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**THE MASK AND THE SOCIAL ACTORS
SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AESTHETIC AND CULTURAL
FUNCTIONS OF THE MASK**

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Halil ALTUNKAYA

Date (17.09.2022)



To My Dearest Family...

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ABSTRACT

The mask, which dates back to the earliest periods of human history, is an object that has found a place in our lives over time, except for mythical ceremonies and special days. Even though humanity has partially severed its ties with primitive mythical ceremonies, the mask preserves its place and importance in our lives as it was on the first day. The mask appears as a multidimensional and comprehensive field of study. This multidimensionality and comprehensiveness complicate the limitations of research. In this study, it has tried to reveal the usage areas of the mask and the meanings it creates under different topics. The aim of the study is to reveal the common points that emerge as a result of different usage areas and to try to understand whether the mask actually creates an area where one can escape from social reality as a result of these common points. The examples selected and analyzed in this study have been kept wide and aim to reveal that the mask actually takes place in every moment of our lives and shapes our lives in a wide field of study ranging from cinema to carnival, from daily life to politics. The culturally different uses of the mask were excluded on the grounds that it would both decontextualize the subject and not serve the study. Due to the literature and examples used, the use of masks in Europe and there has been effective in determining the universe of the thesis. In this thesis, it is aimed to reveal the use of mask and mask in which situations and for what purpose, by using the general scanning method. The selected examples have been preferred in terms of the use of masks and the intensity and causality of the meanings attributed to it historically and currently.

Keywords: Mask, Carnival, Theater, Public Sphere, Politics, State of Exception

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ÖZET

İnsanlık tarihinin en erken dönemlerine kadar uzanan maske, efsanevi törenler ve özel günler dışında zamanla hayatımızda kendine yer bulan bir nesnedir. İnsanlık ilkel mitik törenlerle bağımlı kısmen koparmış olsa da maske ilk günkü gibi hayatımızdaki yerini ve önemini koruyor. Maskeler, kimlik oluşturan nesnelere olmalarının yanı sıra soyut anlamda insan kimliğinin de değişmez bir parçası olmuştur. Özellikle kamusal yaşamda karakter oluşumunda vazgeçilmez bir olgu haline gelmiştir. Ayrıca anlam üzerindeki hakimiyeti sonucunda karakterlerin silinmesi, özlerinin zedelenmesi, özele kurallardan kaçış alanı yaratmak gibi durumları da beraberinde getirmiştir. Maske çok boyutlu ve kapsamlı bir çalışma alanı olarak karşımıza çıkıyor. Bu çok boyutluluk ve kapsamlılık, araştırmanın sınırlamalarını karmaşıktır. Bu çalışmada maskenin kullanım alanları ve farklı başlıklar altında oluşturduğu anlamlar ortaya konulmaya çalışılmıştır. Çalışmanın amacı, yukarıda bahsettiğim farklı kullanım alanları sonucunda ortaya çıkan ortak noktaları ortaya çıkarmak ve bu ortak noktalar sonucunda maskenin aslında toplumsal gerçeklikten kaçılabilir bir alan oluşturup oluşturmadığını anlamaya çalışmaktır. Bu çalışmada seçilen ve analiz edilen örnekler geniş tutulmuş ve maskenin aslında hayatımızın her anında yer aldığını ve sinemadan karnavala, günlük hayattan siyasete uzanan geniş bir çalışma alanında hayatımızı şekillendirdiğini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Maskenin kültürel olarak farklı kullanımları, hem konuyu bağlamından koparacağı hem de çalışmaya hizmet etmeyeceği gerekçesiyle dışlandı. Kullanılan literatür ve örneklerden dolayı Avrupa'da maske kullanımı tez evreninin belirlenmesinde etkili olmuştur. Bu tezde genel tarama yöntemi kullanılarak maske ve maske kullanımının hangi durumlarda ve ne amaçla kullanıldığını ortaya çıkarmak amaçlanmıştır. Seçilen örnekler, maskelerin kullanımı ve ona tarihsel ve güncel olarak yüklenen anlamların yoğunluğu ve nedenselliği açısından tercih edilmiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Maske, Karnaval, Tiyatro, Kamusal Alan, Politika, İstisna

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1. INTRODUCTION

It is an inevitable necessity to behave or appear differently in different situations and environments as a requirement of our social life. The necessity of being with more than one identity in more than one environment in social life is perhaps the biggest test of modern man. The habit of existing in different areas with different identities appears as a human-specific behavior. In some cases, it is also seen that the areas give rise to conflicts. The only result of conflict and competition is that the field is a battlefield analogy. The said competition and conflict in this area increase its existence and violence among those who participate in this environment. Because all of the participants have their own habits. At this point, masks come to the rescue of individuals. It is possible with a mask to be the person you want to be or should be in the area you are in. The mask provides the convenience of treating individuals politically. So what does it mean to act politically? Agamben tries to find an answer to this question by examining the intermediate region between "public law" and "political fact", and "law order" and "life". The state of exception is "not as a state of full authority, a state of legal occupancy, as in the dictatorship model; as a state of emptiness, legal vacuum and suspension of law. He insists that the state of exception should not be read as the moment when an unlimited power replaces the law, but as the self-creation of the political sphere in the void left over from an outdated legal order. According to Agamben (2006, 33-34), the state of exception creates a state of emptiness, a legal vacuum. During these festivities, where we encounter similar characteristics in different ages and cultures, people disguise and behave like animals, masters serve slaves, men and women change roles, and criminal attitudes are considered legal or in any case unpunished. That is, these festivities initiate a period of lawlessness that disrupts and temporarily destroys the social order. Scholars have always had difficulty explaining these sudden outbursts of lawlessness within a highly ordered society, and especially the tolerance of both religious and civil authorities towards them. Agamben (2006, 85) For Marshall, Moore, and Barbour, persona is "still attached to the concept of the mask, a layer, or adornment used to obscure the underlying features of the performer, providing a new surface upon which to inscribe a public identity" (Marshall, Moore & Barbour 2020, p. 21). However, in conflicts in intertwined areas, the overlapping mask causes the individual to hide themselves. The mask deals with the reproduction of the reality that is wanted to be broken. It is like a mystical and magic tool

with dimension-changing function. It has emerged as a result of a person's tendency to transform himself. The mask derives much of its influence from the fact that it reveals nothing of what lies behind it. The perfection of the mask is that it emerges alone, overshadowing everything behind it; The more different the mask, the darker everything else is. The magnitude of the effect the mask evokes lies in the fact that no one knows what will come out of it, and the tension created in contrast between the mask's appearance and what it conceals can be extreme. Furthermore, in theatre, mask is not always conceived in the literal sense of a disguise or adornment which might hide or obscure, but also as something indivisible and embodied that can be deployed to stage revelations of both self and role (Mary and Sandra 2019, 1).

The aim of the study is to reveal the historicity of the mask and to show that it is still up to date today. While examining the studies in the thesis, the aims of the mask were emphasized, and it was aimed to show how they created a way out in the social and legal order in the period and place they were in. While doing this, it is aimed to show that there is a common point between them by examining the mask usage areas in different historical periods. While choosing the examples in this study, theatre, carnival, and movies were selected considering the show aspect of the mask.

The mask has always found a prominent place in the history of humanity until today. The fact that the mask, which is so important for the history of humanity, is still effective today brings to mind the question of how this happened. In order to answer this question, it is thought that finding the answer to this question with the examples chosen from the past to the present and the similarities between them will contribute to the literature.

Since the mask is widely used all over the world, a European-based study was preferred due to the sharpening of the boundaries of the study and the literature used while choosing these examples. By placing the mask in a theoretical framework, for what purpose it is shaped to correspond to which experiences of the human; A general framework was tried to be drawn for the mask and mask traditions were excluded from the study as it would both disperse the context of the subject and be the subject of studies in different fields.

In addition, while the samples were selected, it was taken into account that the mask was of primary importance and that it was shaped around the mask.

This study examines the mask under the theme of aesthetics, politics, public space, and carnival, and aims to reveal that the mask has completely taken over our lives and it has been tried to show that this possession brings some advantages. These advantages allow the experience and use of anonymity by creating a state of exception.

In the Mask and Aesthetic section, the concept of aesthetics is examined, and it is tried to be shown that the concept of aesthetics can be identified not only with the beautiful but also with the ugly. The *Commedia dell'Arte* and its characters are explored. As a result of this research, it was tried to reveal that the experience emerged in an activity process and as a result of this experience, the masks and personalities of the characters became an inseparable whole. This chapter is aimed to reveal how the characters are integrated with their masks and that their mask and selves are completely inseparable, and it is emphasized that the audience naturally welcomes any excess they do. In the next section, carnival is discussed as a state of exception. In this state of exception, the behavior of individuals as required by the mask they use, and their impersonation are examined. Later discussion on the Venice carnival and the masks used there; The importance of the use of masks in carnival in creating an exception has been examined together with Bakhtin's understanding of carnival. It was emphasized that the rules were overturned for a certain period and how they could get away from all the pressure of the legislators.

