and the abandonment of ideas of emancipation. At one point the main character meditates on the bridge where Rosa Luxemburg had been killed and her body thrown into the water. The question is double: how much do places retain of such key events in the history of humanity and how far is the new world (triumphantly imposed or about to be imposed with the fall of the Berlin wall) from such figures of emancipation. Germany appears rather as a desert and certainly as a space of confusion about to be invaded by the neoliberal ideology. The key element is that the movie does not succumb to the hysteria of those days (about the end of History and the glory of liberal capitalism) and, far from every form of pathos, it retains an extraordinary lucidity which allows it to survive well in time. The dislocation of the world is exposed and meditated upon far from its closure in a political solution. The movie's melancholy and pessimism make it a mature work of art that understands history and thus manages to catch it in an aesthetic web that does not simplify it.

Another example along the same lines is Manoel de Oliveira's 1990 movie *No, or the Vain Glory of Command*, which revisits the history of Portugal from the perspective of its defeats. Through this option, history is re-edited far from the chauvinist filter that usually guides the understanding of the past. Events appear less as steps in an evolution of a nation and more as moments of crisis in which communities are dislocated and thus thrown out of their ideological slumber. Several threads from the Battle of Toro to

the Colonial War are gathered in a meditation that deconstructs and resists to any attempt of simplification. Art is understood here as a privileged means of exposing ideologies and of offering access to an authentic historical thought.

Both directors believe in the role of cinema in relation to history, but they do not understand it through the poetics of representation. Art is not a mirror, but an active mechanism. The definition offered by Paul Klee about art at the beginning of the 20th century is relevant for both of them: "l'art ne reproduit pas le visible, il rend visible"<sup>11</sup>. One good example for this attitude can be found in Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet's 1979 movie *Dalla nube alla resistenza*. Starting from two stories by Cesare Pavese, the movie follows in its second part characters strolling across the Italian countryside where, during World War II, civilian populations have been massacred. The content of the shot is however never explained directly so the spectator is expected to see what is not directly shown. Just as the presence of Eddie Constantine on the Rosa Luxemburg bridge, this connection between a certain past and a certain present asks for an understanding of history in the terms of Walter Benjamin: the past does not speak through the same terms to each new present. The relation between the two is dialectical: they have to recognize each other and know how to respond to the interpellation of the other. In these terms, events (or images or texts) don't always reach legibility in their own times and the task of the analyst is to understand and meditate on this relation between the past and the present, the event and its meaning, the image and the reactions to it.

All three examples prove that three dimensions are always in play: a political one, a historical one and an ethical one. We will take them in turn.



### **The Political Dimension**

We will call political the way(s) in which images and narrative techniques contribute to the elaboration of frames of understanding. According to certain authors like Raymond Depardon or Eric Rohmer, both relevant to the visual field (photography in the first case and cinema in the second), the frame is always political. It decides each time upon what is part of the visible and what is not. It works on the border between what is viewed as relevant and what is considered irrelevant. It includes or excludes just as the people have or have not been part of the discourses and arts of the Western world during its history. This is even more evident in the case of the media mechanisms of our times and their reflection of reality. But, if we revisit Paul Klee's definition, it is more a question of creating reality rather than reflecting it. Mass-media does it through the ways in which it chooses (most often without realizing and thus working inside an ideology) to code images. Each image is used and presented in relation to a certain message, a sign that is offered as reality. In the famous example given by Serge Daney<sup>12</sup>, the images of the fall of the Berlin wall have been presented in the media (and in stark contrast to the Godard movie discussed above) with the implied message that freedom is and has always been on the Western side of the wall. Scientific myths and the pervading positivism of the Western culture in general work along the same lines, coding not only (what are considered to be) correct messages, but also (what are considered to be) correct attitudes. In 1944 Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer were already revealing the main prerequisite of the positivist method (and also its limit),

namely that “any object of thought to be grounded in scientific data”<sup>13</sup>. This tends to exclude anything that is *only* literature, in other words anything that cannot be based on empirical evidence. All sciences have developed as a reaction to literature (or the literary), considering their complex relations with it in the past as pre-scientific stages that have luckily been surpassed.

There is undoubtedly another movement with the same characteristics, especially in contemporary neoliberalism, namely the reduction of everything (including the commons) to economic criteria. We live in a world dominated by an economic (un)-reason. This reign is on the verge of eliminating from our societies not only politics but democracy itself<sup>14</sup>. It not only relates and explains any event (or object of study) to economic movements, but it demands changes in behavior, mentality and/or organization according to (what it perceives as) natural economic requests.

