



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: C
SOCIOLOGY & CULTURE

Volume 15 Issue 4 Version 1.0 Year 2015

Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal

Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)

Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism: An Analytical Discourse for Dalit Liberation and Emancipation

By Dr. Rabindra Garada

Utkal University, India

Abstract- The extent of social transformation of any socially discriminated people may be better judged from the social philosophies propounded by their great leaders like Gandhi and Ambedkar in modern India. Gandhi is dead, so are Ambedkar and Marx. However, neither their philosophies- Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism are dead nor could they posthumously suppress to one another. Their philosophical axis- may be different and dialectical such as for example absolutism versus relativism, positivism versus phenomenism and theological versus metaphysical but remain the far sighted discourse for the liberation and emancipation of dalit in India. Our study also reveals that the protagonists of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism are either eating their humble pie in the circumstances of their failures or feeling like fishes out of water in the company of other outdated philosophies for the cause of dalit at present. Further, the change agents like heart, mind, conscience, science, violence, non-violence, constitutionalism, religion, state and village perceived in Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism could not break loose the thread of casteism.

Keywords: dalit, humanism, ambedkarism, gandhism, marxism, liberation, emancipation.

GJHSS-C Classification : FOR Code: 160899



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



© 2015. Dr. Rabindra Garada. This is a research/review paper, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 Unported License <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism: An Analytical Discourse for Dalit Liberation and Emancipation

Dr. Rabindra Garada

Abstract- The extent of social transformation of any socially discriminated people may be better judged from the social philosophies propounded by their great leaders like Gandhi and Ambedkar in modern India. Gandhi is dead, so are Ambedkar and Marx. However, neither their philosophies- Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism are dead nor could they posthumously suppress to one another. Their philosophical axis- may be different and dialectical such as for example absolutism versus relativism, positivism versus phenomenism and theological versus metaphysical but remain the far sighted discourse for the liberation and emancipation of dalit in India. Our study also reveals that the protagonists of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism are either eating their humble pie in the circumstances of their failures or feeling like fishes out of water in the company of other outdated philosophies for the cause of dalit at present. Further, the change agents like heart, mind, conscience, science, violence, non-violence, constitutionalism, religion, state and village perceived in Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism could not break loose the thread of casteism. Irony is that the destitution and deprivation of dalits, tribals and women, instead of loosening their grips after gone through these isms over the time, have greatly been aggravated. On the one hand Gandhi being defender of caste-based hierarchism, caste-based incarnations and patriarchy could not be the true fighter against casteism and the Marxists though became true fighters for class equality and fraternity but could not promote individual liberty. On the other hand, the original axis of Ambedkarism based on liberty, equality and fraternity and Buddhism shows to the dalit their real paths of emancipation and liberation. However, for the cause of dalit in this paper we have not simply examined the quintessence of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism but in addition analysed their convergence and reconciliation judiciously through different creative Figure formats. Further, dialoguing Gandhi, Ambedkar and Marx one another the dalit will certainly situate them somewhere emancipating and empowering from their age old sufferings from casteism.

Keywords: dalit, humanism, ambedkarism, gandhism, marxism, liberation, emancipation.

I. INTRODUCTION

Every nation-state has some unfortunate human stock who has been suffering for centuries, for example, Slavs (Poles and Serbs) in Europe, Slave in Roman, Helots in Spartans, Villeins in Britain, Negroes in America, Gypsies and Jews in Germany and

Tanka in China but not like "untouchables" who are destined to suffer forever in India. The slavery, serfdom and villeinage have been vanished and racism and religious atrocity on Jews have also been reduced to a large extent but the plight of untouchables revolves around their castes but "being outcastes". The untouchables known as Harijan, scheduled caste and dalit as used by caste Hindu- found to be the manual scavengers, street sweepers, cobblers and leather workers whose mere touch was believed to be "polluting" to a higher caste Hindu. It also relates to a situation of forced labour or slavery (see, Manual Scavenging, International Dalit Solidarity, 2013 & 2015; dsn.org/key-issues/manual-scavenging). In December, 2006, the then Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh described untouchability as a "blot on humanity" and India's "Hidden Apartheid (www.hrw.org/news/.../india-hidden-apartheid-discrimination-against-dali). www.chrgj.org). He publicly acknowledged the parallel situation as existing between untouchability and the crime of apartheid. The plight of untouchables was so severe that everything in him- appearance, speech, words, shadow, etc, as if polluting, and even they were treated as un-approachable, un-speakable, un-hearable and un-seeable in the past. So far, the scheduled caste has been physically tortured, mentally abused, socially humiliated, culturally accused and socially excluded (see, Deliege, 1997; Ilaiah, 1996; Tripathy, 1994; Rajshekar, 1987; <http://drarnedkarbooks.wordpress.com/dr-b-r-ambedkar-books>). The legal protective acts like Civil Rights Act of 1955, Scheduled Caste and Tribe Act of 1989, the article 17, etc, are there to protect these unfortunate communities. This is also not untrue that the scheduled castes communities have been undergoing rapid changes in India. However, the changing status of this human stock is intense speculation throughout India. In this context, the philosophical queries and concerns raised through Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism can be critically analyzed for the promising prospect of dalit in India. In fact, whether it is class or caste oppression; the history witnesses that the contemporary Indian society cannot bypass the view points of Ambedkar, Gandhi and Marx (see, Roy, 2014; Habib, Weil, 1958). However, dealing with the caste or class oppression of either society's lowest rung or highest rung there has been no communality. In the

Author: Utkal University, Odisha, (India).
e-mail: rabindragarada@rediffmail.com

lowest rung along with tribal the so called scheduled caste are still remaining underprivileged, downtrodden and marginalized as compared to their counterparts in Indian society (see, Mishra, 2010; Kathrine, 2007; Thorat, 2007; Gandhi, 2006; Hardiman, 2003; Roy, 2002; Zelliott, 2001; Omvedt, 1995; Dhanwan, 1991; Keer, 1990). Even if the lower rung of the Indian society gets elevated to the status of higher rung the latter one may not drop into the status of the former one. In this context, the so called dalit stay dalit even if they achieve better political and economic status than their counter parts. In fact, it refers to anybody who is socially oppressed and depressed regardless of their gender, caste and ethnicity. However, the conception of "dalit" no longer remains a broad term in real sense of its comprehension and application since it identifies anyone who is called scheduled caste (constitutional term), Harijan (Gandhian term) and untouchable (Hindu term) in actual social practice. In this context, this article highlights the potentiality of Ambedkarism, Gandhism and Marxism for Dalit emancipation and liberation in Indian society. But what Gandhi experiments this truth by rectifying from within Hindu structure- without detaching dalit from the wrong doers- the so called higher castes, Ambedkar experiences it by getting rid of Hindu social structure (see, Ram, 2009; Thorat, 2007; Alter, 1996; Zelliott, 2001; Omvedt, 1995 and 2004; Dhanwan, 1991; Keer, 1990). The Marxism preaches it differently that the economic equality will destroy social inequality whereas Gandhism does not concern whether social inequality will destroy or stand on economic inequality. And Ambedkar visualizes that the economic inequality perpetuates social inequality but the economic equality also supports social inequality (Weil, 2010; Thorat, 2007). However, the critical overviews of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism reveal the problems and prospects for dalit's emancipation and liberation. In this backdrop, we have modestly tried to project an analytical discourse comparing the divergence thesis of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism in detail.

II. PHILOSOPHICAL MOORINGS OF GANDHISM, AMBEDKARISM AND MARXISM

The Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism- the promising philosophies in Indian scenario have been grounded thoroughly out of the retrospective lives, ideas and works of Gandhi, Ambedkar and Marx respectively. Question is not what their philosophies are but how much pragmatic, humanistic, liberative and emancipative these are. In order to authenticate our imaginative roots about them the philosophical backgrounds of each "ism" has been comprehended in this paper. In this regard, the personal backgrounds of Gandhi, Ambedkar and Marx have been found to be unique to one another. For instance, the humanitarian background of Ambedkar was influenced by the

American pragmatism of John Dewey, Buddhism, social philosophy of Jyoti Ba Fulley and the writing of famous poet Kabir (see, Ram 2009; Omvedt, 2004; Zelliott, 2001; Gautam, 2000; Jatava, 1997; Gore, 1993; Keer, 1990). The ethical and moral background of Gandhi was influenced by Hinduism, Jainism and some historic books namely Henry David Thoreau's on the Duty of Civil Disobedience (1849); Plato's Apology (1862), John Ruskin's Unto this Last (1862), William Salter's Ethical Religion (1889) and Leo Tolstoy's The Kingdom of God is within You (1894) (see, McLellan, 2006; Hardiman, 2003; Mehring, 2003; Jack, 1994; Rubel, 1973; Gandhi, 1940). Marx was influenced by the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, G. W. F. Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach, Adam Smith, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, David Ricardo, Saint-Simon and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (see, Johnson, 2006; Mehring, 2003; Fischer, 2002). In fact, the German philosophy, French socialism and English and Scottish political economy greatly nurtured and socialised the mind of Marxism (ibid). The economic determinism, historical materialism, dialectical materialism, class consciousness, class struggles, communism, etc, are some of the communist ideology of Marxism (see, Abraham and Morgan, 2010; Haralambos and Heald, 2008; Calhoun, 2002; Russell, 1999). The ideological structures of Gandhism include truth, ahimsa, satyagraha, khadi, charkas, swadeshi, trusteeship, Ramrajya, etc (see, McLellan, 2006; Hardiman, 2003; Mehring, 2003; Parekh, 2001; Green, 1986; McClellan, 1973; Rubel, 1973; Gandhi, 1940). The ideological structures of Ambedkarism include the dalitism, constitutionalism, Buddhism, etc (see, Omvedt, 2004; Zelliott, 2001; Zelliott, 1992; Keer, 1990; Jaffrelot, 2005). Through these ideological structures the course of dalit emancipation and liberation has been tested and verified more often throughout the Indian history (see, Kuber, 1973). However, the existing philosophical divergence and convergence between these "isms" have not been adequately analysed in Indian society. Thus, a critical reflection on Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism promote an appropriate discourse for the future prospect of dalit.

III. CRITICAL REFLECTION

a) *Dimensions of Philosophical Divergence and Convergence for Dalit Liberation and Emancipation*

It is not easy to find out the appropriate discourse for the future prospect of dalit in India. Further, to what extent dalit liberation and emancipation possible following the philosophical discourses is another significant question. However, on the basis of philosophical dimensions like absolutism, relativism, phenomenism and positivism the discourses developed in Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism can be analysed for the same. The different tenets of

these philosophical dimensions preach a unique dialogue for dalit in India at present. The tenet of absolutism preaches and promotes conservatism, fundamentalism, communalism and reductionism whereas the tenet of relativism promotes pluralism and liberalism. Thus, for dalit liberation and emancipation the latter tenet is functional and desirable than the former

one. The tenet of phenomenism emphasizes subjective knowledge whereas the tenet of positivism emphasizes objective knowledge. Thus, for dalit liberation and emancipation the latter tenet is scientific and practical than the former one. In the Figure-1 we have modestly deconstructed a relative substantive base for our analysis.

Figure 1: Relative Importance of Absolutism, Relativism, Phenomenalism and Positivism

Sl.No	Relative Importance in Gandhism		Relative Importance in Ambedkarism		Relative Importance in Marxism	
	More	Less	More	Less	More	Less
1	Absolutism	Relativism	Relativism	Absolutism	Absolutism	Relativism
2	Phenomenalism	Positivism	Positivism	Phenomenalism	Positivism	Phenomenalism

Source: Our Own

The Gandhism based on fundamental religious doctrine (Karma, Varnashrama Dharma, and gospel of Gita) reflects its tendency of having absolutism and phenomenism more than relativism and positivism. For instance, the Gandhian practices- religious tolerance, non-violence, etc, were rooted in the great traditions of Hinduism. On the other hand the Ambedkarism seemed to have reflected more relativism and positivism than absolutism and phenomenism. It is because Ambedkarism beliefs in scientific research and resolution but not in dogmatic fundamentalism (see, Roy, 2014; Garada, 2013; Coward, 2003; Roy, 2002; Puri, 2001; Alter, 1996; Gandhi, 1940 (www.gandhifoundation.net, www.mkgandhi.org/articles/gambedkaruntchbls.htm). The Marxism though reflects more on economic reductionism largely relies on positivism. It does not belief in absolute monarchism. But its vision of proletariat dictatorship through class struggle and its experience passing through the authoritarianism of Lenin and Stalin in former Soviet Union are proved to be

as an absolutist strategy. Thus, to some extent the Gandhism and Marxism are structured largely on the principles of absolutism since the former utilizes religious fundamentalism and the latter utilizes economic reductionism as stated earlier. The latter is situated more on positivism and less on phenomenism whereas the former is situated more on phenomenism and less on positivism. The Ambedkarism is found to have the stand of less absolutism but more relativism and more positivism. His reductionist tendency of having the tenet of Buddhism is not dogmatic and conservative. Thus, it is clear that for dalit liberation and emancipation the positivistic and relativistic tendency in Ambedkarism and Marxism are more appropriate and functional than that of Gandhism. In this context, the discursive conception of truth explained in Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism has well comprehended the course of liberation and emancipation for dalit differently.

Figure 2 : Relative Conception of God and Truth

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Truth	God	Belief	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	Truth is God	God is Truth	Belief in God and Religious Ethics	Monism/Dualism
2	Marxism	Truth is not God	God is not Truth	Neither belief in God nor in religious ethics	Atheism/Realism
3	Ambedkarism	Truth is Truth	God is God	Does not belief in God but belief in religious ethics	Realism/ Pluralism

Source: Our Own

b) Discursive Conception of God and Truth for Dalit Emancipation

It is clear in the Figure- 2 that each philosophy at the least focuses on what is truth although that could be of monism, dualism and pluralism differently. Metaphysically the truth is ultimate reality but theologically it is God. To Gandhi it is the same thing. Gandhi

In fact, what the Ambedkarism disapproves or approves comfortably that help resolving that God is God and truth is truth. And to reducing truth into God meaning destroying and confusing the truth of truth

according to Ambedkarism and Marxism. To Gandhi ultimate truth is God as without God nothing is possible (see, Johnson, 2006; Parekh, 2001; Gandhi, 1940). As for instance, Gandhi can live without air and water but cannot live without God. To Marx and Ambedkar we can live without God but cannot live without air and water. Gandhi argues that truth is God because without truth you cannot get God. God is there in everybody's heart and his sole (*atman*) is nothing but one with paramatma- that is God. To Biblical saying Jesus Christ is not only the truth but also the way to truth. The Bible also asserts that that even human being is the way, the truth and the

life of God in a inclusive sense. In higher level of Hindu religious discourses, the Lord Krishna reveals the same thing through *Bhagat Gita* for which Gandhi claims God is Truth and Truth is God (see, Johnson, 2006; Parekh, 2001; Jack, 1956; Gandhi, 1940). This equation nurtures his fundamentalism as true to his practical life of religious absolutism. It does not mean that his truth is independent of human knowledge and belief because he individually experimented the truth of humanity during his life time (ibid). But still he is known more an absolutist than a relativist to dalit. To Ambedkar the truth is relative. There is no absolute truth and it is a self-defeating for him. For instance, if it is true, it is not true for everybody, its opposite is also either true or false to anybody who claims it differently. Every version of truth therefore, is equally legitimate or illegitimate. Thus, the monism (God is Truth), dualism (God is Truth and Truth is God) and pluralism (neither exclusively logical or spiritual or scientific or human) of truth are its inclusive realms as stated earlier. The truth is God and God is truth statement thus, assimilates metaphysics with theology to which Gandhi approves and Ambedkar and Marx disapprove. To a theist like Gandhi the true knowledge is the knowledge of God and nothing

beyond. But to Marx one's statement is true if it corresponds to reality or to that extend if it is the fact itself (Gould, 1978; Marx, 1976 and 1975). According to Marxism there is nothing called as truth beyond its material existence and otherwise it is illusion. Thus, the truth is nothing more than a material life itself- a historical reflection. What the truth is perhaps the ensoulment of body to Gandhi, embodiment of soul to Marx and emancipation of body and soul from an eternal bondage to Buddhism. Further, the human desire and ignorance as the causes of the truth-sufferings the dalit should know for their emancipation and liberation as per the Ambedkarian Buddhism (see, Omvedt, 2004; Zelliot, 2001; Gautam, 2000; Grover 1992; Keer, 1990). The conception of truth on the basis of realism found in Ambedkarism and Marxism seems to be more practical for dalit emancipation and liberation than the conception of truth based on monism and dualism in Gandhism. The ambedkarian conception of truth is more relevant for dalit because it pleads the realism like Marxism and religious ethics like Gandhism. But unlike the materialistic atheism of Marxism and the theological conservatism of Gandhism it has been progressive for emancipation and liberation.

Figure 3 : Type of Knowledge for Dalit liberation and Emancipation

Sl.No	Philosophy	Knowledge	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	Theological/metaphysical	Theological/metaphysical knowledge assumed to be impractical for dalit liberation
2	Marxism	Epistemological	Epistemological knowledge is required for dalit cause
3.	Ambedkarism	Epistemology/ religious ethics	Epistemological knowledge with religious ethics seems to be practical for dalit liberation

Source: Our Own

The Figure- 3 clears the type of knowledge each ism having justifies how they are different in this regard. The intellectual bases in Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism can be deconstructed as theological/ metaphysical epistemology, objective epistemology and objective epistemology/religious ethical respectively. The theological/ metaphysical knowledge base in Gandhism assumed to be impractical for dalit liberation whereas positive epistemology with religious ethics in Ambedkarism seems to be more practical. It is clear in

the Figure that the role of religion is significant for Gandhism but insignificant for Marxism whereas it is significant for Ambedkarism but unlike that of Gandhi's theism and Marx's atheism. In the Figure 3, the perception of Gandhi, Marx and Ambedkar on the role of religious-conversion & proselytization has been deconstructed for dalit liberation and emancipation. As stated earlier unlike theism and atheism Ambedkarism promote a religion of humanism that is desirable for dalit emancipation and liberation.

Figure 4 : Role of Religion for Dalit Liberation and Emancipation

Sl.No	Philosophy	Religious-Conversion & Proselytization	Critical Reflection
1.	Gandhism	Gandhism neither approves religious proselytization and conversion nor disapproves missionaries' charity and services to humanity	Religion is significant for Gandhism but his religious orthodoxy is problems for Dalit
2.	Marxism	Marxism rejects religion but cannot denies the effect of religion in the society	Religion is not significant for Marxism but without religion the dalit cannot live in Indian society
3.	Ambedkarism	Ambedkarism neither pleads conversion into foreign religion like Christianity nor for proselytization although it promotes Buddhism for Dalit emancipation	It is significant for Ambedkarism but unlike that of Gandhi's theism and Marx's atheism. It seems to be a religion of humanity for dalit.

Source: Our Own

The Gandhism neither supported proselytizing nor conversion. But he also did not underestimate the role of missionaries for charity and human services in India. This dualism goes with his perception of anti-Indianisation agenda of western world. Ambedkar pleads for conversion but not for proselytization. Ambedkar also realised the importance of Indianness and therefore refused to convert into Christianity. Since Marx does not believe in religion the question of proselytization and conversion is not raised in Marxism. It is because the dalit requires the religion of humanism. But which religion is believed to be the most appropriate for this is an important question for dalit. Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism seems to be appropriate for the Dalit but not yet realized by many dalit even after several

decades of Ambedkar's conversion to Buddhism. In order to resolve the problems of dalit the Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism provide the spiritual, secular and material spectrum of thought respectively. However, each spectrum of the thought is not univocal but cross-sectoral as mentioned in the Figure-5. While Gandhi's mode of spiritualism is his theism and Hinduism Ambedkar's spiritualism is his belief in Buddhism against Hinduism and fundamental of theism. The Marx's mode of atheism spread humanism against religious spiritualism. The Gandhian mode of secularism is his religious tolerance whereas Marxian secularism is his atheism. The Ambedkarian secularism reflects constitutionalism- all are treated equal before law irrespective of their gender, caste and colour.

Figure 5 : Nature of Spiritualism, Secularism and Materialism for Dalit's Liberation

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Spiritualism	Secularism	Materialism	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	Theism, Hinduism	Religious tolerance	Nai Talim- Constructive programmes	It prioritizes ritualism over secularism but the Dalit want secularism against rigid ritualism for their emancipation
2	Marxism	Atheism & Humanism against religious spiritualism	Atheism his secularism	Optimism for capitalistic contradiction and coming of communism	The role of capitalism for achieving communism seems to be not fruitful for dalit in India.
3	Amedkarism	Buddhism against Hinduism	Constitutional safeguards	Nationalization of lands and properties	Religion without supernatural belief seems to be impractical in real life situation for dalit in India

Source: Our Own

The nature of materialism is Gandhi's Nai Talim as constructive programmes whereas Marxism itself a materialistic philosophy that generates optimism for communism. Marxism also runs through inclusive perspectives such as his sense of humanism is his spiritualism, his practice of atheism his secularism and his optimism of communism is his economic perspective. However, responding to Dalit' plight Ambedkar and Marx are ideologically more committed to the secular perspective than Gandhi because both of them express their predicament for dalit's cause through modernity and go for radical transformation of economy and society with the help of technology (Tejani, 2008). Whereas Gandhi opposes it with tooth and nail upholding Hindu tradition (see, Gandhi, 1940). However, main ends of all isms are to liberate man from his suffering, promote equality between man and man and let them to live in their company and brotherhoodness. The spectrum of thought ways of Marxism, Gandhism and Ambedkarism for the dalit emancipation and liberation has been reflected through communism, Hinduism and Buddhism respectively. Thus, the Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism, are not different in their goals. However, to Hinduism there is no equality and liberty because its karma and varnashrama dharma do not uphold these equaliser concepts, and therefore, Gandhism heavily based on the ideals of Hinduism get

destined to the principles of caste hierarchy, patriarchy and caste-based incarnations. On the other hand, though equality and fraternity as expected result of communism the Marxism remains far from the individual liberty. Since the democracy is the antithesis of Marxism the liberty, equality and fraternity cannot be incorporated in it.

On the other hand, the original axis of Ambedkarism is based on the egalitarian principles of liberty, equality and fraternity (Garada, 2013). Once Ambedkar argued that unless the dalits enter into a life of liberty, equality and fraternity based on Buddhism they cannot be free from social degradation, humiliation, and exploitation sustained in Hindu social order (Garada, 2013, Omvedt, 2004). Thus, how Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism perceive the role of change agents for dalit is important in this regards.

IV. DISCURSIVE PERCEPTION OF CHANGE AGENTS FOR DALIT LIBERATION AND EMANCIPATION

It is very difficult task to have a critical reflection on philosophical dialogue of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism for dalit liberation and emancipation. We have modestly tried to analyse the different dimensions

of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism for dalit's emancipation. The role of village and state as assumed

through Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism reveals a different picture in this regards.

Figure 6 : Village and State for Dalit Emancipation

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Role of Village Life	Role of State	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	Optimistic about the role of Village as self sustaining republic	Pessimistic about the role of state for dalit emancipation	Optimism and pessimism on the roles of village and state respectively comprehend a conservative strategy for dalit
2	Ambedkarism	Village as den of ignorance and casteism	Optimistic about the role of state for dalit liberation	Role of state against village based oppression is significant for dalit
3	Marxism	Village as geographical unit consisting of castes for economic activity	Optimistic about the role of state for economic development	Political economy of village and state is not free from caste hegemony

Source: Our Own

It is clear in the Figure-6 that the philosophy of Gandhism romanticizes the village and village life as self sustaining republic. It proposes a better life for Indians irrespective of their castes safeguarding their self respects. But the Ambedkarism developed a polar anti-thesis to the village republic heralded by orientalist (Garada, 2013, Omvedt, 2004; Coward, 2003; Omvedt, 1995). On the contrary the Ambedkarism proposes a civilized life in the urban world in order to save the dalits from exploitation in the villages. In Marxian understanding the concept of village life is supposed to be changed from its traditional connotation to the modern connotation after development of capitalism. But the caste village cannot be fully class village in India although the agrarian class structures are there in the rural Indian societies. As a result, the caste village perpetuates an unequal society. In fact, neither village life nor industrial centre could fully empower the dalit from their destitution. The caste is accommodated in the urban way of life. Thus, it is assumed that for the dalit's emancipation and liberation the vision of village life emphasized in Gandhism is perceived to be impractical while the vision of city life promoted in Ambedkarism is

practical but yet to be realised in larger context. Since the village in Indian social life cannot be detached from the caste life the untouchability cannot be wiped out from the village. Further, since the caste cannot be turned into class the problem related to casteism cannot be resolved following the path of Marxism. Thus, the vision against the village life promoted by Ambedkar is increasingly followed by the dalit. In case of role of the state for the welfare of weaker section the Gandhi was quite pessimistic whereas Ambedkar and Indian Marxists are optimistic. Since the dalit requires a welfare state the role of state for dalit liberation is indispensable. However, with the help of the state neither Gandhi nor Ambedkar and Marxists could completely eradicate the evils of untouchability in India so far. A critical reflection on the perception of Gandhism, Indian Marxism and Ambedkarism related to the role of constitutional provisions against untouchability is crucial in this regard (see, Figure 7). The role of constitutional provision which has been the modern catalyst of democracy and the watch dog of human right violation is indispensable for dalit liberation and emancipation in Indian society.

Figure 7 : Perception of Constitutional Provision against Untouchability

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Perception on Constitutional Provision	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	Constitutional Provision Protect Hindu community from world's criticism on untouchability	Task of saving Hinduism and untouchables simultaneously invite dalit's suspicion and pessimism
2	Ambedkarism	It saves untouchables from caste based oppression and promote their human rights	Constitutionalism for human rights is inevitable for the civic and democratic life of dalit
3	Marxism	Constitutional mechanism for labour's right	Promotes fair & equal pay, labour rights and trade unionism for workers' welfare

Source: Our Own

Though the Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism are seemed to be indifferent to the significance of constitutional provisions against untouchability they are found to have different stands on it. For instance, the first one supports it in order to protect Hindu community

against world criticism of casteism whereas the second one approves it in order to save the untouchables from the caste-based oppression in Hinduism. Further, the Marxism is assumed to turning the caste into class for the annihilation of caste exploitation in India. Thus, it is

assumed that unlike Ambedkarism the Gandhism hardly inspires the dalit for demanding the constitutional rights against casteism. Thus, the goal of Gandhian activism against the practice of untouchables was far different from that of Ambedkarian ones. The *Dalit* rights perceived in Ambedkarism is quite different than *Harijan* rights and worker rights perceived in Gandhism and Marxism respectively. Thus, the discursive paths of emancipation for dalit have also been perceived differently in the Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism.

V. DISCURSIVE PATHS OF EMANCIPATION AND LIBERATION FOR DALIT

The paths suggested by Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism for dalit's emancipation and liberation have been critically comprehended in the Figure-8. In the philosophy of Gandhism though the forces of revolution and constitutionalism not undermined the vitality of religious and altruistic non-violence means is largely emphasized for dalit emancipation and liberation

(see, Johnson, 2006; Roy, 2002; Alter, 1996, Gandhi, 1940). In the philosophy of Gandhism the path of achieving humanism has been non-violence (peaceful means), altruistic non-violence (suffering for the cause of larger interest) and religious non-violence (peaceful means generated on religious principles). In case of Marxism, it has been violence means. But in case of Ambedkarism, it has been non-violence, religious non-violence (peaceful means generated on Buddhist principles) and humanistic non-violence (humanism unlike religious one). The non-violence means always expose dalit to violation in the modern Indian history so far. Altruistic non-violence also led to human rights violation in the history. Thus, Ambedkarism neither promotes Gandhian means of non-violence which is based on religious ethics nor Marxian violence which led to human rights violation instead it promotes humanistic non-violence and religious non-violence unlike that of Gandhism.

Figure 8 : Paths of Emancipation and Liberation

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Path of Emancipation	Path of Liberation	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	Religious Non-Violence/ Altruistic Non-Violence	Reformative & Transformative movement	Transformative movement fails for the cause of dalit liberation
2	Marxism	Revolutionary Violence, class struggle	Radical movement	Extremism and violation means fail for classless/casteless society
3	Amedkarism	Constitutionalism- Humanistic-Non-Violence	Reformative & Alternative movement- educate, agitate and organise	Role of humanism, rationalism, pragmatism, socialism and democracy and strategy of educate, agitate and organise seem to be liberating for dalit

Source: Our Own

For Marx, the revolutionary strategy is more functional and desirable than that of non-revolutionary and constitutional strategy of Gandhi and Ambedkar respectively. In the philosophy of Marxism, communism is the only way out for dalit liberation and emancipation but it cannot be achieved unless they go for revolution. On the other hand Ambedkar's constitutionalism has been the practical strategy of dalit emancipation. The force of constitutionalism envisaged in Ambedkarism is greatly help liberating the dalit from their social humiliation, suppression and oppression in Hindu society (see, Garada, 2013; Ram, 2009; Omvedt, 2004; Ambedkar, 1943). But, the dalit today require all means-non-violence, violence and constitutionalism. But the revolutionary violence strategy and religious non-violence strategy are unconstitutional in practice. Thus, the dalit has to follow constitutional paths for their emancipation. The dalits are also optimistic with the alternative political organization envisaged in the Ambedkarism than that of Gandhism and Marxism (see, the Figure-9). As for instance, the Gandhism promotes national level political organization for the development of the people. Gandhi believed National Congress as a

national party represent all people including dalit. But Ambedkar did not accept that the congress party would do the best for the cause of dalit (see, Roy, 2002; Puri, 2001). On the contrary, he argued Gandhi's authoritarianism would be reflected through congress party. The Ambedkarism promotes separate political organization for the empowerment of Dalit. The Indian Marxists neither tolerated congress bossism nor liked Ambedkar's Dalit politics. In fact, the Communist Party of India based on a principle of Marxism developed the communitarian pressure group that not only pressure the government for policy change but also argued for grassroot movement for a classless society in India.

Figure 9 : Political Organization and Dalit Liberation

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Political Organization	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhism	National level political organization- Congress party	Transformative movements and congress party fail
2	Marxism	Communitarian pressure group and communist party	In the name of classless or casteless society extremism and violation promoted
3	Amedkarism	Separate political organization- All India depressed class	Organization in term of the principles-educate, agitate and organise is inviteable

Source: Our Own

The Gandhian inclusion of political freedom with power and human service through political organization like All India Congress could not be realized so far. Indeed the connection between freedom and powers is better reflected through Ambedkarism. The role of political party for Ambedkarism is an active action that helps promoting the dalit empowerment in real life situation. Of course not in similar perception as the political strategy of Marxism envisaged the practical action for Dalit empowerment. For instance, the extreme wings of the Indian communist party have been activating the Marxian radicalism in Indian situation. But each of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism though promoted the role of political organization as indispensable for the cause of Dalit empowerment but has been grappling with many loopholes in real life situation. The difference between Gandhi, Ambedkar and Marx was not only their different approach to political discourse but their participation and non-participation in politics. The former two were active politicians while the later one was not. Except Ambedkarian political participation the Dalit does not have exclusive platform which authenticates their political involvement. The reformatory and transformative movements against social evils as promoted in Gandhism and Ambedkarism is acceptable for the dalit. And even the radical movement of Marxism is also

inevitable for their liberation. But Ambedkar's subaltern perspective is indispensable for the annihilation of casteism and dalit humanism in the Indian society (see, Garada, 2013). However, there have been many change agents promoted by the philosophy of Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism differently over the time. These are being applied for the actualization of dalit humanity in Indian society. However, the limitation and disadvantages involved in the change agents are neither adequately identified nor rectified for dalit empowerment so far. In this regard the relative importance of change agents for dalit humanism has been discussed in the Figure-10. For instance, change agents- the conscience works like science for Gandhi and therefore, he overemphasized it comparison to the role of revolution and constitutionalism. In Ambedkarism, the conscience without rationality is not a science and revolution without humanity perpetuates violence against dalit. Thus, the Gandhian conscience is also impracticable for dalit liberation and emancipation. The heart, religious principle, supernatural belief and ethical principles are assumed to be the main change agents of humanism in Gandhism. In case of Marxism, the mind and materialism are the crucial change agents whereas in Ambedkarism, heart, mind, religious principles, ethical principles and legal provisions are included.

Figure 10 : Relative Importance of Change Agents for Humanism

Sl.No	Relative Importance in Gandhism		Relative Importance in Ambedkarism		Relative Importance in Marxism	
	More	Less	More	Less	More	Less
1	Conscience	Science	Science	Conscience	Science	Conscience
2	Ethics	Law	Law	Ethics	Law	Ethics

Source: Our Own

Thus, the relative change agents in Ambedkarism can serve better for the cause of dalits humanity comparison to the change agents in Marxism and Gandhism respectively. For instance, the approaches, means and goals for humanism have been the mythological, bodily fasting and Ramrajya (Lord Rama's rule in Hinduism) respectively in case of Gandhism. The historical extremism and communism in case of Marxism, the subaltern, non-violent and legal means and progressive socialism in case of Ambedkarism are deconstructed respectively. However,

the personality and ideological dualism of Gandhi, Ambedkar and Marx make it more complex for dalit emancipation and liberation in the contemporary societies.

VI. A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON DUALISTIC PERSONALITY AND IDEOLOGICAL DUALISM

The dalit needs a personality who is open, straight forward pleading their rights without any dualism and dilemma. In this regard, they follow more Ambedkar

than Marx and Gandhi. In order to analyse this fact the facts of dualistic personality and ideological dualism have been deconstructed in the Figure-11. For instance, Gandhi's personality was assumed to be a backward man in English world but hero in South Africa and India in modern history (see, Jain, 1987). In true sense of his personality Gandhi was politician, conservative man and unsuccessful lawyer in his homeland. Ambedkar's personality was assumed to be one of the highly intellectual figures both in India and abroad. Ambedkar was forward looking, smart modernist and a successful

lawyer in practice in modern India. However, both of them acclaimed high stature of international reputation after Independence of India. Marx's personality epitomizes the stature of free thinking and dynamics academia. The secular thinking, great heart, critical attitude, etc are some of his personal reflection. Thus, Ambedkarian and Marxian radicalism instil dalit for social movements against social oppression whereas the Gandhian gospel of liberalism and conservatism hardly attract Dalit for their course of emancipation whereas.

Figure 11 : Personality and Ideological dualism of Gandhi, Ambedkar and Marx

Sl.No.	Philosophy	Personality Dualism	Ideological Dualism	Critical Reflection
1	Gandhi	Gandhi is perceived as backward man in English world but the hero in South Africa and India	Gandhi is perceived to have liberalism and conservatism on caste query	Gandhi's personality and ideological dualism complicates the discourse for dalit empowerment
2	Amedkar	Ambedkar belongs to backward caste but hero among dalit in India and intellectual figures abroad	Ambedkar responded a politics of compromise on reservation issues	Ambedkar's personality is appreciable for dalits but his ideological compromise invites criticism for dalit empowerment
3	Marx	Marx is assumed to be a stature of free thinking and dynamics academia	The ideology of radicalism and capitalism doubt in converging his theory and practice.	Marx's personality and ideological dualism promotes extremism among dalit

Source: Our Own

Though Gandhism promoting both the liberalism and conservatism such as untouchable's entries in his constructive programme and also his simultaneous cautionary remarks of not allowing inter-dining and inter-marriage between touchable caste and untouchable caste. This dualism invites inherent complicity in the axis of Gandhism. Ambedkarism is also not free from its dualism on certain ideologies for Dalit empowerment. Initially, it followed humanitarian slogan against the social slavery of dalitism but compromised with Gandhi in Poona Pact for a sympathetic introspection of Dalit plight for reservation. Marx's thesis of Asiatic mode of production going beyond the anti-thesis tendency of western capitalism as for instance, the inherent contradiction of commune in Asian society was not revealed like that of workers' societies in the western world. There is also misconception that the Marxism conceived of convergence between its theory and practice. The dualistic tendency in the philosophy of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism is perceived differently but to what extent they either complicate or resolve the path of Dalit empowerment is not clear. For Dalit, the dualism of this entire "isms" must be rectified in the contemporary society otherwise the dalit will remain dalit forever. Taking all these deconstruction on Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism, we can find out the relevance of each philosophy for Dalit liberation and emancipation in the contemporary India. However, the gospel of humanism promoted by Gandhi, Marx and

Ambedkar seems to be at crossroad. Taking the dynamics of subaltern approach such as the dynamics of originality, acceptance, rejection and new departure evolved in Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism it is assumed that Ambedkarism is decisive thesis for Dalit emancipation (see, Garada, 2013). It is because the original thesis of Ambedkarism includes humanistic relativism whereas it has been mythology and economic determinism in Gandhism and Marxism respectively. What these isms accept and reject also reflect a comparative advantage and disadvantage for Dalit liberation and emancipation. For instance, for Dalit emancipation Gandhi accepts Hindutva and rejects eurocentricism and Marxists accept communism and reject theology whereas Ambedkar accepts democracy and Buddhism and reject Hinduism (ibid). Another important question whether there is any new departure in the philosophy of Gandhism, Marxism and Ambedkarism for Dalit emancipation. For instance, there is no scope for new departure in Gandhism whereas there is scope for the new departure from caste to class and from Hinduism to Buddhism in Marxism and Ambedkarism respectively.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The article addresses the philosophical divergence and convergence of Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism for the cause of dalit liberation and emancipation. The relative importance of absolutism, relativism, phenomenism and positivism in

each discourse profess and preach unique intellectual acumen for dalit. However, the relative importance of relativism and positivism against absolutism and phenomenism in Ambedkarism seems to be more practical discourse for the cause of dalit in India. The change agents such as heart, mind, conscience, science, violence, non-violence, constitutionalism, state, village and religion perceived in Gandhism, Ambedkarism and Marxism help evolving a new discursive synthesis for the cause of dalit liberation and emancipation. But there is difference since Gandhi experienced it by rectifying the problems from within Hindu structure- without detaching dalit from their wrong doers- the so called higher castes, Ambedkar experienced it by getting rid of Hindu social structure. The Marxism preaches it differently as the economic equality will destroy social inequality whereas Gandhism does not concern whether social inequality will destroy or stand on economic inequality. Ambedkar visualizes that the economic inequality perpetuates social inequality but the economic equality also supports social inequality. The role of religion is significant for Gandhism but insignificant for Marxism whereas it is significant for Ambedkarism but unlike that of Gandhi's theism and Marx's atheism. Our study reveals that the monistic (God is Truth), dualistic (God is Truth and Truth is God) and pluralistic (neither exclusively logical or spiritual or scientific or human) version of truth are the inclusive realms of dalit emancipation. To substantiate the conception of truth the study also reveals that metaphysically truth is ultimate reality but theologically it is God. For Gandhi this is the two sides of a same coin to which Ambedkar and Marx disagree. What is truth is perhaps ensoulment of body to Gandhian spiritualism, embodiment of soul to Marxian humanism and emancipation of body and soul from an eternal bondage to Ambedkarian Buddhism (see, Jondhale and Beltz, 2004). In fact, Ambedkarism neither want dalit to follow the path of *Kranti* (revolutionary non-violence) envisaged in Marxism nor the path of *Shanti* (peace- religious non-violence) promoted in Gandhism but the Mukti (emancipation and liberation) that is to have a original path but with a new departure apart from that of Gandhism and Marxism fighting against their age old social oppression in Indian society. Unlike violence of Marxism Ambedkar follows the non-violence means of Buddhism and unlike religious non-violence of Gandhi he follows the Buddhist humanism and constitutionalism. On the other hand the Gandhism heavily based on the ideals of Hinduism get destined to the principles of caste hierarchy, patriarchy and caste-based incarnations. On the other hand, though equality and fraternity as expected result of communism the Marxism remains far from the individual liberty. Since the democracy is the antithesis of Marxism the liberty, equality and fraternity cannot be comfortably incorporated in it. On the other hand, the original axis of

Ambedkarism is based on liberty, equality and fraternity (Garada, 2013). Thus, the question is not what these philosophies are but how much pragmatic, humanistic, liberative and emancipative these are and to that extent such dynamics resolved in Ambedkarism has been much more realistic and optimistic for dalit liberation and emancipation than Gandhism and Marxism in Indian society so far.

