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**Review Article**

# Novel Insights into the Psychopathology of War

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**Abstract:** Background: To grasp the terrible nature and enormity of nuclear weapons is a painful exercise of the imagination. Recent political developments between different nuclear countries are quite alarming. A nuclear war would be an absolute disrespect and cruelty toward humanity and nature. Religion is simply made a scapegoat in times of wars. The psychopathology of war is “the elephant in the room.” Aim: To evaluate the different psychological, psychopathological views and para-psychodynamics of global conflicts as well as some of the future directions in peace research. Method: A selective survey of the literature, including previous reviews, to collect different understandings to help inspire and form a framework for future peace research. Results: The medical profession has a major burden in the form of physical and emotional rehabilitation after war; therefore, prevention is better than cure and rehabilitation. Psychological, political, religious, and economic factors may be at the root of war. Even though the psychopathology of war is being studied, the para-psychodynamics of global conflicts are poorly understood. Peace research without identifying the causative factors would be like treating an infection without recognizing the infecting agent. Marian apparitions offer some insight into this important aspect of peace research. In each credible, worldwide religion, there is a strong longing for peace and harmony, and mental health workers should get enlightenment from the wisdom of world religions. Both religious leaders and mental health professionals must take the helm in peace-making. The new insights gained through research into the psychopathology of global conflicts can inspire the international mental health professionals to support the existing peace campaigns to create a world without war, crimes and poverty.

**Keywords:** Psychopathology, Para-psychodynamics, War, Violent Behavior, Peace

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## 1. Introduction

The psychopathology of war and terrorism is a topic in need of immediate attention from the medical profession. This is because, at the foundation of international hostilities, there are psychological, political, economic, religious, spiritual, and spiritistic elements. Physical and emotional rehabilitation after war puts a heavy burden on the medical profession, and from the pragmatic viewpoint alone, it is inarguably better to prevent warfare than to make reparations in its aftermath. Psychiatrists should adopt as prominent a role in peace-making as politicians and religious leaders do, and in this, psychiatrists can gain some insight from the wisdom of the faith traditions. Ironically, religion tends to be held responsible for aggression in times of war and terrorism. This is unjustified because, in every recognized worldwide religion,

there is a strong impetus toward peace and harmony. Jerome K. Frank states [1], “The growing danger of a nuclear holocaust has intensified two aspects of the human predicament that concern religion and psychiatry: the inevitability of death and the disastrous consequences of the characteristic termed pride by theologians.”

War and terrorism, which are inextricably linked, are ever-present concerns throughout the world, and hardly any age in recorded human history has escaped strife. Wars have been waged ostensibly in the furtherance of a multitude of social values, but there are indisputable qualities inherent in human nature that make people capable of initiating and participating in war when the circumstances are appropriate. Humans have the innate savagery to create war, and it is in the minds of individuals that aggression is conceived. Terrorism is also based on aggressive instincts. Humans live with an inner

compulsion to hate their neighbors even though religion encourages the opposite impulse: that of every individual expecting to be loved by their neighbor.

A despairing world has impotently watched the destructive conflicts in Syria and its neighboring countries for many years. The accompanying feelings are comparable to a person who has been tied around a tree while his close relatives and friends are attacked and slaughtered in front of him. Likewise, world leaders have had to desperately watch this humanitarian crisis. The inevitable outcomes of the Syrian conflict include unprecedented numbers of displaced people and war casualties, abandoned children and huge pressures on already limited medical resources. War journalism itself carries physical risks and psychological traumas [2, 3].

Human history has been disfigured with endless wars starting with the civilizations of Sumer and Egypt. It has been estimated that between 1740 and 1897, there were 230 wars and revolutions in Europe, and during this time countries were almost bankrupting themselves with their military expenditure. Apparently, warfare actually became slightly less frequent during the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, but this was only because of the awesome technological power which nations could now utilize, which meant that wars were over more quickly [4] but with more casualties. War has been identified as one of the 10 causes of disability-adjusted life years lost up to the year 2010 [5]. If 30 million people died in all the wars between 1740 and 1897, estimates of the number of dead in the First World War range from 5 million to 13 million, and a staggering 50 million people died during the Second World War. One curious observation is that the archaeological and anthropological findings suggest an apparent lack of warfare in early human history, or pre-history, and the relative lack of conflict in most traditional hunter-gatherer societies. Why humans became deranged as civilization advanced is a matter of speculation.

The way to prevent war and terrorism lies in understanding the biological nature of humans. The simple truth is that people are not gentle, friendly creatures who wish for love and simply defend themselves if they are attacked. In everyone, there is a powerful measure of aggression that is part of their instinctive endowment. Cruelty and violence are part of every man and woman's biological make-up. Human beings are natural haters, and even the most intense love relationship includes some elements of hate. War and terrorism make death real to humankind, but even after they experience the death of participants, people do not accept that the aggression at the root of the conflict also applies to themselves. Instead, they direct their hatred toward the enemy.

## 2. Refugees and the Syrian Crisis

A despairing world has impotently watched the destructive conflicts in Syria and its neighboring countries for many years. The accompanying feelings are comparable to a person who has been tied around a tree while his close relatives and friends are attacked and slaughtered in front of him. Likewise, world leaders have had to desperately watch this humanitarian crisis.

The inevitable outcomes of the Syrian conflict include unprecedented numbers of displaced people and war casualties, abandoned children and huge pressures on already limited medical resources. Due to regional wars and civil unrest, the world is witnessing the largest refugee crisis in history, involving a massive shift of humanity unlike any seen before. Today, more than 70 million people around the world are displaced from their homes, including 6.7 million Syrians, 2.7 million people from Afghans, 2.3 million South Sudanese, and 1.1 million Myanmar. Refugees are most often accommodated by poor countries, while rich countries try to shun them. The image of children and teenagers fleeing wars, persecution, and misery only to face an extremely uncertain future has become the face of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. More than 470,000 Syrians have lost their lives in armed conflicts, which began with anti-government protests before escalating into a full-scale civil war. More than 11 million people have been forced from their homes, and the economic cost of the war has been put at \$255 billion, essentially wiping out the nation's wealth.