In all these cases we are witnessing a reduction of the real which works along ideological lines. If we return briefly to Brecht's definition of the theme of art as the dislocation of the world, the function of artistic procedures is not most definitely the coding of the same ideological messages and putting in effect the same reduction. On the contrary, it would mean the careful study and exposure of the logos of such mechanisms. Artistic and media procedures have effects far beyond the frames of their domains. In the understanding of Jean-Luc Godard, for example, any travelling movement in cinema is a problem of ethics. No movement of the camera is innocent, just as no decision upon words is purely artistic. And if the question of ethics is implied, then the position of artist cannot be neutral. In the words of Walter Benjamin, art should be able to “*démaquiller le réel*”<sup>15</sup>.



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### The Historical Dimension

It is essential now to follow the connection between art and history (we will call this *the historical dimension*) and ask three questions: is art a way of responding to the dislocation of the world? Is it a privileged medium through which this dislocation can be brought into visibility? Is art a way in which to *dis-locate* the world?

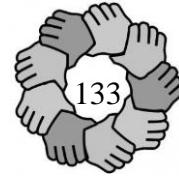
We could start by briefly returning to Hermann Broch's 1945 novel *The Death of Virgil* in which we are told the story of the last 18 hours from the poet's life. As it has often been noted<sup>16</sup>, the novel contains in fact a double meditation: one of Virgil and one of Broch himself. For the Latin poet, it is the case of literature in connection with his times and of what now Virgil perceives as his grave error in defining literature as one about heroes and glory and in general the triumph of the few. For Broch it is the problem of what literature should mean and what its function should be during dislocating times as those contemporary with the writing of the novel: the rise of fascism and the World War II. In both cases the answer and the core point of these meditations is represented by the people and by what we have defined above as the commons. In the words of Maurice Blanchot, the meditation of Virgil reveals his "honte de s'attacher à ses propres souvenirs et de célébrer les fastes de l'origine, quand il se trouve en face de ce temps sans passé, sans avenir, qui este celui du troupeau-esclave, mutisme formé de voix"<sup>17</sup>. The revelation for Virgil is so acute that he wants to burn the manuscript of *Aeneid*: the work has missed the point, being the result of a faith in a pure art, related only to the idea of beauty and kept clean from any direct contact with reality. The poet now understands that real

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art should always be engaged, militant, in the name of the commons. Art should not simply glitter but become the voice of those without voice. And for Broch the problem is that of art in general: "*La Mort de Virgile*, en effet, n'est pas seulement le développement d'une expérience personnelle, mais un mythe, un effort, pour représenter symboliquement le savoir et le destin de toute la civilisation occidentale"<sup>18</sup>. But Virgil eventually accepts to not burn his work. His decision is not an effect of his changing his view, but a sacrifice to a friend: the Emperor. The poet understands not only that art should reflect the commons and the dislocation of the world, but, more importantly, that art can have an active effect: it can *dis-locate*, it can bring about change. Art is not just a mirror to reality; it can change reality. And therein lies its most important mission.

### The Ethical Dimension

The problem of the Western electorate remains, as Alain Badiou astutely remarks, the defending of "my standard of living first and foremost"<sup>19</sup>. We live in a world no longer structured according to ethical principles and this is one of the reasons why the French philosopher considers that this world is a re-enactment of barbarism. Civilization as constructed by the values of Enlightenment and the socialist ideas of the 19th century has been replaced by the rule of Capital hidden under the neoliberal process of focusing on economics instead of politics. For contemporary forms of media, as Slavoj Žižek puts it, "the reality does not matter, what is important is the situation of Capital"<sup>20</sup>. Inside this new framework the role of arts and education based on the principle of emancipation has also changed. There is less and less interest, financial support and respect for an art understood as an ever-moving work of what is human and



what is common.

According to Jacques Rancière, an important change has taken place in the perception of history. Starting in France and mainly with the works of François Furet, there has been not only a massive rewriting of the (up-to-then) key emancipatory events like the French Revolution, but also an entirely different philosophy of words and language has prevailed. To put it shortly, the new historians exposed a strange fear of “la maladie des mots”, namely the fluidity of meaning, the openness of discourse and of the relation between the past and the present. Their revisionist stance tries to make words stable and thus evacuate history, the events and any Idea. But the question is: can Art function without the idea of a Common?

