Hostile Radicalness: A Second Look

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Abstract

While hostile radicalism, which can be presented in mishaps like quarrel, murder, genocide, suicide bombing or public mass shooting, is a kind of antagonism in the context of ideological or sociocultural disputes, its roots do not seem to be shaped simply by political clashes, preferences or philosophies. It is usually accomplished by individuals who think that such maneuvers are the only possible solution to a particular problem. Therefore, they select the most painful, awkward or primitive strategy for solving their real or imagined difficulties. On the other hand, impulsiveness, personality traits, desperateness, defenselessness, depressed mood, presence of over-value ideas, low patience, and perhaps misapprehension of sociopolitical processes or paranoia may be accounted as predisposing or precipitating factors, incidentally. Similarly, in some cases, such a fanaticism may have roots in a clash between newfangled and oldfangled styles of perspectives or objectives. Though for the present generation radicalism may seem to be a new phenomenon in the realm of sociopolitical conflicts, it is constantly a catalyzer for the creation of great changes. The present paper involves a brief discussion regarding extremism, its foundations and likely solutions for moderating its ferocity. For such a purpose, suicide-bombing, as the most life-threatening kind of political maneuver, in addition to and in comparison with public mass shooting, as the most thrilling kind of societal insurgence, has been briefly discussed.

Key words: hostile radicalism; political clashes; demarcation; psychiatric disorders; PTSD

Introduction:

Though radicalism is not limited to this epoch, it was expected that maybe due to technological and intellectual development, which could result in sociocultural development, too, radicalness would be substituted by higher tolerance, better communication and enhanced problem-solving methods, whether intra-nationally or internationally. But the situation is not so cool. In contrast, the previous cold war has been substituted by new cold wars, and previous shortfalls have been substituted by novel shortages or hitches. Frequent geopolitical clashes, public mass shootings and a remarkable rate of crimes, which, like before, may have roots in sociocultural complications, financial difficulties or joblessness, show that, maybe and metaphorically, still a favorable match between infrastructure and superstructure, nationally, and between political world order and hegemonic rivalries, internationally, does not exist. So, projection of unresolved national pressures into international affairs may produce a morbid cycle, which may end in personal frustration and group turmoil. The said disappointment and turbulence, too, may be reverberated as misconduct or radicalism by irritable, impulsive or tired mentalities. In the present article, radicalness has been probed from a psychopathological and psychosocial standpoint. So, due to unfavorable detriments of radicalness, like destructiveness and fatalities, and also its psychological and political consequences around the world, it seems that some brief discussion and analysis of this phenomenon, for clarifying its different aspects, will be justifiable in the realm of behavioral science or mental health.

Results:

Radicalness: Demarcation of a Tough Stance

Radical politics denotes the intent to transform or replace the fundamental principles of a society or political system, often through social change, structural change, revolution or radical reform [1]. Alternately, radicalism may be defined as the opinions and behavior of people who favor extreme changes, especially in government, namely, radical political ideas and behavior [2]. In political science, the term radicalism is the belief that society needs to be changed, and that these changes are only possible through revolutionary means (3). On the other hand, while the process of adopting radical views is termed radicalization, some scholars believe that radicalism is characterized less by its principles than by the manner of its application [4]. Though some scholars may differentiate between radicalism and extremism, and believe that radicalism just opposes the constitution, while extremism is hostile towards it, our discussion is specifically regarding a kind of radicalism which allows mass murder, as one of its main objectives, like public mass shooting or suicide bombing. Previously, in another article [5], the psychosocial dynamics of public mass-shootings had been discussed. So, in the present article, the silhouette of suicide-bombing, as one of the most violent forms of political militancy in recent decades, will be discussed, separately, and in comparison, with mass-shooting. Suicide-bombing, too, like public mass-shooting, may be grouped as an ideological or vindictive act, with

