

## **Rethinking Radicalisation and Counter-Terrorist Strategies**

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### **ABSTRACT**

'Radicalization' has been a keyword in the public discourse on terrorism. Yet the answer to what exactly it is, remains fuzzy. This poses a challenge not only to the scholars who aim to study it but also, to the practitioners, who aim to tackle and prevent it. Despite the ambiguities surrounding the process of radicalization, there, however, exists a set of pre-conceived notions about it. Islamist extremist ideology is always taken as a key factor or as a starting point in these notions. This in turn leads to faulty policy measures for tackling the problems of terrorism and radicalization, which eventually turn counterproductive. This is where the paper tries to answer its central question: 'why the current policy measures are turning out to be ineffective in tackling terrorism?'

This paper attempts to bring into focus a more nuanced understanding of radicalization. By arguing that radicalization is not an individual process driven by an ideology, the paper tries to bring into focus different pathways to terrorism and how they have undergone a vast change in the era of globalization, and how that has a bearing on effective counter-terrorist strategies. The argument that this paper is trying to make is that, due to faulty understanding of what entails radicalization, the authorities are coming up with ineffective counter-terrorist policies, which lead to violations of UN Charter, Rule of Law, International law (Torture convention, Humanitarian law, Jus in Bellum) and Human Rights laws. This gives a free hand to the authorities and security forces without any repercussions or, transparency.

Special attention has been given to UK's Prevent Policy, America's "War on Terror" strategy and the recent United Nations (UN) Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy Review, 2018 to substantiate this claim. These strategies are compared with European Union's approach to counterterrorism and radicalization, to offer a contrast.

After giving a better understanding of radicalization, the paper then turns to the policy implications emanating from this nuanced understanding. Taking into consideration what Kundalini and Walzer had to say about the rules and approach towards countering terrorism, the paper ends with giving a few recommendations, in the light of its main argument about the importance of having a nuanced understanding of the process of radicalisation.

**KEY WORDS-** Radicalisation, Counterterrorism, Terrorism, Globalisation, Extremist Ideology

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### **I. RESEARCH QUESTION AND RATIONALE OF THE PAPER**

The past decade has seen a surge of terrorist activities. This has fueled many counter terrorist policies. At the center of these initiatives lies the concept of radicalization. These policies are reminiscent of those from the times of 9/11. These carry their legacy of failures. Such policies remain ineffective at the best.

There has been little effort to link these failures to the flaws in the underlying analytical model that has shaped how governments respond to terrorism (especially home-grown terrorism).

In this paper, an attempt has been made to assess these assumptions, with a view to providing impetus to a rethink of how radicalization is understood. In particular, this paper points to the fact that how these assumptions have no empirical evidence, but rather rest on the belief that radical speech and beliefs are the most significant factors causing terrorism. Thus, policies based on these assumptions are flawed.

This is where the paper tries to answer its central question: 'why the current policy measures are turning out to be ineffective in tackling terrorism?'

After giving a better understanding of radicalization, the paper then turns to the policy implications emanating from this nuanced understanding. Taking into consideration what Kundalini and Walzer had to say about the rules and approach towards countering terrorism, the paper ends with giving a few recommendations, in the light of its main argument about the importance of having a nuanced understanding of the process of radicalisation.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

To understand the process of radicalization and its multiple dimensions, the paper heavily cites the works of M. Crone, D. Porta, A. Kundalini, and De Marco. Through their works the multiple causes and pathways to radicalisations are sketched out. To understand the psychology and motivations behind violence, and terrorism the paper draws insight from the works of Bandura et al, Berkowitz, Cline, Kakkar and Gerbner et al.

Official documents and press releases from the White House as well as speeches of George W. Bush are referred to, to explain the “war on terror” and the new terrorist thesis. This is supplemented by UN’s document on its own Counter-terrorist strategy. Reference has also been made to UK’s Prevent Policy and New York’s Police Department’s 4 step process by citing the works of Kris Christmann, and Silber and Bhatt.

This stance is contrasted by making reference to EU’s strategy by citing works of Shreya Sinha, David Keohance, Richard Jackson, and Sven Biscop.

