GANDHI MARG

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Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Liberation of Self and Society

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ABSTRACT

Religion gave meaning and direction to the lives of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.; it inspired their belief in the unity of life and commitment to the way of love. Service to humanity was part and parcel of their religion. The deeper they delved into serving society, the more they grew in their spiritual awareness. In the process, they became less self-centered and more spirit-centered. Their vision of a nonviolent social order was based on the assumption that individual transformation and social transformation are interrelated. Their lives are a demonstration of the fact that personal and social transformation are interconnected and interdependent.

DECADES AFTER THEIR assassinations, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) and Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) remain voices of hope and courage for people throughout the world. Even though these twentieth-century prophets were rooted in different religious traditions — Gandhi in Hinduism and King in Christianity — they had a shared understanding of what it means to be religious. Religion gave meaning and direction to their lives; it defined their visions and provided them with the means of transforming self and society. Religion also made them aware that at its core nonviolence is a way of life and not just a tactic for gaining ground in a conflict. In the world they sought to create, there was room for all creeds, classes, races, and nationalities. They did not view difference as a problem; rather, difference was accepted as a pathway to the realization of the ultimate Truth. Both Gandhi and King recognized that the inner and

the outer, the personal and the political, the religious and the secular, are related and that there is a fundamental link between personal and social transformation. The renewal and liberation of their own lives, they firmly believed, was intertwined with the renewal and liberation of their societies. They lived their lives in the service of God and humanity — Gandhi through his vision of Sarvodaya (welfare of all) and King through his vision of the Beloved Community (a community where the law of love reigns). The religious values they inherited from their faith traditions, how they interpreted them, and how they applied those values in their personal and public lives is crucial to grasping the meaning of their lives.

Gandhi was born into a deeply religious household. His parents led pious and religiously informed lives. Putlibai, Gandhi's mother, rigorously adhered to religious rituals, especially vows and fasts. "The outstanding impression my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness," Gandhi writes in his autobiography.[1] His father was not only open to the many strands of Hinduism but he also sympathetically engaged persons of different faiths who were frequent guests in their home. According to Judith Brown, Gandhi's British biographer, the religious environment that the family provided was perhaps "the only remarkable aspect of [an] otherwise unremarkable experience of" Gandhi's early years.[2] This, however, did not lead to Gandhi gaining "any living faith in God."[3] He disliked going to temple because of its "glitter and pomp" and even developed an interest in atheism.[4] Yet he was touched by the religious spirit. "One thing," he writes, "took deep root in me — the conviction that morality is the basis of things, and that truth is the substance of all morality. Truth became my sole objective. It began to grow in magnitude every day, and my definition of it also has been ever widening."[5] In the process, he internalized a powerful moral teaching — "return good for evil"— a teaching that, starting in 1893 in South Africa, was to become his guiding principle in personal and public life.[6] In his quest for wisdom about his own faith, he found a teacher, Raychandbhai, who helped him to gain a place of peace and stability within Hinduism.[7]

Son, grandson, and great grandson of ministers, King was touched deeply by religion from the outset at home and in the church. In an essay titled "An Autobiography of Religious Development," King highlights closeness to his "saintly [maternal] grandmother" and the centrality of religion in his life. Systematic study and practice of religion also began early in his life. "Religion has just been something that I grew up in."[8] It "has been real to me and closely knitted to life. In fact the two cannot be separated; religion for me is life," he added.[9] So central was religion and the church in King's life that already at the

age of fifteen, he gave a trial sermon at his father's church. And in 1948 he was ordained to preach. Just as Gandhi was pressed into learning the importance of compassionate living, so also was King encouraged from childhood to take seriously the Christian principle of love of the other. His family taught him to love all, a teaching the church reinforced.[10] King did not readily grasp the wisdom of his parents' teachings. He had to be convinced of their truth and social relevance, first at Morehouse College, then at Crozer Seminary.

The first real test came when King was only six years of age. He had a white playmate from the age of three. Their friendship suffered and finally ended when they started school. It was then that the white boy's father forbade him to play with King.[11] Perplexed, King sought an explanation from his parents, who told him about racism and the insults and injuries Black people, including them, had experienced and were still experiencing. King's parents underscored their love and God's love for him. "Don't let this thing impress you. Don't let it make you feel that you are not as good as white people. You are as good as anyone else, and don't you forget it."[12] Parental words of affirmation, however, were not enough to soothe his feelings of anger at and rejection of whites. He began "to hate every white person."[13] The feeling of hatred of whites "continued to grow" in him despite the fact that his parents impressed upon him that it was his "duty as a Christian to love" all people.[14] "The question arose in my mind," King reflected years later, "how could I love a race of people [who] hated me and who had been responsible for breaking me up with one of my best childhood friends?"[15] It was not until King got to college and participated in interracial activities that he was able to "conquer this anti-White feeling."[16] In subsequent years, especially with the start of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the love of the other, the stranger, the enemy became the operating principle of his public life also. He not only preached the way of love, he persistently practiced and forcefully advocated it.

It was in England that Gandhi "first discovered the futility of mere religious knowledge."[17] He understood well that the Hindu tradition, not unlike other religious traditions, had within it many strands. He chose to live his life according to what the Gandhi scholar Raghavan Iyer suggests is "a neglected strand of Indian tradition — the path of karma yoga, or spiritual realization through social action. . . . Gandhi believed strongly . . . that the time had come for the purification of politics and the reformation of formal religion in India."[18] Once this was understood, withdrawing from the affairs of the world was not an option. Gandhi was convinced that it was only by engaging the world that he could attain his ultimate religious goal

— Moksha (liberation from the cycle of birth and death). "What I want to achieve, — what I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years," he highlights in autobiography, "is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain Moksha. I live and move and have my being in pursuit of this goal. All that I do by way of speaking and writing, and all my ventures in the political field, are directed to this same end."[19] He continued to believe that it is not possible to find God by withdrawing from the affairs of the world. "If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity," he told a European visitor as late as 1936."[20]

That God could be realized only through service Gandhi learned firsthand in South Africa. It was there that the way opened for him to begin to serve both God and humans. Aged twenty-four, Gandhi arrived in Durban on "a purely mundane and selfish mission" to earn a living, not to change the world or to pursue a saintly path.[21] "I was just a boy returned from England wanting to make some money."[22] Racial segregation was the established norm of South African society; public facilities were strictly segregated. Gandhi had been in South Africa just a few days when he was thrown off the train for refusing to leave the first class compartment set aside for white passengers. As a result, he sat and shivered at the train station through the night, and asked himself the question: "Should I fight for my rights or go back to India or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case?"[23] Convinced that "it would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation," he decided to stay and "to root out the disease [of color prejudice] and suffer hardships in the process."[24] We can see that, even at this early stage, Gandhi had intimations of the notion that personal and social transformation cannot be placed in separate, unrelated compartments; the two are inextricably linked. The night spent on a cold railway station, we know now, would prove to be a transforming experience for Gandhi. "It changed the course of my life. . . . My active nonviolence began from that date. And God put me through the test during that journey," he told Dr. John R. Mott, a Christian missionary, decades later.[25] "Was it destiny, heritage, luck, the Gita, or some other immeasurable quantity" that led Gandhi to "resist the evil" of racism, asks his biographer, Louis Fischer?[26] Whatever the precise answer, Gandhi's experience at the train station put him on a path which demonstrated to the world the transformative power of peaceful ways of coping with conflict. Thus the way and the vision became one.

As Gandhi consulted with members of the Indian community, he

realized that his experience was by no means unique. Instead of finding an exceptional solution for the wrongs that had been done to him, Gandhi sought ways of confronting segregation as such — his personal concerns became political. In 1906, he launched a mass movement founded on the principles of nonviolence, a movement that was to inspire many all over the world and none more so than Martin Luther King, Jr. The deeper Gandhi got into the service of his community the more he grew in his spiritual awareness. In the process, he became less self-centered and more spirit-centered.[27] "Gandhi was a self-remade man and the transformation," Fischer writes, "began in South Africa. It is not that he turned failure into success. Using the clay that was there he turned himself into another person. His was a remarkable case of second birth in one lifetime."[28]

Judith Brown also stresses the significance of the melding of the spiritual and the political during Gandhi's time in South Africa. "These African years were crucial in forging Gandhi into a public man, inwardly and outwardly. In his self-understanding, too, Africa was a seminal experience; but it was only the spiritual and political prelude to his life's work."[29] From his South African sojourn, Gandhi emerged committed to spiritualizing politics. All the work that he did from 1915 onwards in India was built on the insight that called for the harmonization of religion and politics. As he told a missionary group in 1938, "I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. . . . I do not know of any religion apart from activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities without which life would be a maze of sound and fury signifying nothing."[30]

When the time came for King to choose his vocation, he decided to give his life to the service of the church. Though King, Sr. influenced the son in his decision to enter the ministry, the call to ministry came "neither by some miraculous vision nor by some blinding light experience on the road to life's experience. . . . [I]t was a response to an inner urge that gradually came upon me. This urge expressed itself in a desire to serve God and humanity, and the feeling that my talent and my commitment could best be expressed through the ministry," King notes in his autobiographical essay.[31] In the fall of 1954, with his doctoral dissertation for Boston University still not written, King took up the leadership of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. Steeped as he was in the distinctive social gospel tradition of the African American Church, King brought a wide range of public concerns to his ministry and a commitment to

politically engaged religion.[32]

The elder King's activism, according to historian Clayborne Carson, also "shaped his son's understanding of the ministry and presaged King, Jr.'s own career."[33] King, Sr.'s conviction that "the true mission of the church" is "to do something about the broken-hearted, poor, unemployed, the captive, the blind, and the bruised" greatly influenced his son.[34] By his refusal to accept discrimination personally and actively engaging in voting rights for African Americans, King, Sr. set a powerful example of politically engaged religion for King.

Equally, if not more, significant was the influence of King's teachers. Under their guidance, "he began to rethink his religious attitudes."[35] Morehouse Professor George D. Kelsey removed "the shackles of fundamentalism" from "my body," King recalled years later.[36] Kelsey guided King "to see that ministry could be intellectually respectable as well as emotionally satisfying. When he accepted this fact," writes Coretta Scott King, "it opened the way for him to go into the church."[37] Perhaps none among his teachers was more influential in pressing King into the direction of politically engaged religion than Benjamin E. Mays, President of Morehouse College.[38] King acknowledged Mays as "my spiritual mentor" and "one of the great influences in my life."[39] Mays encouraged his students to go out into the world and challenge segregation openly and without fear. He stressed that "a religion which ignores social problems will in time be doomed."[40] And the meaning of that heritage was the call to serve God by fully engaging the world.

Direct participation in the African American struggle for justice and equality, however, was not in King's plans. "Although we had come back to the South with the hope of playing a part in the changes we knew were on the horizon," King remembered later, "we had no notion yet of how the changes would come about, and no inkling that in little more than a year we would be involved in a movement that was to alter Montgomery forever and to have repercussions throughout the world."[41] But all that changed with Rosa Parks's refusal to give up her seat to a white man and the start of the Montgomery Bus Boycott in December 1955. The successful year-long nonviolent bus boycott brought King to the heart of the Black struggle and ultimately catapulted him to national and international prominence.

No sooner had he accepted the leadership of the bus boycott than he became the target of police harassment, obscene and threatening phone calls and an arrest. As stress and tension mounted, King began to grow in fear and his resolve to stay in the struggle weakened. When, in January, his house was bombed, King's "crisis

of confidence peaked," writes King biographer David Garrow.[42] In the dead of night in his kitchen at home, King seriously considered relinquishing the leadership of the boycott without appearing a coward. Not only that, he was even ready to give up the struggle altogether.[43] In his moment of despondency, King turned to God like he had not done before. "And I discovered then that religion had to become real to me, and I had to know God for myself. . . . I prayed a prayer, and I prayed out loud that night. I said, 'Lord, I'm down here trying to do what's right. I think I am right. I think the cause we represent is right. But Lord, I must confess that I'm weak now. I'm faltering, I'm losing my courage. And I can't let the people see me like this because if they see me weak and losing my courage, they will begin to get weak."[44] He "heard the voice of Jesus saying still to fight on."[45] In what, according to historian Taylor Branch, was King's "first transcendent religious experience of his life" uncertainty and fear left him; he regained the courage and the strength to continue.[46] Though very different in their setting and historical context, there is likely a parallel between King's kitchen experience and the night Gandhi spent in South Africa in 1893 in the cold at a train station.

Staying true to the progressive tradition of the Black struggle, with its roots in African American Christianity, King made the teachings of Jesus the cornerstone of personal morality and socially responsible activism. Two years into his involvement in the Southern Nonviolent Movement, King reiterated his position on the place of religion in society. "On the one hand [religion] seeks to change the souls of men, and thereby unite them with God; on the other hand it seeks to change the environmental conditions of men so that the soul will have a chance after it is changed. Any religion that professes to be concerned with the souls of men and is not concerned with the slums that damn them, the economic conditions that strangle them, and the social conditions that cripple them is a dry-as-dust religion."[47] Just as for Gandhi, so also for King, mere religious knowledge is not enough; religion must inform our personal and public lives.

Religion also provided the Mahatma and King their openings to nonviolence. In a fundamental sense, Gandhi's journey to nonviolence began early. At age fifteen he stole a piece of gold out of his brother's armlet to clear a debt his brother had incurred. Though the debt was cleared, Gandhi could not bear to live with himself for the wrong he had committed. As a first step, he resolved never to steal again. Next, he decided to confess his errors to his father. Terrified of speaking to his father, he decided to write a confession note seeking forgiveness. With fear and trembling, Gandhi handed the note to his father. Tears fell down his father's cheeks as he read the note, which he tore up.

"This was, for me," Gandhi recalls, "an object-lesson in Ahimsa [nonviolent love]. Then I could read in it nothing more than a father's love, but today I know that it was pure Ahimsa. When such Ahimsa becomes all-embracing, it transforms everything it touches. There is no limit to its power." And he added, "This sort of sublime forgiveness was not natural to my father. I had thought that he would be angry, say hard things . . . . But he was so wonderfully peaceful."[48]

The application of the principle of forgiveness became foundational in Gandhi's life. As he matured, Gandhi found support for the way of nonviolence in the scriptures — Upanishads, the Mahabharata, and the Bhagavad Gita. Chandogya Upanishad lists ahimsa as one of the five virtues.[49] "Ahimsa is the greatest religion," says the Mahabharata. Contrary to what some Hindu theologians have suggested, Gandhi insisted that in essence the Gita was an essay in the way of nonviolence. "Even in 1888-89, when I first became acquainted with the Gita," Gandhi writes, "I felt that it was not a historical work, but that, under the guise of physical warfare, it described the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind, and that physical warfare was brought in merely to make the description of the internal duel more alluring."[50] According to Gandhi, the Gita does not establish the "necessity of physical warfare;" it proves "its futility."[51] The New Testament, Leo Tolstoy's The Kingdom of God is within You, and Henry David Thoreau's "On Civil Disobedience" further reinforced Gandhi's evolving faith in the way of nonviolence.[52] Once he grasped the meaning of nonviolence, Gandhi worked to transform himself as well as society — first in South Africa and then in India. Yet, as the Trappist monk Thomas Merton argues, in Gandhi "the spirit of non-violence sprang from an inner realization of spiritual unity in himself. The whole Gandhian concept of non-violent action and satyagraha is incomprehensible if it is thought to be a means of achieving unity rather than as the fruit of inner unity already achieved."[53] [Original emphasis] And this "inner unity" too was nurtured in and by a particular understanding of religion.

If the notions of forgiveness and "returning good for evil" in daily living played their part in Gandhi's acceptance of nonviolence as a way of life, the concept of Christian love and the example of Jesus were foundational in King's pilgrimage to nonviolence. His favorite childhood gospel song, we are told, was "I Want To Be More and More Like Jesus."[54] And to want to be "more and more like Jesus" meant loving one's neighbor and forgiving all wrongdoers. "Forgiveness," as King emphasized in his mature, activist years, "is not an occasional act; it is a permanent attitude."[55] Biographer David Lewis stresses that King's character traits, such as "abhorrence of

violence" and a "desire to assume the suffering of others" in evidence in his childhood, also prepared him well for the practice and advocacy of nonviolence.[56] In his Voice of Deliverance, Keith Miller argues that "King arrived at [Crozer] seminary [in 1948] with his most important ideas already intact," including nonviolence.[57] Nevertheless, King had to labor some to deepen his understanding of nonviolence. Encountering Gandhi was important to this process. Under the guidance of Crozer seminary's lone pacifist professor, George W. Davis, King began his exploration of the life and thought of Gandhi. While still at Crozer, a talk on the Mahatma by Howard University president, Mordecai Johnson, inspired King to take Gandhi more seriously than he had done until then. Johnson, a longtime admirer of Gandhi, had recently returned from India, where he had participated in the World Pacifist Conference.[58]

Yet it was not until King's involvement in the Montgomery Bus Boycott that he fully grasped the meaning of nonviolent resistance. Bayard Rustin and Glenn Smiley, major twentieth-century theoreticians and practitioners of nonviolence, were most helpful to King in this. And in good measure because of them, he was able to meld the teachings of Jesus and the method of Gandhi. As a result, at the height of the bus boycott, King could say, "Christ showed us the way, and Gandhi in India showed it could work."[59] From the accounts of both Rustin and Smiley, King and other Montgomery Improvement Association office holders had less than adequate understanding of the fundamentals of nonviolent resistance. For example, in the early phase of the bus boycott, both Rustin and Smiley had to tell King to get rid of the guns that people were holding on to for self defense. Even at that early a stage in the South-based nonviolent movement, King demonstrated a genuine interest in nonviolence as a way of life. Tactical aspects of nonviolent resistance were secondary for him.[60] Just as at the start of the bus boycott, when he reminded the mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church that they are Christian people who believe in the teachings of Jesus, so also in subsequent years King drew upon the notion of Christian love and the teachings of Jesus to mobilize and galvanize the African American community. And the Black church played an important role in keeping nonviolence at the center. Before long, King became a major twentieth-century proponent and practitioner of the way of nonviolence.

Gandhi and King lived as if the world's peoples, with all their diversity, were their family. As already noted, Gandhi's early exposure to world religions put him on a path that ultimately made him a major advocate for and practitioner of religious pluralism. But

his acceptance of religious pluralism was neither easy nor smooth. Early in life, he "developed a sort of dislike for" Christianity; he could not "endure" the abuse Christian missionaries poured on Hindus and their gods.[61] Gandhi's deep study of world religions as well as sustained working relations with practicing Christians stretching over several decades, first in South Africa and later on in India, helped him to understand not only the spirit of Christianity but also deepened his commitment to religious pluralism.

Gandhi's encounter with the American Christian missionary E. Stanley Jones, is instructive here. Jones asked Gandhi: "How can we make Christianity naturalized in India, not a foreign thing, identified with a foreign government and a foreign people, but a part of the national life of India and contributing its power to India's uplift? What would you, as one of [the] Hindu leaders of India, tell me, a Christian, to do in order to make this possible?" Gandhi gave the following answer — "First, I would suggest that all of you Christians, missionaries and all, must begin to live more like Jesus Christ. Second, Practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down. Third, Emphasize love and make it your working force, for love is central in Christianity. Fourth, Study the non-Christian religions more sympathetically to find the good that is within them, in order to have a more sympathetic approach to the people."[62] As we can see, instead of judging Jones or his endeavors, Gandhi shared out of his own understanding the essential meaning of Christianity. He related to all religions with respect and in the spirit of sympathy. Gandhi's interpretation of the teachings of Prophet Mohammad further illustrates his approach to religion. Contrary to scholarly as well as popular interpretations of Islam wherein recourse to violence is accepted under certain situations, Gandhi saw only a sanction for nonviolence.[63] When we examine the worldwide rise of militant Islam, including the December 2008 bombings in Mumbai, we can see that Gandhi's is a minority interpretation of the teachings of Prophet Mohammad. In other words, for Gandhi what really mattered is that we live according to the life-affirming tenets of our religion even as we reach out to the truths of other faith traditions.

Gandhi realized that only in and through a diverse community was it possible for an individual to be whole, to be fully human. Beginning in 1904, Gandhi founded four communities — Phoenix Settlement and Tolstoy Farm (1910) in South Africa and Sabarmati Ashram (1915) and Sevagram Ashram (1933) in India. These communities provided each member the space in which to begin to live "as if" their dreams were already a reality. They encouraged people to be good and to be connected to the stranger — the other.

Ethnically diverse and religiously pluralistic in their makeup, these communities were laboratories for personal and social transformation. Prayer and meditation were the glue that held these communities intact. At the same time, social concerns were at the core of all that the communities represented. On the one hand, members had the space in which to nourish their inner being; on the other, they could engage the world that lay beyond the confines of the community.

King's was also an inclusive vision of humanity founded on the unity of life and the interconnectedness of people everywhere. God-loving people are called, he believed, to step out of their places of comfort and convenience and to risk position, prestige, and even life for the welfare of others.[64] That much and more, he tried to do. He fought to make the world better for all people and not just Black people.[65] This meant poor people, white people, brown people, black people, Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and people of every nation. According to King, as children of the loving God, humans, irrespective of their various identities, are members of one family. Therefore, it is not enough that we see people merely as Jews or Gentiles, Catholics or Protestants, Chinese or Americans, Negroes or whites. In so doing, we "fail to think of them as fellow human beings made from the same basic stuff as we, molded in the same divine image," he believed.[66] In his Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community King once again stressed unity in diversity and encouraged people everywhere to learn to live in harmony. He insisted that "we have inherited a large house, a great 'world house' in which we have to live together — black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Moslem and Hindu — a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace."[67]

Unlike Gandhi, King did not have the experience of life in an ashram-like intentional community. The congregations of the churches he ministered and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference were his communities. In the context of the African American struggle, King underscored the "interrelatedness of all [ethnic, regional, racial] communities" emphasizing that "whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."[68] He was convinced that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."[69] Turning to the world beyond the United States, at the height of his country's involvement in Vietnam, he called upon his government to "see the enemy's point of view."[70] King rejected the popular notion of patriotism, which insists that right or wrong a people obey their government. Speaking "as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam," he reminded his nation

that the Vietnamese "too are our brothers"[71] He stood for the transformation of "this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood," which depended on "a radical revolution of values."[72] King's was a plea for ensuring that our loyalties "become ecumenical rather than sectional." He urged that individual societies "develop an overriding loyalty" to humankind as a whole. "This call for a world-wide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all men."[73] As a follower of Jesus, he was an extremist for love.[74]

Gandhi and King understood the sterile and self-destructive potential of materialism well. Gandhi critiqued modern civilization with its emphasis on bodily comforts, and he urged that we set "limit[s] to our indulgences."[75] An essential counterpoint to intoxication with materialism for Gandhi was self-rule in matters personal and societal. As an objective in life, self-reliance seeks to harmonize spiritual and material needs, inner and outer needs. Toward that end, Gandhi brought about a number of fundamental changes in his life. It was in South Africa that he initiated the most significant transformations. He simplified his life, reducing his personal needs to a bare minimum. With the start of the Phoenix Settlement, his personal and public concerns came together in fundamental ways; he gave up his entire personal wealth. The burdens of running a household ceased to exist; he now had more time to attend to public affairs as well as his inner needs. His involvement in nonviolent campaigns, though demanding, still left him with time for quiet and private reflection. This changed once he was involved in the Indian freedom struggle, however.

Though he further simplified his life, Gandhi's political responsibilities grew exponentially and with it came a massive nationwide following that made inordinate demands on his time. In the process, he found himself with little or no time for quiet reflection. It was during this phase, in 1926, when he was working at breakneck speed and caught up in the intensity of constructive work, that Gandhi devised a way of getting away from the pressures of daily existence. An apparent physical need for rest led him to create the spiritual discipline of silence. "It happened," he told Fischer, "when I was being torn to pieces. I was working hard, traveling in hot trains, incessantly speaking at many meetings, and being approached in trains and elsewhere by thousands of people who asked questions, made pleas, and wished to pray with me. I wanted to rest for one day a week. So I instituted a day of silence. Later, of course, I clothed it with all kinds of virtues and gave it a spiritual cloak. But the

motivation was really nothing more than that I wanted to have a day off."[76] A day of silence a week soon became much more than just a "day off." According to Fischer, "silence offered an opportunity for spiritual exercise." Silence provided Gandhi the time to withdraw, to meditate, to get away from pressures of daily living, and to renew himself for engaging the world.