spiritualistic or non-spiritualistic content. Therefore, while politically aware spiritualistic suicide-bombing is usually occurring according to some military planning and consistent with the commands of a holy leader, the vindictive one may happen sporadically and in the form of a revengeful maneuver. Anyhow, though generally a variety of reasons, such as political, philosophical, ethnological, religious, historical, economical, and cultural or a combination of them may be expressed as the predisposing or precipitating factor for vicious radicalism, the psychological autopsy of such extremists, as well, is not inconsequential, especially when the said act is being performed willingly and not under duress [6-11]. With respect to the first group, they do this because they think that this is a fight in favor of the benefits of their sect or ideals [12]. But, why does such a violent plot seem to be necessary? Because they think that there is a disfavor against their profits or demands, which cannot be fixed along with the current laws and state of affairs, and so, they can justify vehemence, according to their peculiar inferences or objectives. Hence, while life is irreplaceable, scarifying devotees, too, is not prohibited because no war is without costs or mistakes, while non-military fatalities have always been a tactic for getting advantage by putting nemesis under huge pressure of public opinion. On the other hand, concrete division of people between hellish (antagonist) and paradisiacal (exponent), according to their weird criteria, may lessen the burden of side effects of such kinds of militancy. Therefore, a suicide-bomber doesn't reflect at all on the consequences of his or her performance. They do that altruistically as the soldiers of celestial power against devilish ones. Such a person may be suggestible and dysphoric. Such a dysphoria, too, may be induced by a traditional and cultural paradigm which usually looks for idealistic and optimistic solutions to destiny, instead of a commonsense goal line based on their own thinking and efforts, and since fate is not sufficient for finding proper solutions for different troubles, therefore frequent frustration, especially in today's world, may cause an unending subjective desperateness with respect to unattainable aspirations. On the other hand, frequent disappointing news, narrations, interpretations or dictums, as continuous cognitive inputs, may create a milieu that is fitting

for further negativism and hopelessness. The end result of such a morbid process may be nothing except learned helplessness. Reinforcement of the said melancholic sequence, by coincidental events or the sect's cynical inductions and outlooks, along with restricted abilities or tools for solving the problems or reforming the surrounds, may finally find a bizarre conduit in a suicidal maneuver for expressing piled up hostility of a person with an immature coping style, or with a disturbed judgement due to fervor of vengeance. Similarly, such an irritation may be augmented by cyclic conflict between a number of philosophical dichotomies, like traditionalism vs. modernism, anticipations vs. constraints, fantasy vs. reality, worldly cravings vs. unworldly yearnings, inferno vs. heaven and totems vs. taboos. Nonetheless, it is not deniable that a commandant's order may not be enough for annihilation of self and others without the existence of other cognitive or psychological factors, which may intervene as precipitating dynamic forces. Though many believers around the world respect their blessed leaders, they don't attempt suicide or homicide for the sake of their own dogmas or their forerunner's order. So, exploration of some of the associated psychopathologies which may be involved in such a morbid process may deserve attention. For example, overvalued idea, delusion (primary, secondary or shared) with persecutory and/or grandiose content, mood disorders (depression with its extended, unconscious or conscious, suicidal tendencies, or bipolar disorder), personality disorders (paranoid, schizotypal, antisocial, borderline, dependent, obsessive-compulsive, and its unspecified varieties, like sadistic or passive aggressive traits), and limited power of analysis and abstract thinking, like borderline intellectual functioning and mild mental retardation, and low-self-esteem, may, unavoidably and automatically, prepare milieu for growth of every kind of radicalism. Among them, low self-confidence, while seems to be the slightest influencing factor, may, slowly, precipitate the most negative cognitive bias, terrifying distortions and misunderstandings in mindsets, which are ready to have faith in whatever they intuitively want to accept as true (Table 1).

