

# Understanding the Phenomenon of Violence: A Perspective of Philosophical Anthropology

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## Abstract:

In the present human society, the omnipresent violence reaches and strikes all the human beings in the forms of crimes, wars, massacres and by its daily pressures. The phenomenon of violence is present even from the womb of the mother when the human being is in the state of a foetus. Is it not advisable to admit that violence is in the root of the human nature? Such an understanding of violence is anthropological and there is an urgency to formulate the concept of 'homo violens' (violent man) together with other fields like morality, philosophy, sociology, etc.

Considering the human being as 'homo violens' is not to support or encourage violent activities, but to face the reality of human nature and to accept that man is intrinsically violent. This will bring an acceptance on the part of human beings about their reality and help them deal with this grave issue. The anthropological studies have purposely avoided facing the reality of human violence in order to adhere to the traits of civilization which consider human life, human body and human actions as sacred and have higher motives. However, the human reality is violent and the human race has to admit this fact and still move towards a civilization which is shattered of all its traits of brutalities. There is an inevitable fact that there is only a subtle difference between cannibalism and civilization.

The study or serious examination of 'homo violens' (the violent man), will also contribute to the study of 'homo pācātus' (the non-violent man) who has to still arrive in the human history.

**Keywords:** Aggression; Human rights; Intentional; Homo animalis; Homo Pācātus; Homo Violens; Perpetrator; Predatory; Repression; Victims;

## 01. INTRODUCTION

The study of violence presents a far greater dilemma for social analysts and anthropologists because of its wider prevalence in the contemporary society. Contemporary human society is collectively affected by violence which is universally expressed in the form of crimes, wars, massacres. As Mark Vorobej observed, the human beings today "live lives that are, to an extraordinary extent, mired in violence."<sup>1</sup> Violence is an extremely diverse phenomenon and a weltanschauung in the globalized world of today which displays a sense of confusion between cannibalism and civilization. The French philosopher Michel Montaigne condemned the Western society as cannibalistic not in the literal sense but in a figurative and sarcastic sense. He said that eating human flesh is somehow barbaric and exotic. But it is more barbarous to eat a man alive than eat him dead. The interpretation of cannibalism is thus circumscribed today by the violent acts of the societies. The human reality is violent and the human race seems compelled to concede that there is only a subtle difference between cannibalism and civilization.<sup>2</sup>

It is realistic to say that violence is universal being woven into the very fabric of society. The infliction of violence on the human beings may be said to start even as a foetus in the mother's womb. It is noted that violence influences all the aspects of human life including family, village, classes, genders, ethnic groups, religions, sects, etc. In this background, it is reasonable to say that violence shapes the contemporary world.<sup>3</sup> The emic and etic understandings of violence are used in this article, because particular acts of violence

are seen as part of the human social living and at the same time violence is also seen as a phenomenon which is applicable cross-culturally. Further violence is primarily seen as a performance and a human act and those involved in the violence are human beings. Therefore, there is an urgency to formulate the concept of 'homo violens' (violent Man) in the face of escalation of violence throughout the face of the earth. 'Homo violens' is an understanding to show that violence is almost certainly an inherent part of human nature and it is essentially a cultural phenomenon which is organized and articulated culturally.<sup>4</sup>

## **02. ETYMOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE**

The word 'violence' is usually associated with 'the exercise or an instance of physical force, usually effecting or intended to effect injuries, destruction, etc.' or 'an unjust or unwarranted exertion of force or power, as against rights or laws'. Etymologically Latin *violentia* means 'vehemence, impetuosity' and *violentus* means 'vehement, forcible' probably related to *violare*. Though the word violence at the outset seems to indicate the physical aspect blatantly, the concept of violence covers a wider field than the physical component and has its influence in moral and political fields. Violence can be physical, moral, mental and verbal; violence also is an act of commission or omission. Since, it lacks the clarity about its meaning and moral status, it cannot be duly defined. However, from the etymological understanding, violence is generally defined as essentially the illegitimate use of force and there is also a claim that violence is morally permissible and tolerable.<sup>5</sup>

## **03. CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE**

Definitions of violence depend upon its purpose and motivation. Violence is not a single kind of activity: as already seen, it is the consequence of both mental and physical act. According to the contemporary understanding, violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations.<sup>6</sup> This view shows clearly that it is almost expected violence to follow or to be an invariable consequence when physical and mental expectations are not achieved. This shows the violent trend of the world of today. Violence and abuse are used to establish and maintain power and control over another person, and often reflect an imbalance of power between the victim and the perpetrator. The roots of all violence are founded in the many types of inequality which continue to exist and grow in society. Violence is therefore a socially defined category of activities that share some common features.