REFERENCES RÉFÉRENCES REFERENCIAS

1. Abraham, F. and H. J. Morgan (2010). *Sociological Thought*, MacMillan Publishers India Ltd.
2. Ahuja, M. L. (2007). *Eminent Indians: Administrators and Political Thinkers*, New Delhi: Rupa. Co.
3. Alter, Joseph S. (1996). "Gandhi's body, Gandhi's truth: Non-Violence and the Biomoral Imperative of Public Health". *Journal of Asian Studies*, 35.
4. Ambedkar, B. (1943). *Mr. Gandhi and the Emancipation of the Untouchables*. Bombay: Thacker
5. Ambedkar, B. R. (1979), *Writings and Speeches 1*. Education Dept., Govt. of Maharashtra
6. Bob Jessop; Russell Wheatley (1999). *Karl Marx's Social and Political Thought*. Taylor & Francis US
7. Calhoun, Craig J. (2002). *Classical Sociological Theory*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
8. Coward, Harold G. (2003). *Indian Critiques of Gandhi*, SUNY Press.
9. Deliege, Robert. 1997, *The World of the Untouchables*. New York: Oxford UP,.
10. Dhanwan, S.K.(1991). *Dr. Ambedkar: A Select Profile*. Delhi: Wave.
11. Dr.B.R.Ambedkar, *Annihilation of Caste* <http://drambedkarbooks.wordpress.com/dr-b-r-ambedkar-books/>.
12. Gandhi, M. K. (1940). *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments With Truth* (2 ed.). Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House
13. Gandhi, R. (2006). *Mohandas: A True Story of a Man, His People, and an Empire*, New Delhi: Penguin-Viking
14. Ganguly, D. (2005). "Buddha, Bhakti and 'Superstition': A Post-Secular Reading of Dalit Conversion", *Caste, Colonialism and Counter-Modernity: Notes on a Postcolonial Hermeneutics of Caste*. Oxon: Routledge.
15. Gautam, C. (2000). *Life of Babasaheb Ambedkar*, London: Ambedkar Memorial Trust.
16. Garada. R. (2013). Beyond Structural-Functional Perspective: A Critical Heart Searching For Dalit, Tribal and Gender in Indian Sociology, *Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* Volume 16, Issue 6
17. Gautam,C.(2000). *Life of Babasaheb Ambedkar*, London: Ambedkar Memorial Trust

18. Gore, M.S. (1993). *The Social Context of an Ideology: Ambedkar's Political and Social Thought*, New Delhi: Sage
19. Gould, C.(1978). *Marx's Social Ontology: Individuality and Community in Marx's Theory of Social Reality*, Cambridge, Mass.
20. Green, M. B. (1986). *The Origins of Nonviolence: Tolstoy and Gandhi in their historical settings*, Pennsylvania State University Press
21. Habib, I. (2013). *The National Movement; Studies in Ideology And History*. Delhi: Tulika Books.
22. Haralambos, M, and Heald R.M. (2008), *Sociology-Themes and Perspectives*, Oxford University Press
23. Hardiman, David (2003). *Gandhi in His Time and Ours: The Global Legacy of His Ideas*. Columbia University Press
24. <http://www.themuslimtimes.org/2012/10/europe-and-australia/europe/karl-marx-what-relevance-does-he-have-for-our-times#ixzz3b5OBIJTw>
25. Ilaiah, K. (2009). *Post-Hindu India: A Discourse on Dalit-Bahujan, Socio-Spiritual and Scientific Revolution*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.
26. Ilaiah, K. (1996). *Why I am not a Hindu: A Sudra Critique of Hindutva Philosophy, Culture and Political Economy*. Calcutta: Samya. in *Their Historical Settings*. Pennsylvania State University Press.
27. Jack, Homer A. (1956), *the Gandhi Reader: A Sourcebook of His Life and Writings*, New York: Grove Press
28. Jaffrelot, C. (2005). *Ambedkar and Untouchability: Fighting the Indian Caste System*. New York: Columbia University Press.
29. Jain, J. (1987). *Gandhi, the forgotten Mahatma*, Delhi: Mittal Publications.
30. Jatava, D.R.(1997). *Dr. Ambedkar: Social Philosophy*, Jaipur: Rawat Publications,
31. Johnson, Richard L. (2006), *Gandhi's Experiments with Truth: Essential Writings by and about Mahatma Gandhi*, Lexington Books.
32. Jondhale, S. and J. Beltz (2004). *Reconstructing the World: B. R. Ambedkar and Buddhism in India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press
33. Kathrine S. N. and S. Thorat,(2007). "Caste and Economic Discrimination: Causes, Consequences and Remedies", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 42(41).
34. Keer, D. (1990). *Dr. Ambedkar: Life and Mission*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan
35. Kuber, W. N. (1 973), *Dr. Ambedkar: A Critical Study*. New Delhi: People's Publishing House.
36. Marx (1853)'*The British rule in India*', in *Marx and Engels*, Collected Works, Volume 12
37. Marx, K.(1975). "*The Poverty of Philosophy*" Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Volume 6, New York: International Publishers
38. Marx,K.(1975). "*Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*"Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Volume 3, New York:International Publishers
39. McCarney, J.(1990). *Social Theory and the Crisis of Marxism*,
40. McLellan, D. (1973) *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought*, Harper & Row
41. McLellan, D. (2006), *Karl Marx: A Biography (fourth edition)*, Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
42. Mehring, F. (2003), *Karl Marx: The Story of His Life*, London: Routledge
43. Michael, S. M.(2007). *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values*,Sage
44. Michael, S.M., (1999), ed. *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values*, New Delhi: Vistaar
45. Mishra, S.N. (2010). *Socio-Economic and Political Vision of Dr. B.R.Ambedkar*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company
46. New Delhi: Manohar,
47. Omvedt, G. (1995). *Dalit Visions: The Anti-Caste Movement and the Construction of an Indian Identity*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman Limited.
48. Omvedt, G. (2004). *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in colonial India*, New Delhi: Penguin
49. Parekh, Bhikhu C. (2001). *Gandhi: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
50. Puri, B.(2001). *Mahatma Gandhi and His Contemporaries*, Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study
51. Rajshekar, V.T. (1987). *Dalit: the Black Untouchables of India*, Clarity, Atlanta
52. Ram, Nandu, (2009), *Beyond Ambedkar: Essays on Dalits in India*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications
53. <http://www.themuslimtimes.org/2012/10/europe-and-australia/europe/karl-marx-what-relevance-does-he-have-for-our-times#ixzz3b5Obd9IR>
54. Roy, A.(2014). Doctor and the Saint: Ambedkar, Gandhi and the Battle Against Caste, *The Caravan. Journal of Politics and Culture*: Navayana
55. Roy, R.(2002). *Gandhi and Ambedkar Collision of Two Worldviews In Politics and Society: A New Perspective*, Delhi: Shipra Publication
56. Rubel, M. (1975). *Marx without Myth: A Chronological Study of His Life and Work*, Blackwell
57. Sankhdher, M. M. (1972). *Gandhism: A Political Interpretation*, Gandhi Marg,
58. Tejani, S. (2008) "From Untouchable to Hindu Gandhi, Ambedkar and Depressed class question 1932". *Indian secularism: a social and intellectual history, 1890-1950*. Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press.
59. Thorat, S. and N. Kumar, (2008). *B. R. Ambedkar: Perspectives on Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policies*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
60. Thorat,S.(2007). "Ambedkar's Interpretation of the Caste System, Its Economic Consequences and

Suggested Remedies" in S.M. Michael (ed.), *Dalits in Modern India: Vision and Values*

61. Tripathy, R. B., (1994). *Dalits: A Sub-Human Society*, N. Delhi: Ashish Publishing House,
62. Zelliott, E, (1992). *From Untouchable to Dalit: Essays on the Ambcdkar Movement*, New Dehli: Manohar
63. Zelliott, E.(2001). *From Untouchables to Dalit*. New Dehli: Manohar

ARTICLE



Gandhian Inversion of Modern Political Perception

Ramin Jahanbegloo

Submitted: November 2010

Accepted: December 2010

Published: May 2011



Abstract

The core of Gandhi's theory of politics is to show that the citizen is the true political subject and not the state. In other words, in Gandhi's mind the citizen was always above the state. As such, the political subject's decision on sovereignty becomes, for Gandhi, the true subject of political sovereignty. As a result, the Gandhian moment of politics is an effort to de-theologise and de-secularise the concept of modern politics as presented by the omnipotent sovereign of Thomas Hobbes. His ideas on ethics in politics lead Gandhi to criticise Hobbesian political authority and to disobey the state and its laws beyond the principle of fear. Gandhi's political practice is based on the taming of this fear.



Keywords

nonviolence, politics, peace culture, conflict resolution

"His physical body has left us and we shall never see him again or hear his gentle voice or run to him for counsel. But his imperishable memory and immortal message remain with us."

Jawaharlal Nehru

Everyone knows the central ontological question: Why is there being, being rather than nothing? But there is another central philosophical question which the human race has been unable to answer: Why is there violence, violence rather than nonviolence?

Why is there so much violence in the world today? Terrorism, religious and ethnic communalism, environmental deterioration, increased economic bankruptcies and the expansion of international hostilities – all of these point to a world of global challenges and multiple threats. It is clear that in such a world, plagued by violence, we urgently need strong ethical thinking which insists on applying fundamental ethical principles in interactions between individuals and between nations and to change the war-fostering political reality. At a time when humankind is confronted with clashes of national interest, religious fundamentalism

and ethnic and racial prejudices, nonviolence can be the well-trusted means of laying the groundwork for a new cosmopolitics.

Many continue to believe that nonviolence is an ineffective instrument against dictatorships and genocide. However in the last few decades, many democratic initiatives, based on nonviolent militancy and an affirmation of human rights to help build global civil society on solid ethical foundations, could be associated with a kind of neo-Gandhian quest for peace and justice. Never in the history of the human race has nonviolence been so crucial. Nonviolence has recently evolved from a simple tactic of resistance to a cosmopolitical aim based on international application of the principles of democracy. Over the past three decades, the repercussions of global terrorism, human rights violations and environmental degradation have highlighted the need for politics of nonviolence at the global level to best deal with these problems. Global politics of nonviolence, therefore, is the task not only of governments but also of civil society, and intergovernmental, non-governmental and transnational organisations. Most importantly, the international community has the moral



obligation and duty to intervene in countries if they slide into lawlessness and cannot protect citizens from violations of human rights. Only a nonviolent society can work its way up to create institutions for development and foster inter-cultural and inter-religious harmony. In a century where terror conditions the life and mentality of at least two-thirds of humanity and violence influences our everyday culture, we cannot continue with the ostrich policy – no longer asking “whose responsibility is it?”

It would be folly to expect nonviolence to become effective and durable while the majority still thinks of politics in terms of the use of violence. It is true that, as Karl Jaspers affirmed: “In morality, moral conviction is decisive, in politics it is success.” But it is also true that there is no long-term success in politics in the absence of morality. Thus, the political is dependent on the “over-political,” which remains independent from politics. If politics does not remain dependent on the “over-political,” it may end in ruin.

That is to say, political events bring moral responsibilities, and in turn, ethical views leave their imprint on political decisions. Politics without ethics is pure exercise of power. It is only in relation with ethics that politics can be elevated to a public virtue. Terrible crimes have been committed by political practices that tried to teach and impose moral behaviour. Spiritualising politics, as Gandhi understood, is not about moralising it, but is an effort to redefine it in terms of civic responsibility in an explicit public sphere. Politics is the morally conscientious and socially responsible exercise of civic roles: nonviolence is the key to this. When we examine where we are today, given the politics and technology of violence, we can only conclude that we live in a world with no wisdom. The time has come for humanity to renew its commitment, politically, economically, and culturally to the Gandhian moment of politics.

During his lifetime, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi became a world citizen. Out of his native Gujarat and later through experiments in England and South Africa, he emerged as an original hero into the public realm of national and international visibility – a hero destined to lead his people and nation out of the bitter experience of colonial oppression into a new era of independence and freedom. Somehow Gandhi remains easier to manage and explain to future generations as an Indian hero, if we forget his criticism of modern civilisation and his search for the democratisation of modernity that had already begun in 1909 with the publication of *Hind Swaraj*. As such, evoking the powerful originality of a Gandhian moment of politics means paying acute attention to the vital and global manifestation of the democratic hope that Gandhi

represented. He had the powerful determination to identify his life and his leadership with the cause of nonviolence, called for the spiritualisation of politics and revolutionary transformation of religious and political institutions in India, and attempted to unite the elites and the masses in India and organise them into a visionary nonviolent force. These are all significant manifestations of Gandhian pluralist thinking and creation of democracy. Perhaps, then, the Gandhian moment needs to be dissociated from all attempts to manage, market or domesticate the memory of Mahatma Gandhi. With the end of the first decade of the 21st century, we need to stop holding Gandhi captive to his most amenable history so that he might help us break free and move toward a future as intercultural communities of creativity and dialogue.

Gandhi once said, “There is no hope for the aching world except through the narrow and straight path of non-violence.”¹ If we want to reap the harvest of dialogical coexistence in the future, we have to sow seeds of nonviolence. Sixty years after Gandhi’s death, we face a choice: either forge a peaceful human community in a plural world by speaking and acting to increase human solidarity, or preserve and extend the divide between communities and cultures by promoting religious and cultural prejudices and creating conflict and violence. Gandhi came to believe that the future of our global civilisation on this vulnerable globe was dependent on our ability to live together in harmony, tolerance and peace. Though he fired the spirit of nationalism and gave a clarion call to his countrymen to join him in the liberation of the motherland, Gandhi saw no difference in being a patriot and serving humanity. “Through the realisation of freedom of India,” he said, “I hope to realise and carry on the mission of brotherhood of men.”² As such, Gandhi’s search for human solidarity and intercultural dialogue was an effort to narrow the gap between the logic of “we” and “they” while seeking, revealing and displaying many voices in Indian society and around the world who expressed this common aspiration for solidarity and mutuality in all its facets: ethical, spiritual, social, economic and political. Evidently, making sense of a plural world by cutting across various boundaries posed theoretical and practical challenges for Gandhi.

Gandhi’s real challenge was to make politics and religion truthful by creating a dialogical bridge between the two. According to him, the process of fostering individual freedom and social harmony was only possible through the spiritualisation of politics and reintegration of politics within ethics. As such, Gandhi described his conception of true citizenship as “the reign of self-imposed law of moral restraint.”³ In fact, it was not the morals of a sectarian

1 Quoted in Thomas Merton (ed.) (1965), *Gandhi on Non-Violence*. New York: New Directions, p. 74.

2 *Young India*, 14 April 1929

3 M.K. Gandhi (1956). *Towards Everlasting Peace* (ed. A.T. Hingorani). Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, p. 217.



religion that, according to Gandhi, were to be fused with politics, but what Gandhi called “the highest moral law.” He referred to the two sides of his ethics as truth and non-violence. Moreover, he described a moral action as “a matter of duty” and rejected any action which was “promoted by hope of happiness in the next world.”⁴ Not surprisingly, Gandhi frequently expressed his deep conviction that politics and religion were inextricably interlinked and that their separation resembled the separation of body and blood. Unlike those in India and around the world who believed that religion and social amelioration could not unite, Gandhi refused to consider the spiritual and secular ideals as opposite poles.

Mahatma Gandhi was different from most of the spiritual giants of India such as Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo. Mahatma Gandhi put nonviolence as an absolute factor, an absolute imperative; but this was not always the case with other spiritual leaders. Sri Aurobindo, for example, used passive resistance as a means in the struggle for independence, but he was not an ardent champion of the doctrine of nonviolence. Gandhi, however, was greatly inspired by the spiritualistic nationalism of some of these gurus. He stated that Vivekananda’s influence increased his “love for his country a thousand-fold.” But Gandhi’s religion was not confined to temples, churches, books, rituals and other outer forms. It was closely related to the social and political realms. Gandhi was in this respect one of the few spiritual thinkers of his generation to also be a political leader. He once said that meditation and worship were not exclusive things to be kept locked up in a strongbox, but they must be seen in our every act.⁵ Surprisingly, what made Gandhi’s thinking unusual in a secular age was his conviction that secular politics and spiritual ethics could be harmonious. He was bold enough to consider both paradigms of politics and religion outside their traditional conceptual framework.

It was the unique achievement to invert the Hobbesian approach to politics as a universal desire for self-preservation. Gandhi essentially replaced the Hobbesian security paradigm of politics, which raises the question of the state as a political agent responsible for implementing the requirements of human security, with his own paradigm of human solidarity. Accordingly, Gandhi’s project of spiritualising politics through nonviolent action has the twin objectives of bringing about a truly democratic transformation of society and thereby securing an ethical social order. Politics, for Gandhi, was the search for the ethical, and the bare fact of surviving with the help of a sovereign was of no value to him.

Gandhi’s grammar of politics, therefore, was neither juridical nor technological and he adopted a new concept of society as a sphere of relationships of solidarity. He was quite aware of the fact that the search for human solidarity was not the same as seeking a social contract out of pragmatic self-interest. Gandhi, unlike Hobbes, did not view free society as a choice made by selfish people seeking to escape the confrontation of each against all others. For Gandhi, humans are not governed by their passions, but by their sense of self-restraint and self-suffering. “I have found,” he wrote, “that mere appeal to reason does not answer where prejudices are age-long and based on supposed religious authority. Reason has to be strengthened by suffering.”⁶ He went on to distinguish between “self-suffering” and “violence” and developed the idea that self-suffering is a proof of courage and truthfulness in nonviolent action. According to Gandhi, “Suffering is the law of human beings; war is the law of the jungle. But suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason... Suffering is the badge of the human race, not the sword.”⁷ This Gandhian idea of “self-suffering” may be looked upon as open recognition of the idea of interdependence and mutuality among social beings if one understands how Gandhi tried to explain what he meant by *sarvodaya* or “welfare of all.”

As for his politics, Gandhi’s idea of service to fellow human beings is a negation of the utilitarian principle of the “greatest good for the greatest possible number,” which leaves no place for moral empathy and social self-sacrifice. Gandhi’s emphasis on self-sacrifice and the capacity for service among human beings led him to criticise modern civilisation, which, according to him, had the pursuit of power, wealth, and pleasure as its predominant goals. A civilisation as such, which referred to itself as modern, did not take heed of morality as a stepping stone and guiding force for the construction of society. Consequently, Gandhi described what he considered “true civilisation” not as a linear progression of human kind, but rather as “good conduct” or a good way of life. In Gandhi’s native Gujarati language, the word *sudharo* (civilisation) as opposed to *kudharo* (barbarism), implied that there is a higher mode of a conduct which leads to a better path of duty. This is important to note because duty has the connotation of a responsibility that is to endure under all circumstances, and it is duty that assists us in striving towards better conduct towards each other.

Gandhi saw a true civilisation as one that could attain the universal principles of morality. If a society was

4 M.K. Gandhi (1922). *Ethical Religion*. Madras: S.Ganesan, pp. 8-11.

5 *Harijan*, 20 April 1935.

6 *Young India*, March 1925.

7 Quoted in Thomas Pantham (1983). “Thinking with Mahatma: Beyond Liberal Democracy”, *Political Theory*, vol.11, No. 2, May, p. 180.



not built on the foundations of ethics or morality, it would not be sustainable. Gandhi was deeply concerned with the moral and spiritual alienation of mankind, and his criticism of modernity and his approach of greater human solidarity to the problem of politics have to be seen in the context of this fundamental question. However, two questions remained for Gandhi: first, how does one go about emancipating civilisation from the maladies it produces? And second, how is a civilisation based on ethics and morality built? The answers to these questions can be found in Gandhi's major work entitled *Hind Swaraj*, in which he attempted to reconcile the question of Indian nationalism with his theoretical vision of civilisation. It was through the usage of his conceptual trinity of *swaraj*, *satyagraha* and *swadeshi* that Gandhi sought to reconcile, both practically and theoretically, the ailment of modern civilisation with a more sustainable and truer form of civilisation.

The first of the trinity was *swaraj*, or self-rule. Gandhi believed in a political community that included self-institution and self-rule as its foundations, leading to the growth of a truer moral civilisation and a common understanding of mutuality. In Gandhi's mind, *swaraj* would bring about social transformation through small-scale, decentralised, self-organised and self-directed participatory structures of governance. The second, *satyagraha*, or truth-force, involved voluntary suffering in the process of resisting evil. As has been explained by Joan V. Bondurant, "*Satyagraha* became something more than a method of resistance to particular legal norms; it became an instrument of struggle for positive objectives and for fundamental change." The third part of the trinity, *swadeshi*, or self-sufficiency, was considered by Gandhi as a way to improve economic conditions in India through the revival of domestic-made products and production techniques. As *swaraj* laid stress on self-governance through individuals and community building, *swadeshi* underlined the spirit of neighbourliness. As for *satyagraha*, it emphasised the principle that the whole purpose of an encounter with the unjust was not to win the confrontation, but to win over the heart and mind of the "enemy." Gandhi, therefore, believed that no true self-government could be achieved if there was no reform of the individual.

On this premise, Gandhi argued that the modern state as an institution was enmeshed in violence. Gandhi's criticism was not limited to the particular colonial state he was opposing, but was aimed at the fundamental rationale of the modern sovereign state itself. The key to this was, of course, the connection between political and moral sovereignty. As such, Gandhi believed that the centre of gravity of modern politics needed to be shifted back from the idea of material power and wealth to righteousness and truthfulness. In his

criticism of modernity, Gandhi saw modern civilisation as promoting ideals of power and wealth that were based on individual self-centeredness and causing the loss of community bonds that were contrary to the moral and spiritual common good (*dharma*). Therefore, as in the Hindu concept of *purusharthas*, meaning objectives of a human being, Gandhi advocated a life of balance, achievement and fulfilment. Ultimately in Gandhi's political philosophy the two concepts of self-government and self-sufficiency are tied into his political ideal of *Rama Rajya*, the sovereignty of people based on pure moral authority.

For Gandhi, therefore, politics is a constant self-realisation, self-reflection and self-reform within the individual. It is a process of self-rule through which citizens are able to contribute to the betterment of the community. Thus it goes without saying that Gandhi's nonviolence presupposes spiritual solidarity. Contrary to those who claim that Gandhi was a reactionary, it should be noted that his criticism of modern civilisation did not mean a return to the past. It was actually a move forward in human moral progress. Clearly Gandhi not only saw the need for fundamental change in the modern world but even recognised its inevitability. That is why his ideas have inspired people around the world, among them Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr. and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. King came to realise that Gandhi was the first person in history to re-invent the Christian ethic of love as "a potent instrument for social and collective transformation". It was then a short journey to unreserved acceptance of the Gandhian technique of nonviolence as the only viable means to overcome the problems faced by his people. Both King's and Gandhi's life-practices challenge our politics today: they represent a different image of human enlightenment, one that our world of violence direly needs as a method of reform.

These are truly interesting times to rethink a Gandhian moment of politics as a moral exercise of power. This is where the Gandhian spiritual approach to politics can be distinguished from the process of politicisation of politics and fundamentalist approaches to religion. Far from being utopian, the Gandhian approach can be seen as an ethical basis for the evaluation of existing political practices in today's world. As King once affirmed, "Timid supplication for justice will not solve the problem. We've got to confront the power structure massively."⁸ In Gandhi's mind, democratising politics meant not only ending British colonialism but also taking nonviolent action on coercive power relations and unjust social structures. For him, the stability of human civilisation, the democratic potential of a community and the moral dignity of individuals depended on challenging the evils of the growing gap between the haves and

8 *The Washingtonian*, February 1968, p.53, quoted in James Echols (ed.), *I Have a Dream: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Future of Multicultural America*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, p. 19.



the have-nots. Therein lies the ultimate finality and power of the Gandhian moment. It was not just Gandhi's dream for India; it is a vision for humankind, with the powerful presence of the future for democratising modernity.

Basically speaking, if we are to recognise that we are in a new era where politics can be defined essentially as reducing violence and therefore creating the passage from hostility to hospitality, we must recognise that the Gandhian view of politics is not merely "the other possibility" for our world, but "the possibility realised in the first instance."⁹ Furthermore, violence always remains, but as the Gandhian movement shows us, those who choose nonviolence must also make the effort to redefine and reconstruct politics as the transmutation of violence. For this reason, nonviolence is politics' point of departure, as well as its final goal. History bears witness, and everyday experience confirms that to make violence a political right and a moral duty is essentially a mistake. But it is also a mistake when politics becomes a vehicle for violence as soon as it is not founded on the ethical imperatives of solidarity and reciprocity. As such, nonviolence is the cornerstone of citizenship as a space of empowerment and self-government. That is why Gandhi believed in the exercise of active citizenship for a more enlightened and mature form of democracy. By this he meant that the success of democracy depends on its dialogical nature. The very essence of democracy, then, is the dialogue of citizens among themselves and the success of democracy is therefore the success of this dialogue. Therefore, the breakdown of dialogue always means a breakdown of democracy and the failure of the very foundations of the body politic.

Violence is liable to present itself as the ultimate means of expression of the anti-political. At the same time, we must understand this violence as an absence of a human environment that can foster the culture of tolerance and mutual respect. As we can see from the experience of nonviolence around the world in the past sixty years, the Gandhian idea only achieves its full existence when it is made flesh in exemplary human actions like those of King, Mandela and Tutu. Assuredly, prophetic nonviolent action is not easy in a time when the ultimate manifestation of power is military prowess. The Gandhian approach has political power because it is not just a dream, but an ethical

vision. Ethical vision can be used to evaluate, to criticise, to guide, and to transform global citizenship to a civic movement of duty and responsibility. The Gandhian moment of politics is innovative and transformative, and not simply a calculation of static interest or balance of power. What it has shown us over the past sixty years, through different experiments with nonviolence around the world, is that we are not condemned to thinking about politics in purely strategic terms or as a mere mechanism to guarantee rights. The story of Gandhian nonviolence as a conscious political idea shows us how the act of negotiating relationships in a context of politicised divergences and differences pulls all parties, the strong and the weak, to an acknowledgment of a form of mutuality and solidarity with immediate ethical consequences. As such, the Gandhian moment of politics supports the civic capacity of citizens to redefine politics in relation to its explicit commonality, its feature of mutuality and a long-term guiding feature of a just society. Furthermore, it is not only about the value of engagement in public life, but also an ethos of a common world.

A final observation: today, the retreat of politics presents us with new and urgent problems. This retreat has led to outbreaks of great intolerance and violence. To reassert the primary value of politics as the civic capacity for mutuality and reciprocity, the Gandhian moment of politics can undoubtedly play a crucial role in pluralist sensitivity of civilisation. Gandhi's work and action make it clear that, while civilisation is rendered in the plural, its significant opposite remains the unethical feature of modernity. Gandhi equated the limits of ethics with the limits of civilisation. Moreover, he tried to reconstruct the grammar of civilisation by overcoming the social and political problems of violence. What is unique and innovative about the Gandhian approach is its capacity to make the idea of politics intelligible and appealing as a sphere of self-realisation and recognition of the other. That is to say, it demonstrates the alternative possibilities embedded within nonviolent tradition while revealing to future socio-political actors of nonviolence the basic conception of human solidarity and emancipative transformation. ■

■ Cited Works

ECHOLS, J. (ed.) (2004). *I Have a Dream: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Future of Multicultural America*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press. P. 19.

GANDHI, M. K. (1922). *Ethical Religion*. Madras: S. Ganesan. Pp. 8-11

⁹ This expression is from the French philosopher Eric Weil in his book *Logique de la Philosophie*, Paris: Vrin, 1967, p. 69.



GANDHI, M. K. (1956). *Towards Everlasting Peace* (ed. A.T. Hingorani). Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. P. 217.

Harijan (20 April 1935).

MERTON, T. (ed.) (1965). *Gandhi on Non-Violence: A Selection from the Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*. New York: New Directions. P. 74.

PANTHAM, T. (1983). "Thinking with Mahatma: Beyond Liberal Democracy". *Political Theory*. Vol. 11, No. 2, May, p.180.

The Washingtonian (February 1968), p.53.

WEIL, E. (1967). *Logique de la Philosophie*. Paris: Vrin. P. 69.

Young India (March 1925).

Young India (14 April 1929).

Recommended citation

JAHANBEGLOO, Ramin (2011). "Gandhian Inversion of Modern Political Perception" [online article]. *Journal of Conflictology*. Vol. 2, Iss. 1. Campus for Peace, UOC. [Consulted: dd/mm/yy].

<<http://www.uoc.edu/ojs/index.php/journal-of-conflictology/article/view/vol2iss1-jahanbegloo> /vol2iss1-jahanbegloo >

ISSN 2013-8857



This work is subject to a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivative-Works 3.0 Spain licence. It may be copied, distributed and broadcasted provided that the author and the source (*Journal of Conflictology*) are cited. Commercial use and derivative works are not permitted. The full licence can be consulted at: <<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/3.0/es/deed.en>>

About the author

Ramin Jahanbegloo
ramin.jahanbegloo@utoronto.ca

Ramin Jahanbegloo is an Iranian-Canadian philosopher. He received his BA and MA in Philosophy, History and Political Science and later his PhD in Philosophy from the University of Sorbonne. He has worked as a lecturer and researcher at the Academy of Philosophy in Tehran, at the French Institute for Iranian Studies, at Harvard University, University of Toronto and at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, India.



**CAMPUS
FOR PEACE**



PEACE & WORK

GLOBAL THOUGHT AND LOCAL ACTION FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE

SEPTEMBER
2006

VOL. 33
ISSUE 368

\$3



Kate Donnelly-Colt cradles Cal Donnelly-Colt at a nonviolent blockade of Wall Street in New York to protest exploitation and militarism, November 19, 1984. Photo: © Ellen Shub

**Special
Issue:
100
Years of
Gandhian
Nonviolent
Action**

**Featuring:
Gandhi,
Bacic,
Starhawk,
Einstein,
King,
Orwell, &
Sheehan**



Peacework is published monthly except August and January by the New England Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC); phone: 617/661-6130; fax: 617/354-2832; pwork@igc.org; www.afsc.org/peacework. Views expressed are those of the authors, not necessarily of the AFSC. Periodicals postage paid at Boston, MA and additional locations. Postmaster: Send address changes to Peacework, AFSC, 2161 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, MA 02140.

Published since 1972, *Peacework* serves movements for nonviolent social change, particularly in the Northeast, by covering social justice and peace issues in a way that links grassroots work with national and international perspectives. The work of the AFSC is rooted in the spiritual insights of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). Since 1917 the AFSC has worked with people of many religious and ethical traditions to affirm the dignity and promise of every individual, to relieve the suffering of war and poverty, to foster peace and reconciliation, and to promote social justice.

Subscriptions are: Regular, \$23; student/low-income, \$14; prisoners, \$1; Mexico and Canada, \$25; overseas, \$40. Two-year rates, respectively: \$40, \$25, \$1.50 (no two-year rates for international subscriptions).

In addition to our web page where current issues are posted, *Peacework* is available in microform from UMI, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106; 800/521-0600, and on tape from the Braille and Talking Book Library, Perkins School for the Blind, 175 N. Beacon St., Watertown, MA 02172; 617/924-3434. *Peacework* is a member of the Independent Press Association, an organization of independent periodical publishers in North America. ISSN: 0748-0725.

Editorial material in *Peacework* is published under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/2.5/>) unless otherwise specified. Readers are invited to submit brief items for the "Pieces" section, as well as letters to the editor. Query before submitting longer articles. Contributions are subject to editing.

Staff: Sara Burke, Sam Diener (Co-Editors) Volunteers: Michael Berger, Mark Bramble, Larry Dansinger, John Fuller, Jamie Munro, Valerie Sperling, Doug Healy, Alyson Lie, Dave Taber

Nov. 2006 issue deadline: October 6

From the Editor's Desk

"In 1921, Gandhi made it clear that he had no desire to found a sect. He added, 'I am really too ambitious to be satisfied with a sect for a following.' Sixteen years later Gandhi asked his followers to forget him on his passing, to 'cleave not to my name but cleave to the principles [of truth and nonviolence].'"

— Tom Weber, Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research

In his playfully humble egotism, Mohandas Gandhi was quite honest. Gandhi was indeed ambitious, endeavoring to change the historical rules which had governed politics and social change worldwide for millennia: in particular the basic rule which dictated that armed force makes the rules.

Among the revolutions that Gandhi endeavored to undertake in his lifetime were the recognition of immigrant rights in South Africa, the abolition of war, the mobilization of millions to nonviolently decolonize India and the rest of the world, the transformation of religions into a force for peace, the empowerment of village-based political and economic self-determination, the end of a centuries-old caste system, the inclusion of women as equal participants in politics, the transformation of village sanitation systems, and the redefinition of the struggle for mutual understanding as a valuable aspect of human existence.

Some may claim that the "war on terror," and the cycles of violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Israel-Palestine, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Sudan, and Uganda, among other places, are proof that Gandhi failed. The politics of violence still inflict untold suffering on millions of people each year.

And yet: South Africa did change its immigration rules, in 1914. In the decades that followed, the apartheid regimes in the US and South Africa were overthrown mainly by nonviolent action; scores of countries have been liberated by nonviolent insurrections; India banned the caste system (though it persists); a global feminist movement challenges male domination and violence worldwide; and millions of people and thousands of non-governmental organizations have been mobilized to almost double the average human life-expectancy, largely through improved sanitation.

Most issues of *Peacework* are filled with contemporary accounts of these struggles: stories about resisting war, feminist organizing, public health campaigns, struggling for social justice, speaking out for political freedom, working for economic democracy, and creating ecological alternatives. In this special expanded edition, we decided to take a longer view.

On the fifth anniversary of the murder of thousands of civilians and military personnel on September 11, 2001, we knew there would be endless re-hashing of the politics of violence in the corporate media. But September 11 is also the date when Mohandas Gandhi began his first campaign of nonviolent direct action, 100 years ago. What if we used this moment to critically reflect on 100 years of Gandhian nonviolent action?

In the first part of this issue: survivors of violence from around the world will converge in the week before September 11th to declare an alternative: the politics of reconciliation. Dave Taber reminds us to keep a historical focus when remembering victims of terror attacks. Jack DuVall sets the stage by chronicling the rise of People Power worldwide (a theme echoed towards the end of this issue by Fred Fay's and Fred Pelka's tribute to disability rights activist Justin Dart, and by Bill Quigley's account of the aftermath of Katrina one year on). The Mayor of Asheville proclaims September 11 as a day for peace, and the poet E. Ethelbert Miller alerts us to the dangers and importance of becoming allies for each other in the face of racist backlash.