In the following section, the manifestation of the state of exception in the carnival in the public sphere and the intertwining of everyday life and the carnival area are tried to be discussed together with the analysis of the Joker movie. The reason the Joker movie is preferred is a character that has the potential to harm even those closest to the main character. But he can gather many people around him despite this. The reason for this is that it gathers people who complain about the system around a mask and gives them a purpose. It will be examined that it is a symbol of rebellion by gathering a part of the society behind a mask. In addition, in this section, public sphere discussions are discussed in the Sennet, Habermas and Arendt triangle.

In the last part, the relationship between mask and politics is examined. Why do people live together? By examining the issues such as managing perception and managing perception with a mask, it has been tried to reveal that the mask has an undeniable place

in politics as in all areas of our lives. Contrary to the previous sections, this chapter examines how the legislators and the government use the mask against the society and how they hide behind the mask.



2. MASK

The Mask is an accessory put on the face and used to hide the identity of the person wearing it and give it a new identity and meaning. The history of this accessory dates to ancient times. It has preserved its existence from antiquity until today with different usage areas and different semantics. The Mask was first designed by carving or shaping from wood and clay, and later, it was also made using metal and plastic. (Nunley & McCarty 1999, 31)

2.1 Etymology of the Mask

While the mask has been defined as the second face, the second persona since ancient times, it has been used since prehistoric times with its mysterious structure and changing the identity of the mask wearer. Although the mask has different periods and different uses, it is also a valuable tool for us to understand the beliefs and cultures of the society in that period. The first recorded and written source of this word is Meninski, Thesaurus (1680). Its use may have previously been common orally or in daily life. Etymologically, Heidegger refers to the Mask as the persona (origin of the word, phersu in the word entrusted) is the Mask the actor wears on her/his face. (Heidegger 2004, 62) Parallel to the meaning of the character in the play, the word persona was used in the Latin texts of antiquity to mean "the role an individual assumes in the world" and "the individual's unique structure," the primary sign that distinguishes the individual from others. Cicero has a significant role in gaining this meaning load of the word. The word persona, which appeared four times in the pro Roscio Comoedo defense text, which he defended the famous actor of the time Roscius, probably in 76 BC, is based on the position of his client, both in the sense of role, character, and role in life in the same text used. (Freese 1961, 21) In addition, in his work titled *officiis*, the word used by human beings in terms of character and role when talking about individuals' universal and unique character is the word persona. (Cicero 2001, 107-125).

When we look at its etymological origins, we clearly see the relationship of the mask with the character. It is clear that the main reason for the use of the mask, which gives a new

face and character to the individual, is to move away from the existing individuality and move to a new dimension, character.

2.2 A Brief History of the Mask

In the ancient Greek and Roman world, the Mask was used in cult ceremonies and dramatic representation of a particular god or goddess. In the first cults in the Hellenistic world, grotesque masks for gods are often found. For example, the horse head found in the temple of Demeter in Lykosoura, and the sheep and cow headed terracotta figurines found in excavations at the Artemis Orthia temple in Ispara are examples of such masks. It is known that the priest wears the Mask of the goddess in the ceremonies organized for the Demeter cult in Arcadia. (Otto 1995, 87) However, the Mask is more identified with Dionysus, who later established himself in the Hellenistic world. He is a nature god designed by the primeval people of Anatolia to respectfully bless the land that donates fertility. It has become a symbol of integration with nature. That is why farmers quickly accepted it. The ceremonies performed in the name of Dionysus, known as Bakkhos in the Romans, are aimed at the relationship of human with nature. The purpose of these ceremonies is to reach the secrets of nature, in a sense, to reach God. Dionysos is the magical power that provides this ability to human (Erhat 1989, 103). The feasts and ceremonies devoted to Dionysus were seen as passing out to integrate with nature, accompanied by music. In Nietzsche's famous work titled *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music*, for the ceremonies experienced in Dionysian, "These festivals are held in a certain place, without any discrimination between male and female, and the fluctuations of generations exceed the rules of tradition to which every family is bound, does not know solemnity, nature's most An environment is formed as if the predatory wild people have let themselves go, and in the most strange way, excessive love and ferocity mingle (Nietzsche 2003, 24).

In these primitive ceremonies, the Mask was perceived and respected as the real appearance of the Dionysus it symbolizes. However, everyone knew that the Mask was made by a human. The process at work here is not just a logic process, but a play-like, theatrical process. We have passed into a universe where everything is accepted to exist

as if it were real with the animation logic. This is the way of thinking that later prepared the emergence of comedy and tragedy.

Mask contains three basic elements. It is divine, ceremonial, and has a meaning (depth). Since it emerged as a part of the Dionysus culture and embodied the divine face in tragedies, it acquired this feature from the first stage of use. Later, it gained the characteristic of ceremonial by using it again in rituals and special occasions (carnival). Because the Mask has never been a part of daily life, besides, it has become an object that the public can use on special occasions such as carnivals. According to Bakhtin, Carnival, comic performances and the rituals associated with them had a prominent place in the life of Medieval people. All these forms of protocol and ritual, based on laughter and sanctioned by tradition, were present in all countries of Medieval Europe; they differed sharply from the solemn and formal church, feudal, and political cult forms, and ceremonies. These comic forms showcased completely different, informal, aspects of the world, man, and human relations beyond the church and politics; they were establishing a second world, a second life outside the officialdom; a world in which all medieval people lived at a certain time of the year. What were the peculiarities of the comic rituals and spectacles of the Middle Ages? Of course, these are not religious rituals, such as the Christian rite of bread and wine, to which they are distantly linked by a genetic link. The basis of laughter that shapes carnival rituals liberates these rituals from the monopoly of ecclesiastical religious dogmatism, mysticism, and piety. These rituals were also completely stripped of the characters of magic and prayer; They neither command nor demand anything. Some forms of carnival even parody the cult of the Church. All of these forms are systematically located outside the church and the religious. These belong to a completely different field. (Bakhtin 2005, 31-33) And finally, as a result of the two main features. The Mask has always had a depth and meaning. this meaning and depth has removed it from being a standard object. As a result, these three basic features that I have mentioned encompass the concept of masks as complementary and inclusive of each other.

2.3 Mask as an Object

In this section, it has been tried to reveal that the mask is a human-made object, and it is human itself who gives it this value. Especially when we consider the etymological origin

of the mask we mentioned in the first chapter, this situation becomes even more revealing. Because meaning loading starts when the mask is made and then becomes official while naming it.

A mask is an objective thing made of various substances to hide or protect the face, or it is all deceptive behavior that metaphorically conceals the real appearance and feelings of the person. The Mask has been used for different purposes throughout history. The meanings attributed to the Mask appear in the theater in the Ancient Greek and Roman tradition. In the classical theatrical tradition of Greek and Rome the Mask was used as identification of character, not as a deception disguise. Indeed, mask in the ancient world should be taken face value. In other words, the Mask aimed at role and imitation rather than fake and deception as understood today. It aimed to reflect the plays and characters the characters played on the theater stage.

Today, this situation is not much different. When we say mask, we see a stage equipment that is mostly associated with theatrical art. Vernant is a "fantastic stage instead of everyday decor" in the place designated by Dionysus, the "god of disguise, metamorphosis and mask", which is accepted as the origin of Western theatre. The mimetic action takes place when the actor, as the performer of another fictional world, takes on the guise, form, form of another in his own body and brings into being otherness. In this sense, mimetic action always contains a duality. The duality is in the fact that the actor is present in the same body, at the same time as someone else he has embodied, disguised as here and now. The actor carries the body of both the everyday and the otherness/someone else that is created momentarily in the everyday. The player transforms into a bearer, and they become bodies of other worlds.

So, what is mimetic action? The word mimetic comes from mimesis, which is an imitative representation of nature and human behavior in art. In fact, in Plato's works and philosophy, there is an opinion that the origin of everything is in the world of ideas, and that all those in this world are his good and bad imitations. Aristotle, on the other hand, says that human beings have the ability and pleasure to imitate (mimesis), and that the artist imitates the ideal, the idea, in the essence of events and beings. According to H. Koch, art is a way of reflecting a special reality. However, this form of reflection is determined by social values. This imitation is not the same for all branches of art. One of

the ancient Greek thinkers, Philostratus, put imitation into the background and defended the principle of imagination and creation. Those who made the statues of the ancient Greek gods did not make them by seeing them. The German philosopher Hegel also rejects the beauty of nature and places the beauty of art above the beauty of nature. Shelling is also against those who regard art as an imitation of nature. As a result of this mimetic expression in art, there is a flow of meaning between those who produce art and those who consume art. Meaning is the product of dialogue. It is possible to define the dialogue that produces and reveals meaning as a discursive process. We can also define it as a process in which the meanings in the speeches are dressed in various discourses in the form of thesis and antithesis, and then result in a synthesis that manifests itself as a 'meaning change'.