In 1996, World Health Organization (WHO) in its 49<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly declared violence as "a major and growing global public health problem."<sup>7</sup> It elaborated 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."<sup>8</sup> It is an etic understanding of violence, because it is an outsider view and a cross cultural consideration on violence. According to this understanding when a person or a group uses force or power against another person or group, that act becomes aggression or violence. Such power or force may be used against oneself, against an individual or against a group or community, as in gang violence or repression of ethnic groups. Perhaps this definition of violence is restricted to physical violence given the context of the contemporary society. Though WHO looks at violence as a public health problem in a cross cultural sense, it also recognizes violence as rational and intentional, and therefore a human act prevalent

even from the beginning of the human society, because the perpetrator (the one who begins the violence) and the victim (the one who is affected by the violence) are human beings.

Plato had observed the rational and intentional aspect of violence. He was of the view that violence is rational and it has an end and object in view. In his elaboration, he points out that violence results from uncontrolled desire for the pleasures associated with bodily beauty. Such desire overcomes any rational opinion about what is good and results in using the other for one's own self-satisfaction at the expense of the other.<sup>9</sup> Plato's philosophy idealized everything, including violence. Therefore, even violence is a reality and has its concrete existence. According to Plato, the task of philosophy is to love ideas and repress violence.

After Plato, Aristotle defined man as the rational animal, combining the basic animal nature of man together with his essential and noble character of rationalization which characterizes man. Further he added other basic human activities with this 'animalness' and defined 'man as a social animal' 'man as a political animal' 'man as a cultural animal', etc. Thus according to Aristotle, human being is an animal but crowned with rationality. Therefore, the aggressive and violent nature must be governed and be under the control of correct reasoning.

After these two great pillars of Greek philosophy, there were other Greco-Roman thinkers who in the history of philosophy have emphasized the violent nature of man arising from the animal nature of the human being. The Stoic thinkers like Cicero and Marcus Aurelius affirmed the animal nature of man as the cause of all violent activities in the society and called for the arrest of this 'animalness' as a necessity to grow in virtue and moral life. Such thinkers observed and personified that certain animal behaviour is incorporated into human behaviour and is reflected in the human being. For example, human anger was compared with the nature of dog; human slothfulness was identified with that of donkey; cunningness and cheating with that of fox; jumping from the hideout on its prey with that of tiger, etc. Such comparison of the human violent nature with that of the animal nature and attributing the origin of human violent nature to the animal nature is incompatible, because animals do not commit rape; even the carnivorous animals do not kill their preys in excess; and animals do not commit suicide. The callousness of the human violent nature cannot be compared with the animal nature and thus discredit animals. "Homo animalis" is not in the background of the violent activities of man. However, analyzing the violent nature of man as a separate entity did not come into reality till recently or in the modern era where considering 'the violent nature as something innate to the human being' was recognized.

The seventeenth century philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679) believed that the implication of violence is at the heart of any society. In his classic of political philosophy, *Leviathan*, Hobbes described the living conditions in the 'state of nature' as 'a war of everyman against everyman'. He used the simile of Leviathan to bring out the mutual swallowing nature of the human beings. This expresses the mutual antagonism or mutually destructive behaviour of the human being. Man has this destructive instinct in his social, political and economic activities. This constant conflict stemmed, from the nature of human being who for Hobbes is 'a warring animal'. To quote Hobbes in this context: "In the first place, I put for a general inclination of all mankind a perpetual and restless desire of power after power that ceaseth only in death. And the cause of this is not always that a man hopes for a more intensive delight than he has already attained to, or that he cannot be content with a moderate power, but because he cannot assure the power and means to live well, which he hath present, without the acquisition of more."<sup>10</sup> According to Hobbes, the social life of the

human beings is not something natural as Aristotle perceived. It is only a remedy for the violent life that prevailed in the state of nature. The continued violent trends, atmosphere of death, poverty, hopelessness and loneliness were the situations of human life in the state of nature. To get rid of this tragic life situations people selected a 'violent' and a strong man as their leader to ensure their safety and smooth life.