Gandhi's 1906 speech initiates a large section of articles analyzing Gandhi's multiple legacies: his family, historical perspectives, analyses from around the world, assessments of his spiritual mission, and perspectives about how we may learn to abolish war and usher in social justice. Lederach's article describing the value of replacing the term "conflict resolution" with "conflict transformation" speaks to Gandhi's efforts to redefine conflict itself as something we could embrace. We also include critiques of Gandhi's work and philosophy; essays which challenge us to cleave, not to Gandhi's name, but to the principles of nonviolence, of struggling firmly and gently towards truth, he so successfully championed. ☪

Sam Diener — Sam Diener, Co-Editor

CONTENTS: SEPTEMBER 2006

Transforming Personal Grief into Global Healing: Survivors of Violence Converge to Advocate Peace	4	India's Women's Peace Corps Embodying Gandhi's Idea for a Peace Army	18
by David Potorti		by Krishna Mallick	
<i>Each of us has been personally affected by violence yet has rejected the idea of retaliating with further violence.</i>		<i>In the age of the atom bomb, unadulterated nonviolence is the only force that can confound all the tricks of violence.</i>	
September 11th: Commemorating Resistance to Terrorism Throughout History	6	Gandhi's Insights Gave People Courage to Defy Chile's Dictatorship	20
by Dave Taber		by Roberta Bacic	
<i>Also remember: "witch" burnings, a massacre by Mormon militia, Gandhi's first campaign, Attica, the coup in Chile, and Biko.</i>		<i>We suffered twice: first enduring the pain of the dictatorship's violence, and second the anguish of keeping silent out of fear.</i>	
Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth Day	7	Globalizing Nonviolence in an African Context	21
by Richard Fireman and Kim Carlyle		by Matt Meyer	
<i>The mayor of Asheville, NC declared September 11 a day to reflect on the meaning of justice, peace, and nonviolent conflict resolution.</i>		<i>Globalizing nonviolence in Africa must mean a sharing of skills, resources, and training techniques.</i>	
Looking for Omar	7	Gandhi's Constructive Program — and Ours	22
by E. Ethelbert Miller		by Joanne Sheehan	
<i>I'm trapped in the middle of one of those Bible stories — but it ain't Sunday.</i>		<i>It is easier to protest the things we don't like than to build the things we want.</i>	
People Power as Gandhi's Enduring Legacy	8	An Odyssey with Gandhi	23
by Jack DuVall		by David Cortright	
<i>Where commands are no longer obeyed, the means of violence are of no use.</i>		<i>My commitment to peace and Gandhian nonviolence began when I was drafted into the Army.</i>	
Mohandas Gandhi's Call for Mass Defiance of Anti-Immigrant Legislation	9	Gandhi's Spiritual Revolution Lives	24
by Mohandas Gandhi		Claire Schaeffer-Duffy interviews Arya Bhushan Bhardwaj	
<i>So long as there is even a handful of us true to our pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.</i>		<i>Was Gandhi a Gandhian? Was Buddha a Buddhist? Was Christ a Christian?</i>	
Gandhi's Prisoner: Manilal Gandhi as Son and South African Dissident	10	A Pacifist Critique of Gandhi	25
Goolam Vahed reviews <i>Gandhi's Prisoner?</i> :		by Sam Diener	
<i>The Life of Gandhi's Son Manilal</i> by Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie		<i>Gandhi was at times sexist, racist, and perhaps not a pacifist.</i>	
Practicing Nonviolence: An Interview with Arun Gandhi	12	Defining Conflict Transformation	26
Sam Diener interviews Arun Gandhi		by John Paul Lederach	
<i>Anger isn't evil. It's not something to be ashamed of — be ashamed only of abusing anger.</i>		<i>Conflict can be understood as the motor of change.</i>	
Reclaiming Nonviolence from Gandhian Puritanism	14	Four Principles for Organizing in a Post-Katrina World	28
by Starhawk		by Bill Quigley	
<i>We can learn from suffering — if we are truly going to change the world, we probably can't avoid it — but let's not venerate it.</i>		<i>Can our hearts stay open to both tragedy and hope?</i>	
Einstein, Orwell, and King Comment on Gandhi	16	A Revolution of Empowerment: Honoring Disability Rights Activist Justin Dart, Jr.	29
by Albert Einstein, George Orwell, and Martin Luther King		by Fred Fay and Fred Pelka	
<i>Gandhi has done more than any other person in history to reveal that social problems can be solved without methods of violence.</i>		<i>Dart defined Gandhi's message as, "Find your own truth, and then live it."</i>	
Nonviolent Peaceforce:		Pieces: Events, Gatherings, Opportunities, Resources, Campaigns	30
What to say YES to when we say NO to War	17	A Declaration of Peace: Protest to End the War	31
by Donna Howard		Weaving in Traffic	32
<i>We come into conflicts as partners of local peacemakers, hoping to keep them alive long enough to do their work.</i>		by Craig Swanson	
		<i>The mantle was passed from 1st century India, to the US in the 1800s, to early 20th century India, and back again to 1950s US.</i>	

Transforming Personal Grief into Global Healing: Survivors of Violence Converge to Advocate Peace

David Potorti is the Director of September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows.

We all had choices to make after September 11th, 2001. Whether or not you lost family or friends, whether you were overcome by anger, fear, or compassion, whether your view of the world was rearranged or reinforced, how you chose to live your life after “everything changed” shaped the collective future of our nation and our world. It was truly a “kairos moment,” a time of crisis that could be seized in a life-giving way, or ridden into a greater crisis.

For those of us who founded September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows, the direction we chose was consistent with our values, and grew out of who we were. We met in November of 2001 during a symbolic walk linking the Pentagon and the site of the World Trade Center organized by Kathy Kelly and the staff of Voices in the Wilderness (now Voices for Creative Nonviolence, www.vcnv.org). We took to the streets with our small truth because we rejected the idea of bombing Afghanistan as a response to the attacks of 9/11. We did not want the losses our families had experienced — like the loss of my brother, Jim Potorti, at the World Trade Center — to be duplicated among the civilians in Afghanistan.

And though only a handful of us did the walking, we were in good company: a poll taken only days after the September attacks showed that nearly half of Americans did not support the bombing if it would mean significant Afghan civilian casualties. Even then, with fires still burning at the World Trade Center site, there was a human impulse among Americans to align themselves with their peers on the other side of the world, those who had suffered for years under the Taliban and would continue to suffer under a new bombing campaign.

These qualms were a good sign, and one reason why I remember the days after 9/11 as “the good old days,” a time when anything was possible, a moment when the whole world could have come together in common cause against precisely the kind of brutality that now has the world in flames. Then as now, it was all about choices.

Our walk received very little press back in November of 2001, but enough so that a temporary email address we set up came to the attention of the founder of the Parents’ Circle, Yitzhak Frankenthal. He had lost his son, Arik, to a Hamas kidnapping and murder. Believing that he had “failed his son because there was no peace,” he decided to gather together family members of those killed by *any* side in the cycle of violence between Israelis and Palestinians to seek together for an end to the cycle. Yitzhak emailed us in December to express common cause with our mission, and I remember his outreach being another good sign, a blip of life and compassion that echoed on our radar screen to let us know that we were not alone.

Some of those who would go on to found Peaceful Tomorrows visited their civilian counterparts in Afghanistan in January, 2002 in a delegation organized by Global Exchange and in so doing cemented the value of what might be called person-to-person diplomacy. Our delegation learned that while many reporters on the ground in Afghanistan had written articles about civilian casualties of the US bombing campaign, getting them printed at that “patriotic” time was another story. That task became much easier when those casualties could be described in the context of meetings between Afghan families and US citizens who had suffered loss on 9/11. Speaking engagements outside our borders made us aware that the face of America seen around

the world was the face of President Bush. The idea that there were other faces — and other viewpoints — elicited a sigh of relief from many around the world.

When we launched Peaceful Tomorrows as an organization on Valentine’s Day of 2002, we based our name on Martin Luther King’s observation, “Wars are poor chisels for carving out peaceful tomorrows.” The Japanese media took a special interest. Thanks to that coverage, we were contacted by the Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, which asked if we, as the survivors of those killed on 9/11, might host a delegation of *hibakusha*, atomic bomb survivors, in a visit to the World Trade Center site.

We hosted the *hibakusha* in April of 2002, shortly after my brother’s remains from the World Trade Center had been positively identified by DNA testing. That morning I visited the NY Medical Examiner’s office where I learned about the size of the bone fragment that had been recovered, and the blunt force trauma that had created it. I stood under a white tent outside the office, where there were a number of refrigerated trailers, and paid my respects to the trailer that held his remains. Then I walked to the World Trade Center site and joined the *hibakusha*, who almost 60 years earlier had been targeted so violently by our government



Delegation of *hibakusha*, atomic bombing survivors, at the Nuclear Freeze rally of 800,00 people in New York City, June 12, 1982. © Ellen Shub

and had survived the maelstrom, nursing enduring wounds, only to dedicate the rest of their lives to calling for the elimination of all nuclear weapons. It was a powerful leap of solidarity across time. Though we as a nation had hurt them so terribly, it was the *hibakusha* who came to us, the 9/11 family members, to extend their sympathy and to stand with us in solidarity. It was another connection, another realization that what we were doing was resonating with others.

As Peaceful Tomorrows grew, other connections followed. Jo Berry, who had lost her father to an IRA bomb, later arranged to meet the man who planted the bomb, in an effort to understand the sources of violence. Today, Berry runs an organization called Building Bridges for Peace. She sent a message of support that touched all of us in the early days of our organization.

Father Michael Lapsley, who had supported the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and had lost his hands to a letter bomb delivered by the government, met one of our founders, Colleen Kelly, on a post-9/11 panel in New York City. In 2004, another Peaceful Tomorrows member, Andrew Rice, participated in a "Healing of Memories" workshop led by Lapsley on Robben Island, marking the tenth anniversary of democracy in South Africa. The visit had particular significance for Rice, who lost his brother David at the World Trade Center. David Rice had studied as a Fulbright Scholar in South Africa in 1996.

Lapsley grew to become another spiritual advisor to our new group, and in 2005 joined us in Oklahoma City for commemorations marking the tenth anniversary of the Murrah Federal Building bombing. Conversations captured that weekend became the Peaceful Tomorrows DVD, *Beyond Retribution*, in which participants who lost loved ones to war and terrorism in Oklahoma City, on September 11, 2001, and in Iraq talked about methods for coping with our pain by transcending the urge for vengeance.

The support of others around the world has been critical to our ability to continue our work. If those who have suffered so terribly, and have lived under oppressive conditions that put them face to face with injustice and violence for long periods of time, could remain true to their values and find a way to focus on a struggle bigger than

their own, then surely people in the US, many of us surrounded by comfort and relative security, could find a similar place in our hearts to conduct peace work. We found ourselves returning the favor by reaching out to those who were suffering as a result of other terrorist incidents and the backlash to these attacks — family members and survivors of the Bali nightclub bombing, immigrants suffering hate crimes, civilians in Iraq who lost loved ones to the US bombing campaign, those who had lost family members to the train bombings in Spain and Britain. In doing so, we learned that we have much in common.

The Bush administration makes constant references to "dangerous people" in "dangerous parts of the world." Wouldn't it be better to focus on brave, visionary people in dangerous parts of the world, people who have risen above their own losses and chosen to break the cycle of violence in order to create a better world? People who share our aspirations as human beings and as world citizens? People who have something to teach us about creative and life-affirming responses to terrorism, violence, and war? These are the people who are not found on TV screens across America, or in mainstream newspapers or magazines. Their stories are not heard or honored. And their wisdom is not shared.

This fall, Peaceful Tomorrows would like to change that. We are convening a meeting of more than 30 extraordinary individuals from around the world who are devoted to cooperation, healing, and reconciliation. Together we will meet to establish an international network that will share ideas and information. Each of the men and women joining this network has been personally affected by violence yet has rejected the idea of retaliating with further violence. Instead, we have successfully built bridges between groups previously in conflict, and have formed organizations to promote justice, reconciliation, and genuine peace.

This international gathering will begin with private sessions at the Garrison Institute, and will continue with public events at sites throughout New York City in the days leading up to the fifth anniversary of 9/11. Students, 9/11 family groups, and other members of the public will hear stories from people including:

Father Romain Rurangirwa (Rwanda),

lost his entire family — parents, siblings, nieces and nephews, in-laws — along with neighbors and friends, to the 1994 massacre that took the lives of nearly 35,000 Tutsis in his village alone. Rurangirwa became a Roman Catholic priest ministering to genocide survivors. He is currently pursuing Master's degrees in Pastoral Care and Counseling as well as Conflict Resolution at Brandeis, and plans to return to Rwanda.

Naba S. Hamid is a Professor at the University of Baghdad, who was prohibited, from pursuing any scientific activities as a result of her refusal to join the Ba'ath party. In 2003, Naba founded New Horizons For Women, to help women deal with the "multiple traumas that have robbed them of hope and skills for their future."

Olga Takaeva is a member of the Mothers of Beslan, and was present during the 2004 Beslan school hostage crisis where armed Chechens killed hundreds of hostages, including children, after holding them for three days. As one of the coordinators of the organization For the Health of the Nation, Olga is engaged in efforts aimed at assisting people with disabilities, orphans, and parents suffering from the Beslan attack.

Jesús Abril Escusa lost his son to the March 2004 train bombings in Madrid. He became a founding member of Asociación 11-M Afectados por el Terrorismo, which operates on the principles of truth, justice, and peace.

Afifa Azim represents the Afghan Women's Network, a non-partisan network of women's NGOs working to empower Afghan women and ensure their equal participation in Afghan society.

Learn more about our other attendees by visiting our website, www.peacefultomorrow.org.

We believe that the fifth anniversary of 9/11 is a crucial opportunity for Americans to consider alternatives to war. This conference could be a seed from which a multitude of new initiatives to eradicate attacks on civilians and promote peace might grow worldwide. We hope that these powerful exemplars of the moral power of transcending vengeance and embracing hope can help transform our societies' cultures of violence into cultures of peace — one person at a time, one story at a time, and one changed attitude at a time. ☪

September 11th: Commemorating Resistance to Terrorism Throughout History

Compiled by Peacework intern and freelance writer, Dave Taber, with special thanks for lists created by Democracy Now! and Working for Change columnist Geov Parrish.

Every day is historically significant for a multitude of reasons. *Peacework* offers this list, not to ascribe mystical significance to any given date, and certainly not to discount the pain inflicted by the attacks of September 11, 2001, but instead to widen our circle of understanding and compassion by also commemorating, on this day, civilians who were terrorized in other places and times, and by celebrating our potential for transcending pain and injustice through nonviolent action.

This Day in History: September 11th

September 11, 1589: Appela Huebmeyer, Barbara Huebmeyer, and Anna Schnelling were burned as “witches” in Waldsee, Germany.

September 11, 1857: Approximately 100 Mormon militia members in Utah massacred at least 120 members of a wagon train. The perpetrators, inflamed by the story that a Mormon had been persecuted and killed in Arkansas by some of the members of a wagon train then heading through Utah, and ordered by the Mormon leadership to exact vengeance as an act of faith, disarmed the wagon train under a flag of truce and massacred everyone except the youngest of the children. The perpetrators either included some members of the Paiute tribe, or (more likely, according to historian Sally Denton) disguised themselves as Paiute; the Mormon leadership later blamed the tribe for the crime. See *American Massacre* (Knopf 2003), by Sally Denton.

September 11, 1905: Vinoba Bhave, Indian land reform activist, considered by many to be one of Mohandas Gandhi's primary successors, was born. Bhave participated in the Quit India movement and was chosen by Gandhi in 1940 to be the first Individual *Satyagrahi*, or individual civil resister, in the revived campaign against British rule. Bhave initiated the Bhoodhan

(land gift) movement, in which he walked the breadth of India asking people to consider him a son and give him land, which he redistributed to landless peasants.

September 11, 1906: Gandhi began a nonviolent resistance campaign to secure civil and political rights for Indians in South Africa. Between that time and the campaign's victory in 1914, Gandhi and his cohorts were repeatedly beaten and imprisoned, but they maintained the discipline of nonviolent action. The campaign helped initiate a wave of mass nonviolent struggle around the world. However, during the campaign, Gandhi used the racist argument that the laws unjustly reduced the status of the Indian immigrants to that of the native Africans. (Please see Gandhi's 1906 speech on page 9, and a critique on page 25).

September 11, 1941: Underground Norwegian trade union newspapers arranged for the writing of thousands of letters rejecting Nazification to the government. According to the website of England's Peace Pledge Union, “When all radios were confiscated, over 300 ‘underground’ newspapers sprang up, carrying news obtained from concealed radios and urging non-cooperation with the Nazi authorities. One person would type out several copies (say 20) of each edition, and pass them on for the next 20 readers to type more copies, and so on until there were enough to go around.”

September 11, 1941: Construction commenced on the Pentagon building. See James Carroll's book, *House of War: the Pentagon and the Disastrous Rise of American Power* (Houghton-Mifflin, 2006).

September 9-13, 1971: Approximately 1,300 inmates took control of New York State's Attica prison to protest inhumane treatment. Prisoners held 39 guards hostage. Negotiations lasted until the 13th when Governor Nelson Rockefeller sent in state troopers and correctional officers. In the attack, gunshots killed 10 hostages and 29 inmates, and wounded 4 hostages and 85 inmates. The official version claimed that the inmates killed hostages during the attack; however, only the forces sent in by the government had guns. After the longest-running

court case in New York State history, New York settled a wrongful death lawsuit with families of the killed inmates in 1998, and compensated the families of the murdered prison employees in 2004.

September 11, 1973: Salvador Allende, the democratically elected socialist president of Chile was murdered in a CIA-backed coup. Augusto Pinochet seized control of Chile and, during his 17-year dictatorial reign, supervised the murder of at least 3,000 Chileans and the torture of thousands more (see article, p. 20).

September 11-12, 1977: Steve Biko, South African anti-apartheid activist, was assassinated in prison by prison guards. One of the preeminent voices of the anti-apartheid struggle, Steve Biko, leader of the South African Black Consciousness Movement stressing black pride and self-determination, was beaten unconscious on September 11 and shackled, naked, in the back of a van. Instead of taking him to a hospital, the van was driven 700 miles from Port Elizabeth to Pretoria. Biko, who had been arrested three weeks earlier, died from multiple injuries on September 12.

September 11, 1988: The Innu Nation launched direct action protests against low-level supersonic jet training flights over their traditional hunting grounds around Goose Bay in Labrador. The Innu claimed that the training flights and attendant sonic booms adversely affected wildlife and seriously compromised their traditional way of life.

September 11, 2002: According to peace-buttons.info, “Women In Black (Baltimore) started the first Peace Path as a response to the September 11, 2001 World Trade Center attacks. The nonviolent action presents images of peace as opposed to war and militarism. Now in its fourth year, the Path — a line of supporters along city streets in Baltimore — extends for 12 miles. Others are beginning to create September 11th Peace Paths in their own communities.”

For more analyses of and reflections about the events and immediate aftermath of September 11, 2001, please see our September 2002 commemorative issue, viewable online at www.peaceworkmagazine.org. ☪

Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth Day

Mayoral Proclamation, Asheville, NC, for September 11, 2006, originally co-written by Richard Fireman, Co-director, Caring for Creation, and Kim Carlyle, of the Network of Spiritual Progressives.

WHEREAS, September 11, 2006 marks the fifth anniversary of events that have caused this date to be associated with fear, terrorism, and war; and

WHEREAS, September 11, 2006 also marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of the nonviolent movement for justice and peace of Mahatma Gandhi; and

WHEREAS, a world that is free from war and violence will be a world in which the human community may reach its highest potential, and in which future generations may live without the threat or fear of physical, psychological, and spiritual harm; and

WHEREAS, decades after the assassinations of Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., we see more polarization within our nation and between nations, we recognize that nonviolent conflict resolution is largely absent from civil society; and

WHEREAS, in the last 100 years we have begun to understand the linkages and interconnections among justice, peace, and environmental integrity, and that all aspirations for human betterment, including justice and peace, are utterly dependent upon the health of the ecosystems that support and maintain life in all its forms; and

WHEREAS, it is clear that cultural transformation of vast societies always begins with an awareness at the local level of the need for change, and we recognize that local issues affecting the City of Asheville, Buncombe County, and the region of Western North Carolina are inextricably linked to the wider communities of human life and planetary life; and

WHEREAS, we understand that how we solve our local problems of poverty; a living wage; affordable housing; urban sprawl; transportation; a sustainable economy; of safe and accessible drinking water; preservation of farmland, parks, and for-

E. Ethelbert Miller is the author of several books of poetry, including How We Sleep on the Nights We Don't Make Love (Curbstone, 2004), from which this poem is reprinted.

I'm in the school bathroom
washing my hands without
soap but I'm still washing my hands.

I turn the water off
and look for a paper towel
but paper towels have been gone
since the first day of school
and it's June now.

I start to leave the bathroom
with my wet hands but then
the big boys come in talking
loud and cussing like they
rap stars or have new sneakers.

I hear the one named Pinto
talking about how someone
should get Omar after school
since he's the only Muslim
they know.

Pinto talks with an accent
like he's new in the neighborhood
too.

I don't have to ask him
what he's talking about
since everybody is talking
about the Towers and how they
ain't there no more.

ests; clean streams, rivers and wetlands; and an energy economy that is non-polluting, safe, secure, and does not contribute to global warming, will determine whether we and our descendants live in a just, loving, healthy, and peaceful world;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, TERRY BELLAMY, Mayor of the City of Asheville, do hereby proclaim, September 11, 2006, as

PEACE ON EARTH, PEACE WITH EARTH DAY in the City of Asheville, North Carolina, and encourage the citizens of Asheville and Western North

Looking for Omar

My momma said it's like
a woman losing both
breasts to cancer and my daddy
was talking at the dinner table
about how senseless violence is
and Mrs. Gardner next door lost
two tall boys to drive-bys

Bullets flying into
both boys' heads
making them crumble too.

Everybody around here is
filled with fear and craziness
and now Pinto and the big boys
thinking about doing something bad.

I stare at my wet hands
dripping water on my shoes
and wonder if I should run
and tell Omar or just run.

I feel like I'm trapped
in the middle of one of those
Bible stories but it ain't
Sunday.

I hear my Momma's voice
saying
*Boy, always remember to wash
your hands but always remember
you can't wash your hands from
everything.*

Nashville, TN, October 12, 2001.

For resources to counter the racist backlash, see www.both-places.afsc.org.

Carolina to reflect on the meaning of justice, peace, and nonviolent conflict resolution, and become living representatives of the power of love in their duties as householders and responsible citizens of our great Democracy, by acting in a compassionate, non-harming manner within human society, towards other than human life, and to the earth itself.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Asheville, North Carolina, to be affixed, this 11th day of September 2006. ☪

People Power as Gandhi's Enduring Legacy

Jack DuVall is the President of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict and the co-author and co-director of A Force More Powerful. This essay is part of a lecture given at Michigan State University, March 15, 2006.

One hundred years ago, a mass meeting was convened in Johannesburg, South Africa by Mohandas Gandhi, an Indian lawyer outraged by the government's proposal that Indians carry registration cards. "The Old Empire Theatre was packed from floor to ceiling," Gandhi wrote. The group's most important action was to pass a resolution saying they "solemnly determined not to submit to the Ordinance." One speaker said that they "must never yield a cowardly submission to such degrading legislation."

They never did, during a long campaign that Gandhi led, of non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Defying the state, Indians burned their registration cards, marched illegally across borders, and thousands went to jail, Gandhi himself three times. They disrupted the government's racial laws and drove up the cost of enforcement. In the eighth year of civic resistance, the government withdrew the laws. One piece of one empire's contempt for people's rights was pulverized, starting that night at the Empire

Theatre. The date was September 11.

Gandhi returned home to India from South Africa and launched a great nonviolent war against British control of his homeland. Millions marched, refused to pay taxes, quit their colonial jobs, spun their own fabric to avoid buying English cloth, and began to realize that to take control of India, they first had to refuse the terms of British control. The scope of resistance sobered the few colonial leaders who understood what was happening. "England can hold India only by consent," said Sir Charles Innes, a provincial governor. "We can't rule it by the sword."

But that consent evaporated. The great political thinker Hannah Arendt defined the process well: "Where commands are no longer obeyed, the means of violence are of no use.... The sudden dramatic breakdown of power that ushers in revolutions reveals in a flash how civil obedience — to law, to rulers, to institutions — is but the outward manifestation of support and consent."

Gandhi's campaigns in India were the first stories of mass civic resistance to be reported worldwide by broadcast media. Ever since, the rate with which people have applied this new force has accelerated. The Danes obstructed German occupiers in World War II with strikes and work slow-downs. African-Americans defied and dissolved legal segregation. Polish workers refused to leave their shipyards until they'd won the right to a free trade union, from which the ruling party never recovered.

A few years later, civilian Filipinos blocked a dictator's loyal army units from attacking officers who had switched sides, the military was immobilized, and the regime was toppled. Chilean generals declined to let President Augusto Pinochet steal a plebiscite, enabling his people to push him out.

Czechs, East Germans, Mongolians and others living under Soviet client regimes choked the streets of their capitals until their rulers resigned. Black citizens boycotted South African businesses and made the country ungovernable, until a new political order was established.

In every one of these nations, governments based on the people's consent still rule today. This is not accidental. Civilian-based movements often produce sustainable democracy because ordinary people are the means of change: When you march, strike or sit in, you become a stake-holder in the results of what you achieve — you've done it, not a foreign government or a violent vanguard.

Osama bin Laden says that "oppression... cannot be demolished except in a hail of bullets." Lenin went further, saying that "real, nationwide terror" was needed to "reinvigorate" a country, suggesting violence not only as a means of liberation, but also as a social good. Yet over the last three and a half decades, of 20 transitions from authoritarian rule in which violence was used by political oppositions, only four have resulted in nations where people have political rights today. In contrast, in 31 of the 47 transitions where no opposition violence occurred, political rights are recognized. (See "How Freedom Is Won: From Civic Resistance to Durable Democracy," Freedom House, 2005.)

Those who have amplified Gandhi's legacy by consummating nonviolent struggles for democracy and self-rule include Europeans, Asians, Latin Americans, Africans, and North Americans. Civic defiance is a global phenomenon, even as its strategies develop in the basements and the barrios of a thousand different villages and cities.

People's passion to be free and independent should not ever be in doubt. Nor should our willingness to help each other. It is not for any nation to win another its rights. Those rights will be won by people who stand up to domination and learn to liberate themselves. It is only for us to stand with them. ☞



Poster: Center for the Study of Political Graphics

Mohandas Gandhi's Call for Mass Defiance of Anti-Immigrant Legislation

Mohandas Gandhi was the Secretary of the British Indian Association in South Africa and a local barrister when he gave the following speech on September 11, 1906 regarding a proposal for mass defiance if impending pass-law legislation became law. The passage is available in Gandhi's collected works, www.gandhiserve.org/cwmg/cwmg.html, volume 5.

Pledge of Resistance

"In the event of the Legislative Council, the local Government, and the Imperial Authorities rejecting the humble prayer of the British Indian community of the Transvaal in connection with the Draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, this mass meeting of British Indians here assembled solemnly and regretfully resolves that, rather than submit to the galling, tyrannous, and un-British requirements laid down in the above Draft Ordinance, every British Indian in the Transvaal shall submit himself to imprisonment and shall continue so to do until it shall please His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor to grant relief."

Mohandas Gandhi's Speech

We all believe in one and the same God, the differences of nomenclature in Hinduism and Islam notwithstanding. To pledge ourselves or to take an oath in the name of that God or with Him (sic) as witness is not something to be trifled with. If having taken such an oath we violate our pledge we are guilty before God and man (sic).

There is wisdom in taking serious steps with great caution and hesitation. But caution and hesitation have their limits, which we have now passed. The Government has taken leave of all sense of decency. We would only be betraying our unworthiness and cowardice, if we cannot stake our all in the face of the conflagration which envelops us and sit watching it with folded hands. There is no doubt, therefore, that the present is a proper occasion for taking pledges. But every one of us must think out for himself if he has the will and the ability to pledge himself. Resolutions of this nature cannot be passed by a majority vote. Only those who take a

pledge can be bound by it.

A few words now as to the consequences. Hoping for the best, we may say that, if a majority of the Indians pledge themselves to resistance and if all who take the pledge prove true to themselves, the Ordinance may not even be passed and, if passed, may be soon repealed. It may be that we may not be called upon to suffer at all.

But if on the one hand one who takes a pledge must be a robust optimist, on the other hand he (sic) must be prepared for the worst. It is therefore that I would give you an idea of the worst that might happen to us in the present struggle. It is quite possible that in spite of the present warning some or many of those who pledge themselves might weaken at the very first trial. We might have to go to jail, where we might be insulted. We might have to go hungry and suffer extreme heat or cold. Hard labor might be imposed upon us. We might be flogged by rude warders. We might be fined heavily and our property might be attached and held up to auction if there are only a few resisters left. Opulent today, we might

be reduced to abject poverty tomorrow. We might be deported. Suffering from starvation and similar hardships in jail, some of us might fall ill and even die.

If someone asks me when and how the struggle may end, I may say that, if the entire community manfully (sic) stands the test, the end will be near. If many of us fall back under storm and stress, the struggle will be prolonged. But I can boldly declare, and with certainty, that so long as there is even a handful of men (sic) true to their pledge, there can only be one end to the struggle, and that is victory.

A word about my personal responsibility. If I am warning you of the risks attendant upon the pledge, I am at the same time inviting you to pledge yourselves, and I am fully conscious of my responsibility in the matter. It is possible that a majority of those present here might take the pledge in a fit of enthusiasm or indignation but might weaken under the ordeal, and only a handful might be left to face the final test. Even then there is only one course open to the like of me, to die but not to submit to the law. It is quite unlikely but even if every one else flinched leaving me alone to face the music, I am confident that I would never violate my pledge. Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying this out of vanity, but I wish to put you, especially the leaders upon the platform, on your guard.

I wish respectfully to suggest it to you that, if you have not the will or the ability to stand firm even when you are perfectly isolated, you must not only not take the pledge yourselves, but you must declare your opposition before the resolution is put to the meeting and before its members begin to take pledges and you must not make yourselves parties to the resolution. Although we are going to take the pledge in a body, no one should imagine that default on the part of one or many can absolve the rest from their obligation. Every one should fully realize his responsibility, then only pledge himself (sic) independently of others and understand that he himself must be true to his pledge even unto death, no matter what others do. ☞



Protesting INS detention policies, Boston, January 9, 2003, © Ellen Shub

Gandhi's Prisoner: Manilal Gandhi as Son and South African Dissident

Goolam Vahed, of the School of Anthropology, Gender and Historical Studies, University of Kwazulu-Natal, reviews Uma Dhupelia-Mesthrie's book Gandhi's Prisoner?: The Life of Gandhi's Son Manilal. Cape Town: Kwela Books, 2005. 419 pp. Photographs. \$27.00 (cloth). Excerpted from a review first published by: H-SAfrica, H-Net Reviews, June, 2005.

Mohandas K. Gandhi died almost sixty years ago. The fascination with him continues even though he and others have written voluminously about every aspect of his life. Approximately thirty books are published on Gandhi annually. *Gandhi's Prisoner?* is ostensibly a biography of Gandhi's second son Manilal (1891-1956). At the core of the book, however, is the relationship of Gandhi, a universal figure, with his sons Manilal, Harilal (1888-1948), Ramdas (1897-1969), and Devdas (1900-1957), and the different ways in which they reacted to being the children of a "Mahatma."

The book's title is taken from a letter that Gandhi wrote to Manilal in 1918, asking him to consider him a "friend" rather than as his "prisoner." The question mark was added because opinions of Gandhi the family man range from those who feel his autocratic control ruined the lives of his sons, to those who consider him above criticism. This study is underpinned by a second important objective. Existing work on South Africa from the 1920s to the 1950s, Dhupelia-Mesthrie asserts, "hardly does justice to Manilal's role.... As we celebrate our country's ten years of democracy and the heroes and heroines of the long preceding struggle, Manilal's name should now also come to the fore" (p. 23).

Dhupelia-Mesthrie has excellent credentials. She is Manilal's granddaughter and Gandhi's great-granddaughter, and an Associate Professor of History at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa. The author seems, at times, to be caught between two stools, being a professional historian on the one hand and granddaughter of Manilal on the other. She states that in addition to the general problems with writing biography — "how to

phrase what must be told, how to force the seals, twist back the locks, burgle the cabinet of the soul" — she had to "take care to consider the feelings of my family" (p. 27). Although she qualifies this by stating that "there has been no censorship," this raises the broader historiographical question of objectivity when one is so close to the subject.

Manilal, born in Porbandar in 1891, joined his father in South Africa as a young child when Gandhi delayed his return to India. Gandhi comes across as a harsh patriarch at times, who sought to impose his philosophy of life on his descendents. En-route to South Africa the boys had to wear shoes and eat with knives and forks. Though unhappy, "they learnt to comply. This was the first of many lifestyle changes they would encounter; in Africa their father would impose many more" (p. 36). When Manilal was ten and forgot his glasses at home, Gandhi exhorted "we can't afford to forget such things, can we?" and made him walk back five miles to retrieve them.

Gandhi cast a long shadow over Manilal's life as he sought to control every aspect of it. Little pleasures were forbidden. Manilal was not allowed to learn to play the piano. Gandhi punished himself by fasting for seven days when Manilal was caught kissing a teenage girl at Phoenix, the place of Gandhi's residence, north of Durban. As penance, Manilal promised not to marry until Gandhi freed him from this promise (p. 109). Manilal's actions were always tempered by the fact that Gandhi would punish himself through fasting when displeased with his actions.

After they returned to India, Manilal gave financial assistance to his brother Harilal. When Gandhi found out, he punished Manilal by sending him to Madras virtually penniless and with instructions to return only when he had earned back the money he had given Harilal. He was warned not to use Gandhi's name to secure a job. Manilal sobbed years later when he recalled his struggles in Madras (p. 140). Whether Gandhi's austere disciplinary measures, strict regulations, and continuous attempt to control

Manilal's life, even from India, can be construed as parental love in the traditional sense, or as extreme, is for the reader to decide.

Responsibility was thrust on Manilal from a young age. With Gandhi spending long periods in prison and elder brother Hiralal preoccupied, Manilal was the "man of the house." His tasks, Gandhi reminded him in 1909, included being guardian of younger brothers Ramdas and Devadas, "looking after aunt Chanchi, nursing mother, and cheerfully bearing her ill temper" (p. 80). Gandhi wrote regularly to Manilal from jail, instructing him on what to read, work to do, and how to take care of the family. Manilal's political training began at the age of seventeen. Gandhi involved him in the *satyagraha* struggle between 1910 and 1913 to give him a "sense of purpose" and "calm his restless mind" (p. 85). Manilal served four prison sentences ranging from ten days to three months during this period. He was not a "passive puppet," Dhupelia-Mesthrie contends. Having helped edit *Indian Opinion*, he understood the issues and participated out of conviction (p. 89).

Manilal returned to India in 1914 and helped establish Gandhi's ashram in Ahmedabad. Phoenix Settlement and the printing of *Indian Opinion* were entrusted to Albert West, Gandhi's British devotee. West informed Gandhi in 1918 that the paper's future was in jeopardy. Gandhi asked for a volunteer to help and Manilal returned to South Africa in 1918 at the age of 26. This was the making of Manilal. He replaced West as editor in 1920, a position he held until his death in 1956: "he saved the paper and the paper saved him, for here he found a purpose in life" (p. 156). As Manilal gained in confidence, he began writing his own editorials, gave greater coverage to African issues, covered the anti-imperial struggle in India, and reported vigilantly on anti-Indianism in South Africa.

Gandhi's influential hand was also evident in Manilal's decision to marry. He had wanted to marry Fatima Gool, a Muslim from the Cape, but Gandhi objected because

she was not Hindu: "it will be like putting two swords in one sheath" (p. 175). This seems anomalous considering that Gandhi had brought up his children to believe all religions equal. However, the boys were "shaped primarily by Hinduism" even though Gandhi respected all religions (p. 40). Gandhi was concerned about the impact the marriage would have on Hindu-Muslim relations in India. He warned Manilal that if he proceeded with the marriage he would have to stop editing *Indian Opinion* and would not be able to return to India. Gandhi advised Manilal to get over the "infatuation" and "delusions" of love: "our love is between brother and sister. Whereas here the main urge is carnal pleasure" (p. 176). Whatever Manilal might have felt, "in the end, though, he could not forget whose son he was. He did not have the courage to face the consequences of defiance; there really was no future without his father's blessing" (p. 176).

Gandhi implored Manilal to remain celibate, but on this issue Manilal disagreed with his father and married in 1927, at the age of thirty-four. However, his wife was chosen by Gandhi. She was nineteen-year-old Sushila Mashruwala, also of the *bania* caste and daughter of a wealthy property-owner and fervent Gandhi supporter (p. 183). Gandhi therefore failed to impose his views on sex and marriage on his family. However, in the book, Gandhi's views on these matters and his family's disregard of them are not critically explored. We learn little about family debates on sex and marriage, except that Gandhi was very fond of his grandchildren.

Manilal was intimately involved in the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). From 1920 onward, he was a member of the NIC Committee and attended South African Indian Congress (SAIC) conferences as its representative. In India in 1930 he participated in salt marches and spent nine months in prison. This raised his political profile and he returned to South Africa a hero. The experience radicalized him. Manilal supported campaigns by young radicals like Dr. Yusuf Dadoo in the Transvaal and Dr. G. M. Naicker in Natal. He was close to Dadoo, a Muslim and communist, but a staunch supporter of Nehru, Gandhi, and *satyagraha* (p. 253). While he supported African resistance,



Manilal arrested violating anti-apartheid laws, Photo www.mahatma.org

Manilal, unlike Dadoo, was only prepared to collaborate where there was "a possibility of action" (p. 260). He participated in the 1946 passive resistance struggle against segregation, spending 23 days in jail. As far as India was concerned Manilal, through *Indian Opinion*, supported Gandhi and the Indian National Congress and vehemently opposed the creation of Pakistan.

Manilal seemed to emerge from Gandhi's shadow after his father's death: "Had Gandhi been alive, Manilal would have been in the background. Now he spread his father's message about the importance of fast and prayer" (p. 338). As apartheid gathered momentum in South Africa, Manilal advocated *satyagraha* as a means of resistance. Anger should not form the basis of resistance, he insisted. Whites should be won over through "love" and "self-suffering." His weapon of choice was "spiritual armaments" (p. 344).

Manilal lacked the moral authority of his father and became increasingly isolated. One activist said that Manilal "did not understand the new Africa. So that when the resistance movement came, he was genuinely doubtful about the African's capacity to make a success of that weapon" (p. 349). As the rest of the country moved towards joint resistance, Manilal campaigned individually against petty apartheid laws. He had reservations about the Defiance Campaign of 1952 because he believed it would turn violent. He did, however, cover the campaign in *Indian Opinion* and fasted to show solidarity with resisters (p. 352). Manilal eventually joined the campaign with a group of liberals under

Patrick Duncan, son of a cabinet minister, who led resisters into a banned location in December 1952. They were arrested and Manilal, aged 61, served 38 days of a 50-day prison sentence.