Apart from these, several newspaper and journal articles were used to write this paper. Help was also taken from various secondary sources and published and unpublished research theses on the same topic.

## **III. INTRODUCTION**

In contemporary contexts, terms as ‘radicalisation’ and ‘de-radicalisation’ are used widely, but investigating exactly what ‘radicalisation’ is, what are its causes and de-radicalization strategies directed towards those who are considered radicals, violent extremists or terrorists, is indeed a frustrating experience (Schmid, 2013). Rik Coolsaet, a Belgian expert who was part of an expert group on violent radicalisation established by the European Commission to study the problem, described the very notion of radicalisation as ‘ill-defined, complex and controversial’ (Coolsaet 2011). Scholars argue that “the only thing that radicalisation experts agree on is that radicalisation is a process. Beyond that there is considerable variation as to make existing research incomparable.’ (Nasser-Eddine, 2011). In terms of the significance of the concept, scholars as Arun Kundnani comment, “Since 2004, the term ‘radicalisation’ has become central to terrorism studies and counter-terrorism policy-making. As US and European governments have focused on stemming ‘home-grown’ Islamist political violence, the concept of radicalisation has become the master signifier of the late ‘war on terror’ and provided a new lens through which to view Muslim minorities. The introduction of policies designed to ‘counter-radicalise’ has been accompanied by the emergence of a government-funded industry of advisers, analysts, scholars, entrepreneurs and self-appointed community representatives”.

According to Merari and Friedland (1985) the problem of terrorism has surely existed since before the dawn of recorded history. However, what differentiates contemporary security threats from erstwhile manifestations include but are not limited to: (a) the globalization of commerce, (b) travel, and (c) information transfer. All these have brought economic disparities and ideological competitions as sharp challenges. The ascent of religious fundamentalism along with the privatization of weapons of mass destruction has enhanced the possibility and ease of macro terror acts to be committed by small groups and even individuals as stated by scholars like Hoffman (1998); Laqueur (1999); Enders and Sandler (2000). Along with this economic transformation, the onset of easily available, accessible and executable mediums of information technology in general and communication technology in particular having brought in a paradigm shift in the age-old construct which has given rise to the problem of radicalization. It is this revolution in the online mediums of communication that crude and brutal forms of violent behaviour have replaced the sophisticated weaponry to match the military dominance of the contemporary conflict theatre. It is not the threat of killings being carried out by ISIS which has created a terror for the world order, but the brutal methods used to carry out and celebrate these inhuman killings which have attracted the concern of international bodies. The worst being seen when these brutalities are visualized online for the general public. Though this visualization of inhuman celebration is damned and ridiculed and attribute to insanity by one and all, but still there is a section of youth who remain unaffected by this demonization. It is this identification, self-motivation or trained persuasion which has brought in the concept of radicalization. According to the political psychological theory, policy making must understand the fundamental reality of the radicalized individual’s psychological processes, in order to better policies which seek to manage and address the risk. (Wardlaw 1989; Clayton, Barlow, and Ballif- Spanvill 1998). Looking into the vulnerable individual’s motivations and mental processes may be a necessary beginning towards bringing into practice modern political psychology’s potential for uncovering the bases of their violent behaviour and designing an optimum counter radicalization policy.

## **IV. EXISTING WIDESPREAD NOTION OF RADICALIZATION AND THE FAULT LINE IN IT**

Despite the fact that there is no scholarly consensus on how to define radicalization, there exists a set of problematic pre conceived notions associated with it .The starting point for explaining the dissatisfaction surrounding the term lies in the unclear and inconsistent relationship asserted between radicalization and

terrorism. (Horgan, End of Radicalization ,2012)

Religious ideas and ideology have always been considered as the starting point behind radicalization. Extremist ideology is taken as the precondition for violence.

After the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 in the United States, the threat of Muslim terrorism was perceived as an external threat. But the London bombings were of a different kind when it turned out that the perpetrators were no foreigners, but British citizens and residents born and brought up in the UK. This new threat perception was soon to be conceptualized as 'homegrown terrorism'. The question that quickly arose to confront politicians and analysts was that why young people brought up in peaceful environments would engage in this form of violence. The answer was quite simple- they had been influenced by Islamist ideology, propagated by radical preachers and imams. From this viewpoint, radicalization was seen as a process of embracing extremist ideas. (Crone, 2016)

However, the process that's seen today is not necessarily an acquaintanceship with radical ideology that eventually leads to violence.

