

Representation of Agamben's Concept of 'Homo Sacer': Interpretative Analysis in Turkish TV Series Based on Turkey's 1980 Military Coup

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Abstract : The notion of biopolitics, as studied by such intellectuals as Foucault, Agamben, and Negri, is an important guide for comprehending the current understanding of politics. While Foucault evaluates biopolitics as a survival policy, Giorgio Agamben, German leftist, identifies the theory with death. Agamben claims the fact we can all be considered to be homo sacer who are abandoned by the law, left in the field of exception, and whose killing does not require punishment. Agamben defines the person who is tried by the public for committing a crime but is not allowed to be sacrificed and whose killing is not considered a crime, as 'homo sacer'. This study analyzes how the concept of 'homo sacer' is made visible in TV series such as *Çemberimde Gül Oya* (Cagan Irmak, 2005-2005), *Hatırla Sevgili* (Ummu Burhan, 2006-2008), *Bu Kalp Seni Unutur Mu?* (Aydin Bulut, 2009-2010) all of which portray the period Turkey's 1980 military coup, within the framework of Agamben's thoughts and notions about biopolitics. When the main plots of these abovementioned TV series, which constitute the universe of this study, are scrutinized closely, they lay out the understanding of politics that has existed throughout history and prevails today. Although there is a large number of TV series on the coup of 1980, these three series are the only main productions that specifically focused on the event itself. Our final analysis will reveal that the concepts of homo sacer, bare life, exception, camp have been embodied in different ways in these three series. In these three series, which all deal with similar subjects using differing perspectives, the dominant understanding of politics is clearly conveyed to the audience. In all three series, the reigning power always decides on the exceptions, those who will live, those who will die, and those who will be ignored by law. Such characters as Mehmet, Sinan, Yıldız, Deniz, Defne, all of which we come across in these series, are on trial as criminals of thought and are subjected to various forms of torture while isolated in an area where they are virtually deprived of law. Their citizenship rights are revoked. All of them are left alone with their bare lives (zoe).

Keywords : bare life, biopolitics, homo sacer, sovereign power, state of exception

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