Psychiatric disorders	Conditions (prevalence)
Depressive disorders	Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder (2%-5%), Major depressive disorder (7%), Persistent Depressive Disorder (Dysthymia) (0.5%), chronic major depressive disorder (1.5%), Substance/Medication-Induced Depressive Disorder (0.26%)
Bipolar and Related Disorders	Bipolar I Disorder (0.6%), Bipolar II Disorder (0.3% - 0.8%), Cyclothymic Disorder (0.4%-l%)
Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders	Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (0.5% - 3.5%, acute stress disorder (10%-50%), and adjustment disorders (5% to 20%)
Disruptive, Impulse-Control and Conduct Disorders	Oppositional Defiant Disorder (3.3%), Intermittent Explosive Disorder (2.7%), Conduct Disorder (4%), Pyromania (1.13%)
Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders	Alcohol (8.5%), Cannabis (3.4%), Hallucinogen (2.5%), Inhalant (0.4%), Opioid (0.37%), Sedative-, Hypnotic-, or Anxiolytic (0.3%), Stimulant (0.2% - 0.3%), Anabolic Steroids (0.5% – 12%)
Personality Disorders	Paranoid (2.3% – 4.4%), Schizotypal (0.6% – 4.6%), Antisocial (0.2% - 3.3%), Borderline (1.6% - 5.9%), Narcissistic (0% - 6.2%), Passive-Aggressive Personality ( ), Depressive Personality, Sadistic Personality, Sadomasochistic Personality, Personality change due to a general medical condition [Head trauma Cerebrovascular diseases, Cerebral tumors, Epilepsy (particularly, complex partial epilepsy), Huntington's disease, Multiple sclerosis Endocrine disorders, Heavy metal poisoning (manganese, mercury) Neurosyphilis, Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS)]
Schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders	Delusional disorder (0.2%), Schizophrenia (0.3%-0.7%), Schizo affective Disorder (0.3%), Substance/Medication-Induced Psychotic Disorder (7% and 25%), Psychotic Disorder Due to Another Medical Condition (0.21% to 0.54%)
Paraphilic Disorders	Sexual Sadism Disorder (2% - 30%),
Dissociative Disorders	Dissociative Identity Disorder (1.5%), Brain washing,

Neurodevelopmental disorders	Intellectual Disability (1%), Autism Spectrum Disorder (1%), Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (5% – 2.5%),
Gender dysphoria	Males (0.005% to 0.014%), females (0.002% to 0.003%)
other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention	Borderline Intellectual Functioning (13.6%), adult antisocial behavior (5% – 15%), Identity problem, Acculturation Difficulty, attenuated psychosis syndrome, identity problem, child or adolescent antisocial behavior , Social Exclusion or Rejection, Target of (Perceived) Adverse Discrimination or Persecution, Victim of Crime, Religious or Spiritual Problem, Discord With Social Service Provider, Including Probation Officer, Case Manager, or Social Services Worker , Victim of Terrorism or Torture, Exposure to Disaster, War, or Other Hostilities, Personal History of Self-Harm, Unavailability or Inaccessibility of Health Care Facilities, Relational Problems, Abuse and Neglect, Educational and Occupational Problems, Housing and Economic Problems,

Source: American Psychiatric Association (APA). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. 5th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association, 2013.

Table 1: Psychopathologic Factors That May Precipitate Radicalism

Forensically, while patients with serious psychiatric disorders, like schizophrenia, are usually unable to commit prearranged aggressions due to their cognitive and functional deficits, patients with delusional disorder may commit planned and complex violent behavior, due to their unimpaired function or cognition, which has remained intact, outside of their delusional preoccupations. Really, diagnosis of some delusions, even for experienced psychiatrists, is the most difficult task, because due to its psychosocial nature, diagnosis between primary, secondary, complete, partial or shared delusion, while it may have a lot's of overlapping with overvalued-ideas, gloomy preoccupations, or even erratic ideation, is not always a stress-free clinical or forensic issue. Specifically, many times, the inimical radicalism of the sect's devotees may have roots in a series of shared delusions, which are being brought and amalgamated by the sect's leaders or beliefs. Likewise, if substance induced paranoid delusions, which may be induced by stimulants like cocaine or amphetamine, are not accompanied with hallucinations or bizarre behavior, and become abnormally lengthy, their easy differentiation with primary autochthonous delusions may be too difficult. Likewise, secondary delusions, which are being precipitated by a depressed mood, or primary delusions, which are being presented in a patient with schizoaffective disorder, who may have better prognosis than schizophrenia, particularly in its bipolar variant, may precipitate hazardous fierceness, which may end in nasty tragedies. A depressed person, too, who, forensically and clinically, may attempt extended suicide, by killing himself or herself in addition to other dear relatives,