If Gandhi simplified his life by choosing communitarian living, King avoided the snares of materialism and opted to live simply in a modest house near a poor neighborhood in Atlanta. Nor did he accumulate wealth; King left behind less than $6,000.[77] And the longer he stayed in the struggle for justice and equality, the more passionately he engaged in the fight for and on behalf of the poor. This was especially true after he took his campaign North in 1965 and experienced firsthand the horrible living conditions of the urban poor. Not surprisingly, from then on he brought issues of economic justice to the center of his concerns. A year before his assassination, he challenged his nation to retreat from its mad rush to materialism. "We must rapidly begin to shift from a 'thing-oriented' society to a 'person-oriented' society," he said.[78] Materialism, he argued, was one of the three evils confronting the nation, alongside racism and militarism. Without let-up, he continued to drive home the point that the nation must begin to attend to the basic needs of the poor. Forever speaking out of the depths of his religious sensibilities, and repeating his vision of the Beloved Community, he challenged the wealthy to recognize that "the agony of the poor impoverishes the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich. We are inevitably our brother's keeper because we are our brother's brother. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

King came to national and international prominence at a younger age than even Gandhi. He was a few days shy of his twenty-seventh birthday when the African American leadership in Montgomery invited him to lead the bus boycott and head the newly formed Montgomery Improvement Association. With the leadership of the bus boycott, his days became very full. The post-boycott period did not bring any respite in his public responsibilities either. Before one campaign or an issue was tackled, another was there begging for attention. The presidency of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded soon after the conclusion of the bus boycott in 1957, King's speaking engagements that ran on an average of four per week, and the expanding movement in the South did not allow him time to reflect or be still. He hardly had time to breathe.[79] According to historian Lerone Bennett, "King was not often in his house. Two-thirds of his time was spent elsewhere, a fact that

disturbed him greatly. He had a feeling akin to guilt over his extended absences from his family. He said privately and on occasions publicly that nothing disturbed him more than his inability to fulfill his demanding concept of what the head of a household should be."[80] "I am not doing anything well," King complained. He did not feel that he could "continue to go at this pace, and live with such a tension filled schedule."[81] The desire to slow down, to withdraw, to renew was there, but he failed to bring it about. He continued to carry on without respite until the end. The dynamism of the movement, with grassroots activists taking initiative on their own, did not help either. Unlike Gandhi, who was among the pioneers in the field of nonviolent resistance, by the middle years of the twentieth century, King was one among many. In early 1968, it seemed that King yet might succeed in taking the time to nourish his interior in ways he had not done before. Arrangements were made for him for a spiritual retreat with Thomas Merton at Gethsemani outside of Louisville.[82] Before that could happen, King was assassinated.

Gandhi, on the other hand, was saved from the burdens King carried, especially after 1904, when he gave up managing a single-family household. Yet life in community did not eliminate all the pressures of meeting parental or spousal responsibilities. Community living certainly simplified Gandhi's life and made it easier for him to provide for many of the physical, emotional, and psychological needs of the Gandhi family. In the setting of a community made up of many families, the traditional role of "heading" a nuclear family was no longer relevant. Children, for instance, could be guided by community elders and not just their parents. Yet, as is well known, Gandhi's eldest son, Harilal, with reason, felt parental neglect. And he blamed his father for that. Nor did Kasturba Gandhi, the Mahatma's wife, feel that she had the freedom to be fully herself, especially in the early phase of their marriage.

The genius of Gandhi and King lay not in that they were above making mistakes or that they always succeeded in their personal and political endeavors. We know that each failed to live up to his ideals as a parent or a spouse. Equally, we know that neither fully achieved his goals in the social, economic or political arenas. Nor did they succeed in converting the masses in their respective countries to the way of nonviolence; the vast majority of their supporters and co-workers went along with them essentially for tactical reasons. The fact that these prophets of nonviolence died at the hands of assassins is proof enough that they failed to eliminate violence from their midst. For our purposes, it is worth noting that their assassins (and those who supported them) saw dangers to the existing social order in the

inclusive worldview of King and Gandhi. The attempts of these leaders to bring those who stood on the periphery to the center of the body politic were even a bigger threat to the upholders of the status quo.[83]

Deeply committed to the notion of religious pluralism, Gandhi and King recognized their pastoral responsibility to all people. The limitations of their leadership notwithstanding, the challenges facing the world at the dawn of the twenty-first century press us to reexamine the visions of these men and to grasp the ancient wisdom of love, truth, tolerance, and compassion that inspired them to make this broken world community whole. For greed, bitterness, hatred, and violence, we know only too well, can give us neither meaning nor tranquility. It is possible these men might also inspire people everywhere to look into their particular tradition and to gain the necessary wisdom and the courage to reconcile, heal, and nurture our personal lives as well as the wellbeing of our communities. Perhaps their lasting contribution lies in that they had the courage to take risks and each in his own way and his own time attempted to live by the highest ideals known to humankind.

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'Why Should I be Moral?' A Search for Justification of Morality in Western and Indian Philosophies

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ABSTRACT

This paper searches for a convincing answer to the question, 'Why should I be moral, if it goes against my interests?', in various philosophies, both Western and Indian. There have been two broad approaches to moral issues in the West: teleological or utilitarian, and deontological. Utilitarians emphasize that an act or a moral rule is right if its consequences are beneficial to humankind. Deontologists, chief of them being Kant, argue that the consequences and any other considerations do not count; an act is right if it is done in obedience to a universal moral law, or categorical imperative. Among post-Kantian thinkers, R M Hare responds by emphasizing universality and prescriptive character of all moral judgments, as also the need of sympathetic imagination. Many ethicists also affirm that avoidance of suffering to others is the final test of moral acts. Others such as John Rawls have emphasized the innate equality of all persons which creates the demands of justice.

Ancient and medieval Indian philosophy often fails in justifying morality on the basis of equity and justice, which includes the criteria of reciprocity and reversibility. But what it fails on the practical field it makes up in its metaphysical (religious?) vision. According to it, one Absolute or Atman resides in every heart; thus there is no basis left for discriminating between all living beings.

I. Introduction:

W*HAT IS MORALITY? And What is the Justification of Morality?* We mean by the term 'morality' any discipline which seeks to answer

the questions: 'What should I do?' and 'What should I be?' That is, morality concerns itself with telling us what is the right course of action, or our duty; and at a somewhat meta-ethical level-what should we aim to be. Morality (ethics), thus, is a normative or prescriptive discipline that seeks to tell us how we should behave, or what should be the ideal(s) we should try to incorporate in our person. Morality implies a set of criteria, standards or principles to judge any one's actions thereby. Or, morality can simply be understood as the moral point of view.

Our problem here is to search for a convincing justification of morality. It brings us to our basic question –'Why should I be moral?' That is, 'why should I bother what is right or my duty, if that course of action would go against my personal interests?'

2. *Some Relevant Views in Western Philosophy*

There are two broad answers to this question in the Western philosophy: First comes from utilitarianism. Early utilitarians like Adam Smith and J.S. Mill simply held that an act is right or wrong according to its consequences; and these consequences, in turn, were to be determined for their desirability or otherwise with reference to the human good, which was conceived in terms of pleasure or happiness. Utilitarianism, according to which whatever leads to the good or welfare of the self and other human beings is right, and therefore obligatory, has had a broad appeal as an ethical theory. It has gradually been developed into a more sophisticated form by C.D. Broad, Henry Sidgwick, Marcus Singer, Stephen Toulmin, R.B. Perry, and Kurt Baier. They assert in their different ways that human good or welfare, considered in terms of either the satisfaction of desires or harmony of interests, both at the individual and at the interpersonal level, gives justification to our actions.

There has been a resurrection of interest in utilitarianism in its various formulations, especially in rule utilitarianism. According to it, morality is a code of conduct that seeks to regulate our interpersonal behaviour with the aim of minimizing evil and suffering and establishing harmony of relations (R.B Perry). Also most ethicists writing in 1970s onwards have emphasized that avoidance of suffering or even inconvenience to others should be the main objective of morality; and that involves a careful consideration of the consequences of our contemplated act. Even the cardinal virtue of promise keeping is secondary to it.

Second answer to our question comes from the deontologists. According to them, consequences of an act are not relevant in a moral judgment; rather morality consists in an unconditional obedience to

the moral law.

Kant , in his classic, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, based morality on the foundations of reason alone. Morality, for him, consists in obedience to the moral law. This moral law is an imperative or moral command which is unconditional and totally independent of all empirical considerations, whether those of consequences of an intended act, or the circumstances thereof, including any cultural, historical or religious differences. He, therefore, called it the categorical imperative and defined it as a command that tells us to act only on that maxim which we can at the same time will to become a universal moral law. [1] The categorical imperative must never be transgressed, and provides the foundation of all moral laws. The worth or dignity of the moral law (categorical imperative) is absolute, that is, is an end- in- itself, and passes on to human beings who are the locus of reason, the giver of the moral law. The pure reason is in some way transcendental, that is, presupposed by morality, but not proved independently. Kant rightly contends that this pure reason does not have its locus in the individual self but belongs to all rational beings, or is a general consciousness. That is why, its commands are obligatory to the individual agent. It gives an inviolable dignity to the human person who as a rational being is an end- in- herself, that is, can never be made a means of another person, or any other goal.[2]

In the second part of the *Metaphysics of Morals, The Doctrine of Virtue,* Kant uses the term 'humanity' instead of the rather mysterious 'pure reason'. Now he says that man is an end- in –himself by virtue of his humanity; and all his duties, as well as rights should be based on his innate dignity by virtue of his humanity.[3]

To the question- 'Why should I obey the categorical imperative?', Kant and his followers have argued that the categorical imperative is a formal principle which simply cannot be violated without getting into self-contradictions, or making life in the world practically impossible. If I break my promise, I cannot will that everybody should do so, as it would make normal life impossible; and so on.

On the other hand, I can still break my promise without bothering about what would happen if everybody did the same. Why should I ever bother about the whole world when my interests are served here and now by breaking my promise, or any other moral law? The question is simple- 'Why be moral?'

R.M. Hare has been the most comprehensive and influential thinker of Kantian tradition in the 20th century. According to him, all moral judgments are necessarily prescriptive, and universal. By the prescriptive character of moral judgments, Hare means that if someone consents to a moral judgment, he thereby commits himself

to acting according to it. That is, it would be self-contradictory if someone says that I agree that this conduct or action is right, or that one ought to do this; and then add 'why should I do that ?' (Why should I be moral?')[4]

By the universality of moral judgment, Hare means that any judgment must be applicable to all similar persons in similar circumstances. Hare contends that an account of the facts of the case (e.g. a description of an act of cruelty) alone cannot lead to a moral 'ought'. Instead, when we prescribe or choose a moral principle and acknowledge both that it is a universal principle and that it is a prescription or command for us to act in a certain manner, that it becomes a basis of the moral 'ought'. He affirms the need of imagination in moral dilemmas. We must put ourselves imaginatively in the place of the victim or the other person who might be harmed by our conduct, and think out what our response would be if we were placed in his or her place. If we come up with the answer that we would not like to be treated in that way, then according to the norm of universalizability of all rational moral judgments, we cannot act in that manner.[5]

It is the simple Golden Rule which can be put both in positive and negative forms: "Act only in that manner in which you would yourself want to be treated." Or, "Do not act in that manner in which you would not want to be treated by others." It has often been objected that the Golden rule appeals to the baser instinct of selfishness for its justification. But it is not so at all. To understand others on the analogy of oneself is not an expression of self-love or ego-centricity, but an honest assertion of the affinity of all human beings.

Henry Sidgwick and Marcus Singer have equally emphasized the universalizability, or generalizability principle; and argue that any moral judgment has to be universal in its authority, that is, a given moral rule or command is applicable to all relevantly similar persons in relevantly similar circumstances, emphasis here being on relevant similarity.[6] They add that the criterion of relevance is based on the grounds on which the original judgment is based.

The idea of the universalizability of moral rules and judgments is related both to the rationality of all moral assertions, and to their validity. As Baier says, a moral point of view or the moral principle is necessarily rational, that is, it is one for which rational arguments can be given, and hence it has an overriding authority. It is often argued that in as much as moral judgments are not about facts, they cannot be either true or false. Baier argues that even so, moral statements can be valid, that is, moral arguments can be given for

them; and if they are rational, they would naturally be valid and have an overriding authority.[7]

Moreover, the moral point of view is objective, impartial and universal. Objectivity and impartiality imply that there cannot be any reference to individuals in our judgments, so that it is irrelevant whether it is you or I who is benefited or harmed by our acts. Universality means that if an act is right or wrong for one person, it must be right or wrong for every relevantly similar person in relevantly similar circumstances. That means above all that one cannot make an exception of herself whenever it suits her interests. As experience shows, our self interest and our eagerness to make an exception of our case are the main reasons for our rejecting the demands of morality. And the rejection of any such subterfuge may go a long way in convincing an agent to be moral.

No doubt a rationally argued universalism is a much more justifiable ethical theory than Kantian absolutism. It is also noteworthy that none of these thinkers ever alludes to any religious belief either for justifying his theory, or even by the way. However, neither of these thinkers could satisfactorily answer our query- 'Why should I be moral?' True, a certain moral principle is universal, or objective, or even is said to have overriding authority; but what is the authority behind that principle which can convince or even coerce me to act in a certain way; in short, 'why should I obey it , often at the cost of my self interest?' While Kant appealed to 'transcendental pure reason' as the source of moral laws, others, not willing to affirm some such principle, have just talked about the choice of moral principles. So, what is the source of these moral principles and their overriding authority?

In mid-and late twentieth century John Rawls developed his 'Theory of Justice as Fairness'. He developed an elaborate theoretical system in order to include equality and justice along with individual liberty in his ideal system of a just society by proposing that each legislating person should imagine herself in a state of total ignorance regarding her position in a future socio-economic-political set up; as only then they would all agree for a system in which liberty is harmonized with equality of opportunity and justice for the least advantaged.[8] The idea here is to emphasize the motto of Bentham that ' Each man is to count for one and no one is to count for more than one;' that is, the absolute equality of all human beings, irrespective of all other differences.

However, I do not think that liberals, whether then or now, have been able to strike a real balance between self interest and interests of the society or humanity as a whole. Nor have they been able to

answer the crucial question- 'Why should I be moral, that is, sacrifice my self- interest for the sake of the interests of others, or do morally right act?'

Kant's assertion that rational nature exists as an end- in- itself, and that the moral law is given by our own rational nature, gives a certain justification for obeying the moral law. Or as he later asserted, our actions and attitudes should be in conformity with the dignity of humanity in us, that is, we should take care that our conduct does not debase the humanity of ourselves and that of other persons.

P.F. Strawson has suggested the reciprocity of claim as the touchstone of morality. By this he means that 'a demand made on an individual in the interests of others must be balanced by a demand made on others in his interest.'[9] Kant had earlier affirmed the principle of reciprocity in the second part of his *Metaphysics of Morals.* This principle is also known as the principle of reversibility; and carries forward the Kantian thesis that each rational person is an end- in- herself and no one can be made a means of another. Baier has emphasized the idea of reversibility, saying that the test of reversibility is even more stringent than that of universalizability. According to him, any kind of non-reversible behaviour is wrong in itself; no further reasons are needed to justify or condemn it.[10]

Hare, Baier and Bernard Gert have argued that not causing any suffering, or even inconvenience to another human being is the first priority of all (moral) action.[11] An overt or implicit suggestion in all such assertions is that the 'other' suffers in the same way as we do. I appreciate this version of universal morality because it somehow not only preserves the dignity of different persons of a society, but also puts greater emphasis on two things: first, on the reciprocal duties of all moral agents towards each other; and second, on a certain affinity between all human beings. Perhaps Strawson et al did not intend the latter, but from my point of view, true morality and the principle of reciprocity somehow acknowledge a certain affinity between human beings, or all living beings. Both Hare and Rawls have tried to incorporate this principle in their ethical systems; but Hare had to appeal to imagination, and Rawls had to take recourse to a veil of ignorance in order to argue their respective contentions. It may suggest that they were not sure how to justify their ethical principles.

II *Indian Views on Morality and its Justification*

In ancient India, morality was called dharma or the way of righteousness; and it was considered integral with the moral order of the universe (*rita*). The way of dharma was a way which brought the person in harmony both with the moral order of the universe

and the Self which is one with the Absolute within one's heart. Morality was generally understood as autonomous, that is, independent of divine commands, or any other external authority.

Significantly, dharma or moral law was conceived to cover entire human life, both one's relations with one's fellow beings, as well as one's own goal(s). The fact that dharma was unanimously accepted as the first or foremost among the three or four goals of life (*purusharthas*) signified that dharma or righteousness was both supreme and having unconditional or overriding authority. Whether one was pursuing worldly goals of prosperity and pleasure (which pursuing was liberally accepted), or the spiritual goal of liberation, one could never be free from the demands of dharma. That is, dharma or the righteous way of life was the first condition to follow any path in life.[12]

However, a systematic treatment of moral problems, or some meta-ethics regarding the source, cognition and justification of morality or dharma is singularly missing in Indian thought. Worse still, The term dharma was used for denoting universal morality (*sadharana* dharma), rituals (*yajnas*) as prescribed in the Vedas (which were at best amoral), and above all for duties determined by one's caste and its status in the *varna* hierarchy (*varnashrama dharma*). The term "ought" was freely used to denote all the three kinds of "duties". This blunted the edge of a profound conception of morality.

Moreover, Vedic Hindus were acutely conscious of the differences in the ways of various people of this vast subcontinent; and eager to assimilate people who perhaps belonged to different races, societies and cultures. They, therefore, often asserted that morality is relative to time and space or region, as well as to the caste or station in the society of the doer. They even went on to assert that what is right or wrong for a particular group (based either on region, *varna*, or stage of life) may not be right or wrong to other persons belonging to other groups.[13] This was ethical relativism at its most unjustifiable form.

However, what Indian thinkers failed to achieve in practical and systematic ethics, they more than made up in their conceptualization of the foundation for a profound morality. According to Vedanta, one Self (Atman) is the essence or Self of every living being. 1 Let me quote the *Bhagvadgita*, a popular text:

> He, O Arjuna, who sees with equality everything in the image of his own self, whether in pleasure or in pain, he is considered a perfect yogi.[14]

Therefore it is implied that there is no justification for our

preferring our own good to that of others. This implication of the Vedantic vision of unity of all creation and all living beings by virtue of all having the same Self as their essence was later on very beautifully developed in some of the Puranas and Epics; and above all in the poetry of the saints of devotional sects of medieval period, as Kabir, Tukarama, Dadu and Nanak.

Mahatma Gandhi was not a mystic, but he carried forward the Vedantic vision of fundamental unity of all living beings by asserting that one Ram resides in all hearts, where Ram not only does not mean the historical person, but is also not a personal God, but a name for the 'Divine'.[15] Above all, his God (Narayana) existed in the dumb millions, through the service of those millions.[16]

Apparently, the above morality is religious, as it presupposes certain religious or metaphysical beliefs. And yet, it is not religious, as it involves no unconditional obedience to a supernatural God, or any other religious authority. However, it does not mean that every person who upholds a rational, universal morality must accept these presuppositions; only that a universal morality is best justified if we do.

III. *Conclusion*

Can we assert a universal morality of nonviolence, compassion and integrity without affirming the metaphysical principle of one Atman in all? Western philosophers have affirmed such a universal morality, implicitly assuming a basic affinity between human beings, without any religious or metaphysical overtones. Other thinkers have contended that the most basic rule of morality is that we must avoid causing any suffering or even inconvenience to others; but have failed to tell us why should we do so. Kant has rightly argued that every man who is in need wants others to help him; therefore it follows that every person must help others when they are in need; as otherwise, his desire to be helped becomes self-contradictory.[17]

Hare contends that we must not treat others in an unjust manner, as the moral principle applies to all persons alike; and in a situation in which the agent is in the position or circumstances of the other or the victim of her actions, she would have to suffer in the way now the other is suffering, and inasmuch as she would not like that, she could not do the same to the other.[18] While Kant did not include animals in the category of equality or affinity with humans, Hare includes them.

Interestingly, Hindu texts do not always refer to the one Self in all while arguing for universal compassion. The Epics and Puranas repeatedly affirm that same *prana* (life breath) invigorates all living beings. They often indiscriminately use the word, Atman and *prana*

being the same in all living beings, the idea being to emphasize the basic affinity or sameness of all; and inspire kindness towards them.[19] Fifteenth century saint Kabir affirms the same thing again, and emphatically so.[20] The real idea is to realize that all beings are basically akin in their needs and sufferings. The central values of a universal, rational morality, such as not harming other beings, or compassion, truth and justice, are best justified by founding them on a presupposition (now proved by science) of the basic affinity of all living beings.

However, though the above realization may motivate us to be kind and considerate towards others, it does not explain the duty of truthfulness or personal integrity, and the allied demands of morality. Kant does give an answer that human beings have intrinsic dignity by virtue of their rational nature, or simply by virtue of their humanity. They must not degrade their humanity by engaging in acts of self-indulgence or dishonesty.[21] I find this affirmation of the innate dignity of human person, along with the recognition of the basic affinity of all living beings, as the most convincing justification of a moral way of life.

There may be several justifications for morality. But, as Hare says, everyone must decide for herself what principles or way of life she wants to live by.[22]

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4. R.M. Hare, *Freedom and Reason* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 73-74.
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6. Sidgwick asserts: ' Whatever action any one thinks that it is right for himself, he implicitly judges to be right for all similar persons in similar circumstances.' He approvingly quotes the Golden Rule in its negative form: 'It cannot be right for A to treat B in a manner in which it would be wrong for B to treat A, merely on the ground that they are two different individuals.' *Methods of Ethics*, given in Jones, Sontag, Beckner, Fogelin, eds., *Approaches to Ethics: Representative Selections from Ancient Times to the Present (*New York: McGraw Hill, 1962_, pp. 392- 94. Marcus Singer has elaborated upon the same

idea and called it the Generalization Principle.

7. Kurt Baier, *The Moral Pint of View : A Rational Basis of Ethics* (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 25 ff.; 38 ff.

8. See his *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 136-142; 302.

9. "Social Morality and Individual Ideal", given in Kenneth Pahel & Marvin Schiller, eds., *Readings in Contemporary Ethical Theory* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1970), pp. 344 ff, especially p. 353.

10. *Op. cit.*, pp. 107-9.

11. See *Morality: A New Justification of Moral Rules* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 227 ff.

12. ' Dharma being violated destroys; dharma being preserved preserves…' 'The only friend who follows man after death is dharma…' *Manu Smriti* VIII. 14-17. *The Mahabharata* contends that dharma is what supports the society. Therein lies its obligation, as if it is not followed by all, the very structure of society would crumble. *Shanti Parva*, CX. 11.

13. P.V. Kane has argued in detail about the relativist approach of Dharmashastras, Epics and Puranas in his *History of Dharmashastra*, (Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, 1973), Vol. III., pp. 825 ff. Also see Saral Jhingran, *Aspects of Hindu Morality* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989, 1999), pp. 73 ff.

14. *Bhagvadgita* VI. 32.

15. '…all life (not only human beings, but all living beings) is one, i.e., all life coming from one universal source, call it Allah, God or Parmeshwara……You may give Him any name that you like, provided it is one God without a second..' *Harijan* 26. 12.'36, given in M.K. Gandhi, *The Essence of Hinduism*, pp. 10-11..

16. 'I recognize no God except the God that is to be found in the hearts of dumb millions…And I worship the God… through the service of these millions.' *Harijan*, 11.3. '39, op. cit., p.65.

17. *The Doctrine of Virtue*, *op. cit.*, pp. 84 ff.

18. *Freedom and Reason*, *op. cit*., pp. 93 ff.; 108 ff.

19. See *Mahabharata, Shanti Parva*, CCLI. 19 ff.; ibid., CCCVIII. 120 ff., etc.

20. For a detailed discussion of Kabir's vision, see Saral Jhingran, " Kabir and Gandhi as Apostles of Human Unity", *Gandhi Marg*, October-December, 2010.

