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## SEMANTICS OF NONVIOLENCE\*\*

JUDITH BUTLER'S PERFORMATIVITY OF VULNERABILITY  
AND SARA AHMED'S QUEER LINES

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**Abstract:** In the article, we consider the approaches to the ethics of nonviolence suggested by Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed. Butler's project is rooted in Monique Wittig's concept of «material violence». By extending the meaning of this term to gender and normative violence, Butler articulates the ethics of nonviolence. The latter involves concepts of radical equality and interdependence. A practical complement to the Butler project can be found in the works of Sara Ahmed, who investigates the possibility of opposing violence within institutions. She develops the concept of the «feminist ear», based on phenomenology, which we suggest considering as a tool to implement the ethics of nonviolence. Being an attitude that can be adapted due to methodology requirements or in political practice, Ahmed's feminist ear refers to Bourdieu's metaphor of the «sharped eye» by which a researcher can objectivate their doxic (or «native») experience. Considering these parallels, we investigate his theory of symbolic violence, internalized and reproduced in systems of dispositions. Bourdieu's striving to reveal a material side of ideology confronting that of intellectualist tradition partly matches Wittig's intuitions. By introducing the notion of habituality, we can reconsider the very question of ideology's potential overcoming that cannot be performed using intellectual endeavor. This impossibility leads Bourdieu to criticize classic phenomenology because of its ignorance of social conditions and the natural attitude. Inverting the usual working strategy of Husserlian phenomenology, he takes a natural attitude as a framework of his research, revealing the initiation rituals to the symbolic structure. The article suggests some strategies to overcome it.

**Keywords:** Material Violence, Feminist Ear, Normative Violence, Symbolic Violence, Nonviolence, Butler, Ahmed, Bourdieu.

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Rien n'est à faire, tout est à défaire.

*Laura Lamiel*

Feminist critique of violence has a long history and many faces: on the one hand, it contains works of fiction (especially autofiction) that record slow

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and routinized acts of violence; on the other hand, there are theoretical works that conceptualize notions of “violence” and “nonviolence.” It is apparent that violence does not exist *per se* but is always transitional, establishing a certain hierarchy. The latter can be based on gender, biological sex, skin color, economic status, or religion — that is, anything that makes a living being (in this case, a human being) vulnerable in the dominant normative system. In this paper, we will focus on the projects Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed put forth, highlighting their qualitative synergy. For Butler, violence is a performative practice that results in putting vulnerable bodies in a precarious state. Ahmed narrows her focus on studying institutions, primarily universities, and explores violence within the phenomenology of space. In the second part of the article, we will focus on the notion of symbolic (discursive) violence, especially apparent in the ethnological field. By focusing on the possibilities to overcome this violence we will present a conceptual framework within which its critique can be understood as a personal trial requiring a particular attitude toward lifeworld. We argue that these projects establish a theoretical foundation for nonviolence as an ethical stance and, more importantly, provide specific practices to counter normative violence.

#### MATERIAL VIOLENCE: FROM GENDER PERFORMATIVITY TO VIOLENCE PERFORMATIVITY

One of the central aspects of the state of nature myth, as Butler notes, is the fact that it speaks about the figure of an adult, self-sufficient *man* (Butler, 2020: 30). Furthermore, his gender identity emerges not from social empowerment but from social individualization, wherein the individual consistently identifies as a man. In the ideal world of this fantasy, interaction with another individual becomes possible only through conflict. At the same time, in the background is a figure of the woman that the man desires. The image of this woman is so illusory, that “(w)e cannot even fault the representation of women in the scene, because she is unrepresentable.” (ibid.: 34). Similar fates befall other unrepresentable or invisible individuals who do not conform to the settings established by the dominant framework. Performative acts transform nonviolence into the power of these unseen individuals, allowing them to reaffirm their presence as vital and valuable. Below, we will see how these acts are possible and how they affect the struggle against violence. In *The Force of Nonviolence*, one can find references to the pivotal (and thus mainstream) works related to violence and nonviolence, such as those by Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, Frantz Fanon, and

Sigmund Freud. However, within the conceptual framework, Butler remains aligned with Monique Wittig, even though Wittig's name is not explicitly mentioned in the text.