may do worse in more incompatible conditions. A hopeless person may not be concerned with social stigma or legal penalties because he or she may already have a subjective feeling of nothingness. Previously, in another article (13), the complexity of affiliation, interaction and leadership in sects has been discussed. By taking into consideration the possible aforesaid psychopathological factors that may consolidate such a cult, it seems that shared delusions (shared psychotic disorder, atypical psychosis or unspecified schizophrenia spectrum disorder), paranoid traits or primary delusional disorder may be some possible maladies with respect to at least some members of some of these sects. Then again, while some fighters may describe their cruel tactics as military maneuvers, psychopathology may be involved when their martial plots are regularly and repeatedly devoid of any constructive, clear or functioning objective or outcome, in addition to the creation of various humanistic and financial calamities; a conclusion which is approximately comparable to dysfunctionality of psychiatric conditions, immaturity of coping skills, and resistance against rational reevaluation and feed-back. Moreover, though one of the major aims of violent radicalism is the production of huge fear among the masses, which may result in subsequent political pressure on the administrative system, the outcomes are not usually parallel to radicals' expectations due to an unexpected domino effect. No doubt, social issues like surroundings, culture, education, experience, economics, genes, parental training, the media, morals and ego ideals, have great influence on the formation and direction of ideations and content of delusions (Table 2).

Shortage of Ethics
Leads' ethos
Problematic Ego-Ideals
Awkward & aggressive & paranoid surrounds
Careless system
High rate of illiteracy
High rate of poverty

Table 2: Sociological Factors that May Prompt Hostile Radicalness

Similarly, while exposure to psychological traumas, like facing the danger or threat of demise, murder or kidnapping of relatives, lack of shelter or foodstuff, may be influencing factors for shaping depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (14-20), low intelligence may increase the risk of exposure to trauma (21), and PTSD and trauma, too, may precipitate the emergence of delusion-like ideas (22-25). Similarly, even regular life events, like divorce and unemployment may bring about symptoms of PTSD (26). These are important psychological variables, which are operative especially in areas with geopolitical clashes and can

prepare the milieu for the creation of radicalistic inclinations. Likewise, psychological factors, like anger, seclusion, verbal, physical or sexual abuse, negligence, and revenge were found as acute foundations in criminal mass murders (27, 28). Furthermore, the social isolation and secretiveness of such cults, groups or establishments that prevent appropriate input, or distinct atmosphere of deified settings, or occasional trance states that are induced in believers through performance of angelic ceremonials may provide a distinctive type of the hinterland, which may prevent amendment of risky judgment in aficionadas. Also, hostile

radicalism may sometimes be comparable to unconscious identification with an aggressor, instead of a conscious defensive strategy against the aggressor, a selection which may depend on the subjective verdict of diehards. Inhibition of verbal assertiveness, promotion of self-censorship and encouragement of fabricated modesty in traditional training, as well, may play a role, in this regard, by preventing proper and timely release of amassed tensions or stored furies. While typical wars, usually, involve a mixture of fight and flight, along with tactics and resources, in such radical hostilities, due to the existence of an elemental hopelessness and helplessness, nothing except a ceaseless fight is conceivable, which is being done with disregard to balance of power, detriments or existing facts. Though, from an army standpoint, suicide-bombing may be, substantially, comparable to the customary maneuvers of political or military guerillas, the former one usually lacks a specific battlefield, blueprint or answerability, and in contrary to ordinary partisans, who are being energized by party-political or soldierly organizations, they are invigorated by ideological and sanctified thoughts. Though, while idealistic challenges may be started by different political, cultural or ethical standards, and, in addition, cognition or judgement may become biased by apperception, emotion and personality traits, logic may not have the same meaning or criteria for everyone. The game of power, which is the main topic in political challenges, whether traditional warriors or modern fighters, is not, usually, carried out by dedicated people or blameless preachers. While hegemony demands resources and brainpower, a challenger without them and without considering the balance of power, may be either an irritated person, who is full of hatred and demands settling of scores, or a suicidal individual, who demands salvation, or a thoughtless devotee of a single-minded, cold-blooded or ambitious commander, who takes balance of power differently or paradoxically. Though slaying enemies during wars may be justifiable, along with its necessities, conditions and prohibitions (29), its enactment in today's world, without any condition or principle, and outside of any visible battlefield, may be really bewildering to public opinion, which, usually, see that as a personal warfare that is in accordance with the perpetrators' interest and inference, and, so, may classify that as a terroristic act, not a righteous battle. Anyhow, while cultural improvement may be regarded as an important barrier against the rise of radicalness, it may not guarantee its extermination due to uneven circulation of socioeconomic development, on the one hand, and