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Palestinian theological praxis in context: Peacemaking and peace-building in the Occupied West Bank

Samuel J. Kuruvilla

ABSTRACT

This article deals with the different approaches that the Palestinian contextual theology movement 'Al-Liqa,' the liberation theology movement 'Sabeel' and the intercultural movement 'Diyar' consortium have taken towards resolving the Palestine-Israel conflict, given their similarities as well as divergences in the light of the intersection between theology and politics. The contextualisation of theology and politics in Palestine has a long history, especially in the light of the tortured history of that nation in world affairs. Palestinian Christians have long been controlled and influenced by Western Christendom and it was only in the middle part of the last century that a so-called 'contextualisation' movement rose among them that sought to place the culture of the Palestinian people right at the centre of their faith and practice. This article has sought to show how the Diyar Movement in Bethlehem has and can have an impact on Palestinian society, irrespective of party and religious affiliation, as it has sought to bridge the secular-religious divide within Palestinian society.

Origins of the 'Contextualisation' Movement

Most Palestinian theologians own their debt to the Latin American liberation theologians.[1] The Palestinian Anglican theologian Naim Ateek always uses the term 'Palestinian Liberation Theology' to refer to his work.[2] The Sabeel (river or stream of life in Arabic) Centre that he helped to found in East Jerusalem has modelled itself in its activities as an interdenominational ecumenical centre/institute for the development of a Palestinian Christian theology of liberation in

the 'Holy Land.' At the same time there are crucial differences between the Latin American and the Palestinian context. In the first place, Latin America is a continent where the vast majority of the poor are Christian, albeit with a strong admixture of indigenous beliefs and cultures. In Palestine, Christians are only a tiny minority. This means liberation theology cannot simply be transposed from one situation to another.

Secondly, the option for the poor in Latin America is about class. In Palestine, all Palestinians are oppressed. Class in Palestine is largely focused on the difference between town and village dwellers in the Palestinian Territories and socio-religious differences between Arab Muslims, Muslim Bedouins, Druze, Arab Christians and other non-Arab Muslim groups dwelling in the territory of Palestine-Israel. What is being dealt with here is a perverse form of racism where Semites are discriminating against Semites.

Thirdly, it can be argued that the exodus paradigm does not play out in Palestine. Palestinians find themselves in the role of the dispossessed people. This has raised acute difficulties for biblical study. Palestinian theologians have been much exercised by how to read the Hebrew bible.

Finally, Palestinian theologians do not have the background in Marxism which many Latin American theologians had. To them, it is an alien form of analysis and they turn elsewhere for understanding society.

Most Palestinian liberation/contextual theology practitioners in general, tend to interact and relate (intellectually, culturally, and politically) more with the (formerly colonial) West, from an Eastern or Oriental standpoint, than with their fellow (formerly colonized) global Easterners or Southerners (Christians of South Asia, the Far East, and Western or sub-Saharan Africa, for instance).

This is partly about where wealth, power and global political control is centred in today's world, but it may also reflect a kind of 'elitist' or 'superior' Arab understanding of the so-called 'two-thirds' world. It can also be seen as a reflection of the historic ties that Arab Christians have had with Christians in the European West during the long centuries of Islamic rule in this region. Ties between Western and Eastern Christians were particularly cemented during the period of the Crusades, which saw a sustained Western intrusion into the region, both from a military, colonial and religio-cultural point of view. The Ottoman territories of the 'near east' or 'middle east' were also one of the first regions penetrated and influenced by Western Christian missionaries and administrators, thereby considerably culturally impacting the life and prospects of Arabic-speaking

Christians in the area. Many Arab Christians migrated and settled in parts of Latin America, North America, parts of Europe and Australasia, thereby fuelling ties between these largely 'developed' regions of the world and the Arab Christian homeland of Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Egypt-Jordan.

Palestinian Contextual Theology

The premier Palestinian Protestant Theologian who sought to give a contextual twist to his theologising was the Rev. Dr. Naim Ateek, director of the Sabeel Liberation Theology Institute in Jerusalem who used the term 'liberation theology' to describe what he is doing. The Lutheran Mitri Raheb as well as the Latin Patriarchate's Fr. Rafiq Khoury preferred the term 'contextual theology'. What lies behind this difference in terminology was essentially the need to engage with both Judaism and Islam.

'Contextual theology' can be said to have three meanings. In the first place it can simply be a synonym for liberation theology. Thus the Indian theologian K.C. Abraham writes that, 'The aim of contextual theology is not only to understand and interpret God's act, or to give reason for their faith, but to help suffering people in their struggle to change their situation in accordance with the vision of the gospel. Liberative praxis is the methodology for contextual theologies.'[3] Occasionally, Raheb uses the phrase like this. Secondly, the term is used to signify the recognition, originating in the sociology of knowledge, that all discourse is placed. There is 'no view from nowhere'. As Abraham, again, puts it,

> 'Creative moments in theology have arisen out of the church's response to new challenges in a given historical context. They bear the cultural and social imprints of the time…...Theologians of every age are committed to interpreting the Gospel of Jesus in a way (that is) relevant and meaningful to the realities around them.'[4]

Thirdly, it originates in the attempt first of missionary theologians, and then of indigenous theologians, to express theology in terms of the symbols and values of a particular culture. Stephen B. Bevans speaks of contextual theology as,

> 'a way of doing theology in which one takes into account the spirit and message of the gospel; the tradition of the church; the culture in which one is theologizing; and social change within that culture, whether brought about by western technological process or the grass-roots struggle for equality, justice and liberation.'[5]

The Christian faith can be understood and interpreted, according to Bevans, not only on the basis of 'scripture and tradition,' but also on the basis of 'concrete culturally conditioned human experience.'[6] Contextual theology reflects on the 'raw experience' of the people. It represents an amalgamation of Christian concepts, stories and symbols on the one hand, with the particular indigenous culture of the people on the other.[7]

There has been a growing realization world wide that contextualized or local theologies are the key to the future appeal of the Christian faith. As Jose M. de Mesa puts it,

> 'Contextuality in the field of theology denotes attentiveness, the determination to listen to the voice of the poor; and conscious and intentional rootedness in the culture, in religion, in the historical currents, in the social locations and situations of people as well as in gender. It aims to alter conditions in the Church and in society that are counter to the deep intent of the Gospel and seeks to include voices which have been excluded in the participative process of theologizing.'[8]

K. C. Abraham likewise argues that, 'Theologians of every age are committed to interpreting the Gospel of Jesus in a way (that is) relevant and meaningful to the realities around them.'[9]

Mitri Raheb seeks to make the Christian faith relevant or contextual to the Palestinian faithful as part and parcel of their own culture. Raheb is a 'contextual' theologian in his own words, seeking to relate his theology to his practice, so that an effective praxis-oriented political and cultural milieu is created, within which the Palestinian Christian population can live and function. He has written off the necessity for the Palestinian Church to be totally 'Arabised', starting from the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, through the clergy and right down to the base-laity. This 'Arabisation' of the leadership of the church should spread to include theology as well as education. In his view, only this kind of essential 'Arabisation' would bind the native Arab Christian people of Palestine to 'their church, their society, and their country.'[10] Naim Ateek too has written of the need for the (very Europeanized and Euro-centric) church in Palestine-Israel to 'contextualize its faith and theology,' thereby seeking to address and answer the important issues facing native Arab Christians and society in the region.[11] He writes,

> '……… the contextual concerns of the Church, although predominantly political in appearance, are deeply and ultimately theological in nature. These needs are perpetually frustrated by the increasing complexity of the political conflict…….. The duty of the Church in Israel-Palestine today

is to take its own concrete and local context seriously. It (the Church) needs to incarnate itself in its context so that it can be the voice of the oppressed and the dehumanized.'[12]

Writing in 1989, Ateek acknowledged that the church in Israel-Palestine had hardly begun to contextualize. He has since sought to do this, with an emphasis on the political context. Palestinian Christianity has long roots dating right back to the time of Christ. Even during the Byzantine era, Palestinian Christians did not have any experience being part of the ruling party as the Byzantine Church in Palestine was ruled and controlled by Greeks and Cypriots.[13] During the Islamic era, the majority of the Palestinian people slowly converted over to the ruling faith and by the eve of the Turkish conquest of Palestine in 1519, the land had become majority Muslim.[14] Coupled with this was the almost continually disturbed nature of Palestinian society that resulted in large-scale emigration over the last 100 years or more.[15] Today, native Christians in Palestine worry more about whether they can ensure adequate quorum in their churches to make them practically viable as part of the 'living stones' of the Holy Land.[16] Palestinian Christians are small in number, but their contributions to society vastly outnumber their actual population. Their institutions, schools and hospitals dot the Holy Land and they are actively involved in rendering valuable social services to the Palestinian population at large.

The Al-Liqa Centre (Bethlehem)

Al-Liqa had its origins in the early 1980s, when a group of Palestinian scholars and theologians associated with the Tantur Ecumenical Institute for Theological Studies, midway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, decided to withdraw from the centre and form a dialogue centre of their own that would be able to focus on the all-important issue of Christian-Muslim relations in the Holy Land. Al-Liqa has since its inception focused on this theme as well as on research into the heritage and culture of the Palestinian and Levantine Christian Arabs. They mainly fulfil their role through the conducting of yearly and biyearly conferences on the two above themes as well as one-day workshops, seminars and symposia directed mainly at the native Palestinian and Christian population of the West Bank, Jerusalem and the state of Israel. Al-Liqa was also actively engaged in publishing mainly in Arabic for domestic consumption as well as in English for external consumption.

Sabeel Centre (Jerusalem)

Sabeel had its origins in the period immediately prior and during the First Intifada when there were concerted calls on the Christian community in Palestine-Israel to respond to the continued Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories, within a non-violent framework.[17] It had its origins in the commitment of Pastor Ateek to develop a Christian non-violent theo-political approach towards the Israel-Palestine conflict, one that sought to distinguish itself from the more Islamist-oriented approach of the Hamas-Fatah movement in those days.[18] Sabeel has focused on community development from its earliest days, trying to play a part in the development and rebuilding of Palestinian society, fragmented and broken by the over forty years of Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories. This fragmentation and destruction of Palestinian communal life was further accelerated by the negative impacts of the post-First Intifada security measures put in place by the Israelis. Citing security considerations, post-Intifada Israel created a virtual blockade of almost all Palestinian urban centres in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and then proceeded to cantonise the West Bank and isolate the Gaza Strip by strictly enforcing an encirclement (containment) policy from the sea, land and air. This policy has continued for almost twenty years since the end of the First Intifada in 1992.[19]

Dar Annadwa-International Centre of Bethlehem

The International Centre of Bethlehem (ICB-Dar Annadwa Addawliyya) had its origins in the outreach ministry of the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem, a process that really kicked off after the Rev. Mitri Raheb assumed the pastorate of the church in 1988. He sought to renovate and re-employ some of the empty rooms and building that surround the church and convert them into revenue generating institutions, thereby contributing to the renovation and regeneration of the region. One of the first projects undertaken by Raheb, with the full support of the Lutheran Church in the Holy Land, along with other interested donors was the establishment of the Abu Gibran Guest House in the heart of the Old City of Bethlehem right next to the Lutheran Church, in 1992. This also coincided with what was known as the Authentic Tourism Program in Bethlehem, an initiative to get tourists to come again to the city and to enjoy the traditional hospitality of the Palestinian people. The establishment of the ICB followed in 1995, which coincided with the first International and intercultural conference organized by the centre. Raheb also emphasizes the importance of internationalist

collaboration. Many of his projects, were and are accomplished with the help of Western support, both political, financial and humanitarian aid, directed towards the welfare of the Palestinian people, both Christian as well as Muslim. In 1998, Raheb founded the Dar Al-Kalima Model School, which became part of the network of Lutheran schools in the region. A notable achievement was the high participation of Muslim students in the rolls of the school. The ten year period from 1999-2009 saw a frenetic pace of activity at the ICB with the launch of the Al-Kahf Gallery and Arts and Crafts Centre in 1999, followed by the Bethlehem Media Centre (2003), The Dar Al-Kalima Health and Wellness Centre (2003), and finally the Dar Al-Kalima College in 2006. That year also saw the official launch of the Diyar Consortium that was intended to bring all the varied activities of the Bethlehem centre under one organizational roof.

The International Centre of Bethlehem, also know as Dar Annadwa Addawliyya (The House of Worldwide Encounter) has a number of other initiatives other than those mentioned above. These will include the Bright Stars Program focused on pre-school and early primary school children in the Bethlehem region, the Ajyal (generations) program that focuses on community care for the elderly and Azwaj (couples) group program that focuses on young couples and families. The ICB itself is housed in a landmark Bethlehem building abutting the Lutheran church that once comprised part of the old Lutheran School in the Old City. This was transformed into the Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Centre, an impressive centre built through a generous donation from the government of Norway. This building was significantly damaged during the April 2002 Israeli siege of Bethlehem and had to be restored and partially reconstructed.[20]

Raheb has thus sought to ensure the grass-roots appeal of his organisation and its activities benefit the maximum among the Christians and Muslims of the population in the occupied West Bank. His holistic 'cradle to the grave' approach has been designed to benefit and appeal to a wide cross-section of the Palestinian populace, irrespective of religious and socio-political orientation.

Relevance of liberation/contextual theological approaches to Palestinian Christians

Palestinian Christians are a small 'minority within the Palestine-Israel spectrum. They are often perceived as a somewhat 'embattled' minority, given their propensity to migrate in search of greener pastures abroad. One of the purposes of Ateek, Raheb's and Al-Liqa's theo-political as well as cultural endeavours in the region has been to seek to give a 'voice to the voiceless,' to ensure that the ecumenical

Palestinian Christian voice does not go unheard in the general cacophony of competing forces and influences in the region. While Sabeel started out initially as an organisation dedicated to educating the 'Christian' West about the situation on the ground in Israel-Palestine, it has considerably diversified its activities over the years, as its popularity and support base, both political and ecumenical as well as financial, within and without the Palestine-Israel region has increased. Sabeel benefitted from the ease of access that Israelis as well as Palestinian residents and citizens of the state of Israel were allowed in the occupied Palestinian Territories, a situation that radically changed during and after the first Intifada. Ateek himself sought to apply strategies and policies learnt during his youth pastoring depleted Christian communities within the state of Israel, during the 1960s and 1970s, a situation that forced him to seek to build up an ecumenical framework of collaboration between the different Christian churches and communities in the area. He carried this process on in his work as Canon in charge of the Arabic speaking congregation in the main seat of Palestinian Anglicanism in Israel-Palestine, St. George's Cathedral in occupied East Jerusalem. Raheb, while younger than Ateek, has had a similar ecumenical oriented experience, both in his early life in the occupied West Bank town of Bethlehem as well as later when he went abroad to Germany for higher education.

Post-First Intifada, the new and fractured situation in which Palestinian Christian communities found themselves in the region, because of the travel and other restrictions imposed by the Israelis, meant that there has been a renewed focus on the necessity of ecumenical as well as inter-faith activities for the sake of physical/spiritual survival and continued relevance within radically changed circumstances. It's essentially Western oriented approach has meant that Sabeel has made ecumenical endeavours between Palestinian Christians and Westerners as well as localized encounters between the various Christian churches and communities in the region, their prime goal of activism. Sabeel's ecumenical counterpart in the West Bank town of Bethlehem, Al-Liqa, while having substantial internationalist activism, has made inter-faith encounter in Israel-Palestine, their main plank of activity. Diyar has made educational and cultural endeavour among Palestinian youth of all groups and faiths the main thrust of activism, while ensuring that the mainly Lutheran world in the West is well aware of the ecumenical and internationalist implications of their work in the occupied West Bank of Palestine.

The value of Palestinian Christian liberation/contextual theology to Muslims

Has Palestinian liberation/contextual theology anything to offer in the largely Muslim environment in Palestine today? Obviously, this question is a sub-set of the more general question as to the importance of minority faiths within the context of a majority faith environment. This applies to Christians in India and in many Muslim countries, to Jews in many parts of the world, to Sikhs just about everywhere, and to Muslims in Western Europe and North America. Reflecting on these examples, one can see that minority faith communities often 'punch above their weight,' both in providing distinguished individuals who represent their community (for example Gandhi in South Africa, C.S. Andrews in India, Bhikhu Parekh in Britain today), and in the ability of minority communities to puncture complacency and ask questions the majority community cannot otherwise see.

The Church in Palestine is such a minority group, faced with complex challenges intensified by the long drawn out Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories. As mentioned earlier, the missionary emphasis on social, educational and medical work in Palestine meant that Christians inherited a social services and educational organizational and institutional network far in excess of their actual numbers. This, in turn, has been the greatest contribution that Christian missionaries and their native supporters have left in Palestine, a legacy that has impacted on many generations of Palestinian people, irrespective of religious affiliation. Ateek and Raheb's institutions are in many ways a modern development on the older missionary project in Palestine. The work of Al-Liqa in particular in Bethlehem has been focused on developing a sustainable dialogue between Muslims and Christians in Palestine-Israel, with the initiative been taken from the side of the native Christian ecumenical community. Sabeel's focus on Christian-Muslim relations in the region is less overt, possibly because of the internationalist ecumenical focus of the group. Raheb's work in Bethlehem again stands out in this context as the most praxis-oriented socio-political as well as educational-culturally programmed approach that seeks to fashion a new generation of Palestinians, Christian and Muslim, on the streets of Palestine, who would be capable of carrying forward the goal of building a sustainable and self-reliant nation-state for the Palestinian people. In this sense, Raheb's work under the Diyar umbrella stands out as the approach that has the most to offer in the largely conservative Muslim environment that is Palestine today. The liberation that was sought to be propagated by Raheb for the

Palestinian Christian people was primarily one from fear, fear of being part of an ever-shrinking Christian minority in a Muslim sea that is the Christian situation in Palestine today. Raheb saw his role as facilitator of Christian-Muslim youth encounters in this role, programming and developing a generation of Christian-Muslim youth to becoming the torch-bearers of an independent Palestine. In this sense, the liberation he envisaged was one of the mind, a spiritual liberation necessary for both the communities to live in peace and brotherhood in a future independent Palestine of their dreams.

Dependence on the West

The church in Palestine was largely planted by Western missionary activism, an effort that went on more or less uninterrupted till the mid-twentieth century. Even today, the church in Palestine is far from independent of Western influence and financial support, a circumstance that hardly sets it apart from the rest of the church in the 'third world.' Christian Churches, particularly Protestant, evangelical-origin as well as Catholic mission-origin churches in the so-called 'developing or third world' still rely in varying extents on financial and other support from parent churches in the so-called developed 'Western' worlds. The organizations referred to in this study are not independent of this trend; indeed, they would find it very difficult to function in their present format without the generous help of their external donors, predominantly in Europe, America and Australasia.

The programs developed by both Sabeel as well as the Al-Liqa centre in Bethlehem are relatively similar and largely based on the dialogue approach, the premise that talking with one's enemies is the best path to reconciliation and peace. Funds accrued from the West are largely spent (in addition to paying the salaries of office and field staff members and meeting overhead costs) in conducting conferences, both local as well as (particularly in the case of Sabeel) international, local clergy and laity workshops, youth conferences and day trips (as a means of bringing dispersed Palestinian communities and individuals together in social networking exercises) and finally (in the case of Sabeel) witness visits that are a means of bringing Western tourists and pilgrims to Palestine-Israel on a reality awareness exercise.

Sabeel has since its inception devoted increasing space and resources to involving interested Palestinian clergy and laity within an ecumenical liberation theology framework, one that is programmed to emphasize the continued relevance of scripture, Old as well as New, for the Palestinian Christian people and their context. The

weekly Thursday noon communion service at the Sabeel offices in Jerusalem features a Latin America base community modelled prayer and scriptural reflection format that again seeks to make the Anglican bible passage of the week relevant to the Palestinian struggle for liberation and against Israeli socio-political and economic oppression in the Occupied Territories. One of the outcomes of this has been that Palestinian Christian participants at these sessions as well as interested foreign visitors and observers are exposed to the scriptures through the socio-political lens of liberation theology, a scheme of reading and analysis not historically or culturally popular and accepted in the Palestinian and Levantine Christian framework. People are challenged as they realize that the situation in Palestine today, coupled with the Israeli occupation and its side-effects can be remarkably similar to the circumstances and personal-collective communal experience that Jesus and his early followers faced in Roman Palestine, roughly 2000 years ago. This, in turn, encourages them to go out and face the occupation on a daily basis, with courage and fortitude, secure in the knowledge that what is happening in Palestine today can be seen as a test of their faith. Just as Jesus took a stand against his fellow Jewish oppressors as well as the Roman occupiers on the basis of truth and justice as revealed in the Hebrew Scriptures, so also Palestinian Christians and their foreign supporters are exhorted to view the present confliction situation that they are placed in through the eyes of Jesus Christ and His responses to the circumstances that faced Him and Palestinian society at that particular historical juncture. This mode of viewing the conflict, that was enunciated by Ateek through his first book, *Justice and Only Justice*, has the added advantage of being able to connect the Palestinian struggle for liberation and the Christian sub-struggle within that broader context, to concerned Christians and Christian communities worldwide, including those that have been through and are still in the process of developing these forms of non-violent protests against sectarian, class, race and political-economic oppression. The reference here is obviously to, among others, the South African struggle against Apartheid, the continuing Latin American experiments with base communities and liberation theology and interested and concerned supporters in the Western world.

There has been a similar history of radical thinking and move towards a contextualisation of theology within Palestine in the Lutheran community as well. This move towards what was then known as a 'Palestinian theology' started well before the first Palestinian Intifada broke out in 1987. A former bishop and head of the Lutheran church in Palestine, (Naim Nasser) writing in a German

Protestant publication (*Friede im Land der Bibel-3. Folge*) during the first Intifada explained Palestinian theology as follows:

> We know ourselves to have been placed by God, as part of the Palestinian people, in this land Palestine, and called by His Son, Jesus Christ, to be His people. Therefore we are citizens of two states, the earthly-Palestinian and the heavenly-divine state. It is the task of the so-called "Palestinian theology" to clarify the relationship of those two states to each other. Our theologians strive to pursue theology in the Palestinian context, i.e., to seek new ways in which to proclaim the Gospel to our people in its situation, language and mentality…[21]

An estimation of Raheb's approach in relation to liberation/contextual theology in Israel/Palestine

Mitri Raheb was involved with the Al-Liqa Centre from its early years and honed his theological orientation within the context of his native Palestinian heritage and culture in close association with this organisation. He, however, diversified from the Al-Liqa set-up in opting to follow partially the example provided by Archbishop Elias Chacour (the Galilean Palestinian-Israeli educator) in seeking to focus on education as the tool of empowerment of the Palestinian youth in the West Bank and particularly in Bethlehem.

Raheb's approach must be seen as an attempt to meld institutions and approaches within a framework of occupation and oppression to create facts on the ground in Bethlehem that are most suited to the present needs of the Palestinian people, irrespective of faith, creed or party affiliation. It is in this context that his theological approach becomes apparent as well as its divergences from the top-down approach favoured by Sabeel and Al-Liqa. Raheb has sought to utilize the broad similarities of culture, language and the political and economic situation that do more than anything else to bind the two main religious communities of Palestine together against a common foe, to create a cultural theological approach that will in turn lay the groundwork for a reliable, sustainable and mutually fruitful dialogue between the Christians and Muslims of the Palestinian Territories. He also sought to do this through the use of the twin tools of co-ed Christian-Muslim 'education' (conceived from the cradle to young adulthood) as well as popular Arab culture, coupled with his holistic 'cradle to the grave' concept of providing readily available and relatively cheap recreation and healthcare facilities to the occupied and logistically constrained Palestinian people of Bethlehem and the Palestinian Territories in general. Raheb's ability in achieving what he has accomplished, has hinged on his success in persuading Western

(mainly US and European Lutheran) donors that Palestinians deserve a better life, even if this cannot at present include freedom.