What started as another Arab Spring uprising against the military rulership in Syria mushroomed into a brutal proxy war that came to involve regional and global powers. In fact, like the Bosnian war, which started with a deceitful rumor, the Syrian conflicts were initiated by a simple event. Some teenagers painted revolutionary slogans on a school wall in March 2011 in the southern city of Deraa and were arrested and tortured. This event led to pro-democracy protests and security forces opening fire on demonstrators, killing several people; then, more people took to the streets. If closely scrutinized, Syrian political leaders are trying helplessly to limit the atrocities of war but are getting caught up in the military turmoil. Although the conflict in Syria does not seem to have an end, every instance of chaos reaches a state of equilibrium at some point. However, in that moment, there will be no winners.

The analysis of such regional conflicts has great significance for research on the psychopathology of war, as well as peace research. For instance, when examining the start of the Syrian conflict, it appears as if somebody had pressed a button to lift the curtain for a drama to commence—the stage was already prepared. Are unknown dark forces operating behind all this mayhem? This paper examines such questions, contributing to the etiological research of global conflicts.

## 3. Accidental Nuclear War

Even if we doubt the possibility of intentional nuclear war ever taking place, we are aware that an accidental outbreak of nuclear warfare cannot be dismissed as an eventuality. The nature of the work undertaken by those involved with nuclear weapons predisposes them to a psychological disorder, thereby increasing the likelihood of inadvertent nuclear hostilities. More than 4% of the 100,000 people with access to nuclear weapons in the United States (US) are suspended from their responsibilities every year for reasons, such as drug abuse, psychological disorder, or alcoholism. It may be

assumed that a similar or even worse situation prevails in other countries that have nuclear armaments. The arms race inevitably carries a concomitant risk of human error or technical failure that may precipitate an outbreak of nuclear war [6, 7]. Recently, the US Secretary of State announced that the US is suspending the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, and this should worry everyone. Lord Carver once said that, if nuclear war comes, it will be better not to survive; it would be a life in death for the survivors. Regarding recovery after nuclear war, Tucker and Gleisner states, "The fact is that civil defense, however much is spent upon it, can have only marginal effects on the chances of survival and none at all on the quality of the remnants of society" [8].

Today, the tensions building up between the nuclear powers of India and Pakistan in South Asia are very alarming. However, after seven decades of hostility and four wars, this current crisis may not be a wake-up call for either country. Instead, it could reinforce the most dangerous tendencies in both capitals, making the next crisis just a matter of time. Before a war breaks out, war mania develops, and there is nothing uglier than people cheering for war. In the corners of every crisis, there are fresh opportunities for peace-making. India and Pakistan should initiate nuclear peace treaties, including signing a non-nuclear exchange agreement, and adhere to them at any cost and through any crisis. Both countries need transparent nuclear risk-reduction measures, but there is currently a shortage of trust between these countries.

#### 4. Indirect Aggression

Psychological warfare is a common peace policy practice between nations as a form of indirect aggression. This type of propaganda drains the public opinion of an opposing regime by stripping away its power over public opinion. This form of aggression is hard to defend against; no international court of justice is capable of protecting against psychological aggression since it cannot be legally adjudicated. The propagandists try to destroy the morale of the adversary by psychological means so that the opponent begins to doubt the validity of his beliefs and actions [9, 10]. In modern warfare, government manipulates the media by the embedding of reporters in military units and the uncritical, openly patriotic coverage of these conflicts [11].

There are many examples from history of indirect aggression and psychological warfare. Emperor Genghis Khan is regarded as an all-time expert in psychological warfare. Meanwhile, in World War II, different forms of psychological warfare were used by the military to demoralize the enemy, including distributing pamphlets that encouraged desertion or suppling instructions on how to surrender. Creating shock and awe in the enemy camp was another military strategy. Projecting repetitive and annoying sounds and music for long periods at high volume toward groups under siege during operations was also used as a form of passive aggression. Propaganda radio stations were also used as passive psychological aggression to confuse the enemy.

Tolerance and indoctrination mean that the totems and culture of a defeated enemy can be removed or replaced without conflict. Terrorism and the threat of chemical weapons are ongoing psychological techniques to subordinate perceived enemies.

#### 5. Psychopathology of Violent Behavior

It is time for psychiatrists to concentrate internationally on the psychopathology of violent behavior relating to terrorist activities. When we consider what has happened in human history, we find many instances of suicide attacks. Nearly two centuries ago, an ambitious king in Kerala in south India had an army of suicide soldiers, known as the Chaver Pada. In the World War II, Japanese kamikaze pilots flew to their deaths in attacks against American ships in the Pacific. The Tamil Tigers, who describe themselves as having minds like steel and hearts like the petals of a flower, have made more than 200 suicidal murder attempts in Sri Lanka. Terrorism involves both mass murder and suicide: the terrorist sacrifices his life to demonstrate his conviction that his victims are the guilty ones.