One of the most important mask ideas in the theatre is the neutral mask. The idea of a neutral mask first emerged during Copeau's work with his students, when an actor who was experiencing physical tension covered his face with a handkerchief and realized that the player whose face was eliminated was relaxed. Strengthening the relationship of the actors with their bodies, in this sense, emerges as a quest to seek expression in the body, rather than the face being the center of expression. Although the mask gives a feeling of concealment to the player when it is first put on, it is an element that reveals the body of the player. And as can be seen with the neutral mask, the mask is not just an object that affects the viewer and provides a flow of meaning it. The mask has also become a phenomenon that affects its users. Considering that the starting and ending point of the performance is the actor's body, it can be said that it has a direct effect on the play.

The mask is not just an object covering the face. A mask is a form of expression that gives other meanings to the face after covering it and aims to convey an expression to the audience. This way of expression serves to turn things upside down on stage. In other words, the one being watched on the stage turns into a spectator position. Because the group starts to watch from the eye gap in the mask and not covered by the mask. The viewers, on the other hand, instantly become the watched position where they came to watch. They look at the mask defenselessly. The game is a fictional structure. It creates new worlds for us within the ordinary and habitual world. The mask also gives players the opportunity to disguise themselves to exist in the world they have created. The player

has now moved to another world and can watch all the viewers from within that world. In other words, the mask offers the player the opportunity to be in two worlds at the same time. Here, a non-daily space is created. The actor opens a rift in the world he has created and allows the audience to look through that slit and partially see that world. But the genuine experience is the player himself. The actor is always both himself and someone else in the mimetic act.

On the other hand, the word mask has also been used as a metaphor to hide the truth due to its hiding the face. The Mask is understood as an actor's tendency to portray a role as some form of fraud, lying, deceiving the viewer, or in other words, the act of concealing the truth. As can be seen, the mask has always been in close contact with art due to the depth of meaning and historicity it contains. In the next section, we will take a closer look at the mask's relationship to art and aesthetics.

3. MASK AND AESTHETIC

Art embodies experience and aesthetics at its core. Aesthetics, on the other hand, contains perception in its basis. In Dewey's philosophy, experience is not completely individual, the meaning understood from experience is the most general meaning. That is, experience emerges as a day, process, or activity in which various individuals are involved. (Dewey 1980, 17-18) Experiences are not just momentary or isolated. Therefore, while examining the examples in the following sections, they were not considered independent of space and time. In all discussions, there are close relations between perception and the phenomenon of beauty. The word aesthetic is generally associated with the beauty in everyday life. Whether a work of art is beautiful or ugly is closely related to the perception of the consumer. The main problem is to find an answer to the question of what the equivalent of beauty is philosophically.

The word 'aesthetics' takes its etymological origin from the Greek word 'aisthesis' meaning 'sensation' or 'perception'. In this context, aesthetics has also been used in philosophy in the sense of sensation or perception theory. For the first time, Alexander Baumgarten used aesthetics as a technical term in the sense of knowledge of sensation or perception in his work called 'Aesthetica'. Philosophical aesthetics, as a doctrine of perceptual competence, is also a discipline that studies what is beautiful, because what constitutes perfection and completeness in perception can be defined as beautiful. of the beautiful and pleasant.

3.1 Aesthetic and Object

Aesthetic experience is based on a subject-oriented analysis. It gets its authenticity from there. The aesthetic object, on the other hand, focuses on the beautiful or the objective dimension of beauty. It would not be right to separate the perceiving subject and the perceived object, and to isolate subjective and objective reality from each other. Considering the concept of aesthetics, neither an object without an object nor a subject without an object can exist. Still, it can make certain distinctions on the analytical plane, without forgetting this dialectical and synthetic accuracy.

It can be said that the object, which looks nice and beautiful in human experience, has a cultural and religious determination not only with its physical characteristics, but also in terms of the meaning and emotions it creates for us. The object described as beautiful is beautiful because it creates associations in our minds and reminds us of the joy of living. In an aesthetic experience, the subject can be thought of with a cultural and religious perception rather than a simple and physical perception. It can be said that the harmony and integrity between the pieces of the artwork constitutes the origin of aesthetic perception and experience. The work of art can be seen as the unity of the multitude, the inner and deep perception of various determinations. It can also be stated that such an inner and deep perception creates a sense of beauty and satisfaction in the subject.

3.2 Aesthetics of the Mask

Some of the post-modern understandings of art emphasize the idea that the content of aesthetics and art cannot be limited to the beautiful, and that the 'ugly' can constitute the content of artistic creation and therefore an aesthetic appreciation. As an example, in Aristotle's politics, we come across the idea that an ugly character or situation will not destroy the integrity of a work of art. In his work, Aristotle states that the moral value of a tragedy is not deteriorated by the evil of some of its characters, and that the overall meaning and message of the work is more important. In this context, it can be said that the expression of what is 'ugly' and 'bad' in a work of art may not spoil the aesthetic integrity and beauty value of the work. There can be an aesthetic and beautiful expression and expression of what is 'ugly' and 'bad'. Again, at this point, in Spinoza's Ethics (2000), we encounter the understanding that evil is not specific to a deep holistic understanding, but to a superficial and particular point of view. In this Spinozian understanding, both evil and ugliness are out of question in the context of divine and natural integrity and understanding. The perception and illusion of evil and ugliness are valid only for the individual subject endowed with finite and particular interests.

As a result of the good and bad or ugly and beautiful debates carried out within the framework of this whole aesthetic concept, we encounter Commedia dell'Arte and its formless and ugly masks, in contrast to the fact that there should be only formal beauty in art. The next section will examine the Commedia dell'Arte and take a closer look at the characters and their masks. And we will take a closer look at how the masks reflect the

character and we will look at how the mask used gets rid of the social norms of the character and how it is accepted.

3.3 Commedia dell'Arte

Gerald Kahan speaks of the difficulty of translating the phrase Commedia dell'Arte. (1976). He states that this idiom roughly means "artists' comedy," while describing performances by professionals, not amateurs. Kahan mentions that this form has been given other names that better show its nature and characteristics: "such as Commedia alla maschera (masked comedy), Commedia improvviso (improvisation comedy) and Commedia dell'Arte all'improvviso (improvised comedy)" (Rudlin 2000, 23). Carlo Goldoni, the most important representative of Commedia dell'Arte in Italy, used the term Commedia dell'Arte to distinguish written comedy from masked and improvised comedy.

However, this idiom was used until Goldoni, i.e., until the 18th century, for the activities of artists or for professional performance troupes. Names previously used for professional actors and groups tended to be more specific: Commedia degli Zanni (Comedy of the Zannis), Commedia a soggetto (comedy without text), Commedia all'italiana (Italian comedy) or Commedia mercenaria (Comedy with money) (Rudlin 2000, 24).

3.3.1 Commedia dell'Arte Types

Commedia dell'Arte communities have their own stereotypical characters with names and features that distinguish them. The characters are divided into groups within themselves. These groups are divided into two according to the mask usage of the characters. This grouping is as follows: Masked, Unmasked

Apart from the masked and unmasked, other character groups that need to be examined separately are exposed to an intense make-up. Other typings are as follows:

The Elders: Pantalone and Dottore are the most well-known, but also Cassandra, Zonobio, Tartaglio are among the Elders.

Zanni (Servants): In the Commedia dell'Arte, the servants are called Zanni. These are the villagers who come down from the Bergamo mountains and work as porters and sell food and wine to earn money and live. They are divided into two as Primi and Secondi. For

example, Brighella, Fritellino, Beltrame Primi are among the Zanni, their trait is cunning; Arlecchino, Pulcinella, Mazzettino, and Truffaldino are butlers who are among the Secondi Zanni and are stupid unlike the Primi Zanni. The costumes of the Zanni are bag-like trousers made of loose, white flour sack. The masks they wore were in the form of a kind of carnival mask that covered their entire face at first, but later they took a form that left the mouth open to the bottom of the nose. (Balamir 2017, 83) The longer the nose of the mask was, the more it was an expression of his baseness. They did not have accessories of their own, they were only temporary carriers of objects such as bags, letters, jewelry belonging to others. Because the Zanni once worked in earthworks and were porters, they have a humped back, bent knees, feet apart, and stand on tiptoes. Just like a puppet, their feet are in constant motion while speaking or listening. They balance in this way, with one foot in front while the other foot is thrown diagonally over that leg. They talk a lot and loudly, their body movements are hasty, dynamic, excited, and exaggerated. While speaking, they support what they say with hand gestures, they can use body language beyond their control even when describing an imaginary situation. They are afraid of starvation, so they are greedy. They are ignorant. They do not like to think, but when it comes to cheating, they are cunning. They do not like those in authority, but they are still loyal to their boss. They are sympathetic. (Balamir 2017, 83) Their disorganization is actually an indication of their dislike for authority. They do not like order.