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469 - 1527) in the West and Kautilya (Chanakya / Vishnugupta) (B.C. 371 - 283) in the East (India) had their views about the leaders of society as always in search of power by means of violence and brutality. Machiavelli's '*The Prince*' and Kautilya's '*The Treatise on Government (Arthashastra)*' deal with the same subject matter - that is, instructing the leader of the people on terrorizing and exercising violence on the subjects to continue to rule. Machiavelli proposes that the prince or the leader of the people to be a man of war and who always thinks and prepares for war. "A prince, therefore, must not mind incurring the charge of cruelty for the purpose of keeping his subjects united and confident; for, through cruelty to a few subjects he might be more merciful than those who, through excess tenderness, may allow disorder resulting in murders and rape; these as a rule bring harm to the whole community, while punishment or execution carried out by the prince may only harm one individual [...] From this arises the question whether it is better to be loved more than feared, or feared more than loved. Ideally one ought to be both feared and loved, but as it is difficult for the two to go together, it is perhaps preferable to be feared than loved, if the choice is between one or the other."<sup>11</sup>

Such a leader according to Machiavelli is compared to a lion and a fox. A prince or a leader must be both a lion and a fox at the same time. A lion is the symbol of violence and aggression and a fox is the symbol of cunningness. Therefore, the prince must be a warrior, cruel, cunning, deceitful, fearful, and niggardly under the title of diplomacy and on the whole be the symbol of violent aggression. The prince or the leader comes from the people; therefore, since the leader is violent and aggressive, the people too will be so. Since the people are violent, the societies, states and nations are violent. For Machiavelli, the government is an organized form of violence. The unorganized violence that prevailed in the human societies becomes organized and accepted in the forms of governments and states. On the whole, violence is seen as the natural and fundamental essence of the human beings.

Kautilya also presents a leader who is ever ready for war, uses violent means to increase his wealth and army and who is more cruel than kind towards his citizens. Both Machiavelli and Kautilya accept that the natural life and behaviour of human beings is brutal, fearful and aggressive.

Such definitions and notions of violence make it clear that the human life or society cannot be perceived without violence and aggressions. These notions initiated the anthropological understanding of violence to perceive the human being as intrinsically prone to violence and hence human being as 'homo violens.'

#### **04. MULTIDISCIPLINARY UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENCE**

The consideration of violence here is limited chiefly to psychological and religious spheres. According to Freud, pain is pleasure and vice versa.<sup>12</sup> Freudian understanding of pain and pleasure, equating them and associating them with the sexual instinct emphasizes the multifaceted understanding of violence. Pain and pleasure are physical, mental, psychical and imaginary which is connected to the internal sense of fantasy. Therefore, the origin of

human aggression or violence is largely on the rational and mental plane than on natural instincts. Large sections of the media and entertainment industry today concentrate on the production and dissemination of images of violence and often these images depict true life situations. The use of violence by animals is instinctive with a physical manifestation; whereas the use of violence by the human beings is most of the time urged by reason and therefore it is planned and premeditated. Sometimes some acts of violence are reflex actions or on the spur of the moment. But such actions do not prolong or bring effects which are nasty and inhuman. Such acts do not leave revengeful effects. Thus, violence is in conjunction with the human will and is associated with the human passions which have their origin in human desires.

Both Hinduism and Buddhism affirm desire as the root of all human sufferings. To attain what a human being desires, when natural means fail, violent or aggression often takes over. Therefore, desire becomes the root cause of violence and consequently leads to human suffering. King Asoka's conversion to Buddhism is associated with Kalinga battle in which he was engaged and his experience of its brutal consequences.<sup>13</sup> In Judaism the story of Cain and Abel show how ambition, jealousy, anger and hatred harboured in the heart of Cain led him to the use of violence and he commits a murder. The book of Proverb of the Old Testament asserts that the human heart which is the seat of all desires makes a human being as he is: "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." (Prov. 23:7) Basing on such Jewish thought patterns, Christianity developed its teaching about violence which is seen as a part of the human state because of sin (Rom. 3:23). St. Augustine noticed human being's great capacity for aggression and slaughter. This inclination for violence and evil seemed to him a theological explanation for original sin. Man's aggressive nature was related directly to the fall from grace in the Garden of Eden. According to Muslim theology, mankind's chief cause for fall was pride and rebellion. In their pride, human beings attempted to be equal with God and thereby damaged the unity with God. Thus, in the Islamic faith, pride becomes a cardinal sin. (Qur'an 7)