In terrorist self-sacrifice, we may sometimes perceive a counter-phobic attitude. It may be hypothesized that people who commit suicide attacks have secret doubts about the validity of the beliefs that they are trying to uphold. Those doubts frighten them so much that, instead of confronting them, they choose an easier option: throwing themselves into the arms of death. It is notable that some terrorists have been identified as recent converts to their particular faith. Later, ideological ambitions give way to greed, and new economic, political, and religious goals replace the early passions that united specific groups. There is, perhaps, a need to develop empathy with terrorist assassins in order to understand how they were radicalized in the first place—without, of course, confusing empathy with sympathy. The leaders of terrorist groups do not demonstrate any major individual psychopathology, but there will be psychopathology in their groups, and those suffering from mild psychiatric problems are drawn to fanatical groups. Terrorists are not simply masochistic or sadistic people, and, in the clinical sense, the terrorist's mind does not present a psychopathological example of a conventional suicide subject who displays indicators of helplessness and hopelessness.

Regular armed forces rarely create carnage amongst non-combatants, whereas, for terrorists, that is the main tactic. They are mass murderers whose ideology is entirely opposed to the universal doctrine of "live and let live." Both martyrs and terrorists believe in life after death and an eternal reward in the hereafter. The martyr dies so that other people may share the reward, but the suicide terrorist is concerned only about his own reward. The key element leading to fulfilment for the suicide terrorist is the perversion of a healthy religious faith by diffusing the natural fear of death and the punishment for terrestrial misdeeds: two factors that normally serve to inhibit suicide. Terrorist leaders achieve their goals by tempting and brainwashing their acolytes with the idea of a painless death and the promise of an instantaneous heavenly reward.

However, among the major religions, there is skepticism about blind belief in an immediate reward awaiting a discarnate terrorist.

## 6. Insights into the Undercurrents of War

### 6.1. Biological Causes

Evolutionary psychologists hypothesize that it is very human to wage war because humans are composed of selfish genes and these genes demand to be replicated. Groups that endanger our survival have to be fought with and oppressed. Testosterone is linked with aggression and men are biologically clued-up to fight wars. Violence may also be linked to a low level of serotonin, since there is evidence that when animals are injected with serotonin, they become less aggressive. These views are inadequate to explain the orchestration of a highly manipulative warfare. Field researchers who have worked with mobile forager band societies generally report that warfare is absent or rudimentarily developed among them [12] pointing towards that humans are not basically war minded and it is a developmental error of civilization.

A Darwinian basis has been postulated for terrorism. The theory is that the primitive portion of the human brain retains a location responsible for aggression and revenge in cultures that are motivated more by the hatred of others than by the love of higher values; these locations are activated through the empowerment of collective faith [13]. The *Biology of War* authored by Georg Friedrich Nicolai, originally published in German in 1919 is an excellent treatise on war pathology. Nicolai tried to explain the Darwinian struggle for existence as a fundamental human strength and weakness and how it may contribute to war pathology [14]. The terrorist is effectively brainwashed by myths of self-sacrifice. Terrorist leaders use unethical psychological techniques of mind control, derived from communications technology, in order to manufacture mass murderers. Environmental explanation such as population explosion and population pressure are weak explanations when we consider the fact that there are fewer violence in larger crowds than in smaller crowds.

### 6.2. Abnormal Psychodynamics

Aldous Huxley identified nationalism and the adulation of heroes as predominant psychological causes of war. Nationalism is undoubtedly a significant barrier on the pathway to world peace. The basic loyalty of most modern humans is to the nation to which they belong. Personal vanity and a thirst for glory may act as motives that drive national leaders to embroil their country in war. The armaments race is a symptom of a deeper pathological condition that afflicts nations: that of distrust of other countries.

Steve Taylor argues that two important driving factors of war are the ambition to increase wealth, status and power and the yearning of one group of human beings—usually governments, but often the general population of a country, tribe or ethnic group—to increase their power and wealth [4].

The group tries to do this by conquering and subjugating other groups, and by seizing their territory and resources. Secondly, war is strongly related to group identity. Human beings in general have a strong need for belonging and identity which can easily manifest itself in ethnicism, nationalism, or religious dogmatism. One of the most dangerous aspects of group identity is moral exclusion which happens when we withdraw moral and human rights to other groups and moral standards are only applied to members of our own group and deny other groups respect and justice. Such an attitude would give us moral justification to exploit, oppress, and annihilate them.

Disarmament talks fail when nations refuse to trust each other's intentions. That prevents the first steps of disarmament, namely, effective inspection and enforcement. There is a challenge to psychiatrists in this area. They have the expertise to heal distrust between nations by instituting an open discussion that is analogous to the dialogue that resolves distrust between individuals. This postulation is an all-embracing one: world peace does not simply mean the abolition of war. It also involves guaranteeing the institution and preserving fundamental human rights, which are at grave risk in many countries.

In today's world, too often technological advances take the lead over moral forces. Humans have more power available to them than they are equipped to manage. They are human and, therefore, unable to cope with being supermen, even though they have the potential to take on that role. An outcome of this situation is that making war has become more efficient than making peace.

Social change lies at the heart of the modern world. Every aspect of society and every major institution has been subjected to change that continues to undermine and transform the way in which we live. Society may be defined as being influenced by four factors: biological heredity, the natural environment, group life, and culture. Of these, culture has a specific influence on society. It is a complex construct that embraces many interrelated aspects and is also affected by the functioning of the other three factors. Among its drivers is technology, and the constantly developing successive advances in applied sciences are having rapid effects on production, transportation, communication, and health. In counterpoint to this progression is an illogical and relatively unchangeable factor: human heredity. Technology is advancing at such a rate that it has become the principal instigator of social change. The varied aspects of culture do not change at the same rate; therefore, strain develops between the different elements of culture. These lags are instrumental in creating social problems, which, in turn, endanger peace.