*The Force of Nonviolence* can be ascribed to Butler's post-9/11 works, including *Precarious Life* (2004) and *Frames of War* (2009). However, it is not fair to consider Butler's reflection on violence and nonviolence apart from her gender studies. The nexus between gender theory and critique of militarism represents a paper, *Contingent Foundations: Feminism and the Question of "Postmodernism"* (Butler, 1992), published two years after *Gender Trouble*. Sanna Karhu (Karhu, 2017) notes that in *Contingent Foundations*, Butler speaks about the concept of material violence that first appeared in Wittig's essay *Straight Mind* and as the better option for the term "ideology":

When we use the overgeneralizing term "ideology" to designate all the discourses of the dominating group, we relegate these discourses to the domain of Irreal Ideas, we forget the *material (physical) violence* that they directly do to the oppressed people... (Wittig, 1980: 105–106; emphasis added).

As an example, Wittig draws attention to pornography as a part of the dominant heteronormative discourse that "signifies that women are dominated" (ibid.: 106). Among other things, she underscores a crucial aspect of this material violence, which we will delve into later:

As a harassing tactic it has another function, that of a warning. It orders us to stay in line and it keeps those who would tend to forget who they are in step; it calls upon fear (ibid.).

Hence, material violence is embodied in any dominant discourse that forces the body to fit the established settings. Wittig contends that the discourses of heteronormativity and binarity play a defining role, portraying a man as inherently dominant and independent while positioning a woman in perpetual confrontation vis-à-vis the man. Her reflections on material violence and the political meaning of the gender category became the foundation for Butler's theory of performativity and further conceptualization of terms like "normative violence" and "gender violence" (Butler, 2020; see also Karhu, 2017: 29–34).

Wittig herself hardly uses the notion of "norm";<sup>1</sup> however, for Butler, it becomes a crucial conceptual tool. While Wittig understands social

<sup>1</sup>As S. Karhu notes, the term "norm" is used by M. Wittig once in *Paradigm* (1979). See: Karhu, 2017: 31, n. 12.

force as permanent and monolithic, Butler subverts this confidence in stability by addressing norms as historically and socially contingent. In other words, force and violence are necessary but insufficient conditions for the functioning of norms (Butler, 2020), which should also be considered from a *temporal* perspective. Butler expounds upon the temporality of norms through a framework derived from Jacques Derrida's interpretation of John Austin's theory of performative speech acts (see Butler, 1997: 146–151). Derrida argues that precisely because of repetition, language units could be recognized and reused through the citation. In the same way, the norm as a discursive practice is viable only because of the repetition, which is a temporal process.<sup>2</sup> Temporality simultaneously establishes norms and makes them fragile and changeable. The normativity of violence, in turn, is also performative and temporal; that is, it can change. Further, we will show how said contingency allows the demolition of violent norms.

#### BODIES SOCIALIZED IN SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

This persistent reminder of the material character of ideology aligns with the strategy of thinking about this phenomenon in Pierre Bourdieu's oeuvre and becomes especially noticeable in his approach to violence (Bourdieu, 1998a). He shows that any attempt to think of ideology in terms of *imaginary* and *symbolic* meets a severe trap that consists of precipitate division between imaginary and real, spiritual and material, false and true. Such a trap originates from the early Marxist definition of ideology as a false consciousness opposed to an objective world. Hence, some following attempts to apprehend ideology have tacitly adopted this division that implies a possible comeback from imaginary to real (science, production, or class struggle). To avoid charges of intellectualist philosophy and to show the material existence of ideology, Bourdieu introduces the notion of *dispositions* (practical schemas) instead of categories (cognitive structures). These dispositions arrange our *doxic experience*—everyday perceptions and anticipations that phenomenology explores under the notion of *natural attitude*. However, even acknowledging Husserl's merit in its elaboration, Bourdieu does not consider natural attitude as a *simple* undergird of everyday life from which one should, as quickly as possible, proceed to a phenomenological one. In other

<sup>2</sup>See also: "Construction not only takes place *in* time, but is itself a temporal process which operates through the reiteration of norms; sex is both produced and destabilized in the course of this reiteration" (Butler, 1993: 10). Hence, instability is a *deconstitutive* possibility in the very process of repetition.