Its young people, who are already part of violent milieus that eventually end up converting their violent skills to serve a politico religious cause.

## **V. A NUANCED UNDERSTANDING: BRINGING IN NEW IDEAS**

To fully grasp what exactly the phenomenon of radicalization entails, the following ideas need to be brought in: - (Crone, 2016; DeMarco, 2016; Kundani, 2015; Porta, 2009)

### **A. Politicisation**

The tendency to view radicalization through the prism of religion has often implied a de-politicization of radicalization. Radicalization has been conceived of as a religious process and not a political one but this contention is purely abstract. Pathways towards terrorism are first and foremost political processes or in the case of Islamist extremism, a politico religious process. (Horgan, *The Psychology of Terrorism*, 2012 ). Pathways towards terrorism do not necessarily entail a step 'from talk to action' – from ideology to violence but could also entail a transition from one kind of violence to another. In other words instead of an ideological process, one pathway towards terrorism could be politicization of violence. This politicization could transform violence from ordinary crime into political form of violence.

### **B. Socialisation**

Concepts of radicalization that frame the process have also been de-socialized. Initial concepts of radicalization perceived it as an individual process through which a single person is transformed from a normal citizen into a budding terrorist. Concepts of radicalization have always focused on individual pathways but under closer scrutiny, radicalization does have a social aspect attached, which is pivotal. The role of extremist milieus or subculture, more generally, the role of the ambient society is crucial. The lone wolf who is radicalized in isolation in front of his computer is a myth that, with very few exceptions, has no empirical support.

### **C. Physical Abilities**

Concepts of radicalization have also abstracted a factor that appears to be critical for the readiness to use violence, namely 'physical abilities.' The process of radicalization not only implies an intellectual transformation but also a transformation of physical capacities and acquisition of skills of violence. (Crone, 2016)

### **D. Globalisation and Radicalisation**

Globalization has its own technologies: computerisation, miniaturization, digitization, satellite communication, optic fiber and Internet, which reinforce its defining perspective. Once a country enters into the system of globalization, its elites begin to internalise the perspective of integration and try to fit in a global context. Those incapable, take a different path, which can make them more radical in their views and approaches.

With the advent of globalization, increased connectivity and new technologies, the concept of radicalization has also undergone a change. Internet has become a new pathway. The power and significance of the digital world in perpetration of terrorism has become clear. Terrorist organisations like Al Qaeda have developed a global network and are more connected than ever. The proliferation of technologies across and within social and individual lives has led to additions into the operational reality of extremism and radicalization. 'Asynchronicity' alleviates embodiment within time and space, allowing social engagements and discussions to continuously flow and ebb; and a particular sensation of 'escapism' may lead to a feeling of disembodiment, and the disarmament of potential consequences as related to one's actions. These factors, while

not exclusive to the process of radicalization, may be conducive to increased exposure to extremist rhetoric; an increased targeting for recruitment by violent extremists; and an increased likelihood of radicalization through online mediums. (DeMarco, 2016)

Three factors have drawn youths to radical Internet web sites: “they may come across radical content while exploring the Internet for entertainment (such as video sites); they may be seeking, out of curiosity, information on ideologies, traditions, or heritage-related matters associated with the radical groups; or, they may be looking for a community with which they can identify” (White Paper, 2009)

If the surface is scratched its seen that attractions of weapons, violence, war zones, excitement combined with a just cause or just the prospect of leaving behind a dull and seemingly hopeless life may pave the way for a radical engagement. Young people are not necessarily illuminated by a radical religious ideology but may be attracted to the perspective of entering a battle zone, of getting access to weapons, of fighting for a cause they believe to be just, of living out dreams of heroism.

Thus, radicalization doesn't necessarily involve a cognitive process. It has multiple pathways, which may or may not involve a religious/extremist ideology. To fully grasp the phenomenon other dimensions, need to be brought on the table. Only then can the parochialism plaguing it can be broken.