Let us look at an example of the tension between technology and culture. In spite of the real possibility of nuclear war in South Asia, most of the medical associations in India and Pakistan maintain complete silence regarding the issue [15]. It is currently reported that Iran is preparing to resume nuclear research, a development that should be taken with the utmost seriousness internationally. Instead, the "it

will not happen to us” sentiment—which we may term the policy of an ostrich—is all too prevalent, as so often occurs in times of instability. This may be a significant reason for why the medical profession is apparently indifferent to the risk of nuclear proliferation in South Asia [16]. This reticence could also be explained by feelings of utter despair and helplessness about the situation. A third factor may be ignorance about the gravity of nuclear conflict. A Pentagon study has speculated that the death toll in the event of a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan would be as high as 12 million, with 7 million people injured [17].

Steve Taylor [18] contends that there might be something wrong with human beings, even adding that humans might be slightly insane because so many human beings are filled with a restless discontent and an insatiable desire for material goods, status, and power. Human history has been filled with endless conflict, oppression, and inequality. Taylor maintains that humans suffer from a psychological disorder, which he refers to as *humania* or *ego-madness*. It is the root cause of all of our dysfunctional behaviors, both as individuals and as a species. *Humania* leads to the madness of materialism, status-seeking, warfare, inequality, and other symptoms of our insanity.

Imperialism has contributed to the psychopathology of war and has been a roadblock toward achieving world peace. Imperialism is defined as a special type of dominance of one collective, usually a nation, over another. Johan Galtung proposes that two of the most glaring facts about this world are the tremendous inequality, within and between nations, in almost all aspects of human living conditions, including the power to decide over those living conditions, and the resistance of this inequality to change [19]. This situation has been formulated as a structural theory of imperialism. We are living in a two-nation world. The center nation has power over the periphery nations and can bring about a condition of disharmony of interests between them. Imperialism has divided the world into a central nation of rich countries and peripheral nations of poor countries.

Unaffiliated people or lone offenders who commit terrorist acts is not a new phenomenon, but very few scientific analyses have focussed upon the relationship between mental health and terrorist involvement. Some of these offenders may suffer from mental health problems and could be identified in the premorbid state and helped. Lazzari et al has attempted to explore how a radicalized leader can lever on the vulnerability of some individuals to radicalize them [20]. They try to explain radicalized thought as a logical fallacy and as a sign of dualistic thinking.

### 6.3. *Abnormal Para-psychodynamics*

In the scientifically evaluated Marian apparitions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mother Mary reaffirmed the involvement of negative entities in the aetiology of war. Jon Klimo and Pamela Heath [21], in their ground-breaking research studies on suicide, have submitted intriguing data about life turning against itself and have explained in detail the para-psychodynamics of murder-suicide. Their new insights point toward an abnormal

para-psychodynamic or a spiritual and spiritistic pathology for terrorism. They are based on information gathered through mediumship and channeling. Cases of drops in communication, proxy sitting, and cross correspondence give some supporting evidence for the validity of these paranormal phenomena. Anything totally destructive originates in the negative spiritistic dimension. God attests martyrdom, but terrorism is endorsed by human leaders and orchestrated in the negative spiritistic realm. However, this does not negate individual responsibility for evil behavior.

Mr. Pagourtzic, the lone shooter of the US high school in Santa Fe, Texas, is yet another example of spiritistic grooming leading to violent behavior. Pagourtzic does not appear to have a psychiatric or criminal history. It is reasonable to assume that an unrepentant murderer would only turn into an earthbound murder spirit after death if he were subjected to judicial execution and more dangerous to the incarnates. This is where the folly of the death penalty lies. The death penalty began as a practice of primitive tribes that had not developed prison systems to protect their societies. Today, 56 countries hold capital punishment. Meanwhile, 103 countries have completely abolished it *de jure* for all crimes, 6 have banned it for ordinary crimes (while maintaining it for special circumstances, such as war crimes), and 30 countries have abolished the practice. Two wrongs will not make one right. Some criminals are only the foot soldiers of an astral terrorist group, which may also consist of earth-bound spirits. If we could add the negative intellectual entities to this equation, we would be able to draw a better picture of the para-psychodynamics of violence. One can only imagine the consequences of such spiritistic grooming among people working in nuclear sites.

The late Dr. Kenneth McAll (2013) was another pioneer in recognizing the spiritistic causation of human violence [22]. He also hypothesized that certain “ancestral illnesses” could result from the helpless activities of unhappy earthbound ancestral spirits. It is most often the help-seeking behaviors of the ancestral spirits in the lower plane of the astral dimension that lead to certain illnesses; remedial measures include rescuing them through prayer activities. McAll argues that many supposedly incurable patients are the victims of ancestral control and could be helped by liberating them from the domination of the ancestral spirit. For example, by drawing up a family tree, he was able to identify the ancestor who was causing his patient harm. He then cut the bond between the ancestor and the patient by celebrating, with a clergyman, a service of Holy Communion in which he delivered the tormented ancestor to God [22].

Alan Sanderson believes in the spirit attachment theory and describes some of the more common symptoms of spirit attachment, such as lack of energy, memory disturbance, behavioral change, mood change, addictive behavior, relationship problems, hearing disturbing voices, and physical symptoms [23-28]. The degree of attachment is variable. Some individuals are scarcely affected, while, in rare cases, an individual’s body and mind are taken over completely. In some instances, attachments exacerbate an existing complaint

with similar symptoms, slowing down the recovery process [29,30]. Spirit release is the term given to the process of clearing the attachment.