Manilal's new political circle came to include liberals like Alan Paton and Julius Lewin, a law professor at the University of Witwatersrand. Manilal, who had resisted Indo-European Councils and White liberals in the 1920s, converted to Liberal Party politics. This became his new political home and he formally became a member of the Liberal Party in 1954. The party's members were united by opposition to the NP and communism. One of Manilal's last public acts was to attend the Congress of the People in June 1955, where the *Freedom Charter* was adopted. He suffered a stroke in November 1955 and died on April 5, 1956.

How are we to judge Manilal politically? Unlike Gandhi, he achieved few tangible results in the struggle against apartheid. His name is rarely mentioned when the pantheons of anti-apartheid activists are discussed, even though he spent close to fourteen years in prisons in South Africa and India. Gandhi's credo of non-violence, which Manilal embraced, left him increasingly in the political wilderness because he was unsure how to react as the Congress Alliance moved towards confrontation with the apartheid government. He became sidelined from the anti-apartheid movement of which he should have been an integral part because of this and his revulsion for communism.

Gandhi's Prisoner? is an absorbing study of the personal and political lives of Mahatma and Manilal Gandhi, as well as the Phoenix Settlement and *Indian Opinion* after Gandhi left South Africa. It also provides an excellent and detailed outline of political developments in South Africa and India during these decades. A large number of the splendid eighty-eight black-and-white photographs are from private collections and add considerable value. This book opens new debates relevant to post-apartheid South Africa, in particular the relationship between Indians and Africans. It is beautifully narrated, and is obligatory reading for anyone interested in Gandhi and his family, the story of Indians in South Africa, or the history of racial segregation in South Africa. ☞

Practicing Nonviolence:

An Interview with Arun Gandhi

Sam Diener, Co-Editor of Peacework, conducted a phone interview with Arun Gandhi, Co-Director of the M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence in Memphis, TN, on July 25, 2006. The Institute is planning a conference at Georgetown University and a gathering at the Lincoln Memorial on September 11, 2006 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Gandhian nonviolent action, as well as another conference in Memphis in October.

Sam Diener (SD): What misconception about Mohandas Gandhi do you spend the most time and/or energy correcting?

Arun Gandhi (AG): Many people today associate grandfather's philosophy only with waging political conflicts, because most people I talk with in the US associate Gandhi first with the freedom struggle in India, and second as an exemplar for Martin Luther King and the political struggle for civil rights in the US. Transforming political struggles in nonviolent directions is an essential contribution. Yet what I understand of Grandfather's philosophy is that it transcends the purely political; it's also about creating economic justice and about how individuals can transform our lives to live in nonviolent ways.

Nonviolence isn't just for activists. We all need to transform ourselves so that we embody nonviolence. This is a challenge because our society surrounds us with violence. The culture of violence encourages us to engage in violent thinking, violent work, violent relationships, and violent media. So, too often, unless we are trained to consciously strive to unlearn all these habits of violence, our first response to a crisis is violence. We need to practice becoming better practitioners of nonviolence every day, just as a doctor needs to practice medicine. Sometimes people who aren't necessarily trained in nonviolent struggle will try a particular nonviolent action, will face opposition, particularly violent opposition, and then too quickly conclude that nonviolence can't work. We need to practice building our everyday repertoire of nonviolence so that when we do face crises we can draw upon

these practical, ethical, and spiritual nonviolent resources.

SD: How did you get to know your grandfather?

AG: I grew up in South Africa on Phoenix Ashram, an ashram that Mohandas started when he lived here, and which Manilal, Mohandas's son and my father, sustained along with many others. I traveled to live with Grandfather in India for 18 months when I was 12-14 years old. He was a loving grandfather, spending an hour with me every day, helping me with lessons primarily, as he did with all the kids in the ashram.

SD: Did you ever have disagreements with him?

AG: I wanted my grandfather's autograph. So many people wanted his autograph he had decided to charge people for it and donate the money to the cause. He wouldn't make an exception for me. Not only did I have to pay him, but he told me I needed to work to earn money for it; I couldn't obtain the money from my parents. I kept pestering him, and it became a running joke between us, with me trying to wheedle it out of him, and grandfather gently refusing.

SD: Did he help you personally become more nonviolent?

AG: When I traveled to India, I was filled with rage about the discrimination I faced under apartheid. Yet I was ashamed of my anger, and he helped me understand that anger is a vital resource for us to channel rather than suppress. He said, "Anger isn't evil. It's not something to be ashamed of — be ashamed only of abusing anger." He told me to write an anger journal. When I felt anger, he wanted me not to respond to the situation right away, but to write and express my anger in the journal. These days, I've heard of other people keeping anger journals, but they don't do anything with what they write except maybe re-read the material and get angry all over again.

Mohandas taught me to address each incident in the anger journal, talking about and thinking the situation through until I had decided how to constructively approach each one of the conflicts. I continued keep-

ing an anger journal for many years after I returned to South Africa. There were times I wanted to explode with rage at racist officials, but I knew it wouldn't help anybody and would ruin my life.

So I used the anger journal to help me figure out how I could help challenge racism positively.

SD: How did you decide to challenge racism?

AG: I got involved with the political struggle against apartheid as my father helped bring together the African National Congress, the Colored People's Congress, and the Indian Congress in 1952. I worked with him. Unfortunately, when they arrested leaders from different "racial" groups, the apartheid regime imposed much harsher sentences on the Black ANC leaders, sowing distrust and disunity. The apartheid regime's strategy of divide and rule was effective. Some of the young activists in the ANC responded to the intense repression by wanting to move the ANC away from its commitment to nonviolence, arguing that it wasn't violent to blow up bridges, for example. My father disagreed with this approach, and I had the opportunity to work with him on these struggles until his death in 1956. My grandfather faced a similar situation during the Quit India Campaign in 1942 when some impatient activists began blowing up bridges, arguing this wasn't violent. When a



© Leni Fried, www.titaniumarts.com

train derailed after a rail bombing, causing many casualties, instead of generating sympathy for the cause, it caused widespread revulsion. Grandfather channeled this revulsion to win a re-commitment to nonviolent struggle from the overwhelming majority of activists.

SD: What is Mohandas Gandhi's legacy in India today?

AG: Sunanda and I lead a tour every year to "Gandhi's India." (Sunanda and Arun share a marriage, and are co-directors of the M. K. Gandhi Institute). I'm excited about the new impetus the Gandhian *sarvodaya* (welfare of all) constructive program campaign has received from young activists. *Sarvodaya* is not just a campaign for rural land reform, which is how it's best known here. For example, in the slums of Mumbai (formerly Bombay), young Gandhians began organizing homeless day laborers. Many of these workers arrive in Bombay from poverty-stricken rural villages, but don't have places to live, and their employment is sporadic. As we organized with them, part of the requirement was to save one coin from each day of work. For people who have nothing, this takes an incredible amount of self-discipline and commitment. Yet, in this way, as a collective they saved the equivalent of \$11,000 in two years. This was enough to buy ten second-hand textile machines to begin a business. At first, this collective employed the 70 people who had literally gone hungry in some cases in order to save the money, working in three shifts around the clock. It was explicit in the charter of the enterprise that it existed not solely to serve the market, but to provide employment and help each employee help other people who live in the slums as well. It's explicitly an enterprise with a nonviolent spiritual base instead of a corporation based on the violence of exploitation. Today, this collective has grown into four large factories and a micro-credit savings bank for the poor which now has seven branch offices throughout the city.

SD: Does this enterprise cross caste and communal lines?

AG: From the beginning it crossed communal lines, with Hindu, Muslim, and Christian members. These divisions haven't been an issue. Crossing caste has been more difficult. At first, there were few low-caste

members, but now the projects are better integrated. There was a real need for self-education and dialogue about how to make the projects more inclusive. Caste was banned by law in India, as segregation was banned by law in the US, but this doesn't integrate our hearts or our organizing efforts. True integration requires spiritual struggle.

SD: With your experience in working against racism and oppression in so many cultures around the world, are there principles and/or approaches you believe are central to this work?

AG: I believe we need to learn about each other in order to change our hearts. So many conflict resolution programs, including conflict resolution initiatives in schools, just focus on resolving violent conflict, after the conflicts based on various forms of injustice have already escalated almost to the point of violence. We need to teach students to learn about each other and care about each other so that we become committed, not merely to resolve conflicts, but to working for justice for all, for *sarvodaya*. This then would truly be teaching violence prevention. In the US, there is Black history month, and Women's History Month, but they're separate, instead of integrating anti-racist and anti-sexist education throughout the year into all of our subjects. What could be more important than teaching students how to create positive relationships and work for justice? What could be more important than teaching students about the history of nonviolent struggles in this country and around the world? We could then ask students to identify the injustices of today and ask them their ideas for how they might go about transforming the situation.

SD: In theory, in the US, schools do teach about the struggles of the civil rights movement, especially around Martin Luther King day and during Black History Month, but King's radical message of principled non-violence, nonviolent direct action, and the need to challenge capitalism itself has been coopted by politicians and too many educators into platitudinous sound-bites. Has the same thing happened to Gandhi in India?

AG: Definitely. Politicians have always exploited grandfather's name and memory, even before he was killed. A martyred hero is safer than a cantankerous critic calling us to transform our lives and our societies.

Politicians in India trudge out to official functions every January 30th (anniversary of Gandhi's assassination in 1948) and October 2nd (anniversary of his birth in 1869). Even President Bush was taken to one of these events by Indian militarists. They pay homage through meaningless rituals. It's like people who go to churches, mosques, and temples to utter meaningless prayers and then return to their lives of participation in the culture of violence. Instead, we need to strive to live compassion, live respect, live love. That was grandfather's, and Martin Luther King's, true message, but it's a challenging message.

SD: Do you have ideas about how we can extend the radical legacy of Mohandas Gandhi into the future?

AG: It's a challenge because we don't want to accept any legacy as dogma, and we don't want to allow just anyone to invoke their legacies in ways which subvert the very essence of the message. I believe some people who call themselves Gandhians are stuck in dogma. Every time something happens today they want to rush out and consult grandfather's collected works as if something he said 80 years ago will contain the god-given answer to today's dilemmas. Yes, we can learn from Grandfather, but everything changes, so ideas need to change.

The easiest way to kill a philosophy is to write it in a book and worship it. Grandfather once said that when he died he wanted all of his books and papers to be burned with him so that his ideas would live on in nonviolent struggles for justice instead of fossilizing into dogma. When the Mumbai project bought sewing machines, some of the older and more dogmatic Gandhians condemned us for not using spinning wheels and not dressing in *khadi* (homespun cloth produced from hand-spun thread). At first, this turned off many young people, and motivated them to reject Gandhism. We need to understand that Grandfather promoted the spinning wheel at a particular time in order to involve millions of people in a program to promote economic and political self-determination and to create a symbol of collective resistance to British colonialism. I'm excited that a new generation of Gandhian activists in India understand this, and won't let some of the old guard scare them away from extending Grandfather's living legacy. ☞

Reclaiming Nonviolence from Gandhian Puritanism

Starhawk is a permaculture activist, member of the RANT nonviolence training collective, and author of Truth or Dare and The Fifth Sacred Thing. This essay is excerpted from her book, Webs of Power: Notes From the Global Uprising, © 2002, New Society Publishers.

Does Gandhi's Sex Life Matter?

Gandhi and King were not the only influences on the development of movements grounded in nonviolence. In the United States and in England, Quakers have long been in the forefront of struggles for social justice. Their religious pacifism influenced the course of liberation movements from the antislavery campaigns of the 1800s to the antinuclear campaigns of the 1980s.

Women pioneered many of the tactics used by Gandhi and King. Alice Paul revitalized the suffrage movement in the US when she brought back from England the tactics of direct action. In England, suffragists demanding women's right to vote chained themselves to lamp posts and broke shop windows in an earlier version of the property-damage controversy. They filled the jails and went on hunger strikes, withstanding enormous suffering when they were forcibly fed. In the US, women marched, chained themselves to the White House fence, and challenged President Wilson over the hypocrisy of fighting for democracy abroad while denying it to women at home. Nevertheless, it is Gandhi and King who again and again are cited as the authors of the non-violent philosophy, whose pictures are carried in demonstrations, whose works are quoted. Many pacifists call themselves Gandhians; I know of no one, not even any woman, who calls herself a Paulian or Pankhurstian or Ella Bakerian or Rosa Parksian. It may be a measure of the internalized sexism even among people in the movement that we still look to men as moral authorities and erase the con-

tributions of women. But for that very reason, we need to examine their legends and legacies.

For Gandhi nonviolence was not just strategic, it was deeply moral, and it went far beyond eschewing violence. *Satyagraha*, truth force or soul force, was an energetic force that could only be marshaled by long and deep preparation, much as certain yogis employ special techniques and diets in order to command special powers. It was part of a way of life that required forms of self-discipline few of today's activists are interested in undertaking: most notably, giving up sex altogether.

While no one I know of is proposing abstinence as a requirement for joining a direct action campaign, for Gandhi it was indispensable. *Satyagraha* could not be mobilized without *brahmacharya*, a comprehensive self-discipline that included sexual abstinence. And not just abstinence outside of marriage. Gandhi actually went beyond the Pope in viewing even marital sex as a sign of lack of self-control. A man's progeny were living proof of his inability to control his lusts.

Satyagraha, for Gandhi, was also not about low-risk cross-the-line actions. He waged *satyagraha* campaigns infrequently, and each campaign required a pledge from his followers to be willing to die before giving up. Gandhi used all his moral authority and the weapons of guilt and shame on his followers to get them to live up to his ideals.

And Gandhi was no anti-authoritarian. He was a Mahatma, a religious leader in an authoritarian religious tradition that included a level of veneration and obedience unlikely to appeal to most of us today. His near deification by many pacifists lies firmly within that tradition.

King was also a religious leader, a minister, functioning in a milieu in which ministers were venerated and strong leadership was expected. King held a deeply religious, Christian moral commitment to nonviolence. In the Birmingham

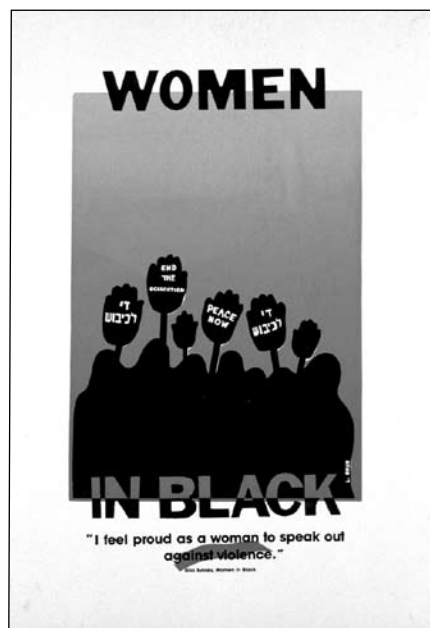
campaign of 1963, the very first pledge required of activists was to meditate on the life of Jesus every day and to pray. Three of the ten pledges involved Christ.

But King was also a fallible mortal being who, we now know, carried on a long-standing secret extramarital affair. We can't begrudge him the comfort and solace he must have needed to sustain the tensions and dangers of his work. But we can point out that he follows the pattern of male spiritual and political leaders from New Age gurus to Jim Baker to Clinton, who publicly preach a strict sexual morality while privately indulging their own needs and desires.

Does Gandhi's sex life matter? Does King's? On the one hand, no, their flaws shouldn't undercut our respect for their philosophy, their courage, their real contributions to human liberation and political struggle.

But from a woman's point of view, from an anarchist viewpoint, and from the perspective of earth-based spirituality, yes, it does. Gandhi's rejection of sexuality, of the body, leaves us firmly in the world view of patriarchy, split between body and spirit, venerating Gods that transcend the flesh, and suffering the inevitable degradation of those of us who bring that flesh into the world. That world view is a comfortable fit with Christianity as well (although certainly within both Christianity and Hinduism, strands can be found that do value nature, the erotic, and women).

The revolution we need to make includes a profound change in relationship to our experience of being a body. One of the insights of eco-feminism, the convergence of the feminist and ecology movements, is that our destruction of the environment is allowable because of the deep devaluation of nature and the body in the underlying religious and philosophical systems that shape our worldviews. And the devaluation of women — the violence, rape, and destruction perpetrated on female bodies around the globe — is



Courtesy CSPG, politicalgraphics.org.

also supported by the same philosophical and religious systems that identify women with nature and the body, and assign them both low value.

That essential mind/body split is the basis of all systems of domination, which function by splitting us off from a confidence in our inherent worth and by making integral parts of ourselves —our emotions, our sexuality, our desires — bad and wrong.

When we are bad, we deserve to be punished and controlled. Punishment systems lie at the root of violence. Marshall Rosenberg, a teacher of nonviolent communication, describes how violence is justified by the split between the deserving and undeserving: “You have to make violence enjoyable for domination systems to work ... You can get young people to enjoy cutting off the arms of other young people in Sierra Leone because of the thinking that you are giving people what they deserve.... When you can really justify why people are bad, you can enjoy their suffering.” And so we see people who deplore the violence of the attacks on the World Trade Towers, who empathize and suffer with the victims, gleefully demanding that we bomb Afghanistan back to the stone age because the Afghans have been defined as deserving of punishment.

As human beings, we always have a

somewhat problematic relationship to our body. The body is the source of pleasure — it is life itself. But it is also the source of pain, need, discomfort, and deprivation, and ultimately it suffers death. A liberated world, a world that could come into balance with the natural systems that sustain life, a world that values women, must also value life, embodiment, physicality, flesh, sex.

Nonviolence And Suffering

Both King and Gandhi believed in the transcendent value of suffering. Now, a certain asceticism is helpful if you are asking people to risk physical discomfort, injury, imprisonment, or even death. A belief in the value of suffering is a useful thing to have when you are voluntarily putting yourself in a position in which you are likely to suffer.

But embracing suffering is problematic for women, who have always been taught to suffer and sacrifice for others. Conditioned to swallow our anger, to not strike back, we have not had a choice about accepting blows without retaliation. Nonviolence puts a high moral value on those behaviors, encourages men to practice them, and develops them as a political strategy. Yet women’s empowerment involves acknowledging our anger, owning our rage, allowing ourselves to be powerful and dangerous as well as accommodating and understanding.

And from the perspective of an earth-based spirituality, which values pleasure, the erotic, the beauty and joy of this life, suffering is sometimes inevitable but never desirable. We can learn from it; if we are truly going to change the world, we probably can’t avoid it — but we don’t seek it or venerate it. Instead, we share it as much as possible through solidarity with each other.

One of Gandhi’s strong principles was that we accept the suffering and the consequences of our actions, that we don’t try to avoid or evade punishment but welcome it. That position creates a powerful sense of freedom and fearlessness. If we accept the inevitability of punishment, if part of the power of our action is to voluntarily go to jail, we move beyond fear and beyond the system’s ability to

use our fear to control us. But often the way this principle plays out is that the focus becomes the arrest rather than the action.

There’s something to be said for doing a strong action and getting away with it. There’s even more to be said for conceiving of an action that does not derive its impact from an arrest, but from what it actually is and does. And if we do choose an arrest strategy, let’s do it for a purpose we’ve thought about and clearly defined, not just by default.

Authority And Virtue

The underlying moralism in Gandhi’s formulation of nonviolence is a subtle thread, but it encourages other moralisms that contribute to the worthy/sexy dichotomy. If we hold a punitive relationship to the body’s needs, we assume a posture of internal violence toward the self that extends to other strong emotions and passions. And we become judgmental toward others, rigid in our thinking and viewpoints. Any behavior that does not fit our model is seen as “violent,” and violent people are seen as deserving of punishment. So our very “nonviolence” puts us into an authoritarian, dominating mode. Gandhi and King both exemplified religious authority and top-down styles of leadership. They were good, benevolent father figures (although how good they were to their own children is another issue), but dependence on any sort of father figure is not a route to empowerment for women, nor for anyone who wants to function as a liberated, full human being. Anti-authoritarians rightly criticize that model of leadership as keeping us all childlike, released from true responsibility for our lives.

Nonviolence does not have to be practiced in an authoritarian manner. The Quaker tradition of consensus and non-hierarchical organization is a counterbalancing force in nonviolent movements. The Quaker-influenced Movement for a New Society, which introduced affinity groups, consensus, and horizontal power structures to the antinuclear movement in the seventies and eighties, pioneer

continued on page 25

Einstein on Gandhi

Compiled by the Gandhiserve Foundation, Rathausstrasse 51a, 12105 Berlin, Germany, www.gandhiserve.org, which operates a compendious online archive of Gandhi material and a Gandhi-related News Digest list-serve.

"I believe that Gandhi's views were the most enlightened of all the political men (sic) in our time. We should strive to do things in his spirit: not to use violence in fighting for our cause, but by non-participation in anything you believe is evil."

- Albert Einstein

Einstein's Letter to Gandhi

September 27, 1931

Respected Mr. Gandhi!

I use the presence of your friend in our home to send you these lines. You have shown, through your works, that it is possible to succeed without violence even with those who have not discarded the method of violence. We may hope that your example will spread beyond the borders of your country and will help to establish an international authority, respected by all, that will take decisions and replace war conflicts.

With sincere admiration,

Yours A. Einstein.

I hope that I will be able to meet you face to face some day.

An Excerpt From Einstein's Notes

(translated from the German):

Mahatma Gandhi's life achievement stands unique in political history. He has invented a completely new and humane means for the liberation war of an oppressed country, and practiced it with greatest energy and devotion. The moral influence he had on the consciously thinking human being of the entire civilized world will probably be much more lasting than it seems in our time with its overestimation of brutal violent forces....

We may all be happy and grateful that destiny gifted us with such an enlightened contemporary, a role model for the generations to come. ☞

Orwell's Reflections on Gandhi

The following is the conclusion to "Reflections on Gandhi" by George Orwell, published in Partisan Review in 1949, reprinted from www.readprint.com. The famous first phrase of the essay is, "Saints should always be judged guilty until they are proved innocent...."

I have never been able to feel much liking for Gandhi, but I do not feel sure that as a political thinker he was wrong in the main, nor do I believe that his life was a failure.

It is curious that when he was assassinated, many of his warmest admirers exclaimed sorrowfully that he had lived just long enough to see his life work in ruins, because India was engaged in a civil war which had always been foreseen as one of the byproducts of the transfer of power. But it was not in trying to smooth down Hindu-Moslem rivalry that Gandhi had spent his life. His main political objective, the peaceful ending of British rule, had after all been attained....

The British did get out of India without fighting, an event which very few observers indeed would have predicted until about a year before it happened. On the other hand, this was done by a Labour government, and it is certain that a Conservative government... would have acted differently. But if... there had grown up in Britain a large body of opinion sympathetic to Indian independence, how far was this due to Gandhi's personal influence?

And if, as may happen, India and Britain finally settle down into a decent and friendly relationship, will this be partly because Gandhi, by keeping up his struggle obstinately and without hatred, disinfected the political air? That one even thinks of asking such questions indicates his stature.

One may feel, as I do, a sort of aesthetic distaste for Gandhi, one may reject the claims of sainthood made on his behalf (he never made any such claim himself...), one may also reject sainthood as an ideal and therefore feel that Gandhi's basic aims were anti-human and reactionary: but regarded simply as a politician, and compared with the other leading political figures of our time, how clean a smell he has managed to leave behind! ☞

Martin Luther King's Tribute to Gandhi

This tribute, marking the tenth anniversary of the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi, appeared jointly in the Hindustan Times and Peace News on January 30, 1958. It is excerpted from the Papers of Martin Luther King website, www.stanford.edu/group/King. © The Estate of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mahatma Gandhi has done more than any other person in history to reveal that social problems can be solved without resorting to primitive methods of violence. In this sense he is more than a saint of India. He belongs — as they said of Abraham Lincoln — to the ages. In our struggle against racial segregation in Montgomery, Alabama, I came to see, at a very early stage, that a synthesis of Gandhi's method of non-violence and the Christian ethic of love is the best weapon available to Negroes for this struggle for freedom and human dignity. It may well be that the Gandhian approach will bring about a solution to the race problem in America. His spirit is a continual reminder to oppressed people that it is possible to resist evil and yet not resort to violence.

The Gandhian influence in some way still speaks to the conscience of the world as nations grapple with international problems. If we fail, on an international scale, to follow the Gandhian principle of nonviolence, we may end up by destroying ourselves through the misuse of our own instruments. The choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is now either nonviolence or non-existence.

I myself gained this insight from Gandhi. When I was in theological school, I thought the only way we could solve our problem of segregation was an armed revolt. I felt that the Christian ethic of love was confined to individual relationships. I could not see how it could work in social conflict. Then I read Gandhi's ethic of love as revealed in Jesus but raised to a social strategy for social transformation. This lifts love from individual relationships to the place of social transformation. This Gandhi helped us to understand, and for this we are grateful a decade after his death. ☞

Nonviolent Peaceforce: What to say YES to when we say NO to War

Donna Howard helped establish the Nonviolent Peaceforce and currently serves on its International Governance Council, 425 Oak Grove Street, Minneapolis, MN, 55403, 612/871-0005, www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org, dhoward@nonviolentpeaceforce.org.

"Of course we will win. All they have is guns."

— Aung San Suu Kyi

War gets the headlines and militarism gets the budget. It is a tragic knee-jerk reaction to conflict that will continue until we demonstrate an alternative so strong and effective that it gets both headlines and the resources it deserves. That has not happened yet, though third party nonviolent intervention (TPNI) has a long and demonstrated history of success in Gandhi's implementation of and vision for a *shanti sena* (Peace Army), and in the work of nonviolent intervention teams from Peace Brigades International, Christian Peacemaker Teams, Fellowship of Reconciliation, the International Solidarity Movement, and so on. These groups do not answer to any political authority and share the common vision of getting enough people involved so peacekeeping "armies" can be deployed at a moments notice to anywhere in the world. It is this combined growth and viability that will eventually become the alternative to war that can no longer be ignored.

Nonviolent Peaceforce (NP) is a trained, international civilian nonviolent peace force. We send teams into areas of conflict to pre-

vent death and destruction and protect human rights, thus creating the space for local groups to struggle nonviolently, enter into dialogue, and seek peaceful resolution.

NP currently has a team of 30 in Sri Lanka providing accompaniment as unarmed bodyguards for civil society activists, offering a protective presence in villages and at public events, monitoring volatile situations, consulting with local people on options for what to do in crisis situations, providing safe places to meet, and much more. Our team there has seen the beginnings of a re-emergence of civil society in communities where fear of violence had driven it underground. Local and regional dialogues between different groups caught up in the conflict have begun to replace communal violence in particular places. Mothers have been able to reclaim children who were abducted as child soldiers. Yet Sri Lanka remains on the brink of return to war. It is far from possible that only 30 people can prevent war even when they are dedicated, highly trained, and competitively selected from around the world.

One way to expand and increase the visibility of TPNI is to align with global entities such as the United Nations. The Global Action Agenda presented by the Secretary General advocates a high priority for civilian unarmed peacekeeping and highlights NP along with 10 other organizations. NP and UNICEF partnered in Sri Lanka for protection of children from abduction as child-soldiers.

NP is creating a global model of third party nonviolent intervention. Our staff, field team members, and Governing Council members come from all the world's regions and religions, are balanced in gender and diverse in age. We therefore come into the conflict as interveners without a shared bias except toward nonviolence. We come as partners of local peace-makers who alone know how to resolve the discord and create a lasting peace. And we come hoping to keep them alive long enough

to do their work.

Our field team members are paid in order to increase the legitimacy and professionalism of nonviolent conflict intervention and to assure that the role is equally accessible to peacekeepers from richer and poorer countries (though the cash they have available to them on-site is calibrated to local prices so as to reduce their disruptive effect on local economies and to help focus attention on their peacemaking role).

We consciously rooted ourselves in the Gandhian idea of *Shanti Sena*. During our convening event in Delhi we gathered in the garden where Gandhi was shot, praying and singing in many languages and spiritualities. The Mahatma's granddaughter, Ela Gandhi, spoke gently then, assuring us, "My grandfather would be very happy today."

All combatants are trained to do is fight. We must be there to protect those who have the creativity and strength to choose a future not filled with retaliation and death. I work with the Nonviolent Peaceforce to stand with the civilians caught in the cross-fire, with elders who remember a time when neighbors weren't enemies, with parents who want to create a peaceful life for their children, with young people who want to create a peaceful world, and with nonviolent activists worldwide.

Each year since September 11, 2001, NP has encouraged people to work that day annually for peace and donate their wages (or some other amount) for our conflict intervention work. This year the centennial celebration of *satyagraha* is very empowering for us. "Peaceforce" is our translation of Gandhi's *satyagraha*, and we hope our work manifests his vision. We are asking everyone to sign a statement resolving to break the cycle of violence: "I choose to break the cycle of violence. I will seek to resolve my own conflicts without violence; and I will encourage nonviolent responses to conflict by my neighbors, governments, and civilians worldwide." For a kit designed to help you hold a September 11th "break the cycle" gathering, please see www.nvpf.org/np/english/workadayforpeace/toolkit.asp.html. ☪



Impact of war on Sri Lanka. Image courtesy Nonviolent Peaceforce, © Donna Howard.

India's Women's Peace Corps: Embodying Gandhi's Idea for a Peace Army

Krishna Mallick is Chair of the Philosophy Department, Salem State University, and author of An Anthology of Nonviolence: Historical and Contemporary Voices.

One of Mohandas Gandhi's lasting legacies is the idea that we could replace militaries with *shanti senas*, unarmed peace brigades. In 1938, he wrote, "Some time ago I suggested the formation of Peace Brigades whose members would risk their lives in dealings with riots, especially communal. The idea was that this brigade should substitute [for] the police and even the military." During his lifetime, he was only able to implement the *shanti sena* concept on a limited scale, though the results in stopping the Hindu-Moslem violence in Calcutta in 1947, for example, were nothing short of astounding. It is worth explaining Gandhi's conception of *shanti sena* in detail before exploring a contemporary implementation of the idea, the Mahila Shanti Sena (Women's Peace Corps).

Gandhi believed that peace should also be waged like war is waged. Gandhi said, "A soldier of peace, unlike the one of the sword, has to give all his (sic) spare time to the promotion of peace alike in war time as in peace time. His work in peace time is... [the] prevention of, [and] also that of preparation for, war time."

In his article in *Gandhi Marg*, Jan – March 2002, "Mahatma Gandhi's Peace Army: A Paradigm," M. William Baskaran explains in great detail the five major integrally related guiding principles of an ideal *shanti sainik* (member of a peace army). For each of the guiding principles, Baskaran explains the means *shanti sainiks* could use to pursue these principles (utilizing language and concepts which, at times, post-date Mohandas Gandhi). To summarize Baskaran's ideas:

I. Search for Truth

Gandhi pursued Truth throughout his life. He made a distinction between absolute Truth (which only God could know) and relative truth. As it is impossible for us to know the absolute Truth, he suggested that we need to make conscious, constant, efforts to seek

the truth as we understand it, and to appreciate the truth in others. The following are the some of the means to pursue Truth:

Nonviolent Communication — expressing oneself directly and listening intently to what others have to say. Engaging in compassionate dialogue to build constructive relationships, even with opponents.

Transparency — Being open to oneself as well as to others.

Pluralism — Respect of religions and beliefs other than one's own.

Conscientization — This is the process of learning to understand oneself and one's relationships with nature, culture, and power. Both the use of the spinning wheel to produce homespun cloth (and boycott British goods) and the salt *satyagraha* were campaigns designed, among other things, to conscientize millions about the power Indians had to declare independence from Great Britain by practicing self-determination.

Transformation — This refers to a willingness to change when we come to appreciate new perspectives or more complicated truths.

II. Stopping and preventing direct violence

By this, Gandhi means the peaceful resolution of conflict and responding to violence with determined nonviolent resistance. Gandhi said, "In the age of the atom bomb, unadulterated nonviolence is the only force that can confound all the tricks of violence put together."

The following are the means:

Skills for Peace-Making and the Peaceful Resolution of Conflict — Adopting a win-win approach to counseling, dialogue, negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and legal and judicial proceedings.

Crisis Intervention — Putting oneself in between parties in conflict, undertaking dispute management.

Alternative Defense — Deter and defeat internal and external attacks by developing a human wall against any invading army and organizing nonviolent civilian defense by

refusing to cooperate with any invader.

Disarmament — Follow unilateral/bilateral/multilateral approaches in stopping the production and deployment of all kinds of weapons. It also means abolishing the existing conventional, nuclear, and other kind of lethal weapons. Gandhi said, "Peace will never come until the great powers courageously decide to disarm themselves."

III. Removing Structural Violence

At present, one of the crucial problems is structural violence, the prevalence of inequality, injustice, and exploitation. This has to be challenged and new structures have to be built. For that, the following means are required:

Nonviolent Direct Action (*satyagraha*)—This involves non-cooperation and self-suffering for the issues of justice and freedom. It becomes *satyagraha* when it is associated with truth, love, and spirituality. Nonviolent direct action needs planning, strategy, training and leadership to counter violence.

Constructive Work (also called constructive program) — a long-term strategy to build parallel and alternative peace structures in all spheres of life.

Nonviolent Organization and Managerial Skills — developing institutions based on the principles of the democratic participation of everyone involved, care for others, and the avoidance of exploitation.

IV. Nonviolent Ethics and Values

Shanti sainiks must repudiate all kinds of lethal force — individual killing, the mass killing of war, and instead nourish the values of love, compassion, reconciliation, and service towards others. To practice these values, the following is recommended:

Relief, Rehabilitation, and Humanitarian Assistance — when natural and/or human-caused disasters happen, *shanti sainiks* should be available to help.

Alternative Lifestyles — Gandhi proposed giving up materialistic consumer culture and

the cultivation of a self-sufficient nonviolent lifestyle.

Interpersonal and Intergroup Relationships — Cultivation of positive inter-group and interpersonal relationships across communal, caste, and other lines.

Eco-friendliness — Reverence for all living beings is expected. No harm should be done to the environment.

V. Inner Peace

A *shanti sainik* must have inner peace, as without inner peace it cannot be transmitted outside.

The following training is required:

Training for Peace and Nonviolence — Gandhi said, “just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for nonviolence.”

Peace Games — Instead of competitive games, cooperative games should be played to build a peaceful society.

Transformative Practices — Practices such as yoga, meditation, prayer, and self-introspection should be practiced.

The Women's Peace Corps

Gandhi insisted that the power of organized nonviolence is stronger and longer lasting than the power of might. The Mahila Shanti Sena (Women's Peace Corps) was founded in 2002 at Vaishali Sabha (Vaishali Assembly) in the northeast Indian state of Bihar in order to embody these principles.

The co-sponsoring organization is Shramabharati, founded in 1952, which has

run primary schools, health camps, women's peace training, small-scale industrial workshops and other programs.

One of the main reasons behind starting the Mahila Shanti Sena was the amendment of the Indian Constitution in 1992 giving rural villages autonomy in governance as well as the reservation of 30% of seats in all elected bodies for women. The latter amendment has led to the election of thousands of rural women to village councils (*Panchayats*).

As most of these women are illiterate, a little training in the area of peace, democracy, and development has been very helpful. This raises mass awareness among women to realize their strength and power, which in turn, can influence policy priorities at the local level in a way that meets the needs of women, children, families, and neighborhoods. With this training they develop courage and dare to ask questions in their village council.

Mahila Shanti Sena consists of at least 5 or 10 women from each village. The membership is voluntary and involves training ranging from three to five days in peace building, the practices of democracy, and economic development. Initially, through lectures, discussions, and role-playing around issues like the status and rights of women in India, barriers to women's advancement, such as dowry, child marriage, alcoholism among men, domestic violence, economic dependence and others, women learn conflict resolution techniques and work to identify possible solutions to local issues. Village council governance is also discussed. Then, these women take an oath to remain non-partisan and work across party lines to create peace in the village.

On October 31, 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security. This resolution reaffirms “the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and [stresses] the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.” Mahila Shanti Sena stands as a proof of this central role of women in creating and maintaining peaceful communities

by following the guiding principles of *shanti sena* — compassionate communication, dialogue, respecting all religions and castes, developing skills for peacemaking, nonviolent ethics and values and others. Mahila Shanti Sena has now spread to other parts of India including Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and others.

Mahila Shanti Sena as a rural women's development project is likely to be more successful due to the following reasons:

First, it is a grassroots movement with assistance from the Gandhian organization, Shramabharati Khadigram, that has spent more than fifty years focusing on the needs of the rural people in Bihar, one of the poorest and most illiterate states in India.

Second, it does not have any political agendas and refuses funding from political parties. It is funded by the financial contributions of women participants themselves and other private institutions. Most of the women involved in the movement are volunteers and are committed to making positive changes in their communities.

Third, it is a movement that includes men and women from any caste and all socio-economic strata.

Fourth, it is non-hierarchical and is based on a collaborative partnership method. Like Gandhi's own life, it is experimental and is subject to self-assessment, with the flexibility to make changes when necessary.

Lastly, its focus is on peace building, conflict resolution, and problem solving skills. Village women in India are faced with violence at different levels. With these simple tools, women are able to deal with violence in a more constructive way.

Other organizations modeled on *shanti sena* are better known in the West, including Peace Brigades International (PBI) and Witness for Peace, which have advanced the concept of nonviolent intervention and have achieved success in Central America. The Nonviolent Peaceforce (see page 17) was founded in India in 2002 by seventy member organizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East and North America. It is coordinating its first field project in Sri Lanka. All of these organizations and many more have been inspired, to a large extent, by Gandhi's concept of *shanti sena*: responding to violence through transformative nonviolent action. ☪

**Subscribe to
Peacework!**

Now on-line at

www.afscstore.org

Order a subscription for yourself and add gift subscriptions for peace-loving friends! We'll send a card.

Also available: books, cards, caps, fair trade products, t-shirts, tote bags, and more!