words, he does not seek to reduce the usual and inevitably naive standpoint of our being-in-the-world to start the investigation, as Husserl used to. Instead, he uncovers the carelessness of such a definitive reduction that goes together with the ignorance of social conditions that make such a *natural* attitude possible. These dispositions are, in turn, impregnated by dualist taxonomies (masculine and feminine, raw and cooked, top and bottom, and cultural and natural) covering such natural domains as time and space. But the *natural* character of gender differences is proved retroactively: social repartition of work is justified by a backdating reference to the anatomic constitution. In other words, symbolic constitution transmits an arbitrary social *nomos* to necessary present *phusis* (Bourdieu, 1998a: 40). Thus, the domain of the feminine is determined by a diacritical construction with a continuous reference to the masculine as different, and this difference outlines the champ of “I can” and “I will.” The cognition of dominated groups is, in fact, *recognition* of the symbolic order they endure and its establishment as a gnoseological order of the world,<sup>3</sup> common sense of representations, and, consequently, praxis.

Given this, symbolic violence cannot be apprehended as something spiritual or fading secondary to the physical physical, unless we fall into naive materialism. Instead, it should be considered in terms of the objective character of its subjective experience.<sup>4</sup> Hence, in this problem statement, a potential critique of symbolic power or an emancipatory shift from this setting has a form of performative disobedience involving subordinated bodies. In this sense, there is no way to exit it by a simple act of cognitive realization (ibid.: 63). Habitual (or, following Bourdieu’s terminology, *habitualized*) structures of violence are inscribed onto bodies, and not only in minds: their corporeal existence entails a stable repeatability that inertially outstrips social conditions lying at their origins. One can better understand its potential overcoming by emphasizing the practical shape of symbolic violence.

Ethnological material gained in Kabylia (northern Algeria) and largely used by Bourdieu in *La domination masculine*, as well as in a number of

<sup>3</sup>Cf. the definition of symbolic power in (Bourdieu, 2014: 210; translated by M.S.): “Symbolic power as a power to constitute the given by its enunciation, to make see and make believe, to transform the vision of the world [...] is executed only if it is recognised, i. e. unrecognized as arbitrary.”

<sup>4</sup>Similar reflexion on the necessity to consider other types of violence besides the physical can be found in bell hooks’ work (hooks, 1997). This broader definition is needed in order to shift the (over)focus from extreme forms of violence leading to acceptance of its “average” manifestations.

previous volumes, causes us to question the pertinence of the ethnological motif lying behind the whole conceptualization. At first glance, ethnology, an endless confrontation between the query of structural universals and respect for plurality, causes more trouble than it is worth. Being a part of scientific practice with its striving to apprehend the Other, ethnological research reproduces distinctions between researcher and informant, knowledge and ignorance.<sup>5</sup> One distinction also appears during fieldwork: that of the “ethnologizing” and “ethnologized,” introduced by Jean-François Werner (1999) (Clifford, 1983) and destined to show the redoublement of symbolic violence. Thus, the challenge for an ethnologist is to overcome this epistemic asymmetry to lead the symbolic structure into the light and not to reificate it for the sake of descriptive objectivity (Bourdieu, 1998a: 159). Another challenge is to find out the way to proceed.

In one of his later lectures, *Participant Objectivation*, Bourdieu credits his ethnological experience for providing him with a sharpened eye that captures some structural similarities between dominant forms of masculinity.<sup>6</sup> He uncovers the trick he mastered during fieldwork: a sort of to-and-fro movement that allows a researcher to objectivate their own doxic experience while preserving natural engagement in the field. The latter presumes that a researcher is always-already provided with a sort of indigenous experience: Bourdieu, in this point, recalls the ceremonies of initiation existing in French Academies, but we can also refer to greeting habits or celebratory meals, the perception of which is guided by shared conventions. Given this, the procedure in question consists of a return to individually lived but shared experiences that should be objectivated, i. e., subjected to sociological critique. Considered unreliable in previous traditions, doxic experience offers

<sup>5</sup>The last is deeply rooted in the distinction between theoretical and practical (phenomenological) attitudes. The last is based on non-reflexive experience that can not be objectivated in first-person perspective (as, for example, a native speaker can barely explain the grammatical structure of their language) but can be taught by demonstration. Inaccessibility of the theoretical side of a practice to its performer is considered as an epistemological asymmetry between a researcher and their informants (Bourdieu, Randal, 1998b).