Raheb views the present situation in the Territories as being more fit for visions of the future as it should be in Palestine-Israel. One of Raheb's greatest fears as a long-time resident of the occupied West Bank has been the continuing Palestinian and Christian emigration from the Territories, primarily as a result of the Israeli occupation. His primary purpose in developing a theo-political contextual praxis of liberation has been to counter this trend by giving the Palestinian Christian people a sense of work-dignity, empowerment, holistic development and pride in remaining in their homeland, despite all the pressures to the contrary to make them leave.

He has a particular vision for infrastructure development and building institutions in Palestine, and is particularly interested in implementing projects that would result in developing human resources through the arts, culture and modern vocational-oriented education in the Occupied Territories. He has felt the need to harness the creativity and the inherent talent of the people. Raheb's vision is concerned with the building up of the Palestine of his dreams, and not being bogged down with questions about how one must deal with and end the Israeli occupation of the West Bank. He feels that there is already enough Palestinian and worldwide obsession with the occupation and with the requirement of whether to support a two or one-state solution. Now is the time to build up the Kingdom of God on earth and particularly in this context of the proposed new Palestinian national state. This is more important than anything else in Raheb's view.[22]

All Raheb's outreach mission activities were theologically speaking a fore-taste for understanding the concept of the Kingdom of God. It is in this context that the Lutheranism of Raheb becomes apparent. Just as Luther enunciated the concept of the two Kingdoms, the Kingdom of man and the Kingdom of God, with the possibility and necessity of cooperation between the two, so also Raheb views his medical, cultural and educational work in the context of a necessary outgrowth of his theological analysis in praxis.[23] The end of the occupation and the physical-political liberation of Palestine is not the sole goal in Raheb's eyes. He also believes in working towards the greater purpose of the spiritual liberation (the liberation of the soul) of the Palestinian people, both Christians as well as Muslims.[24] Raheb's firm belief is that it would not be possible to achieve the 'physical' liberation of Palestine primarily by lifting the Israeli occupation. True liberation of the Palestinian people could only proceed as a result of the spiritual and physical liberation of the land of Israel-Palestine,

and one of the tools, in his opinion, to achieve this is through the contextual theological medium that he has devised and sought to propagate through his various projects and institutions.

A contextual approach to theology is important precisely because it gives importance to people's narratives. This is because only something like 8% of the Palestinian population is functionally literate. One must take notice of the uneducated people in Palestine. As most of the people do not care about theology, we should appeal to them by way of practical 'on the ground' policies.[25] It is for this reason that the ICB knowingly prefers a contextual and less politicized service-oriented approach.[26]

Raheb's emphasis on inter-faith dialogue sought to take further what had been tried and tested in Al-Liqa over the past two decades or more. The most important fact in this context was to actually bring people together without talking about the process of doing so through dialogue. Christians and Muslims must come together without having the necessity to speak about coming together. Muslims and Christians in Bethlehem and in Palestine had the same needs and sometimes different needs. The 'need of the hour' was to provide for their need which was what Raheb was trying to do through his different institutions and projects. He felt that it was important to include Muslims in all his projects, and indeed sometimes more work must be done for Muslims than for Christians, as true liberation would not be achieved for Christians unless the Muslims of Palestine acquire their own physical and spiritual liberation as well. Liberation for Palestinians has to be holistic, or not at all, as Christians are a small minority in a Muslim sea. Raheb has said that he has a vision where he would prefer to see Christians and Muslims swimming and walking and going on tours and painting together rather than anything else as well as going on tours to foreign countries together as brand ambassadors of the extent of ethno-religious harmony in Palestine. He feels that what he is doing at the ICB does more to bring Muslims and Christians, and particularly the youth of Palestine, together. In Raheb's view, Christian-Muslim harmony and unity can be achieved only as a result of a grassroots ground-based approach and can only be achieved by emphasizing the essential unity of the people of Palestine as well as the potential of the people to remain together.[27]

In Raheb's view, the most important thing is to create a taste of the new life that could possibly be enjoyed in Palestine once the Israeli occupation is ended. It is important not to be obsessed by the occupation, but to think beyond it. To this end, Raheb argues that theology must be translated into infrastructure, people and ultimately onto the streets of Palestine-Israel.[28] The holistic development sought

through the Diyar consortium marks a major difference between his approaches as opposed to the Sabeel programs. Whereas Sabeel and Al-Liqa look to the ideal Palestine-Israel of the future, Raheb seeks to change the present. Raheb emphasizes the Arabic term *Dar* in all his institutes, as well as the plural form *Diyar*, both of which mean 'home'. All his organizations are homes and at *Dar al-Annadwa* as well as at *Dar al-Kalima*, what is most important is the building of the homeland of Palestine and belonging to it.[29]

It has been asked whether what Raheb is doing in Bethlehem is little more than applying plasters to the open sore that is the Palestinian and Christian situational context today in the land of Israel-Palestine. This would however, in the eyes of this researcher, be the result of taking an extremely critical stand against the work of a Christian organisation that seeks to pave the way as regards the future of the Palestinian people in their own homeland. Raheb's Diyar Consortium has within the space of 14 years (1995-2009) grown to become one of the largest employers of quality manpower in the Bethlehem Governorate of the Palestinian Authority.[30] They are projected to reach out to some 60,000 people during the course of their various activities and projects in 2009 and their impact is not just restricted to the Bethlehem region, but now extends far afield covering mainly the southern West Bank and Jerusalem, plus even the Palestinian populated areas of the state of Israel.[31] Raheb's entire mission strategy is fashioned around the policy of 'empowering people in a context of continuing conflict.' His vision and that of his organisation is geared towards 'influencing people's transition from a stance of reactivity to one of pro-activity, from being victims to becoming visionaries, from waiting to creating, and from surviving to thriving.'[32] Again from a holistic and spiritual point of view, Raheb seeks to emulate Jesus Christ's own ministry of 'preaching, teaching and healing in his (Christ's own) homeland….. That we might have Life and have it abundantly (John 10:10).'[33]

Raheb declares that,

> In a context of too much peace talking, Diyar believes in peacemaking. In a context of too much politics, Diyar believes in caring for the polis/city. In a context of too much religion, Diyar believes in investing in spirituality. In a context of too much disempowering aid, Diyar believes in empowering the individual and the community. In a context of too much segregation, Diyar believes in building bridges and platforms for intercultural dialogue. In a context of despair, Diyar believes in to creating room for hope. In a context full of liturgies of death, Diyar celebrates the mystery of the risen Lord of life.[34]

Conclusion

Sabeel, Al-Liqa and Diyar are closely connected within the spectrum of Palestinian liberation/contextual theology and in particular, the advocacy and publicity (conference-oriented) support work that they perform often overlaps with each other. This often confuses Western viewers and supporters of Palestinian Christians as to the actual differences between the different groups. Both Sabeel as well as the Raheb-inspired ICB engage in contextual theologies to bring the whole gamut of their activities into focus. However the essential praxiological focus of each remains different. Their differences lie within the theo-political visions of the two Palestinian Christian clerics and directors of these centres, Naim Ateek and Mitri Raheb, as well as the socio-political and economic angles through which these visions are translated into actual praxis.

Notes and References

1. *Gina Lende (2003), A Quest for Justice: Palestinian Christians and their Contextual Theology,* M.Phil diss., University of Oslo, 51. This work was one of the first works in English from a European University that focused on Palestinian Christian issues and their affairs.
2. *Gina Lende, A Quest for Justice: Palestinian Christians and their Contextual Theology, 51.*
3. K. C. Abraham (1992), 'Third World Theologies', *CTC Bulletin,* May-December: 8, in 'Towards a Contextual Theology,' by Lourdino A Yuzon, *CTC Bulletin*, Chapter 1, XII (2)-XIII (1 and 2), July 1994-September 1995. Available at http://www.cca.org.hk/resources/ctc/ctc94-02/1.Yuzon.htm (accessed on April 30, 2006). The Rev. K. C Abraham is one of the leading theologians of India (particularly after the death of M. M. Thomas) and indeed, the Third World. He is a member of the Church of South India (the South Indian wing of the global Anglican Communion). He has served as a vice-president of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT), as well as a Professor of Theology and Ethics at United Theological College (UTC), Bangalore, one of India's leading liberal Protestant theological seminaries. He has also served as the director of the Bangalore-based 'South Asia Theological Research Institute (SATHRI),' and as director of the board of theological education of the Senate of Serampore University. He is the author of many books and articles including *Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergences*, (Eugene-Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, October 2004), and *Liberative Solidarity: Contemporary Perspectives on Mission*, (Tiruvalla-India: Christava Sahitya Samithi, April 1996).
4. K. C. Abraham, *Third World Theologies*, 5.

5. Stephen B. Bevans (1992), *Models of Contextual Theology,* NY: Maryknoll-Orbis Books, 1. Stephen Bevans is the Louis J. Luzbatek Professor of Mission and Culture at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, US. Before joining the CTU, he spent over nine years in the Philippines, teaching theology at a local diocesan seminary. This experience obviously affected the way he thought and did theology. Apart from *Models of Contextual Theology* he is also co-author (with his colleague Roger Schroeder, S.V.D.) of *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004)**.**

6. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 1-2.

7. Ibid.

8. José M. de Mesa (2003), 'Contextual Theologizing: Future Perspectives,' *East Asian Pastoral Review* 40, no. 3, in *Theses on the Local Church: A Theological Reflection in the Asian Context,* FABC Papers 60, 54. Available at http://eapi.admu.edu.ph/eapr003/mesa.htm, (accessed on September 14, 2006).

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11. Naim Ateek (1989), *Justice and only Justice: A Palestinian theology of Liberation,* Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 71.

12. Ibid, 72.

13. Rosemary Radford Ruether, 'Foreword,' in *I am a Palestinian Christian,* by Mitri Raheb, 7.

14. Ibid, 8.

15. Raheb, *Palestinian Christian*, 15-16.

16. Ruether, *Foreword*, 8. Also see Raheb, *Palestinian Christian*, 24-25.

17. See Naim Ateek (2008), 'A Palestinian Christian cry for reconciliation,' (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books), 7.

18. Ibid, 7-8.

19. Sonja Karkar, 'The first intifada 20 years later,' *The Electronic Intifada,* 10 December 2007. Available at http://electronicintifada.net/content/first-intifada-20-years-later/7251, accessed June 15, 2012.

20. See Mitri Raheb (2004), 'Bethlehem Besieged: Stories of Hope in Times of Trouble,' (Minneapolis, Fortress Press) for more information about the scale of the destruction following the Israeli invasion of Bethlehem and the determination of the staff and supporters of the ICB to rebuild again after this.

21. Quoted in Malcolm Lowe, 'Israel and Palestinian Liberation Theology,' in *End of an Exile*, by James Parkes (2005) 3rd Ed. Eugene B. Korn and Roberta Kalechofsky eds. (Marblehead, MA: Micah Publications), 268-269. The clear reference to the classical Lutheran concept of the Kingdoms of Heaven and Earth are very visible in this statement. As has been explained later in this chapter, Raheb's work in Palestine has sought to follow up on this very Lutheran principle of the two Kingdoms and their mutual interdependence.

22. Interview with Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, International Centre of Bethlehem, August 24, 2007.

23. Historically, classical Lutheranism has believed that the Kingdom of this world is quite distinct from the Kingdom of God in Jesus Christ. Hence it can be argued that Lutherans will not be theologically comfortable with the premises of the orthodox Latin American format of liberation theology that has always stood against any separation between the spiritual as well as the political and physical liberation of mankind. Lutherans in general and Western Lutherans in particular, might thus well opt to support the less confrontational 'contextual Lutheran-base theology' of Mitri Raheb.

24. Interview with Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, International Centre of Bethlehem, August 24, 2007.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Diyar employs a total of 100 people in 2009, making it the third largest employer in Bethlehem. Refer speech made by Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's (ELCA) Bishop's Academy, which was held in the Middle East and particularly in the Israel-Palestine-Jordan region in early 2009. Available at Raheb's website at http://www.mitriraheb.org/ (accessed on April 02, 2009).

31. 60 percent of the people who benefit from Diyar programs are Palestinian Muslims, reflecting the organization's situational context as well as communal outreach within the predominantly Muslim Manger Street quarter of Bethlehem. The city of Bethlehem itself is now a Muslim majority city, reflecting the large-scale emigration of Palestinian Christians from the region over the last hundred years and almost completely reversing the Christian history of the city over the last two millennia or so.

32. Speech made by Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb at the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's (ELCA) Bishop's Academy.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

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Environmental Thoughts of Gandhi for a Green Future

Sasikala AS

ABSTRACT

The environmental concern as we understand today was not there at the time of Gandhi, but his ideas on development, technology, self sufficiency, village Swaraj etc. disclose his environmental concern. Different streams of environmental philosophy have paid their indebtedness to Gandhi. The present paper is an attempt to understand the theoretical aspects behind Gandhian environmentalism. The Philosophical elements of Gandhi such as truth and non violence, the idea of science and technology, economic concepts, conflict resolution techniques etc. are discussed to analyze their implications for environment. The paper distinguishes Gandhian economics from conventional economics to underscore its links with sustainability questions. The paper argues that the final outcome of Gandhian economics is a green future.

Introduction

WE LIVE IN A world in which science, technology and development play important roles in changing human destiny. However, over-exploitation of natural resources for the purpose of development leads to serious environmental hazards. In fact, the idea of development is itself controversial in the present situation as in the name of development, we are unethically plundering natural resources. It is rather common to confront high dam controversies, water disputes, war against deforestation and pollution these days. Eminent Indian environmental activist Vandana Shiva argues that development is actually a continuation of colonialism. Borrowing from Gustavo Esteva she argues that "development is a permanent war waged by its

promoters and suffered by its victims."[1] It is true that a science that does not respect nature's needs and a development which does not respect people's needs threatens human survival. The green thoughts of Gandhi give us a new vision to harmonise nature with the needs of people.

Gandhi was not an environmentalist in the modern sense. Although he did not create a green philosophy or write nature poems, he is often described as an "apostle of applied human ecology."[2] It is a fact that environmental concerns were minimal in Gandhi's time; but eminent environmental writers like Ramachandra Guha consider him an early Environmentalist[3]. His views on nature are scattered throughout his writings. His ideas relating to Satyagraha based on truth and non-violence, simple life style, and development reveal how sustainable development is possible without doing any harm to nature and our fellow beings. His idea that "nature has enough to satisfy every one's needs, but not to satisfy anybody's greed" became one line ethic to modern environmentalism.

Gandhi considered the earth a living organism. His ideas were expressed in terms of two fundamental laws: Cosmic law and the Law of Species. Cosmic Law views the entire universe as a single entity. Nothing could malfunction outside the threshold limits built into the grand system that includes both living and non-living phenomena[4]. He believed that "the universe was structured and informed by the cosmic spirit, that all men, all life and indeed all creation were one"[5]. He was an *advaitist* who believed in the essential unity of man and nature. He wrote: "I believe in the *advaita* (non-duality), I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter, of all that lives. Therefore, I believe that if one man gains spiritually, the world gains with him and if one man fails, the whole world fails to that extent."[6] Regarding the law of species Gandhi believed that without the cooperation and sacrifice of both human and non-human beings evolution is not possible. Being rational human beings, we are the custodians of the rest of creation and should respect their rights and cherish the diversity. It is for this reason that taking more than the required resources is seen as theft. Gandhi evolved these principles from his vast readings and understandings of religious traditions of Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity and Islam. His social, economic and political ideas were framed on the understanding of interdependence of the whole universe. This paper tries to analyze the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi to understand their relevance for the environment. First section of the paper presents the theoretical aspects of truth, non-violence and *Satyagraha* and their

environmental implications. The second section discusses the critique of Gandhi on science and modernity while the third section makes a case for consideration of Gandhian economics as ecological economics. The last section analyses the conflict resolution techniques of Gandhi and their applicability in environmental conflicts. The paper argues that a new model of environmentalism put forward by Gandhi will lead us to a green future where the rights of the present and future generations are well protected.

1

Truth, Non-violence and Satyagraha

Truth and Non-violence are the fundamentals of Gandhian Philosophy. His life itself was a relentless search for truth. His views on truth are embedded in his religious beliefs and practices and offer "a cosmological view of our relationship with one another and a pervasive sense of duty we owe to one another."[7] Non-violence or *Ahimsa* means non-injury, but to Gandhi non-violence was much more than the absence of violence. He used it to mean non-injury in thought, word and deed. He viewed non-violence as the philosophy of life. *Ahimsa, Satyagraha* and *Tapasya* were the basic principles that guided his life[8]. Truth and *Ahimsa* are intertwined terms. To Gandhi truth is that "which determines the spirit in which one lives or the religious and ethical criteria which governs the way in which he thinks and acts."[9] He believed that truth can be achieved only by means of non-violence. It affords the fullest protection to one's self respect and sense of honor. If truth is the highest law, then non-violence is the highest duty. Gandhi claimed that truth was the most correct and fully significant term that could be used for God. To practice *Ahimsa* is to realize truth and to realize truth is to practice *Ahimsa*. The concept *Satyagraha* gave practical expression to the religious and ethical ideals of truth and non violence. *Tapasya* or self sacrifice is necessary to achieve the highest truth. It involves freedom from fear and a willingness to die. Gandhi believed that *Satyagraha* is nothing, but *tapasya* for the truth. The suffering that has to be undergone in *Satyagraha* is tapasya in its fullest form.[10]

Gandhi explained his concept of non-violence in the following terms.

1. Non-violence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force.

2. Non-violence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honor.
3. Individuals and nations who practice non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice everything for the welfare of the whole world.
4. Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all - children, young men and women or grown up people, provided they have a living faith in the God of love and therefore have equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not merely applied to isolated acts.
5. It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the law is good enough for individuals it is not for masses of mankind.[11]

Satyagraha is an active form of non-violence. Gandhi considered it as truth force or soul force. Satyagraha is based on the idea that the moral appeal to the heart or conscience is more effective than an appeal based on the threat or bodily pain or violence. *Satyagraha* itself originates from the belief that while violence to persons and property diverts the minds of the parties concerned from the real issues involved, non-violent action invites the parties to a dialogue about the issues themselves.

The major difference between Gandhian and non-Gandhian systems of non-violence is a disagreement about the relations of ends and means. To Gandhi, the selection of means precedes the selection of ends in the sense that one's original and basic commitment is to certain means or methods, and one's ends are seen as objectives which progressively emerge as one tries to bring one's life into conformity with this basic commitment.[12] *Satyagraha* tries to unite this objective and basic commitment. In a way this gives an opportunity to understand both our opponent's and our own mission. In the Gandhian scheme of *Satyagraha* one undergoes self-suffering with a belief that the opponent can be converted to seeing the truth by touching his or her conscience or that a clearer vision of truth may grow out of the dialectical process for both parties.[13]

March 12th, 1930 was a watershed in the history of India. Gandhi started *Dandi* march on that day to protest against the salt law imposed by the British. Thousands of people including women and children joined the march. Gandhi advised the people to make salt by themselves in their own homes as a protest against the government. On April 6, 1930 he broke the British salt law by picking up a chunk of the salt crust from the *Dandi* beach. It was a unique method of protest and Gandhi taught the world a new lesson that the power of non-violence supersedes the power of violence. Non-violence has a

mesmerizing power to exert a pull in the minds of human beings and it appeals to the heart. After Gandhi, leaders and activists of different movements used prototypes of *Satyagraha* to bring their campaigns to fruition.

The ecological scope of non-violence is unlimited. Gandhi's faith in non-violence and vegetarianism made him a votary of conservation of all diversity including all forms of life, societies, cultures, religions, and traditions.[14] He made manifest the internal relation between self-realization, non-violence and what sometimes has been called biospherical egalitarianism.[15] Arne Naess, the pioneer of deep ecology argued that ecological preservation is non violent in nature[16]. Naess introduced and Thomas Weber systematized the relation between non-violence, self-realization and mutual dependence of all living beings in the following points.

1. Self-realization presupposes a search for truth
2. All living beings are one
3. *Himsa* (violence) against oneself makes self-realization impossible.
4. *Himsa* against a living being is *himsa* against oneself
5. *Himsa* against a living being makes complete self-realization impossible[17]

Naess used these principles to evolve a broader philosophy of environmentalism i.e, deep ecology. He believed that Gandhi's utopia is one of the few that shows ecological balance.[18] As Gandhi envisaged, non-violence has the power to solve all our problems, including ecological crisis. Gandhian non-violence is accepted by different environmental movements as a vital principle. Most of these movements lay claim to the Gandhian values of ecological prudence and frugality and to the Gandhian model of decentralized democracy and Village *Swaraj*. Many thinkers considered the Indian Environmental Movements like *Chipko* movement, *Narmada Bachao Andolan* (NBA) etc. as the living example of Gandhian Environmentalism and they consider Gandhi as a "man with deep ecological view of life, a view much too deep even for deep ecology."[19] It was in Chipko movement that *Satyagraha* was initially used as an effective technique to fight against environmental injustice. The Forest *Satyagrahas* of 1930's were a result of the Forest Act of 1927 which denied the people access to biomass for survival while increasing biomass production for industrial and commercial growth[20]. The key agenda of the *Chipko* movement was that carrying forward the "vision of Gandhi's mobilization for a new society, where neither man nor nature is exploited and

destroyed, which was the civilizational response to a threat to human survival."[21] All these together made Gandhi an exponent of Indian environmentalism.

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II

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Gandhi's Critique of Modern Civilization

Modern industrial civilization has had a huge impact on human kind as well as on the environment. It made a small part of the population wealthy at the cost of exploiting the world's natural resources. Gandhi believed that it propagates nothing other than the hunger for wealth and the greedy pursuit of worldly pleasures. His denunciation of modern civilization and his proposal for reordering it stems from his concern for the destiny of man which modern society distorts[22]. *Hind Swaraj*, published in 1909, criticized the modern civilization as 'satanic'. He observed that 'machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization; it represents a great sin. It is machinery that has impoverished India'[23]. The distinguishing characteristic of modern civilization is an indefinite multiplicity of wants, whereas ancient civilizations were marked by an imperative restriction upon, and a strict regulating of these wants[24]. Resources are limited and so the desire to amass wealth leads to violence both at individual and collective levels. It also creates a social order in which inequality, oppression, and deprivation prevail with disastrous implications for human dignity. Gandhi believed that the ancient civilizations were religious in nature which would surely limit worldly ambitions.

Gandhi's critique of modern civilization was influenced by the Western critique of modern industrial civilization. In the nineteenth century, the greatest critics of the industrial revolution in Europe were Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris to whom Asia held a particular appeal. There was a perception that Western industrialism was destroying the Asian paradise. Gandhi was a great admirer of Ruskin who criticized the Victorian industrialization and urbanization. It was through his book *Unto This Last* Gandhi realized the importance of manual labor. The "magic spell of the book"[25] contributed to the Gandhian *Sarvodaya*. He was also influenced by the ideas of Tolstoy who believed that agriculture is the true occupation of man[26]. Gandhi believed that true civilizational values are not present in modern civilization. In *Hind Swaraj* Gandhi argued that what we think as 'civilization' today is an illusion, and that any civilization that ill treated outsiders could

hardly avoid ill treating its own people. Gandhi's critique of western civilization and science emanates from his dissatisfaction with the divorce of science and progress from morality[27]. He was not against the technology, but the technologism which creates a hierarchical relationship among men as well as between men and nature. Gandhi believed that the greatest achievements of modern civilization have been weapons of mass destruction, the awful growth of anarchism, the frightful disputes between capital and labor and cruelty inflicted on innocent, dumb, living animals in the name of science and technology. He believed a science to be science only if it afforded the fullest scope for satisfying the hunger of body, mind and soul.