Gandhi's Insights Gave People Courage to Defy Chile's Dictatorship

Roberta Bacic is a Chilean human rights researcher and activist who now lives in Northern Ireland. She has worked with War Resisters International's Dealing with the Past Program.

On September 11, 1973, the Chilean junta, backed by the CIA and the Nixon Administration, overthrew the democratically elected government of Socialist President Salvador Allende. Priscilla Hayner, in her book *Unspeakable Truths, Confronting State Terror and Atrocity* (2001) outlines the devastating impact: "The regime espoused a virulent anti-communism to justify its repressive tactics, which included mass arrests, torture (estimates of the number of people tortured range from 50,000 to 200,000), killings, and disappearances." The dictatorship assassinated, tortured, and exiled thousands of political opponents and visionaries.

Under these conditions, a foreboding silence, the result of threats and terror, hung over Chile. Some of us wondered, "could Gandhian insights about the power of nonviolence help the struggle to defy the terror?"

Nonviolence refers to a philosophy and strategy of conflict resolution, a means of fighting injustice, and — in a broader sense — a way of life, developed and employed by Gandhi and by followers all around the world. Nonviolence, then, is action that does not do or allow injustice.

Crying Out the Truth

A few of us decided to try to inspire others to speak up against the dictatorship by "crying out the truth." We faced a double suffering: the pain involved in enduring the dictatorship's violence, and the suffering caused by keeping silent out of fear. To not cry out while those we love were killed, tortured, and disappeared was unendurable. Clandestine pamphlets and leaflets were printed. Slogans that denounced human rights violations were

painted on the walls at night at great risk to safety. Underlying these actions was the principle of active nonviolence: since there is injustice, the first requirement is to report it, otherwise we are accomplices. The clandestine actions helped spread the principle of telling the truth and acting on it. Yet, despite the risks, we needed to move beyond clandestine protests: we needed to move the protests against the Chilean junta into the public arena.

Activating the Public Movement against Torture

José Aldunate, a Jesuit priest who became the leader of the Sebastian Acevedo Movement Against Torture in Chile, says in his memoirs, "A comrade came to us and brought up the fact (of torture). We educated ourselves about torture and about the dynamics of non-violence. We watched a film on Mahatma Gandhi. I was more motivated [to protest against] poverty, but I responded to the discipline of the group. We deliberated and decided to undertake a nonviolent demonstration to denounce torture... to break the barriers of silence and hiding with regards to torture, we had an obligation to denounce it in public. We needed to shake the population's conscience."

On September 14, 1983, ten years after the regime took power, the anti-torture movement was born in an action in front of the headquarters of the National Investigation Center, 1470 Borgoño St., in Santiago. Around 70 persons interrupted traffic, unfurling a banner which read "Torturing Done Here." They shouted their denunciation and sang a hymn to liberty. The group returned to this scene to denounce the regime's crimes against humanity at least once a month until 1990.

In order to act, we needed to openly defy the State of Emergency provisions decreed by the junta in order to terrorize the population. We needed to break through our own sense of powerlessness, isolation, and fear.

The movement denounced torture. It left to other entities the task of investigating and making declarations. It had no meeting place, no secretariat, no infrastructure. It met in the streets and plazas when it was time to act. It had no membership list. Participants came by personal invitation, as the movement had to avoid infiltration from the secret police and other repressive institutions. Instructions were passed from person to person. Participants were mainly trained during the actions themselves, where we evaluated each action on the spot.

Participants faced legal and illegal sanctions when detained and prosecuted as they often were. Tear gas, beatings, detention, and prosecution were common practices used in retaliation against demonstrators. Torture was also a possible consequence of being arrested. Not only Sebastian Acevedo movement participants faced these sanctions, also reporters and journalists willing to report on the actions and the issues that were exposed.

At some of the actions, there were as many as 300 participants. Some 500 people participated in total. There were Christians and non-Christians, priests, monks, slum dwellers, students, aged persons, homemakers, and members of various human rights movements; people of every class, ideology, and walk of life.

The main goal was to get rid of torture in Chile. The means chosen was to shake up national awareness (consciousness raising) and rouse the conscience of the nation until the regime would get rid of torture or the country would get rid of the regime. In 1988, after a widespread anti-intimidation campaign, the nonviolent "Chile Sí, Pinochet No" campaign helped, to Pinochet's shock, to defeat a plebiscite designed to ratify Pinochet's rule.

Efforts to end the culture of impunity that arose during the Pinochet years, and to engage in national reconciliation, continue, but nonviolent protest provided an important means, amongst others, to overthrow the dictatorship. ☪

Globalizing Nonviolence in an African Context

Matt Meyer is a co-convenor of the War Resisters International (WRI) Africa Working Group, and author of Time is Tight: Urgent Tasks for Educational Transformation - Eritrea, South Africa, and the USA (Africa World Press, 2006) and Guns and Gandhi in Africa. Meyer interviewed several members of the WRI working group at the WRI triennial Conference in Germany, July 2006, which focused on Globalizing Nonviolence. Among other tasks, the working group is gearing up to promote nonviolent perspectives at the 2007 World Social Forum, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya.

Marianne Ballé Moudoumbou, an activist from Cameroon who represents the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), reminded us that globalization is not a recent phenomenon, but began with slavery. "Today," she stated, "we still face crucial issues regarding the connection between militarization and globalization. Refugees are the most obvious symbol and result of institutionalized racism and capitalism. So refugee emancipation has been a major priority for AAWORD, along with our work for the closing of all French military bases on the African continent." Noting that the Western powers don't want African people, or even the African Union, to have the power to help themselves, Moudoumbou suggested that Africans explore ways to empower themselves according to their own cultures and traditions.

As the sole African woman on the Women's Security Council in Germany

(where she currently resides), Moudoumbou emphasized the importance of ongoing work throughout Africa and amongst Africans living in Europe in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325. The resolution, adopted in 2000, marked the first time the Security Council addressed the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women.

Recognizing the undervalued and underutilized contributions women make to conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution, and peace-building, the resolution stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation as active agents in peace and security. "We have the power to protect our own people!" Marianne asserted. "We've been taught to be Anglophone against Francophone — but we are finding ways of working together. We must unite to make a better world."

Chesterfield Samba, the operations manager of Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe (GALZ), helped organize a recent GALZ conference, attended by twenty-seven groups throughout Africa. Despite this achievement, differences that emerged during the conference underlined how clashing cultures, beliefs, and religious perspectives on the continent have made organizing together quite difficult. Chester also warned, "donor dependency has caused some groups to lose focus." There are many examples of African groups adopting Western terms; even the terms gay or lesbian sometimes create difficulties where unity might have been possible.

Western corporate media coverage portray the whole of the African continent as a horrible place, when — in fact — there are many positive things going on in the continent. It is true, he added, that constitutions are sometimes just for the rich, and groups sometimes are working so hard just to survive that other organizing needs get lost. "But we now have an excellent opportunity to globalize our skills," he concluded. "Globalizing nonviolence in Africa must mean a sharing of

skills, resources, and training techniques."

Light Wilson Agwana shared stories of the Sudanese Organization for Nonviolence and Development (SONAD), for which he serves as executive director. SONAD was founded in 1994 as a response to the marginalization of youth in the decision making process of the country. Adhering to the belief and conviction that just, peaceful, and democratic societies can be achieved by people who are conscious and aware of their political and civil rights, SONAD believes that nonviolence is the best way to resolve conflict and achieve a just and lasting peace. "SONAD is an organization with nonviolence at its center," stated Light. "For SONAD, this means a commitment to justice without force that destroys or causes injuries to one's enemies. We believe that the nonviolent movement should analyze injustice from a critical perspective, working to overcome injustices in ways that liberate both the oppressed and the oppressor."

Their work is mainly done through five-day workshops on the themes of nonviolence and conflict transformation; civic and human rights education; women's empowerment; HIV/AIDS education; and capacity/institution building at the grassroots level. The violence in the Darfur region is of special concern to the people of SONAD and all of us working for an end to war and genocide.

WRI's Triennial concluded with remarks from European Parliament member **Tobias Pfluger**, an expert on EU/NATO militarization. I was honored to moderate that plenary, as Pfluger, who is also a member of the WRI Council, discussed the questionable motives of the large "peacekeeping force" in the Congo. "The EU is a neocolonial party," Pfluger stated at a special session on the Congo, "and they have an African plan. If they can't accomplish their goals through economic means, they'll do so through military means."

The WRI is united in its opposition to all war and militarism, from the production and trading of small arms to the waging of large scale wars and "ethnic cleansing." For WRI's African associates, globalizing nonviolence is not just a goal — it's a necessity. ☐



Chileans defy the dictatorship and denounce torture.
Image: Roberta Bacic archive.

Gandhi's Constructive Program — and Ours

Joanne Sheehan is on the staff of War Resisters League/New England. She is a member of a study group on constructive program in Southeastern Connecticut and facilitates workshops on the topic.

"Nonviolence for Gandhi was more than just a technique of struggle or a strategy for resisting military aggression; it was intimately related to the wider struggle for social justice, economic self-reliance, and ecological harmony as well as the quest for self-realization." (*The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense*, Robert Burrowes, SUNY Press)

The nonviolence movement in the West has, for the most part, ignored what Gandhi believed was key to social change: constructive program.

Gandhi stated that there were three elements needed for social transformation: personal transformation, political action, and constructive program. In the US we mostly focus on political action, in particular on protest and civil disobedience.

Constructive program is "building the new society in the shell of the old." In his introduction to the booklet, *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place*, Gandhi said that constructive program is the construction of "complete Independence by truthful and nonviolent means." As people who are struggling for independence from an empire that is trying to rule us and the world, we need to develop our own truthful and nonviolent means.

The core elements of the constructive program that Gandhi believed would be necessary for the transformation and liberation of India involved programs to embody equality, liberate education, promote economic self-reliance, and create a clean environment. Equality meant creating ashrams, political campaigns, and cooperative enterprises across communal lines (Hindu/Muslim/Sikh, etc.), embodying gender equality, and transcending caste distinctions, especially "untouchability." Gandhi saw a need for mind-opening education for children and adults. The economic self-reliance campaigns involved, most famously, spinning homemade cloth and the salt *satyagraha*, but also included the diversification

of crops, the creation of other village industries, and the development of labor unions. Environmental efforts focused on the whole community getting involved in creating village sanitation systems, which meant, for Hindus, overtly flouting caste norms.

The process of working on constructive program has fundamental benefits, the first of which is to provide immediate assistance to those in greatest need. As people come together (constructive programs are community, not individual, action), they build constituencies for social change. Constructive work provides opportunities for us to develop the skills we need to build a new society.

As Burrowes describes it, "*For the individual*, [constructive program] meant increased power-from-within through the development of personal identity, self-reliance, and fearlessness. *For the community*, it meant the creation of a new set of political, social, and economic relations." In cases where political revolutions have taken place but the population is not organized to exercise self-determination, the creation of a new society has been extremely difficult. In some cases, the usurpation of power by a new dictatorship has been the result; in others there has been political regime change without fundamental social or economic transformation.

The society we presently live in is very different from India in the first half of the 20th century. But as we look at the social, economic and environmental problems we face today, the similarities as well as the differences are striking. Can the problems of militarism, racism, poverty, sexism, classism, heterosexism, lack of access to affordable health care, housing, and decent education, and the need for immigrant rights and sustainable agriculture be transformed through a constructive program? While there are many projects that address these issues, a constructive program is a holistic approach to what needs to be changed, a vision based on non-violent principles. Burrowes explains, "*At the community level*, then, the constructive program is that part of the strategy designed to facilitate the development of new social structures that foster political participation, cultural diversity, economic self-reliance, and

ecological resilience."

Challenges In Creating Our Own Constructive Program

Gandhi's constructive program was rooted in the reality of the extreme poverty of India. While we certainly have poverty in the US, and a growing gap between the rich and the poor, most of us need to *reduce* our consumption. Our challenge is to develop a *society* that does not consume more than its fair share of the earth's resources, reducing our consumption of non-renewable energy within a framework of self-reliance.

Who should create such a vision for our society? What should the process be? Can a document such as the Earth Charter, a synthesis of values, principles, and aspirations created through an international consultation, serve as a framework for a present day constructive program, with communities working on the projects they feel are most needed? It is essential that there be a common vision and principles that link us together.

There are examples of projects in the US which are potential components of a comprehensive constructive program: the growth of community land trusts, the development of cooperatives, the creation of battered women's shelters and rape crisis centers, the proliferation of mediation centers, the amplified interest in alternative public schools, the blossoming of sustainable agriculture, the exponential spread of free software, and the increased interest in community-controlled economic development all contain the seeds for building an alternative society.

While developing a constructive program can be the answer to the often asked questions "but what are you *for*?" and "how can we be *proactive* rather than reactive?" is there enough of a perceived need to mobilize people? It is easier to protest the things we don't like than to build the things we want. It takes a sustained level of organizing to create a new society. But what if we don't?

For a copy of Gandhi's pamphlet, Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place, contact WRL-NE, POB 1093, Norwich, CT 06360, 860/887-6869, wrln@peoplepc.com. ☞

An Odyssey with Gandhi

David Cortright is the author, most recently, of Gandhi and Beyond: Nonviolence for an Age of Terrorism (Paradigm, 2006), and of the recently reissued Soldiers in Revolt: GI Resistance During the Vietnam War (Haymarket, 2005).

My commitment to peace and Gandhian nonviolence began when I was drafted into the Army during the Vietnam War. As I learned about war and militarism firsthand, I experienced what theologian John Howard Yoder later told me was a crisis of conscience.

I came to see the war as unjust and immoral and began to speak out for peace as part of the GI movement, openly opposing the war while on active duty. I recognized after discussions with antiwar colleagues and reading more about US

policy that the Vietnam War was part of a larger system of militarism and nuclear insanity that I also had to oppose.

Thus began a lifelong commitment to peace that has led most recently to my current position as professor of peace studies at the Kroc Institute at the University of Notre Dame.

My decision to write *Gandhi and Beyond* was a response to the persistent and often difficult questions of students. Nonviolence is nice in theory, but is it really practical? Are the beliefs and principles of Gandhi and King still relevant in a world gripped by the fear of terrorism? Will nonviolence work against adversaries who are seemingly without conscience and who ruthlessly attack civilians, as the Nazis did? As I grappled with these questions, I found a deeper meaning in nonviolence. I recognized that the Gandhian method at its core is a search for truth. Nonviolence is much more than a method of social action. It is a philosophy of life, a radically different way of being and doing. An inquiry into nonviolent social change became for me a quest for truth and the meaning of life.

I found it difficult to study Gandhi. My attempts to comprehend his message were impeded by the man himself. Every time I tried to approach Gandhi I found myself intimidated and overwhelmed not only by the scale of his accomplishments but also by his austerity and eccentricities. I was turned off by his extreme asceticism and his bizarre and offensive views toward women and sexuality. When I attempted to read his autobiography, *My Experiments in Truth*, I recoiled at his puritanical preachments and guilt-ridden battles against sexual “temptation.”

Gandhi practiced celibacy, I knew, but he seemed to want everyone else to do the same. The students in my class asked pointed and skeptical questions about Gandhi’s practice in his later years of sleeping naked next to young women in order to test his commitment to celibacy. All of these challenges forced me to address Gandhi’s limitations on gender issues. The chapter on these issues in the book, “Gender Matters,” attempts to incorporate the insights of pacifist feminists.

The most important insights I take from Gandhi are the commitment to action and the practicality of the method of nonviolent mass action. He developed core principles to guide this method: 1) a commitment to truth and the meticulous collection of facts, 2) persuasion and dialogue with the adversary, 3) a willingness to sacrifice and suffer, and 4) the use of direct action and mass non-cooperation. Dr. King developed a similar typology of the four steps in every nonviolent campaign in his incomparable *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*.

Through the creative application of these principles, Gandhi’s successors have achieved great advances for justice in numerous settings around the world. As I learned these core concepts, I realized that they apply to some of my own experiences in the GI movement, especially the willingness to sacrifice. When fellow soldiers and I made the decision to speak out against the war, we knew there would be a price to pay. We were willing to take that risk, however, because we were so outraged by the war and simply could not continue business as usual.

We were prepared to make sacrifices, but we were also committed to continuing the struggle and standing up for truth, regardless of the consequences. There is no better formula for achieving social justice and peace. It is the ideal to which I have tried to remain committed through the years, in my writing and activist commitments. I’m trying to follow in the footsteps of Gandhi, to take the long march with him to the sea. ☸



Activists Paul Watson and Rob Hunter risk their lives to protect baby harp seals in Canada from hunters, 1976. The campaign still continues, www.harpseals.org. © 1976 Patrick Moore/Greenpeace.

Gandhi's Spiritual Revolution Lives

Indian activist and author Arya Bhushan Bhardwaj is the founder of Gandhi-in-Action, an organization that promotes Gandhian non-violence internationally. Mr. Bhardwaj, who has a masters in sociology, formerly worked for the Rajghat School of Nonviolence, the Gandhi Peace Foundation, and the Indian Ministry of Human Resource Development. His father and grandfather were imprisoned during India's struggle for independence from Great Britain. Gandhi-in-Action, B-29 Mangal Pandey Marg, Bhajanpura, New Delhi-110053. Phone: 0091 11 22562448, +91 9811443566. Claire Schaeffer-Duffy is a frequent contributor to the National Catholic Reporter and a member of the Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community in Worcester, MA. They talked on July 6, 2006.

Claire Schaeffer-Duffy (CS): For many people, Gandhi's significance is his application of nonviolence to a political struggle. In your book *Living Nonviolence* you describe him as a "spiritual revolutionary," whose lifelong goal was "to see God face to face." Can you explain?

Arya Bhardwaj (AB): There is no doubt Gandhi applied the principle of nonviolence to the socio-political issues facing humanity during his life time, through his symbolic political actions in South Africa (1894–1915) and later in India (1916–1948). He did succeed up to certain extent. His ultimate goal was something more. He wanted humanity to change from the traditional ways of solving problems through physical-conflict . . . to adopt new ways of nonviolent social-change. He did not fully succeed in his effort.

To change minds is difficult. From time immemorial society has relied on violent ways which have dominated the human mind. Gandhi had full faith in the human heart's ability to change. He was optimistic and continued his ceaseless effort in this direction, throughout his life. Therefore, I say, Gandhi was a spiritual revolutionary.

The human being has been gifted with three-dimensional-growth: physical, mental and spiritual. But the human psyche seldom applies all three faculties. This is the biggest limitation with ordinary human

beings. Gandhi tried to use all three faculties that were God's gift to him.... Only when one uses all three faculties can one understand an integral approach to life and the concept of God.

CS: In your writings and talks, you refer frequently to the Gandhian concept of *swaraj* (self-rule). What is *swaraj* and why do you think it is so essential to constructing a nonviolent society?

AB: The Sanskrit word *swaraj* comes from *Swa* + *Raj*. 'Swa' means mine and 'Raj' means Rule. The main conflict that has been persisting all over the world is over the meaning of "Swa."

Most people think it is merely the physical (individual) 'I' which matters. The real meaning of 'I' can be truly understood only through an integral approach towards life where the physical 'I' remains marginal and the individual becomes one with others. It is only this real 'I' which remains ever lasting and universal. To reach a stage in life where one realizes that there is none other than that real 'I' — this was Gandhi's real goal in life.

CS: You have said that "identifying oneself and feeling one with others is the way that leads to God;" yet today the world seems more divided than ever. Political leaders speak of "a clash of civilizations" and religious fundamentalism is on the rise. What is a Gandhian response to these divisions? Specifically, how are Gandhians in India responding to Hindu fundamentalism?

AB: I do not think that this is a "clash of civilizations." True civilizations never clash actually speaking; it is a clash of narrow minded 'Swa' and the true 'Swa' as I have tried to explain earlier. It is the result of so-called democracy that the present clashes exist, whether it is in the name of Hindu fundamentalism (in Kashmir) or Muslim fundamentalism (the Middle East, Iraq, both inter-religion and intra-religion) or Christian fundamentalism (in Northern Ireland, intra-religion) or Buddhist fundamentalism (in Sri Lanka) or for any other illogical reasons.

We have to understand that in the age of mega-computers, supersonic jets, the

internet, and globalization, geo-political boundaries have become meaningless. It is only the political mis-leadership that unfortunately has been promoting this dead concept.

The problems of the common person around the globe are the same: poverty, hunger, socio-economic injustice, mental slavery and fear of death. These can be fought — in a united way rather than through fragmented clashes. The only sane way is to use all three faculties (physical, mental, and spiritual) that have been gifted to human beings. We have to "think positively, act locally, and live globally."

CS: Are you pessimistic or optimistic about the relevance of Gandhi's teachings for India of the 21st century?

AB: I do not think in isolation. I have been humbly trying to promote Gandhi's ideas at the global level for the last 22 years. It does not matter much that Gandhi was born in India. Gandhi's relevance is the same for India as well as for the whole globe. [His message] is as important today as it was when he was alive 58 years ago.

The mistake 'Gandhians' in India have been making is to identify themselves as a special people. They foolishly tried to make themselves a superior class, holier than thou. It has resulted in their reduction in numbers day by day. By contrast, Gandhi said, "I am humbler than a particle of dust."

Was Gandhi a Gandhian? Was Buddha a Buddhist? Was Christ a Christian? Buddha, Christ, and Gandhi were people who thought in an integral way and reached the position of "real human beings." People may call them God. I have no objection. But how they reached that level is a matter of practice.

In democracy, people's headcount matters. What is inside the head does not matter. This is the main limitation of the system and this is the root cause of the violence that we are helplessly witnessing today. It has to be changed, and it will be changed. I have full faith in a three dimensional approach of human beings. It is a matter of time. It may not be achieved in my life time. It does not matter. My simple goal is to go on striving until my last breath. ☺

Reclaiming Nonviolence

Continued from page 15

an empowering model of organizing.

But at times the Quaker influence in the nonviolence movement also contributed to the drift toward morality plays. Quaker pacifism involves a process of deep discernment, of constant self-questioning, of asking, “Are my actions in alignment with my values? Does my conscience allow me to participate in this act or comply with this procedure?” This process of deep self-examination imparts a clarity and purity to actions, and can serve as an important inner compass.

But if the main measure of an action’s success becomes how closely it allows us to conform to our personal moral values, we can lose sight of whether or not it is actually effective. When our actions again and again are ignored or seem to have little immediate impact on the wrongs we protest, we can unconsciously give up hope of actually winning.

There are many different modes of a politics of despair. We usually associate that phrase with the secret, militant cells of the seventies that carried out political bombings and robberies in a last desperate hope that the extremity of their acts would spark a revolution. But it could equally be applied to those who act simply to be virtuous in the face of doom and lose sight of the possibility of victory.

Such actions may be admirable and inspirational. But our time and attention can become focused on the minutia of moral choices in an action: Should I stand up or sit down when the police come? Should I walk with them or go limp? Should I voluntarily place my hand on the pad to be fingerprinted or make them pick it up and place it there? It’s not that those questions shouldn’t be asked, they can be valuable in helping us define our goals and limits.

But when we don’t go beyond them to ask, “What is the objective of this action? How does each of my choices further that objective?” then we undercut our chances of being effective. And they reinforce the system’s focus on individuals as isolated actors instead of encouraging us to ask, “How do we collectively take power?” ☐

A Pacifist Critique of Gandhi

Sam Diener is Co-Editor of Peacework.

To make a hero out of someone dehumanizes them almost as much as demonizing them does. It serves no one to turn Mohandas Gandhi into a plaster saint (or a stone *ganesha*).

Many of Gandhi’s statements and actions were reprehensible, some of which are mentioned elsewhere in this issue (such as the treatment of his children, see page 10). There isn’t space for a full critique, but a few themes are important to mention. One of Gandhi’s contributions to nonviolent thought is the idea that a true dedication to nonviolence requires striving for the complicated truth. As we appreciate Mohandas Gandhi’s many contributions to the development of nonviolent struggle, we can’t, if we are to appraise his legacy honestly, ignore his faults as well.

Misogyny

Gandhi campaigned vigorously to include women in every non-cooperation campaign, and organized against purdah. Yet, Gandhi, in his old age, regularly slept naked next to young girls, including his nieces, in order, he said, to test his commitment to *brahmacharya*, or celibacy. No matter how some try to contextualize these actions, from my perspective, he was abusing these girls.

His views about rape were misogynist. Gandhi wrote in *Harijan*, for example, that women “must develop courage enough to die rather than yield to the brute in man.” Gandhi claimed, if women are fearless, “However beastly the man, he will bow in shame before the flame of her dazzling purity.”

Gandhi opposed contraception (he had a famous debate with Margaret Sanger on the subject). His “idealization” of women as being superior at self-sacrifice, a quality he saw as being required of *satyagrahis*, is another form of stereotyping.

Racism

Gandhi often utilized racist arguments to advance the cause of Indians in South Africa. For example, addressing a public meeting in Bombay on September 26, 1896, following his return from South Africa, Gandhi said,

“Ours is one continued struggle against degradation sought to be inflicted upon us by the European, who desire to degrade us to the level of the raw *kaffir*, whose occupation is hunting and whose sole ambition is to collect a certain number of cattle to buy a wife with, and then pass his life in indolence and nakedness.” (*Collected Works, Volume II*, page 74). The word *kaffir* (or *keffir*) is a derogatory term used in South Africa for native Africans. Gandhi never, as far as I’ve read, publicly opposed the racist oppression of black Africans in South Africa.

Pacifism?

Gandhi was, at best, an inconsistent pacifist, in the sense of opposing all wars, a fact pointed out by pacifists such as Bart de Ligt in the 1930s. Gandhi supported the British war effort in several wars, including the Boer War, the Zulu Rebellion (though he later came to believe the British were wrong in that struggle), and World War I. His role was mainly to organize and participate in ambulance corps, but his personal participation earned him the British Empire’s War Medal. Even after he proclaimed “war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil,” he defended his participation based on his perceived “duty as a citizen of the British Empire.” He acknowledged that he was “guilty of the crime of war,” and eventually repudiated the Empire, but didn’t repudiate his actions. (See *Gandhi on War and Peace*, by Rashmi-Sudha Puri).

Caste-Based Worldview

While Gandhi undeniably campaigned vigorously against untouchability, Dalit leaders such as Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar opposed the use of Gandhi’s term for “untouchables” (“*harijan*,” or “children of god”) as condescending, and claimed Gandhi never fully renounced a caste-based worldview.

Contemporary peace and social justice movements are still struggling to overcome misogyny, racism, the call of nationalist duty, and oppression based on caste and class. Applying the best of Gandhian principles of nonviolence helps us compassionately critique the actions of Mohandas Gandhi the person, and ourselves. ☐

Defining Conflict Transformation

John Paul Lederach is a conflict transformation practitioner who provided consultation and direct mediation in a range of situations from the Miskito/Sandinista conflict in Nicaragua to Somalia, Northern Ireland, the Basque Country, and the Philippines. Lederach is a scholar with the Joan Kroc Institute of Conflict Studies at the University of Notre Dame and a Distinguished Scholar with the Conflict Transformation Program at Eastern Mennonite University. Lederach is the author of Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies. This selection is excerpted from The Little Book of Conflict Transformation (May 2003; \$4.95, © Good Books) used by permission. All rights reserved.

I propose the following definition:

Conflict transformation is to **envision** and **respond** to the **ebb and flow** of social conflict as **life-giving opportunities** for creating **constructive change processes** that **reduce violence, increase justice** in **direct interaction and social structures**, and respond to real-life problems in **human relationships**.

The meaning and implications of this definition will be easier to understand if we analyze the italicized components. Imagine conflict transformation as a person on a journey, comprised of a head, heart, hands, and legs.

Head

The head refers to the conceptual view of conflict – how we think about and therefore prepare to approach conflict. In the head we find the attitudes, perceptions, and orientations that we bring to creative conflict transformation. Our definition uses the terms *envision* and *respond*.

Envision is active, a verb. It requires an intentional perspective and attitude, a willingness to create and nurture a goal that provides direction and purpose.

A transformational perspective is built upon two foundations:

a capacity to envision conflict positively, as a natural phenomenon that creates potential for constructive growth, and

a willingness to respond in ways that maximize this potential for positive change.

A transformational approach recognizes that conflict is a normal and continuous dynamic within human relationships. Moreover, conflict brings with it the potential for constructive change. Positive change does not always happen, of course. As we all know too well, many times conflict results in long-standing cycles of hurt and destruction. But the key to transformation is a proactive bias toward seeing conflict as a potential catalyst for growth.

Respond suggests that vision must result in action, engaging the opportunity. The tilt is toward involvement. *Respond* recognizes that the deepest understanding comes from the learning process of real-life experience.

Both foundations – *envision and respond* – imply a certain level of “head” work. They represent the ways we think and orient ourselves as we approach the conflicts in our lives, relationships, and communities.

Ebb and flow: We often see conflict primarily in terms of its rise and fall, its escalation and de-escalation, its peaks and valleys. In fact, we often focus on a singular peak or valley, a particular iteration or repetition of a conflict episode. A transformational perspective, rather than looking at a single peak or valley, views the entire mountain range.

Perhaps it is helpful here to change our metaphor to one that is less static. Rather than narrowly focusing on the single wave rising and crashing on the shore, conflict transformation starts with an understanding of the greater patterns, the ebb and flow of energies, times, and even whole seasons, in the great sea of relationships.

The sea as a metaphor suggests that there is a rhythm and pattern to the movements in our relational lives. At times the sea movements are predictable, calm, even soothing. Periodically, events, seasons, and climates combine to create great sea changes that affect everything around them.

A transformational approach seeks to understand the particular episode of conflict not in isolation, but as embedded in the greater pattern. Change is understood both at the level of immediate presenting issues and that of broader patterns and issues. The sea is constantly moving, fluid, and dynamic. Yet at the same time it has shape and form

and can have monumental purpose.

Heart

The heart is the center of life in the human body. Physically, it generates the pulse that sustains life. Figuratively, it is the center of our emotions, intuitions, and spiritual life. This is the place from which we go out and to which we return for guidance, sustenance, and direction. The heart provides a starting and a returning point. Two ideas form such a center for conflict transformation.

Human relationships: Biologists and physicists tell us that life itself is found less in the physical substance of things than in the less visible connections and relationships between them. Similarly, in conflict transformation relationships are central. Like the heart in the body, conflicts flow from and return to relationships.

Relationships have visible dimensions, but they also have dimensions that are less visible. To encourage the positive potential inherent in conflict, we must concentrate on the less visible dimensions of relationships, rather than concentrating exclusively on the content and substance of the fighting that is often much more visible. The issues over which people fight are important and require creative response. However, relationships represent a web of connections that form the larger context, the human eco-system from which particular issues arise and are given life.

To return for a moment to our sea image, if an individual wave represents the peak of issues visibly seen in the escalation of social conflict, relationships are the ebb and flow of the sea itself. Relationships -- visible and invisible, immediate and long-term -- are the heart of transformational processes.

Life-giving opportunities: The word *life-giving* applied to a conflict situation reminds us of several things. On one hand, the language suggests that life gives us conflict, that conflict is a natural part of human experience. On the other, it assumes that conflict creates life like the pulsating heart of the body creates rhythmic blood flow.

Conflict flows from life. As I have emphasized above, rather than seeing conflict as a threat, we can understand it as provid-

ing opportunities to grow and to increase understanding of ourselves, of others, of our social structures. Conflicts in relationships at all levels are the way life helps us to stop, assess, and take notice. One way to truly know our humanness is to recognize the gift of conflict in our lives. Without it, life would be a monotonously flat topography of sameness and our relationships would be woefully superficial.

Conflict also creates life: through conflict we respond, innovate, and change. Conflict can be understood as the motor of change, that which keeps relationships and social structures honest, alive, and dynamically responsive to human needs, aspirations, and growth.

Hands

We refer to our hands as that part of the body capable of building things, able to touch, feel and affect the shape that things take. Hands bring us close to practice. When we say “hands-on,” we mean that we are close to where the work takes place. Two terms of our definition stand out in this regard.

Constructive: Constructive can have two meanings. First, at its root it is a verb: to build, shape, and form. Second, it is an adjective: to be a positive force. Transformation contains both these ideas. It seeks to understand, not negate or avoid, the reality that social conflict often develops violent and destructive patterns. Conflict transformation pursues the development of change processes which explicitly focus on creating positives from the difficult or negative. It encourages greater understanding of underlying relational and structural patterns while building creative solutions that improve relationships. Its bias is that this is important, that conflict is opportunity.

Change processes: Central to this approach are *change processes*, the transformational component and the foundation of how conflict can move from being destructive toward being constructive. This movement can only be done by cultivating the capacity to see, understand, and respond to the presenting issues in the context of relationships and ongoing change processes. What are the processes that the conflict itself has generated? How can these processes be altered, or other processes initiated, that will move the conflict in a constructive direction? A focus on

process is key to conflict transformation.

Conflict transformation focuses on the dynamic aspects of social conflict. At the hub of the transformational approach is a convergence of the relational context, a view of conflict-as-opportunity, and the encouragement of creative change processes. This approach includes, but is not driven by, an episodic view of conflict. Conflict is viewed within the flow and the web of relationships. As we shall see, a transformational lens sees the generation of creative “platforms” as the mechanism to address specific issues, while also working to change social structures and patterns.

Legs and Feet

Legs and feet represent the place where we touch the ground, where all our journeys hit the road. Like the hands, this is a point of action, where thought and heartbeat translate into response, direction, and momentum. Conflict transformation will be only utopian if it is unable to be responsive to real-life challenges, needs, and realities.

A transformational view engages two paradoxes as the place where action is pursued and raises these questions: How do we address conflict in ways that reduce violence and increase justice in human relationships? And how do we develop a capacity for constructive, direct, face-to-face interaction and, at the same time, address systemic and structural changes?

Reduce violence and increase justice: Conflict transformation views peace as centered and rooted in the quality of relationships. These relationships have two dimensions: our face-to-face interactions and the ways we structure our social, political, economic, and cultural relationships. In this sense, peace is what the New Sciences call a “process-structure”: a phenomenon that is simultaneously dynamic, adaptive, and changing, and yet has a form, purpose, and direction that gives it shape. Rather than seeing peace as a static “end-state,” conflict transformation views peace as a continuously evolving and developing quality of relationships. Peace work, therefore, is characterized by intentional efforts to address the natural ebb and flow of human conflict through non-violent approaches, which address issues and increase understanding, equality, and respect in relationships.

To reduce violence requires that we address the presenting issues and content of an episode of conflict, and also its underlying patterns and causes. This requires us to address justice issues. While we do that, we must proceed in an equitable way toward substantive change. People must have access and voice in decisions that affect their lives. In addition, the patterns that create injustice must be addressed and changed at both relational and structural levels.

Direct interaction and social structures: As suggested above, we need to develop capacities to envision and engage in change processes at all levels of relationships: interpersonal, inter-group, and social-structural. One set of capacities points toward direct, face-to-face interaction. The other set underscores the need to see, pursue, and create change in our ways of organizing social structures, from families to complex bureaucracies, from the local to the global.

Conflict transformation suggests that a fundamental way to promote constructive change on all these levels is dialogue. Dialogue is essential to justice and peace on both an interpersonal and a structural level. It is not the only mechanism, but it is an essential one.

We typically think of dialogue as direct interaction between people or groups. Conflict transformation shares this view. Many of the skill-based mechanisms that are called upon to reduce violence are rooted in the communicative abilities to exchange ideas, find common definitions to issues, and seek ways forward toward solutions.

However, a transformational view believes that dialogue is necessary for both creating and addressing social and public spheres where human institutions, structures, and patterns of relationships are constructed. Processes and spaces must be created so that people can engage and shape the structures that order their community life, broadly defined. Dialogue is needed to provide access to, a voice in, and constructive interaction with, the ways we formalize our relationships and in the ways our organizations and structures are built, respond, and behave.

At its heart, conflict transformation focuses on creating adaptive responses to human conflict through change processes which increase justice and reduce violence. ☞

Four Principles for Organizing in Our Post-Katrina World

Bill Quigley is a human rights lawyer and law professor at Loyola University New Orleans. You can reach him at Quigley@loyno.edu

Katrina turned our world upside down. Our social justice communities have had to start over in many ways. Many of our usual friends and organizations are literally gone – over 200,000 from the City of New Orleans alone are still displaced.

The Gulf Coast is in a “self-help” mode. If you have the resources to help yourself, go right at it. If you need help from the community, especially from the government, you are out of luck.

Everyone saw who was left behind when Katrina hit: the elderly, the children, the disabled, the prisoners, those in hospitals and nursing homes, those without cars, the working poor. Guess who is being shut out of the rebuilding of New Orleans? The same people – left behind again for the same reasons.

We have had to start over. Here are some reflections on four of the many organizing principles we are learning as we start over.

Tragedy and Hope

We fight two tendencies as we struggle for justice. One is to focus only on the terrible things that have happened and those that

continue to happen. The other is to look only for the good in order to keep our spirits up and our optimism for the future well-fed.

Either one of these approaches without the other will rob us of the ability to stay balanced in the long-term struggle for justice.

Pain and devastation are very real. Over 1000 people died directly, thousands more have died since. Homes and neighborhoods remain destroyed.

But, despite the odds, neighborhoods are showing signs of life as formerly isolated neighbors are introducing themselves to one another and working together to build their communities. Volunteers from across the country have generously come to help out and to provide some of the basics we need.

The hardest thing in the world is to have a heart that is totally open to both tragedy and hope. But that is exactly what we need.

Race and Poverty Over and Over and Over

What neighborhoods are going to be rebuilt? Where are people going to go to school? Who is going to get assistance and when? No decision is made in our community without the dimensions of race and poverty being part of the discussion – usually the unstated part.

Plus, all of a sudden, half the workforce in our city is Latino. This is very new for us. We never had day labor corners before. Politicians are blaming the newest brown workers for the problems of black workers. Everyone conveniently overlooks the fact that black workers were treated poorly before the hurricanes. All of a sudden it is the fault of those new guys.