The solution suggested by Rancière is, as we have noted above, the connection between words and the voice of those without voice: “au ressentiment infini contre la tromperie des homonymes on peut opposer le règne général de la synonymie dès lors qu’on donne aux mots non leur référent, toujours hasardeux, mais la voix par laquelle ils ont un corps”<sup>21</sup>. The voice of the commons is always under threat. Its fragility requires an intervention; it interpellates and asks for help, just as the excluded do in the novel of Hermann Broch. The narrative of the commons can be lost or misinterpreted, replaced by myths that, under the apparent glorification of the people, reduce its power and ability to bring about change. That is why this narrative has to remain narratable. In a conversation between Serge Daney and Manoel de Oliveira, the French critic observes that: “c’est quand son histoire est perdue (ou inracontable) qu’un peuple (ou un individu) se rabat sur la boîte noire de sa mythologie fondatrice”<sup>22</sup>. It is essential for history to remain *racontable*. For that an act of creation/ invention/ style/ montage is

needed. This can be called literary or artistic dignity.

### **From Resistance to Dignity**

“Le réalisme, ce n’est pas comment sont les choses vraies, mais comment sont vraiment les choses”<sup>23</sup>. The quotation is from Brecht and is cited by Jean-Luc Godard in a presentation of his movie from 1963 *Les Carabiniers*. The movie is relevant because it tried to expose the violence of war through formal means in order to counterbalance the pathos and chauvinism usually implied in a war movie. Godard made a collage between archival images and fiction in order to allow fresh perspectives and the deconstruction of received knowledge. The commercial failure of the film exposed the ideological expectancies of the public: with few exceptions, war movies try to glorify one position or at least they use violence in order to exacerbate certain emotions. Reluctant to glorify, *Les Carabiniers* has the courage to show what war really means: crude violence, absurd and pointless suffering, ugliness etc. The formal inventions of Godard were not understood at the times: the black and white of old movies, the fragments of letters used as intertitles, the deliberate errors of editing and the acting devoid of emotion or pathos were all heavily criticized. The critical failure of the film made the film into a revolutionary and political one. It exposed the ideology of the times and the inability of the public and the critics to free themselves from it. Everything was done by Godard to reduce the cinema to its bare essence of early movies or documentaries and thus to inflict upon the viewer a direct confrontation with reality. The movie resists the ideology of the time and attains a certain dignity that makes it a great moment not only in the history of cinema, but in the understanding of history.





Several years later, Serge Daney pointed out why it is a great movie: “Pourquoi *Rome ville ouverte* et *Les Carabiniers* sont de grands films? Parce qu’ils ont eu le culot de dire non au pathos et de mettre les points sur cet i inadmissible: la torture est une routine, la guerre est ennuyeuse, les événements historiques ne se tiennent pas mieux que de banals faits divers, la puissance d’acceptation (ou de révolte) de l’homme est indéchiffrable, le spectacle du pire n’est pas toujours sûr, etc.”<sup>24</sup>

Works of imagination as *Les Carabiniers* have the power to create a new *imaginaire*, in other words a different montage of perceptions and forms of understanding. It all starts with the position of resistance (to ideology and the understanding of history written by the winners). Art is a continuous workshop or field of what humanity is/ becomes. It works on intensities and tensions and in certain cases it makes possible the description of the people in such a way that this new *imaginaire* could be produced, by working on our perceptions, by inventing new forms of seeing and by risking a new Idea of the common. An ethics of the commons is not produced by a simple focus on a political message. It requires an aesthetic invention capable of opening the possibility of new forms of thoughts. In the case of visual art, for Georges Didi-Hubermann, one such form is *le montage*, as present in the work of Aby Warburg or in cinema. He defines it as a procedure capable of initiating new “espaces de pensée”<sup>25</sup>. Through such formal means, new emotions, new perceptions and thus new worlds can appear. The French author has studied these inventions in the case of many authors including Pasolini<sup>26</sup> who was well aware of the necessity for art to resist the capitalist ideology and thus preserve a dignity of the commons.

