


Chapter 16

Context and Space as the Tools to Legitimize and Produce Violence: Broadening Hassan's Perspective on East–West Dichotomy

Ahmet Faruk Çeçen

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3561-2915>

Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

Hassan thought the reason of the never-ending clash between East and West is the difference between their varied time perception. Albeit accepting many of Hassan's claims, the author believes the difference between their time perception cannot be the sole reason of the conflict. Examining the conflict through power relations and seeing violence as a tool of it, the study aimed to show how structural violence helps sustaining global, national, local, and domestic economic, social, and cultural inequalities. As far as we know, the legal structures that sustained state-mandated overt discrimination have been dismantled in the West, meaning the equal treatment of all races and religions under the law. However, it is obvious that there are structural obstacles preventing the law from being practiced the way it is intended. Through the concepts 'context' and 'space', the researcher will try to explain how discriminative practices are sustained, produced, legitimized, which pave the way for the conflicts to go on (e.g., East and West).

INTRODUCTION

Hassan (2018) in his essay “Sources of Resilience in Political Islam: Sacred time, earthly pragmatism, and digital media” pursued the answer of the intertwined questions of how could the groups like Al Qaeda and ISIS somewhat achieve to survive even though they are economically and technologically inferior to western countries they fight against and how have western democracies been unable to adopt

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coherent and long-term strategies to defeat the enemy, considering they seem to have the necessary tools to handle. According to him, political Islam and western modernity consider the time from a difference angle. Political Islam derives it from Quran mandating Muslims to consider time sacred and preordained and live for afterlife and western modernity's temporal approach that judges everything, including time by efficiency, which creates asynchronicity between the West and political Islam explaining the persistence of the present conflict 'Clash of Temporalities.'

What Hassan suggests might make us think that Muslim and Western civilizations not only experience and perceive time differently but also they turn out to be seem to live in another time period. Albeit accepting many of his claims on time and the proposed difference of perceived time between the aforementioned civilizations, I would suggest explaining the conflict might require dealing with the problem from many aspects. Considering that it is a conflict, even escalating to warfare, the author believes that violence should be the key concept as it is something conducted verbally, psychologically and physically to show one's hate towards others, keep them under control and harm or destroy them.

Who or which actor should be allowed to commit violence, what has been legitimizing it and under which conditions can it be considered legitimate to use it are the questions which thinkers have been striving to answer. In a Hobbesian perspective, some might believe the authority of the sovereign, including the right to commit violence should be absolute to prevent a situation, named state of nature where every man fights against the other. Over years, following the limitation of sovereignty, the way the state conducts violence has dramatically changed in Foucauldian sense, at least the way the punishment is carried out has transformed from criminals being punished in public as a spectacle by means of states showing publicly that they do their part of the social contract into prison sentence that has seemingly no aim to make it a public show. However, the Hobbesian perspective remains somewhat same for 'the modern world' characterized by nation states and positive law, which means that states and citizens keep their word to obey the social contract metaphorically signed by our ancestors.

Some might argue that violence is a concept that is inherent in state which Weber (1947) emphasized saying state crime seems inevitable as long as there are states, but it can also be claimed that violence might mean much more than Hobbesian state or modern governments. One might claim that violence is a tool to maintain order belonging not only a monarch and democratically elected government (thought to be legitimate) but also for example a bunch of prisoners beating and dominating other prisoners (thought to be illegitimate). Nietzsche, setting violence as a central theme in his political thought, thinks violence is inherent in our race (he believes not sexual desire but violence lies at the heart of the 'unconscious') by saying '*we have never lost our instinct for cruelty— we have only refined it* (2002).' What makes violence inherent might be as Woolf said, glory and satisfaction or the necessity to defend oneself and one's genes to survive like Dawkins' concept of Survival Machines (2016). Moreover, one might even be pleased by and grateful for the sense of confidence by being away from violence and its varied versions. According to Zizek (2019) "*the sight of the other's suffering is the obscure cause of desire which sustains our own happiness (bliss in heaven) – if we take it away, our bliss appears in all its sterile stupidity.*" Zizek believes media plays a strong role by showing us Third World horrors (wars, starvations, violence) so that we can sustain the happiness of our consumerist heaven. So, people living in stable and wealthy countries might need seeing others' suffering and a potential threat to be grateful for what they have. As Hassan (2018) said that some might believe "*violence of political Islam was something that the imperialist West 'asked for'*" and others like Kumar (2012) believes that Islam turned out to be the new enemy, taking place of communism (from red scare to green scare) and Eco (2012) believed Islam became a tool for USA to maintain its identity by creating a new enemy and a chance to keep its citizens

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