## **VI. SUMMING UP DIFFERENT THEORIES OF RADICALISATION**

Human behaviour in the context of radicalization and its more violent, manifest form –extremism or at worst, terrorism- is based on the modulation of the dominant emotion of aggression, sans which such questions lose meaning.

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1973, 1977, 1983) examines aggression as behaviour that is learnt by observing an aggressive model. He suggested that the dictates of a role model become the guiding force for the attitude and behaviour of an individual through the phenomenon of vicarious reinforcement. Bandura identifies the major influence of TV<sup>1</sup> in generating such role models and stimulating identification with them. These role models train an aggressive style of conduct, desensitize and habituate people for violence (Cline et. Al. 1973; Gerbner and Gross, 1976). Dwelling on this analogy, the prevailing modes of violent acts committed by actors like ISIS and being shown online through various forms of social networking mediums has not only influenced the mind of vulnerable youth manifold, but has proven a suitable platform for quick connectivity to affiliate, identify and empathize with the idealised role models. The spread of social media with a more powerful impact, than Bandura's TV impact, has given an impetus to shape and reinforce the attitude of those vulnerable to such forces, who find a medium of expression to their biological instincts. Another significant contribution comes from the social - deprivation model (Devies, 1969). Devies opined that revolutions occur when rising expectations somehow meet with blocks and reversals. Relative deprivation, especially perceived, provokes one to raise the voice in a violent manner. Kapur, (1992) studying the dynamics of violence in Punjab youth explained how the feelings of relative deprivation set people on a confrontation path for the fulfilment of their demands.

The emerging socio-cultural-economic disparities on one hand and aspirations for achieving identities similar to idealized role models on the other, has made some unguided youth vulnerable to such fantasized attractions.

Another hypothesis which provides considerable explanation for the central question of this thesis is the Frustration – Aggression hypothesis (Dollard, 1939), often considered as the pillar explanation for the phenomenon of radicalization. This hypothesis suggests that people who experience frustration have the need to displace it in an aggressive manner. This hypothesis once again strengthens the role of social environmental cues in generating frustration, resulting in violent aggression. (Pelson, 1992; Berkowitz, 1989). Other hypothesis studied relate to the influence of crowds, mobs and general group membership (New Comb, 1943; Penord, 1986; Quinn, 1995; Petty et. al. 1997). Due to the phenomenon of anonymity and de-individualization<sup>2</sup> in the members of a crowd, the crowd becomes highly suggestible to external stimuli which can sway their mood and behaviour from one extreme to another in quick succession and it is here that perceptions and emotions get distorted. The tendency is to become dogmatic and there is a desire to spread the dogma. For instance, today, the sympathisers of ISIS in general and some other terrorist groups use this strategy to radicalize some of the sections with the population. Economic disparities have set in an element of diseased emotions in certain sections within the younger generation, who have become vulnerable to the impact of finding 'solace'

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<sup>1</sup> Bandura's theory in the context of television as a stimulus can be extrapolated in the contemporary context to also refer to online mediums of communication which are emerging as prominent grounds of recruitment and influence for neo-terrorism

<sup>2</sup> Loss of exclusive individual identity following entrenchment in a cohesively organized group

through the preaching of those with whom they ‘identify easily’, especially in the absence of any proactive effort on the part of national policy makers. Not prepared to tolerate obstacles between desire and its realization, the collective mind, thus, resorts to committing aggression of a kind. Psychological closeness, vision, touch, hearing and smell exchange of body heat and body rhythms all get involved in the form of such a collective mind, which resorts to one or the other form of aggressive attitude (Kakkar, 1990, 1995). Further the role of religion has been explained by Kakkar, (1995) in provocation of violence.

This theoretical background explaining aggression as the basis of radical attitudes is essential to review the manner in which counter-terrorist policies are formulated and implemented.

## **VII. WHY HAVE THE CURRENT POLICY MEASURES FAILED?**

Two recurrent features are usually found in contemporary definitions: (1) that terrorism involves aggression against noncombatants and (2) that the terrorist action in itself is not expected by its perpetrator to accomplish a political goal but instead to influence a target audience and change that audience's behaviour in a way that will serve the interests of the terrorist (Badey 1998; Laqueur 1999). Thus, the behaviour of a terrorist connects his ideology through violent means directed against unassuming, innocent civilian populations or state combatants. According to Borum (2004), terrorism includes “acts of violence intentionally perpetrated on civilian non-combatants with the goal of furthering some ideological, religious or political objective”. It is the use of premeditated violence against non-combatant targets with the intent of influencing the population or government to capitulate.