Lovers: They always travel in pairs. male lovers; Silvio, Fabrizio, Aurelio, Orazio, Ottavio, female lovers; Isabella, Angelica, Eularia, Flaminia, Vittoria, Silvia, Lavinia, Ortensia, and Aurelia. One of the male lovers always takes one of the female lovers with him. They are young and attractive, they attract attention, as their costumes are fashionable. The men's costumes sometimes resemble soldiers' uniforms, they wear wigs. Women also always dress stylishly, change their costumes frequently, this is an indication that their financial situation is good. Lovers do not wear masks, but very intense make-up. As the age of the players progresses, very intense make-up, which becomes a mask, is applied so that their real age is not revealed. Men use handkerchiefs as accessories, and women use hand fans. Their legs look like they are doing ballet, so they do not want to walk too much. Their movements are also quite exaggerated, they use dance moves to be ridiculous. Although they portray the two lovers, they have no physical contact during

the play. They are extremely arrogant and self-righteous, they always carry a mirror with them, look at it, feel sad when they notice any flaws in their image. Compared to the Zannis, they speak extremely politely and are knowledgeable. The voice tones are incredibly soft. They even read the lines of poetry they have memorized from time to time. They are in love with themselves, they are selfish, they love themselves more than the other person. When lovers get together, they often get into fights, and their resentment ends when the man serenades the woman. The lovers, although arrogant compared to the other characters of the Commedia dell'Arte, are kindhearted. (Balamir 2017, 83) The fact that they look like a naive and act like a ballet is an expression of their emotional side.

3.3.2. Basic Masks of Commedia dell'Arte

Arlecchino

It was created in France in the 16th century by Tristano Martinelli of Mantova, a member of the Raccolti Company. It became one of the most popular Zanni in the 17th century. There are many interpretations of where the name "Arlecchino" came from. The first is rumored to be named after a colorful water bird known as a "harle", and the second is likely to come from the French word "harlequin". (Balamir, 2017, 84) Arlecchino is the first Zanni when Brighella or Paquariello is not in the company. He is the butler of Capitano and Dottore, mostly Pantalone. His costume is rhombus-patterned patched jacket and trousers in green, yellow, red, and brown. His mask, at first, consisted of a black stocking that completely covered his head, resembling an African slave, but later it became a normal mask without a chin. The Batocchio he always carries with him as an accessory. He carries the stick by attaching it to the belt that falls on his hip. He does not use this stick, which is also accepted as a symbol of masculinity, as a threatening tool against anyone. His voice is muffled. Since he is carrying heavy items, his back is also hunched, as if he were dancing while walking. He also uses this gait to impress his lover, Colombina. Although he looks stupid, he is quite cunning. His mind is more useful for planning intrigues, but he is unlucky and the intrigues he plans never turn out as he wishes.

Brighella

Brighella, who is a witty, cunning butler, is a self-improved and status person according to Arlecchino. He is extremely successful in plotting; he makes particularly good observations. He is constantly chasing deceptions and never regrets what happened. He is a liar, but she never hides what he has done, he is always hungry and thirsty. he is ready to sow seeds of evil among her rivals. But it would not be wise to pay him before he has done. Because Brighella does not have the tiniest bit of professional dignity. (Rudlin 2000, 106)

Brighella has a dagger and a guitar that he carries with his. His mask, on the other hand, is a strange mask with a bleached, disgusting expression. He has a hook-like nose, thick lips, a sparse beard, and a mustache with upturned ends. For Brighella's mask, Antonio Fava says: "There is something human about the appearance of the mask. The mask appears to be a positive character at first glance, but under this appearance, Brighella's evil, mysterious and dishonest personality emerges." (Rudlin 2000, 104) Brighella also has a unique way of speaking: he speaks by mixing Bergamo and Tuscan dialects, his movements are relaxed and agile, he does not make any physical effort like other Zannis.

Capitano

Although Capitano is no longer a captain, he is still a character that is roaming with his rank. He always pretends to be of higher status, boasts of this, and wants to be called Capitano himself. Capitano has other names such as Giangurguh, Coccodrillo, Matamorus, Spavento, Fanfarone, Meo Squasquara. He works for Pantalone and knows all his immoral deeds and even helps him. His only goal is to make money and become rich. Pantalone, on the other hand, sees him as a simple soldier and does not care at all. For this reason, Capitano improves himself and starts working under Dottore. Their personalities are also similar to Dottore. He has a cloak, feathered helmet, and long boots. The purse he carries is always empty. The mask has a long nose. He also has a sword that he never leaves with him. His back is not hunched like the Zanni's, on the contrary, he is straight, his chest is well out, and he stands with his legs wide open. While he normally takes small steps, when the subject of war is brought up, his steps expand. He speaks loudly. He stumbles every time he steps onto the stage, and when he meets the audience,

he immediately bows to impress them. With his capitano costume and mask, he aims to appear as the person he wants to be more than the person he is in the society. According to him, when he dresses like a soldier, he thinks that even if he is not a soldier anymore, he will be respected as a soldier and that the society will not take a negative attitude towards him because of his actions. He wants to use this as an advantage. In this character, we can clearly see the transgression property of the mask. Capitano tries to gain privilege with the mask he wears and partially succeeds in this.

Pantalone

He is a middle-aged or elderly merchant who wants to marry his daughter with a rich man. He is very greedy, short, and weak. He walks with small steps, moves his hands constantly when he thinks about something, and hides his hands behind his cloak to hide these movements. He speaks loudly. Stands with knees bent, heels together, but feet apart. Pantalone is a ruthless boss, only giving orders to his servants. As for his daughter, he is a narrow-minded, despotic father, has a particularly good memory, does not forget, or forgive any wrongdoing. His mask consists of a long-hooked nose, bushy eyebrows, a mustache and a pointed upwardly pointed beard. He has a dagger and a chain locket. He has tight-fitting trousers, red socks, a fitted jacket, a black cloak, a red wool cap, and yellow slippers.

Dottore

He is the character played by someone with an important profession such as a lawyer or medical doctor, in fact, he is Pantalone's friend and often rival. He is the father of one of the lovers. He is from Bologna. He is fat, walks with his belly sticking out and his back left behind. He waves his hands like he is sowing seeds. He speaks with a Bologna accent and Latin words to show his knowledge. He is of the opinion that he is deeply knowledgeable and expert in every field. He can babble about anything. Their speeches are always exceptionally long, so the duration of their stay on stage is also longer than the others. He makes a lot of jokes, interrupts everyone's speech, interferes with the conversation. He is married or divorced and is always cheated on by his wife. His mask covers only his nose and forehead, especially in this way, to show the reddening cheeks of the drink loving Dottore. His costume is pitch black: he has a black coat, black pants,

black socks, shoes, and a black beanie. He only carries a white handkerchief as an accessory.

3.3.3 The Importance of the Mask in the Commedia dell'Arte

The meaning attributed to the mask in the Commedia dell'Arte is extremely large, the mask, completely stripped of an objective existence, means character. Even characters who do not wear masks are considered masks, like Lovers. Masks only exist as long as the play lasts and are removed from their boxes when the play is over. As soon as he/she puts on the mask in Commedia, the actor has moved away from his/her own identity and has taken on a completely different identity. The new personality that emerges does not have to be true to reality.

Masks have limits as they reflect a certain character. The player cannot exceed these limits and must act with the identity of the mask he/she wears. And since these limits in the play also limit its existence, the characters evaluate it not because of what they do, but because of their appearance. The player is the prisoner of the mask. Putting on the mask does not end the actor's task, he/she must also acquire the physical characteristics of the character he/she plays, which can cost an actor about ten years. Costumes are not ordinary garments for masks, the story of each is based on specific reasons. "A stingy doctor's servant, the stupid Arlecchino from Bergamo, is forced to wear an outfit made of scraps of unusual colors because of his master's stinginess. He is a foolish buffoon, a deceitful servant who always grins with delight" (Rudlin 2000, 47). The professionalism of the actor is hidden in reflecting the character he/she plays with all his features, activating the imagination of the audience and making him/her find something of himself/herself in the role he/she plays. For this reason, as soon as a good actor puts on the mask, he/she must isolate himself/herself from the real world and fully integrate with that mask and turn into that mask. The player gains a new self-alongside his/her own self. An exception occurs in the transition between these two selves. There is a state of uncertainty. He/she must submit to it, from his/her voice to his gestures, he/she must become him with his/her whole body. The Commedia dell'Arte is a work of art. And the mask, which is one of the most essential elements of this work of art, was used to describe ugliness rather than beauty. To describe the ugliness of the characters, incomplete masks with long noses and different colors were used. This formlessness and incompleteness

served the existence of the characters and therefore the purpose of the artwork. It is possible to say that the mask changes the behavior both for those who wear it and for those who watch it. Because while the actor takes on the character of the mask, the audience sees that even though they know the actors, they are no longer the people they know. This is not only about the reflection of the mask in the theater, but also in the carnival, which is another critical area where the mask is used. In the next section, we go from the theater to the carnival. We will examine carnival masks just like in this section and focus on how those who wear these masks behave.