Most of our civil rights issues have usually been black and

white. Now we have an additional group at the table. We are having trouble making room. Our justice ideas have to expand.

It is impossible to overstate the continuing need for clear racial and economic justice analysis in order to avoid re-creating the problems of the past.

Growing Importance of Human Rights

Our community is starting to see some connections between the displacement of over 200,000 people from their homes and the displacement of other peoples across the globe.

We are surprised to find that the United Nations Principles on Internally Displaced Persons apply to us.

We feel in our bones we have a right to return. But there is little in our traditional civil rights law that creates a right to return home. A human rights analysis is helping us create a framework for our struggle to return.

Solidarity

Several local organizations have adopted the slogan “Solidarity not charity.”

People are coming to help us from all over. We appreciate it. But there is something unsettling in being the object of charity.

We know there are neighborhoods in every city in this country where people have been left behind. Places where the schools don't work, where people do not have jobs. Every city has a little Katrina in it. It is more concentrated in New Orleans right now. It is easier to see here.

Use your time with us to develop relationships with us, but also use it to help people see the Katrinas in your own community as well.

Then we will all understand why Australian aboriginal activist Lila Watson challenged us: “If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us struggle together.”

We need your solidarity. Let us struggle together. ☪



A volunteer and a resident construct a shelter for a tent city, Survivors Village, outside a New Orleans public housing complex slated for demolition. HUD plans to demolish over 2/3 of its pre-Katrina units. The United Front for Affordable Housing protests. Photo: June, 2006 © Diane Greene Lent.

A Revolution of Empowerment: Honoring Disability Rights Activist Justin Dart, Jr.

Fred Fay and Fred Pelka (author of The ABC Clio Companion to the Disability Rights Movement) are activists for the civil rights of people with disabilities. This belated but still timely obituary is excerpted from a longer piece available at the American Association for People with Disabilities website, www.aapd.org.

"Beloved colleagues in struggle... Our lives, our children's lives, the quality of the lives of billions in future generations hangs in the balance. I cry out to you from the depths of my being. Humanity needs you! Lead! Lead! Lead the revolution of empowerment!"

— Justin Dart, Jr.

Justin Dart, Jr., a leader of the international disability rights movement and a renowned human rights activist, died on June 21, 2002 at his home in Washington DC. He is survived by his wife Yoshiko Saji, their extended family of foster children, his many friends and colleagues, and millions of disability and human rights activists all over the world.

Dart was a leader in the disability rights movement for three decades, and an advocate for the rights of women, people of color, and gays and lesbians. The recipient of five presidential appointments and numerous honors, Dart was also a highly successful entrepreneur, using his personal wealth to further his human rights agenda by generously contributing to organizations, candidates, and individuals, becoming what he called "a little PAC for empowerment."

Until the end, Dart remained dedicated to his vision of a "revolution of empowerment."

Dart never hesitated to emphasize the assistance he received from those working with him, most especially his wife of more than thirty years, Yoshiko Saji. Time and again Dart stressed that his achievements were only possible with the help of hundreds of activists, colleagues, and friends. "There is nothing I have achieved, and no addiction I have overcome, without

the love and support of specific individuals who reached out to empower me... There is nothing I have accomplished without reaching out to empower others." Dart protested the fact that he and only three other disability activists were on the podium when President Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act, believing that "hundreds of others should have been there as well." After receiving the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Dart sent out replicas to hundreds of disability rights activists across the country, writing "this award belongs to you."

A turning point was Dart's discovery in 1949 of the philosophy of Mohandas K. Gandhi. Dart defined Gandhi's message as, "Find your own truth, and then live it." This theme too would stay with him for the rest of his life. Dart attended the University of Houston from 1951 to 1954. He wanted to be a teacher, but the university withheld his teaching certificate because he was a wheelchair user. During his time in college, Dart organized his first human rights group — a pro-integration student group at what was then a whites-only institution.

Dart went into business in 1956, building several successful companies in Mexico and Japan. He used his businesses to provide work for women and for people with disabilities. It was during this time he met his wife, Yoshiko.

The final turning point in Dart's life came during a visit to Vietnam in 1966, to investigate the status of rehabilitation in that war-torn country. Visiting a "rehabilitation center" for children with polio, Dart instead found squalid conditions where disabled children were left on concrete floors to starve. "That scene," he would later write, "is burned forever in my soul. For the first time in my life I understood the

reality of evil, and that I was a part of that reality."

The Darts moved to Texas in 1974, and immersed themselves in local disability activism. His work in Texas became a pattern for what was to follow: extensive meetings with the grassroots, followed by a call for the radical empowerment of people with disabilities, followed by tireless advocacy until victory was won.

Dart is best known for his work in passing the Americans with Disabilities Act. In 1988, the Darts toured the country, visiting every state, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the District of Columbia, holding public forums attended by more than 30,000 people. Everywhere he went, Dart touted the ADA as "the civil rights act of the future."

While taking pride in passage of the ADA, Dart was always quick to list all the others who shared in the struggle: Robert Silverstein and Robert Burgdorf, Patrisha Wright and Tony Coelho, Fred Fay, and Judith Heumann, among many others. And Dart never wavered in his commitment to disability solidarity, insisting that all people with disabilities be protected by the law and included in the coalition to pass it — including mentally ill "psychiatric survivors" and people with HIV/AIDS. Dart called this his "politics of inclusion," a companion to his "politics of principle, solidarity, and love." ☞



The Disabled Peoples Liberation Front blockades an inaccessible Boston movie theater, 1987. © Ellen Shub.

PIECES

EVENTS

IWW Solidarity Night, 9/9, 8-11 pm; Democracy Center, 45 Mt. Auburn St, Cambridge MA; suggested donation \$10; an evening of musical entertainment to benefit the Starbucks Workers Union, with performers Evan Greer (Riot Folk Collective), Jake & the Infernal Machine, Clara Hendricks, & Bill Bumpus; IWW Starbucks Workers Union, 347 Maujer St #C, Brooklyn NY 11206; www.iww.org

Salem State Peace Institute, 9/11, 7-9 pm; Forten Hall (4th Floor of library), Salem State University, Salem, MA; watch a film about Gandhi & participate in a discussion led by Krishna Mallick (professor of Peace Studies) & James Hoover (professor of History of India)

The Punishment of Virtue: Inside Afghanistan after the Taliban, 9/11, 6:30 pm; Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington St (at Milk St), Boston MA; with Sarah Chayes, former NPR correspondent in Afghanistan & later staff in Kandahar of Afghanistan for a Civil Society; presentation followed by Q&A moderated by Robin Young of WBUR; wheelchair accessible; sponsored by Ford Hall Forum, 716 Columbus Ave #565; Boston MA 02120; 617/373-5800; www.fordhallforum.org

The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Execution, 9/12, 6:30 pm; Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington St (at Milk St), Boston MA; with Sister Helen Prejean; wheelchair accessible; sponsored by Ford Hall Forum, 716 Columbus Ave #565; Boston MA 02120; 617/373-5800; www.fordhallforum.org

You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train (film & discussion), 9/21, 7 pm; New Art Center, 61 Washington Park, Newtonville MA; \$15; This acclaimed film, directed by Deb Ellis & Denis Mueller, looks at the amazing life of the renowned historian, activist, & author Howard Zinn. Following the screening there will be a Question & Answer session with Howard Zinn; tickets available at the door or in advance by calling 617/964-3424.

Pat Farren Memorial Lecture with Marge Piercy, 11/8, 7 pm (6 pm reception); Cambridge Friends Meetinghouse, Cambridge MA; \$10-50; to reserve seats, make checks to Peacework/AFSC with "Marge Piercy" in the memo line & send to Peacework, AFSC, 2161 Mass. Ave., Cambridge MA 02140; 617/661-6130; www.peaceworkmagazine.org

CAMPAIGNS

September 11th Is a Choice: Choosing the Path of Nonviolence, 9/11-21; September 11, 5th anniversary of the terrible attacks in the US & 100th anniversary of Gandhi's historic speech calling for nonviolent resistance to injustice, is symbolic of a basic choice that we all must face: Do we respond to deep hurt with a practice of revenge, or do we choose a practice of nonviolence & determination not to give up our inherent humanity? The Seattle Center for Peace offers many resources & ideas for ways to choose & promote practical alternatives to violence: nonviolence pledge cards, wristbands commemorating the pledge, events listings, educational materials, & more; for more information contact Sandy Fox, 206/322-9899; seattlecenterforpeace@yahoo.com; www.seattlecenterforpeace.org

Support Nonviolent Peaceforce: Work a Day for Peace, 9/11; NP, whose civilian unarmed peacekeeping teams are working Sri Lanka & other areas of conflict, offers a program for any group to gather & reflect on September 11 & act positively for change; suggested activities & discussion questions for a 1- to 2-hour gathering are provided, along with a pledge of nonviolence & ways to support NP's work in the US & abroad; NP, 425 Oak Grove, Minneapolis MN 55403; www.nvpf.org

Software Freedom Day, 9/16; organize your own event to participate in a worldwide celebration of Free & Open Source Software; for ideas & more information, www.softwarefreedomday.org

Keep Space for Peace Week, 10/1-8; international week of protest to stop the militarization of space; for information on events or to get involved, contact the Global Network Against Nuclear Weapons & Power in Space, 207/729-0517; POB 652, Brunswick ME 04011; www.space4peace.org

Peace & Justice for Guam: The US plans to station 8000 more troops on the island of Guam in the weeks after September 11, 2006, as part of its increasing direction of military resources toward Asia; US military bases occupy more than one-third of this nation's 35 square miles; to support a campaign of protest by leaders of the Chamorro people of Guam, sign an on-line petition at: www.PetitionOnline.com/haleta/petition.html; to learn more, contact The Chamorro Nation, POB 6132, Merizo, Guam 96916

Home from Iraq Now Ballot Question; On 11/7, 139 MA towns will vote whether to approve a referendum calling for the US to end the war in Iraq and bring the troops home; To help with the AFSC/UFJP campaign, contact Paul Shannon: 617/497-5273, pshannon@afsc.org

OPPORTUNITIES

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law of the Boston Bar Association seeks Office Manager; letter & résumé to LCCR, 294 Washington St #443, Boston MA 02108; www.lawyerscom.org (no phone calls please)

PeaceWriting Annual International Writing Awards; seeking book-length manuscripts about the causes, consequences, & solutions to violence & war, & about the ideas & practices of nonviolent peacemaking & the lives of nonviolent peacemakers; cash prizes for non-fiction, fiction/poetry/play, & children's literature; deadline 12/1; for guidelines & more information, contact PeaceWriting, 2582 Jimmie Ave, Fayetteville, AR 72703-3420; 501/442-4600; jbennet@uark.edu

World Peace Tour to Bhutan, 2/13-26/07; Sacred Himalaya Travel in collaboration with the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism is hosting a trip focused on peace in a culture where kindness & compassion are practiced as a way of life. With a flexible schedule, meet Bhutan's warm-hearted people, offer blessings for peace, attend a rural festival. For details visit www.iipt.org/worldpeacectravel/index.htm

GATHERINGS

¡La Lucha Continua! Centro Presente invites you to participate in a week of national action, 9/7; Washington, DC; tell Congress to stop the separation of families & the deportations; for information or to reserve a seat on the Centro Presente bus from Boston, contact CP, 54 Essex St #2, Cambridge MA 02139; 617/497-9080

A Retreat for the Isolated Activist, 9/21-28; Ferdinand, IN; A retreat for peace & justice activists within the Christian community who have felt separated from the mainstream in these past few years of national division & conflict; with Margaret Silf (*Sacred Spaces & Inner Compass*); participants may come for either or both three-day sessions, 9/21-24, "Companions of Christ: The Art of Detachment & Ways of Living True" or; 9/24-28, "Coming Home to Our True Selves: The Search for Security, the Power of Fear, & the Possibility

A Declaration of Peace

The Declaration of Peace is a nationwide campaign to establish by September 21, 2006 a concrete and rapid plan for peace in Iraq, including:

- A prompt timetable for withdrawal of troops and closure of bases
- A peace process for security, reconstruction, and reconciliation
- A shift of funding from war to meeting human needs

If this plan for peace is not created and activated by Congress by September 21, Declaration signers across the US will engage in nonviolent action in Washington, DC and in communities throughout the nation.

From September 21-28, just before Congress adjourns for the fall elections, Declaration signers will take action — and support a comprehensive peace process — by taking part in nonviolent action, marches, rallies, demonstrations, interfaith services, candlelight vigils, and other creative ways to declare peace at the US Capitol and in cities and towns across the country.

More than 180 organizations are participating in the Declaration of Peace movement. Sign The Declaration of Peace (available at www.declarationofpeace.org) — and take tangible, nonviolent action to end this war and to declare a new era of peace and justice.

For information, contact Declaration of Peace, 2501 Harrison St, Oakland CA 94612; 773/777-7858; www.declarationofpeace.org. ☎

of Authentic Freedom.” For more information visit www.broadwayumc.org/publications/retreatbrochure3.pdf

Common Ground Country Fair, 9/22-24; Maine Organic Farmers & Growers Association Fairgrounds, Unity ME; a celebration of rural & healthy living; sponsored by MOFGA, 207/568-4142; www.mofga.org

Protest the Christening of the USS Samson Aegis Destroyer, 9/16, 9 am; Bath Iron Works, Washington St, Bath ME; contact Jack Bussell, Veterans for Peace, 207/772-1442; jfabussell@zwi.net

Declaration of Peace March, 9/30, 1 pm; Concord, NH; New Hampshire's peace & faith communities will join together to protest the war in Iraq & demand action to bring peace, demonstrating locally as other activists converge in Washington, DC & around the country; contact New Hampshire Peace Action, 603/746-4235; www.nhpeaceaction.org

Not In Our Town National Gathering, 10/6-8; Bloomington IL; NIOT is a media & grassroots organizing project that encourages community response to hate violence; NIOT, c/o The Working Group, POB 70232, Oakland CA 94612-0232; 510/268-9675; www.theworkinggroup.org/gathering

Promoting & Practicing Peace in Perilous Times: A Gandhian Conference on Nonviolence, 10/13-14; Memphis TN; with keynotes by Arun Gandhi, Helen Prejean, Frida Berrigan, Victor La Cerva, & Roz Nichols; M. K. Gandhi Institute for Nonviolence, 139 Oakdale St, Memphis TN 38112; 301/452-2824; www.gandhiconference.org

Second International Conference on Islamic Feminism, 11/3-5; Barcelona, Spain; with Ziba Mir Hosseini, Ayesha Imam, Shaheen Sardar Ali, & many other presenters; to learn more or to register (deadline 10/20) visit www.feminismeislamic.org

Creating Change 2006, 11/8-12; Kansas City, MO; an organizing conference for the lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender community; with Matt Forman, Oscar De La O, Marjorie Hill, Rinku Sen., & Olga Vives; workshops, seminars, & a National Religious Leadership Roundtable; sponsored by the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force, 1325 Massachusetts Ave NW #600, Washington DC 20005; 202/393-5177; www.thetaskforce.org

RESOURCES

Revolutionary Heroes Women Warriors 2007 Wall Calendar; \$15 +\$3 she (bulk discounts available); a unique 13-month calendar

honors daily rebels, radicals, & revolutionaries of different times & contexts; each day features a brief biographical sketch & image of a historic woman change agent such as Lillian Madeira Nagoya, South African apartheid resister; Anna Louise Strong, radical pacifist American journalist; Yamada Wake, Japanese journalist & activist, & hundreds more; proceeds benefit the Gustavus Myers Center for the Study of Bigotry & Human Rights; make checks payable to “Myers Center/Simmons” & send to Myers Center, Simmons College, 300 The Fenway, Boston MA 02115-5898; 617/521-2171; www.sheroescalendar.org

Fellowship of Reconciliation seeks to replace violence, war, racism, & economic injustice with nonviolence, peace, & justice; FOR's Task Force on Latin America & the Caribbean works for the demilitarization of US policy in Latin America & maintains a team of human rights international observers in Colombia who have increased the security of courageous Colombian communities engaged in nonviolent resistance. FOR, POB 271, Nyack NY 10960; 845/358-4601; www.forusa.org

New England No Nukes Resources; t-shirts with beautiful sunflower design, Stop Vermont Yankee buttons, bumper stickers, nuclear impact maps of the region; Citizens Awareness Network, POB 83, Shelburne Falls, MA 01370; 802/787-4276; www.nukebusters.org

Exile: Conversations with Pramodya Ananta Toer — Interviews with André Vitchek & Rossie Indira, edited by Nagesh Rao; \$16 pb; 180 pp; The first ever book-length interview with an artist who gave expression to a revolutionary vision of Indonesian cultural identity & was exiled for 10 years in the Buru island internment camp; also new from Haymarket Books, *Independent Politics: The Green Party Strategy Debate*, edited by Howie Hawkins; Haymarket Books, POB 180165, Chicago IL 60618; 773/583-7884

The Engaged Spiritual Life: A Buddhist Approach to Transforming Ourselves & the World, by Donald Rothberg; \$16 pb; 272 pp; for anyone who has wondered how to manage a meaningful balance between spiritual practice & social justice; Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St, Boston MA 02108-2892; 617/742-2110; www.beacon.org

After the Guns Have Stopped: Searching for Reconciliation in Burundi, by Theoneste Bizimana & Anna Sandidge; A report from the African Great Lakes Initiative of the Friends Peace Teams; Hear from 18 individuals & their response to the violence — not the cries of those in the midst of conflict, but the mature thoughts of people who, more than a decade after the violence began, are healing; FPT, African Great Lakes Initiative, 1001 Park Ave, St. Louis MO 63104; www.aglionline.org ☎

Weaving in Traffic

Craig Swanson is a political cartoonist and essayist whose work, emblazoned on t-shirts and other paraphernalia, can be found at <http://store.perspicuity.com>. This piece is excerpted from a longer essay available on Swanson's site.

Henry David Thoreau was a poet, essayist, and naturalist. He spent a night in jail for not paying his poll-tax, but made the act a medium for protesting both the United States' war in Mexico and slavery. Mr. Thoreau is credited for inventing the concept of civil disobedience (which he writes about in his essay of the same name). As for Mr. Thoreau's influences, one of the sources of his ideas is the Hindu classic, the *Bhagavadgita*, (Sanskrit for "Song of the Lord").

In the beginning of the 20th century, we find Mohandas K. Gandhi exploring ways of bringing about social change through nonviolent resistance. Gandhi claimed that he first got the idea for organizing mass civil

disobedience by reading Thoreau's essay. Gandhi's brilliance was his ability to create techniques for applying Thoreau's theory; Gandhian nonviolent resistance took shape as strikes, boycotts, and protest marches.

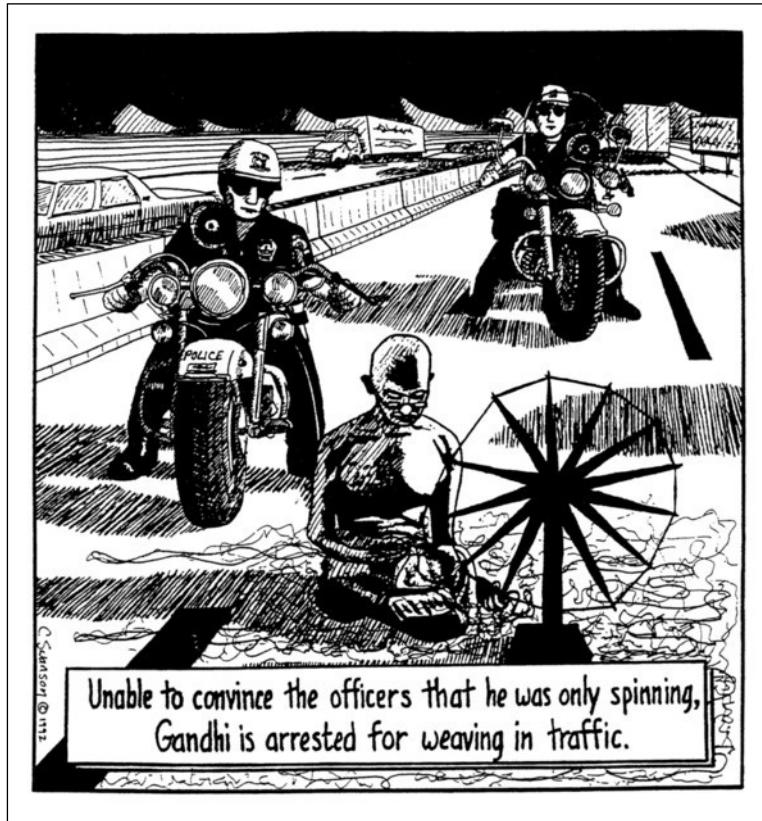
Twenty years after Gandhi's death, Martin Luther King, Jr. was listening to

a speech by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, the president of Howard University, describing Gandhi's life and teachings. King was so impressed that he immediately read as much as he could about Gandhi and through him discovered the tools that he would use in helping to lead the US Civil Rights Movement.

And so the mantle was passed from 1st century India, to mid-19th century United States, to early 20th century India, and back again to mid-20th century United States.

I think of this as my first detailed cartoon. I had read about Gandhi's life, so I was bound to weasel him into one of my cartoons sooner or later.

Gandhi's image is from a fairly well-known photograph by Margaret Bourke-White. The scenery is inspired by George Herriman (author of Krazy Kat). The cops came from a picture book on Los Angeles that my Grandmother gave me (a book I would never have imagined ever using). So many of my cartoons are montages of images from all over the place. That might be most of the fun. ☺



**DID YOU RECEIVE
THIS ISSUE FREE?
PLEASE SUBSCRIBE!**

10 monthly issues: \$23 regular, \$25
Canada & Mexico; \$14 student/low-
income; \$1 prisoner; \$40 overseas.

Enclosed is \$___ for a subscription for

Name _____

Address _____

Make check to AFSC/Peacework. Or
subscribe online at www.afscstore.org!



American Friends Service Committee
2161 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140

Periodicals
Postage
Paid

Taylor C. Sherman

A Gandhian answer to the threat of communism? Sarvodaya and postcolonial nationalism in India

**Article (Accepted version)
(Refereed)**

Original citation:

Sherman, Taylor C. (2015) *A Gandhian answer to the threat of communism? Sarvodaya and postcolonial nationalism in India*. [Indian Economic and Social History Review](#). ISSN 0019-4646

Reuse of this item is permitted through licensing under the Creative Commons:

© 2015 The Author
CC BY

This version available at: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/63939/>

Available in LSE Research Online: Online: October 2015

LSE has developed LSE Research Online so that users may access research output of the School. Copyright © and Moral Rights for the papers on this site are retained by the individual authors and/or other copyright owners. You may freely distribute the URL (<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk>) of the LSE Research Online website.

**A Gandhian Answer to the Threat of Communism? Sarvodaya and Postcolonial
Nationalism in India¹**

Taylor C. Sherman
London School of Economics and Political Science
t.c.sherman@lse.ac.uk

Abstract: It is an axiom of early postcolonial Indian history that Nehru and his statist conception of nationalism and of economic development dominated the political and economic life of India. As such, scholars have assumed, Gandhian ideas, especially radically non-statist answers to the problems of development, lost influence in this period. This article explores Gandhian economic thinking, in the form of the Bhoodan Movement and three of the thinkers on sarvodaya economics in the 1950s, Vinoba Bhave, K.G. Mashruwala and J.C. Kumarappa. It goes on to demonstrate the complex relationship that these men and their ideas had with Nehru and various levels of the Indian state. It argues that non-statist ideas remained important in the development of postcolonial Indian nationalism.

KEY WORDS: Vinoba Bhave, K.G. Mashruwala, J.C. Kumarappa, M.K. Gandhi, Telangana, land reform, development, self-sufficiency, Gandhian economics

A Gandhian Answer to the Threat of Communism? Sarvodaya and Postcolonial Nationalism in India

Taylor C. Sherman
London School of Economics and Political Science
t.c.sherman@lse.ac.uk

Over the past decade or more, a reassessment of the early postcolonial history of South Asia has begun as historians have started to unearth new archival sources. Independence and partition are no longer seen as a single moment, but as long, tangled processes.² New research into citizenship, secularism and corruption has given us a more complex, and less rose-tinted, view of India's early years.³ Even as this new research has questioned some of the earlier beliefs about the years of Nehru's premiership (1947-64), two assumptions about the Nehruvian period have remained largely unexamined. The first is the centrality of the state to programmes of economic development in this early postcolonial period.⁴ The second, and consequential, assumption is that Gandhian economic thought and Gandhian political activism were marginalised under Nehru. The research below casts a fresh eye on these two pillars of early independent Indian political life through an examination of the Bhoodan Yajna (Land-gifts Mission). The Bhoodan Yajna was a Gandhian movement, initiated by Archarya Vinoba Bhave in 1951 as a step towards solving India's 'land problem' and the communist uprisings which grew from it. Bhave, along with other prominent Gandhian thinkers, drew up blueprints for an economy based on Gandhian principles of radical decentralisation that were encompassed in the idea of *sarvodaya* (uplift for all).

An exploration of the Bhoodan movement, and the economic thinking of which it was part, first of all, throws new light on Gandhian thought and nationalist politics after independence. Although there has been a sharp increase in research on Gandhi's thought of late, much of the existing research implicitly assumes that the ideas died with the man.⁵ Even before the death of Gandhi in 1948, scholars have assumed, Gandhian approaches to India's economic questions were either side-lined,⁶ or thoroughly co-opted, at least rhetorically, by India's planners.⁷ Moreover, the nationalist leadership, now the ruling elite,

sought to rein in Gandhian political activism, in the form of non-violent protest, as nationalism was directed through the channels of the state.⁸

The transition to independence did indeed raise questions about the nature and direction the nationalist movement might take. But the existing scholarship elides the fact that each nationalist campaign had not only negative, rule-breaking elements, but also positive, constructive elements, usually concerned with village reconstruction. It is argued below that this latter aspect of Gandhian thought, in the form of decentralised, non-statist (even anti-statist) efforts at economic transformation continued to be developed after independence. This was so for a number of reasons. First of all, it continued because a spiritual successor to Gandhi emerged in the form of Vinoba Bhave, who took on the task of furthering Gandhi's programme of village regeneration, and developed it in new ways via the Bhoodan movement. Secondly, whilst Nehru and the Congress leadership did discourage Gandhian-style political protests, they were also searching for ways of channelling the constructive energies of India's masses to fight a new war, this time for India's economic independence. Moreover, early postcolonial India never had the resources to pursue centralised planning for the entire economy. And the constitution restricted the scope of government action when it came to land reform. Therefore, in the agrarian sector, the government had to limit itself to acting as a catalyst for change and encouraging independent improvements.⁹ It is argued below that Gandhian, non-statist economic thought and activity, pursued by the three thinkers examined here, Vinoba Bhave, J.C. Kumarappa and K.G. Mashruwala, existed in productive tension with the statist policies of the Nehru government. This is because these Gandhian approaches seemed to provide answers to the pressing questions of how to direct the energies of the masses, and of how to foster economic change with limited state resources.

These Gandhian thinkers, though reasonably well-known, have not been subjected to much scholarly scrutiny. Ramachandra Guha is one of the few authors to evaluate these men, their thought and their achievement, albeit in very brief essays. The work in which Guha does this is, by his own estimation, a work of 'appreciate and depreciation, not an impersonal work of "scholarship"'.¹⁰ Indeed, Kumarappa and Bhave appear in Guha's work as 'adversaries'.¹¹ Moreover, they stride his stage as hero and villain, as Kumarappa's

humble and practical approach to village reconstruction is contrasted to that of Bhave, who is condemned as 'devoid of the capacity for self-criticism' and suffering from a 'lop-sided sense of priorities.'¹² Guha has then been followed by other scholars, who paint Kumarappa as the true Gandhian, adhering to an anti-statist programme, and declare Bhave to be, pro-state, pro-Nehru, though no evidence is cited to substantiate this assertion.¹³

Although there were important differences between the three Gandhian thinkers discussed below, the following research suggests that it is not necessarily helpful to regard those individual Gandhians who developed the Mahatma's ideas after his death as in competition with one another over Gandhi's legacy. Instead, Gandhian thought – Gandhi himself rejected the idea of Gandhism for its implied rigidity – was, true to its origins, both flexible and capable of encompassing different opinions on an issue. Indeed, Vinoba declared, 'there is not a single problem in life...whereon all the close associates of Gandhi will declare the same mind.' And this was as it should be: 'it is much better to allow thought to work freely than to beat and drive and shut it up into the rigidity of a system.'¹⁴

The research which follows, therefore, remains sensitive to the differences between these thinkers, but aims to tease out the common economic programme that united them in the first decade after independence. To these early postcolonial Gandhian economic thinkers, capitalism and communism were more similar than different, and both were equally flawed. As an alternative, these men articulated a vision for economic organisation that was based on principles that they believed would truly liberate not only India, but the world from the troubles introduced by the existing economic ideologies.

India's Land Problem and the Threat of Communism

All of these questions arose because India's future seemed to hinge on how to reform agrarian relations so as to ensure economic progress and avoid political revolution. By 1947 the idea that the country had a 'land problem' was one of the orthodoxies held across the political spectrum in India. Of course, this issue had a long history, one tied intimately to India's experience of colonialism. It had been a maxim of the nationalist movement that

British rule had impoverished India.¹⁵ And after independence, it was universally agreed that in order to secure India's economic freedom, the land problem had to be addressed.¹⁶

By the middle of the twentieth century, much of rural India was characterised by a combination of large estates owned by absentee landlords and worked by heavily indebted landless labourers; and small, highly fragmented plots worked by single families often without access to irrigation, fertilisers, high-quality seeds or tools. Depending upon where one stood intellectually and on one's socio-economic status, the problem of how land was distributed could be understood in several overlapping, but competing ways. For the Government of India in Delhi, the question of land was central to their nation-building objectives. Land, as a source of commodities which could be used to feed the nation and trade with other countries, was valuable primarily for what it produced. Production, in turn, yielded revenues for the state. These funds would be returned to the nation as they were invested in schools and dispensaries for the population, and ploughed back into the land through improved seeds, fertilizers and tools in a virtuous circle of productivity. Small, fragmented plots, with their circumscribed production possibilities, prevented owner-cultivators from taking advantage of the latest technologies and practices; equally, the tenant-cultivators of the largest landholdings were discouraged from similar investments by their lack of ownership. Efficient production, therefore, necessitated a more rational distribution of land.

Ownership was, paradoxically, conceived of both as the cause of current inefficiencies, and also as the cornerstone of (future) productive investment. The tension between the desire for redistribution and the imperative not to undermine property rights pervaded government thinking on land. Thus, property rights were protected in the Constitution, which provided that one could not be deprived of property without compensation.¹⁷ And at the same time, land reform legislation, devolved to state and provincial governments, sought to set upward limits on landholdings whilst relying on market mechanisms for redistribution, and providing compensation for those dispossessed of their large holdings. Progress was slow, and wily landlords readily circumvented official measures to redistribute land.

For many ordinary Indians, however, land was not simply a matter of production; it was a question of livelihood, broadly conceived.¹⁸ A field of one's own established one's status: it distinguished one from landless labourers; and it symbolised independence from the rural landholding elites, even if it did not always secure it in practice. A person who was a tenant tended to be a debtor and a labourer as well. Possession of land, therefore, held out the promise of escape from the circle of dependence and obligation. Land could also serve larger social functions, as it could be used as collateral to obtain loans to pay for weddings, funerals and other ceremonial occasions. And possession of ancestral lands sustained ties with the past. At this level, the land question was as much cultural as economic. Given that independent India was a democracy with universal suffrage and an overwhelmingly rural population, politicians of all parties had to recognise the widely held ambition to own land. Across the political spectrum, therefore, political parties' manifestos all promised to find a way to grant land to India's rural citizens. These promises existed in tension with statist fantasies of more 'rational' rural production.

Whilst the Congress Party was often constrained by the need to keep landlords and businessmen on side, it was left to Leftist parties to put forward more radical proposals for solving the land problem, at least rhetorically. At the time of independence, leftist politics in India had had only a very short history. The Communist Party of India had been formed only in the 1920s, as an organisation separate from the Congress. Although its adherents toyed with armed conflict at various points, its activities had centred primarily on urban areas and the mobilisation of labour.¹⁹ Notwithstanding the colonial state's paranoia about the threat these groups posed, leftist parties remained on the margins of Indian politics, and violent movements associated with the left made headlines, but not much headway. For their part, India's socialists initially had constituted themselves as a sub-unit of the Congress Party, calling themselves the Congress Socialist Party. Before independence, these socialists had shared leadership with the Indian National Congress, and their political platform was articulated under the broad umbrella of the Congress Party. By 1949, however, the two had formally split, as the socialists formed their own party.²⁰ Nonetheless, the leadership of the two sets remained close, and they struck periodical alliances over specific issues.²¹

After the Communists achieved success in China by mobilising the peasantry, however, the prospect of a communist revolt in rural India came into clearer focus. Indeed, in the period immediately surrounding independence, this possibility was realised as an armed peasant uprising emerged in the Telangana region of Hyderabad State.²² The Telangana uprising had its origins both in the social stratification of the countryside and the inadequacy of local administration in rural areas. With dry rocky soil and irregular rainfall, the Telangana region had natural climactic and geographic disadvantages compared to neighbouring areas, making it difficult for small cultivators to eke out a living. As small farmers fell into debt, large landholders accumulated not only property, but unprecedented social and administrative influence in the region. The landed elite, known as *doras* or *deshmukhs*, tended to hold positions as land revenue officers at the local level. Small holders and tenants, who were often illiterate, tended to be either unaware of their rights or unable to enforce them against these elites. As such, *deshmukhs* could and often did evict tenants and confiscate crops and lands with near impunity. In addition, they exacted *vetti* (unpaid customary labour) from barbers, carpenters, masons and dhobis, in contravention of the law. The unparalleled influence of *deshmukhs* helped them to accumulate further swathes of land. By the 1940s, there were areas, especially in the districts of Nalgonda, Warangal, Karimnagar and Adilabad, in which 'certain families own the entire cultivable land in several villages.'²³ The Second World War hit Telangana hard, particularly as food was levied from rural areas at below market prices to be distributed as part of the ration system. For their part, *deshmukhs* and village officials were accused of evading the levy, hoarding products and selling them on the black market. In this context, the Andhra Mahasabha, the local leftist party, began to take on the task of assisting the peasantry. Its members, including Ravi Narayan Reddy and Puchalapalli Sundarayya, had established records of working for the uplift of the rural poor. During the war, they helped ensure peasants received their fair share of rations and were not cheated by levies or black marketers.²⁴

During the war, a peasants' movement emerged in protest against the worsening conditions in rural Telangana. At dispersed locations, the poorest members of rural communities stood up against *doras* when they tried to evict long-standing tenants or confiscate crops.²⁵ Members of the Andhra Mahasabha saw themselves as the natural partners of these dispossessed peasants, and they helped to weave together these separate, local victories

into a larger movement. As part of this endeavour, the Andhra Mahasabha set out a programme for the amelioration of peasant grievances: they called for the abolition of vetti, fair rent for tenants and fair wages for agricultural workers; they discouraged peasants from contributing to the levy and urged them to seize stocks of grain; they demanded an end to exorbitant interest rates on grain and cash loans given by landlords to peasants and labourers.²⁶

Land redistribution and the reoccupation of lands from which tillers had been evicted were not initially a part of the Andhra Mahasabha's programme. Rather, the slogan 'land to the tiller', according to Sundarayya, was adopted in response to the 'sheer pressure of the developing movement.'²⁷ In response to the demands of the rural poor, lands from which peasants had been evicted were reoccupied, government and waste lands were seized and cultivated, and tenants laid a claim to their landlords' fields. In total, the communists boasted that in three thousand villages, 'One million acres of land was seized from the landlords, rents were abolished, [and] land distributed to agricultural labour and poor peasants.'²⁸ They claimed to have given five acres to each cultivator.²⁹

The relationship of this grassroots revolt to the Communist Party of India was complex. The leadership in Telangana were in most cases avowed communists. However, when the Andhra communists initially suggested that India might follow the Chinese path with a peasant-led revolution this was rejected by the Communist Party of India (CPI).³⁰ Indeed, whilst the revolt had begun in 1944, it was not until February 1948, after Moscow's own line changed, that the CPI formally endorsed the revolt in Telangana.³¹

In its first few years, it was left to the Government of Hyderabad to combat the movement, and the Government of India did not take formal measures against the revolt until the princely state of Hyderabad was forcibly integrated into India in September 1948. After this date, the primary means of addressing the communist problem was to adopt the latest counter-insurgency methods. The Government of India amassed a huge number of police and troops in the state, swept large numbers of suspected communists into jail without trial, forcibly resettled tribal communities in New Villages, and, somewhat later, sought to address the basic needs of the villagers by providing some measure of food, clothing and

supplies.³² This was not the only response to the movement, however. Quite by chance, a man named Vinoba Bhave came to lead a completely different kind of campaign against the communists, one aimed at both the material and psychological amelioration of conditions in rural Telangana.

Bhoodan: a Gandhian Answer to Communism

Vinayak Narahari Bhave had been born on 11 September 1895 in Kolaba District, in today's Maharashtra in western India. Accounts of his early life, largely from contemporary accounts in the 1950s and 1960s, tend to repeat the same stories almost verbatim, giving an air of hagiography to the tales. According to available material, the young Vinoba was studious and intelligent, but also strong-willed. He was reported to have taken an oath of celibacy at the age of ten, and learned some eighteen foreign and Indian languages during his long life.³³ After studying for a time in Benares, he met Gandhi and joined him at his ashram. The Mahatma is said to have had great affection and great esteem for Vinoba.³⁴ Vinoba, like any good nationalist, spent several years in jail during the freedom movement. Indeed, when, in the midst of the Battle of Britain during the Second World War, Gandhi decided to launch his Individual Satyagraha Campaign to convince the British to hand more power to Indians in the war effort, he chose Vinoba to be the first person to court arrest because he embodied Gandhi's principles so completely.³⁵ After independence, he was not a member of the Congress Party, and from Gandhi's death until he marched into Telangana, he had lived a quiet life of relative seclusion on his ashram.

