

# Violencia de Estado, guerra, resistencia. Por una nueva política de la Izquierda

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*Violencia de Estado, guerra, resistencia. Por una nueva política de la Izquierda*

Judith Butler

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82 pp.

ISBN 978-849-2946-29-7

As a continuance of Hanna Arendt's legacy, this book poses the question of violence and war beyond the boundaries of politics, to invent a new theory of ethics. The connection between visual and mobile cultures and the violence is exhaustively examined by Butler across this short research. In order for scholars to re-consider their stance respecting to the victimization and vulnerability, she considers that the instruments of war that causes suffering to human beings are originally created to make this life safer. An assumption of this caliber opens the door to discuss the paradox of hegemony where the frontiers between oppressed and oppressors are blurred. The war-state not only

accelerates the vulnerability of human beings but also confers legitimacy to governors. In view of this, Butler adds, we must accept that mass-media are monopolized by the state to exert visual control over the population. The information that is circulated throughout the society remains associated to the discourse of politics, functional to ruling elite interests. Epistemologically speaking, whenever we hear or watch news related to battles, a frame of stereotypes is adjusted. The sense of reality broadcasted by the media reports acts of war, but this information corresponds with a subtle tactics of violence as well. Most certainly, in the late capitalism, violence is commoditized and sold as a visual product to maintain an entertained audience, but to some extent, this runs a serious risk simply because lay-people's understanding is framed on a biased view of facts. That way, the mediated frames not only exhibit the acts of violence inherited in all wars, but also contributes to create a biased interpretation of the events. Therefore, the image becomes uncontrollable because of the velocity of reproduction that alters its contours. In

DOI: 10.4018/ijcwt.2011100104

perspective, the circulation of news determines the social bonds to the extent to control the loyalties of consumers. It is important not to lose the sight that many soldiers are recruited in the army forces to escape from the poverty or the situation they live. In this vein, war allows the professionalization of poor citizens and expands their possibilities, which are subject to the exploitation of senses in order for viewers to commit. As actors, soldiers play a role in the theatricalization of battlefields. During the state of emergencies, wars wake up, citizenry confers their loyalty to the system, and social protest is temporarily controlled, mitigated, and reduced.

As the previous argument was given, Butler acknowledges that the current preventive war-state evokes the rights to limit the daily life of people. Although there are, in some conditions, collateral damages in any conflict, western states are aimed at agreeing to typify a controlled quota of violence legally, decoding and controlling violence by means of law and international covenant of human rights. The resources are mobilized to cause certain damage to enemies, with some care not to violating the grounding human rights. However, all wars, to some extent, violate human rights. Similarly, the war-state facilitates further identification about what lives should be exterminated and what should be protected. Unless otherwise resolved, it is clear how war produces deprivation in order for empires to index new local economies, convert their inhabitants in workers, and recycle their local resources to stimulate the consumption in largest metropolis. One of most interesting sections of this book refers to the way the bodies of victims are manipulated by armies to coin an ethnocentric discourse. The statistics about casualties depend on how the information is presented. This process emotionally moulds the reaction of people. While civilians are often considered as innocents, terrorists refer to them as soldiers. Underpinned in the proposition that some tactics of war consists in creating false information based on manipulation of words, Butler explores how the sentiment of victimization may be politically re-channelled to install a dictatorship. This means that human

right proponents, sometimes, may support a bloody totalitarianism; a theme which may be studied in the contemporary Argentina. Whatever the case may be, the main thesis of this valuable research is that some leftist scholars should take attention not to be employed as proponents of a new subtle racism. Whether a stronger state exerts pressure against its ethnic minorities, as Muslims in USA, public opinion may react against these strategies denouncing constitutional rights. To solve this potential short-circuits, States, in late modernity, appeal to victimization. Efficient policies entail to cut the individual freedoms of Muslims, portraying their rejection to gays, radical feminists, and lesbians. Some sexual minorities are, under these conditions, framed to fight against Muslim-Americans. Ethnocentrically, national purity is used as a form of strengthening its own boundaries. Activists and left-wing scholars ought to re-consider the practical application of some philosophical concepts such as liberty, democracy, equal opportunities, racism, ethnocentrism, and fear. Secondly, it is important to situate the demands of minorities in pro of an egalitarian assimilation of migrants. One thing is to accept the cultural values of hosting community, and another is multiculturalism.

Following this argument, if migrants are accepted by means of the sacrifice of their cultural values and customs, the reactionary nationalism would be a fertile source for terrorism. Rather, politicians should implement policies of acceptance of strangers more democratically and hospitably. Last but not least, Butler warns that the international business corporations that control the mass media today play a pivotal role in the preventive war to Middle East and the policies of US worldwide. She accepts that access of information is based on the process of communication, but the coverage of wars seems to be framed following specific interests to maintain the power of *status quo*. Far away from being a question of religious belief or fundamentalist values, terrorists attacks are result of the local resentment against USA and its arbitrary intervention in Middle East. To put this in bluntly, terrorism has a political nature

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