4. CARNIVAL AND MASK

Carnival is a term used to express different rituals and events. In its most general definition, it can be said that Carnival is a temporary suspension of the hierarchical order. There is a state of emergency or transgression of character at the Carnival. General rules are suspended for a certain period, and the number of exceptions increases. It is permitted lawlessness, confusion, overflow, and a celebration of the power of fruitful life. Bakhtin's term carnival is a concept he developed to describe this polyphony, the richness, fluidity and contingency of culture and language. Carnival appears as an indication of the overthrow of the official ideology of the medieval period, the monologized language of institutions such as the church and the state. According to Bakhtin, the true quality and richness of language is revealed in dialogue, in the relationship between speakers and listeners. Therefore, language itself, like life, exhibits an appearance that resists uniformity and oppression.

It has its own contingent, fluid, and polyphonic dialogic structure, as Bakhtin puts it, against centralization and stereotyping. Bakhtin grounds this concept with examples from social history. According to him, it is possible to see the clearest example of the dialectic and polyphony of language in the carnivals, where the oppressive, otherworldly, and uniform understanding of life of the Middle Ages was suspended. Bakhtin draws attention to the dialogic feature of the language spoken at these fairs and carnivals, which the state and the church allow once a year and calls it the carnivalesque language. According to Bakhtin, this language defines the language of the novel, which breaks away from the epic and is a new genre. (Bakhtin 2001, 95)

Carnival is a state of public and urban upheaval. Carnivals, a type of entertainment that people do collectively to fill their spiritual void, are common in ancient Greek and Roman societies. Carnival festivities, comic shows and the rituals associated with them had a prominent place in the life of medieval people. All these forms of protocol and ritual, based on laughter and sanctioned by tradition, were present in all countries of Medieval Europe; they differed sharply from the solemn and formal church, feudal, and political cult forms, and ceremonies.

The idea of warding off evil spirits by wearing masks has been prevalent in carnivals held by some communities since ancient times. Wearing masks has become one of the key features of carnivals due to the belief that masks give various powers to the wearer. The use of masks has been reintroduced to society in the form of masquerade proms since the 18th century. Even if it was banned for a period, it started to be regulated again at the end of the 18th century. The most important feature of the medieval Carnival is the upside-down world (grotesque) depiction of the world. According to Bakhtin, the first, that is, centripetal forces, are the center-oriented forces that organize the flow of life, mold it, and integrate it. The second ones, namely centrifugal forces, are linguistic and semantic realities that escape centralization, cannot be integrated and fixed. The concept of dialogism is also based on the existence of centrifugal forces of multilingualism. Depending on this concept, language and culture are no longer a fixed structure in his theory. It is possible to see this in clothes and masks.

This exception situation in carnivals often disturbed the authority, and some regulations were introduced; for example, the oldest document on the use of masks during the Carnival is dated May 2, 1268. It is known in the document that egg-tossing games by Mattaccino (who wear Joker masks) are prohibited. Especially the carnivals, which started before the religious feast, have become an important public entertainment. One of the most important examples of this is the Venice Carnival. In this section, we will examine the masks used in this Carnival. The carnival season, when festivities are held in Venice, and the Feast of Fools, one of the most important medieval festivities, is celebrated before religious feasts, which shows that these celebrations are closely related to Christianity. In addition, both the organization of the celebrations and the rituals carried out are related to the Christian religion and have the characteristics of this religion. (Bakhtin 2001, 95)

4.1 Masks of the Venice Carnival

There are some rumors about why the Venice Carnival, which started in the first days of February, was held with masks. One of the most accepted ones; is about the noble people and the poor people having fun like crazy without knowing each other, thanks to masks once a year in the past. Another is the Plague epidemic in 1348, which killed half of

Venice's population. People who survived the plague began to wear long clothes and masks to hide the scars on their faces and bodies. Over time, the masks have become a symbol that integrates with the public by being colored and shaped.

Although it changes a little, it continues the tradition of the Venice carnival today. A different theme for each year is also determined during the carnival days, where entertainment is diversified in every style. The last day of the Venice Carnival is called the "silent farewell moment." The farewell time of the Venice Carnival is adorned with the images of Venetians, who start from the Rialto Bridge and row in silence with indistinct lights. The most impressive aspect of this Carnival is the masks, which are works of art. The history of the Carnival dates to the 13th century. Masks have never lost their feature of being the symbol of Carnival for centuries. Interesting masks and extraordinary costumes had the greatest impact on this Carnival's fame.

The main purpose of the masks used in the Venice Carnival is to react to the social class discrimination that existed in ancient times and to emphasize that everyone is equal. All the masks show different features from each other. Some are very colorful, while others are quite plain. Some of them have turned into separate accessories rather than a mask with attachments on them. Some masks only cover the eyes.

The tradition of using costumes and masks, which allowed dukes and judges to mingle with the public and gather direct information about events from them, was also adopted by women who wanted to enter cafes with the ban in 1767. Long black robes and masks completely conceal people's gender and identity.

Until the 18th century, Venice Carnival, which lasted for six months every year from the beginning of September to the end of February, was declared illegal for a while. This tradition, which was tried to be kept alive by the Venetians at that time with difficulty, was started to be lived as in the old days again in 1980 when the whole city was accepted as a celebration area, the separation of audience-actors was abandoned, and everyone decided to celebrate with costumes and masks for ten days, and it has survived until today.

4.1.1 Bautta and Volto

It first appeared in the 13th century. Bautta is thought to come from the German word "Behüten," meaning to be protected. Another view attributed to the origin of Bautta is that the name derives from the sound of screaming "Bau, bau" to frighten misbehaving children.

The only difference between the Volto and the Bautta is that the Volto is designed to be jaw-dropping. This feature allows the wearer to eat or drink with ease. The combination, which gave an air of complete anonymity, was standard dressing for the nobility and was important. Wearing expensive and extravagant clothes was the passion of the Venetian nobility. This situation, which disturbed the people immensely, was prevented even a little by wearing this type of clothing. In this way, the nobles could mingle with the people as they wished. During the carnival period, they were able to go beyond the strict bourgeois rules that limited them, thanks to this mask and dress.

4.1.2 Moretta (Muta)

Worn only by noble people, Moretta was a mask used to establish erotic relationships. From the 16th century onwards, there was a style in women's clothing known as the "Venice Decollete," in which a piece of lace or tulle was featured on the chest of the dress. The women's breasts were visible through the transparent part of the dress. At that time, it was fashionable to paint the nipples in a light carmine red. Women wore oval masks covered with black velvet, covering only the nose and mouth, clipped between the teeth, resting in the middle of the face, to gain a more attractive and mysterious air. It was believed that the contrast created by the transparent cleavage and the black Moretta made women more attractive. The mask is also called Muta, which means "Silent" because the clips that are clamped between the teeth make it difficult to speak. In the same way, this mask gave freedom to those who used it by easily getting out of a situation that could be faced with a serious reaction in daily life. Those who wore this mask could both behave as they wanted and had the chance to convey exactly what they wanted to the other party without speaking.

4.1.3 Gnaga

It is designed for gay people to make themselves look like women. It should be noted that homosexuality was prohibited by law in Europe of the period, and the penalty was death. In Venice, the death penalty or burning by a stake was applied, but gay people who wore Gnaga were exempt from the death penalty. They were able to reveal themselves without fear, thanks to their mask. As a Venetian citizen, they had the same legal rights as any other masquerade. The Gnaga mask undoubtedly made an exception. Gnaga masks were the place where the state of exception of the Carnival, which was an environment of lawlessness, reached its peak. Mimics the female face, the Gnaga is flesh colored. He acted like a homosexual woman wearing a mask, spoke like a female voice, and dressed like a woman. Although it had a function just like the Moretta, the Gnaga prevented a situation that could cause much larger reactions in society. The point where the mask's function reaches its peak is the Gnaga. Because the Gnaga was keeping the individual alive, saving him from death.

4.1.4 Mattaccino

Derived from the word "Mattoé," meaning crazy, Mattaccino went beyond being a mask and turned into a character. Over time, the Mattaccinos, who began to wear masks with demonic expressions, would sell eggs filled with rosewater during Carnival. The Mattaccinos, though harmless, were a nuisance with their frenzied behavior. Throwing rosewater-filled eggs on people was their main activity. They were after justice in their own way, and while providing this justice, they exhibited acts of violence. Violence as a tool is presumably either law-making (*rechtssetzende*) or law-preserving (*rechtserhaltende*). Because those who wore the Mattaccino mask determined an area for themselves and ensured that everyone who stayed in this area was affected by this understanding of justice, the demarcation will become clearer with reference to the first meaning of *nomos*. According to this, the first meaning of *nomos* appears as drawing borders, dividing lands, drawing fences, and dividing space. Here we can talk about violence directed towards natural ends. The purposeful use of force is the creation of power over the subject to which the power is directed.

In 1268, the use of Mattaccino masks and clothing was banned by the proclamation declared by the senate. After a while, the use of masks and clothing of this type has been released again. Mattaccino is also known by the name "Joker," which means humoristic in English. Mattaccino is closely related to the Joker character, which we will examine in the following sections. Forming a community that enforces its own laws in what they define, Mattaccino goes one step beyond the mask's escape from the law and replaces it while ignoring it.

