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Topic

Spectres of biopolitics: the wounded movement of *displacement*

Abstract

Contemporary politics creates *modes of silence* in which the singular bodies transform themselves into organic spaces of annihilation. Men, women and children survive in *spaces of abandonment* – *refugee camps, displacement spaces, detention fields* – where the language is stitched to the mutism of the body which folds over itself, falling into a silence without childhood. Inside this world atlas, stateless persons, refugees, immigrants, displaced persons are registered in *spaces of exception* that update a geography of fear in the experience of exile. Within a multiplication of legal-administrative borders marked by a policy of migration and control of the populations, the “displaced person” is the naming of a singular body transformed into a biopolitical identity that immobilises time and sterilises space.

However, inside these *other spaces*, one can feel the intimacy between body and time, in a *gesture* that is the *matter of life*. Despite their public invisibility, the displaced persons, in their singularity, introduce a corrosive body in the instituted political scene. In situations of extreme violence, their erratic movement is like the line of a fracture that, in its concrete existence, corrupts the historical, political and social processes of normalisation. Their gestures are an abyss in the legal-administrative order that rules the contemporary socio-political setting. In the camps for displaced persons, the bodies constitute themselves as a *movement of memory- oblivion*; a sign of *resistance* from the silence. Despite the gesture of giving death in life, the displaced persons resist in an *event-body*: a body that draws escape lines on the skin of the world.

In this context, considering the intrinsic tension towards the concept of biopolitics, as Michel Foucault coined it – between a *power over life* and a *power of life* – we will try to reflect on the figure of these impossible bodies – the *gesture of bodies on stage* – that expose a ethical, aesthetical political wound in the contemporary *archipelagos of exception*.