advanced communicative technology, like the web and social media, on the other hand. Perhaps, a kind of mismatch between cultural growth and high-tech progress may be regarded as an opportunity, which may direct some inept, unstable or prejudiced users towards crimes or sociopolitical problems. Like a chess player, who may not notice differences between a real trench and a chessboard, or between a real soldier and a chessman, a raw sociopolitical activist, too, may never touch differences between a dynamic social media and a real revolt. Likewise, while the nice screen of a monitor may not mirror the actuality of real sufferings, novelty-seeking mindsets, as well, may infer mistakenly or judge baselessly. Historically, political science and strategies have been invented to replace physical fighting, to protect energy and resources, to save time for potential repair of faults, and, metaphorically, to substitute the ruthless motivations of the limbic system with the logical problem-solving ability of the prefrontal cortex. On the other hand, though political science could be described by some skeptics as a nice and deceptive mask for covering the dark face of the struggle for supremacy, resources and genetic fitness, it is at any rate a wiser approach than a deadly battle. At least, it can be the first choice in every conflict. Similarly, while it seems that any struggle for gathering a better place in the pyramid of hegemony, whether on a national scale or worldwide, stems from the same origin or instincts, its mechanism may be disguised by different circumstances. Generally, while aggressiveness may not be ascribed to a special idea, race or nation, it may be expressed correctly or incorrectly, fittingly or unfittingly, depending on the time, place, resources, cultural merit, objectives and mental health of belligerents. On the other hand, in keeping with cognitive psychology, depressed mood may lead to a biased selection of negative thoughts, which may lead, unintentionally, to misjudgment. Equally, it seems that such a faulty course may take place in the presence of low self-esteem too, in spite of an apparently euthymic mood. Anyhow, yet again, it seems that sociocultural factors are not enough for committing hostile radical acts, like suicide-bombing, though they may have determined influence in some occasions on some ones. For example, while many people may live in the same circumstances and bear the same sociopolitical hassles or monetary strains, most of them do not have any proclivity to commit crime, suicide, homicide or both. Moreover, mass media, means of communication, the web and social networks, may have an amending effect on such radical inclinations, if receiving mindsets are ready for through analysis and understanding of signals (Table 3).

> ➢ Growth of literateness
> ➢ Proper educational system
> ➢ Decrease of poverty
> ➢ Apropos political economy
> ➢ Culpable political system
> ➢ Unwarlike leaders & administrators
> ➢ Authentic mass media
> ➢ Efficient communicative technology
> ➢ Proper law enforcement and judiciary services
> ➢ Genuine analysis of history in schools
> ➢ Improvement of public mental health
> ➢ Availability of child & adolescent psychiatric facilities
> ➢ Exploring transcultural psychology & sociology

Table 3: Beneficial Schemes for Mitigation of Hostile Radicalism.

Then again, performing radical crimes by extremists who have been born and educated in advanced societies may show that training and schooling, without cultural modification, enough socialization and a stable mentality, may not be enough for prevention of hostile radicalism; a conjecture that may be applicable to domestic terrorism, as well, which is done by exasperated fellow citizens. Furthermore, fundamentalism is not limited to non-developed or developing societies, and may be found in developed nations, too, though with different physiognomies. So, cultural

differences between various civilizations may be categorized through the fraction of traditional persons to modern people, and circulation of political power among them, though neither conservatism nor liberalism are absolute qualities and, parenthetically, there is no controlled norm with respect to each one of them, except than a phenomenological differentiation between their exaggerated beliefs or conduct. Anyhow, while neither fundamentalism nor illiteracy or poverty may be enough for the promotion of extremism, a nasty amalgamation of them and

