Artwork: I'm a Bird by Chimeddorj Shagdarjav bronze sculpture installation outside of the Mongolia pavilion, Venice Biennale, 2017. Photo credit: Alessandra Capodacqua

Only under conditions in which [a] loss would matter does the value of life appear.—Judith Butler, *Frames of War*

"Americans! They kill people for no reason! Now of course, the US government gives all kinds of reasons for its killing while at the same time refusing to call those killings 'killings'" –Paris taxi-driver in *Rush Hour 3*

...Why terrorist? Because my blood isn't calm? It's boiling!...
I'm not against peace, peace is against me
It's going to destroy me, erase my culture
You don't listen to our voices
You silence us and degrade us
And who are you? When did you become ruler?

Take a look at how many you've killed and how many orphans you've created

Our mothers are weeping, our fathers are in anguish

Our land is disappearing, I reiterate who are you?

You grew up spoiled while we grew up in poverty

Who grew up with freedom and who grew up in confinement?

We fight for our freedom, but you've made that into a crime

And you the terrorist, call me a terrorist?...—"Meen Erhabe" (Who's the terrorist?), DAM

I.

At the height of the first US-Iraq war, Jean Baudrillard famously observed that the war was not, in fact, taking place and that what we were observing in the daily news coverage was little more than a performance of power. "Promotional, speculative, virtual," Baudrillard noted, "this war no longer corresponds to Clausewitz's formula of politics pursued by other means, it rather amounts to the absence of politics pursued by other means."[1] Baudrillard's statement points to the ways in which the formation of events, including war, in the "unreal spaces" of information—a 24/7 news media that in its expanding, speculative, substancelessness was increasingly little more than a reflection of itself, wondering for the cameras: "Am I pretty enough, am I operational enough, am I spectacular enough, am I sophisticated enough to make entry onto the historical stage?"[2]—represented a decisive moment in western culture: Nothing is real anymore and all we have are representations.

Since Baudrillard's observation, we have seen a proliferation of war, most notably in the Global War on Terror, testifying, perhaps, to the truth of his argument: a power anxious about itself needs to continually establish its own presence. On this view, war becomes the instantiation of power because nothing makes real power's presence than death. But in the liberal imagination of secular, humanist democracies, death cannot announce itself explicitly. This is where we confront the limit of Baudrillard's argument. What the virtualization of war announces is not the void of representations, but rather the void of its own meaning. Here, we can indeed conceive of war as performance, but not as the empty gesture Baudrillard thought it was. Rather, if war is performative, it is because it is because it hides what is its truest realty: war is death and only death. This notion; however, lies hidden in the discourse of war's political function: Wars are fought for life. This is perhaps best represented in the Global War on Terror.

The consequences of these developments are paradoxical. On the one hand, this kind of virtualization has extended the arm of power, and thus war, potentially expanding the breadth and depth of

sovereignty across the globe as well as within the microspheres of daily life. On the other hand, and by virtue of this very expansion of sovereignty, power has remained almost totally invisible since it is no longer linked to the figural—the sovereign, the territory, the population—but finds meaning in the hyperreal, which is to say, the spaces of the virtual and the performative. [3] How, I ask, are we to make sense of this when it comes to war since we know that the efficiency of war must rest on its capacity to articulate itself in the "real,"–to kill and destroy?

Focusing on the discourses surrounding the War on Terror, I to explore this question and tentatively suggest that the efficiency of war must be understood in relation to a cultural imaginary of life. This argument follows on from what Judith Butler has argued in *Precarious Life* that specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not apprehended as having lived.[4] This means, as Butler shows in her follow up text *Frames of War*, what takes place in the framing of every war is a selective process of appearances through which certain forms of life are rendered visible and bestowed with meaning while others are rendered "ungrievable." For, as Butler observes, if it is the case that

> I am already up against a world I never chose when I exercise my agency…[i]t follows, then, that certain kinds of bodies will appear more precariously than others, depending on which versions of the body, or of morphology in general, support or underwrite the idea of the human life that is worth protecting, sheltering, living, mourning. These normative frameworks establish in advance what kind of life will be a life worth living, what life will be a life worth preserving, and what life will become worthy of being mourned. Such views of life pervade and implicitly justify contemporary war. Lives are divided into those representing certain kinds of states and those representing threats to state-centered liberal democracy, so that war can be righteously waged on behalf of some lives, while the destruction of other lives can be righteously defended.[5]