<sup>6</sup>The example Bourdieu offers in this lecture is pertinent enough to be quoted in detail: “[H]aving discovered in Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse* (1929) mythological structures that I would not have noticed had my eye not been sharpened by familiarity with the Kabyle (and more generally Mediterranean) vision of the division of labour between the sexes, I was able, thanks to the extraordinarily subtle analysis that Virginia Woolf develops in that novel of how the dominant masculine is dominated by his domination, to discover in return the limits of the lucidity of an anthropologist who has not managed fully to turn anthropology against itself” (Bourdieu, Wacquant, 2003: 290–291).

a practical standpoint in the critique of symbolic violence and is the only medium to *perform* it.

(UN)GRIEVABLE LIVES

One of the normative goals of *The Force of Nonviolence* is an attempt to form “a political imaginary of the *radical equality* of grievability” (Butler, 2020: 57; emphasis added). The very category of the “human” works as a differential norm: some human beings gain their humanness by default, while others have to struggle for it (Butler, 2009: 76). Hence, varied lives undergo disparate evaluation: “Some group is, then, covered by my expanded claims of self-defense, and they are understood to be worthy of a violent protection against violence” (Butler, 2020: 44).

Life’s worth is delineated by the alignment of performative actions with established norms, which is — at least, in Western societies — determined by that said subject from the myth of the natural state. The goal of nonviolence, then, is to struggle with this divisional principle by overcoming the idea of self-sufficiency and independence, which are the motors of eternal conflict.<sup>7</sup> Butler does not justify vicious colonization dependence, but suggests it stems from a “renewed and revalued notion of interdependency,” which can help to “formulate another view of social solidarity and of nonviolence” (ibid.: 41). Which type of interdependence is she talking about in *Frames of War*:

If, as the philosopher Emmanuel Lévinas claims, it is the face of the other that demands from us an ethical response, then it would seem that the norms that would allocate who is and is not human arrive in visual form. These norms work to *give face* and to *efface* (Butler, 2009: 77; emphasis original).

The assertion of this thesis can be found in Lévinas’s example of the hounded, who are already given away even before the roundup and the bullying.<sup>8</sup> *I* (moi) is always in an ethical or ascetical position in relation to the Other. This relation does not have any beginning or *arche*: *I* am already in a relationship with the Other even before *I* find out about this connection. In other words, the subject is always a hostage of this

<sup>7</sup>Quite like fantasies of the natural state, where the independence and autonomy of one person (man) is compromised by the presence of the Other, who also has independence and autonomy.

<sup>8</sup>While examining the parallels between Butler and Lévinas, we drew on Anna Yampolskaya’s outstanding translation of Lévinas’s lectures into Russian. Lévinas’s original thought implies that ethical obligations apply to a very *limited* group of people united by cultural and religious (Judeo-Christian) contexts.

interdependence. The Other does not just demand an ethical response from us but calls it into question. Lévinas points out — the death of the Other makes me doubt myself.

For both Lévinas and Butler, responsibility is the synonym for interdependency. Reflecting on mourning practices, she notes that differential norms are valid in life and even after death — some lives will undoubtedly elicit mourning, while others may not be seen as requiring expressions of grief.<sup>9</sup> The latter are treated as if these lives cannot be lost, since it is believed that these lives are not life in the real sense; that is, there is no need to declare mourning for them. In his turn, Lévinas highlights that my non-indifference to the other has an irreducible significance of sociality. Those who are pushed out into “the zone of non-being”<sup>10</sup> (Butler, 2020: 18) and doomed to precarity have no choice but to practice *nonviolence*, i. e., physical affirmation of the claims of life and the right to be mourned after death. Radical equality — as the essential element of the ethical position of nonviolence — is possible only with the recognition of absolute interdependence. As Butler argues, our equality is defined by the fact that there is a possibility for any living interconnection to be destroyed, and each such destruction strikes at the interdependence that forms our world.