Modern civilization involved an egregious amount of violence against nature which was largely seen as man's property. This undermined man's unity with his environment and fellowmen and destroyed stable and long established communities[28]. Natural resources were ruthlessly exploited and their rhythm and balance disturbed while animals were killed or tortured for human needs. Gandhi believed that villages would soon disappear due to the urbanization which is part of modern civilization, and of which environmental degradation is a product. Gandhi had a romantic vision of the ideal village. He wrote:

> ..it will have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation, built of material obtainable from within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages will have courtyards enabling house holders to plant vegetables for domestic use and to house their cattle. The village lanes and streets will be free of all avoidable dust. It will have wells according to its needs and accessible to all. It will have houses of worship for all, also a common meeting place, a village common for grazing its cattle, a cooperative diary, primary and secondary schools in which industrial training or vocational education will be the central fact, and it will have *panchayats* for settling disputes. It will produce its own grains, vegetables, and fruits and its own *khadi*…[29]

While the western environmentalists spread the message of "going back to the nature" Gandhi spread the message of "going back to the villages". He believed that the "the blood of the village is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built."[30]

III

Ecological Economics of Gandhi

Modern economy is "propelled by a frenzy of greed and indulges in an orgy of envy."[31] It makes man more materialistic at the risk of majority and the environment. Schumacher argued that, "Wisdom demands a new orientation of science and technology towards the organic, the gentle, the non-violent, the elegant and beautiful."[32] He identified Gandhian economic ideas as having the power to reach that goal. Gandhi asserted that "true economics stands for social justice; it promotes the good of all equally, including the weakest and is indispensable for decent life"[33]. Dr. J C Kumarappa, known as the Green Gandhian, systematized Gandhian economic and development thoughts and integrated his economic thinking with scientific knowledge to "entail macro-ecological problems of pollution as well as depletion."[34] He summed up Gandhian economic ideas as a constituting a philosophy that sought to create an "economy of permanence". He observed that self-interest and preservation demand complete non-violence, co-operation and submission to the ways of nature if we are to maintain permanency by non-interference with and by not short-circuiting the cycle of life[35]. In another way, "all nature is dovetailed together in a common cause". Kumarappa argued that "when this interconnection works out harmoniously and violence does not break the chain, we have an economy of permanence"[36]. He identified different types of economies and realized that the highest form of economy is the economy of service which Gandhi suggests. Gandhian economic Concepts like *swadeshi*, trusteeship, bread labour etc received attention and acceptance from the whole world.

Gandhi defined *Swadeshi* as "the spirit in us which requires us to serve our immediate neighbors before others and to use things produced in our neighborhood in preference to those more remote. So doing we serve humanity to the best of our capacity"[37]. The *swadeshi* spirit encourages us to consume commodities made from our own villages, thus promoting small scale industries which help ordinary farmers and weavers to live happily. Limitation of wants is another important aspect in Gandhian economics. Gandhi urged us to minimize our wants to minimize the consumption and thus reduce the burden on nature by avoiding hazardous wastes. Our civilization, culture and *swaraj* depend on the restriction of wants. Gandhi realized that the modern civilization and the market economics have a tendency to multiply the wants and needs of common people. Schumacher also identified modern economy as propelled by a frenzy of greed and

which indulges in an orgy of envy. He realized that every increase of needs tends to increase one's dependence on outside forces over which one cannot have control and therefore increases existential fear. Schumacher observed that as physical resources are limited everywhere, people satisfying their needs by means of a modest use of resources are obviously less likely to be at each other's throats than people depending upon a high rate of use. Equally, people who live in highly self-sufficient local communities are less likely to get involved in large-scale violence than people whose existence depends on world-wide systems of trade. Bread labour is another important economic concept of Gandhi. He valued bodily labor saying "the rains come not through intellectual feats, but through sheer bodily labor. It is a well established scientific fact that where forests are denuded of trees, rains cease, where trees are planted rains are attracted and the volume of water received increases with the increase of vegetation"[38] It not only promotes our environment, but also increases our economic stability. The Gandhian concept of bread labor encourages the use of human hands and body instead of machines to produce essential items like vegetables, cloth etc.

The economic ideas of Gandhi differed from conventional economics and bore close resemblances with ecological economics. Ecological economics is a relatively new area that came in to existence in response to the failure of mainstream economics to bridge the gap between economics and the environment. It has an explicit concern for future generations and long term sustainability, and works with a broader range of values than the limited perceptions of the current generation of humans.[39] Ecological economics sees sustainability not only as an economic problem, but also a problem of maintaining essential, non-replaceable and non-sustainable environmental features.[40] The importance has given to natural capital, i.e, to non-renewable natural resources and renewable resources such as ecosystem services. In Gandhian economics environmental sustainability can be defined as sustainability of the ecological services (includes the provision of food and other raw materials) on which human beings depend.[41] Environmental sustainability ensures minimum use of natural resources. The term sustainable development was not much discussed at Gandhi's time, but his ideal vision of the world known as *Sarvodaya* safeguard the rights of future generations, through the welfare of all. The following table shows the difference between conventional economics and Gandhian economics and reveals how it contributes to environmental sustainability.

**Table 1: Differences between Conventional and
Gandhian Economics**

	Conventional Economics	**Gandhian Economics**
Basic Philosophy	Materialistic	Spiritual
World View	Human Centric	Eco centric (considers the equal right of human and non human beings.
Macro Aim	Profit Maximization	Sustainable communities through agriculture and constructive programmes.
Views on Science and Technology	Inevitable part of human progress	'Scienticism' or the 'technologism' makes modern man slaves of machines
Views on natural resources	Maximum benefit out of natural resources	Limited use of resources
Views on modes of production	Mass production with the aid of modern technology	Production by the masses
Nature of production	Capital intensive	Labor intensive
Views on the market	Large scale market induced by globalization	Local and national *(Swadeshi)*
Nature of Power	Power vested in the industrial nations or the corporate (centralization of power and resources)	Power belongs to people (decentralization of power and resources)
Outcome	Urbanization, environmental crisis, resource depletion and natural calamities.	Village *swaraj,* and environmental sustainability

IV

Gandhian Conflict Resolution and Environment

Conflict resolution is an emerging branch of social science which deals with the techniques to resolve conflicts between nations or between individuals. It can also be applied to address environmental issues. For the last forty years, India has been witnessing several conflicts between the policy makers and environmental activists. This includes disputes such as the Cauvery river water dispute, the Ganga water controversy, high dam controversies like Narmada movement, Silent valley movement, Tehri dam movement and so on. There are several other environmental debates on nuclear proliferation, deforestation etc. Most of these movements use Gandhian techniques of conflict expression to deal with their adversaries. The reasons may be, (1) Gandhian techniques are non-violent in nature, which is more eco-friendly than the violent protests, or (2) the success of other Gandhian movements could have inspired them to use the Gandhian techniques.

Whenever there is a mismatch between different interests, conflicts arise. Gandhian non-violence or *Satyagraha* is accepted by many as an effective technique of conflict resolution. Here the term 'technique' is not used in the narrow sense, but as an effective method which contains many contradictions and strategic implications. Conflict resolution is used to denote the methods and processes of negotiation, arbitration, and institution building which promote the peaceful ending of social conflict or war. Gandhi never used the word 'conflict resolution'; instead he used terms like mediation and 'negotiation'. He never considered conflicts as problems. Rather, they were opportunities for moral growth and transformation. For Gandhi, what mattered in a non-violent struggle was 'how the game was played and how the opponent felt about his antagonist after the game was over'[42].

The contribution of Gandhi in conflict resolution was his "working hypothesis that the non-violent resolution of group conflict was a practical goal."[43] Gandhi experimented with mass actions without violence and succeeded in them many times. Thomas Weber argued that we should view Gandhi's philosophy vis-à-vis conflict resolution theory, rather than as distinct from it. His philosophy of truth and nonviolence contribute to the theory of conflict resolution. Gandhi believed that the truth is one and different individuals perceive it differently. Nobody can claim that their perception is correct. If we are not sure about the supreme truth there is no need of violence or conflict. In order to realize truth one should have to realize God. Self realization is the way to realize God. Self realization will lead us to

refrain from violence against other beings.

Weber identifies the key points of Gandhian technique of conflict resolution from Arne Naess' systematization of Gandhian Ethics[44]; those principles may be summarized as follows:

1. Non violence should be observed in any situation. Violence is invited from opponents if they are humiliated or provoked.
2. It is necessary to understand the root of conflict and our role in it.
3. Accepting the individuality of the opponent is crucial. Appealing to greed, prejudice or hatred cannot under any circumstances be reconciled.
4. It is necessary "to put ourselves in the shoes of the opponent", to understand his position well.
5. Tolerance, love and sympathy are the keys of conflict resolution
6. Mutual trust is essential. It is easier to move from cooperation to competition than from competition to cooperation. So trust needs to be built early in the relationship, but one should not exploit the trusting behavior of the opponent.
7. Compromise on honorable terms is another important element in conflict resolution. Gandhian process of conflict is one of synthesis rather than compromise
8. Surrender without conversion is not the ideal Gandhian way of terminating a struggle. The conversion of an opponent should be furthered by personal sincerity.
9. Self sacrifice is the essential quality of a *Satyagrahi*. The best way of convincing an opponent is furthered by personal sincerity.
10. One should be careful not to take benefit out of the opponent's weakness.

The advice of Gandhi in group struggle was to "make a constructive programme part of the campaign" to make it more understandable and also more open to critical examination.[45] He believed that the civil disobedience itself is irrelevant if the entire nation did not take part in constructive programmes.[46] He suggested doing literacy programmes, spinning or weaving, awareness campaigns etc as a part of the campaign and he himself involved in several constructive programmes. It would also help the participants to deviate their minds from violent thoughts.

So far as the Indian environmental movements are concerned, the conflict is often between different interest groups or between the state and people, and are often led by peasant groups or tribal people. It is often in the form of struggle for the protection of livelihood control over resources or some form of self-determination. Non-violent protest has a significant role here, because violence to any living being is against the principle of environmental justice.

Environmental injustice, and marginalization are considered as instances of structural violence. As Gandhi believed violence and counter violence will never help to resolve conflicts, he considered *Satyagraha* as the "only force of universal application be that of Ahimsa or love" to fight these kinds of problems.[47] It is entirely different from mere passive resistance, where there is no scope for mutual love. In passive resistance, Gandhi believed "there is a scope for hatred" but "Satyagraha may be offered to one's nearest and dearest."[48]

Environmental movements in India used *Satyagraha* as the moral equivalent of war. Forest *Satyagraha* was first used effectively in *Chipko* movement to protest against deforestation. Gandhian techniques like *padayatras* were conducted to save nature. Conflict resolution techniques based on non-violence and self sacrifice were used by environmental activists like Chandi Prasad Bhatt, Baba Amte, Sunderlal Bahuguna, Medha Patker and others.

Conclusion

Several decades before the rise of environmental movements, Gandhi picked up fundamental environmental issues like over-consumption, violence to man and nature and so on. Nowadays, there are several movements in different parts of the globe fighting against environmental injustice. Some of them are violent in nature, but in India environmental movements have been forged by Gandhian traditions of non-cooperation and non-violence. The Gandhian definition of non-violence is far more than mere passive resistance, rather "it is a way of life, which affects everything from what a person eats through to how they relate to the world around them"[49]. Gandhian *Satyagraha* often functions as a conflict resolution technique. Forest *Satyagraha* proved to be effective as seen in the *Chipko* movement. Gandhi wrote much about the colonial power, its impudence, and the heinous destiny it has imposed on the country. He criticized modernization and industrialization for its lethal effects on the society. He believed that "the economic imperialism of a single tiny island kingdom (England) is today keeping the world in chains. If an entire nation of 300 million took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts."[50] He observed that the Indian situation demanded a new vision on economics which is centered on agriculture and village industries. He conceptualized a new economic order based on ecological balance. The environmental thinkers like Arne Naess considered Gandhi's utopia as one of the few that shows ecological balance. The village romanticism of Gandhi has been considered as central to his environmental philosophy. However, going

back to the thoughts of Gandhi is essential to build up a green future, where there is no place for human greed.

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Gramdan to Gram Swaraj: Insights from Rajasthan Experiments

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks at Gramdan as a necessary condition for achieving Gram Swaraj, upon which a nonviolent social order is to be built, and not a mere extension of the concept of Bhoodan. In this paper, the experience of Gramdan in Rajasthan is reviewed to find out whether the efforts made were on the pathway to achieving Gram Swaraj or not. The Gramdan Act of the Government of Rajasthan has been more progressive compared to similar Acts in other states. Three Gramdan villages are covered in the study. The study findings are analysed in the context of the spirit of the Act and the idea of Gram Swaraj. The paper ends with a general discussion of some issues relating to Gandhi-Vinoba discourse.

Introduction

GANDHI AND VINOBA visualised and programmatised the formation of a society based on non-violence –an *ahimsak samaj*. They conceived non-violence not in a passive sense. The proposed social system sought to minimise structural violence as well[1]. The basic issues that need to be addressed include, among others, inter-individual/inter-personal relationships, nature-human relations and relationship with self2. The last issue is hardly brought into the mainstream social science discourse. All research and socio-economic and political policy perspectives and prescriptions seem to skirt this issue. In Gandhi-Vinoba discourse for realising *ahimsak samaj* 'relationship with self' is

extremely important and basic. The proposed socio-economic and political structures in the discourse assume a healthy and dynamic relationship with self. For Gandhi, *Swaraj* did not mean political freedom and 'home rule' only, but it meant something that ultimately leads to regulating the self. Thus, the principle of Gram Swaraj which meant self- regulated autonomous village as a unit of human settlement has this component of 'enlightened and self regulated individuals' at its core.

When the self-regulated individuals join the world of production for physical survival and well being their relationship with physical factors of production such as nature, land, capital and labour is assumed to be that of a trustee rather than that of an owner. The concept of private property and the right to alienate it [3] is rejected in the Gandhi-Vinoba discourse. Due to historical reasons property may be owned by private individuals and due to production relations it may also be created by individuals, but ultimately it has to be treated as common property and shared with and by all for moving towards the a*himsak samaj* where the last person also achieves optimum welfare.

In reality, the nature of production relations and the concomitant inter-individual relations has resulted in an unequal society which accords undue importance to ownership of the means of production and the capacity to use goods and services for personal welfare. How does one correct this? Gandhi proposed a decentralised production system and self- sufficient villages side by side with individuals who have attained self-control[4]. The individual was not only responsible for involving himself in the production process but also responsible to the neighbour, and would consume what the neighbours produced. The process, if followed by all or at least by many, would lead to better equity. The next question would be: how should the property owners behave? With respect to industrial and non-land assets the owners were supposed to behave like trustees and use them for the benefit of the society they belong to. Gandhi had not given full thought to the question of the use of land in his trusteeship scheme. Vinoba, later, developed a concrete set of ideas and programmes on the question of land relations and applied them. He introduced what is now well-known as *Bhoodan* – gift of land. Land owners were persuaded to donate land to landless. At the time of political independence India was still a rural economy and major resource for production and subsistence was agriculture. Hence, land was a critical factor in production. Without having ownership on land those who produced could have no access or control on what they produced. Distribution of land was highly skewed, so to say. It then appeared that unless the land was redistributed, it would not be possible to

alleviate the misery of the poor. The Government of India and various state governments initiated land reforms. Reacting to the misery of the landless the radical and extremist political groups, in some places in India, were organising violent movements leading to killings of landlords (known as Zamindars) and redistributing the confiscated land[5].

Bhoodan evoked considerable positive responses and land owners came forward in large numbers to gift land for the landless. It grew into an influential movement. Consequently, Vinoba was prompted to develop the idea of *Bhoodan* further; the serious and disturbing socio-political situation prevailing then also compelled him to take Bhoodan further to its logical end. Thus the idea of Gramdan was born. It is obvious that Gramdan was not just an extension of the idea of bhoodan, that is, if most land owners in a village came forward with donation of land, it would be called Gramdan. Several conditions have to be fulfilled if a village was to become a Gramdan village. In the ultimate analysis Gramdan was a necessary condition for Gram Swaraj. And *Ahimsak Samaj* is to be built on the basis of Gram Swaraj. In this paper, we intend to review the experience of Gramdan in Rajasthan and examine a few Gramdan cases to see whether they were on the pathway to Gram Swaraj or not. This paper is part of research that we are undertaking to review Bhoodan and Gramdan experience in selected Indian states. To begin with we have selected Rajasthan state because the Gramdan Act enacted by the Government of Rajasthan has been progressive relative to similar Acts in other states and also because we have been able to do some field work there earlier. The paper, after the introductory part, is divided into four sections. In section one a brief review of Gramdan is presented. In section two a review of Gramdan in Rajasthan is attempted. In the third section case studies of three Gramdan villages are presented. In section four the status of Gramdan villages under study is analysed in the context of the Act and the idea of Gram Swaraj. Finally, in the light of the present status some general issues relating to Gandhi-Vinoba discourse are discussed.

Gramdan as a stage of the Bhoodan Movement

Vinoba anchored his thought and action in the Gandhian stream, but he tried to extend its frontiers with his own contributions. Thus, working on Gandhi's idea of trusteeship, he evolved the concept of Bhoodan and then extended it and developed it in to a movement. Conceiving land gift as a panacea for solving the problem of land allotment for the landless poor in India, Vinoba soon expanded the concept into *Gramdan* and subsequently into *sampatti dan, sadhan dan,*

samaya dan, and sarvasva dan. The concept of *Sarvodaya Patra* – an offering vessel for sarvodaya - was also introduced by him. He suggested that, just before cooking, the youngest child of every family should pick up a handful of grain and store it in a vessel to be donated later to the poorest of the poor in the village. This ignited the imagination of many, but it appears that the programme did not pick up as a regular and large scale activity. The nature of the extension then Vinoba conceived and attempted is easy to see. He introduced *dan*, which can be gift or donation, as the central component in the redistribution of assets, physical and others. According to him gifting what one has in excess to others in the spirit of sharing and sacrifice is the central point. While other forms like sharing of gift of wealth, time, means of production etc. are individual-centric, Gramdan is a communitarian action. Gramdan fired the imagination of many during the heyday of the movement and even attracted international attention inspiring researchers and activists to visit the sites where it was carried out and conduct on the spot study and evaluation. Hence revisiting Gramdan villages in Rajasthan, one of the most active fields of Gramdan experiment, assumes some importance.

In 1952 Vinoba entered Uttar Pradesh as part of his p*adyatra* for Bhoodan. During his visit to a village called Mangroth in Hamirpur district he reminded the people of the ancient Indian tradition of considering all land as belonging to God - s*ab bhoomi Gopal ki*. People of Mangroth absorbed this message. The Zamindar of Mangroth owned a very large part of the land in the village. He gifted his land to Vinoba. This gesture prompted other landowners to come forward, and they too donated their land. Since all land owners began to donate land this came to be called Gramdan. Thus Mangroth has the distinction of being the first Gramdan village in India. Encouraged by this Vinoba and his Sarvodaya colleagues declared in the Palani Sarvodaya Annual Conference (1956) that Bhoodan should now shift to Gramdan. Three stages were envisaged. In the first stage villages would agree to donate all their land, in the second stage the village would be declared as Gramdan village once the gift consent papers were received by the Sarvodaya Mandal, and in the third stage the village would be registered as a Gramdan village in government records. In September 1957, the Prabandh Samiti (Managing Committee) of the Sarva Seva Sangh decided that if more than 80 per cent land owners agreed to donate land and if that constituted more than 50 per cent of the total land in the village, the village will be declared a Gramdan village.

Vinoba later conceptualised the path from Bhoodan to Gramdan in the following way. In the first phase bhoodan - land gift - should

be made so that there would be no landless family left in the village. The next phase would be to reach a stage in which no land owner would be left in the village. In terms of economics Vinoba tried to assess land as a free gift from nature. He argued that as air, water etc. are gifts from God, so is land.[6] Initially Gramdan meant gift of all land within the jurisdiction of a revenue village. All land was to be gifted first and later redistributed as per the need of the families. If 80 per cent of land owners in a hamlet gifted land and the land so gifted was 50 per cent of the total village land, it was declared as a case of Gramdan. It was resolved that the stipulation that 80 per cent the people should agree includes the landless families also. Such changes in the working definition occurred and the concept of Gramdan slowly evolved into a comprehensive one.

The second and third villages donated almost all land and that happened in Manipur and Akili in Orissa in 1955. During his *padyatra* in the eastern parts of the country Vinoba further refined the concept of Gramdan and introduced *Sulabh Gramdan*. The conditions specified were the following.

1. 75 percent of the land owners in a village or a hamlet should transfer their ownership of land to the Gram Sabha.
2. The donors should gift 1/20th part of the land owned to the landless families. The Gram Sabha should redistribute the land.
3. Every family should donate one thirtieth or fortieth part of their annual income from agriculture and industry to the Gram Sabha. Gram Sabha was empowered to determine the share.
4. Income sharing was not limited to agriculturists and artisans; it was applicable to the traders, teachers and others too.

Gift of 1/20th part of the land for landless was laid down as an obligatory condition and rest were to follow. Eventually, Gram Sabha was to plan for each family so that all able bodied persons would get employment and have a source of income. This entire programme was christened as '*Sulabh Gramdan*'.

T.P. Singh (1973) has noted that in Bihar liberalised norms were incorporated and implemented. He also notes that people of Gramdan village had no right to sell or mortgage the land. In spite of such liberalised norms the land owners, especially big landowners, were unsatisfied and the Gramdan norms were further relaxed. Vinoba asked for relinquishment of one twentieth share of land and rest could be retained by the donor for heritable rights. This understanding led to evolving of Sulabh Gramdan concept. The norms for it were formalised in the 1963 Raipur conference of Sarva Seva Sangh. The owner could retain 19 parts out of 20, but could not sell

or mortgage it because Gram Sabha was the custodian of all the land in the village. However, the original owner had the right to bequeath and transfer to his kith and kin. A Village Community Fund known as *Gram Kosh* was developed wherein all producers had to contribute one fortieth of the produce after deducting land revenue. Non-land earners had to contribute one thirtieth of the income earned. The *Kosh* was to be used for taking care of the poor and the destitute, supporting education activity and renovating and establishing village industries.

It should be noted that the idea of Gramdan did catch the imagination of the people in some states. Enthusiasm was perhaps highest in Bihar. Gramdan evolved further in to *Prakhand Daan* and *Zila Daan*. In Bihar it culminated into *Bihar Daan*! But one needs to critically assess all these developments. Some analysis is attempted in the second and third sections of this paper. In terms of statistics, however, accomplishments in the Gramdan movement are not easy to establish. Therefore a variety of sources were examined. The most authentic source is the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India. But the Ministry too does not seem to have reliable data. The only source that we could tap was T.P. Singh's study (1973). It lists three types of areas namely Gram (village), Prakhand (region) and Zila (district). In Bihar 15 cases of Ziladan are recorded followed by 11 in Tamil Nadu, 8 in Uttar Pradesh and 7 in Madhya Pradesh. In Orissa two Zilas were donated and in four states only one Zila each was donated. Prakhand (cluster of blocks) donation also followed the same pattern by state. In all 1249 Prakhands were donated. A total of 1,68,056 villages were donated with more than 60,000 from Bihar followed by more than 30,000 in Tamil Nadu and 32,000 in Uttar Pradesh.

II

Gramdan in Rajasthan

The first Gramdan in Rajasthan took place on 11th February 1955 in Nagaur district. The Bhoodan coordinator Badri Prasad Swami inspired residents of Gorava village. All land owners donated their land. Senior Gandhian and Sarvodaya leader Gokulbhai Bhatt presided over a meeting in which Gram Sabha members were distributed land based on their membership. Soon the people in the village were misled by some others and the process was stopped and reversed. Nevertheless, the activity continued in other parts of Rajasthan and by the end of 1957, there were 11 villages where

Gramdan was accomplished[7].

The Gramdan Act was passed in Rajasthan in 1960. As per the Act the authorities were expected to declare the villages as Gramdan villages. In 1960, 28 villages were declared as Gramdan villages. By the end of 1963, a substantial number, 234 villages, were covered by Gramdan. However, only 65 villages were declared as Gramdan villages under the Act. The year 1964 also turned out to be a special year. In November 1964 the then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri visited Sikar, a town and the district headquarters. On the occasion, a special function was organised by the Neemka Thana Panchayat Samiti during which 88 villages offered Gramdan. It was the Prime Minister's 61st birthday. Same number of villages was gifted to him as Gramdan villages. By the end of 1964 Rajasthan reported 351 villages under Gramdan. In 1965, Gramdan activities were initiated in two new districts — Jaisalmer and Sawai Madhopur. The total Gramdan commitments increased. By the end of 1965, 543 villages made commitment for Gramdan. Of these 87 were officially declared under the Act. Subsequently, 61 Gram Sabhas were formed.

