

Blend: A Tapestry of Multi-Disciplinary Narratives

ENGLISH PART - I

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9. Facets of Violence

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The term violence conveys the painful, awful, and terrifying sense and implies the use of physical force applied against the wishes of the individual or state. In the psychological context, the violent behavior is an intentional physical aggressive behaviour against person. The violence can be understood as coercive, destructive behaviour using great deal of powerful aggressive energy and force that is often destructive, merciless, anarchist, turbulent, outrageous, and unlawful. The violence is inflicted upon or caused by one human being to another, generally inflicted by transgressor upon a victim, by powerful against powerless. The World

Health Organization (WHO) in its first World Report on Violence and Health defined violence as, “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal development or deprivation” (Wikipedia).

There are various facets of violence. The colonial violence is the violence inflicted by the colonizers on the native. In India, colonial violence began with the first encounter between Indians and the Europeans. The Mutiny of 1857, the first Indian Freedom war fought against British was the first violent resistance against the colonizers. Though Fanon argues in *The Wretched of the Earth* that, colonial violence is responded by counter violence by native, the Indian people under the able leadership of Mahatma Gandhi were following path of non-violence. Therefore, colonizers encountered very less number of incidents of counter violence in India.

However, since Independence at the stroke of midnight, India has come across number of violent events. The imperial policy of ‘Divide and Rule’ culminated in the tragic partition of India. The seeds of Hindu-Muslim riots were visible during the war between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. The nation’s partition was a tragedy as well as a reality. India’s

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independence was eclipsed by the tragic historical event of the assassination of the Father of the Nation on 30 January 1948. Its consequence was the communal riots all over India. India suffered tremendously from three wars during the pre-emergency period. First, the Chinese attack in 1962, secondly, Pakistan launched the 1965 Indo-Pak war, and it was followed by 1971 Indo-Pak war for the Independence of Bangladesh in which India proved to be Victorious. Fighting also occurred between India and Pakistan for the cause of Kashmir.

Indira Gandhi's imposition of the Emergency in June 1975 was a seminal event of utmost atrocities in the post-Nehruvian India that affected the entire national life. During the Emergency, apart from many atrocities, the main leaders of the opposition were arrested and harassed under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. In the elections held after the lifting of the Emergency, Indira Gandhi was voted out of the office. However, she came back to power in 1980 once again.

India adopted the non-Proliferation Treaty, but did not adhere to it. India tested its nuclear capability with the fission technology in Pokharan in 1974 and later in 1998. During the 1980s supply of American warfare to Pakistan increased challenges before Indian security. During the 1990, the soldiers of India and Pakistan have been exchanging fire and its outcome has been the Kargil war of 1999 in which our troops won victory. It has been Pakistan's fourth war for Kashmir.

The communal violence between Hindu and Muslim is the major threat to the multicultural existence of India. The construction of secularism was adopted to Indian conditions by following the religious ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and the modernist outlook of Jawaharlal Nehru. However, since 1980s state secularism has been under attack by the political forces mobilized by 'Hindutva' and 'Anti Secularists'. However, the major Hindu-Muslim violence in post-independence India after partition riots began after demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992. Such willful destruction of the cultural heritage of other religions or civilization is called as "Cultural Terrorism" (Ahmed 27). This version of terrorism gained prominence when the Taliban government decided to destroy the two enormous fifteen hundred years old Buddhist statues in the valley of Bamiyan. The consequences of the communal riots after the demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya on 6 December 1992 in North India were resulted into the series of thirteen bomb blasts in Mumbai. The recent terrorist attack on World Trade Centre in America on 11 September 2001 and the Afghanistan crisis have immediately been followed by the attacks

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on the Parliamentary Building of India in Delhi and the USA Embassy in Kolkata. In modern times, violence has become an indispensable part of the historical reality in India and it is an indication of an aesthetic of indifference towards humanity.

Terrorism, a special kind of violence, is situated and defined in various contexts such as crime, politics, war, propaganda, and religion. The terrorist violence has been expressed typically in indiscriminate bombings, armed assaults on civilians, focused assassinations, kidnapping, hostage-takings, and hijacking. Terrorist violence is intended to terrorize. Any laws of war are not applicable to terrorism because it attacks on persons taking no active part in the hostilities. The innocents are killed in war and terrorism and both are equally repulsive. War and terrorism can be differentiated as unintentional war damage to civilians and intentional attacks on civilians. According to Alex Schmid, instead of understanding terrorism as violence, it can be better understood as propaganda. Violence aims at behavior modification by coercion. While propaganda aims at the same by persuasion. Terrorism is the mixture of both. It uses violence against one victim, and seeks to coerce and persuade others. Thus, "Terrorism often prefers to demonstrate to the citizens the state's impotence of protecting them all the time" (Alex 207). By creating a climate of fear in order to manipulate target audience at the emotional level through media, it perpetuates terror in masses and the success of terrorist activity is measured in the context of the amount of publicity it receives. The terrorist intention is to assure free access to the news system because "Terrorism without its horrified witnesses would be as pointless as a play without an audience" (Juergensmeyer 139).

The violence in the name of religion has been wrongly considered as sacrifice. The French Philosopher Blaise Pascal already noted in the 16th century that, "Men never do evil so openly and contentedly as when they do it from religious conviction" (qtd. in Alex 211). The religious terrorism is based on fundamentalism or a religious ideology. This obviously is fissiparous in nature as the global civilization is divided in multifarious religions. As Harmon puts forward, the rise of religiously motivated gunman is the most important fact about international terrorism since the end of cold war. Religion, ordinarily a wellspring of hope, life, and virtue stirs such deep passions that it also sometimes leads to violent actions, to war and even to terrorism (Harmon 27). Moreover, Islamic radicals are now the greatest threat to the US national security, proved by 9/11 incidents. Some critics see the 9/11 attacks by other side, "An act of terrorism can also be interpreted as a sacrifice with religious connotations, born from

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humiliation in the face of overwhelming power” (Alex 214). Thus the 9/11 attack has been seen in different terms as an attempt by Jihadis to establish a sectarian Islamic state, as reaction to the globalization and west hegemonic power and thirdly as reaction to violence of the West and the violence of the modern. Although whatever may be the reason; 9/11 attack succeeded in terrorizing US People and creating psychological stress on public.

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