4.1.5 Plague Doctor

The mask used by doctors during the plague epidemics is also seen in some European countries. The beak of the mask, whose eye sockets were closed with glass, was filled with aromatic herbs that filtered the inhaled air. Air enters through linear slits on either side of the beak. The plague doctor mask is the prototype of gas masks. The combination is completed with a hat. According to the beliefs of the doctors of the time, the cause of all diseases was the infestation of people with evil spirits. They believed that with this mask, which they thought was terrible, they would scare away the evil spirits that created the disease.

Another important feature of the plague mask is that it contains the paradox. As I mentioned above, the doctors wearing this mask are the people who are the only hope in the time of the plague, and everything depends on them. It did not matter who they were. What they could give people was important. That mask had become the hope of life and was no longer an ordinary mask. The reason I say paradox is that the Plague Doctor mask, which is a biopolitics element that shapes the society and directs them, is still used while the regular irregularities are raised in the carnival scene where everything is turned upside down. It is possible to see this in the drawing at the beginning of the Leviathan book by Thomas Hobbes. While that drawing represents the monarch with one hand, the figure representing the church with the other is completely composed of masked individuals whose faces are not visible. This drawing shows us that individuals living in society are accepted as "people" until the social contract and then accepted as "mass." Because in elections or other power determination processes, society collectively transfers its individual powers to Leviathan. People exist momentary. We will examine this issue in depth in the following sections under the heading of mask and politics.

4.2 The Importance of Masks at the Carnival

One of the most important takeaways from the Venice carnival is the use of masks as a tool in creating a state of exception in carnivals. It offers the characters the opportunity to escape the law and any kind of judgment for a certain period of time. It builds a space where everything is suspended. The mask served as a ticket to the world of no draw. All activities in which the self is put in the background, violence, or contrary to social norms are associated with masks, and when the Carnival ends and the masks are removed, individuals can attribute all these irregularities to the masks and continue their lives. At this point, a completely different function of the mask welcomes us. It turns out that the mask that I mentioned in the previous chapters can remove the visibility of the individual by the society and remove him from the social rules and pressures. As a result of this detachment, the individual can now freely return to human nature, especially in carnival situations. It is freed from all the pressures of habitus. As in the *Commedia dell'Arte* section, the masks here also affect the behavior of those who wear them. In the examples in the first two sections, we focused on ceremonial masks such as theater and carnival. In the next section, we will look at the reflections of masks in the public sphere. We will continue to examine the upside-down version of the mask, which we see in Carnival and *Commedia dell'Arte*, through cinema to see how the mask preserves its historicity as well as its actuality and how it looks in the art reflections of the modern world.

5. JOKER AND PUBLIC

The mask is one of the most tangible tools of the actor's disguise in their own body in the theatrical construction. As an element of disguise, the mask paves the way for the actor to construct the play in life and construct the dramatic. For Mark Evans, the mask is a symbol of theatricality. (Evans 2006, 135) But the theatricality of the mask has spilled over the stage over the ages. The mask, which was previously used in religious rituals, ceremonies, and carnivals, has pushed itself into the public sphere with the effect of digitalization over time. And in this public sphere, it has dominated the whole ego of the person by acting not only as a commodity, but as required by habitus.

Now, what we are talking about when we say mask has turned into an abstract expression rather than a concrete commodity. It has become an indisputable necessity for the existence and acceptance of the individual in the public sphere. This requirement has been the answer to who the individual should be in daily life.

5.1 Joker and Comedy

Based on the Joker movie, it tells us the development process of an individual who tries to make himself accepted in society. In this process, we see the changes that the individual goes through and the problems he faces. Joker, which is an anti-hero movie, takes place in the stories of the famous superhero Batman as his worst enemy. Although the origin story has been told many times since its first appearance, this latest film shows us how this anti-hero changes and evolves as an ordinary person trying to be a part of society. The word ordinary here is essential because the Joker, which is Arthur, shows us that he is not a bad character trying to find himself in society, but that what happened to him compelled him to do so.

At the very beginning of the movie, while the announcement of the city-related problems and crises is heard on the radio, we see Arthur putting on make-up in front of the mirror. He tries to smile by forcing himself with his hands while doing his make-up. He tries to change his feelings with physical intervention, but he cannot hold back his tears. This scene shows us that Arthur is aware of what his clown make-up, or mask, requires, that he should be happy and look happy around him. He tries to cover reality with the demands

of the mask, but his crying shows that he has not been extraordinarily successful in doing this. Arthur tries to grasp what kind of attitude towards the world is better and more acceptable. His life outside of work does not please him. On the other hand, just putting on make-up and being a clown does not satisfy him either. He wants to be funny. But this funniness should not be just because of its appearance, as in clowning. It aims to be aware of its existence as an individual, which has its own jokes, and everyone adopts it. That is why he wants to be a comedian. Because, as Bergson defines it, he wants to be a comic. In other words, it is a comic that contains human elements and is accepted as human. Only truly human things can be ridiculous. A landscape can be beautiful, majestic, elegant, but never ridiculous. An animal can be laughed at, but that is because we have caught a human expression in it. (Bergson 2006, 5) That is, Arthur refuses to be ridiculous because of human mechanicalness. He seeks to be funny as a human being. Emotions are the worst enemy of laughter. For example, just before he commits his first murder, Arthur is bullied by three people on the subway. And when these three realize Arthur's discomfort, they show no pity. Arthur is a freak to them. As a result, it is funny for them. Arthur laughs unwillingly at his discomfort, while the others laugh because they find his situation amusing. Already in the following scenes, we see that he has a cognitive disorder and laughs in unexpected places.

5.2 Mask as a Social Positioner

The mask is more than just an object that changes the appearance by covering the whole or a certain part of the face. As soon as the mask is worn, it will be necessary to present the self-according to the rules of the mask. Although we perceive it as making a difference on its basis, most of the time the mask makes the individual ordinary and erases his width. So much so that once the mask is worn, it is inevitable that you will become ordinary. There are scenes in the movie that can be shown as an example of this subject. One of them is the scene where Arthur is holding a sign in front of a shop with his clown clothes and make-up as part of his job. A group of young people passing by steals Arthur's sign for no reason and runs away. Arthur starts chasing them and at one point they beat him up. Because Arthur is not an individual for them. It has become an object that they can easily bully. The mask/make-up covered Arthur's self and made him look standard. This situation appears throughout the movie as the primary problem that our character wants

to get rid of. In fact, he refers to this situation in one scene and says, "I was feeling better in the hospital". Because he could only be treated as a human being in the hospital. What his profession was, who he was, and what determined his social position did not matter.

5.3 Mask as an Emotional Expression Tool

In one of the later scenes of the movie, we hear a song that Arthur sings to entertain the children in the hospital. This song is a song that all of us know and there are versions in different languages. This song draws attention to a key place in the modern individual's self-expression and Arthur's life. This song:

If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands

If you are happy and you know it and you really want to show it,

If you are happy and you know it, clap your hands...

The audience is then expected to demonstrate this. Because the only way to understand that an individual is happy is to show it to another person. The mask is not just an external commodity used for a certain purpose. At the same time, the expression of our emotions in daily life can be our mask when appropriate. As I mentioned above, the origin of the word personality comes from *persu*, that is, mask. In other words, the importance of what we feel is based on the meaning that the other person attributes to it. What we "really" feel in the public sphere (here we are talking about the public sphere in the sense that Sennet is talking about) does not really matter. Therefore, the individual will always tend to build his whole daily life on this idea. At this point, it would be useful to talk about the public domain. The public sphere is the concept used in modern social theories to point to the common social activity area where thoughts, discourses and actions aimed at determining and realizing the common good of the society are produced and developed. The purpose of the public sphere was to enable the public to think critically about themselves and the practices of the state.

5.4 Public Sphere

The public sphere first emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries, in salons in France, coffeehouses in England, and reading rooms in Germany, where male members of the bourgeoisie and intellectuals met to discuss works of literature. These are the initial institutions of the public sphere. There were some common features of the public spaces that Habermas mentioned in the "structural transformation of the public sphere". These; ignoring the power of the participants stemming from their social and economic status, the availability of philosophical and literary works, the advanced quality of the press, their openness to everyone in principle, a critical and rational discussion environment, and the public use of reason. (Habermas 2018, 95) According to Habermas, the public sphere can be considered as sessions in which individuals leave their private spaces and discuss political issues that concern them.