In 1966, in the annual convention of the Sarva Seva Sangh held at Gopuri, Wardha, it was decided to speed up the pace of Gramdan. Gramdan Hurricane (*Gramdan Tufaan)* was to be the approach. Subsequently the Rajasthan Sevak Sangh held its meeting in Sitabdiyara village in Bihar where Jai Prakash Narayan had settled down. In this meeting a target of 2000 Gramdan was set for Rajasthan for the year 1966. The Working Committee of the Sarva Seva Sangh met in Jamshedpur. Vinoba presided and the target for Rajasthan was confirmed. The Rajasthan Samagra Seva Sangh, a regional organisation and the Sarvodaya group in its meeting held in Ganeshpura in 1966 accepted the targets given to them and chalked out an implementation programme. Gramdan related activities were intensified in seven districts, namely Sikar, Sirohi, Jaipur, Dungarpur, Nagaur, Banswada and Chittodgadh. Selected Panchayat Samitis became active. They were Neem ka Thana, Abu Road and Revdar, Chaksu, Dudu and Jobner, Dungarpur, Makrana, Bhookia, and Chittodgadh and Begun respectively. By the end of 1966, 942 villages committed themselves for Gramdan of which 110 were officially accorded the status and 62 Gram Sabhas were formed.

It should be noted that since the organisations and people in Rajasthan showed high enthusiasm, many prominent persons encouraged the movement. Some prominent leaders also emerged from within the state Sarvodaya movement. Those who visited the state frequently included Jai Prakash Narayan, Dayanidhi Patnaik and Radhakrishna Bajaj. The state level people who actively

participated and also emerged as regional and national Sarvodaya leaders included Gokulbhai Bhatt, Siddhraj Daddha, Rameshwar Agrawal, Chitarmal Goyal, Badri Prasad Swami, Sohan Lal Modi, Yagnadatt Upadhyay, Manoharsingh Mehta and Bhogialaji Pandya. The other important landmark event was that, in 1959, Vinoba was gifted with 119 Gramdans in Dungarpur district. The Gramdan activity that started in 1955 continued for a very long time. The last Gramdan was declared on 23 October 2003. The village was Delasar in Jaisalmer district. The final tally of the Gramdan villages by district is given in Table 1 below.

Gramdan Declaration Process in Rajasthan as per the Act

Village people obtain the Jamabandhi from the Tehsil office and village residents and land owners fill up the declaration forms. Gramdan Board scrutinises them and forwards it to the District Collector. The revenue officers scrutinise the claims further and verify. Of the total revenue land 50 per cent has to be declared as donated, and land owners and landless labourers should account for 75 per cent of the total number of people. With this basic requirement fulfilled, the scrutinised and verified matter is readied for publication. It is then published in the Gazetteer. The effective ownership is not disturbed in case of donors.

After the declaration in the Gazetteer, the village is declared as a Gramdan village. As per the Act the Board facilitates the election of Executive and the President in the Gram Sabha. The number of members in the Executive is determined by the Gram Sabha, but it should not be less than five. Selection is made either by consensus or by two thirds majority decision. The district development authorities and the Panchayat Samitis consider the development plan requests from the Gramdan villages on priority basis.

Special Features of a Gramdan Village

In Gramdan, participation is a key factor. Since the property is deemed to be common, its management is envisaged to be done by Gram Sabha of which each adult village resident is a member. The Gram Sabha idea did not materialise in the country as a whole until the constitutional amendments were introduced in 1993. It appears that the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution have drawn on the provisions that have been made to govern the Gramdan villages. Some specific features of the Gramdan villages are given below.

- All land of the villages donated and other than the one owned and operated by individuals including revenue land, uncultivated land,

Table-1 : Distribution of Officially Declared Gramdan Villages in Rajasthan

Sr. No.	District	Number of Gramdan Villages					
		1960-70	1971-80	1981-90	1991-2000	2001-05	All
1.	Chittodgadh	7	-	-	-	-	7
2.	Jaipur	22	-	-	-	-	22
3.	Tonk	1	1	-	-	-	2
4.	Dungarpur	41	-	-	-	-	41
5.	Nagaur	7	3	-	-	-	10
6.	Banswada	12	19	7	1	-	39
7.	Bhilwada	2	1	1	-	-	4
8.	Sikar	36	-	-	-	-	36
9.	Sirohi	16	4	-	-	-	20
10.	Udaipur	-	4	-	-	-	4
11.	Jaisalmer	-	-	15	1	2	18
12.	Baran	-	-	2	-	-	2
13.	**All**	**144**	**32**	**25**	**2**	**2**	**205**

Source: Rajasthan Gramdan Board Records

grazing land, land used for community purposes etc. is under the governance of the Gram Sabha for the purpose of use and redistribution. In the revenue villages governance rights continue to be vested with the Revenue Department.

- In Gramdan villages the Bhoodan land is also governed and distributed by the Gram Sabha. The ownership and use rights are awarded to Bhoodan holders by the Gram Sabha. 1/20th of the land of the donors is distributed among the landless.
- Complete land records are transferred to the Gram Sabha by the Tehsildar. The Patwari has no role in revenue administration. All functions relating to revenue collection, land transfers, name transfers, collection of land revenue, collection of water charges etc. become the responsibility of the Gram Sabha.
- Rights to settle disputes related to land distribution also vest with the Gram Sabha. The Bhoodan Gramdan Board is the appellate authority in case of non- acceptance of the Gram Sabha judgements.
- The Gram Sabha is vested with right to cultivate and distribute the produce thereof.
- The Gram Sabha collects 1/40th of income of every individual annually to meet the development and relief related expenditure assessed by it through planning processes.
- Land distributed by the Gram Sabha is legally owned and operated by the recipient and the asset is bankable.

Distinction between Revenue and Gramdan Villages

Provisions in the Gramdan Act in Rajasthan, and perhaps in other states too, reflect the willingness of the government to recognise the Gramdan villages as special units and the governments have tried to make them decentralised governance units. Their status is obviously better than the revenue villages. Some of the distinctions are the following.

- Gram Sabha has all the rights that the Panchayats have.
- Gramdan village gets representation in the Panchayat. Gramdan villages also get grants for development work.
- Gram Sabha can distribute the revenue waste land for a period of three years to the landless.
- The President and the Executive Committee of the Gram Sabha are elected once in three years either by consensus or by 2/3rd majority.
- Gram Sabha prepares amends and maintains its own voters list.
- Any part of the village, *Dhani* (hamlet in Rajasthan) or settlement upon total agreement can be declared as Gramdan unit and it can assume a separate identity. In case of a unit containing more than 100 persons, it can be declared as a separate revenue village.
- Gram Sabha can register as a primary cooperative society and function as one.

- The office bearers of the Gram Sabha have legal status and all privileges under the Indian Penal Code Clause 21.
- The Judgements delivered by the Gram Sabha cannot be challenged in higher revenue or judicial system.
- Gram Sabha can formulate rules and sub rules for its smooth governance.

Functions of Gram Sabha in Gramdan Village

Gram Sabha has to:

- Ensure that no able bodied person is without work and no family is without land.
- Develop best grazing land for preserving and maintaining best animal breeds.
- Undertake tree plantation as per the needs of the village and grow a good village forest.
- Promote cooperative farming among the Bhoodan land recipients and arrange for bullocks, implements and irrigation facilities.
- Strive for all round development of the village including setting up of the cottage and village industries, organising banking facilities to set up industrial units, agriculture and land improvement, plan and implement the schemes and programmes promoted and supported by the Khadi and Village Industries Commission, district development authorities and other development organisations.
- Set Shanti Dal for peace and organise and set up institutions for education, health and welfare.
- Set up a *Gram Kosh*, a village Fund, to collect money from people and use it for development work in the village and also use it for leveraging funds from other sources for the village work or for the work of individuals/groups.
- Collect dues on its own as stipulated under the Rajasthan Land Revenue Act clause 229. Under the same provision it can request the Tehsildar office to recover dues legally if it fails to do so.

It may be seen from the account above that the Rajasthan Gramdan Act was devised with sound intentions to view the Gramdan village units as decentralised units that could govern people and resources in a village and achieve all round socio-economic development autonomously. How much of this could be achieved in the Gramdan villages would be explored in the case studies. But before closing this sub section the situation that arose after the 73rd and 74th Amendments were introduced is briefly discussed[8].

As is known, the 73rd Amendment provided considerable autonomy to the Gram Panchayats for governance and development of the villages. Each state government was supposed to formulate

and pass state specific amendments to facilitate devolution of governance functions and finance. The Rajasthan government did not deliberate in depth on the proposed Panchayat provisions and the provisions it had made in the Gramdan Act. May be under the pressure to bring uniformity in the decentralised structure, the Rajasthan state's provision for the Panchayat amendment quashed section 43 of the Gramdan Act by which all the development functions and autonomy were devolved to the Gram Sabha. With this the identity of the Gramdan village has come to an end. This change has been contested by the Rajsthan Samagra Sevak Sangh and it has also approached the courts besides making a plea to the Governor. It appears that the apex courts, that is the high court of the state and the supreme court of India, have upheld the contention of the appeal that Rajasthan Government's Gramdan Act 1971 is valid and all the functions can be performed by the Gram Sabha even after the 73rd amendment. However, the Rajasthan government has not yet restored section 43 of the Gramdan Act.

There is another specific issue that deserves mention at this stage. Its deeper implications will be discussed later in the next section. In Jaipur district some villages that had undergone Gramdan, over time, came under the Jaipur Urban Development Authority. This has happened as the population has grown in most cities in the country and the horizontal expansion has led to urbanisation of the villages adjacent to the cities. In and around Jaipur 8 villages are affected in this way. A Deputy Secretary of the Revenue Department of the Government of Rajasthan has written to the Rajasthan Gramdan Board Chairperson seeking his opinion and objections about the proposed conversion of the Gramdan villages back as regular revenue villages. Unless this conversion is made effective land transactions cannot be legally implemented. Presently, the Board has registered objection and protest stating that the Gram Sabhas in these villages have not been heard. There appears to be a stalemate at present, but the problem has to be resolved in some way.

There are two other minor yet important developments that deserve mention in this context. The Rajasthan Government through an amendment in August 2007 has introduced simple majority as the criterion for election in place of consensus or 2/3rds majority as was the provision initially. This has turned the Gramdan villages into a normal village as far as political arrangement for governance is concerned. The second point is about the reconstitution of the Bhoodan–Gramdan Board. The term of the Board Chairperson and the members expired on December 13, 2004. It has not been reconstituted. Rajasthan Samagra Seva Sangh views this as *mala fide*.

Since the Board does not exist, all the decisions and working of the Gramdan are stalled.

<center>**III**</center>

A Review of Selected Gramdan Villages

It has been observed that, compared to many other states that participated in the Bhoodan-Gramdan movement in the country, Rajasthan did relatively well. Although a large number of villages came up with commitment, only 218 could complete the formalities to be declared as Gramdan villages. This is not a small number. In a study of the kind which is being pursued here it is not possible to review the situation in all Gramdan villages. It was decided to take up three villages for a detailed review. Of the twelve districts that report Gramdan villages, Dungarpur ranks first and Banswada ranks second, the rank being shared by Bhilwada and Sirohi as well. One village each from Dungarpur and Banswada has been selected because they are also districts with high proportion of tribal population. The third village selected is from Jaipur district and the reason for selection is its proximity to the capital city of Jaipur. It must be stated at the outset that all the three villages have been visited only once and that too for a short duration - a day each. The present picture is rather sketchy and analysis has its obvious limitations. The three villages selected and reported are Raghunathpura in Dungarpur, Sundrav in Banswada and Badh Mahavatan in Jaipur.

Raghunathpura, Dungarpur

It is considered to be one of the best Gramdan villages. It is inhabited mainly by tribal population of Bhils. Located about 25 km. away from the Dungarpur district headquarters, its population at present is about 850. Known Sarvodaya worker Bhogilal Pandya worked with the village people here. He worked for social reforms too. He persuaded the Bhil leaders in the village then to come together and join the Gramdan movement. Interestingly, in Dungarpur there were no large landholders or Zamindars. Most tribal families held relatively small pieces of land. But there was abject poverty, social backwardness, superstitions, addiction of various kinds and illiteracy. Pandya worked relentlessly on all these fronts and it appears that he was able to convince people in Raghunathpura to convert their village into a Gramdan village. His efforts were rewarded and on July 5, 1962 Raghunathpura was declared as a Gramdan village.

Reportedly, there was a kind of metamorphosis after the Gramdan.

The Gram Sabha became a serious body. With the passage of time the village became addiction free. This is no mean achievement considering that culturally the Bhils brew and use intoxicating drinks. People apparently also gave up drinking tea. Literacy levels improved substantially. Women started getting literate. Khadi and village industry units were set up. There were Charkhas in most houses. Decision making was participatory and inclusive. Conflicts and disputes were settled by the Gram Sabha and recourse to Police and Court was hardly observed. The Gram Sabha used money to build roads, schools and wells. Houses were constructed under Indira Awas Yojna. *Gram Kosh* was set up and the funds were collected and used well. The Sabha also set up Grain Bank or *Anaj Kosh* to ensure food security for the village.

All was well until 1990. In 1991-92 a serious irregularity was reported in construction of a small bridge. Stones bought for the works were sold away. Two or three youth were involved in this illegal deal. It was learnt that they had become regular migrant labourers and went to Gujarat. It was alleged that their exposure to the smart world in the neighbouring state might have prompted them to commit fraud on the village work. This set in the rot. In 1993 section 43 was quashed from the Gramdan Act and hence the Gram Sabha lost its control over resources. It became dependent on Panchayat and its politics pushed Sabha's priorities behind.

After three years of addiction free environment, addiction has surfaced again in the village. To a large extent exposure of the youth to other areas and Rajasthan Government's excise policy are responsible for this, according to the village elders. There has been further erosion on other fronts. The *Gram Kosh* and *Anaj Kosh* have disappeared. *Charkhas* have been almost totally discarded.

Migration appears to be one of the main reasons for the decay. Youth migrate to Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. They have also brought HIV to the village. The only consolation is that all children go to school. Agriculture is still rain fed but people supplement it with employment in service sector. It appears that Raghunathpura has slipped back into the status of a revenue village.

Sundrav, Banswada

Sundrav is a historical village that was originally inhabited by two brothers belonging to a Rajput Clan in the first decade of the sixteenth century. Sundrav today is a village in Bhukhia block. Vinoba had visited Bhukhia during his *padyatra* and had named the village as Andanpuri. Partapur Gadhi that comes next in size was also a centre of the Bhoodan activity. Sundrav is located 41 km away from Partapur.

It was inhabited initially by Bhil. Later Thoris who manufactured flour mill with stones came and settled. Similarly, Garasia and Damor families also came and settled. The village has 351 hectares of land. The population is around 1200. Agriculture was mainly rain fed, but in the last seven years irrigation water from the Mahi river project has been made available.

The village people were also influenced by the Gramdan idea that was spread by the Sarvodaya workers such as Gokulbhai Bhatt and others. Sundrav was declared as a Gramdan village on 25th April 1961. The present status of the village appears to be very healthy. The relationship with Panchayat Samiti appears to be very good. There is a Gram Sabha Bhavan, Primary and secondary school, a Primary Health sub centre where a nurse stays. It is not connected to other parts through all weather roads. One has to walk for two kilometres to board a bus. Literacy level is high. There are ten teachers in the village. One person from the village works as a District Education Officer.

The only notable thing that people reported about the Chairman of the Gram Sabha was that one of them had facilitated digging of wells during drought years. 113 wells were dug and there is water today in all of them. Other activities relating to Gram Sabha were not reported. *Gram Kosh* and *Anaj Kosh* were set up, but at present they are not functioning.

Badh Mahavataan, Jaipur

Badh Mahavataan is located 4 kilometres North East of Chaksu which is the block headquarters. The village history suggests that the fields in the village were used to graze horses and elephants of the Jaipur Palace. This is one of the villages which joined the Gramdan status relatively late. It was declared as Gramdan village on 25 May 1969. It is a small village with a population of about 300. All the families are agriculturists and belong to Bairva community which is a Scheduled Caste. The total area of the village is 7244 hectares of which 6.12 is grazing land. A tank has been constructed with the help of CASA, a mission organisation about 18 years back.

Gangaram was the first Chairperson of the Gram Sabha. He was followed by Nathulal. He was a satsangi – a devout. He introduced a community prayer programme in the village known as *Kirtan-Bhajan* and it became a regular feature. This activity helped in checking the incidence of addiction in the village. Even today the village people practice strict vegetarianism and there is a *Bhajan Mandali.* During the time when Anopchand was Chairperson, rooms in the school building were added. Wells were dug under the Jeevandhara

programme and houses for landless and poor were built under the Indira Awas Yojna. He was succeeded by Prataplal who facilitated construction of public well and repaired the roads. Interestingly, the Gram Sabha building was constructed during the Chairpersonship of Shyojiram, although section 43 of the Gramdan had been repealed by then!

In 1981, a devastating flood damaged the settlement badly. Kumarpaa Gram Swaraj Sansthan, a Jaipur based Sarvodaya organisation supported the Gram Sabha to build new wells, deepen old wells, level land and rear buffalos. The agency also organised women and a Mahila Mandal has been formed. Currently, Prabhunarayan Bairva is the Chairman of the Gram Sabha. But due to the repealing of section 43, the financial control is with Chhoturam Bairva who is the Sarpanch of Chhandol Gram Panchayat. The development fund is now devolved to the Panchayat.

An interesting feature with respect to land ownership is that the average holding is almost same with all holders. People are able to reap two harvests, one in Kharif and the second in Rabi. Tractor and TV were also found in the village. In recent past there have been problems with irrigation. Both canal and well sources have dried up. There is a school and enrolment and attendance were reportedly good. Proportion of girl children in school was half. After Gramdan there were three types of funds *Gram Kosh*, *Anaj Kosh* and *Mahila Kosh.* Currently, *Anaj Kosh* has been discontinued. The other two are managed relatively well.

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IV

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From Gramdan to Gram Swaraj

In Rajasthan, enthusiasm and efforts for Bhoodan and Gramdan have been noteworthy. It was so because committed and great social workers who were also freedom fighters took the lead in organizing the activities. Vinoba received very good response to his call for Bhoodan and his padyatra was very successful. A political leader and committed Gandhian activist Mohan Lal Sukhadia supported Gramdan and acquired one lakh acres of land under Bhoodan. By 1954, two lakh hectares of land had been gifted in Bhoodan. There was an urgency to transfer the gifted land to landless and the Rajasthan Bhoodan Act known as *Rajasthan Bhoodan Yagna Adhiniyam, 1954* came into existence. A Bhoodan Yagna Board was constituted with the consent of Vinoba. A committed Gandhian Gokulbhai Bhatt became the first President and Purnachandra Jain was the first

Secretary. In 1960, the Gramdan Act was enacted. The Gramdan activity picked up after this Act. A set of amendments were made in the Gramdan Act in 1971. The Act was in force until 1993 when section 43 was repealed. The Gramdan Act based governance has been in crisis since then. There is a need to review the situation in this context too.

It has been noted that although there were a large number of villages that committed to join the Gramdan only 218 could be declared as they alone could complete the legal formalities involved. It may be inferred from this that the initial enthusiasm among people in the villages prompted by the committed social workers could not be sustained and the follow up work was nominal. Nevertheless, the Gramdan Act insulated the villages covered under the Act from other influences. The Act does not recognise private ownership of land by individuals in Gramdan villages. The occupant has a right to cultivate, but cannot sell. The ownership of land is deemed common. Gram Sabha's decisions are final.

The present case studies do not attempt to map the benefits or limitations of community ownership. It would call for land distribution data and changes therein to comment on the implementation and impact of the provisions. Other provisions relating to setting up of funds for the village development appear to have worked in favour of villages. Although scanty evidence comes out of the three villages, it may be said that before the 73rd amendments were made Gramdan villages had a distinct advantage over the revenue villages with respect to preparation of their own village development plan and implement them with financial resources. It was observed that in two villages, Badh Mahavataan and Raghunathpura, the Gram Sabha was able to improve the village infrastructure and developed the production potential. Gramdan model should be seen as a precursor to the provisions made under the 73rd Amendment with respect to Panchayati Raj administration. But there has been another fall out of the Amendment. The Rajasthan government has not been able to see the need for continued devolution of financial powers to the Gramdan villages under section 43 of the Gramdan Act. In fact, there appears to be ill considered judgement to repeal the section that provided financial powers to the Gram Sabha. It appears that the government has viewed that, with 73rd Amendment, Panchayats would perform similar functions as the Gram Sabha did under the Gramdan Act and hence the duplication need to be removed.

It is clear that the government did not give adequate thought to repealing section 43 from the Gramdan Act. While it is true that under 73rd Amendment Panchayats have financial powers, the unit for

decision making is not co-terminus with the Gramdan villages. In this process the autonomy which the Gramdan villages enjoyed in planning their own development has been lost. All Gramdan villages have by this repeal of section 43 have become part of revenue village. This obviously reflects lack of insight and vision on the part of the government. It could have continued with the provision of financial power to the Gramdan villages and used these units for comparing the performance of the Panchayat villages and the Gramdan villages. This opportunity has been lost. More than fifteen years have lapsed after the new Panchayat system came into existence and it would be difficult to make any distinction between the two types of villages now.

The only characteristic that Gramdan villages have perhaps retained is the community ownership of land. There is a need to examine whether the productivity in agriculture and allied sectors has been different in Gramdan villages compared to the revenue villages given comparable infrastructure, physical capital in the form implements and technology. The case studies have not been able to probe this aspect properly, but it needs to be attempted. However, even here the pressure exerted by the mainstream appears formidable. As noted earlier, Gramdan villages located in the proximity of the cities have experienced a very rapid and high upward valuation of the land. Since the right to sell is not vested with the occupants of the land, land markets have become non-operative. The stakes are very high and it should be noted that even the state Cabinet had met twice to bring amendment in the Gramdan Act to facilitate sale of land by the occupants. The issue for consideration is whether this is the only way out or the Gram Sabha can come out with an alternative where it has right to sell and use the proceeds to invest in generating livelihood for the Gram Sabha members. The Rajasthan Samagra Sevak Samaj has registered a protest with the Governor resisting amendment leading to facilitation of sale of land. The argument is that it is against the basic philosophy of Gramdan. In the days and times when the Act was drawn the clause for not selling was valid. In the new situation, some people argue, there has to be a rethinking especially for the villages that are now facing the urbanisation pressure.

Let us turn attention towards the movement of Gramdan villages to Gram Swaraj. On the production front other than redistributing land to landless and promoting common ownership of land, Gramdan villages do not appear to have made any significant headway in planning production and consumption in the village following the principles of Gram Swaraj. The glimpses that we have been able to capture tell that for facilitating production the Gram Sabhas have

also used the mainstream sources such as developing irrigation facility, building roads, schools, houses etc. Some efforts appear to have been made to promote non-farm employment initially through setting up khadi and village industry schemes. But they were all short-lived. An opportunity to develop these Gramdan villages into a model village appears to have been lost. The Board with the help of the Sarvodaya workers could have made a serious attempt to work in the direction of *Swapta Swavlamban* – concept promoted by Vinoba. This definitely has not been attempted.

In the initial phase a positive feature in the Gramdan villages was efforts of the social workers to influence people to get rid of addictions and other social ills. The village records show that in two of the three villages the workers were successful although in Dungarpur the liquor addiction has resurfaced. It can be argued with some confidence that Gramdan villages offered better scope for reducing social ills and promoting literacy and awareness among the population. The state should have drawn positive lessons from this and replicated the efforts in other villages also. In Gramdan villages this aspect definitely moved the village towards Gram Swaraj.

The ultimate goal of the Gram Swaraj through Gramdan is to move towards formation of *Ahimsak Samaj.* What picture do the villages surveyed present in this regard? As long as the land ownership is not privatised and the right to alienate is not granted, there is some non-violence in individual's relation with land. It is used with respect and peace. The production relation to this extent is non-violent. But if the technologies and other inputs that are used are going to destroy the basic potential of the land as a factor of production, it is violent use of the resource. It is obvious that Gramdan villages have not taken care of this aspect seriously.

