Violence and Political Order: Galtung, Arendt and Anderson on the Nation-State

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The German philosopher Hegel claims that the creation of the nation-state as a form of political order is the purpose of the progression of history to achieve the optimum realisation of self-consciousness (Avineri, 1972:223-224). Through violence such as war, the nation-state was established by being the target of another state's violence, which resonates with Tilly's hypothesis that 'the state made war and war made the state' (Tilly cited in Fukuyama, 2014:538). Furthermore, Weber's definition of the state directly links the nation-state to violence as the state maintains a monopoly on the legal use of violence (Weber, 1948:78). To build on the definition of the state, the concept of the nation is introduced to establish the nation-state, which is based on the active consent of a homogenous population to its government (Arendt, 1966:125). This essay examines the relation between violence and political order as illustrated by Johan Galtung, Hannah Arendt and Benedict Anderson with the example of the creation of Israel as the Jewish homeland. I argue that violence, in its many forms, and the nation-state, as a form of the current political order, are intrinsically interlinked as the nation-state contains and authorises violence. My argument is structured by elaborating on the three theorists' work in turn while relating them to the example of Israel.

Beginning with Galtung and Arendt's definitions of violence, both theorists define violence in opposition to another term. Whereas Galtung defines violence as the opposite of peace (Galtung, 1969:168), Arendt reasons that power and violence are opposites, such that one is absent when the other rules (Arendt, 1970:56). According to Johan Galtung, violence occurs when human beings' potential, either somatic or mental, are not realised (Galtung, 1969:168). This typology of violence is then applied to the nation-state to analyse the relation between violence and the political order. Alternatively, Arendt asserts that violence is by nature instrumental (Arendt, 1970:79). Through her analysis on the nature of totalitarianism, supra-human ideologies such as the natural belonging and determination associated with nationalism have a violent character, which is applicable to the nation-state. Lastly, Anderson conceptualises the nation-states as imagined communities founded upon solidarity and national belonging (Anderson, 1991), thereby linking the nation-state and the violent supra-human ideology of nationalism. The nation-state, being an important actor in domestic and international politics, allows for a critical analysis of its relation to violence. The case study of Israel was chosen as it exemplified ideas expressed by all three theorists in regards to the relation between violence and the political order.

Johan Galtung's definition of violence as the constraints on human potential allows for a broad understanding of violence in its many forms, of which Galtung identifies three super-types, which are all present in the nation-state. Galtung begins with direct violence, which is also referred to as personal violence, and is described as when there is an identifiable actor who commits violence (Galtung, 1969:170). In this case, the nation-state can be on either side of the violence as the perpetrator or victim. Firstly, Israel suffers attacks from the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which has the purpose of liberating Palestine through the destruction of the existing state of Israel (Frisch, 2011). This can be classified as direct violence against the nation-state. Furthermore, the creation and maintaining of Israel as the Jewish homeland required and continuously requires direct violence against the Palestinians who object to Israeli rule. Fukuyama claims that cultural units corresponding to territorial boundaries demands determining the borders accordingly or expelling the populations, both of which require violence(Fukuyama, 2014:539). The nation-state then perpetrates direct violence to achieve the homogenisation of its population and suffers from attacks due to this particular identity.

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Galtung's conception of structural violence differs from direct violence in that it is built into the system (Galtung, 1969:171). Galtung himself refers to it as social injustice because there is unequal power and unequal life opportunities (Galtung, 1969:171), despite the means to resolve these issues existing. The Palestinian Arab minority living in Israel do not have the same opportunities and resources as their Israeli-Jewish counterparts because of ethnocratic policies that favour Jewish citizens with the allocation of resources, land and power, thereby undermining the idea of equal citizenship (Yiftachel and Ghanem, 2004:664). The Palestinian minority in Israel suffers from social injustice as structural violence prevents the full realisation of their potential in life. The lack of international intervention in the face of such discrimination and what Pappé refers to as the ethnic cleansing of Palestine through systematic expulsion to create the Jewish state (Pappé, 2006) is arguably also a form of structural violence. Indeed, the nation-state's sovereignty is respected in the international political order and infringement upon another's' sovereignty is against the norm of this system. This also relates to Anderson's concept of the nation being imagined as sovereign (Anderson, 1991:7). As such, the structural violence inflicted on the Palestinians prevails because of a greater structural violence that allows the Israeli government to be faced with judgement. Therefore, structural violence is often embedded in nation-states and in the greater international system of nation-states.

Lastly, Galtung introduces the concept of cultural violence, which are aspects of culture 'that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence' (Galtung, 1990:291). From the beginning, Israel has been declared as a Jewish state in its Declaration of Independence (Provisional Government of Israel, 1948). Zionist messages in Israeli society that identify and advocate Israel as a Jewish state legitimise actions to uphold Jewish integrity and to discriminate against Palestinians, including the use of systemic violence to defend the Jewish majority and dominance in Israel. Judaic symbols and myths are ubiquitous in society to reinforce the idea that Israel is a Jewish state and legitimise the homogenisation of Israel as a Jewish state. Thus, the cultural violence in the nation-state pertaining to specific ideas of national identity legitimise actions of direct and structural violence to maintain that identity. Building upon Galtung's typology of violence, Cocks considers structural violence inadequate in encompassing all forms of structured violence in society and introduces foundational violence, which refers to the 'secret *and* transparent' violence that takes place when a new order is established (Cocks, 2012). This includes the creation of a nation-state. Even in cases of nation-state formation when there is no genocide or war, through the establishment of a new political order, the values of the previous political order are destroyed and replaced with those of the new, seemingly peaceful order. The creation of Israel dismantled the Palestinian order previously there through the forceful eviction of Palestinians. This additional type of violence further demonstrates that it is an inherent aspect of the political order of a nation-state. Therefore, Galtung's typology of violence depicts the complex relation between violence and the political order, as the three super-types of violence and foundational violence are necessary in the establishment and continuation of the nation-state.