Vinoba quite literally walked into the conflict in Telangana. In April 1951, he attended a meeting nearby and, having heard of the unrest in these districts, decided to walk through the area to get a sense of the situation, and 'to spread his message of love, trust and peace'.³⁶ Several days into his pilgrimage, he arrived in the village of Pochampalli, and the official story goes, several Dalit families attended the assembly he held and begged him to find a way to give them land. Initially, Vinoba did not know what to say, and he muttered something about approaching the government for assistance, 'but then a sudden thought crossed his mind.' He decided to ask the others in attendance to donate land to the landless. At this, Sri Ramachandra Reddy, a local deshmukh, offered up one hundred acres, half of his

holdings. 'That evening Vinoba reflected deep into the night and the unmistakable call from the inner sanctuary of his heart came distinctly commanding him to dedicate himself to this new kind of Yajna (sacrifice)'.³⁷ The Bhoodan (land-gifts) mission was born.

Vinoba dedicated himself to turning this single act of sacrifice into a movement. He began walking through India on his mission. On a quotidian level, his schedule was modelled on that of Gandhi. He woke at 3am and began the day with ninety minutes of prayers. By 5am he started walking so that he and his entourage could reach their destination by noon. He was preceded by volunteers who announced his arrival to the villagers. Robert Trumbull, an American journalist, reported in *Readers' Digest*: 'At nearly every town and village Bhava found arbours of palms and mango leaves erected for him to walk through. Underfed, ragged villagers crowded around to touch the holy man's feet...Municipal dignitaries garlanded him with flowers which the little ascetic passed back to the crowd.'³⁸ After a small meal, and some spinning, he held a meeting every afternoon, where he heard grievances, tried to settle disputes and collected donations of land. Every day at 5pm he held a prayer meeting, which began with readings from 'all the sacred scriptures of all the major religions of India', including the Bhagavad Gita.³⁹ This was followed by a sermon from the Acharya, 'in the nature of a heart-to-heart talk with the audience' on any number of subjects from the virtues of sobriety and spinning to the utility of cooperative farming.⁴⁰ Whilst he received spontaneous donations of land, he also made demands of landlords. Telling them that they should treat him as if he were an extra son, Vinoba insisted that each give him his rightful share of their property for him to redistribute to the landless.

Ultimately, Vinoba elaborated a vision that was more than just a response to the rise of communism in rural India, but he did engage in debate with India's communists and with Marxist ideas. Indeed, the relationship between Gandhian thought and communism was a point of contestation amongst Gandhian thinkers of the period. J.C. Kumarappa and his brother, Bharatan Kumarappa tended to argue that Gandhi's thinking was not antithetical to communism, given the concern that both showed towards the poor.⁴¹ They had Gandhi's own words to back up this assertion, as they could cite, *inter alia*, his address to communists in 1931 during which Gandhi said, 'I am trying my best to live up to the ideal of Communism in the best sense of the term.'⁴²

Vinoba, along with K.G. Mashruwala, often construed as being on the right of the Gandhian movement, felt that Gandhism and communism were 'irreconcilable'.⁴³ Firstly, Vinoba was critical of the methods of India's communists. He disparaged the tendency of the CPI to take orders from Moscow or to adhere too closely to Marxist texts, saying, 'They have no independent intelligence of their own.'⁴⁴ Secondly, Vinoba disapproved of the communists' resort to arms. In many ways, Vinoba admitted, he and the communists had a shared goal, in that the both sought, 'the emancipation of India's down-trodden'. But the communists resorted to violence too readily: 'Communists would rather accept a stone achieved through struggle than a piece of bread secured through persuasion and change of heart.'⁴⁵ It was not only violence *per se* that was at issue, but the effects of violence, too. By dividing the world into rich and poor and treating the rich as the enemy, communists, Vinoba argued, failed to realise that, 'There were good men and bad men on both sides'.⁴⁶ Moreover, by treating all the rich in the same way, whether they were good or bad, the communists lost the 'sympathy and support of good men on the opposite side'.⁴⁷ Vinoba's method was different. His goal was 'to secure the goodwill and sympathy of both sides'.⁴⁸

Members of India's communist and leftist parties rose in rebuttle. With Vinoba's slow, plodding approach, they argued, it would take a century and a half to resolve the land problem via donations. Makhdoom Mohiuddin, a prominent communist who had joined the struggle in Telangana, criticised the Bhoodan Yajna because it would lead to the further fragmentation of holdings, or because rural elites had gifted lands that were wasteland, had poor soil or were otherwise uncultivable; in other cases they donated fields that were under dispute.⁴⁹ Vinoba's response was to dismiss this critique, for it focused on issues too mundane for his concern. Illuminating the objective behind his mission, Vinoba explained, 'Fragmented land can be easily consolidated later with mutual goodwill and cooperation; but the fragmentation of hearts due to economic inequality is full of dangerous possibilities.'⁵⁰ His goal was not to simply redistribute land. Indeed, the donation of land was 'a mere beginning and a gesture.'⁵¹ Ultimately, his aim was to effect a number of psychological changes in every person.

The first was a change in the way people approached ownership of land. Drawing on Gandhian ideas of trusteeship, Vinoba argued, 'land is a gift of God just like the sun, air and water and nobody can claim ownership of it.'⁵² Next, he hoped to alter the way people felt about their fellow human beings: 'When a gift is given, we may hope that it will generate purity of mind, motherly love, feelings of brotherhood and friendliness and love for the poor.'⁵³ What would follow would be a transformation in the way people felt about possession of property altogether, so that 'non-possession' would become the ideal.⁵⁴ Out of this would emerge a new order: 'the whole atmosphere will undergo a sudden change in the twinkling of an eye, and India might well show the way to a new era of freedom, love and happiness for the whole world.'⁵⁵ Ultimately he was working for a non-violent revolution, Vinoba argued, countering the communists' charge that he was working on behalf of the rich to stem a revolution, 'And when a revolution in the way of life is contemplated, it must take place in the mind.'⁵⁶

Bhoodan was only the first step in what Bhave conceived as a total revolution. He worked towards this goal for the greater part of the 1950s and 1960s. As his movement expanded, Vinoba left behind him small committees, Bhoodan Yajna Samithis, to complete his work across the country, and turned his personal attention to the northern state of Bihar, where he pursued the same strategy to solicit donations of land. As it developed, several problems came to light. Vinoba adapted his ideas to these developments, bringing in new elements to his movement. For example, cultivable land was given first and primarily to families who were completely landless. But these tended to be the poorest members of rural communities, and they did not have the financial means to invest in seeds or equipment, sparking the worry that they would end up indebted and losing their lands to the very landlords who had donated them. To meet this need, Bhave developed the idea of *sampattidan*, the gift of part of one's wages, usually by the urban middle-classes, to help pay the cultivation expenses of those given land. To *sampattidan* was added *shramadan*, the gift of labour to work in building roads, canals and other public works.⁵⁷ Within four years, Vinoba had moved on to demand *gramdan*, the gift of entire villages. Explaining the new concept to a delegation of his workers from Hyderabad, Vinoba said, 'Gram-dan is to relinquish all of one's possessions in the interests of the village. Everyone will have to work for the village, and the village will look after the prosperity of everyone.'⁵⁸ Finally, there

came *jeevandan*, giving one's life to the movement. The most prominent figure to offer this sacrifice was Jayaprakash Narayan, a veteran of the nationalist movement and leader of the Socialist Party, who gave up politics to dedicate himself to rural uplift along the lines prescribed by Vinoba.⁵⁹ All of this was framed by the notion of *sarvodaya*.

Sarvodaya: an Alternative to Communism and Capitalism

It was Gandhi who had coined the term *sarvodaya*. Inspired by John Ruskin's work, *Unto This Last*, Gandhi had consciously contrasted *sarvodaya* against the utilitarian notion of the greatest good for the greatest number.⁶⁰ Instead, *sarvodaya* would ensure the rise or the welfare of all. After Gandhi's death, Vinoba and a selection of other Gandhian thinkers, including J.C. Kumarappa and K.G. Mashruwala developed the notion further. Whilst they debated with them, Vinoba and his fellow travellers adopted many of the same concerns as the communists, and proposed their own solutions to India's problems. In fact, their quarrel was as much with capitalism as it was with communism. Drawing upon Gandhi's works, as well as Geddes' *Cities in Evolution*, and the thought of the Tamil poet Subramania Bharati, together they elaborated a critique of capitalist and communist political-economy, and sketched out a vision of a non-violent social and economic revolution for India, and for the world.

One of Vinoba's close associates, K.G. Mashruwala, developed the most elaborate critique of the two systems. Born and educated in Bombay city, Mashruwala had been an associate of Gandhi. After the latter's death, he had taken over the responsibility of editing the *Harijan* newspaper. He was a founding member of the Gandhi Vichar Parishad known in English as the Institute of Gandhian Studies, and he did not take up any official posts in government after independence. Mashruwala, like his fellow Gandhians, was in regular correspondence with the Prime Minister until his death in 1952.

In Mashruwala's view, capitalism and communism shared more than their warring proponents cared to admit. They held a common 'attitude towards life', and were based on similar fundamental principles. Both, according to Mashruwala, were premised on the idea that there was an inherent conflict between man and nature, and that the development of

man was dependent upon his successful exploitation of the environment around him. The aim of both was to expand profits, trade and commerce in order to 'achieve as much as possible, and as rapidly as possible with as few men and animals as possible'.⁶¹ In order to attain this objective, industrialisation was essential, though not every person could be given employment. The larger aim was centralisation to the point of establishing 'a World Government'.⁶²

According to Mashruwala, the two systems set up a number of obstacles to economic and social development. In both, there was too much centralisation, both of political power and of wealth. In each system people were encouraged to work for profits, 'instead of providing for the needs of oneself and society'.⁶³ Thus, to Mashruwala and his fellow sarvodaya workers, 'Capitalism is private Capitalism while Marxian Socialism (including the so-called Russian Communism) is State-Capitalism, and the "mixed economy" is a sort of truce proposed between the two rival Capitalisms'.⁶⁴ Though he did not expound on this topic to the same extent as his friend, Vinoba, too, expressed similar sentiments as he preached to Indians about the righteousness of bhoodan and sarvodaya.⁶⁵

In an economy and society inspired by the sarvodaya approach, things would be much different. One of the major thinkers on the question of how to build a Gandhian economy was J.C. Kumarappa. A Christian from Tanjore in today's Tamil Nadu, Kumarappa had received his education in commerce and economics at Syracuse and then Columbia universities in the United States. Unlike Mashruwala or Bhave, Kumarappa took up a number of positions within the Congress Party and at various levels of government during his career. He was, for example, a member of the Congress Party's National Planning Commission. But in 1952 he helped found the Arthik Samata Mandal (Association for Economic Equality), in protest at some of Nehru's economic policies.⁶⁶

As they outlined their vision for a Gandhian economy, Kumarappa, Bhave and Mashruwala, placed two objectives at the centre of their plans: self-sufficiency, and the spiritual and moral development of the individual. With these goals in mind, and adhering to the Gandhian principles of truth and non-violence, these thinkers visualised alternative arrangements for employment, production, consumption and trade. Together they insisted

that the starting point for thinking about any economic arrangements ought to be providing employment for all.⁶⁷ Employment was the key not only to self-sufficiency on the individual level, but also to the development of one's personality. In Kumarappa's words, 'Work is to our higher faculties what food is to the physical body. The occupation we follow should contribute towards the growth of our personality'.⁶⁸ Such an approach required a different attitude to work, especially to manual labour, as well as to remuneration. Men ought to be paid for their work, but wages should not be based on an appraisal of a man's physical or intellectual skill. Rather, everyone who wholeheartedly served society would be entitled to a 'living wage'.⁶⁹

From employment, these men naturally turned to the question of production. Here the aims of personal development and self-sufficiency were developed further. Just as Gandhi had been wary of the effects of industrialisation and mechanisation, these three men, too, were sceptical of the value of an industrialised economy. Industrialisation, especially factory work, Kumarappa argued, was 'not conducive to the growth of the whole man and his full development as a personality'.⁷⁰ Indeed, the repetitive, mindless work of the factory worker only ensured that 'men are made part of the machine',⁷¹ to a point where they lose initiative. The alternative was to choose a form of work that would contribute to the personality. As everyone was to work, this meant choosing means of production that were labour-intensive, rather than labour-saving.⁷² As such, production ought to be decentralised, devolved to the village.

Production was to focus first and foremost on food, clothing and shelter for everyone, and then on village industries. On the one hand, these priorities clearly reflected India's economic crisis of the early 1950s. During this period, the country suffered from severe shortages and was on the border of famine in the early 1950s. As such, the first priority of nationalists was to feed India's population.⁷³ Bhave and his associates shared this aim; but they thought the best way to achieve it was through cultivation for family-level and village-level self-sufficiency in food. On the other hand, self-sufficiency was not just a matter of survival. Village industries, including the production of cloth, oil and jaggery were key components of the drive for self-sufficiency because they were central to man's spiritual development. A man working in a village industry would make a full product himself, rather

than serving on a production line: to do so he would have to be resourceful and creative. His work would then become a means of self-expression. In Kumarappa's words: 'It helps one to grow.'⁷⁴ This was a question of personal as well as national well-being, for the cultivation of this kind of independent thought was required in a young democratic country: 'Politically village industries provide the conditions for the development of democracy.'⁷⁵

The inputs for such production were to be chosen for their non-violent characteristics. Here, ahimsa (non-violence) was understood along the more substantive lines imagined by Gandhi. Echoing theories of imperialism developed by Hobson and Lenin, Kumarappa suggested that violence, in the form of imperialism, was a danger when economies over-produced one product, or when they were over-reliant upon non-renewable inputs. Thus, he reasoned that, each country should focus on producing food, clothing and shelter to meet the needs of its people first and foremost. As far as possible, therefore, in a Gandhian economy, raw materials ought not to be exported, but rather, they ought to be processed where they were harvested.⁷⁶ To this end, Bhave suggested that the Government of India ought to declare some areas of production to be 'reserved industries', so that only villages where raw materials were produced would be allowed to develop industries that used those products.⁷⁷ Moreover, in a Gandhian economy, one should develop industries based on what today we would call renewable resources. Kumarappa divided natural resources into two categories: those that belonged to what he called the 'current economy', and those that made up the 'reservoir economy'. The former were permanent, in that they were renewable; the latter were not.⁷⁸ Again, like Lenin and Hobson, Kumarappa argued that the depletion of natural resources that were of a fixed quantity, such as iron or oil, led to competition and ultimately violence. Instead, renewables were the key to peace: 'The more we base our order on the current economy, the less will be the violence.'⁷⁹

The ethics of production was accompanied by a corresponding ethics of consumption. Here, too, Bhave and his fellow travellers relied on two indigenous terms, developed earlier by Gandhi: *tapas* (austerity) and *aparagriha* (non-possession). *Tapas* was ideal because an attitude of austerity encouraged one to sacrifice one's land, labour or property for others.⁸⁰ The idea was to aspire to spiritual fulfilment via the pursuit of self-discipline in the form of restricted consumption, rather than self-indulgence in the form of over-consumption.⁸¹

Non-possession was an extension of austerity and an essential characteristic of a non-violent society. Bhave connected *aparagriha* to an understanding of the origins of happiness. 'At present', he observed, 'greed and possession are...the ruling principle the world over'.⁸² But as a man pursues wealth, he not only becomes burdened with worry and disease, he also loses the 'love of his fellow men'.⁸³ As a result, both rich and poor were unhappy in the present order of things. The solution was to swap the ideal of possession for the ideal of non-possession.

Of course, this ideal did not rule out consumption altogether. But one had to live within one's means, and use resources following the principles of non-violence. Thus, the Gandhian consumer would not consume anything produced in unethical circumstances. Kumarappa held that when one used a product that had been made using dishonourable methods, then one became party to the violence of production.⁸⁴ Violence, in this sense, was broadly conceived, and included exploitation of labour by paying people less than was required to make a living. Prices that did not include fair wages for those who made the product were a form of exploitation and violence. Kumarappa went on to speculate that if a consumer were only made aware of the fact that the price he was paying was not fair to the labourers behind a product, then, 'he himself will probably not be at peace'.⁸⁵ This natural morality of the consumer, in Kumarappa's thinking, could be brought to the fore in reorganising the world's economic order.

Between production and consumption comes exchange, and these thinkers also had ideas about the appropriate scale and means of trade within an economy. Following Gandhi, all agreed that the village was the ideal 'unit' of economic activity to ensure a non-violent economy. Exchange at the village level ought to take the form of a 'Multi-purpose Cooperative Society', where each person would put into a general pool his skills or his produce, and take out what he required, without the use of money. For those necessities which could not be supplied within the village, trade could be undertaken, but only within a small 'outer circle' beyond the village.⁸⁶ Trade with foreign countries on a larger scale, ought to be limited to trade in surpluses. Foreign trade organised on any other basis would lead to imbalances, in that one country would begin to over-produce one product, and under-produce others, destroying its self-sufficiency. The inevitable consequence would be

imperialism and the violence associated with it.⁸⁷ To limit exchange in this way was conceived of as a form of self-discipline that would build character. For to do so would mean that consumers had to avoid the 'temptation' of cheaper prices.⁸⁸

On a purely economic level, the end result would be self-sufficiency from the family, to the village, the region and the nation. If everyone strived for self-sufficiency, and also abided by the ideals of *tapas* and *aparagriha*, there would be no imbalances in production or consumption, and the resulting society would be a more equal one. An economy and society – or rather, multiple economies and societies – organised in this fashion would have no reason to go to war, and world peace would naturally ensue.⁸⁹

In such conditions, the state would lose its *raison d'être*. Using Marx's famous phrase, Vinoba declared, that he expected the state to 'wither away through decentralization of power.'⁹⁰ This was a key desideratum, because a centralised state, according to the Acharya, took the initiative away from individual citizens, and deprived them of the true freedom of self-reliance.⁹¹ This was not just a question of self-realisation, it was a practical matter as well. For with a centralised state, the progress of the whole nation was dependent upon the decisions of a few men. When one made a poor decision, the entire country suffered.⁹² In a decentralised order based on village autonomy, each unit would have to come to decisions in their own time. According to Bhave, decisions ought to be made by panchayats (village councils), composed of 'persons of honesty and goodwill', acting unanimously. Change would come slowly, for: 'a thing on which the good differ among themselves is not worthy of implementation.'⁹³ In this way, Vinoba's dream was for the whole world to be 'set free from the burden of its governments'.⁹⁴

Indeed, whilst Bhave, Kumarappa and Mashruwala deployed distinctly Indian concepts in their prescriptions, their vision was not confined to India. In their writings and speeches, they were keenly aware that the world of the 1950s and 1960s was divided and that the search for peace was an urgent question for humanity.⁹⁵ But what did the world make of these Gandhians? Just as there had been no single opinion on the Mahatma, the Western world, too, was divided about Bhave and his vision.⁹⁶ Like Gandhi had done, Bhave attracted western 'seekers' who joined his entourage and walked with him for a number of days or

months to absorb his universal truths. These men and women, primed for enlightenment, tended to see in Bhave's mission as one that could succeed not only in India, but in the world. Christians, Quakers, and Social Democrats all seemed to see in Bhave's work a reflection of their own ambitions for the world.⁹⁷ For his part, Kumarappa became part of the world peace movement, and was invited to attend the World Peace Conferences in the 1950s.⁹⁸

Gandhian Economics and the Political Establishment in India

Whereas it is often assumed that Gandhian ideas and approaches were side-lined under Nehru's rule,⁹⁹ the Bhoodan Yajna allows us to see the more subtle relationship that was developed between the two. Nehru, upon hearing of Vinoba's mission, wrote to the Government of Hyderabad to ask them to give the Acharya every assistance. The Prime Minister wrote to Vinoba, too, asking him 'to remain there as long as he conveniently can.'¹⁰⁰ Vinoba's mission appealed to Nehru, who, having overseen the military strategy against the Communists with only mixed results, now began to ponder that, 'a psychological and friendly approach often yields greater results than coercion.'¹⁰¹ Of course, Nehru held that the ultimate responsibility for resolving the land problem lay with government, but Bhave's movement could help create the right atmosphere for official action.¹⁰² Bhave's influence was not limited to his pilgrimage in Telangana. Nehru invited him to New Delhi to speak to members of the Planning Commission who had just drawn up a draft for the country's first Five Year Plan. Whilst in the capital, he met the Prime Minister and the President, and spent hours in conversation with the Planning Commission's S.K. Patil.

How might we understand this relationship? On the practical level, it was obvious to Nehru that India's land problem needed a solution that could both overcome the opposition of landlords, and circumvent the constitutional requirement to provide compensation to landlords for any land taken away from them. The Bhoodan movement, if successful, could further both of these aims. On a different plane, after Gandhi's death Indian politics had seemed to lose its ethical dimension. Because of his own exemplary life, Bhave's association with the political elites in Delhi would invest their decisions with greater authority. This was

not all cynical political posturing: Nehru was genuinely bereft at Gandhi's passing, not just personally, but politically too. Bhave was consciously embraced as a potential successor to Gandhi as the moral guiding light to the nation. Gandhian nationalism had had a strong ethical dimension, and Bhave's reception represented an acknowledgement that the ethical aspect of the national movement could have a place in postcolonial nationalism. That being said, Bhave was not able to replace the Mahatma. Nehru often replied to Bhave's letters about various subjects, from redrawing of India's internal borders to the goals of a planned economy, with a simple acknowledgement that they did not see the issue from the same perspective.

Within the Government of Hyderabad, Vinoba's mission was also well received. For one, he had access to areas that had been off-limits to authorities. Whereas officials had mostly let the force of arms convey their anti-communist message to the people, they were pleased to have someone talking to the masses. B. Ramakrishna Rao, then Minister for Land Revenues and Education, voiced the hope that the Communist leaders would hear Vinoba's message and 'realise the harm they are doing to the country by the violent methods adopted by them.'¹⁰³ As it became clear that the Acharya had received donations of more than twelve thousand acres of land in Telangana, the Government of Hyderabad did what it could to assist the transfer of property rights. The Government drew up special land revenue rules to this end: transfers were exempted from stamp duty and registration fees; land revenue would be remitted for three years on waste lands brought under cultivation within two years of the grants; the state government provided five thousand rupees in travelling expenses to the local committee, which was to oversee the distribution of lands, and it instructed local revenue officers to 'provide all facilities' to the members of the committee, to aid in the success of the mission.¹⁰⁴ By 1953, B. Ramakrishna Rao, now the newly elected Chief Minister, Swami Ramananda Tirtha, President of the Hyderabad State Congress, and Chandi Jaganatham, Secretary of the Praja Socialist Party had all become members of the Hyderabad State Bhoodan Yajna Association.¹⁰⁵

Again, it is clear that the Bhoodan movement was not side-lined at the state level. Nor can we say it was simply incorporated, rhetorically, into existing statist programmes. Instead, we see Hyderabad politicians engaging with the movement in two ways. Like Nehru, they seized

the opportunity to find a solution to the land problem that avoided the pitfalls of working through the formal mechanisms of government. At the same time, especially by 1953, the activities of these elected politicians can be seen as an attempt to set the agenda for postcolonial nationalism. It would not be a nationalism of confrontation and law-breaking. But nor need it be completely directed solely by the state. Instead, participation in the Bhoodan movement seemed to offer the prospect of charting a course for postcolonial nationalism that would continue the constructive, non-statist, popular side of the nationalist programme.

Conclusions

Gandhian economic ideas were not marginalised by Nehru and the Planners of postcolonial India; they were simply non-statist. Bhavé, Mashruwala and Kumarappa were seeking bottom-up solutions to India's economic problems, solutions which were orientated towards the cultivation of the individual. As such, they engaged in conversation with politicians and officials, but their vision of the respective roles of the state and of the individual was so different from Nehru's and from that these ideas could not have been incorporated into existing plans. Both Nehru and Bhavé were keenly aware of this.¹⁰⁶ The engagement that we see from politicians and officials can, instead, be understood as a means of trying to develop the constructive, popular and even ethical aspects of the nationalist movement in a new postcolonial environment.

As for the ideas themselves, the broader political ideas of Bhavé, Mashruwala and Kumarappa, help fill the gap in the intellectual history of India. Beyond their economic ideas, these three men thought and wrote widely on spiritual matters, a side of early Indian nationalism that has only begun to be explored.¹⁰⁷ On the political side, Gandhi's death (1948) and the Emergency (1975-77) are connected by these thinkers, and also by the person of Jayaprakash Narayan, who was a close associate of Gandhi, dedicated his life to *sarvodaya* and rural uplift in the 1950s and 1960s, and led the Navnirman movement in the 1970s which helped to precipitate the Emergency. Indeed, Gandhian non-statist movements are a thread that runs through Indian popular politics from independence, through to the

advent of the Aam Aadmi party in the twenty-first century, a thread which remains largely unexplored by historians.¹⁰⁸

Bibliography

- Agarwal, Bina, *A Field of One's Own: Gender and Land Rights in South Asia*, Cambridge, 1994.
- Akhil Bharat Sarva Seva Sangh, *Bhoodan as Seen by the West: an Appraisal of the Land-gift Mission by Some Western Seekers*, Tanjore, 1958.
- Bhattacharjee, Manash, 'Aam Aadmi Party: Government of the Governed?' *Economic and Political Weekly*, XLVIII:53, 28 December 2013, web exclusive <http://www.epw.in/web-exclusives/aam-aadmi-party-government-governed.html> (accessed 10 February 2015).
- Bhave, Vinoba, *Bhoodan Yajna (Land-Gifts Mission)*, Ahmedabad, 1953.
- Bhave, Vinoba, *Sarvodaya and Communism*, Tanjore, 1957.
- Bhave, Vinoba, *Democratic Values and the Practice of Citizenship: Selections from the Addresses of Vinoba Bhave*, Kashi, 1962.
- Bhave, Vinoba, *Vinoba Bhave on World Peace*, Tanjore, 1957-64.
- Bhave, Vinoba, *Revolutionary Sarvodaya: Philosophy for the Remaking of Man*, Bombay, 1964.
- Bhave, Vinoba, Mashruwala, K.G, and Kumarappa, J.C., *Planning Commission and Sarvodaya Approach*, Muzaffarur, 1952.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh, "'In the Name of Politics': Democracy and the Power of the Multitude in India', *Public Culture*, 19:1, 2007, pp.35-58.
- Chandra, Bipan, *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, New Delhi, 2004, revised edition.
- Chatterjee, Partha, 'Development Planning and the Indian State' in Parth Chatterjee, *State and Politics in India*, New Delhi, 1997, pp.271-297.
- Chatterji, Joya, 'South Asian Histories of Citizenship, 1946-1970' *The Historical Journal* 55:4, 2012, pp.1049-1071.
- Gandhi, Mohandas Karamchand, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Ahmedabad, 1958-84.
- Gould, William, *Bureaucracy, Community and Influence in India: Society and the State, 1930s - 1960s*, Abindgon, 2011.
- Gopal, S. ed. *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, 2nd series, New Delhi: 1984-.

- Government of Hyderabad, Department of Information and Public Relations, *Bhoodan – Concept of Land through Love*, Hyderabad, 1954.
- Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, *Acharya Vinoba Bhave*, New Delhi, 1955.
- Guha, Ramachandra, *An Anthropologist Among the Marxists and Other Essays*, New Delhi, 2001.
- Hardiman, David, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours: the Global Legacy of his Ideas* New Delhi, 2003.
- Kaviraj, Sudipta, *The Trajectories of the Indian State: Politics & Ideas*, New Delhi, 2010.
- Khan, Yasmin, *The Great Partition: the Making of India and Pakistan*, New Haven, 2007.
- Kumarappa, Bharatan (ed.) *Toward Non-Violent Socialism by M.K. Gandhi*, Ahmedabad, 1951.
- Kumarappa, J.C., *Gandhian Economic Thought*, Bombay, 1951.
- Kumarapa, J.C., *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, Wardha, 1954.
- Lindley, Mark, 'J.C. Kumarappa – giant or midget?'
[http://www.academia.edu/292765/J. C. Kumarappa - giant or midget](http://www.academia.edu/292765/J._C._Kumarappa_-_giant_or_midget) (accessed 10 February 2015).
- Mantena, Karuna, 'On Gandhi's Critique of the State: Sources, Contexts, Conjunctures' *Modern Intellectual History*, 9:3, 2012, pp.535-563.
- Mantena, Karuna, 'Another Realism: the Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence', *American Political Science Review*, 106:2, 2012, pp.455-470.
- Markovitz, Claude, *The Un-Gandhian Gandhi: the Life and Afterlife of the Mahatma* (London, 2004).
- Masani, M.R., 'The Communist Party in India', *Pacific Affairs*, 24:1, 1951.
- Mashruwala, K.G., *Gandhi and Marx*, Ahmedabad, 1951.
- Naoroji, Dadabhai *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, London, 1901.
- Narayan, Jayaprakash, *Jeevan-dan*, Tirupur, 1954.
- Nayar, Pyarelal and Sushila, *In Gandhi's Mirror*, Delhi, 1991.
- Newbigin, Eleanor, *The Hindu Family and the Emergence of Modern India: Law, Citizenship and Community*, Cambridge, 2013.
- Pernau, Margrit, *The Passing of Patrimonialism: Politics and Political Culture in Hyderabad, 1911-1948*, New Delhi, 2000.

- Ram, Mohan, 'The Telangana Peasant Armed Struggle, 1946-51', *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 8, 1973, pp.1025-32.
- Rao, C. Rajeswara, *The Historic Telengana [sic] Struggle: Some Useful Lessons from its Rich Experience*, New Delhi, 1972.
- Reddy, Ravi Narayan *Heroic Telengana [sic]: Reminiscences & Experiences*, New Delhi, 1973.
- Roy, Srirupa, *Beyond Belief: India and the Politics of Postcolonial Nationalism*, New Delhi, 2007.
- Shani, Ornit, 'Gandhi, Citizenship and the Resilience of Indian Nationhood', *Citizenship Studies*, 15:6-7, 2011, pp.659-678.
- Shalini Sharma, "'Yeh Azadi Jhooti Hai!": the Shaping of the Opposition in the First Year of the Congress Raj', *Modern Asian Studies*, 48:5, 2014, pp. 1358-1388.
- Sherman, Taylor C., *State Violence and Punishment in India*, London, 2010.
- Sherman, Taylor C., 'From "Grow More Food" to "Miss a Meal": Food, Famine and the Limits of Postcolonial Nationalism in India,' *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 36:4, 2013, pp.571-588.
- Sherman, Taylor C., *Muslim Belonging in Secular India: Negotiating Citizenship in Postcolonial India*, Cambridge, 2015.
- Skaria, Ajay, 'Gandhi's Politics: Liberalism and the Question of the Ashram', *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, 101:4, 2002, pp.955-986.
- Skaria, Ajay, 'Relinquishing Republican Democracy: Gandhi's Ramarajya', *Postcolonial Studies* 14:2, 2011, pp.203-229.
- Srinivasan, Vasanthi, *Hindu Spirituality and Virtue Politics*, New Delhi, 2014.
- Stree Shakti Sanghatana, 'We Were Making History...' *Life Stories of Women in the Telangana People's Struggle*, New Dlehi, 1989.
- Sundarayya, P., *Telangana People's Struggle and its Lessons*, Calcutta, 1972.
- Thirumali, Inukonda, *Against Dora and Nizam: People's Movement in Telangana*, New Delhi, 2003.
- Victus, Solomon, *Religion and Eco-Economics of Dr J.C. Kumarappa: Gandhism Redefined*, New Delhi, 2003.
- Zamindar, Vazira, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*, New York, 2007.

¹ This research was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK, as part of the project, *From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1964*. I am grateful to the AHRC, as well as to Amer Ali Khan (News Editor) and Zahid Ali Khan (Editor) at *Siasat* newspaper for access to their archive.

² Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition*; Vazira Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia*.

³ William Gould, *Bureaucracy, Community and Influence in India*; Joya Chatterji, 'South Asian Histories of Citizenship, 1946-1970'; Eleanor Newbigin, *The Hindu Family and the Emergence of Modern India*.

⁴ See, for example, Partha Chatterjee, 'Development Planning and the Indian State'.

⁵ e.g. Ajay Skaria, 'Relinquishing Republican Democracy: Gandhi's Ramrajya'; Ajay Skaria, 'Gandhi's Politics: Liberalism and the Question of the Ashram'; Karuna Mantena, 'On Gandhi's Critique of the State'; Karuna Mantena, 'Another Realism: the Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence'.

⁶ David Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours*; Sudipta Kaviraj, *The Trajectories of the Indian State*.

⁷ Ornit Shani, 'Gandhi, Citizenship and the Resilience of Indian Nationhood', pp.666-68.

⁸ Srirupa Roy, *Beyond Belief*; Dipesh Chakrabarty, '"In the Name of Politics": Democracy and the Power of the Multitude in India'.

⁹ Taylor C. Sherman, 'From "Grow More Food" to "Miss a Meal"'.

¹⁰ Ramachandra Guha, *An Anthropologist Among the Marxists and Other Essays*, p.4

¹¹ Guha, *An Anthropologist Among the Marxists*, p.86

¹² Guha, *An Anthropologist Among the Marxists*, p.102;

¹³ repeating Guha's assessment is Solomon Victor, *Religion and Eco-Economics of Dr J.C.*

Kumarappa, pp.232-3.

¹⁴ Vinoba Bhave, 'Introduction' in K.G. Mashruwala, *Gandhi and Marx*, pp.21-2

¹⁵ e.g., Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*; Bipan Chandra, *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*.

¹⁶ e.g. Jawaharlal Nehru, "Conference of Heads of Indian Missions in Europe and the USA", in S. Gopal (ed.) *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (hereafter *SWJN*), 2nd series, vol.24, p.77.

¹⁷ Constitution of India, article 31.

¹⁸ Bina Agarwal, *A Field of One's Own*, p.2.

¹⁹ M.R. Masani, 'The Communist Party in India' *Pacific Affairs*, 24:1 (1951), pp.18-38, p.25.

²⁰ Shalini Sharma, "'Yeh Azadi Jhooti Hai!': the Shaping of the Opposition in the First Year of the Congress Raj'.

²¹ e.g. over the election of Muslim candidates in the first general elections. Taylor C.

Sherman, *Muslim Belonging in Secular India*, ch.5.

²² This summary draws on the following: Inukonda Thirumali, *Against Dora and Nizam*;

Margrit Pernau, *The Passing of Patrimonialism*; Stree Shakti Sanghatana, 'We Were Making History...' *Life Stories of Women in the Telangana People's Struggle*; I Ravi Narayan Reddy, *Heroic Telengana [sic]*; P. Sundarayya, *Telangana People's Struggle and its Lessons*.

²³ Radio Talk by M. Seshadri, 10 June 1950, National Archives of India, New Delhi (hereafter NAI), Ministry of States, f.10(4)-H/50.

²⁴ Ravi Narayan Reddy, *Heroic Telengana*, p.36.

²⁵ Reddy, *Heroic Telengana*, p.41

-
- ²⁶ C. Rajeswara Rao, *The Historic Telengana [sic] Struggle*, pp.11-2. See also, P. Sundarayya, *Telangana People's Struggle*, p.58.
- ²⁷ Sundarayya, *Telangana People's Struggle*, p.114.
- ²⁸ Extract from secret Communist document, enclosed in S.B. Shetty, Deputy Director (B), Intelligence Bureau, Ministry of Home Affairs, to S. Narayanaswamy, Deputy Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of States, 7 January 1952, NAI, Ministry of States, f.1(21)-H/50.
- ²⁹ Circular issued by the Hyderabad State Communist Party to Soldiers and Armed Policemen, 8 October 1948, NAI, Ministry of States, f.3(4)-H/49.
- ³⁰ Mohan Ram, 'The Telangana Peasant Armed Struggle, 1946-51'.
- ³¹ Masani, 'The Communist Party in India', p.26.
- ³² Taylor C. Sherman, *State Violence and Punishment in India*, ch.8.
- ³³ Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, *Acharya Vinoba Bhave* (New Delhi, 1955), p.39.
- ³⁴ Government of India, *Acharya Vinoba Bhave*, p.42.
- ³⁵ Sherman, *State Violence*, p.113; *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. LXXIII, p.102-107.
- ³⁶ Government of Hyderabad, Department of Information and Public Relations, *Bhoodan – Concept of Land through Love* (Hyderabad, 1954), p.6.
- ³⁷ Government of India, *Acharya Vinoba Bhave*, pp.10-12.
- ³⁸ Robert Trumbull, 'Vinoba's Loot with Love', p.8.
- ³⁹ Robert Trumbull, *New York Times*, 10 February 1952.

⁴⁰ Government of Hyderabad, Department of Information and Public Relations, *Bhoodan*, p.7.

⁴¹ J.C. Kumarappa was said to have once declared that Gandhism was communism without the truth and non-violence. Sudhila Nayar, 'Kumarappa as I Knew Him', p.284.

⁴² Bharatan Kumarappa (ed.) *Toward Non-Violent Socialism by M.K. Gandhi*, p.152.

⁴³ Vinoba Bhave, 'Introduction' in Mashruwala, *Gandhi and Marx*, p.16.

⁴⁴ Vinoba Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna (Land-Gifts Mission)*, p.128.

⁴⁵ Vinoba Bhave, *Sarvodaya and Communism*, p.10.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Bhave, *Sarvodaya and Communism*, , p.11.

⁴⁸ Bhave, *Sarvodaya and Communism*, , p.10.

⁴⁹ Makhdoom Mohiuddin's speech, *Siasat*, 20 May 1953, inside pages. All translations from the Urdu are my own.

⁵⁰ Government of India, *Acharya Vinoba Bhave*, p.14.

⁵¹ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.7.

⁵² Bhave, *Sarvodaya and Communism*, p.15.

⁵³ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.10.