For my purposes, what is important to emphasize in Butler's discussion is the ways in which these two processes—the activity of war and its framing– fold into one another so as to produce a vision of war as both effective—it kills and destroys– while also producing no death. What we find, I suggest, is that the contradictions of war are resolved by a discourse in which the political economy of war as the continual circulation of life and death is occluded by rendering the lives of its victims outside of the political imagination. "Such populations," as Butler has noted in reference to war's invisible victims, "are lose-able, or can be forfeited, precisely because they are framed as being already lost or forfeited; they are cast as threats to human life as we know it rather than as living populations in need of protection from illegitimate state violence, famine or pandemics."[6] Thus as with Butler[7], the

question of power in war must consider both the beingness of the life it saves or destroys as well as the ways in which being (or non-being) enters the realm of meaning. How, I ask, does the War on Terror inscribe life?

II.

I would like to begin by situating my argument against the political theories of Paul Kahn and Alain de Benoist who argue, albeit in distinct ways, for understanding the global War on Terror in more historically traditional terms of state sovereignty. In *Sacred Violence: Torture, Terror and Sovereignty*, Paul Kahn suggests that political violence, exemplified for Kahn in torture but which we can extend, as Elaine Scarry does in *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, to war, creates and sustains political meaning. Taking up an argument similar to Scarry's, Kahn argues that political violence corresponds to a political theology of the state for which citizens are willing to kill, die and torture. In this fashion, war forms part of a politics of sacrifice in which political violence, in this case war, proceeds from an imaginative structure binding citizens to the state. When terror strikes, citizens are called upon to sacrifice.

Similarly, in a recent analysis of war and terrorism, Alain de Benoist distinguishes contemporary war from its medieval predecessors and argues that the War on Terror represents a return to the ideological and juridical universalism of the "just war" era. According to de Benoist, the "just wars" of the medieval era produced wars of annihilation. The enemy, produced in moral rather than political terms, represented an evil whose total destruction formed war's moral imperative. Citing Schmitt, de Benoist notes that "such a war is necessarily unusually intense and inhuman because, by transcending the limits of the political framework, it simultaneously degrades the enemy into moral and other categories and is forced to make of him a monster that must not only be defeated, but also utterly destroyed."[8]

According to de Benoist, the Westphalian order that would follow the period of just wars would produce a new vision of war through a political rather than a moral rationality. The "regulated war," writes de Benoist, which would become "characteristic of the Westphalian order founded on the *jus publicum europaeum*," would replace the "just war," of the "old *republica christiana*," and distinguish adversaries in newly imminent terms. In this context, belligerents in war, while regarded as enemies, would nevertheless "respect each other and [would] not treat one another as criminals, so that a peace treaty becomes possible and even remains the normal, mutually accepted end of war."[9] Regulated wars between interstate actors sought as their end, then, not the destruction of life, but

the territorial security and political dignity of the state. As such, regulated war would become juridical war where the rule of law would prevent "armed conflicts from degenerating into total war" through a "blind and reciprocal annihilation."[10] For de Benoist, the War on Terror and the era of human rights which preceded it form a shift in war's meaning: wars which had once been fought for the sake of securing peace between states are now fought for the sake of humanity itself. De Benoist summarizes the implications of this transformation in the following paradox: Today, we fight "perpetual war[s] for perpetual peace."[11]

In both analyses cited above, we find that we come up against a limit. For Kahn, the limit is the state: "Political meaning," writes Kahn, "enters the world through killing and being killed [in] war. We take our first step toward torture when we take up arms in defense of the state" (LOC 277). For de Benoist, we find the opposite condition: war is limitless when wars are fought not for the state and its citizens, but for that which now transcends the state: human rights, global security and universal justice. Without an anchor in the exclusive concerns of the state, without the limits of normative laws of power, war pursued for the sake of humanity destroys that which it seeks to protect.