Habermas's conceptualization of the public sphere is an extension of the Enlightenment thought that found its basis in Kant; the idea that what is good for society can be decided through critical-rational discussions. These gatherings have some rules and forms of action within themselves. These; normative action, which is to act in accordance with society, strategic action, that is, acting towards people's goals, and finally communicative action. These three forms of action cannot be considered independently of each other. But among these three actions, the communicative action is more fundamental for Habermas. Because it is particularly important for the participants in these meetings to effectively convey their thoughts to each other and to be accepted by the rest of the community. In its way of mediating and empowering public debate, the press remained an institution of the public sphere. (Habermas 2018, 99) Apart from Habermas's ideal public sphere, the public sphere approaches of Arendt and Sennett occupy a prominent place in the literature. Arendt marks a distinction between public and private sphere. Not only that, but Arendt also talks about the social sphere. The distinction between the private and public spheres of life has coincided with separate spheres, at least since the emergence of the ancient city-state; but the manifestation of the social sphere, which is neither private nor public, is a new phenomenon that has its origins in the birth of the modern age and finds its political form in the nation-state. (Arendt, et al 2018, 65) According to Arendt, the social sphere is located somewhere between the private and the public sphere. The social

infiltrates the public or private, forcing people to behave. The mask also appears as an opportunity for the individual to escape from this compulsion. Anonymity allows the individual to escape such constraints. In other words, the mask finds its place as an exception, despite the invasion of the social in Arendt's distinction between public and private sphere.

The press is a valuable tool for the masses to discuss and gather around innovative ideas. According to Sennett, on the other hand, it expresses the emergence of symptoms of psychic distress related to new elements of public culture. Fear of involuntary revealing of character, avoidance of emotions for defensive purposes, and increasing passivity occur in individuals. (Sennett 2013, 253) Sennett states that the public and private spheres are not fixed situations, and that people's discovery of the social environment takes place during childhood. In the middle of the eighteenth century, it was determined that adult people positioned themselves differently from children. According to this understanding, public life seems to be the domain of adults only, while children are limited to the private sphere. As I mentioned above in Arendt, although for varied reasons, in Sennett, just like Arendt, the mask emerges as a tool that creates an exception. In other words, the Mask has become the adult's toy in the public sphere. This change in the individual means the disappearance of the public person. According to Sennett, the society in which the public person disappears is a private society. In an intimate society, even impersonal social phenomena are transformed into personality problems in order to gain meaning (Sennett 2013, 285). It can be concluded that Arthur does not feel like belonging to society and that this is what the young children are adopted into in the song. Self-expression has lost its reality and is drowned in the need to respond to social demands. The private society that emerged with the collapse of the public man is based on two principles: narcissism and community (*gemeinschaft*). Narcissism is the individual's focus on 'what do I feel' in every situation in society. Congregation, on the other hand, is the formation that people form in order to have direct and open emotional relations with others in a society where public man has disappeared. However, community formations cause more separation in the society, marginalization, and exclusion of those who do not belong to them. For this reason, according to Sennett, communities distance people from publicity. Undoubtedly, the problem that Arthur is experiencing is the answer to the question "how do I feel". On the other hand, as will be seen later in the movie, the main reason Arthur started a

rebellion is based on the second principle I mentioned above. In other words, the city of Gotham was divided into quite different communities within itself, and the grudge and hatred of these communities against each other increased. Later, though unwillingly, Arthur became the voice of this rebellion and the events escalated. In fact, Arthur is the very embodiment of the collapse of the public man. First, the problem of what do I feel was at the center of his life, but later on, he initiated the expression of a community's feelings.

In the example I mentioned above, children, each of whom is a candidate for public sphere, prepare themselves for society with such teachings at the very beginning of the road. This, as Richard Sennet mentioned, causes the person to focus on actually feeling rather than the objective content of what is felt. The result is that subjectivity becomes so much an end in itself and the less that person can express himself. In other words, emotions are also under the influence of symbolization. Society is shaped around symbolic interactionism. Mead, who made important contributions to symbolic interactionism, states that people are not only aware of others but also have the capacity to be aware of themselves. Thus, people enter into symbolic interaction not only with others but also with themselves. Symbols are not finished realities, but rather an ongoing process. This is the process of conveying "meaning", which is the subject of most symbolic interactionist analysis. When interacting, people learn traditional symbols and use them to take on the roles of others in a game.

Blumer puts forward three principles to explain symbolic interaction. First principle; The individual acts in accordance with the meaning he gives to something. The second principle; The same thing can mean different things to different people. The third principle is the meaning that an individual attaches to something is not permanent. Thanks to the mask, the individual can build a variable image and take on the person he/she wants to be. The Joker has managed to be the voice of the people around him with the identity he has assumed and has fueled social indignation. It is not known who the real joker is until he surrenders, and he can easily escape from the law. Lawyers are helpless against individuals who collectively assume the same image thanks to the mask. In this context, the mask is the most crucial element of the symbolic interaction of the individual, and

this element has a prominent place in politics. In the next section, we will further clarify this issue by looking more deeply at the relationship between mask and politics.



6. MASK AND POLITICS

It is known that animals, and therefore animal metaphors, have a special place in Hobbes' thought which is "homo hominu lupus." In *Leviathan*, one of his most fundamental works, the philosopher frequently mentioned animals as a negative element, a sub-human being, especially in the context of the concept of "contract": Animals are beings for which no covenant can be made. In the second part of the book, it is emphasized that humans are superior to animals in terms of their capacity to understand; In the fifth chapter, it is repeated that in this context, man is also superior in terms of his ability to transform results into general rules. This claim of superiority in the context of understanding and reasoning actually lays the groundwork for a superiority in human political capacity.

In the first sense, according to the terminology of the thinker, it is mentioned together with other animals as a sub-human creature that cannot sign a contract. Nor is it mentioned that humans are wolves or lions who, in the state of nature, intend to kill each other.

Hobbes's picture of human life is not a world where wolves tend to eat each other, but a world where the wolf pack does not even come together. There is no point in building a shelter or working. The violent fear of death makes the assurances of people's strength and creativity lose their meaning. However, in Hobbes' eyes, the existence of an animal is only related to its power. In this respect, man in the state of nature is even worse than a wolf or a lion. It does not even have the capacity to form a herd. Perhaps, as John Bramhall put it, "Hobbes' human nature is worse than the nature of Bees, Wolves, or the wildest beasts" (Rossello 2010, 258).

There are two principles, both of which are absolutely true: Man is God to man, and Man is Man's wolf. The first of these is in the relationship of citizens with each other; the second is true in the relationship between states [commonwealth]. In justice and charity, in the virtues of peace, citizens show some resemblance to God. Among states, however, the malice of the bad people compels the good to resort to the virtues of war—which is nothing but violence and deceit—for their protection, namely the predatory nature of beasts. (Hobbes 2013, 3-4)

As it is clearly seen here, Hobbes used the expression "homo homini lupus" not to describe the relationship between people in the state of nature, but to describe the relationship between these states after the state of nature was overcome by contract and states were established.

6.1 Mask of the Ruler

People have started to establish communities because of the necessity of resolving conflicts of interest with third parties in order to survive by their nature. As the populations of these communities increase, conflicts of interest increase at the same rate. And as a result, a superstructure was needed to organize the interests. but the main problem has arisen in terms of managing this inclusive superstructure. Because the administrator here had exceptional rights as the guardian of this organization. As I mentioned in the previous sections, after people started living together, they felt the need to transfer their power to a ruler. And after handing over their power to the ruler, they turned into the mass. In order to gain this power, the rulers had to look like the person the community wanted. As Machiavelli mentioned in his book *The Prince*, in order to influence the people, the ruler must wear the mask of the person society wants. This is the same today.

Andrew Heywood, on the other hand, defined power as the power to achieve a desired result. According to him, power is power. In addition, although power is close to the concepts of 'power' and 'manipulation', "contrary to influence, it is used as the power to punish or reward." (Heywood 2011, 29) From this point of view, it can be stated that the power tries to establish a domination with the ability to punish by using force. Because if there is punishment or reward in a place, it is inevitable to dominate or control there.

According to Michel Foucault, who evaluates power from a distinct perspective, power is a condition of individuals' possibilities to be subjective. Because in Foucault, what is important in terms of power is under what conditions and in what forms the subject emerges in the order of discourse. Expressing another definition of the concept of power with reference to Gramsci's understanding, Hülya Özçağlar Eroğlu, in her article "Foucault's Powers", expressed power as sovereignty based on consent and stated that power is a hegemonic bloc and different classes openly consent to this bloc. According

to Eroğlu, power is “neither the product of only production relations nor only class struggles.” (Özçağlar Eroğlu 2016, 44).

Elias Canetti, who looks at power from a distinct perspective, made an assessment that the moment of survival is the moment of power. (Canetti 2021, 229) Here Canetti identifies the survival of the victors against death with power. Bertrand Russell, on the other hand, expressed power as the product of desired results in his book "Power". Because Russell saw power essentially as a quantitative concept. So much so that one of the two people with the same desires is more powerful than the other if he fulfills all the desires of the other and other desires in addition to these desires. (Russell 1995, 43) Russell is of the opinion that acquiring power is a desire, and then power can occur with the realization of this desire. In fact, according to him, there is no limit to the desires of human beings, and the first of these is the desire to gain power and glory. Here, the state of gaining glory and power differs from person to person. Max Weber, on the other hand, "The dignity of power, in practice, means the glory and honor of establishing political power over another community." (Weber 1996, 241) But when it comes to power, it is exceedingly difficult to talk about the fact that the government can fully hold the power without the support of the masses. Because one of the most important components of power is perception. This perception will reinforce the power and ensure the legitimacy of its owner.