A focus on radicalization risks implying that radical beliefs are a proxy—or at least a necessary precursor—for terrorism. Radicalization does not equate with terrorism. Most people who hold radical ideas do not engage in terrorism, and many terrorists—even those who lay claim to a "cause"—are not deeply ideological and may not "radicalise" in any traditional sense. Different pathways and mechanisms operate in different ways for different people at different points in time and perhaps in different contexts (Bokhari et.al. 2006). Since 2001, social scientists and security agencies around the world have proposed several frameworks designed to explain the process of radicalization. These efforts are conceptual, rather than empirical, and with very few exceptions have not been coherently guided by social science theories. Instead, these conceptual models typically offer a logical, descriptive narrative of a "typical" transformative process, often with reference to a particular extremist group, a specific incident, or a couple of cases.

The current counter terrorist policy measures are based on the analytical framework of ‘New Terrorist Thesis’. This framework obscures all connections/pathways leading to terrorism (as mentioned earlier), and assumes that since, 1990’s, religious ideology has begun to directly cause terrorism. That is, cognitive radicalization eventually leads to behavioural radicalization.

Here again the definition of radicalization taken is flawed. The process of being radicalised is limited to simply adopting radical theological beliefs, with no mention of context and environment, which has changed significantly in the age of globalization. Therefore, these policies end up blurring the lines between violent and non-violent radicals and, propensity to violence and radical religious ideas.

One such policy is the Prevent Policy in the UK.

With the Labour government’s strategy to prevent and check the spread of radicalization, a special body-the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) was tasked with evolving a suitable programme. Thus, emerged the Prevent Policy. This policy has the following strategy –

1. Stop the spread of radicalization
2. Reduce support channels for terrorism
3. Check people from falling in hands of terrorists

In this context, radicalization process is conceived of as a progressive movement up a pyramidal- type model.



Figure 1: The ACPO tiered model of intervention ( Kris Christmann, 2012)

Increased levels of radicalization are therefore associated with higher levels of this pyramid, accompanied by lower numbers.

#### CORE ASSUMPTIONS OF THIS POLICY (ACPO, 2007)-

1. There exists a ‘vulnerable’ group of people (mostly youth), who are more ‘prone’ to being influenced by radical ideas and beliefs.
2. One such group of people exists within ‘social criminal justice system’
3. Channels of being influenced/radicalized are a) present mediums of information technology & b) personal contacts
4. Those who are radicalized either readily themselves participate in terrorist activities or, provide such people with support

Therefore, this policy takes radicalization as a gradient, distinguishing those who become active terrorists from those who belong to the wider group of sympathizers. There is assumed, an implicit and linear relationship between the process of radicalization and further participation in terrorist acts. It has been developed to stem an ideological process that brings about terrorism (as claimed by the new terrorist thesis).

However, this policy has no answer to how a person travels from the Tier 1 to 4. (McCauley and Moskalenko, 2008)

Needless to say, this policy is plagued with many drawbacks- (Bartlett and Birdwell, 2010)

1. It is taking radicalization as an uncomplicated and linear process
2. It is reductionist and insufficiently grounded in empirical evidence
3. Role of ideology in driving terrorism is exaggerated
4. The claimed relationship between radicalization and terrorism is arbitrary and impressionist and has not been tested on a sufficiently large sample
5. There is no predictable difference in behaviour of a supposed radical and a secular
6. Does not pay attention to political context and organizational decision making as causes of terrorism

The Prevent Policy, which is steeped into a neo-conservative paradigm, is underpinned by models of radicalization, which tend to assume that extremist religious ideology drives terrorism (Kundani, 2015).

Similar flaws are evident in The New York Police Department’s (NYPD) Four-Stage Process: 1. pre-radicalisation— 2. self- identification — 3. indoctrination — 4. jihadization (Silber and Bhatt, 2007).