Thus the question of war's meaning remains unresolved when we begin to interrogate Kahn and de Benoist's sources of meaning. Why does the state matter such that we are willing to kill and die for it? Extending this question, for what does a global war proceed that finds no justification in the state or even in international law, but rather in humanity itself? When we take these questions to their limits, we find life. War becomes politically meaningful because it is continually renegotiating the terms of "life." It is always asking who lives and who dies and whose lives and deaths matter in war's accounting of its own progress. In doing so, I suggest, it (re)produces the political imaginary of "life" so that it can kill while simultaneously appearing to produce life. We can explore this idea via the notion of biopolitics, to which I know turn.

III.

The idea of biopolitics first emerged in the work of Michel Foucault. In the first volume of *The History of Sexuality* Foucault begins an analysis of power that would mark a turning point both in his work and, as a result of his influence, in political-philosophical thought about power and its operations. In the final chapter of what was to be a three-volume project, Foucault describes a shift in the configuration of power that began at the end of the seventeenth century. Sovereign power, which, up until that point, represented a divine right to kill, gave way to a diffuse formation of state power manifest in life, its incitement, its optimization, its organization, represented in a people. In this new

configuration, death receded to the background as power more and more expressed itself in the language of life. However, in this process, death would not *not* matter in the political arena. Rather, it would merely move to the background as it became an implicit, but potent, guarantee of life for some. As Foucault noted, death "now manifested as simply the reverse of the right of the social body to ensure, maintain and develop its life."[12] In this configuration, war, which had once existed to defend the life and power of the sovereign, would now be "waged on behalf of the existence of everyone."[13] The paradox that would be produced by this "guarantee of life" would, be an even more rigorous pursuit of death: "Populations are mobilized for the purpose of wholesale slaughter in the name of life necessity: massacres have become vital."[14] The decision for war would thus also ultimately rest on a question of life—in the survival of one people at the expense of another. This is not only because the model of power upon which the state had once gained its legitimacy had shifted. Rather, the equivalence of war with life was also a function of war's expanding efficiency. Wars no longer threatened to kill just enemy soldiers. With the advent of more destructive weapons, war threatened to obliterate entire civilizations—cities, states and peoples. Wars increasingly became about survival.

Foucault's analysis was confirmed by experiences of the twentieth century–the two World Wars, the unprecedented use of weapons of mass destruction, the systematic slaughter of entire populations, the advent of the atomic bomb. It is also likely that the imminence of nuclear war during the Cold War played a role in how Foucault came to view war. While no biographical details illustrate these points, the redescriptions of state power in Foucault's analysis of biopower and biopolitics as well as his later lectures on government[15] point to a world struggling to reconcile the existence of unprecedented state powers to both kill and produce life. On one hand, this power over life/death required new grounds of legitimacy outside of violence since violence had proven totally destructive—even to the state itself. One the other, emerging globalizing patterns in war, law, and capital also began to reduce the space of state sovereignty to the power to kill and injure, becoming increasingly what is today called a security state. This paradox, I suggest, would be resolved in representations of life of, as Butler as shown[16], recognizing not only certain forms of life as living (and thus worth fighting for), but also others as not living and yet other as threats to "life" who must be killed. There is a complex ideological genealogy here that I'd like to explore before moving on to consider the implications of this way of though in the War on Terror.

We can think back to the ideological matrix created by early figurations of the "the human" to see the ways in which constructions of life, even in their most expansive forms, hinge on imaginations of non-life. Paradoxically, we can find this most acutely in the emergence of "just war" theories aiming to

delimit war when we note that the restrictions on war and its atrocities would only apply to Christians. Thus already in the theory of a just war was the root of a political division in life—unrestricted violence against Christians was prohibited but against "infidels" and "barbarians," everything was permitted.[17] Through this exclusion/inclusion, the laws of war constituted in political terms the subjects against whom wars would be legitimized outside of the law–while remaining "just." This way of thinking would provide the ideological foundations for not only wars of religion, but also, the era of colonialism and the institutions of modern slavery. Indeed, what the French called "mission civilisatrice" bringing civilization to "barbaric" people, was premised on the idea that "only fully civilized human beings liv[ed] within the bounds of state systems and those who did not (and they happened to live outside Europe) belonged to inferior societies that 'were scarcely human.'"[18] Similarly, the development of what would become international law, first called "the law of humanity," aimed to "correct" and "enlighten" the spaces of "barbarity" by introducing, first, Christianity, and later, Enlightenment reason, western knowledge systems and the state form itself. The order of political violence produced by these missions functioned to (re)produce and reinforce the political imaginings of life from which they drew their meaning—this is to say, European, Christian life—while destroying the lives of those constituted outside this imaginative boundary. What I wish to emphasize however, is that by virtue of the embedded idea just war theory provided that the killing of some was not only permissible, but necessary, it was also possible to kill and destroy entire peoples without ever seeming to because such peoples were not thought to be living in the first place.