Marian apparitions offer testimonies of the existence of negative spirits, but there are only scanty mentions about their existence in the general literature of parapsychology. Theistic parapsychology accepts the existence of unknown forces, which may also include negative forces. Fr. Kurian Karickal points out that lack of awareness, denial, and ignorance of Satan can be our weakness and Satan's strength through which he gets hold of us and conquer us [31]. Satanic forces are constantly trying to induce a reversal of faith among the faithful. Destroying healthy spirituality is their goal and this has been very clear in the terrorist attacks of recent times when they have confused the faithful in thinking that faith itself is responsible for violence. Karickal adds:

“Deceit is the legal tender of Satan .... As Satan's strength and success is based solely on super-deceit, he takes utmost care of its implementation. Where Satan tries to convince people that truth is untruth, goodness is evil and light is darkness, it requires the discernment and wisdom of the Holy Spirit to distinguish that. Satan desires things diametrically opposed to God's desire.”

Satanic forces are jealous of human life and the spiritual opportunities that go with a bodily existence. They try to destroy human life starting from the beginning of conception. Murder spirits are highly active during times of wars, and they influence the living through instruments of technology.

Unfortunately, psychopathological terms, such as delusions and hallucinations, have been misused as blanket terms to cover up the true existence of negative entities. The cartoonish image of Satan with a pointed tail and horns can be misleading; Satan is an actual negative intellectual entity. Psychiatry has become the nerve center of technologically advanced countries, and psychiatry is based on the Newtonian world view that nothing invisible exists. The triumph of psychopharmacology has reinforced reductionist views. Mental health professionals are materialistically brainwashed and unable to accommodate an imperceptible spiritual dimension. Therefore, a huge paradigmatic shift is required in the cognitive sciences.

Mother Mary is alleged to have been appearing at Medjugorje in Bosnia since 1981; this has been amply written about [32-39]. Our lady offers some insight into the para-psychodynamics of war pathology through her apparitions at Fatima and Medjugorje. In 1917, the peoples of the world were still suffering from the horrors of the seemingly endless World War I. In that year, on May 13 to be exact, three little shepherds from Fatima, Portugal—Liucia, aged 10, Francisco, almost 9, and Jacinta, aged 7—saw “a Lady all of light” above a small oak tree in the Cova da Iria. She asked them to return there on the 13<sup>th</sup> of each month for five months. On July 13<sup>th</sup>, Blessed Mother, for She was the lady of lights, promised the children that she would perform a great miracle in October so that everyone might believe in the apparitions and in her message. She also confided to them special messages to be revealed later. One of them is popularly

known as the third secret of Fatima. Each apparition lasted about 10 minutes. From the second one onwards, they were witnessed by an ever-increasing number of people. Some 70,000 people witnessed the great miracle, which immediately followed the sixth and final apparition. Indeed, this spectacle of light enacted in a noonday sky has been described as “God's own fiery signature” of all that the Blessed Mother did and said at Fatima.

Like the Fatima apparitions, the continuing events at Medjugorje offer an opportunity for sceptics to gain fresh insight into an alleged mystical-cum-paranormal phenomenon. Ostensibly, according to the percipients, an active apparition who has inserted itself harmoniously into our three-dimensional world is manifesting itself at Medjugorje. The reported apparitions in Medjugorje are the first Marian apparitions in history to have been scientifically investigated in detail [33]. Medical and scientific observations may be offering hints of proof of the Marian apparition at Medjugorje. Furthermore, parapsychological studies may complement the scientific findings. The voice extinction and sensory disconnection demonstrated in the Medjugorje witnesses could be probably explained as due to psychokinetic-like activity of the apparition, and visionary experiences involving recurrent spontaneous psychokinesis (RSPK) or RSPK-like activity may be instances of apparitions at the physical site. Unlike other generic apparitional experiences reported in the scientific literature of parapsychology, there are reportedly extended periods of two-way communication taking place between the percipients and the apparition at Medjugorje. Apart from the spiritual and religious implications, Medjugorje is thought to be at the forefront of a revolutionary paradigm shift in the field of consciousness studies, which may be unprecedented in scope; scientists can no longer shy away from this subject.

Our Lady seems to be giving hints at Fatima and Medjugorje to the para-psychodynamics of war pathology, including the spiritistic components that could lead to the total nuclear destruction of our planet. Our Lady's statement in one of the Fatima apparitions, after showing the percipients a vision of hell, is highly relevant in this context:

“You have seen hell where the souls of poor sinners go. To save them, God wishes to establish in the world devotion to my immaculate heart. If what I say to you is done, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.”

Obviously, this means that lost and vengeful souls are creating much havoc in the terrestrial plane. War is orchestrated in the evil conclaves of the astral world. These statements of the Blessed Mother point to the para-psychodynamics of human thinking leading to violent acts. The genetic likenesses help to make the special bonding between members of the same family and likewise, the shared spiritual origins make common bonding between members of human community and negative entities are constantly at work to sever this bonding leading to war pathology.

In the on-going apparitions of Medjugorje (Bosnia, 1981 to date), which is considered as the event of events, where hostility abounds and divine graces super-abound, Our Lady

has cautioned several times about the involvement of satanic forces in the orchestration of global conflicts—the war viruses. Performing remedial measures for a bodily disease without identifying the infecting agent will only result in a symptomatic cure. Likewise, peacemakers are apparently failing to ensure lasting peace because they are not focusing on the root causes of war pathology. Mother Mary is trying to isolate the infecting agents, offering remedial measures so that she can establish world peace and grant peace to men of goodwill. She has stated that the world is currently compromising with an occupying power. The apparition has also told one of the percipients that the present century is a trial period captured by Satan; such a concept is close to the “Kali Yuga” predicted in Hindu philosophy.

Examples of her messages with such references to the existence of Satan include the following:

*July 12<sup>th</sup>, 1984*

"Dear children! These days Satan wants to frustrate my plans. Pray that His plan is not realized. I will pray my Son Jesus to give you the grace to experience the victory of Jesus in the temptations of Satan. Thank you for having responded to my call."