Hannah Arendt makes the distinction between power and violence, where power is the essence of government, but violence is not and that it is instead instrumental (Arendt, 1969:51). Hence, violence is designed for and serves a purpose in the political order. Through her work 'On the Origins of Totalitarianism' (1966) by studying National Socialism and Stalinism, Arendt derives her definition of violence as the use of divine rule or supra-human ideologies from laws of Nature or of History to achieve a goal (Arendt, 1966:461). When these higher forms of legitimacy are used as justification in politics and society, then the regime is violent, because there is no end to the process of eliminating opposition (Arendt, 1966: 464). Indeed, violence is instrumental because it executes supra-human ideology. The Jewish diaspora believed that only on Judgement Day, with the arrival of the Messiah to bring peace, would they return to Eretz-Israel, Land of Israel (Ferry and Harms, 2017). The creation of Israel as the Jewish homeland is based on this belief of their divine origin being located in Israel, from which their ancestors were exiled. With this reasoning, Israel was established on the basis of the supra-human beliefs of religion. The religious foundations of Israel's creation are subsequently violent because of the divine, religious beliefs that are in essence supra-human laws. Furthermore, Galtung explicitly names ideology and religion as culturally violent, thus connecting the two theorists' conception of violence. Galtung's cultural violence encompasses Arendt's supra-human ideologies and can both be analysed in relation to the nation-state.

While Weber writes that the state is supported by legitimate violence (Weber, 1948:78), Arendt maintains that violence is never legitimate but can be justifiable (Arendt, 1970:52). This, however, raises the question regarding a nation's right and legitimacy to defend itself. While I am of the opinion that in the event of an attack, it may be

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legitimate for a state to respond with self-defence, it must also be noted that the rhetoric of self-defence from perceived threats is often used to justify military action, such as the 1978 South Lebanon conflict where Israel Defence Forces retaliated against PLO's maiming of Israeli citizens. Although Arendt dismisses the concept of violence and embraces the concept of power, when violence is detected with Arendt's definition of violence, then that act of violence is found in all three super-types of violence corresponding with Galtung's typology, as cultural violence in the form of supra-human ideologies legitimises direct and structural violence. Therefore, violence is inherently built into the establishment of a nation-state, as its creation is founded upon supra-human ideology such as nationalism.

Lastly, Anderson argues that the nation is an 'imagined political community' because members of nations never meet or learn of other members of the same nation yet still perceive a sense of unity and solidarity (Anderson, 1991:6). The nation is imagined as limited (Anderson, 1991:6) and does not encompass everyone, as seen with Israel only allowing naturalisation of those of Jewish faith. The idea of the common origin of nation-states delineated by Anderson is the source of many conflicts and acts of violence, and is fundamentally linked to violence because national identities are formed in opposition to others and perpetuate conflict (Fukuyama, 2014:186). The idea of the nation creates a sense of solidarity among the population and is perceived as 'a deep, horizontal comradeship' (Anderson, 1991:7), and those who are not included may therefore suffer violence as a means to maintain the homogeneity and exclusive nature of the nation-state. Because Israel is imagined as a Jewish nation-state, others are marginalised and experience violence as depicted by Galtung.

On the subject of nationalism, Galtung reasons that the ideology of nationalism is 'rooted in the figure of the Chosen People and justified through religion or ideology' (Galtung, 1990:298). Once again, the example of Israel illustrates my argument of the inherent relation between violence and the political order, as Israel's nationalism is very much based on the religion of Judaism as the common origin of the population. Anderson's analysis of nationalism can be understood in relation to Arendt's supra-human laws with the rhetoric of natural determination and belonging. Because nationalism is founded upon natural self-determination by a supra-human law, it is violent in its ideology, as it creates a division among people that often leads to violence. While Anderson paints a positive image of nationalism and the nation-state as a brotherhood, he fails to mention the consequences of those not included in the nation's comradery and solidarity despite the rather severe impacts of the exclusion (Marx, 2002). These impacts can include being the target of direct and structural violence. In short, Anderson's concept of the nation-state as an imagined community inherently incorporates violence in the political order, as it is based on nationalism, which is violent according to both definitions of Galtung and Arendt due to its exclusive and dichotomous nature and legitimises further violence to defend the nation-state.

In conclusion, I think it is clear that there are many different types of violence and that violence as a whole is intrinsically intertwined with the political order of the nation-state, as evident with the case study of Israel. Violence played a role in producing the political order as nation-states were created and established as a result of war and conflict arising from nationalism. Now, the nation-state is the perpetrator of violence and thus helps sustain cycles of political violence. Arendt's definition of violence as the use of supra-human ideologies is compatible with Galtung's cultural violence, as both theorist's concepts have the purpose of justifying further violence in the political order. Anderson's idea of nation-states as imagined communities encompasses the definitions of violence as proposed by Arendt and Galtung, because nationalism is a supra-human ideology and a form of cultural violence that legitimises direct and structural violence. To summarise, the basis of the political order being nationalism allows for it to be classed as a form of political violence, as it assumes an Other to define the imagined community and demonstrates the violent ideology of nationalism as noted by Galtung and Arendt.

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