In an essay written in 1938, Carl Schmitt located this moral concept of war as the precursor to the era of "modern just wars" in which the crimes of nations would be regarded as "outrages" against a newly normative international morality.[19] The paradox of this, Schmitt rather presciently noted, would be a reconfiguration of war itself as absolute:

> ...wars are no longer battles between adversaries who recognize one another's rights and status, but tend more and more to become police actions opposing the police of the international order to the state judged an aggressor. War becomes thus a kind of battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil, between those who arrogate to themselves the right to judge and those who should be put on the dock.[20]

Schmitt's remarks were consequential to the resolution of WWI and took into consideration the emerging political dimensions of wars that were, as he foresaw, to be fought on a global scale. What he did not consider, but which make his comments all the more significant, was the emerging

technologization of war and the impact this would have on its politics. The deadliness of biological weaponry, the use of bombs, and the growing reliance on air warfare took war beyond the battlefield and made it a total assault on life. Politically, this would involve, as Schmitt aptly notes, a new configuring of enemies in absolute terms so as to justify the absolutism of its destructiveness. Political enemies would be imagined in a language of good and evil so that wars would find meaning in a discourse of life while continuing to be effective. While this dynamic would be evident throughout the World Wars and continue in throughout the Cold War period, the simultaneous necessity of death and its disavowal would become most apparent after Vietnam when it became clear that war, in order to appear justified, would have to rigorously kill while upholding the value of life. This contradiction would be resolved through an almost total media silence surrounding war after the devastation in Vietnam. But in the War on Terror, the longest since Vietnam, we have also seen a peculiar resolution to the problem of death– representation of particular sorts of subjects—terrorists, "enemy combatants" and figures I shall be calling the "unmournable" l—outside the imaginary of "life"[21] This framing of war's subjects as "not living" (and thus not only ungrievable, but immanently "killable") has made it possible to expand war's death function while offering it as a force for life. The first question to be asked in this context then is—who is the terrorist? I explore this question in the section that follows.

IV.

> *Who is the terrorist?*—DAM, Palestinian rap group

In 2001, the Palestinian rap group, DAM, asked the question, "Who is the Terrorist?" in a song of the same name. This song, representative of the group's politically themed albums restating Israeli occupation, questions the meaning of "terror" in the face of state sanctioned violence. Among the forms of violence the song contests, are occupation and forced evacuation, beating, torture and humiliation and death. Yet this violence, the song observes, is always already justified because of the ways in which its victims are produced. The Palestinians who are beaten, humiliated and forced from their lands and killed are "terrorists," the tautological construction produced by the Israeli state in advance of its violence, even as they are the victims of a state sanctioned terror that is itself advanced as a "war against terror." In asking "Who is the terrorist?" this song aims to turn the meaning of "terror" on its head and situate "terror" in the violence of the state:

> Who's a terrorist? I'm a terrorist?
> How am I a terrorist while I live in my country

> Who's a terrorist? You're a terrorist!
> You've taken everything I own while I'm living in my homeland…

In doing so, however, the song also illustrates the potency of the language of terror in configuring the victims of state violence—in this case, Israeli violence against Palestinians—as enemies of life who can be killed, but never sacrificed.

> Killing us like you killed our ancestors
> Go to the law? Why bother, my enemy
> You're the witness, lawyer and judge
> If you're my judge, I'll be sentenced to death…

Since 9/11, we've seen a proliferation in the language of terror to signify an (anonymous) enemy who must be killed but whose death is also occluded by virtue of this subject's positionality vis a vis imagination of life. The configuration of the terrorist in this way bears remarkable similarity to the hostis humani generis–or the enemy of life:

> The *hostis humani generis,* or the enemy of mankind] describe[s] conflict with a perpetrator whose actions against certain people or groups are thought to betray a fundamental hostility toward humankind and the laws that govern humanity…They are defined as enemies of the rule of law itself—"as if" they personally epitomized anarchic chaos, nightmarish oppression, or any other radical and violent refusal of the law. Because they are constructed as perpetrators of violence, and because their violence is defined as inherently illegitimate, violence against such perpetrators is, in turn, inherently legitimate.[22]