#### PRACTICE OF NONVIOLENCE AS ONGOING STRUGGLE

The project of nonviolence proposed by Judith Butler begs the question: how is it possible to practice nonviolence, given that the human is already an outcome of the violent norm and simultaneously reproduces it? Or, more specifically, how can one in a vulnerable position struggle against systemic violence? Butler examines vulnerability together with anger, perseverance, and resistance; she argues that “(v)ulnerability *ought not to be* identified exclusively with passivity; it makes sense only in light of an *embodied set*

<sup>9</sup>The difference between grieved and ungrieved lives is perfectly shown by the cartoon *Coco* (2017). The plot revolves around the celebration of El Día de Muertos — the day when a bridge of orange velvet petals appears between the World of the Living and the World of the Dead and living people can meet their deceased relatives and friends. However, only those whose pictures are present on the memorial altar can pass from the World of the Dead to the World of the Living, that is, anyone who is still remembered by the living. The forgotten dead are not only deprived of meeting their living relatives, but in time, they cease to exist at all, even in the World of the Dead, and disappear forever. Memory, which also has temporality, is a tool for “quoting.” In real life, a bridge of velvets connecting the World of the Living and the World of the Dead is, for example, the “Return of Names” action in memory of the victims of political repressions.

<sup>10</sup>Butler uses this term following Frantz Fanon.



of social relations” (Butler, 2020: 131; emphasis added). Nonviolence does not arise from nowhere; it is always related to violence. The challenge is not to overcome this vulnerability and act from a powerful position but to expose this vulnerability and, thus, declare oneself. Even when “agency is blocked,” there are different ways to enter “the force field of violence” (ibid.: 132). Butler gives an example of refugees who demand documents or freedom of movement. Mobility (as any other practice involving the body) requires space; that is, streets do not provide room for civic engagement by default, but infrastructure benefits are not available for everyone (especially for those in a vulnerable position; Butler, 2015: 126). In other cases, appearances in public spaces can be dangerous. Then the body, as Butler notes, shifts to another space:

Sometimes the demand is made with the body, through showing up in a place where one is exposed to police power and refusing to move. The cell phone image of the petitioner makes the virtual case for the actual life, and it shows how life depends upon its virtual circulation (Butler, 2020: 133).

Thus, the physical body extends into the digital realm—acquiring room in spatial and temporal space. The Internet provides conditions for the body to be asserted, or in Butler’s words, for “emphatic and public indexical demonstration” (ibid.). The proliferation and replication of images depicting the protester (or an individual trapped in a precarious situation) on the Internet allow for establishing a tangible presence, thereby manifesting the genuine corporeal vulnerability of individuals. However, it does not mean that the digital realm is a safe space; sometimes, it is even more dangerous, as it makes monitoring and deanonymizing other people’s activities possible. In nonviolent struggle, the Internet’s function is to make visible those who are usually invisible. For example, the *Woman, Life, Freedom* movement made visible the death of 22-year-old Iranian Mahsa Amini, who died in a Tehran hospital on September 16, 2022. She was arrested by the religious morality police of Iran’s government for allegedly not wearing the hijab following government standards. Nonviolence is not limited to corporeality; it is rooted in the inherent ties that transcend corporeality, unfolding, differentiating, and embracing the external world (Butler, 2015: 129–131).

## TWISTING LINES

Above, we mentioned that in Wittig's reflections on violence, the material violence forces subjects to "stay in line"<sup>11</sup> (Wittig, 1980: 106). Corporeality and space, which are (not) occupied by bodies, play crucial roles in the critique of violence. The body is orientated in space, however, questions remain regarding where it is oriented. Guided norms direct the body in the "right" way, usually associated with the *straight* line, while deviation is considered wrongheaded. This deviation, twisting—queer—line, is in the focus of Sara Ahmed's studies (Ahmed, 2006). Normativity, she argues, is a consequence of the repetitiveness of bodily practices<sup>12</sup> over time, or "the bodily horizon, a space for action, *which puts some objects and not others in reach*" (ibid.: 66; emphasis original). Accessible objects assemble themselves in a line, along which people are gathered. Assembly, in turn, is not a neutral but a directive action, because to gather somewhere, it is necessary to "follow specific lines" (ibid.: 81). For example, people have to be connected by family ties to gather *around* tables for a family dinner. The roots of these ties lie in similarity or repeatability. And what is repeated, at some point, becomes invisible and imperceptible, as well as dominating and forcing. In Ahmed's words, spaces and bodies "are the effects of such straightening devices" (ibid.: 92).