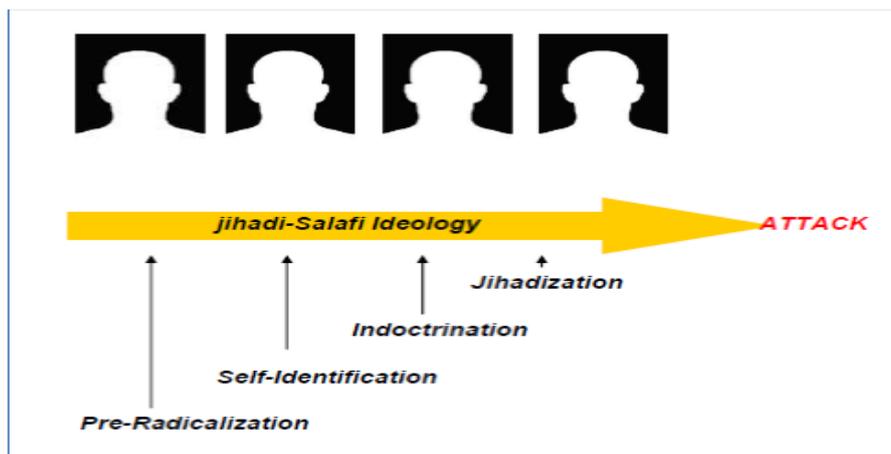


Figure 2: The NYPD's model (Kris Christmann, 2012)

The general trend that is observable in these counter-terrorist policies is that the ideas that they consider to be radical are those, which don't fall in line with the country's values. Lack of allegiance to the country's values creates (according to these policies), a cultural environment in which extremism and therefore, terrorism is more likely. Such policies follow that there needs to be a public campaign to promote the country's values. That is, such policy measures are steeped into in-group and out-group biases.

Radical ideas are therefore seen as something coming from 'outside', and hence, dangerous (to the state). Since these ideas and belief systems are not seen as a part of the country and its society, actions against them warrant unrestricted use of force (Kundani, 2015).

Thus, these policies rely solely on statist approaches in international relations and on instinctive use of force to counter security threats (Singh, 2010). Neither have these policies been tested on a significant sample, nor are there any strong empirical evidences supporting them. Their myopic obsession with radical ideology as the major cause of terrorism blinds them to see the larger socio-cultural political context in which these activities occur.

Policy based on this narrative is at best partial and at worst counterproductive. Such strategies often lead to gross excesses committed by the security forces in the name of "war on terror".

The United States' 2012 killing of Anwar al-Awlaki in Yemen prompted renewed debate over the CIA's predator drone programme and its counter-terrorist strategies. The war, according to USA extends to "associated forces", such as al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the organisation in which Awlaki allegedly played a leading role. By analogising the drone strike on Awlaki to the killing of an enemy soldier in a traditional war, the authorities avoid a series of potential prohibitions, including an executive order banning assassinations and a federal statute prohibiting Americans from murdering other Americans abroad. In this war, the United States may target terrorism suspects located far from any battlefield when those individuals pose an "imminent threat" - a term that the government appears to define loosely. The rationale for targeted killing mirrors the administration's justification for the indefinite detention of prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. The administration argues that it may detain members and supporters of al-Qaeda, just as the United States held German and Japanese as prisoners of war during World War II. The same logic lies behind targeted killings. Numerous scholars have argued, targeted killing is problematic under the international law of war.

One problem lies in the United States' expansive view of war itself. The US position, rests not on a target's connection to the Afghan conflict, but rather to an amorphous, global, armed conflict against al-Qaeda and "associated groups" - a conflict that, conveniently, has proven sufficiently malleable to accompany the shifting focus of US counter-terrorism operations from Afghanistan and Iraq to Yemen and the Horn of Africa. The distinction is important because outside of armed conflict, peacetime law applies and prohibits extrajudicial killing absent exceptional circumstances.