The idea of the enemy of life was first developed with respect to maritime law and first referred to the pirate who posed a danger on the high seas.[23] The problem with defining the pirate politically was that he lacked any specific domain or location to which a law applied. Thus the notion of an enemy of life was developed as a legal fiction to identify and prosecute pirates who did not belong to any particular polity. Legally, of course, the concept was vexed since the domain of its coverage was virtually illimitable. However, what significant for us to note is the way in which the hostis humani generis was constituted by virtue of the recognition afforded him via the law, but which also gave license to kill him. Configured this way, the hostis humani generis could be killed but never

scarified—homo sacer. The implications of this conceptualization are perhaps clear in the very definition of the subject—because these subjects 'betray a fundamental hostility towards human kind," it is not only legitimate to kill them, but that this killing is also a kind of "non-killing' because of the subject's position beyond "life."

Contemporary representations of "terrorists" bear remarkable similarities to the hostis humani generis when we note the juxtaposition of "terrorists" with the politics of life framed in western, humanist terms. Frame this way, the "terrorist" becomes a politically meaningful enemy while also appearing to be no one in particular, a condition which makes it possible to kill and destroy in the name of a "War on Terror" without seeming to do anything of the sort.

In an essay analyzing the emergence of the discourse of terrorism, Remi Brulin locates the origins of contemporary configurations of terrorism in at the first conference on international terrorism in Washington D.C. During this conference, the terrorist was framed in two distinct, but connected ways. First, the terrorist was fundamentally understood as a moral problem, a figure of an essential "evil" whose "immoral means" "pointed to the immorality of its true ends."[24] These three elements were connected in a rather straightforward but still implicit way: terrorism as a form of "immoral" violence proceeds from a subject who is "immoral" and who has formulated his/her act for ends that are also immoral. Combating terror would in turn be formulated as the moral duty of the state.

"Terrorism" in the first international conference was also defined in direct contrast to two other terms: freedom and democracy. Benzion Netanyahu, father of Benjamin Netanyahu, opened the conference with remarks juxtaposing "terror" with "freedom" and stated that the conference inaugurated "a new process—the process of rallying the democracies of the world to a struggle against terrorism and the dangers it represents." The war against terrorism would therefore also be a war for freedom: "Against the international front of terrorism, we must build an international front of freedom."[25] US Senator Henry Jackson made the urgency of fighting terror more explicit: "[T]he ultimate but seldom stated goal of these terrorists is to destroy the very fabric of democracy."[26]

As Saul Newman and Michael Levine note in the analysis of the racist implications of the War on Terror, when framed against "terror,"

the "signifier" democracy is itself…used, in a paradoxical way, to perpetuate this state of war.

"Democracy" functions as the standard bearer of the US-led "war on terror," which is fought in the name of preserving "our democratic way of life" against the enemy who…"hates freedom." Thus, we are told that the only way to guarantee security at home is to promote democracy abroad. So not only the export of democracy, or at least a specific version of it, serves as the pretext for violent regime change and the extension of the global hegemony of the United States, it also operates as a marker for what is politically acceptable today. "Democracy" as a signifier is used to enforce a series of discursive divisions between the "civilized" West and "barbaric" East, between the Judeo-Christian and Islamic, between "us" and "them."[27]

Indeed, since one of the chief goals of the conference was to achieve discursive clarity regarding "terror," "terror" was also situated against other likely considerations, namely, "freedom fighters" and "revolutionaries." Senator Jackson remarked: "'Freedom fighters or revolutionaries don't blow up buses containing non-combatants; terrorist murderers do. Freedom fighters don't set out to capture and slaughter school children; terrorist murderers do."[28]

Following this line of thought, fighting terror was first framed as a war for freedom, which is to say, a war advanced in the cause of an ideal itself imaginatively linked to western political norms—i.e. individual freedoms—while being discursively constructed universally—i.e. human right, global justice, etc.—thought to be fundamental to life. In reality, this language was part of the Cold War and the global power struggle between the US and the Soviet Union. But, as Remi Brulin explains, the strategic language of terrorism framed this power struggle as a war for "freedom":