Twisted or queer, the line always draws attention. To start this line—or, at least, to find said option—means to begin noticing the repeatability of form of familiar things. This break from the common entails *disorientation*, that is, an unusual and uncomfortable body position; in these conditions, the body is knowingly *vulnerable*, losing its footing and compelled to seek something to cling to.<sup>13</sup> Among other things, disorientation involves becoming an object (ibid.: 159). Sometimes disorienting does not require any action from a person—it is enough simply to enter into the world where there is no room for one.<sup>14</sup> Ahmed suggests considering this disorientation not

<sup>11</sup>Separate from Wittig, but with reference to Freud, Sarah Ahmed gives her interpretation of the phrase in line: one "stays the line" by being oriented toward marriage and the continuation of the generation. See: Ahmed, 2006: 72–74.

<sup>12</sup>Bodies, Ahmed notes, take form through reference to those objects that are within reach. If Butler begins with the "natural state," Ahmed begins with the "natural setting" in phenomenology. That is, the world is not just "spread out" (as Husserl was saying), it already has a certain form, which consists of more or less familiar things (ibid.: 28).

<sup>13</sup>Ahmed finds a similar concept of disorientation in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (ibid.: 4).

<sup>14</sup>These are bodies that do not conform to established "normality," by which are most commonly understood as white heteronormative bodies.

as a moment of despair but as a *radical* possibility. The very exposure to this possibility reveals vulnerability, as described by Butler, and becomes a starting point for nonviolence.

#### MIND THE GAP!

As we have shown above, for Butler, the concept of performativity remains relevant not only for issues of gender, but also for ethics of *nonviolence* that begin by asserting its bruised position. Ahmed, in turn, speaks mainly of *nonperformativity*—speech acts in which the stated action is not performed (Ahmed, 2012: 113; Ahmed, 2017). In more recent works, she refines the concept of nonperformativity, that is, it refers to policies that are fixed but not actually enforced (Ahmed, 2019), especially nonperformative statements of various institutions and organizations, where performativity hides the emptiness (Ahmed, 2021).<sup>15</sup> Once this emptiness is discovered—usually because of the act of normative violence—victims who find themselves in it can file a formal complaint. Usually, the procedure for filing a complaint is already described in the regulations in the form of “flowcharts, with lines and arrows that give the would-be complainer a clear route through” (ibid.: 47). However, in most cases, this route is not easy to take, and it may deliberately discourage the complaint by making it more difficult to file.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, all these bureaucratic procedures also have a temporal dimension, an instrument of normative violence. In his phenomenological analysis of waiting, Imad Shouery shows that it is associated with absence and anxiety, especially if it is bureaucratic (Shouery, 1972).

An act of nonviolence, according to Butler, is a person’s assertion of their vulnerable position. However, are these performativities (assertions) visible or heard if the bodies are in this gap? In essence, is it possible to argue that straightening devices intend to marginalize individuals further, pushing them “beyond the margins into the zone of non-being” (Butler, 2020: 26)? Violence destroys connections; practicing nonviolence requires

<sup>15</sup>Sara Ahmed has in mind, for example, the various codes of ethics of universities or other organizations, which are performative statements but are not actually applied.

<sup>16</sup>The complexity of the process of filing a lawsuit in a rape case is perfectly illustrated in the play *Prima Facie* by Susie Miller. The main character of the play, Tessa, first acts as a lawyer on the side of the accused in rape cases. All these cases are just a “game of law” for her, and her task is to find inconsistencies in the victim’s stories (“If the story has holes, then point them out”) in order to save her client. Soon she herself becomes a victim of rape and goes through all the stages of filing a complaint and then appears in court as a victim. Her monologue once again emphasizes how devastating material violence can be.