## **05. ORIGIN OF VIOLENCE**

When analyzing the origin of violence two different schools of thought dominate. Both schools see violence as part of animal nature and on this basis there is no fundamental difference between human beings and animals. The animals use violence dictated by their instinct which is intrinsic to their nature, but human beings can use violence both instinctively and rationally. Rational use of violence can surpass the limits of nature and can bring bizarre effects. Once such violence is unleashed, it is very difficult to bring it under control.

One school of thought identifies the origin of violence from the innate violent nature of human beings. Accordingly, the human reality is by nature violent. In other words the violent or conflict prone nature is inherent in human beings. This line of thinking has led to scrutinizing violence from an anthropological perspective and gave birth to the consideration of man as 'homo violens'.

The second school identifies the origin of violence from the biological perspective of the human beings. Those who adopt this point of view identify natural bodily function or functional behaviour as aggressive and violent. Biologically perception done by the external senses is in some way or other aggressive or physically affective. Physicality is not totally confused with aggression. However, in the physical perception there is a certain amount of

pain or affection in the senses involved: the eye is affected by the colour; the ear drums are pressed hard by the vibration of the hertz frequency; the smell depress the sensitive areas of the nose; taste is in a way an aggression over the taste buds of the tongue; texture is a physical force over the sense of touch. Though the positive side of the sensual perception is called pleasure, the other way of calling this perception is pain or aggression. That is why the Freudian psychoanalysis would equate pain and pleasure.<sup>14</sup>

Biological origin of violence can be seen manifested in 4 basic ways of aggression; predatory aggression is dictated by the self-preservation instinct of an organism to satisfy its hunger, sexual urges and other essential or natural needs by preying on other organisms especially on the weaker or lower species; territorial aggression is to defend the habitat or the territory of an organism; maternal or paternal aggression is the result of the sexual instinct that is to protect the offspring of an organism thereby to assure the survival of the fittest and survival of the species; affective aggression is an emotional arousal to enable an organism to express itself. These are common to human beings and animals and therefore these aggressions are fundamentally instinctive. However, human beings can go beyond from the instinctive level and through reasoning can articulate theoretical foundations for these aggressions. Nevertheless, since these aggressions are biological they are common to the human beings and animals.

Man is not only a biological organism but also a social being. This is the point of departure where the human beings transcend other organisms and establish their identity and vindicate their individuality. Human behaviour is not determined by biological factors alone but is influenced by many other dynamics which are social, spiritual and transcendental. Therefore, the origin of violence cannot just be confined either to the inherent violent nature or to biological factors inherent in the human being. Violence has a dialectical nature acting through very different routes or opposing forces or processes. In this sense violence is dialectical because it is both imagined and performed. This duality is crucial when examining the origin of violence. Generally three components are inherent and can be identified in a violent conflict: the perpetrators, victims and witnesses. The persons in the first group are those who are involved or initiate the violent aggression and who may end up the winners and later may enjoy or benefit from the outcome of the violence. Persons in the second group are the losers and are adversely affected. The third group becomes either neutral or forms those passive (enjoyers) observers of the violence who may also be described as sadist or masochist.