6.2 Governing and Perception

The passion created by the new thinks that adopting everything in motion cannot fully benefit from what upper modernity brings. (Balandier 2006, 13) The mask emerges as a phenomenon that will reduce this discomfort of individuals and the government and to take shelter as a safe area. At the end of the day, political leaders have to present and explain themselves to their followers in order to consolidate their legitimacy. while doing this, he tries to be the person they want them to be, and in fact surrenders the political arena to theatricality.

Imagination illuminates the political phenomenon; Of course, it does this from within, in a way it is building it. All systems of power are diapositives with the aim of producing

certain effects, and these are similar to the illusions created by the theater apparatus. The imagination of Machiavellian religion is also the ruler demiurge, prophet, or hero; this situation makes it institutional, a supporter of the established sacred religion and religious ceremonies, and it also sanctifies religions. But the displacement required by political practice is of a different kind: Machiavelli, in the city of Florence, the cradle of theatre, knew from his own experience as a dramatist the intimate relationship between the art of directing and the art of the stage. Drama techniques are used not only in theater but also in site management. In order to seize and hold power, the ruler must act as if he were a political actor (Balandier 2006, 2).

There is the adopted, tested, soned situation, which in some cases comes across as a way of influencing the masses in an easy way. Times change, and society changes, but in every society and individual, this change does not mean complete renewal and disappearance of the old. For this reason, it turns out that politicians exhibit different attitudes in diverse groups in order to keep up with the traditional structure, especially in the field of politics, as well as to follow the trends. Because insecurities and self-doubt can be hidden behind a perfect mask, they continue to exist, and they often reveal themselves when a person gets emotionally close to someone. For this reason, narcissistic people avoid these situations by seeing themselves above other people and not having a real relationship with them. Distance allows them to hide themselves better.

6.3 Governing with Mask

The mask is not just a tool for macro-level manipulations. At the micro level, the mask is necessary for managing small groups, determining the hierarchy, and directing it. Some individuals hide behind the mask and direct a small group through micro-fascism. While individuals escape from authority with the Mask, they can also establish their own micro-level authority centers. According to some, the mask is perceived as a tool for concealment, and for others, it is perceived as an object that allows the individual to reflect himself as he wishes. For Sennet, the Mask is a tool; It gives the person the opportunity to observe safely. The mask is a way of protecting the person from being influenced or seduced by an authority.” (Sennett 2013, 141). In other words, the individual gets the chance to make an objective and safe observation by hiding behind

the mask (character should be understood when mask is said here) by cutting off the relation with the self and what is going on around him/her. In the movie *Fight Club*, we see that the consumer society isolates individuals and eliminates the concept of solidarity. And we see that what we call solidarity is used only to reintroduce individuals into the system. For example, the character Bob was once a bodybuilder. Bob, who is completely at the center of the show, as time goes on, the hormones he uses to stay on the show cause testicular and breast cancer. Thus, Bob has been pushed out of the show and he has no choice but to join the solidarity groups to get back into the show. In other words, it is trying to stay in the system somehow. Bob has lost the mask that is accepted and accepted in society and is trapped in a mask he does not want. The narrator, like Bob, takes part in these groups and seeks the solution of his own problem.

Although the narrator is the main character, he does not have a name. He tells the story to us, but as an individual, we do not know his name. He enters therapy groups under various pseudonyms in order to relax a little in society, and he makes himself accepted by acting as if he is one of the people in that group. Thanks to this acceptance, he can sleep comfortably at home. These meetings serve to isolate the narrator under different masks by feeling himself belongs to the group he is in. Another feature of these meetings is that the participants take off their masks for a moment by pouring out their hearts to each other transparently (except for Marla and the Narrator). As a result of this sincerity, every speaker who expresses himself is thanked. In fact, the Narrator told the audience at a meeting, “such honest strangers make me watery-eyed too.” he underlines this situation.

While the narrator is continuing these therapies, something unexpected happens and he sees Marla, who does not belong to that group just like herself and hides behind the mask in order to belong. The narrator's seeing Marla and recognizing that she is a fraud can be compared to the individual seeing himself in the mirror. It is useful to remember the mirror stage mentioned by Lacan here. Because, while the Narrator continues various efforts to find himself and find peace, he sees himself in Marla as if looking in a mirror. When he sees himself, there is a distinction between reality and illusion, just like in the mirror. Because Marla becomes an illusion, and the Narrator becomes aware of her own reality. But when the narrator realizes this situation, he rejects this natural process

described by Lacan and tries to stand against it. This awareness deprives him of the reliefs he has recently attained. When he realizes this, he thinks that if he can remove Marla (that is, the illusion), he can find peace again. In other words, if this separation disappears, it threatens him in order to reunite his illusion and reality and continue his life. But just as Lacan mentioned, the Narrator cannot help admiring the image (Marla) he sees in the mirror. Although there is a lot to say about the mask in this movie, one of the most remarkable ones is this; As the narrator and Tyler Durden fight in the parking lot, this fight is shown to the audience on a security camera in one scene. In this footage, the audience cannot see Tyler and see the Narrator being tossed around alone. Because the security camera is an inanimate object without feelings and prejudices. What he sees, he conveys. However, we see Tyler as well, as an editing and director's style comes into play from other angles other than the security camera. The mask is exactly such an object. Although it has no material meaning, it can only exist with the meanings we assign to it.

7. CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to reveal the importance of the mask in our lives both as an abstract concept and as a concrete object by examining the different meanings it has gained in different fields. It is aimed to show that it preserves both its historicity and actuality. In addition, it has been tried to reveal that the mask does not only hide the individual in form, but also its effects on the existence of the individual, that is, her/his reality. While doing this, it has shown that individuals can go out of the current order by creating a situation of exception. In this thesis, first of all, the mask as an object was mentioned, and then the meanings attributed to the mask were examined under four main headings: Aesthetics and Mask, Carnival and Mask, Public Sphere and Mask, Politics and Mask. When the mask is considered at its most basic, it appears as an ordinary object. But what makes the mask so meaningful is the meanings we attach to it. The cumulative accumulation of meaning in the historical process has removed the concept of a mask from being an ordinary object. It also fits the three basic types of action that Habermas has stated. Normative action, Strategic action, and Communicative action. Mask provides individuals with a fluidity between these three types of action. As mentioned in all sections, when a mask is worn, individuals in the carnival leave their own identities aside and take on the character that the mask offers them and experience the state of exception to the fullest. The mask offers individuals an opportunity to escape from the situation they are in. Bakhtin develops the theory of carnival in this regard. According to him, carnival is a field where official ideology and official language are ridiculed. Therefore, the hierarchy and rules that the official ideology sees as absolute are suspended in this area.

The mask reflects a frozen facial expression due to its structure. No other expression can be used. That is, the gesture of the mask remains immortal until the mask disappears. This stability or frozenness can be frightening when considered on its own. But with this feature, the mask resembles a concept we know very well, photograph. The mask starts by freezing the moment, just like a photograph. But the difference from the photo is that when someone puts the mask on their eyes, the frozen one starts to move again. For example, during a game, the frozen expression/mimic in the mask becomes fluid, creating a paradox. Maybe this paradox is the slit opened by the actor who puts the mask on his

face and invites the audience inside. When we look at the anonymous expression on the face as soon as the mask is put on the face, we understand that he is not in a literal attitude. He created this image with a momentary reaction, a movement he made without being aware of it. Even if we see it as the virtual reality of the individual, the human view and behavior that it reflects is unique to us. When spoken to the personality of the mask, the conflict between the individual and individuality will be revealed.

The social history of man began when he came out of the state of being a whole in the natural world and realized that he was a separate entity from the nature and people around him. (Fromm 2011, 35) this difference was essential for the existence of the individual. However, when we come to the century we live in, it has become difficult to talk about the differences of individuals in an age where even the culture that has difference in its basis is industrialized. In such an age, masks are needed more than ever. In order to be an individual, to be different, to assume the desired identity, masks began to be needed. Personality began to change from environment to environment according to the masks we wear. Due to its historicity, Mask has not lost the solutions it contains. In other words, one of the first uses of the mask was protection. At this point, the need for physical protection may have decreased, but he has not lost anything from himself in protecting and hiding the individual. On the other hand, while protecting the individual, it puts the individual into its own patterns.

As a result, this thesis aims to examine the historical development of the mask and its usage areas and aim to reveal that the meaning of the mask for humanity throughout the ages has changed in practice, but in theory, it has not changed much. Besides, as Sennet mentioned, the existence of the public sphere and therefore the city is completely dependent on the mask. Because what constitutes the two phenomena, I mentioned are basically individuals. When Sennett says that we are losing the mask, we are losing the mask, that is, the persona, which belongs to us, as I tried to reveal in this thesis. But paradoxically, the mask allows us to gain new personas and become fluid in modern life.

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