Cooperation does not seem to be the basic operative principal in organising production. The Gramdan villages studied do not reflect any feature where a total plan for the village using the physical resources and workers has been so organised so as to lead towards a non-violent production system with inter individual and individual-nature cooperation. Gramdan village under the Act in Rajasthan had an opportunity to work towards a model village. The Gramdan experiment has hardly been able to move towards Gram Swaraj in a meaningful way; movement towards *Ahimsak Samaj* appears a very distant dream.

Notes and References

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7. T.P. Singh , *Bhoodan and Gramdan in Orissa: An Analytical Study* (Varanasi: Sarva Seva Sangh, 1973)
8. T.P. Singh, *op. cit.*
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Defining and Interpreting Non-Violent Political Revolutions

Antonino Drago

ABSTRACT

In order to develop a new method for defining and interpreting the many decisive revolutions that occurred in 20th Century, I construct a theoretical framework by more accurately defining two notions introduced by Galtung, i.e. the triangle A-B-C, representing the structure of a conflict, and the four models of development (MoDvs). A revolution is seen as a change in the MoDv, more than a change in State Constitution. Since a MoDv is rationalised by a person through three representations (the motivational one, the objective one and the subjective one, three aspects corresponding to Galtung's celebrated A-B-C), the notion of a revolution is represented through these three representations. The paper also distinguishes three different aspects of a revolution, i.e. the statics, the kinematics and the dynamics.

I. *Introduction:*

IN THE 20TH CENTURY a great number of decisive revolutions occurred, more than three hundred in number.[1] Beyond the decolonization revolutions, a lot of states in the world underwent revolutions and changed. Altogether these revolutions constituted a decisive historical wave that changed the face of the political world. Around one hundred of these have been non-violent revolutions (NVRs). In particular, the most important NVRs occurred in the year 1989; these ones made redundant the super power agreement in Yalta in 1945, which divided all peoples of the earth in inflexible "zones of influence".

In the past the historical methods suggested for interpreting these revolutions did not achieve a certain degree of consensus even in the interpretation of the French revolution.[2] The new revolutions have

been promoted and successfully led by movements that adopted non-violence; this has led to the relative stability of the democratic regimes that subsequently came to power.[3] But even the most celebrated NVR, i.e. the Gandhian revolution in India, lacks a commonly accepted interpretation. Although in recent times the non-violent movements have become capable of taking on highly oppressive regimes, the political theory informing such actions still does not offer a convincing interpretation of NVRs.[4]

In my opinion, a first hint in offering a credible explanation was suggested by M. Nagler. He translated in political terms those celebrated categories by which Kuhn interpreted the scientific revolutions that occurred in the history of science.[5] Nagler forecasts the paradigm change that mankind has to perform in order to establish peace in the world.[6] But this successful application may appear as a fortuitous or improper result, which was obtained by ingenuity. Hence, in order to offer a convincing interpretation of NVRs, it is necessary to work within a formal, theoretical framework; in other words, within a structural theory of non-violence.

In order to achieve this kind of theoretical framework, in section 2, I will suggest more accurate definitions of Galtung's two notions, i.e. the triangle A-B-C, which represents the structure of a conflict, and the Model of Development (MoDv); my revision of these notions leads to a general theoretical framework qualifying non-violent politics.[7] In section 3, I will define both a revolution and a NVR by means of the notion of a MoDv. In sect. 4, I will start to illustrate a method for interpreting a NVR. A NVR will be presented as a conflict between two social groups who represent two MoDvs. In correspondence to Galtung's A-B-C, three kinds of representations of an actor's viewpoint on a MoDv are possible – i.e., effective or motivational, objective and subjective. In section 5, these representations will be further subdivided according to an external viewpoint which distinguishes three aspects - i.e. the static, the kinematics and the dynamics - of a social event. We will obtain nine basic categories, which are appropriate for comprehending the complex event of a NVR. In sections 5, 6 and 7 their conceptual contents will be elaborated; In addition, the suitable academic disciplines for studying the subjects belonging to each of the nine categories will be listed. In section 8 this interpretative framework will be synthesised by translating into political terms some celebrated interpretative frameworks of traumatic events such as Fornari's framework for interpreting psycho-analytic trauma, Kuhn's idea of scientific revolutions and Koyré's construct on the revolutionary birth of modern science. In section 9, I will briefly apply the entire

interpretative apparatus to the Indian revolution in Gandhi's time. I will conclude with some general remarks on the import of the illustrated theorisation on NVRs.

2. A new theoretical framework for non-violent politics

Among the several political viewpoints advanced by peace movements in the last century, the case for non-violent political action is, in my opinion, the most sharply defined. In the history of the teachers of non-violence, Tolstoy, and then Gandhi and Martin L. King jr. intended non-violence as an improvement of ethical, *subjective* motivations, leading each person to be responsible about the implications of his actions inside the society. Subsequently, G. Sharp accomplished a Herculean effort for analysing, according to an *objective* viewpoint, all past experiences of non-violent actions; he came up with a comprehensive description of two hundred techniques applied in the past in the name of non-violence.[8] Galtung introduced *structural* notions; in particular, the definition of a conflict as an A-B-C and the notion of four MoDvs, as they are obtained by two dichotomic variables.[9] But Galtung did not link together his above-mentioned notions; instead, he made use of the notion of a MoDv in a loose way, without referring it to the two basic variables. Hence, the structural level of non-violent theory was not apparent to people, that is why they were more attracted towards Sharp's view - stressing the objective techniques only -, as the more refined theory of non-violence[10].

In order to achieve a more accurately defined theoretical framework, first of all, I will suggest more accurate definitions of Galtung's notions. I start from his idea of representing a conflict through its three mutually interacting elements A, B and C.[11] He made use of inaccurate definitions, placing the whole idea inside a merely subjective realm.[12] Galtung defined the contents of vertex B of his triangle as the "manifest, empirical, observed level" of the "Behaviour" or "Facts" of the conflict. In my opinion, B corresponds to the *objective* element of a conflict. Galtung puts the "Assumptions... attitudes…" as the content of the vertex A; as for me, A represents the *motivational* element. In the vertex C Galtung puts the notion of "Contradiction", which in my opinion characterises the *subjective* element of a conflict. By summarizing, I reformulate his definition of a conflict by means of three elements, the *motivational, or effective element* (A), the *objective element* (B) and the *subjective element* (C).[13]

Moreover, Galtung missed a crucial point; namely, which actor the A-B-C triangle refers to. The two opponents have different, if not mutually divergent, assumptions, A. The same holds true for B;

indeed, the behaviours of the two opponents surely are not the same.[14] Moreover, it is apparent that each opponent suffers his own "contradiction" C. In order to obtain a well-defined theory of a conflict it is necessary, in my opinion, to consider for each opponent different contents in the three elements. As a consequence, the three elements A, B and C are multiplied by the two opponents; a slightly complex theory results (a synthesis is presented by a table in next section).

A further crucial innovation Galtung was to synthesise the motivations A by following *two dichotomic options*[15]- "Either vertical interpersonal relationships or horizontal relationships"; "Either individual diversity or collective homogeneity". But these definitions make use of no more than subjective or interpersonal terms.

In order to define them in terms of the structural aspects of a social conflict[16], let us consider first the two opposite ways of organising the economy of a society. Since two centuries, Western politics included two polarities, i.e. "freedom for the more capable people" (the rightists) and "justice for all" (the leftists). We see that Galtung's former dichotomic option - "Either vertical interpersonal relationships or horizontal relationships" –, when considered in structural terms, corresponds to the option on *the kind of organization of a society* – i.e. either an *authoritarian organisation* (AO), working through laws emanated by the most capable men, left free to act at their best; or an *organisation*, aimed at collectively looking for a new method capable of solving a given general *problem* (justice) (PO). The history of three centuries of parliamentary life in the world shows that it is impossible to unite in the same society these two kinds of organisation.

Now let us consider the case of national defence. It is well-known that a basic motivation of the military attitude is to entrust the conflict to the experts and science, which increases Army's military destructive capability by ever increasing arms' race. Instead, the basic motivation of the non-violent attitude is to improve as much as possible the personal relationships among the population, in order to achieve the strongest solidarity. Here we have an instance of *two different kinds of social development or social improvement*; either an *absolutist*, mythical *increase* (AI), or an *increase* of the inter*personal* relationships (PI).

The same structural dichotomic option can be seen in the area of energy planning; it is the dichotomic option of whether to go for nuclear power or solar power (or, more precisely, nuclear source of energy or renewable sources of energy); whereas the former one relies upon improving the excellence of professional works, the latter one relies upon improving the relationships in communitarian life

and even with Nature. Notice that the motivation for improving social solidarity is incompatible with the motivation for pursuing arms race; and *vice versa*. This option on the social increase generalises Galtung's dichotomic option - "Either individual diversity or collective homogeneity".

In the past, the latter option was ignored by the worker's movement and its theorists. It was manifested by Gandhi's movement for Indian liberation. Then, the choice for an alternative to the social increase was a specific feature of non-violent politics. Later, both the ecological movement and the anti-globalisation movement joined this politics aimed to plan an alternative to Western progress.

On these two dichotomic options four pairs of choices are possible. A pair of choices gives rise to a model of development (MoDv); by construction, it includes all aspects, those ranging from the subjective ones to the cultural and structural ones; hence, it is a global notion, comprehensive and inclusive of all aspects of personal life and social life.[17]
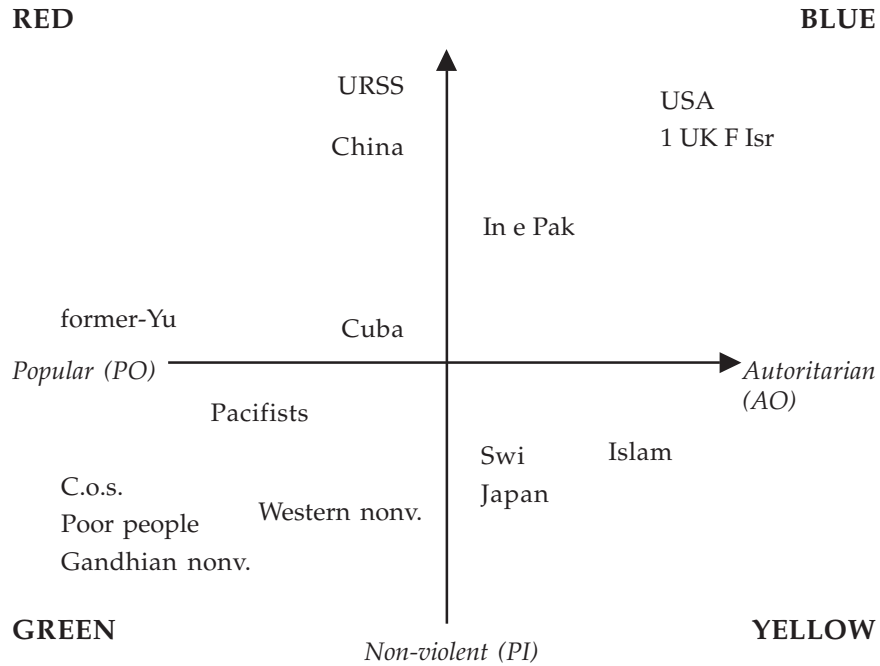
Let us illustrate these two dichotomic options in geometrical terms. The former option, on the kind of society organisation, is represented by an axis, whose extreme points denote the two traditional political polarities. The latter option on the kind of social development, being independent from the former one, may be represented by one more axis which cuts transversally the previous axis. By making reference to a specific kind of social development, such as defence development, we obtain the figure below. Each State or movement is distributed in the four quadrants according to the MoDvs which it belongs to. Galtung baptised the four MoDvs by means of colours; blue: USA; red: USSR; yellow: Islam; green: Gandhian movements.

As an effect of the dichotomic nature of each option, a subjective notion which is shared by two MoDvs – e.g., peace, defence, order, brotherhood, etc. –, undergoes a radical variation in its meaning. E.g., whereas in the blue MODv "peace" means *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, in the green MoDv it means the peaceful solutions for all conflicts. The most radical variation in meaning occurs in the word "non-violence", because in this case the same logic is different; being a double negation (of course, "violence" is a negation of life) which is not equivalent to the corresponding affirmative word (e.g. love, benevolence, charity, smoothness, etc.), the law "Two negations affirm" fails; hence, this word belongs to non-classical logic, namely to an entirely different logical world. [18]

Owing to both the antithetical nature of the two choices on each option and the radical variations in meanings of the common basic notions, two different MoDvs are mutually "incommensurable".[19]

*Fig. 1: Distribution of the main Countries, populations and
social movements according to the four models of development*

RED   **BLUE**

```
                              ↑
                   URSS              USA
                                     1 UK F Isr
                   China

                              In e Pak

    former-Yu        Cuba
Popular (PO) ─────────────────────────────►  Autoritarian
                                                  (AO)
              Pacifists
                              Swi      Islam
    C.o.s.                    Japan
    Poor people    Western nonv.
    Gandhian nonv.
                              │
```

GREEN   **YELLOW**

                     Non-violent (PI)

Abbreviations: Isr = Israel; GB = Great Britain; F = France; In = India; Pak =
Pakistan; former-Yu = former-Yugoslavia; Swi = Switzerland; C.o.s =
conscientious obiectors; Western nonv. = Western non-violent people;
Gandhian nonv. = Gandhian non-violent people.
N.B. Actually all the locations in the figure are wide areas, with blurred
boundaries. The location of a Country takes into account the consensus
reached by its population about its defence policy.

Since conflicts are rooted in reality as well as in our minds, the
separations among the different MoDvs are effective; hence, the unity
among them has to be gained by a specific work. For example, in
order to have a dialogue, two persons belonging to different MoDvs
– say, a military general and a conscientious objector - have to cleverly
translate their basic notions.

As a consequence, we obtained a theoretical framework which is
essentially a conflictual one. The above theoretical framework includes
as a particular case Marx' theory of class conflict, which is obtained
by making dummy the option on the kind of development, and
moreover by reducing the option on the kind of the social organisation
as a determinant of economic organisation only. Although it was based

on an alternative concerning one option only, this theory inspired the great East-West confrontation which dominated international affairs before 1989.

For the survival of political life it is necessary to have a non-violent political theory, aimed to solve conflicts without destroying the opponent; this theory is offered by the green MoDv, which, by conceiving the political life according to fig. 1, supports political pluralism.

The above representation of the political life (fig.1) became apparent since the year 1989. Although even at present the green MoDv is represented by no state (not even by India),[20] in 1989 the non-violent MoDv did reach a critical mass in Eastern Europe. After 1989 the politics of Islamic countries looked for a self-reliant political development incompatible with the Western one. With their politics subordinated to religion, which in turn is subordinated to great authorities (AO), this MoDv came to represent the yellow one.

Consequently, a new type of global politics began. Owing to the collapse of the red MoDv represented by the USSR, the East/West confrontation disappeared; rather, the new US politics of globalisation brought the North – South divisions into sharp focus. Among the two MoDvs of the South, the green MoDv, represented by no state, was ignored by the dominant blue MoDv, which identified the yellow MoDv represented by the Islamic States as its violent opponent. Thus, the blue MoDv was able to transform its confrontation with the South into one with the yellow MoDv; and it rationalised this confrontation as "a clash of two civilisations", where the "civilisation" is a broad category pertaining to mainly the subjective realm.[21]

3. A new definition of a non-violent political revolution

In the following I will follow Weber's suggestion to introduce, as interpretative categories of social phenomena, some ideal-types, which are defined through the main characteristic features of the social phenomena which they refer to.[22]

The notion of four MoDvs suggests a definition of a political revolution which is more accurate, although more radical, than the usual one, which refers to a change in State Constitution.

I define *a political revolution as a people's struggle for changing MoDv.*[23] I call such a social transformation a "change of a political paradigm". In fig. 1 a revolution is represented by a segment, crossing over at least one axis.

Notice that a revolution may be undertaken, against more than a single state, against even a world power by a global movement. In fact, in the year 1989 a great number of people in Eastern Europe

challenged the domination enshrined in the Yalta Treaty. Moreover, in February 2003 the global protest against the "goodwill alliance" that led to engagement in Iraq was in the line of a revolution. Seen from this perspective, the global struggles by movements which did not choose a change of their MoDvs such as the student movement in the 60s and the feminist movement do not qualify as revolutions .

By ignoring the notion of a MoDv, past political scholars of revolutions referred them to the national conflicts between the population and the state. Moreover, given that the green MoDv not represented by any state, the successful NVRs of the 20th century have all been guided by ideas counter to the traditional political theories.

Since the traditional political theories ignore the option on the kind of social increase, no surprise if they have been unable to understand the revolutions occurring along the corresponding vertical axis in fig. 1.[24] In fact, these theories take in account the revolutions occurring on the horizontal axis only. The most important instance of them was the communist Russian revolution, which have been considered by the Western political system as the highest threat and which in fact generated for several decades a "cold war" between East and West.

Instead, a people struggle wanting to change no more than Constitution – for instance, the introduction of national referenda -, or some laws - e.g. the movement led by M.L. King's -, is no more than a rebellion, an insurgence, a revolt, an insurrection. *Vice versa*, a strong people's struggle is not justified by the program of a mere change in the State administration, without a change of the MoDv; in such a case, people either ignore their power with respect to the historical problems they are living, or they release their power in a blind way. In fact, in the political history of Europe the revolutions born in 17th Century's England and in 18th Century's France and USA, occurred when their respective people perceived that a change of the MoDv, more than a State, was possible; and this target was pursued, without being aware of it. Marx' theory enhanced this perception by qualifying it as the choice of the red MoDv; so that the more accurate program for a revolution was shared by a great part of the population. The dominant political theories attribute the main political role to the State, i.e. the aggressed institution, rather than to the people movement, which actually is the promoting actor of such event. In such a way they tended to include in the same notion of a "State" disparate structures of social power; i.e. the absolutist monarchy of Louis XIV, the modern Western State (e.g. England), the federative State (Swiss, USA), the communist Party-State (USSR), the Islamic

State. Furthermore, they attribute a subordinated role to the deep motivations leading the people to a harsh struggle with respect to the state interest to assure its survival. By under evaluating people's political viewpoint, they define a revolution in the reductive terms of *a radical transition in the State*[25]. It is not surprising that current interpretations distort of French revolution, socialist revolutions and Islamic revolutions, all originated from, and decisively conducted by people movements. Moreover, these partial interpretations misunderstand as more violent than they really were the revolutions, because the State fears that the people's initiatives question and then possibly destroy its monopoly of the violence[26].

In an even more reduced sense revolutions are defined by the rightist political theories, as those social struggles which subvert the ordinary political life of a Parliament. Hence, these theorists hastily consider these struggles as illegal phenomena, arising from a backward attitude of people, unrecognising the social achievements already obtained by the Western juridical development.

In recent times the political sciences focussed its attention on the "good" revolutions, each defined as the "transition" from a dictatorship of a whatsoever kind, to a formal democracy. According to the four MoDvs, the initial political situation of this transition, i.e. a dictatorship, represents an extreme version of the basic choice AO of either the blue MoDv (Fascism, Nazism), or the yellow MoDv (theocracy), or even the red MoDv (inasmuch as it imposes the proletariat's dictatorship, although its claimed choice is PO). The final situation of this transition, i.e. the formal democracy of human rights plus free political elections, is commonly identified by these theorists with the typical political life of the blue MoDv; which truly originated these institutions as the social expressions of liberal democracy; but, its formal version may be included by the current political life of every MoDv[27]. Hence, this notion of a State transition is a very broad one; it merely severs dictatorships from all different regimes.

Notice that the theoretical scheme of fig. 1, by relying upon the incommensurability between two different MoDvs, involves in much more radical changes in the actors than mere changes in their interests or their basic needs; it includes traumatic changes of their basic motivations with respect to both the political context and the personal context. During a revolution, the personal motivations have first of all to solve the two following problems, i.e. to accept or not threats to one's own life or to kill or not kill others persons. A change in these motivations constitutes a conversion process; it may occur in each participant in the revolutionary process, even in the mind of the dictator (although desirable, his conversion is not an essential step

for the success of a revolution, which essentially is a collective historical process).

Let us now define a non-violent revolution according to the non-violent political theory, which considers the people as a more important political actor than a State: *A non-violent revolution is a people's struggle (no matter how long in time), which is carried out through non-violent techniques and which is aimed at moving from an oppressive MoDv and embracing the green MoDv.*[28] In fig. 1 this kind of revolution is represented by a segment which, by crossing over at least one axis, enters into the quadrant of the green MoDv.

Two events of the 20th Century seem to fulfil this definition of NVR, i.e., Gandhi's movement for Indian liberation and the World liberations accomplished by the Eastern European countries in 1989. Indeed, both movements made use of non-violent techniques only; both succeeded in freeing themselves from an oppressive MoDv - respectively, the blue MoDv of the British empire and proletariat's dictatorships of the red MoDv; these MoDv actually were the paradigms for World colonialism and the communist regime respectively; both revolutionary movements wanted to achieve a MoDv envisaged in agreement with their non-violent actions (although subsequent governments chose the blue MoDv). These give evidence for the plausibility of both the above definition and the above-illustrated theoretical scheme.

4. The three representations of a NVR: Effective, subjective and objective

Let us now focus the attention on NVR. For simplicity's sake, a NVR is assumed to be a confrontation between *two political actors* only, whose choices belong to two different MoDvs. Since the green MoDv lacks both representative States and State institutions, all NVRs were promoted by a grassroots movement challenging an oppressive government which defended itself by means of military power. Hence, these two political actors have respectively the choices PI&PO and AI&AO. According to them, the actors apply two different models of conflict resolution, which are more clear in their resolutions of the extreme conflict of national defence: *the non-violent model,* and *the military model,* which is a true paradigm in conflict resolution, owing to its strong cultural influence on past society.[29]

The table below summarizes the main features of these two models of conflict resolution; however the table articulates these models in their three representations of the conflict as they are conceived by an actor; they detail Galtung's three elements A-B-C.[30]

In the following these two models for a national defence will be

Table-1: *THE TWO MAIN MODELS OF CONFLICT RESOLUTION*

	A **EFFECTIVE** **Representation** (the options shaping the solution)	**C** **SUBJECTIVE** **Representation** (intuitive ideas for the (subjective thinking)	**B** **OBJECTIVE** **Representation** (what textbooks present)
Military MoCR (the dominant = a paradigm)	Abstract Increase in weapons **(AI)** Authoritative Organization **(AO)**	Scientific strategy, security strength, to be first, authority, hierarchy, deterrence, enemy, traitor, "Scientific security	Destructive tools Compulsory behavior Analytical mind Hierarchical society Classical logic (either *A* or *not-A*)
Non-violent MoCR	Increase of the Personal relations **(PI)** Organization for solving a universal Problem by means of a solidarity movement **(PO)**	Brotherhood, empathy, equality, community, co-operation, non-violence, pluralism, democracy, "Democratization of defense and extinguishing of violence"	Non-violent techniques Human people's rights Community, co-operation Holistic mind Dialectical logic (*not-not-A* is not equivalent to *A*)

Legenda: MoCR = Model of Conflict Resolution

applied to the case of a revolution, although in the latter case the weapons are bounded to little more than the personal weapons and moreover the image of the "enemy" is not so sharp as in the case of national defence.[31]

5. The effective representation. The three aspects of a NVR: Static, kinematics and dynamics

An NVR, being a complex phenomenon to be studied in an interdisciplinary way, we have to take into account more than what is perceived by that actor's viewpoint. A theory is obtained by adding what is essentially perceived from an outside viewpoint. Without getting involved in an epistemological discussion on this point, we will choose the kind of theoretical structure which is more common in both natural and historical sciences; it is three-fold - static, kinematics and dynamics.[32] By crossing them with the three representations of the personal viewpoint one obtains 9 categories as constituting a comprehensive viewpoint on a NVR[33].

Now we start to describe the categories interpreting that complex social event which is a NVR.

Under the light of the three representations of a model of conflict resolution (see Table no. 1), we recognise that we have already introduced the effective representation of a NVR by introducing the two basic choices of a MoDvs and providing a definition of an NVR.[34] This representation of an NVR is improved by illustrating the motivations of each of the two parties; in particular, to what extent these motivations are rooted both in the personal lives (through the cultural and religious aspects) and in the institutions (through mainly the economico-ecological, juridical and defence social structures). In order to perform a comprehensive illustration one has to apply several disciplines – Psychology, Anthropology, Economy, Sociology – in mutual collaboration. However, we recognise that all are *static* in nature.