## **06. TYPES OF VIOLENCE**

Except to the above said few views and notions which advocated violence as an inner nature of the human beings, most of the thinkers viewed violence as something unnatural or artificial to the human beings. The latter thought human civilization as something absolute and violence is an intruder into the civilized human race which is the cause of all human failures and downfall. Even many anthropologists appraised non-violence as something really human and therefore considered it noble and virtuous. Even the religions advocated non-violence as human and shunned violence as something non human and animalistic. However, the contemporary trends especially in anthropology view violence also as a human trait and admit that human being is intrinsically violent. This has provided the opportunities to investigate violence in greater detail and to establish firmly that the human being is intrinsically violent. Those who believe that violence is intrinsic to the human being

identified many types of violence in the human society and classified them into different categories.<sup>15</sup>

Violence can take many forms, including massacres, forced displacement, starvation, mass rape and disfigurement. Here references of violent activities pertaining to a particular country or area is avoided because a cross cultural approach is used to study violence and violence is regarded as a universal phenomenon which is common to all the cultures and ethnic groups. Many types and manifestations of violent activities often overlap, such as war, conflict, genocide, massacre, sexual violence, physical and mental torture, physical injury, captivity, self-harm and suicide. Differences lie in collectivity, such as state and systematic violence, compared with individual persecution.<sup>16</sup> Thus the *World Report on Violence and Health* divides violence into three categories based on the perpetrator of the violence: self- directed, interpersonal or collective. Self- directed violence is mostly self-harm and fatal suicidal behaviour. Interpersonal violence includes family violence, child maltreatment, youth violence, some forms of sexual violence and abuse of elders. Collective violence includes war, terrorism and violent political conflict between or within states, violence perpetrated by states (genocide, torture and systematic abuses of human rights).<sup>17</sup> Based on these categories mainly nine types of violence, aggression or abuse are identified.

### **6.1 Physical Violence**

Physical violence occurs when someone uses a part of his or her body or an object to control another person's actions. Physical violence chiefly includes physical force which results in pain, discomfort or injury; assault or threat with a weapon or other object; **medication abuse; restraint abuse and murder.**

### **6.2 Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence occurs when a person is forced to unwillingly take part in sexual activity. Sexual violence chiefly includes, forcing a person to perform sexual acts without consent; exhibitionism; making unwelcome sexual comments or jokes; withholding sexual affection; denial of a person's privacy; denial of sexual information and education and humiliating, criticizing or trying to control a person's sexuality.

### **6.3 Emotional Violence**

Emotional violence occurs when someone says or does something to make a person feel stupid or worthless. Emotional violence chiefly includes, not allowing the person to have contact with family and friends; jealousy; humiliating or making fun of the person; intimidating the person; causing fear to gain control and threatening to hurt oneself if the person does not cooperate.

### **6.4 Psychological Violence**

Psychological violence occurs when someone uses threats and causes fear in an individual to gain control. Psychological violence mainly includes, threatening to harm the person; verbal aggression; socially isolating a person; inappropriately controlling the person's activities; not allowing a competent person to make decisions; treating a person like a child or a servant and withholding companionship or affection.

## **6.5 Spiritual Violence**

Spiritual (or religious) violence occurs when someone uses an individual's spiritual beliefs to manipulate, dominate or control the other person. Spiritual violence principally includes, not allowing the person to follow his or her preferred spiritual or religious tradition; forcing a spiritual or religious path or practice on another person; belittling or making fun of a person's spiritual or religious tradition, beliefs or practices and using one's spiritual or religious position, rituals or practices to manipulate, dominate or control a person.

## **6.6 Cultural Violence**

Cultural violence occurs when an individual is harmed as a result of practices that are part of her or his culture, religion or tradition. Cultural violence chiefly includes infidelity; committing adultery; rape and other sexual domination; practicing witchcraft; abandoning the elderly; forcible marriage and slavery.

## **6.7 Verbal Violence / Abuse**

Verbal abuse occurs when someone uses language, whether spoken or written, to cause harm to an individual. Verbal abuse mainly includes expressing negative expectations; expressing distrust; yelling; insulting, swearing; unreasonably ordering and telling a person that he or she is worthless.

## **6.8 Financial Violence / Abuse**

Financial abuse occurs when someone controls an individual's financial resources without the person's consent or misuses those resources. Financial abuse chiefly includes controlling the person's choice of occupation; illegally or improperly using a person's money, assets or property; acts of fraud; taking funds from the person without permission; misusing funds through lies or trickery; persuading the person to buy a product; forging a signature and opening the mails without permission.