*January 14<sup>th</sup>, 1985*

"My dear children! Satan is so strong and with all his might want to disturb my plans which I have begun with you. You pray, just pray and don't stop for a minute! I will pray to my Son for the realization of all the plans I have begun. Be patient and constant in your prayers. And don't let Satan discourage you. He is working hard in the world. Be on your guard!"

*January 25<sup>th</sup>, 1991*

"Dear Children! Today, like never before, I invite you to prayer. Let your prayer be a prayer for peace. Satan is strong and desires to destroy not only human life but also nature and the planet on which you live. Therefore, dear children, pray that through prayer you can protect yourselves with God's blessing of peace. God has sent me among you so that I may help you. If you so wish, grasp for the rosary. Even the rosary alone can work miracles in the world and in your lives. I bless you and I remain with you as long as it is God's will. Thank you for not betraying my presence here and I thank you because your response is serving the good and the peace."

*March 25<sup>th</sup>, 1993*

"Dear Children! Today like never I call you to pray for peace in your hearts, peace in your families and peace in the whole world, because Satan wants war, wants lack of peace, wants to destroy all which is good, Therefore, dear children, pray, pray, pray. Thank you for having responded to my call."

*September 25<sup>th</sup>, 2001*

"Dear Children! Also, today I call you to prayer, especially today when Satan wants war and hatred. I call you anew, little children: pray and fast that God may give you peace. Witness peace to every heart and be carriers of peace in this world without peace, I am with you and intercede before God for each of you. And do not be afraid because the one who prays is not afraid of evil and has no hatred in the heart. Thank you for having responded to my call."

*25<sup>th</sup> August 2016*

"Dear children! Today I desire to share Heavenly joy with you. You, little children, open the door of your heart so that hope, peace and love, which only God gives, may grow in your heart. Little children, you are too bound to the earth and earthly things, that is why, Satan is rolling you like the wind rolls the waves of the sea. Therefore, may the chain of your life be prayer with the heart and Adoration of my Son Jesus. Give over your future to Him so that, in Him, you may be joy and an example with your lives to others. Thank you for having responded to my call."

*25<sup>th</sup> June 2019*

"Dear children! I am thanking God for each of you. In a special way, little children, thank you for having responded to my call. I am preparing you for the new times that you may be firm in faith and persevering in prayer, so that the Holy Spirit may work through you and renew the face of the earth. I am praying with you for peace which is the most precious gift, even though Satan wants war and hatred. You, little children, be my extended hands and proudly go with God. Thank you for having responded to my call."

It is obvious from these quoted examples of Marian messages that the pathology of war has a huge contribution from the negative spiritual realm. Mother Mary has been trying to shake the delusion of materialism slowly and gently like a clinician does with a deluded psychiatric patient. War starts in the spiritual minds of people, and the heads of different nations become instrumental in accomplishing the plans of evil forces. Our Lady, therefore, wants individual conversion as an ultimate remedy. Like diabetes affects every cell of the body, war pathology affects every human being. There is a build-up of negative spiritual energy released from every human being, which opens portals to the negative realms; they take control of human society as a whole and mislead nations into war. One of the greatest challenges of parapsychology in this century would be confirming the existence of negative spiritistic-cum-intellectual entities. Evidencing the existence of intra-terrestrials would supersede verifying the existence of extra-terrestrials. Many a war has started with simple lies or false rumors originating from the “father of lies.”

It is consoling to think that Mother Mary has identified herself as the queen of peace at Medjugorje and that she is manifesting there to fulfil her Fatima promise of a period of peace. Let us hope that all these war clouds will eventually be wiped away by a powerful heavenly breeze. We should not sit still and watch the warmongering but be proactive. Like uncontrolled diabetes leading to gangrene of the limbs and eventual amputations, the annihilation of nations can become a consequence of long-standing war pathology. It is very strange that daily apparitions of 38 years are still known only to a small section of the global community as though they have no news value; one way of killing a prophet is apathy. One may wonder whether this silence on the part of the news media itself is a diabolical phenomenon. We are all brainwashed or distracted through trivial television news. It is our choice whether we want a painful or painless delivery of

the peaceful world promised in Fatima. According to one of the Medjugorje visionaries, we have already shortened that promised period of peace by ignoring Our Lady's messages of peace.

## 7. International Disarmament

When India got independence in 1947, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru wanted to disperse the military, at least partially. It sounded like a utopian idea at that time, and, today, that same country is a nuclear power with a strong military spending billion on stocking arms amid poverty. There are countries that survive without any armed forces; for example, Iceland has not had an army since 1869, and Costa Rica has not had one since 1948. Liechtenstein has had no standing army since 1868, and the multicultural country of Mauritius has not had one since 1968. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Monaco renounced its military investment. Meanwhile, Australia is responsible for defense in Nauru, and New Zealand is responsible for Samoa.

Dr. John Gleisner [40] is a pioneer in peace research. He currently resides in New Zealand and is the author of books on nuclear disarmament. According to Gleisner, "It's very questionable whether spending over \$3 billion annually on a military defense force is the best way to provide New Zealand with security when our greatest threats are the effects of climate change and natural disasters like earthquakes." Dr. Gleisner says that New Zealand has not been actually threatened for over seven decades and he believes the country is better served by treaties, which "would provide a more useful alternative to military force and it would be a significant contribution to international disarmament" [40].

The Namboothiri Brahmin king, who my ancestors served in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, did not have a steady army, and this kingdom was peaceful for centuries. When Dutch merchants tried to persuade him to buy their guns, he refused because they were not prescribed in the Vedas. The neighboring Kshatriya king bought them without hesitation and became a war machine. The triumphant Kshatriya king, who had to put up with the guilt of his military actions, became the victim of his military success and had only a short lifespan, whereas the defeated, but peace-minded king lived longer and serenely. He continued to hold onto the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita: "Whatever belongs to you today, belonged to someone else earlier and shall belong to someone else in future. Change is the law of the universe."