For our times, the cinema of Wang

Bing is a perfect example. As in the works of Pasolini several decades earlier, the focus here is on the way the proletariat is capable of inventing worlds and its own joy through other ways of living. In a recent study published in *Cahiers du cinéma*, connecting Bing’s latest movie (the 2013 *Till Madness Do Us Part*) and Jean-Marie Straub’s *Kommunisten* (from 2014), Alexandre Costanzo defines the principle of intimate distance<sup>27</sup>. Straub’s idea of communism is structured in several dimensions: the acts and gestures of the ordinary people; the spaces and times in which they live; the ongoing resistance/ battle for a different way of seeing things. Wang Bing’s movie gives dignity to the patients of a mental hospital. His choice of filming is not that of the so-called objective documentary. The intimate distance implies a certain engagement on the side of those being filmed and a critique of the horizon of expectations of the viewer: “ce n’est pas tant la misère des plus pauvres qu’il documente, ce sont des régions égarées, les angles morts de notre attention, pour partager d’autres expériences – silencieuses ou bavardes – de ce que c’est que vivre”<sup>28</sup>. In short, it is about the invention of new emotions which is the scope of all art. A new way of “mettre en commun les choses grandes et petites”<sup>29</sup> which can give rise to a new Idea of the common.

These seemingly simple changes (a new way of questioning the world, a new kind of attention and a resistance to what is intolerable) could answer to the interpellation of an ethics of the commons and could define an art of the commons for our contemporary world along the principles already exposed by Jacques Rancière in 1992: “le déni d’une exclusion fixée (...), l’identification à celui qui est désigné comme l’exclu (...), l’ouverture de l’espace et du temps où sont comptés ceux qui ne comptent pas”<sup>30</sup>.



## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Giorgio Agamben, *Homo sacer. Puterea suverană și viața nudă*, I, traducere de Alexandru Cistelean, Cluj, editura Idea Design & Print, 2006, p. 141.
- <sup>2</sup> In the well-known words of Alain Badiou, it is a problem of “la part du sans-part”. See Alain Badiou, *The Meaning of Sarkozy*, translated by David Fernbach, Verso, 2010.
- <sup>3</sup> Affordability is used as an argument to explain the difference in access to good property; the rights of homeowners name in fact the privileges of those with property; the refugees are seen as a threat to an identity that is not subject of a dialogue or a negotiation, and meritocracy is the good name that legitimizes inequality, etc.
- <sup>4</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Peuples exposés, peuples figurants. L’œil de l’histoire*, IV, Paris, Les éditions de Minuit, 2012, p. 55.
- <sup>5</sup> Jacques Rancière, *Les mots de l’histoire. Essai de poétique du savoir*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1992, p. 84.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 96.
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 97.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 160.
- <sup>9</sup> Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, Penguin Books, 2004, apud Slavoj Žižek, *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*, Verso, 2009, p. 91.
- <sup>10</sup> Bertolt Brecht, *L’Art du comédien. Écrits sur le théâtre*, Paris, L’Arche, 1999.
- <sup>11</sup> Paul Klee, *Théorie de l’art moderne*, trad. de l’allemand par Pierre-Henri Gonthier, Paris, Gallimard, 1998. P. 34.
- <sup>12</sup> See Serge Daney, *L’Exercice a été profitable, Monsieur*, texte présenté par Jean-Claude Biette et Emmanuel Crimail, Paris, P.O.L., 1993.
- <sup>13</sup> Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press, 2002, p. 7.
- <sup>14</sup> For an excellent study of how this process is taking place, see Jacques Rancière, *Hatred of Democracy*, translated by Steve Corcoran, Verso, 2009.
- <sup>15</sup> Walter Benjamin, *Petite histoire de la photographie* in *Œuvres*, II, Paris, Gallimard, 2000.
- <sup>16</sup> Maurice Blanchot, *Le livre à venir*, Paris, Gallimard, 1959.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 169
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 171.
- <sup>19</sup> Alain Badiou, *The Rebirth of History*, Verso, 2012, p. 119.
- <sup>20</sup> Slavoj Žižek, *The Year of Dreaming Dangerously*, Verso, 2012, p. 102.
- <sup>21</sup> Jacques Rancière, *Les mots de l’histoire*, p. 91.
- <sup>22</sup> Apud *Le ciel est historique*, entretien avec Manoel de Oliveira in *Cahiers du cinéma*, nr. 711, p. 109.
- <sup>23</sup> Apud Antoine de Baecque, *Godard*, p. 216.
- <sup>24</sup> Serge Daney, *L’Exercice a été profitable, Monsieur*, p. 211.
- <sup>25</sup> Georges Didi-Huberman, *Atlas ou le gai savoir inquiet. L’œil de l’histoire*, 3, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 2011, p. 281.
- <sup>26</sup> See Georges Didi-Huberman, *Survivance des lucioles*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 2009.
- <sup>27</sup> Alexandre Costanzo, *Une joie nouvelle* in *Cahiers du cinéma*, nr. 712, p. 62.
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 64.
- <sup>30</sup> Jacques Rancière, *Les mots de l’histoire*, p. 160.