## **6.9 Violence due to Negligence**

Neglect occurs when someone has the responsibility to provide care or assistance for an individual but does not. Neglect chiefly includes failing to meet the needs of a person who is unable to meet those needs alone; abandoning the minors and elders and not remaining with a person who needs help. Such neglect can be physical or medical: Physical neglect is mainly disregarding necessities of daily living, for the children and elders. Medical neglect is ignoring special dietary requirements; not providing needed medications and not being aware of the possible negative effects of medications.

These forms of violence may occur simultaneously and they are not mutually exclusive. One type of violence may be mingled with other and all these forms express that they originate from the human nature which is the seat of all such activities.



## **07. ANTHROPOLOGICAL NUANCES OF VIOLENCE**

Accepting and examining violence as part of the human nature is fundamental in the consideration of the anthropological nuances of violence. Violence is intrinsically human. Only a rational being can involve in violent activities. Animals cannot involve in violent activities. They can involve in physically rough activities induced by their survival and sexual instincts. For a violent activity rationality is important. Rationality and violence are interconnected. In the words of Foucault, “All human behavior is scheduled and programmed through rationality. There is a logic of institutions and in behavior and in political relations. In even the most violent ones there is a rationality. What is most dangerous in violence is its rationality. Of course violence itself is terrible. But the deepest root of violence and its permanence come out of the form of the rationality we use. The idea had been that if we live in the world of reason, we can get rid of violence. This is quite wrong. Between violence and rationality there is no incompatibility.”<sup>18</sup> Therefore, man as a rational being becomes the ‘homo violens’.

Anthropologically such a situation leads to the conclusion that violence is fundamental to human nature. It would then be necessary to have courage to think, after consideration of the human beings in their different stages of civilization as ‘Homo sapiens’, ‘Homo vivens’, ‘Homo volens’, ‘Homo loquens’, ‘Homo culturalis’, ‘Homo laboris’, ‘Homo socialis’, ‘Homo economicus’, this notion of ‘Homo violens’ as well, which allies itself with other fields like morality, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, etc. This question of violence is threatening the contemporary world more than ever before. Human reality is violent and the human race has to admit this fact and still move towards a civilization which is shattered of all its traits of brutalities. Some would argue that ‘homo violens’ is already a part of ‘homo vivens’ because for them violence is a human act which is a consequence of the free act of man. Nevertheless in the midst of the growth of the culture of violence in the contemporary world, ‘homo violens’ has to be scrutinized and studied independently which would facilitate the appropriate understanding of human nature. Current trends in anthropology demands that the nature of the human being is properly interpreted and understood.

## **08. CONCLUSION**

Philosophical anthropology studies the human beings as a whole and integral being. Such a study reveals man as a ‘mystery’ and an ‘impossible possibility’. Man has faced many riddles in this universe some of which have already been unraveled and others will be solved in time to come. As Max Scheler observed man will be astonished when he faces the mysteriousness of himself.<sup>19</sup> Such mysteriousness of the human being is also expressed through human inherent nature of violence and non-violence.

Hobbesian consideration of the original life of humanity was full of violence and terror. His understanding of the human being as naturally violent is crucial in the perspective of ‘homo violens’. The contemporary violent trend that overwhelms the whole world, expressed as minor and major wars, terrorist activities, both religious and political, have led to a necessary examination and research of the human nature from this perspective.

‘Accept the truth’ and ‘face the reality’ are some of the important slogans of the contemporary society. Human beings must accept the reality of their nature that they are naturally violent and aggressive. Escaping from this reality would create a spiral of violence and increase aggressive nature of the contemporary world. Accepting the violence-prone nature is a therapy which would heal the aggressive nature and lead the humanity towards a non-violent culture. In the words of Martin Luther King Jr., violence is part of human nature, but it is the weakest nature in the human being. Unless the violent nature is identified in the human beings and the roots of violence dealt with, the violent acts or behaviours cannot be eradicated from the human societies. “The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that.”<sup>20</sup>

Thus the recognition of ‘homo violens’ is seen as a contemporary revelation of human nature. The escalation of the culture of violence in the world necessarily requires a deeper study of the aspect of ‘homo violens’. This conceptualization brings forward two important questions: whether violence and non-violence are two different aspects or are they two sides of the same coin. In other words, whether human violence comes from his inherent nature or as Isaac Asimov queried whether ‘violence is the last refuge of the incompetent’.<sup>21</sup> The task of anthropology is to elucidate these questions which would contribute to the growth of the conceptualization of ‘homo violens.’