We are all aware that the world is full of conflicts, and psychiatrists should not stand ineffectually alongside tragic situations when they have the ability to participate effectively. At an international level, they should open up international discussion of the implications of the development of weapons of mass destruction and divert nations from nuclear conflict. Psychiatry makes a definite impact on people, and the ability of psychiatrists to understand each other and work together gives them the potential to achieve a measure of detente, uniting nations around common aims. Their intervention may be of paramount importance for the future of humankind.

Psychiatrists should actively support medical bodies in taking steps to mitigate against the arms race, working in harmony with medical associations that exist to further the cause of peace—notably the Medical Campaign Against War and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

## 8. Peace Research

But for the abnormal para-psychodynamics of wars, worldwide increase in literacy, rise of democracy,

international sports and games give us signs of hope for a peaceful world. Sports is the moral equivalent of war. Interconnection, increased contact between people of different nations due to higher levels of international trade, travel and the Internet have contributed to weakening in group identity, and in enmity towards other groups promoting moral inclusion and an expansion of empathy with different human groups. Yet, some of the terrorist activities of recent times are facilitated by the technology, challenging its positive effects in human relationships. Steve Taylor appears optimistic in the sense, as a species human are slowly beginning to transcend the pathology of warfare [41]. He argues that the need for social identity will fade away to the point that empathy extends indiscriminately, to and from all human being to the extent governments would become unable to exploit the citizens and drive the nations to warfare. Unconditional love and forgiveness are healing balm for the discord between nations.

Salim Yusuf et al. have focused on the role of the medical profession in preventing war, one of the earliest chronic diseases experienced by humanity [41]. Spasmodic violence is like the phasic manifestation of a psychosomatic disease. War may be compared to a complex disease process, but if it were such, primordial prevention would stop it from developing at all. In fact, primary prevention entails modifying a process, whereas secondary prevention is treating its effects. Tertiary prevention is concerned with healing and rehabilitation. For the primordial, primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention of war, the interdisciplinary discussion is a desideratum. Medical professionals have some wisdom to contribute to the consideration of the different stages of war, and psychiatrists may have more to say about the primordial prevention of war.

Jim Dyer has courageously discussed the perils of an impending nuclear war and urges the psychiatric profession to take an interest in peace-oriented politics [42, 43]. Psychiatrists have the ability to facilitate the peace-making process. An international peace association of psychiatrists could bring some rapprochement between nations, religions, and races [44, 45]. The importance of the psychological aspects of the nuclear arms race is being increasingly recognized and commented on [46]. It is universally accepted that the medical profession has a major role in physical and emotional rehabilitation after war [47]. Dr. Hachiya [48] has given a detailed account of "survivor's syndrome." There is no argument against the universal assertion that prevention is better than cure and rehabilitation. From a psychological perspective, the aggressors suffer more than their victims in



the long term because of the torments of conscience, and, from a spiritual point of view, their sufferings can extend into the spiritual dimensions as well.

Amidst all these conflicts, there are a few shining stars of peace and one of them is US President Jimmy Carter. In November of 1979, the world's attention was captured by the early stages of what became known as the Iran Hostage Crisis. It was an incident which would forever attach itself to the historical reputation of President Jimmy Carter. His peaceful and psychological approach to the problem should have set an example to the rest of the world's leaders. The world is desperately in need of Carters. Mikhail Gorbachev, one-time Soviet president is a strong promoter of nuclear disarmament and is still committed to this cause. In a recent BBC interview, he has expressed his concerns about the growing tension between Russia and the West.

The Divine Mother through her apparitions remains as the guiding star for the progress of peace research. Our Lady promised a period of peace after the conversion of Russia in her appearance at Fatima [49], and she has also promised a recovery of faith in the apparitions of Medjugorje. When the world community pays due attention to the 20<sup>th</sup> century Marian apparitions, the current crisis of faith will get resolved and the period of peace promised at Fatima will come about. The apparitions of the 20<sup>th</sup> century are bound to induce a paradigmatic shift in the thinking of cognitive scientists, who are enthralled by materialistic views of consciousness. Our Lady made a link between Medjugorje and Fatima in her monthly message of August 25, 1991.

Unconditional love is the healing balm for the present world's ailments. Our Lady has given her peace messages to the world through her chosen Medjugorje visionaries, as evident in the following examples:

"Also, today I am with you and I call all of you to renew yourselves by living my messages. Little children may prayer be life for you, and may you be an example to others. Little children. I desire for you to become carriers of peace and of God's joy to today's world without peace. That is why, little children, pray, pray, pray! I am with you and I bless you with my motherly peace." (October 25, 1997)

"Dear children! With this message I call you anew to pray for peace. Particularly now when peace is in crisis, you be those who pray and bear witness to peace. Little children be peace in this peaceless world. Thank you for having responded to my call". (January 25, 2003)

"Abandon yourselves completely to His will and do not be afraid. Everything that is best for you, everything that leads you to eternal life, will be given to you. You will comprehend that the purpose of life is not always to want and take, but to love and give. You will have true peace and true love. You will be apostles of love". (October 2, 2019)

Message to Mirjana Soldo of November 2, 2019

"Dear children, my beloved Son always prayed and glorified the Heavenly Father. He always said everything to Him and trusted in His will. This is what you, my children, should also do, because the Heavenly Father always listens to His children. One heart in one heart - love, light and life.