⁵⁴ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.68.

⁵⁵ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.16.

⁵⁶ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.7.

⁵⁷ *SWJN*, second series, vol.24, p.43.

⁵⁸ *Siasat*, 28 October 1955, Deccan Desh.

⁵⁹ Jayaprakash Narayan, *Jeevan-dan*.

⁶⁰ Vasant Nargolkar, 'Introduction' in Vinoba Bhave, *Revolutionary Sarvodaya*, p.vii.

⁶¹ K.G. Mashruwala, 'Planning for India', p.43.

⁶² K.G. Mashruwala, 'Planning for India', p.43-4.

⁶³ Mashruwala, 'Planning for India', p.47-8.

⁶⁴ Mashruwala, 'Planning for India', p.41.

⁶⁵ e.g. Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.105.

⁶⁶ Mark Lindley, 'J.C. Kumarappa – giant or midget?'

http://www.academia.edu/292765/J. C. Kumarappa - giant_or_midget (accessed 10

February 2015)

⁶⁷ Vinoba Bhave, 'Planning Commission's Draft Outline - A Criticism', in *Planning Commission and Sarvodaya Approach*, p.4.

⁶⁸ J.C. Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.58.

⁶⁹ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.40-1.

⁷⁰ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.59.

⁷¹ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.64.

⁷² J.C. Kumarappa, *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, p.4.

⁷³ Sherman, 'From "Grow More Food" to "Miss a Meal".'

⁷⁴ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.38.

⁷⁵ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.43.

⁷⁶ Kumarappa, *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, p.3.

⁷⁷ Vinoba Bhave, 'Planning Commission's Draft Outline - A Criticism', p.11.

⁷⁸ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.16.

⁷⁹ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.16.

-
- ⁸⁰ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.58-9.
- ⁸¹ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.72.
- ⁸² Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.67.
- ⁸³ Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.68.
- ⁸⁴ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, p.64.
- ⁸⁵ Kumarappa, *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, p.8.
- ⁸⁶ Kumarappa, *Gandhian Economic Thought*, pp.68-9.
- ⁸⁷ Kumarappa, *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, p.2.
- ⁸⁸ Kumarappa, *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, pp.10-11.
- ⁸⁹ Kumarappa, *Sarvodaya and World Peace*, p.1.
- ⁹⁰ Bhave, *Sarvodaya and Communism*, p.12.
- ⁹¹ Vinoba Bhave, *Democratic Values and the Practice of Citizenship: Selections from the Addresses of Vinoba Bhave*, pp.63-4.
- ⁹² Bhave, *Democratic Values*, p.106.
- ⁹³ Bhave, *Democratic Values*, p.108.
- ⁹⁴ Bhave, *Democratic Values*, p.64.
- ⁹⁵ Vinoba Bhave, *Vinoba Bhave on World Peace* (Tanjore, 1957-64).
- ⁹⁶ Claude Markovitz, *The Un-Gandhian Gandhi*, pp.15-26.
- ⁹⁷ See entries by Leon Benson, Donald B. Grom, and Lee Kleiss, in *Bhoodan as Seen by the West*.
- ⁹⁸ Sushila Nayar, 'Kumarappa as I Knew Him'.
- ⁹⁹ e.g. Chakravarty, "In the Name of Politics", p. 38; Kaviraj, *The Trajectories of the Indian State*, pp. 65-8.

¹⁰⁰ J. Nehru to M.K. Vellodi, Chief Minister, Hyderabad, 15 May 1951, NAI, Ministry of States, f.16(8)-H/51.

¹⁰¹ J. Nehru to Chief Ministers, 17 May 1951, *SWJN*, 2nd series, vol. 16:1, p.564.

¹⁰² J. Nehru, Conference of Heads of Indian Missions in Europe and the USA, *SWJN*, 2nd series, vol.24, p.77.

¹⁰³ B. Ramakrishna Rao, Minister for Land Revenues & Education, Government of Hyderabad, to Damodar Bhai, Secretary to Acharya Vinoba Bhave, 31 May 1951, NAI, Ministry of States, f.16(8)-H/51.

¹⁰⁴ Un-official note by Mohd. Abdulla, Secretary to the Government of Hyderabad, Revenue Department, [undated], NAI, Ministry of States, f.10(6)-H/51.

¹⁰⁵ *Siasat*, 16 June 1953, Deccan Desh.

¹⁰⁶ Jawaharlal Nehru, speech at prayer meeting, 18 April 1954, *SWJN*, 2nd series, vol.25, p.57; Bhave, *Bhoodan Yajna*, p.26.

¹⁰⁷ Vasanthi Srinivasan, *Hindu Spirituality and Virtue Politics*.

¹⁰⁸ Manash Bhattacharjee, 'Aam Aadmi Party: Government of the Governed?', web exclusive <http://www.epw.in/web-exclusives/aam-aadmi-party-government-governed.html> (accessed 10 February 2015).

Gandhism

Gandhism is a body of ideas that describes the inspiration, vision and the life work of Mohandas Gandhi. It is particularly associated with his contributions to the idea of nonviolent resistance, sometimes also called civil resistance. The two pillars of Gandhism are truth and non-violence.

The term "Gandhism" also encompasses what Gandhi's ideas, words and actions mean to people around the world, and how they used them for guidance in building their own future. Gandhism also permeates into the realm of the individual human being, non-political and non-social. A Gandhian can mean either an individual who follows, or a specific philosophy which is attributed to, Gandhism. Professor Ramjee Singh has called Gandhi a bodhisattva (bodhisattva is the Sanskrit term for anyone who, motivated by great compassion, has generated *bodhicitta*, which is a spontaneous wish to attain buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. Bodhisattvas are a popular subject in Buddhist art of the twentieth century^[1]).

However, Gandhi did not approve of 'Gandhism'. As he explained:

"There is no such thing as "Gandhism" and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems...The opinions I have formed and the conclusions I have arrived at are not final. I may change them tomorrow. I have nothing new to teach the world. Tuth and non-violence are as old as the hills.^[2]

In the absence of a "Gandhism" approved by Gandhi, there is a school of thought that we have to derive what Gandhism stands for, from his life and works and living. One such deduction is that his philosophy essentially was based on "truth" and "non-violence" in the sense that first, we should acknowledge the truth that people are different at all levels and accept it. Second, that we should never resort to violence to settle inherent differences between human beings at all levels: from between two people to two nations or two races or two religions.

Contents

Antecedents

Satyagraha

Satya

Brahmacharya and ahimsa

Economics

Khadi

Fasting

Religion

Nehru's India

Freedom

"Without truth, nothing"

Gandhians

Promotion of Gandhian ideas

Criticism and controversy

Concept of partition

See also

Further reading

Antecedents

Although Gandhi's thought is unique in its own right, it is not without ideological parents. Gandhi has in his own writings specified the inspiration for his saying certain things. It can be said that it is his exposure to the West, during his time in London, that compelled him to look at his position on various religious, social, and political affairs.

Soon after his arrival in London, he came under the influence of [Henry Stephens Salt](#), who was not yet the famous campaigner and social reformer that he would later become. Salt's first work, *A plea for vegetarianism* turned Gandhi towards the question of vegetarianism and food habits. It was also around this time that Gandhi joined vegetarian societies in London. Salt eventually became Gandhi's friend too. Talking of the significance of Salt's work, historian Ramachandra Guha said in his work '*Gandhi before India*',

"For our visiting Indian, however, the Vegetarian Society was a shelter that saved him. The young Gandhi had little interest in the two great popular passions of late nineteenth-century London, the theatre and sport. Imperial and socialist politics left him cold. However, in the weekly meetings of the vegetarians of London he found a cause, and his first English friends."^[3]

Salt's work allowed Gandhi for the first time to take part in collective action. Salt later went on to write a biography of [Henry David Thoreau](#), who had a profound impact on Gandhi. Although [Walden](#) could as well have moved Gandhi, it was [Civil Disobedience](#) (Thoreau) that was of greater importance. Gandhi was already in the midst of a form of civil disobedience in South Africa when he read Thoreau. Not only did he adopt the name for the kind of struggle that he would become a champion of, but also adopted the means of breaking laws in order to call for their reform. In 1907, Thoreau's name first appeared in the journal that Gandhi was then editing, [Indian Opinion](#) where Gandhi called Thoreau's logic 'incisive' and 'unanswerable'.^[4]

Gandhi's residence in South Africa itself sought inspiration from another Western literary figure - [Leo Tolstoy](#).^[5] Leo Tolstoy's critique of institutional Christianity and faith in the love of the spirit greatly moved him. He would after becoming a popular political activist write the foreword to Tolstoy's essay, *A letter to a Hindu*. Gandhi exchanged letters with Tolstoy and named his Ashram 'Tolstoy Farm'. In Gandhian thought, Tolstoy's [The Kingdom of God Is Within You](#) sits alongside *A plea* and *Civil Disobedience*.

Tolstoy Farm was Gandhi's experiment of his utopian political economy - later to be called 'Gram Swaraj'. One key source of this concept was [John Ruskin's](#) *Unto This Last* in which Ruskin critiques the 'economic man' (this was written after Ruskin's retreat from Art criticism for which he was well-known). Gandhi tried in all his Ashrams a system of self-sufficiency and decentralised economies. Gandhi was gifted this book by his close associate named Henry Polak in South Africa. The philosophy of Ruskin urged Gandhi to translate this work into Gujarati.

In the *Indian Opinion*, we find mention of [Giuseppe Mazzini](#), [Edward Carpenter](#), [Sir Henry Maine](#), [Helena Blavatsky](#). His first exploration of pluralism can be said to have begun with his association with the Jain guru near home, Raychandbhai Mehta.

Satyagraha

Satyagraha is formed by two Sanskrit words Satya (truth) and Agraha (holding firmly to). The term was popularised during the [Indian Independence Movement](#) and is used in many [Indian languages](#) including [Hindi](#).

Satya

The pivotal and defining element of Gandhism is [satya](#), a [Sanskrit](#) word for truth.^{[6][7]} It also refers to a virtue in [Indian religions](#), referring to being truthful in one's thought, speech and action. Sathya is also called as truth.^[8]

Gandhi said: "The Truth is far more powerful than any weapon of mass destruction."^[9]

Brahmacharya and ahimsa

The concept of nonviolence (ahimsa) and nonviolent resistance has a long history in Indian religious thought and has had many revivals in Christianity, Buddhist, Hinduism, Muslim, and Jain contexts. Gandhi explains his philosophy and way of life in his autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. He was quoted as saying:

"What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans, and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or the holy name of liberty and democracy?"^[10]

"It has always been easier to destroy than to create".^[11]

"There are many causes that I am prepared to die for but no causes that I am prepared to kill for".^[12]

At the age of 36, Gandhi adopted the vow of brahmacharya, or celibacy. He committed himself to the control of the senses, thoughts and actions. Celibacy was important to Gandhi for not only purifying himself of any lust and sexual urges, but also to purify his love for his wife as genuine and not an outlet for any turmoil or aggression within his mind.

Ahimsa, or non-violence, was another key tenet of Gandhi's beliefs. He held that total non-violence would rid a person of anger, obsession and destructive impulses. While his vegetarianism was inspired by his rearing in the Hindu-Jain culture of Gujarat, it was also an extension of ahimsa.

On 6 July 1940, Gandhi published an article in Harijan which applied these philosophies to the question of British involvement in World War II. Homer Jack notes in his reprint of this article, "To Every Briton" (*The Gandhi Reader*^[13]) that, "to Gandhi, all war was wrong, and suddenly it 'came to him like a flash' to appeal to the British to adopt the method of non-violence."^[14] In this article, Gandhi stated,

I appeal to every Briton, wherever he may be now, to accept the method of non-violence instead of that of war, for the adjustment of relations between nations and other matters [...] I do not want Britain to be defeated, nor do I want her to be victorious in a trial of brute strength [...] I venture to present you with a nobler and braver way worthier of the bravest soldier. I want you to fight Nazism without arms, or, if I am to maintain military terminology, with non-violent arms. I would like you to lay down the arms you have as being useless for saving you or humanity. You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions. Let them take possession of your beautiful island, with your many beautiful buildings. You will give all these but neither your souls, nor your minds. If these gentlemen choose to occupy your homes, you will vacate them. If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself, man, woman, and child, to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them [...] my non-violence demands universal love, and you are not a small part of it. It is that love which has prompted my appeal to you.^[15]

Economics

Gandhi espoused an economic theory of simple living and self-sufficiency/import substitution, rather than generating exports like Japan and South Korea did. He envisioned a more agrarian India upon independence that would focus on meeting the material needs of its citizenry prior to generating wealth and industrialising.^[16]

Khadi

Gandhi also adopted the clothing style of most Indians in the early 20th century. His adoption of khadi, or homespun cloth, was intended to help eradicate the evils of poverty, social and economic discrimination. It was also aimed as a challenge to the contrast that he saw between most Indians, who were poor and traditional, and the richer classes of educated, liberal-minded Indians who had adopted Western mannerisms, clothing and practices.

The clothing policy was designed to protest against British economic policies in India. Millions of poor Indian workers were unemployed and entrenched in poverty which Gandhi linked to the industrialisation of cotton processing in Britain. Gandhi promoted khadi as a direct boycott of the Lancashire cotton industry, linking British imperialism to Indian poverty. He focused on persuading all members of the Indian National Congress to spend some time each day hand-spinning on the charkha (spinning wheel). In addition to its point as an economic campaign, the drive for hand-spinning was an attempt to connect the privileged Indian brahmins and lawyers of Congress to connect with the mass of Indian peasantry

Many prominent figures of the Indian independence movement, including Motilal Nehru, were persuaded by Gandhi to renounce their smart London-made clothes in favour of khadi.

Fasting

To Gandhi, fasting was an important method of exerting mental control over base desires. In his autobiography, Gandhi analyses the need to fast to eradicate his desire for delicious, spicy food. He believed that abstention would diminish his sensual faculties, bringing the body increasingly under the mind's absolute control. Gandhi was opposed to the partaking of meat, alcohol, stimulants, salt and most spices, and also eliminated different types of cooking from the food he ate.

Fasting would also put the body through unusual hardship, which Gandhi believed would cleanse the spirit by stimulating the courage to withstand all impulses and pain. Gandhi undertook a "Fast Unto Death" on three notable occasions:

- when he wanted to stop all revolutionary activities after the Chauri Chaura incident of 1922;
- when he feared that the 1932 Communal Award giving separate electorates to Untouchable Hindus would politically divide the Hindu people;
- and in 1947, when he wanted to stop the bloodshed between Hindus and Muslims in Bengal and Delhi.

In all three cases, Gandhi was able to abandon his fast before death. There was some controversy over the 1932 fast, which brought him into conflict with the Untouchable leader B.R. Ambedkar. In the end, Gandhi and Ambedkar both made some concessions to negotiate the Poona Pact, which abandoned the call for separate electorates in turn for voluntary representation and a commitment to abolish untouchability

Gandhi also used the fasts as a penance, blaming himself for inciting Chauri Chaura and the divisive communal politics of both 1932 and 1947, especially the Partition of India. Gandhi sought to purify his soul and expiate his sins, in what he saw as his role in allowing terrible tragedies to happen. It took a heavy toll on his physical health and often brought him close to death.

Religion

Shrimad Rajchandiji, a revered saint in Jainism was Gandhi's spiritual mentor Gandhi quoted!^[17]

"No religion in the World has explained the principle of *Ahiṃsā* so deeply and systematically as is discussed with its applicability in every human life in Jainism. As and when the benevolent principle of *Ahiṃsā* or non-violence will be ascribed for practice by the people of the world to achieve their end of life in this world and beyond, Jainism is sure to have the uppermost status and Mahavira is sure to be respected as the greatest authority on Ahiṃsā."^[18]

Gandhi described his religious beliefs as being rooted in Hinduism as well and, in particular, the Bhagavad Gita:

"Hinduism as I know it satisfies my soul, fills my whole being. When doubts haunt me, when disappointments stare me in the face, and when I see not one ray of light on the horizon, I turn to the Bhagavad Gita, and find a verse to comfort me; and I immediately begin to smile

in the midst of overwhelming sorrow. My life has been full of tragedies and if they have not left any visible and indelible effect on me, I owe it to the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita".^[19]

He professed the philosophy of Hindu Universalism (also see Universalism), which maintains that all religions contain truth and therefore worthy of toleration and respect. It was articulated by Gandhi:

"After long study and experience, I have come to the conclusion that all religions are true all religions have some error in them; all religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism, in as much as all human beings should be as dear to one as one's own close relatives. My own veneration for other faiths is the same as that for my own faith; therefore no thought of conversion is possible."^[20]

Gandhi believed that at the core of every religion was truth (satya), non-violence (ahimsa) and the Golden Rule.

Despite his belief in Hinduism, Gandhi was also critical of many of the social practices of Hindus and sought to reform the religion.

"Thus if I could not accept Christianity either as a perfect, or the greatest religion, neither was I then convinced of Hinduism being such. Hindu defects were pressingly visible to me. If untouchability could be a part of Hinduism, it could but be a rotten part or an excrescence. I could not understand the *raison d'être* of a multitude of sects and castes. What was the meaning of saying that the Vedas were the inspired Word of God? If they were inspired, why not also the Bible and the Koran? As Christian friends were endeavouring to convert me, so were Muslim friends. Abdullah Sheth had kept on inducing me to study Islam, and of course he had always something to say regarding its beauty".^[19]

He then went on to say:

"As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion over-riding morality. Man, for instance, cannot be untruthful, cruel or incontinent and claim to have God on his side".^[21]

Gandhi was critical of the hypocrisy in organised religion, rather than the principles on which they were based.

Later in his life when he was asked whether he was a Hindu, he replied:

"Yes I am. I am also a Christian, a Muslim, a Buddhist and a Jew".^[22]

Gandhi's religious views are reflected in the hymns his group often sang:

- Vaishnav jan to Call them Vishnava, those who understand the sufferings of others...
- Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram Call him Rama or God or Allah...

Nehru's India

Gandhi was assassinated in 1948, but his teachings and philosophy would play a major role in India's economic and social development and foreign relations for decades to come.

Sarvodaya is a term meaning 'universal uplift' or 'progress of all'. It was coined by Gandhi in 1908 as a title for his translation of John Ruskin's Unto This Last. Later, nonviolence leader Vinoba Bhave used the term to refer to the struggle of post-independence Gandhians to ensure that self-determination and equality reached the masses and the downtrodden. Sarvodaya workers associated with Vinoba, including Jaya Prakash Narayan and Dada Dharmadhikari, undertook various projects aimed at encouraging popular self-organisation during the 1950s and 1960s. Many groups descended from these networks continue to function locally in India today.

The Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, was often considered Gandhi's successor, although he was not religious and often disagreed with Gandhi. He was, however, deeply influenced by Gandhi personally as well as politically, and used his premiership to pursue ideological policies based on Gandhi's principles. In fact, on 15 January 1942, in the AICC session Gandhi openly proclaimed Nehru as his successor^[23]

Nehru's foreign policy was staunch anti-colonialism and neutrality in the Cold War. Nehru backed the independence movement in Tanzania and other African nations, as well as the Civil Rights Movement in the United States and the anti-apartheid struggle of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress in South Africa. Nehru refused to align with either the United States or the Soviet Union, and helped found the Non-Aligned Movement

Nehru also pushed through major legislation that granted legal rights and freedoms to Indian women, and outlawed untouchability and many different kinds of social discrimination in the face of strong opposition from orthodox Hindus.

Not all of Nehru's policies were Gandhian. Nehru refused to condemn the USSR's 1956–57 invasion of Hungary to put down an anti-communist, popular revolt. Some of his economic policies were criticised for removing the right of property and freedoms from the landowning peasants of Gujarat for whom Gandhi had fought in the early 1920s. India's economic policies under Nehru were highly different from Gandhi's with Nehru following a socialist model. Nehru also brought Goa and Hyderabad into the Indian union through military invasion.

At this point it is important to note that Gandhi believed in a kind of socialism but one that was very different from Nehru's. In praise of socialism, Gandhi once said, "... socialism is as pure as a crystal. It therefore requires crystal-like means to achieve it."^[24] Moreover Gandhi was conscious of the fact that Nehru's ideology differed from his but did not object to that as he was aware that this was a well-thought-out standpoint. He called this a difference in emphasis, his being on 'means' while Nehru's being on ends.

Nehru's biggest failure is often considered to be the 1962 Sino-Indian War, though his policy is said to have been inspired by Gandhian pacifism. In this instance, it led to the defeat of the Indian Army against a surprise Chinese invasion. Nehru had neglected the defence budget and disallowed the Army to prepare, which caught the soldiers in India's north eastern frontier off-guard with lack of supplies and reinforcements.

Freedom

Gandhi's deep commitment and disciplined belief in non-violent civil disobedience as a way to oppose forms of oppression or injustice has inspired many subsequent political figures, including Martin Luther King Jr. of the United States, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Nelson Mandela and Steve Biko of South Africa, Lech Wałęsa of Poland and Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar.

Gandhi's early life work in South Africa between the years 1910 and 1915, for the improved rights of Indian residents living under the white minority South African government inspired the later work of the African National Congress (ANC). From the 1950s, the ANC organised non-violent civil disobedience akin to the campaign advanced by the Indian National Congress under the inspiration of Gandhi between the 1920s and 1940s. ANC activists braved the harsh tactics of the police to protest against the oppressive South African government. Many, especially Mandela, languished for decades in jail, while the world outside was divided in its effort to remove apartheid. Steve Biko, perhaps the most vocal adherent to non-violent civil resistance, was allegedly murdered in 1977 by agents of the government. When the first universal, free elections were held in South Africa in 1994, the ANC was elected and Mandela became president. Mandela made a special visit to India and publicly honoured Gandhi as the man who inspired the freedom struggle of black South Africans. Statues of Gandhi have been erected in Natal, Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Martin Luther King Jr., a young Christian minister and a leader of the Civil Rights Movement seeking the emancipation of African Americans from racial segregation in the American South, and also from economic and social injustice and political disenfranchisement, traveled to India in 1962 to meet Jawaharlal Nehru. The two discussed Gandhi's teachings, and the methodology of organising peaceful resistance. The graphic imagery of black protesters being hounded by police, beaten and brutalised, evoked admiration for King and the protesters across America and the world, and precipitated the 1964 Civil Rights Act

The non-violent Solidarity movement of Lech Wałęsa of Poland overthrew a Soviet-backed communist government after two decades of peaceful resistance and strikes in 1989, precipitating the downfall of the Soviet Union.

Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi was put under house arrest, and her National League for Democracy suppressed in their non-violent quest for democracy and freedom in military-controlled Myanmar. This struggle was inaugurated when the military dismissed the results of the 1991 democratic elections and imposed military rule. She was released in November 2010, when free elections were to be held.

"Without truth, nothing"

Mohandas Gandhi's early life was a series of personal struggles to decipher the truth about life's important issues and discover the true way of living. He admitted in his autobiography to hitting his wife when he was young,^[25] and indulging in carnal pleasures out of lust, jealousy and possessiveness, not genuine love. He had eaten meat, smoked a cigarette, and almost visited a hustler. It was only after much personal turmoil and repeated failures that Gandhi developed his philosophy

Gandhi disliked having a cult following, and was averse to being addressed as Mahatma, claiming that he was not a perfect human being.

In 1942, while he had already condemned Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and the Japanese militarists, Gandhi took on an offensive in civil resistance, called the Quit India Movement, which was even more dangerous and definitive owing to its direct call for Indian independence. Gandhi did not perceive the British as defenders of freedom due to their rule in India. He did not feel a need to take sides with world powers.

Gandhians

There have been Muslim Gandhians, such as Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, known as the "Frontier Gandhi"; under the influence of Gandhi, he organised the Pathans of the Northwest Frontier as early as 1919.^[26] Christian Gandhians include Horace Alexander^[27] and Martin Luther King.^[28] Jewish Gandhians include Gandhi's close associate Herman Kallenbach. Atheist Gandhians include Jawaharlal Nehru

Promotion of Gandhian ideas

Several journals have also been published to promote Gandhian ideas. One of the most well-known is *Gandhi Marg*, an English-language journal published since 1957 by the Gandhi Peace Foundation.^[29]

Harold Dwight Lasswell, a political scientist and communications theorist, defined propaganda as the management of eclectic attitudes by manipulation of significant symbols. Based on this definition of Propaganda, Gandhi made use of significant symbols to drive his ideal of a united India free of British rule.^[30]

His ideas symbolized in propaganda stated that India was a nation capable of economic self-sufficiency without the British, a unity transcending religion would make for a stronger nation, and that the most effective method of protest was through passive resistance, including non-violence and the principle of satyagraha. In the "Quit India" speeches, Gandhi says "the proposal for the withdrawal of British power is to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and valour, so long as we are not free." On his ideas towards a unified India he said: "Thousands of Mussalmans have told me, that if Hindu-Muslim question was to be solved satisfactorily, it must be done in my lifetime. I should feel flattered at this; but how can I agree to proposal which does not appeal to my reason? Hindu-Muslim unity is not a new thing. Millions of Hindus and Mussalmans have sought after it. I consciously strove for its achievement from my boyhood. While at school, I made it a point to cultivate the friendship of Muslims and Parsi co-students. I believed even at that tender age that the Hindus in India, if they wished to live in peace and amity with the other communities, should assiduously cultivate the virtue of neighbourliness. It did not matter, I felt, if I made no special effort to cultivate the friendship with Hindus, but I must make friends with at least a few Mussalmans. In India too I continued my efforts and left no stone unturned to achieve that unity. It was my life-

long aspiration for it that made me offer my fullest co-operation to the Mussalmans in the Khilafat movement. Muslims throughout the country accepted me as their true friend." ^[31] Gandhi's belief in the effectiveness of passive, non-violent resistance has been quoted as being the "belief that non-violence alone will lead men to do right under all circumstances."

These ideas were symbolized by Gandhi through the use of significant symbols, an important proponent in the acceptance of propaganda, in his speeches and movements. On 3 November 1930, there was the speech given before the Dandi March which possibly could have been one of Gandhi's last speeches, in which the significant symbol of the march itself demonstrates the exclusively nonviolent struggle to empower a self-sufficient India. Beginning in Ahmedabad and concluding in Dandi, Gujarat, the march saw Gandhi and his supporters directly disobey the Rowlatt Act which imposed heavy taxation and enforced British monopoly on the salt market.^[32] The Khadi movement, part of the larger swadeshi movement, employed the significant symbol of the burning of British cloth in order to manipulate attitudes towards boycotting British goods and rejecting Western culture and urging the return to ancient, precolonial culture. Gandhi obtained a wheel and engaged his disciples in spinning their own cloth called Khadi; this commitment to hand spinning was an essential element to Gandhi's philosophy and politics.^[33] On 1 December 1948, Gandhi dictated his speech on the eve of the last fast. Using the fast as a form of significant symbolism, he justifies it as "a fast which a votary of non-violence sometimes feels impelled to undertake by way of protest against some wrong done by society, and this he does when as a votary of Ahimsa has no other remedy left. Such an occasion has come my way." This fast was conducted in line with his idea of a nation's communities and religions brought together. Gandhi's fast was only to end when he was satisfied with the reunion of hearts of all the communities brought about without any outside pressure, but from an awakened sense of duty.^[34]

Criticism and controversy

Gandhi's rigid ahimsa implies pacifism, and is thus a source of criticism from across the political spectrum.

Concept of partition

As a rule, Gandhi was opposed to the concept of partition as it contradicted his vision of religious unity.^[35] Of the partition of India to create Pakistan, he wrote in *Harijan* on 6 October 1946:

[The demand for Pakistan] as put forth by the Muslim League is un-Islamic and I have not hesitated to call it sinful. Islam stands for unity and the brotherhood of mankind, not for disrupting the oneness of the human family. Therefore, those who want to divide India into possibly warring groups are enemies alike of India and Islam. They may cut me into pieces but they cannot make me subscribe to something which I consider to be wrong [...] we must not cease to aspire, in spite of [the] wild talk, to befriend all Muslims and hold them fast as prisoners of our love.^[36]

However, as Homer Jack notes of Gandhi's long correspondence with Jinnah on the topic of Pakistan: "Although Gandhi was personally opposed to the partition of India, he proposed an agreement [...] which provided that the Congress and the Muslim League would cooperate to attain independence under a provisional government, after which the question of partition would be decided by a plebiscite in the districts having a Muslim majority"^[37]

These dual positions on the topic of the partition of India opened Gandhi up to criticism from both Hindus and Muslims. Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his contemporary fellow-travelers condemned Gandhi for undermining Muslim political rights. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and his allies condemned Gandhi, accusing him of politically appeasing Muslims while turning a blind eye to their atrocities against Hindus, and for allowing the creation of Pakistan (despite having publicly declared that "before partitioning India, my body will have to be cut into two pieces"^[38]).

His refusal to protest against the hanging of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Udham Singh and Rajguru by the British occupation authorities was a source of condemnation and intense anger for many Indians.^[39]^[40] Economists, such as Jagdish Bhagwati, have criticized Gandhi's ideas of swadeshi.

Of this criticism, Gandhi stated, "There was a time when people listened to me because I showed them how to give fight to the Britis without arms when they had no arms [...] but today I am told that my non-violence can be of no avail against the Hindu-Moslem riots and, therefore, people should arm themselves for self-defense!^[41]

See also

- Ambedkarism
- Marxism
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr
- Nelson Mandela
- Civil resistance
- Gandhigiri
- Nonviolent resistance
- Satyagraha
- Tolstoyan movement
- Trusteeship

Further reading

- Swarup, Ram (1955). *Gandhism and communism: Principles and technique*. New Delhi: J. Prakashan.

Notes

1. Nicholas F. Gier (2004). *The Virtue of Nonviolence: From Gautama to Gandhi*. SUNY Press. p. 222. ISBN 978-0-7914-5949-2
2. Gwilym Beckerlegge, *World religions reader*, 2001
3. Guha, Ramachandra (2013). *Gandhi before India* Allen Lane. ISBN 978-9-351-18322-8
4. Gandhi, MK (October 26, 1907). *Indian Opinion*. 438. Missing or empty |title= (help)
5. Guha, Ramachandra (2012). *Gandhi before India* Allen Lane.
6. A. A. Macdonell, *Sanskrit English Dictionary* Asian Educational Services, ISBN 978-8120617797, page 330-331
7. J. Wentzel Vrede van Huyssteen et al (2003), *Encyclopedia of Science and Religion*, Thomson Gale, ISBN 0-02-865704-7, page 405
8. KN Tiwari (1998), *Classical Indian Ethical Thought*, Motilal Banarsidass, ISBN 978-8120816077, page 87
9. *Nonviolence* By Senthil Ram, Ralph Summy 2007
10. page 388, *The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi*, by Gandhi (Mahatma), India. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Publications Division
11. *Trustworthiness* by Bruce Glassman – Juvenile Nonfiction – 2008
12. *Trustworthiness*, by Bruce Glassman – Juvenile Nonfiction – 2008
13. *The Gandhi Reader* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=XpWO-GoOhVEC&pg=PR13&lpg=PR11&dq=The+Gandhi+Reader:+A+Sourcebook+of+His+Life+and+Writings&sig=mu7B1to2ve7qqIYNmXQMd5jifsY#PPR14,M1Tt>)
14. Jack, Homer. *Gandhi Reader* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=XpWO-GoOhVEC&pg=PR13&lpg=PR11&dq=The+Gandhi+Reader:+A+Sourcebook+of+His+Life+and+Writings&sig=mu7B1to2ve7qqIYNmXQMd5jifsY#PPR14,M1Tt>), p.344
15. Jack, Homer. *Gandhi Reader* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=XpWO-GoOhVEC&pg=PR13&lpg=PR11&dq=The+Gandhi+Reader:+A+Sourcebook+of+His+Life+and+Writings&sig=mu7B1to2ve7qqIYNmXQMd5jifsY#PPR14,M1Tt>), pp.345–6
16. Mia Mahmudur Rahim; Sanjaya Kuruppu (2016). "Corporate Governance in India: The Potential for Ghandism". In Ngwu, Franklin; Onyeka, Osuji; Frank, Stephen *Corporate Governance in Developing and Emerging Markets* (<http://www.tandfebooks.com/isbn/9781315666020>) Routledge.
17. Rudolph & Rudolph 1984 p. 171.
18. Janardan Pandey 1998 p. 50.

19. Encyclopaedia of Indian philosophy by Vaj Kumar Pandey – History – 2007
 20. M. K. Gandhi, *All Men Are Brothers: Life and Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi as told in his own words*, Paris, UNESCO 1958, p 60.
 21. Mahatma Gandhi and comparative religion – Page 54 , by K.L. Seshagiri Rao – Biography & Autobiography – 1990
 22. [A Man Called Bapu](https://books.google.com/books?id=wliIWWjVargC&pg=PA5)(<https://books.google.com/books?id=wliIWWjVargC&pg=PA5>), Subhadra Sen Gupta, Pratham Books, 2008. P5
 23. Gandhi, Rajmohan (1997).*Rajaji, A life*. Penguin India.
 24. Gandhi, Mohandas (13 July 1946). "The Means"*Harijan*.
 25. Mohatma Gandhi, (1957) *An autobiography: The story of my experiments with truth* (M. H. Desaiāns.). Beacon Press. pp. 24–25
 26. Ronald M. McCarthy and Gene Sharp,*Nonviolent action: a research guide*(1997) p. 317
 27. Horace Alexander, *Consider India: An Essay in Values* (London: Asia, 1961), p. 73
 28. Mary Elizabeth King,*Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr: the power of nonviolent action*(UNESCO Publishing, 1999), p. 183
 29. [Ananda M. Pandiri](#) *A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography on Mahatma Gandhi:Biographies, Works by Gandhi, and Bibliographical Sources*Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995ISBN 0313253374 (p. 349).
 30. Barlow, David M., and Brett Mills. "Harold D.Lasswell." *Reading media theory: thinkers, approaches and contexts*. Second Edition ed. Harlow England: PearsonLongman, 2012. 103. Print.
 31. Bandopadhyaya, Sailesh Kumar "The "Quit India" Resolution." *My non-violence*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Pub. House, 1960. 183-205. Print.
 32. Gandhi, M. K., and Mahadev Desai. "On The Eve Of Historic Dandi March." *The selected works of Mahatma Gandhi* Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publ. House, 1968. 28-30. Print.
 33. Brown, TM; Fee, E (2008)."Spinning for India's independence"(<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2156064>). *Am J Public Health* **98**: 39. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2007.120139(<https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2007.120139>). PMC 2156064 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2156064>) PMID 18048775 (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18048775>)
 34. "Speech on the Eve of the Last Fast." *Famous Speeches by Mahatma Gandhi*. N.p., n.d. ~~16~~. 16 March 2014. <<http://www.mkgandhi.org/speeches/evelast.htm>
 35. reprinted in *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work, and Ideas*(<https://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0394714660/>), Louis Fischer, ed., 2002 (reprint edition) pp.106–108.
 36. reprinted in *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work, and Ideas*(<https://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0394714660/>)Louis Fischer, ed., 2002 (reprint edition) pp. 38–9.
 37. Jack, Homer. *The Gandhi Reader*(<https://books.google.com/books?id=XpWO-GoOhVEC&pg=PR13&lpg=PR11&dq=The+Gandhi+Reader:+A+Sourcebook+of+His+Life+and+Writings&sig=mu7B1to2ve7qqIYNmXQMd5jifsY>). 418.
 38. "The life and death of Mahatma Gandhi", on BBC News[1] (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/50664.stm>) see section "Independence and partition."
 39. Mahatma Gandhi on Bhagat Singh(<http://www.kamat.com/mmgandhi/onbhagasingh.htm>).
 40. Gandhi – 'Mahatma' or Flawed Genius?(http://india_resource.tripod.com/gandhi.html) Archived (https://archive.is/2012121209000556/india_resource.tripod.com/gandhi.html) December 2012 at Archive.is.
 41. reprinted in *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work, and Ideas*(<https://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0394714660/>), Louis Fischer, ed., 2002 (reprint edition) p. 31.
- *Gandhi today: a report on Mahatma Gandhi's successors*,by Mark Shepard. Published by Shepard Publications, 1987. ISBN 0-938497-04-9. Excerpts

References

- Fischer, Louis. *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work, and Ideas*. Intage: New York, 2002. (reprint edition)ISBN 1-4000-3050-1
- Jack, Homer (1956).*The Gandhi Reader: A Sourcebook of His Life and Writings*.. Grove Press. ISBN 0-8021-3161-1. External link in |title= (help)
- Hardiman, David.*Gandhi in His Time and Ours: The Global Legacy of His Ideas*(2004) ISBN 0-231-13114-3

- Narayan, Shriman (1970).*Relevance of Gandhian economics* Navajivan Publishing House. ASIN B0006CDLA8.
- Pani, Narendar (2002).*Inclusive Economics: Gandhian Method and Contemporary Policy*Sage Publications Pvt. Ltd. ISBN 978-0-7619-9580-7.
- Sharma, R. (1997).*Gandhian economics* Deep and Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd.ISBN 978-81-7100-986-2
- Weber, Thomas (2006).*Gandhi, Gandhism and the Gandhians* Roli Books Pvt. Ltd.ISBN 81-7436-468-4
- Mashelkar, Ramesh (2010).*Timeless Inspirator-Reliving Gandhi*^[2]. Sakal Papers Ltd.ISBN 978-93-8057-148-5

External link in |title= ([help](#))

External links

- Gandhian Philosophy in Short
 - Gandhian ideals
 - Relevance of Gandhism in Modern Polity
 - Gandhian Trusteeship as an "Instrument of Human Dignity"
 - Review of "Gandhian economics"
 - Gandhian economics is relevant
 - Gandhism and Buddhism PDF
 - Studies in Gandhism
-

Retrieved from '<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Gandhism&oldid=847434988>

This page was last edited on 25 June 2018, at 10:13(UTC).

Text is available under the [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License](#)additional terms may apply By using this site, you agree to the [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the [Wikimedia Foundation, Inc.](#), a non-profit organization.