> Israeli military and political leaders were also "among the few groups in the Free World who have held correctly that the Soviet Union means ultimately to subjugate or dominate all who are free," and who did recognize that "terrorism – in its strategic form – is in the main a product of the Soviet Union's leadership, direction and support."[29]

The war for freedom was thus also imagined as a war of self-defense in that the assault of terror is fundamentally one on "our: freedom. Freedom in this iteration is short-hand for "a way of life" thought to be fundamental to a political imaginary centered in the West, as George W. Bush made clear in his first address to the nation following the attacks of 9/11.[30]

> Good evening. Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in

a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. The victims were in airplanes, or in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads, friends and neighbors. Thousands of lives were suddenly ended by evil, despicable acts of terror. The pictures of the airplanes flying into buildings, fires burning, huge structures collapsing, have filled us with disbelief, terrible sadness, and a quiet, unyielding anger. The acts of mass murder were intended to frighten our nation into chaos and retreat. But they have failed; our country is strong.[31]

In his analysis of suicide bombing, Talal Asad asks why it is that the death and destruction produced by acts of "terror" produce so much horror while those induced by war do not. He answers this question by exploring the problem from point of view of representations of motives: Where wars are thought to proceed through a combination of "cruelty and compassion,"—that is, "justly", terrorism is thought to proceed from motives which are said to be "religious."[32] In this regard, what seems to matter, is not death and destruction as such, but the reasons which can be given for killing and destroying. This perhaps can help us understand differential humanity accorded to victims of "terror" we observe in Bush's statement and the almost total erasure of those of war. For while it is also the case that war's victims are often "in their offices; secretaries, businessmen and women, military and federal workers; moms and dads, friends and neighbors," their lives are not thought to be ended by "evil" when they are struck by the devastation of war. Rather, as Madeline Albright suggested in 1996 when asked if the deaths of 500, 000 Iraqi children caused by the US embargo that followed the Gulf War was an adequate price to pay for the nation's security,[33] such live-deaths are almost always recognized as the necessary costs of war. Just as often, these lives-deaths are not even mentioned at all. They are simply unmournable:

They have no rights. They have no dignity. They have no humanity to themselves. They're just a 'selector' to an analyst. You eventually get to a point in the target's life cycle that you are following them, you don't even refer to them by their actual name."

This method of killing of "terrorists" Jeremy Scahill documents in his book *Dirty Wars* contributes to "dehumanizing the people before you've even encountered the moral question of 'is this a legitimate kill or not?'"[34] This is only possible, of course, because such subjects are already framed outside of life. As such, it possible to kill while continuing to claim a war for life. However for our purposes, these deaths and their representative non-representation are perhaps the best representation of what war is: totally absurd. This is because that which exceeds the limits of meaning sits at the core of what

war is—the *systematic and intentional* destruction of human life. Yet the discursive structure given to war—a "War on Terror," a "War for Freedom," a "War for Human Rights" ," so continually displaces war's violence that even as the number of dead and injured amassed in the course of war continue to mount, war can still appear deathless. In place of death, war becomes technology—the flying of airplanes, the dropping of "targeted" bombs, the proliferation of unmanned drones, laser-guided missiles, satellites, computerized imagery of human activity and so on—and loses both its political meaning and its material reality. It is only when the logical underpinning of war is revealed, as it was in Albright's statement, that death shows its face and war appears both absurd and horrific. Meaning, in this context, is thus only sustained through the power of faith. Wars are meaningful simply because we believe they are.