The Heavenly Father gave Himself through a human face, and this face is the face of my Son. You, apostles of my love, you should always carry the face of my Son in your hearts and your thoughts. You should always think of His love and His sacrifice. You should pray to always feel His presence, because, apostles of my love, that is the way for you to help all those who do not know my Son, who have not come to know His love.

My children read the book of the Gospel. It is always something new, it is what binds you to my Son who was born to bring the words of life to all of my children and to sacrifice Himself for all. Apostles of my love, carried by the love for my Son, bring love and peace to all of your brothers. Judge no one. Love everyone according to the love for my Son. In this way, you will also be caring for your soul, and it [your soul] is that which is most precious, which truly belongs to you. Thank you."

According to the La Salette secrets found in the Vatican archives in 1999 by Fr. M. Corteville, a French priest, which were later authenticated by Fr. Rene Laurentin, there is an indication of a period of peace and great abundance preceded and succeeded by turbulent times [50]. On September 19, 1846, two French children in La Salette saw "a Lady, all of Light" in the ravine at La Salette, a French hamlet in the Alps. Melanie Calvet, 15, and Maximin Goiraud, 12, suddenly saw a globe of motionless light and a lady of light who confided in each one of them special messages, popularly known as the secrets of La Salette. These secrets contain enormous details of past, present, and future world events, if interpreted correctly. Therefore, we have reasons to be optimistic about the immediate future of the world.

A small number of people who have had deep near-death experiences (NDEs) have reported consistently prophetic visions revealing the future of the planet [51]. This kind of prophetic vision and revelation of a period of peace may tally with Marian apparitional predictions. Of note, the spiritually advanced souls who visited Maria Simma cautiously and conditionally predicted a severe global economic collapse before the promised period of peace [52]. This prediction is not Simma's mere precognitive experience, but a revelation passed on to Simma from the souls existing in a higher realm of pre-heaven stages, and it cannot be ignored.

## 9. Discussion

There are several limitations to this research. The ongoing arms race and terrorism could culminate in global nuclear war. From a clinical perspective, we may regard terrorism as the slashing of wrists and nuclear war as a completed suicide. Psychiatrists know that a significant percentage of patients presenting self-harm behavior eventually commit suicide [53, 54]. It may be envisaged that, if terrorists were to gain access to nuclear weapons, that would mark the end of civilization. World peace would become like a distant horizon.

We must never forget that the knowledge of how to manufacture nuclear weapons would remain after multilateral nuclear disarmament and that nobody would be able to destroy

that knowledge. This is an intractable fact that would loom in a peaceful world, if we achieve it. In that knowledge lies the real threat of the arms race. The threat of the expertise to make nuclear arms will be averted only by a positive universal change of attitude, which, as Aldous Huxley pointed out, will be achieved only through spiritual evolution [55]. Therefore, the peace-making process is not to be limited to the wisdom of medicine. Both religious leaders and medics must take some initiative in peace-making [1].

Discord between religions does not appear to be declining in our modern world, and that must be overcome. It is imperative that humans renew its moral commitment, upheld by all major religions, to the principles of love and humanity. There is no alternative to the promotion by world religions of an order based on the principles that each has set its followers. Aggressive secularism blocks spiritual evolution, but an interfaith movement furthers spiritual growth [56]. Gandhi made an effective link between religion and politics with his weapons: prayer and fasting. Pope benedict stated that faith is stronger than battalions and prayer is more powerful than bullets. Priesthood may involve two aspects, teacher of religious subjects and mediation between God and community; psychiatrists could identify with the former role and they may have the privilege to explain traditional religious truths in modern technical terms and help their clients to find their God [57].

Religious leaders should be involved in breaking the chain of distrust and violence, living out their longing for peace and harmony. Peace is not the mere absence of struggle; it is a positive quality that is linked with spirituality. Only spirituality founded on forgiveness can ensure lasting peace between formerly opposing ethnic groups after the end of war driven by ethnic factors. There is bound to prevail a complex relationship between war experience, interethnic attitudes, interethnic forgiveness, and the willingness to permit basic civil liberties to former enemies. Not forgiving the other ethnic group, partly driven by war experience and ethnic prejudice, appears to be a more consistent predictor of intolerance. These insights imply that post-war efforts to further forgiveness are important to promote political tolerance and, thereby, promote long-lasting peace. Regional patriotism should be replaced by patriotism for human race.

## 10. Conclusion

Only humans could exercise control over the new and terrible dangers that humans have created. There is no magic solution, and world peace cannot be achieved without sacrifices and strenuous effort. Anything that encourages the growth of emotional ties between people and nations has a negative effect on aggression. Emotional links would be encouraged through the identification of common interests. The more cooperation there is between people, the lower the threat of war and terrorism. Cultural and social solidarity are deterrents to conflict. Whatever fosters the growth of solidarity offers great hope for peace. Any stable, lasting peace depends upon creating societies with a richness of varied opportunities that can meet human needs.

Parapsychology has recently made exploratory ventures into the field of discarnate survival. This area has traditionally belonged to the theologian and the philosopher. World religions should try to reorient themselves by drawing on newly gained wisdom from survival researchers and scientifically evaluated Marian apparitions. Erroneous belief systems about life after death should be corrected through widespread education aimed at countering the brainwashing of would-be terrorists. It is the privilege of the medical profession to prolong the human life span and improve the quality of life. Those two responsibilities justify its involvement in peace-oriented politics. Becoming involved in the peace-making process will accelerate the evolution of psychiatry as a caring profession and enhance its status among medical specialties. Even amidst war, there are fleeting moments of harmony that all nations experience; if nations work together, the harmony that we experience from time to time can be made our permanent state of being.

## Relevant Conflicts of Interest/Financial Disclosures

*The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationship that could be constructed as a potential conflict of interest.*

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