

Abstract

The central aim of this dissertation is to introduce tools for studying a form of political violence in Michel Foucault's genealogical methodology. This is accomplished by reformulating theories from Hannah Arendt on violence to sync with Foucault's understanding of power, knowledge and experience. Violence is shown to be a relationship where one subject is prevented from fulfilling a strategy by another, which over time accumulates into widespread power relations, or nexuses of violence, within a society. This is contrasted with power, which is when one subject attempts to control the outcome of a situation, and as such it is productive. This method of genealogy is then employed in the case of national identity (i.e., nationalism) in Turkey. Tracing its historical emergence, the late Ottoman Empire becomes the focal point. A network of allegiances, referred to as sultanic power, constituted the relationships that were exercised prior to the nineteenth century. While one pledged their loyalty and subservience to their ruler, this required their ruler to offer them security and prosperity in return. Over the Long Nineteenth Century, a new network of power relations emerged based on representation through the practices and discourses that developed. I come to outline what I term representative power. This mechanism relied not on allegiance but belonging to a community. The community became tied not to one's position to God or one's obedience to the ruler but rather submission to a spirit. Only once such a spirit was constructed around representation rather than allegiance does national belonging or national identity become coherent.

Keywords

Domination; Freedom; Genealogy; Hannah Arendt; Late Ottoman History; Michel Foucault; Nationalism; Political Violence; Power; Turkey.