As Melbourne Law School professor Kevin John Heller explains, in a non-international armed conflict the target must either be a civilian who is directly participating in hostilities or an individual who exercises a "continuous combat function" in the terrorist group. The mere fact that the United States believes an individual is dangerous is insufficient. The US targeted killing policy encourages other states to expand their counter-terrorism operations in similar ways - ways that might seem less attractive when the same principles are invoked in different contexts. The United States, for example, might feel differently if Russia were to target Chechen rebels in Georgia. Targeted killing, moreover, illustrates how US concerns about terrorism seem to justify any means deemed necessary to improving security. A similar dynamic helps explain the United States' resort to torture in the interrogation of detainees after 9/11. It is to suggest how the war on terrorism can twist the law so that it accommodates the government's never-ceasing demand for new powers to counter the terrorist threat.

This includes concerns about failure to adequately address the human rights abuses being committed, and the increasing erosion of international humanitarian law in the name of combatting terrorism (Hafetz, 2012).

Similar concerns have been highlighted in the 2018 review of United Nations (UN) Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy<sup>3</sup>. It took place with lots of raised expectations—particularly around strengthening obligations to comply with human rights law while countering terrorism and increasing the inclusion of women and civil society organizations in policymaking and programming in this area. Sadly, the results fell short. It was clear from the debates and speeches in New York that deep divisions still remained between member states including on such seemingly innocuous issues as, what entails radicalisation, the utility of the prevention approach to violent extremism, the identification of the conditions and drivers to radicalization, the important role of civil society in ensuring an effective global strategy, and even on the attention being paid to gender. While we continue to see an increase in human rights and humanitarian law violations in the name of the “war on terror,” much of the review was spent discussing states’ performances in passing legislation and acting to combat terrorism, with little assessment of the adverse impact on human rights (Megally, 2018).

A better account of the causes of terrorism would understand that radical religious ideology (or, having non country values) doesn’t correlate well incidents of terrorist activities. Factors that lead someone to commit such acts can’t be reduced to having a set of radical values. Accepting this analysis has significant implications for the development of counter- terrorist policies (Porta, 2009).

Walzer in his work “On Fighting Terrorism Justly” explains that “war on terror” is mostly a metaphorical war- it is a war of ideas<sup>4</sup>. Hence, the realm in which it exists in is fuzzy at best and thus, the rules of engagement are consequently ill-defined. He goes on to say that despite this, these rules should be governed by the same principles that govern jus in bello. Walzer stresses on the point that the war on terror should be within moral and constitutional constraints of modern democratic societies<sup>5</sup>. While quoting from Chapter 11 of *Just War Against Terror* by Elshaintain on ‘why we need the state’ he says that the above is the prime responsibility of the state as in today’s world the state is main security provider, and it will not do for democratically elected authorities in the state to wield unlimited power without accountability in the name of “war on terror”.

## **VIII. THE WAY FORWARD: A NEW APPROACH TO POLICIES**

The way we understand radicalization has concrete policy implications.

Dontella della Porta, a leading scholar of social movements and political violence, has argued that radicalization has to be understood as a process that is relational and constructed. By this she means that it’s a process involving not only the beliefs and actions of the oppositional groups but also of the states they are in conflict with: violence is the result of the interaction of the two and their constructed perceptions of each other’s actions, not just the product of one side’s ideology. (Porta, 2009)

Policies should therefore examine how states and social movements have constituted themselves as combatants in a conflict and address under what conditions each has chosen to adopt tactics of violence, in response to the political circumstances they find themselves in. (Kundani, 2015)

Rather than a broad policy that seeks to criminalise radical opinions, a better approach is to focus on individuals who can be reasonably suspected of intending to engage in a terrorist plot, finance it or incite it.

Thus, the policies should consider pathways towards terrorism as political and social processes that imply specific capacities and skills, then efforts to counter terrorism should not primarily target ideas, but adopt a comprehensive approach including criminology, social measures, and suggestions as to how people in extremist milieus can find non-violent ways of expressing their political ideas-, or pursuing their drive towards heroism. (Crone, 2016)

In the light of the above-mentioned point, a few policy recommendations can be given: -

1. Focus government’s resources available to counterterrorism on investigating individuals who can reasonably be suspected of intent to commit acts of terrorism, incite or finance them

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<sup>3</sup> adopted in 2006, reviewed every 2 years