psychopathology may well provide a suitable setting for unsympathetic antagonism. On the other hand, fundamentalism, like any other ideology, may misuse militancy as a tool for the achievement of political victory or hegemony (30, 31). Anyhow, while fundamentalism has a cultural basis for restriction of liberty and criticism, democracy, also, is not an absolute issue, and when there is a mismatch between political, economic and cultural dimensions of a society, the foundation of democracy can become unsteady, too. Besides, democratic tools, like balloting, may, sometimes, be abused by two-faced individuals or groups for later and further deception or exploitation. Similarly, an inimical, deceitful or paranoid milieu, whether in a fundamental, tyrannical or democratic system, may provide the necessary substrate for further argumentativeness and radicalism. As said before, though sociocultural development can be accounted for as a barrier against hostilities, its evolution may demand enough time and appropriate societal context, which usually comprises a gap between rapidity of technological transformation and slowness of sociocultural rejuvenation. In addition, the necessity of cultural renovation in every civilization may depend on internal circumstances of that society and may not be motivated promptly if there is no mismatch or inconsistency between present status quo and future policies; an inertia, which, though is not believable in a dynamic society, may be found in some way in secluded regions (Table 4).

Perpetrator of unlawful homicide	Suicide-bomber	Mass-shooter
Political	Generally	Occasionally
Ideological (like radicalism, chauvinism, racism, separatism….)	Frequently	Occasionally
As a kind of retaliation	Constantly	Generally
Victims	As nemeses	As targets
Suicidality of Perpetrator	Conscious	Conscious or unconscious
As an Extended suicide	Never	Sporadically
As a copycat	Not likely	Sometimes
Due to mental problems	Not likely	Maybe
Impulsive	Implausible	Sometimes
Gender	Commonly Male	Predominantly Male
Narcissism	Irrelevant	Influential
Iidentity problem	Irrelevant	Influential
Gender dysphoria	Irrelevant	Influential
Lack of sympathy	Against enemy	Generalized

Table 4: An Approximate Comparison between Public Mass-Shooters and Political Suicide-Bombers

Conclusion:

While some criminologists may believe that some violent aggressions, like mass-shooting or suicide-bombing, may lack any understandable purpose, it must be acknowledged that, in reality, no radical attack may lack reason, which should be explored from different angles, because, first, the perpetrators' logic may not be similar to analyzers' logic, and, second, neither of them attempt so cruelly, while they are drowsy or unconscious, particularly when they may broadcast their assaults online, too. Though not applicable to all incidents, a planned shooting or bombing, typically, demands greater alertness, additional concentration and a series of prearrangements, which are not usually possible when the perpetrator is too impulsive, or is under the influence of substance, or is in a trance state of mind. So, there is always a reason which may not be exposed during an ordinary interview or legal interrogation, or it may be so erratic that it may not be acknowledged commonsensically. So, it seems that without an insight-oriented interview, along with regular debriefings, exposing unconscious, subconscious or, ostensibly, unsound motives may not be an easy task. On the other hand, though discovering whys and wherefores does not automatically lead to constructive solutions, it is an important step towards psychological autopsy of vicious behaviors. Though, by taking into consideration all intervening or confounding factors, formulation of a series of sociological, psychological and criminological problem-solving strategies for different aspects of radicalism seems to be difficult, no doubt, a slow but sure decline of complications may provide safer surroundings. For example, while it seems that the rate of mass-shooting may have a linear relationship with inflation, recession or joblessness, or escalation in geopolitical conflicts may lead to an upsurge in suicide-bombing by radical devotees or partisan guerrillas, or, perhaps, a setting full of violent games, clips, events or news may, bit by bit, dismiss or blunt sympathy, no interim program, whether financial or political, may be available, due to any reason, for an absolute solution of the said grounds. Like a messy household which may never become spotless, some social complications, too, may never become untroublesome. Alternatively, though identification of primary or secondary causes of hostile radicalism may not guarantee a thorough control of backgrounds in the short-term or even in the long-term, apathy, too, may not exclude a worse prospect.

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