The more recent consideration of man as ‘homo violens’ is not to support or encourage violent activities, but to face the reality of human nature and to accept that man is intrinsically violent. This will bring an acceptance on the part of human beings about their reality and help them deal with this grave issue. The history of anthropology right up to the 1960s could be written as the history of theories about the societal construction of a generalised condition of non-violence. It purposely avoided facing the reality of human violence in order to adhere to its traits of civilization which consider human life, human body and human actions as sacred and have higher motives. However, the study or serious examination of ‘homo violens’ (the violent man), will also contribute to the study of ‘Homo pācātus’ (the non-violent man) who has to still arrive in the human history. There have been some individuals who were non-violent in the human history. But the aspiration is that a non violent human race must be created in the face of the earth. Such a situation calls for vastly different approaches and methodologies for researchers. Therefore, this article establishes the basic principles of the anthropology of violence by analysing them from various perspectives and examining the origin and types of violence and thereby proposes the path from ‘homo violens’ to ‘homo pācātus’.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Mark Vorobej, (2016), *The Concept of Violence*, New York: Routledge, IX.

<sup>2</sup> Montaigne, Michel de, (1958), *Essays*, trans., J. M. Cohen, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 108.

<sup>3</sup> James Dodd, (2009), *Violence and Phenomenology*, New York: Routledge, 1.

<sup>4</sup> Heelas, P , (1982), “Anthropology, Violence and Catharsis”, in *Aggression and Violence*, ed., P. Marsh and A. Campbell, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 50.

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- <sup>5</sup> Coady, C., 1998, 'Violence', in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, eds., Taylor & Francis, <<https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/thematic/violence/v-1>>.
- <sup>6</sup> Mark Vorobej, 63.
- <sup>7</sup> World Health Assembly Resolution, (1996), *Prevention of Violence: a Public Health Priority*, Forty- Ninth World Health Assembly, Geneva: WHO, No. 25.
- <sup>8</sup> Krug E, Dahlberg L, Mercy J. *et al*, (2002), *World Report on Violence and Health*, Geneva: World Health Organization, 5.
- <sup>9</sup> Plato, *Phaedrus, Platonis Opera*, vol. 2, ed., J. Burnet, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, 143.
- <sup>10</sup> Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed., John Plamenatz, Glasgow: Maxwell, 1991, ch. xi, 123.
- <sup>11</sup> Niccolo Machiavelli, (1882), *Historical, Political and Diplomatic Writings*, trans. Christian E. Detmold, Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, ch. xvii, 558.
- <sup>12</sup> Freud, Sigmund, (1922), *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans., C.J.M. Hubback, Vienna: International Psycho-Analytical, Bartleby.com, 2010. <<https://www.bartleby.com/276/>>.
- <sup>13</sup> Edict 13 on the Edicts of Asoka Rock Inscriptions reflects the great remorse the king felt after observing the destruction after the conquest of Kalinga. Legend says that one day after the war was over, Asoka ventured out to roam the city and all he could see were burnt houses and scattered corpses. The lethal war with Kalinga transformed the vengeful Emperor Asoka into a stable and peaceful emperor and he became a patron of Buddhism. <<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldcivilization/chapter/ashokas-conversion>>
- <sup>14</sup> Such an understanding, that is equating physicality with pain or aggression is contested by many today especially from the medical field. They say that this understanding was justified during a time when neurophysiology was not developed. Now neurophysiology would say that the pain receptors and sensation receptors are distinct. They have different pathways to the brain and the centers in the brain relating to these sensations are different.
- <sup>15</sup> There are many types of violence stipulated by different organizations and foundations. Here the types put forward by “The Violence Prevention Initiative of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador” are used. <<https://www.gov.nl.ca/VPI/types>>
- <sup>16</sup> Lucy Hovil, Eric Werker, (2005), *Portrait of a Failed Rebellion*, Cambridge: Sage Publications, 9.
- <sup>17</sup> Krug E, Dahlberg L, Mercy J. *et al*, (2002), *World Report on Violence and Health*, Geneva: World Health Organization, 5.
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