<sup>4</sup>“It is not a zone of war where armies fight, and it is not a zone of peace where the police do their work. The state’s writ does not run in this realm” (Walzer, 2007)

<sup>5</sup>“the requirements of a constitutional democracy: first, that police powers be limited, with redress available against violations of the limits; second, that the police always respect the crucial democratic freedoms of speech and assembly and that they set no barriers to, but actually protect, peaceful oppositional politics; and, third, that they not invade, without judicial warrant, the privacy of citizens. And the police are constrained in another way, which has more to do with morality than with constitutionalism: the rules about collateral damage are much more restrictive for them than they are for soldiers.” (Walzer, 2007)

2. Publicly defend freedom of religion, even for those who adopt religious beliefs that are deemed as radical
3. Publicly acknowledge that a country's identity is continually reshaped by those reside in it
4. Announce that all sections of people have equal right to contribute to the society
5. Acknowledge the fact that foreign policy decisions are a significant factor in creating political contexts within which terrorism becomes likely. (Kundalini, 2012, p. 23)
6. Enable spaces for wide ranging dialogue and discussions on religious identity, ideology, particularly among people who feel excluded from mainstream politics.
7. Attempts should be made to eradicate fear of expression
8. Encourage extensive and open-ended research on this topic
9. Utilize the latest technologies to contain and counter radical websites from disseminating their 'trade' (Singh, 2010)

It will be worthwhile to mention that European Union's approach to Counter-Terrorism falls checks most of the following point. EU views terrorism as a criminal offence, and this treats it as a global law enforcement problem. It focuses not only on short-term response and mitigation of attacks, as is the focus on USA's "War on Terrorism" but also tries to understand the underlying causes behind the growth of terrorist and radicalization. Falling in line with the multiple pathways to radicalization explained above, EU's 2005 Counter-Terrorist Strategy is a long term and multi-dimension approach to terrorism and radicalization (Sinha, 2019).

It pursues not only security objectives through this strategy but also development e.g., protecting civilian infrastructure, securing hazardous materials and evolving common foreign policy. EU's strategy clearly shows a preference for non-military means, keeping human rights at the heart of it, adopting a law enforcement stance rather than a 'war' stance (Jackson, 2007; Sinha, 2019).

EU accords supremacy to rule of law, and political and financial means. According to it, its the best strategy to address the root causes by focusing on democracy, literacy, equality and economic growth. Hence the strategy is situated in the nexus of development and security. (Biscop, 2005; Sinha, 2019)

Gijs de Vries, the former EU Counter- Terrorism Coordinator in 2006 said that "terrorism and radicalization should be dealt with hearts and minds.... Policies should respect the rights and values that we have pledged to defend, including rights of prisoners. Credibility matters....EU should be guided by established International legal standards including International Human Rights Law" (Sinha, 2019).

David Keohane says that the approach of EU, is distinctive from the assertive military based approach evident through the putative "war on terror" unilaterally adopted by America. Its seen as over-reactive and military driven- a hard line stance, focusing on short term goal of mitigating terrorism attacks but lacks an adequate attention to long term challenges (Keohane, 2007; Sinha, 2019).

## **IX. CONCLUSION**

Jonathan Githens-Mazer recently characterised the study of radicalization as "observing a moving target through the wrong end of a microscope" (Horgan, *The Psychology of Terrorism*, 2012 ). This wrong end takes radical/extremist ideology as a starting point. This understanding of radicalization is, a deeply flawed, conceptually misleading and problematic paradigm both for understanding the development of the terrorist, as well as developing counterterrorism policies (Horgan, *End of Radicalization* , 2012). There is evidence that not all those who engage in violent behavior necessarily need to possess radical beliefs.

The right end of the microscope should, therefore, focus on different pathways leading one to engage with terrorism, moving away from the unhealthy preoccupation with 'the battle of ideas.'

Counterterrorism policies therefore need to be based on a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon of radicalization, taking a comprehensive view of an individual's socio-cultural, political and psychological aspects.

Though globalization has changed the nature and pace of radicalization, it can also be used to curb it, to effectively combat global terrorism, a closer cooperation between secret services, which until now have operated only at national level, can take place at the global level with other measures. As radicalization is a global phenomenon, approach towards it also has to be holistic.

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