forging those connections anew, for example, through developing a “feminist ear” (Ahmed, 2017; 2021), a practice that allows to hear (see) what is usually silenced. Ahmed suggests that the feminist ear should be seen as an institutional tactic and research methodology that seeks to combat material violence (ibid.: 34–37). At the same time, it is impossible to designate a particular organization or individual as the bearer of such a feminist ear. The specificity of this tactic is to be such an “ear” for each other — that is, not only in isolated acts of publicizing deeds of injustice, but on an ongoing basis. Violence, in the broad sense of the word, happens constantly and becomes a matter of course. At some point, it becomes so familiar, that one no longer notices it or does not want to notice it on purpose since it seems impossible to do anything about it. The struggle against violence often ends with a warning: “I know that this can happen so I will avoid it,” but this is not enough, as such a maxim remains mute. It is essential to keep talking about it, to keep telling stories because “We have to keep saying it because they keep doing it.”<sup>17</sup> In *Complaint!* (ibid.) Ahmed shows how she practices feminist ear by collecting stories of violence and harassment in a university setting of students and faculty. Another example of a feminist ear is the journalist project *Schoolgirls*<sup>18</sup> by Nastya Krasilnikova, where she reveals a long history of sexualized violence at the Summer Ecological School. To practice a feminist ear, one does not have to obtain certain positions; on the contrary, sometimes the held position can get in the way of hearing and seeing what is essential. The feminist ear is not something one is born with but something anyone can cultivate as part of nonviolent resistance.

#### CONCLUSION

The ethic of nonviolence cannot replace practices of normative violence in one day. Its mission is to methodically confront acts of violence through the physical assertion of the right to life through speeches, gestures, refugee tent camps, assemblies, and other actions. However, the situation of marginalized people is such that they are not seen by the dominant majority that institutes normative violence. Moreover, such normative practices aim to make these people invisible. The weak point of any norm, including a violent norm, is its temporality. A norm is alive as long as it is cited. Hence, nonviolence is, first and foremost, about stopping repetition and establishing new practices that restore broken relationships. Sara Ahmed’s feminist ear tactic is one possible

<sup>17</sup>The slogan of Sarah Ahmed’s book *The Feminist Killjoy Handbook* (2023).

<sup>18</sup>The *Schoolgirls* project website: <https://uchenitsy.libolibo.me/>.

practice of the ethics of nonviolence. This ear tuning is associated with a radical reorientation in space and exploring new ways of (co)existence.

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ПОРФИРЬЕВА СОФЬЯ ИГОРЕВНА

АСПИРАНТКА

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## СЕМАНТИКА НЕНАСИЛИЯ

### ПЕРФОРМАТИВНОСТЬ УЯЗВИМОСТИ ДЖУДИТ БАТЛЕР И КРИВЫЕ ЛИНИИ САРЫ АХМЕД

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**Аннотация:** В статье анализируются подходы к этике ненасилия Джудит Батлер и Сары Ахмед. Проект Батлер корнями уходит в концепцию «материального насилия» Моники Виттиг. Расширяя значения этого термина сначала до гендерного насилия, а затем до нормативного насилия, Батлер формулирует проект этики ненасилия. Последняя основывается на идеях радикального равенства и взаимозависимости. Практические дополнения к проекту Батлер можно обнаружить в работах Сары Ахмед, которая ставит вопрос более точно: как возможна борьба с насилием в рамках институций? С опорой на феноменологическую философию она разрабатывает концепцию «феминистского слуха», которую мы предлагаем рассматривать как инструмент для реализации этики ненасилия. Поскольку «феминистский слух» — это установка, применяемая как в академической работе, так и в политической практике, она отчасти напоминает введенный Пьером Бурдье образ «этнологической зоркости» — способности исследователя объективировать свой собственный докисический или «аборигенный» опыт. Отталкиваясь от этого мотива, мы обращаемся к его теории символического насилия, усваиваемого и воспроизводимого в системах диспозиций. Стремление Бурдье показать материальную сторону идеологии, противопоставив её интеллектуалистским трактовкам, отчасти совпадает с мотивами, развитыми у Виттиг. Тематизация габитуальности позволяет иначе поставить вопрос о возможном преодолении идеологии, для которого оказывается недостаточно одного интеллектуального усилия. Для Бурдье такая недостаточность становится поводом для критики классической феноменологии, в которой не был поставлен вопрос о социальных условиях возможности естественной установки. Переворачивая характерную для феноменологии стратегию работы, Бурдье делает полем своего исследования естественную установку, в которой воспроизводится символическое насилие. В статье обозначаются возможные стратегии его преодоления.

**Ключевые слова:** материальное насилие, феминистский слух, символическое насилие, ненасилие, Батлер, Ахмед, Бурдье.

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