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NOTES

1. Baudrillard, Jean. *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995. Print. 30. ↑

2. Baudrillard 31-32. ↑

3. The 2016 US Presidential election is perhaps the most recent domestic example of this dynamic. A profound reversal in meanings was produced in which "truth" was found in the spaces of the hidden or ambiguous. Twenty-four hour news channels and the production of "news" in hyperreal forms (news about the news; news productive of events that would then be covered as "news"), together with "real" virtual reality (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snap Chat, What's App, a world of apps for every wish and need) where signs refer to other signs—"shares," hyperlinks, retweets, emeds, themselves lacking clear points of origin– produced a self-enclosed mediascape where appearances were read for what they hid. It is perhaps not odd, then, that much of the discourse surrounding the campaigns centered on the question of lies and truth. The suspicion haunting the Clinton campaign corresponded to all that was hidden while all that was said and done openly were read as lies: Clinton's "inauthenticity" was read through her debate preparation, scripted appearances, political correctness and her redundant choice of clothing (the notorious "pantsuits"), while the 30,000 disappeared emails revealed her hidden "truth" by signaling not what was known, which was very little, but precisely the opposite. Truth was produced by the revelation that something was hidden, which, though never uncovered, nevertheless revealed the "truth": Clinton was, beneath the mask of appearances, *really* corrupt, calculating and criminal. On the opposite side, Trump won precisely be being "himself." For the Trump voter, what seemed to matter was not reality, which is to say, the actual or "truth" since it was clear throughout the

campaign that everything Trump said and did was a not meant to refer to reality– We will and will not build a wall along the Mexican border and Mexico will/not pay for it. We will and will not develop a Muslim registry to monitor for "terrorist" activity. We will and will not force China to capitulate to our trading demands–but rather the performance, which itself became "truth" since it was understood that pretensions are now the only truth. "Reality," as such, ceased to exist. Who is the "real" Trump? Which of his statements are "true"? Which promise does he intend to keep? We cannot know, even when he tells us. ↑

4. See also Butler, Judith. Frames of War. 1 ↑

5. Butler, Frames of War 53 ↑

6. Butler, Judith. Frames of War 31. ↑

7. See Butler, Frames of War ↑

8. Quoted in de Benoist, Alain. *Carl Schmitt Today: Terrorism, 'Just War,' and the State of Emergency.* London: Arktos, 2013. EBook page 26. ↑

9. Quoted in de Benoist 22. ↑

10. de Benoist 23 ↑

11. de Benoist 27 ↑

12. Foucault, Michel. *The History of Sexuality, Volume One: An Introduction.* Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon, 1978. Print. 136. ↑

13. 137 ↑

14. 137 ↑

15. Foucault, Michel. *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1977–1978.* Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2008; Foucault, Michel. *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1975-1976.* Trans. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1997; Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978–1979*. Trans. Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2004. ↑

16. See Butler, Frames of War. ↑

17. de Benoist 24-25 ↑

18. Hallaq Wael B. *The Impossible State: Islam, Politics and Modernity's Moral Predicament.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2013, EBook pages 23-24 ↑

19. The Treaty of Versailles marked the completion of this process as it was thought to bring Kaiser Willhelm II to justice for "supreme outrage against international morality and against the sanctity of treaties" for having started the war (de Benoist 25). ↑

20. Camagna 99, qtd in de Benoist 25 ↑

21. See Bauman Bauman, Zygmunt. *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty.* Cambridge: Polity,

2007. ↑

22. Schillings, 2017: 4 ↑

23. Schillings Sonya (2017) *Enemies of All Mankind Fictions of Legitimate Violence.* Hanover: Dartmouth College Press. ↑

24. Brulin, Remi. "Compartmentalization, Contexts of Speech and the Israeli origins of the American Discourse on Terrorism." *Dialectical Anthropology.* 39.1 (March 2015): 69-119 ↑

25. Quoted in Brulin 87 ↑

26. Quoted in Brulin 88 ↑

27. War, Politics and Race 27 ↑

28. Quoted in Brulin 88 ↑

29. Netanyahu 1981, p. 339 quoted in Brulin ↑

30. See Bush, George, W. "9/11 Address to the Nation." *American Rhetoric*. Web. 30 Aug. 2016. ↑

31. Ibid. ↑

32. Asad loc 112 ↑

33. Albright made this statement during a *60 Minutes* interview broadcast in May of 1996. ↑

34. Scahill, Jeremy. "The Drone Papers: Article No 1 of 8." *The Intercept.* 15 October 2015. Web. 23 October 2015. https://theintercept.com/drone-papers/the-assassination-complex/ ↑

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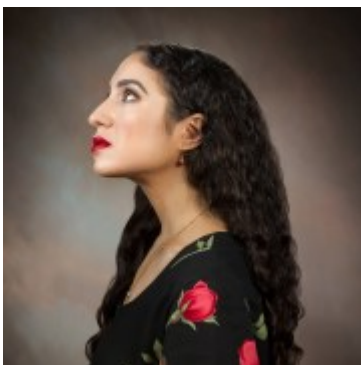
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