In order to describe a *kinematics* of this effective representation, we have to consider the evolution which people may undergo with respect to the two basic options; that is, all potential changes of MoDv (in fig. 1 they are represented by all possible segments crossing over at least one axis for approaching the green MoDv). A specific notion concerning such evolutions is "strategy", which here is defined as the planned path to carry out a change of MoDv.[35]

In the same effective representation, the *dynamics* of an NVR consists in mainly describing the change of MoDv by means of the temporal sequence of the social actions which determined the history of a revolution. In other terms, this representation consists in a

sociological illustration of that opponents' interaction which leads, time after time, to change the basic choices either in agreement or in disagreement with actors' strategies.[36] This illustration has therefore to describe who causes changes in the MoDv, through which actions, by whom these actions have been performed, when the change occurred. Moreover, it has to answer the two following questions: Was the movement committed to choosing non-violent means only? Did this result in a stable change?

History and Political sciences are the main disciplines describing both the kinematics and the dynamics of the changes in the basic choices. But in studying this dynamics a scholar meets a hard problem pertaining to the historical method; a scholar has to investigate this event by following a lot of divergent hypotheses, each relying upon at least two documents. Yet, a non-violent process involves in a decisive way inner variables which cannot always be testified by written documents; for instance, when a non-violent viewpoint evaluates a victory as obtained by a change in the personal choices of the oppressors, i.e. by a true conversion (as, for instance, was maybe the abrupt decision by the British Empire to grant freedom to Indian people). Owing to the lack of documents, often a non-violent dynamics is easily misinterpreted or even ignored by academic disciplines.

6. The objective representation of a non-violent revolution

Let us now consider the categories pertaining to the two more representations of the conflict constituted by a NVR, namely the subjective one and the objective one. To this aim, we add first the **objective** representation of a NVR, as detailed according to static, kinematics and dynamics.

There exists a well-known *objective* representation of the *static* of a revolution; it is given by an accredited discipline, which illustrates the objective features of the actors, i.e. Sociology. Its more relevant notion is "the balance of power", obtained by calculating the sum of the gross tools of military, economicand bureaucratic which each actor disposes of.[37] The sociological illustration of a revolution is the easiest one; moreover, it constitutes a useful support for all possible kinds of interpretations of this historical event; but it alone suggests no more than a mechanistic explanation, which is inadequate to explain a NVR (remember for instance, the leftist interpretation of French Revolution as caused by food scarcity). Instead, being an essentially non-mechanist phenomenon, an NVR is better described by Anthropology, since this discipline illustrates human relationships inside communities, for instance human rights; namely, what is the main concern of a method of analysing NVRs?

In the objective representation the *kinematic aspect* deals with the actions each political actor conjectures to do in the future. It includes the rules of common behaviour; whereas a non-violent movement constructs them through a consensual process, an oppressive State imposes them through hierarchical organisation. It includes also the notion of *tactics*; i.e. a planning, by starting from a given situation, the list of nested actions to be accomplished in a short-term perspective.

Let us now consider the third aspect, *the dynamic* of the objective representation. Of course, it includes a chronology of the main events. Moreover, it illustrates the different techniques elicited by each of the two actors during the interaction among the political actors, their sequence and their joined effects.

7. The subjective representation of a non-violent revolution:

Let us now complete the presentation of the categories by adding those of the **subjective** representation; which is the more elusive one, since it pertains to the interior realm; but it is also the most suggestive one. This representation is studied mainly by going beyond History, Anthropology and Psychology.

In order to describe the *static* description of the *subjective* representation of a revolution let us remember that the incommensurability of the two MoDvs relies upon mainly the logic; the green MoDv makes use of a different way of thinking – through double negated statements belonging to non-classical logic. That implies that the green movement suggests exclusive slogans which are specific to that situation (e.g. "No more dictatorships!"), and even a different language. This description includes also the psychological elements, i.e. the interpretations of the collective experiences of each participant, the collective perceptions of the opposing powers, the subjective evaluation of the opportunities as well as the hindrances, the collective traumas. The above elements may join personal choices and social relationships, so as to exhibit his own will and targets through static manifestations, which however influence the culture of the opponent; i.e. to show off symbols, to passively resist, to declare himself a conscientious objector, to do civil disobedience etc.

In the subjective representation the *kinematics* aspect includes imagination, desires, prayers and all personal forecasts on the revolutionary process; we read them on the diaries of the participants in the revolutionary process. Some specific notions provide hints on the evolution of the confrontation, e.g., "process of peace", "mediation talks"; "to knock down", "agreement"; even the notion of "enemy" , for the future behaviour of a military person; the same holds true for

the word "brother" in a non-violent person. The subjective terms one can list for each political actor is almost innumerable. In Table 1 the two statements between commas summarise them for the two actors respectively. These subjective ideas furnish to the social group the guidelines for inventing (inside the objective representation) a tactic. Moreover, to the interaction of the two opponents belong the ideas of the both dialogue and diplomacy, as promoting the means to an agreement. The kinematics of subjective representation is studied by the theory of conflicts.

In the same subjective representation, the *dynamic* is illustrated by a list of subjective phenomena, which may heavily influence both behaviours and motivations of the two opponents; *i*) the changing image of the opponent and his social power during the revolution; *ii*) the appraisals on the influence of chance and causality on the sequence of the events; *iii*) the psychological consequences of shocking events caused by the actions elicited by both collective actors.[38] This subjective dynamics is so effective that when the revolution is successful, it changes the meanings of the basic notions constituting the culture of a people, e.g. freedom, justice, cooperation, efficiency (e.g., after the year 1989 "the fall of a wall" is commonly intended as a positive fact, instead of a perilous event).[39] The dynamics of the subjective representation of past NVRs is studied by History assisted by Psychology.

8. Interpreting a non-violent revolution through subjective categories of a synthetic kind

Although a complete account of a NVR has to include both the effective representation and the objective representation of it, one has to remember that each historical interpretation is evaluated at last at a subjective level; indeed, the facts and the situations pertaining to a complex historical event such as a NVR are innumerable; a synthesis of all in a closed formula is possible at the subjective level only; it is this formula which is received by a reading of the historical account. To this aim the historian translates in the subjective representation each notion of both objective and effective representations; for example, the subjective notion of "powerful" translates as the superiority of an actor in the objective balance of power with his opponent; or the qualification of "progressive" attributed to an actor translates as a subjective term, the motivation to follow the Western kind of development.

Hence, each of a great number of notions related to the subjective dynamics, e.g. "struggle for justice", or "freedom", or "*liberté, fraternité, égalité*", may suggest a vivid illustration of the dramatic events of a

revolution. The large number of subjective notions makes difficult to choose, in a general way, the best ones to be promoted to interpret a revolution. However, from previous scholars who studied traumatic events we will obtain three qualified suggestions for interpreting an NVR in a synthetic way.

Psycho-analysis F. Fornari studied the development of a child, during the first months of life, through the two subjective mottos: "*Mors tua, vita mea*" (Your death, my life) and "*Vita tua, vita mea*" (Your life, my life).[40] The first sentence is the first answer by a child to the bad image of his mother, the second sentence expresses his apt attitude to overcome the crisis. Through them Fornari characterised the respective attitudes of two conflicting persons - a military man and a conscientious objector. By seeing these persons as the representatives of the Blue MoCR and the Green one respectively, we recognise that the above mottos are highly suggestive for a synthetic interpretation of an NVR. Unfortunately, they are so synthetic to suggest little more than the respective basic attitudes of the two opponents.

Instead a detailed representation of an NVR may be obtained by translating into political terms T.S. Kuhn's conceptual framework for interpreting a scientific revolution. According to this author, for a long time, for the most part, scientists produced new scientific results by applying the same paradigm. In this thinking science gradually progresses by accumulating ever more solved problems and experimental truths. But this evolution is interrupted by a *crisis*, occurring when the application of the paradigm to a particular case-study leads to a sequence of unsuccessful results. This case-study is called an *anomaly*, which gives rise to a *scientific revolution*, troubling the received version on the foundations of science. The revolution ends when a change of paradigm occurs; i.e. when the minds of all scientists jump, in a parallel way to a *Gestalt* phenomenon, to a new perception of the reality.[41]

First Nagler translated this interpretative framework to social sciences; his aim was to illustrate the hoped revolution which will establish on the Earth a history of Peace.[42] The old paradigm for achieving peace is the military-nuclear one (*Si vis pacem para [nucleare] bellum*). But since Hiroshima's and Nagasaki's devastations, people became increasingly aware of an anomaly; i.e. the above paradigm want to achieve peace by threatening a nuclear Armageddon, destroying at the same time the defender and the aggressor, which is absurd. This anomaly started in the traditional military paradigm of national defence during a period of crisis. The consequent political revolution will end through a change of a *Gestalt* kind, leading people

to conceive the solutions of the usual conflicts in a radically different way from the destructive solutions suggested by the old paradigm. Fortunately, this new conception is already known; it is the non-violent one, which may solve conflicts without destroying the opponent; Gandhi taught it and successfully applied it.

It is easy to apply this interpretative framework (which relies upon six basic notions only; i.e. normal course, paradigm, anomaly, period of crisis, revolution, *Gestalt*) to an NVRs, which (likely to a *Gestalt* phenomenon) does not destroy population (the basic inputs to the eyes) but only the institutions (both visions and notions). Owing to these two features, remarkably, this interpretative framework apply to NVRs only.

One more synthetic subjective representation of an NVR is suggested by the interpretative framework of the great historian of science, A. Koyré. He summarised the revolutionary birth of modern science by means of two "characteristic processes".[43] By analogy, I suggested the following two points characterising the guidelines of the dominant MoDv of Tab. 1, i.e. the blue MoDv:[44]

Organizing national security (AO) in a scientific way (AI) and suppressing (not PO) both individual passions and grassroots movements (not PI).

This represents the attitude supported by the Blue MoDv. In contrast , the second constitutes the green MoDv whose guidelines are characterised by the following two points.

Organising people (PO) for just defence of people's values (PI) and stressing the absurdity (not AO) of science- assisted violence (not AI).

I summarize the entire above theoretical apparatus by means of Table 2. Its 9 cases show the theoretical complexity of an adequate interpretation of an NVR; this interpretation requires an interdisciplinary work, connecting History, Political Sciences, Sociology, Anthropology, Strategic sciences, Psychology, and Conflict Theory. In the above table the contents of each case suggest which disciplines pertain to which ; moreover, the table assigns, by its structure, a specific role to the discipline of each case.

Notice that traditional political theory reduces table 1 to the last column only, i.e. the objective representation, plus some diplomatic work, which pertains to the kinematical subjective case. As a verification, let us consider two instances of this kind of reduction. Usually, the military personnel choose to illustrate a conflict through its objective representation only, because this representation refers to the material elements, which are easily understood by people; whereas, the same representation in the non-violent model of conflict resolution concerns no more than the human relationships, which seem an elusive subject for people. Moreover, let us recall the

Table-2:
THE CONCEPTUAL TOOLS FOR INTERPRETING AN NVR

	Effective R.	*Subjective R.*	*Objective R.*
Statics	The revolution as a change of MoDv	Kind of logic. Slogans. Cultural aspects. All omissive acts	Figures about the organisation and aims of each of the two actors
Kinematics	Strategies of change of MoDv	Dialog and diplomacy. Forecasts	Non-violent political interaction. Tactics
Dynamics	Evolution of the basic choices by both people and State	The subjective notions synthesising the dynamics: dialog, process of peace, etc. Synthetic interpretations à *la:* Fornari, Kuhn, Koryé)	Social techniques of actors' interactions

interpretation suggested by current political theories, and then spread by mass media, on the events of the year 1989: "The fall of Berlin wall". These words, by referring to a material object only, belong to the last column; they ignore the actors (the people), the immaterial subjects of the fall (the mystified communist ideology, and, even more, the Yalta partition of the World population) and the new political motivation shared by the struggling people of all these countries (non-violence). These two example prove that with respect to the traditional political tradition, the culture of the non-violent conflict resolution, by adding all the subjects listed in the first two columns, constitutes a new, wider comprehension of the decisive events in mankind's history.[45]

9. A cursory application to India's non-violent liberation from the British Empire

In order to verify the above illustrated theoretical apparatus for interpreting an NVR, let us apply it to the Indian non-violent liberation from British Empire. I choose this case-study because it is well-known to a wider public, and also because it marks the birth of mass non-violence in the history of World politics. Furthermore, the political appraisal on this revolution is highly controversial. On one hand, according to the opponents of non-violence, this revolution was atypical, being determined if not by chance, by both a British tolerant attitude and a backwardness of India of that time. On the other hand, the supporters of non-violence see it as the first political great success. But, whereas some non-violent theorists see India's revolution as an exemplary revolution in the history of non-violent politics, other non-violent theorists see it as a revolution which was too dependent one on both the religion and the charisma of Gandhi, who moreover had in fact some personal wavering, and the movement too.[46]

For brevity' sake I present an interpretation of this revolution, rather than in a detailed way, by specifying the contents of all cases of the previous table for representing the viewpoint of the Indian movement (whereas the viewpoint of the British Empire is well-known, since it pertains to the traditional politics).

I add *the three synthetic interpretations of the Indian NVR*. Surely, Fornari' slogans "*Mors tua, vita mea*" and "*Vita tua, vita mea*" apply well to the two basic attitudes of the colonialist British Empire and the Gandhian followers respectively, as illustrated by the celebrated dialogue in *Hind Swaraj*[48].

Moreover, we recognise as a political *paradigm* (British Rule) the colonialist British empire, extending itself on the entire World. In 1930 this paradigm underwent a crisis, caused by an *anomaly*; i.e. the

Table-3:
THE CONCEPTUAL TOOLS FOR INTERPRETING THE INDIAN NVR

	Effective R.	*Subjective R.*	*Objective R.*
Statics	Exit from an extreme Blue MoDv(AO and AI) in order to begin the Green MoDv (PO and PI)	Non-classical logic. Non-violence Renewal of the Indian culture (*Kadhi*, spinwheel, villages civilization vs. Western civilisation). Civil disobedience. Boycott. To be imprisoned	Representative figures of the organisation and aims of each of the two actors; Communitarian solidarity's power vs. force's power
Kinematics	The strategy for reaching a new MoDv: Gandhi's constructive program	Forecasts on decolonization and self-reliance London diplomacy	Tactics An ethical politics, instead of a pragmatic policy
Dynamics	Processes of progressive self-reliance and interiorising the non-violent basic choices	The subjective notions synthesising the dynamics: Psychological images and appraisals, traumas, etc.[47] Synthetic interpretations à *la:* Fornari, Kuhn, Koyré	New social techniques of non-violent kind.

government was unable to apply force for repressing the mass rebellion which was generated everywhere in India by Gandhi's struggle against the salt law, imposed by the British administration. This fact started a non-violent *revolution*, which continued through a number of Indian actions destabilizing the British power; i.e. the general mobilization of the Indian people, Gandhi's meetings in London, the political pressures by the Congress Party, the further non-violent actions launched by Gandhi through the Campaign *Quit India!* in the years of WW2. The crisis of British colonisation ended when, after World War Two, a *Gestalt phenomenon* led the British administration to recognize that, on one hand, Indians' rebellion made this colony excessively costly in both political and military terms; on the other hand, Indian people had become a politically mature society. Hence, in 1947 the British Empire granted independence to India. On their side, Indians, being faithful to non-violence, underwent a *Gestalt* change in their vision of British people; they celebrated the first day of national independence together with the representatives of the British Empire; their adversaries had become their friends.

Let us now apply the interpretation *à la* Koyré. For our purposes it is enough to observe that the two above couples of sentences roughly apply to the Indian NVR.

10. Conclusion

In the history of last Century, non-violent political theory, which links together the subjective aspects and the structural aspects, had as its first challenge to lead people to face all political events by means of non-violent personal techniques only and to show that it is possible to win in such a way. The long series of past NVRs shows that this challenge is won.

As a second challenge, it had to interpret the main historical events of political life by means of a new theoretical apparatus. The present paper suggests a theoretical apparatus which answers such a challenge, also by exploiting previous celebrated efforts for comprehending traumatic events, even in the most authoritative field of human knowledge, i.e. science.

Remarkably, the categories of this apparatus qualify an NVR as an ideal-type of revolution with respect to all the different kinds of revolution; in particular, the violent ones; which here appear as immature or mislead.[19]

In retrospect, we see that past political scholars attempted to define revolutions without reference to the MoDv they upheld. The first scholar that theorised a revolution according to what at present we call the red MoDv, Marx, received greater authority than, as the

1989 events proved, what he merited. On their part, people, being unable to rationalise the true target of their revolutions, i.e. the change in the MoDv, supported the red revolution, although hoping to achieve either the yellow MoDv or the green MoDv. The exit out of this monopoly on the theory on revolutionary events by the red MoDv started just a century ago, when Gandhi wrote the little book *Hind Swaraj*, theorising as an alternative to the Western civilisation (actually the blue MoDv) an improvement of the Indian civilisation (actually, the green MoDv). Then Indian people applied his guidelines in a successful NVR, which was an example for a great number of the subsequent NVRs of the 20th century. The present paper proves that by reflecting on this exemplary revolution as a Weberian ideal-type one can exit out the theoretical paradigm of the past political theory of considering exclusively violent revolutions and bring in the MoDv as a new category to understand NVRs.

Acknowledgement

Notes and References

1. Adrian Karatnycky and Peter Ackerman, *How Freedom Is Won. From Civil Resistance to a Stable Democracy* (New York: Freedom House, 2005). Mary J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth: "Why Civil Resistance Works", *International Security*, 35 (2008), pp. 7-44. I prefer to call "non-violent revolution" what in the Anglo-Saxon culture is called "civile resistance"; this term seems to me appropriate to the old episodes of people resistance under Nazi's occupations in Norway 1944 and Denmark 1944-45 and in Czechoslovakia 1968, but not in India liberation from British Empire, Iran liberation 1979 and the following non-violent people liberations.

2. Jeff Goldstone, "Theories of revolutions: The third Generation", *World Politics*, 32 (1980), pp. 425-453; "Towards a fourth generation of revolutionary theory", *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4 (2001), pp. 139-187.

3. Adrian Karatnycky and Peter Ackerman, *How Freedom Is Won*, op. cit., p. 7-9; Mary J. Stephan and Erica Chenoweth, "Why…", op. cit., table 1, p. 21.

4. A recent international conference brought together the most prominent experts to ponder NVRs: *Civil Resistance and Power Politics*, St. Anthony College, Oxford, 15-18 March 2007 (the proceedings are edited by Adam Roberts and Timothy G. Ash (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 2009)). As a preparation, a set of 20 questions

was submitted to both the participants and the guest speakers; these questions tried to exhaust all the issues of the subject. But apparently they represent no more than an attempt to circumscribe the subject. Moreover, neither the organizer group, nor any of the guest speakers suggested a general interpretative framework. In my opinion, the more theoretical suggestions have been presented by Peter Ackerman, Mark Beissenger, Judith M. Brown, Tim R. Davies, Konrad Jarausch.

5. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of the Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: Chicago U. P. 1969).

6. Michael Nagler, "Peace as a Paradigm-shift", *Bull. Atomic Sci.*, 37, December 1981, p. 23-35.

7. For a more detailed illustration of this framework, see my paper, "The birth of a non-violent political theory", *Gandhi Marg*, 29 (Oct.-Dec. 2007), pp. 275-295.

8. Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Non-Violent Action. Vol. II* (Boston: Sargent, 1979).

9. Johan Galtung, "Social structure and Science Structure", in *Ideology and Methodology*, (Copenhaven: Eijlers, 1976), pp. 13-40, 247-251; *Peace by peaceful means* (London: Pluto Press, 1996); "Peace by peaceful conflict transformation. The TRANSCEND approach", in *Handbook of Peace Studies*, Johan Galtung and Charles Webel eds., (London: Routledge, 2007),pp. 14-32.

10. Thomas Weber: "Non-violence is Who? Gandhi and Gene Sharp", *Peace & Change*, **28** (2003), pp. 250-280.

11. Johan Galtung, *Peace by peaceful means*, *op. cit.*, §. 2.1.2; "Peace by peaceful conflict transformation….", *op. cit.*, 14-32. Incidentally, let us notice that with respect to Sharp's view of a conflict, Galtung's innovation was to introduce the *motivational* element of a conflict and then to put it on the same par of the objective one.

12. Moreover, Galtung did not maintain a constant view about his A-B-C; in the same book (*Peace by peaceful means, op.cit.*) he emphasized a separation between B, representing the manifest element of a conflict, and both A and C, representing the latent elements of a conflict. But this move may collapse his structural notion in a dualistic notion of a subjective kind.

13. As a verification of its validity, this theoretical framework successfully interprets the three great conflict: Freud's theory of psychoanalysis, Marx' theory of social struggle and Clausewitz' theory of strategy. Notice that these theories concern all types of conflicts – internal conflicts, structural social conflicts and mass conflicts. A. Drago, "The birth…", *op. cit.*, 278-282.

14. In the aim to obviate a crude interpretation of a social conflict, Galtung studies it by introducing a number of triangles A-B-C, of an even different nature (deep, superficial, violent, non-violent, cultural, etc.); but all they represent an outside viewpoint only with respect to the conflict at issue.

15. Johan Galtung, *Ideology and Methodology*, *op. cit.*.

16. My professional work as historian of Sciences independently obtained two similar, dichotomic options by improving past historical analyses – mainly Alexander Koyré's one (*From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (Baltimore: U. Maryland P., 1959)) and Thomas S. Kuhn's one (*The Structure of the Scientific Theories*, op. cit) - of the conflicts among scientific theories; see my book *Le due opzioni* (Molfetta BA: La Meridiana, 1991) or „A Gandhian Criticism to Modern Science", *Gandhi Marg*, 31 (no. 2, 2009), pp. 261-276). These scientific dichotomic options suggested to me the best definitions of the structural dichotomic options in political sciences.

17. This notion was introduced first by Lanza del Vasto, *Les Quatre Fléaux* (1959) (Monaco: Le Rocher, 1993): ch. IV, par. 60, and then clarified by Johan Galtung, *Ideology and Methodology*, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-40, 247-251; *There are Alternatives!* (London: Pluto Press, 1983); he baptised it as "a Model of Development".

18. Jean-Baptste Grize, "Logique" in *Logique et connaissance scientifique*, Éncyclopédie de la Pléiade, Jean Piaget ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 135-288, pp. 206-210; Michael Dummett, *Elements of Intuitionism* (Oxford: Claredon, 1977), pp. 17-26; Dirk van Dalen, "Intuitionistic Logic" in *Handbook of Philosophical Logic*, Dov Gabbey and Franz Guenthner eds. (Dordrecht: Reidel, 2002): vol. II, 35.

19. Both notions of incommensurability and radical variation in meaning have been introduced by Thomas S. Kuhn, *The structure of scientific revolutions,* op. cit., ch. 9. See: M. A. Khalidi: "Incommensurability", W.H. Newton-Smith (ed.): *Blackwell Companion to Philosophy. A Companion to the Philosophy of Science,* (Blackwell, London, 2001), pp. 172-180.

20. At present non-violent movements did not achieve a definition of a green State. Moreover, no present State in the World includes a non-violent institution (one may conceive in such a sense a Civilian service aimed to a national defence, a non-violent Army, an alternative national market, a national Peace research institute addressed in a non-violent direction, etc.). This lack of non-violent institutions is the main reason why present States disregard as ineffective the non-violent movements; moreover, it is the main reason why in political life the political elites usually divert non-violent struggles to either different political aims or to a compromiser results.

21. Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

22. Max Weber (*The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of the Western Capitalism*, 1905; also in internet http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/weber/cover.html). The notion of ideal-type suggests an interesting parallelism between the conflict theory and the theory of the impact of bodies (see my paper: "When the history of Physics teaches non-violence: The shock of bodies as a metaphor of conflict

resolution", *Nonviolence and Spirituality* (n. 3, 1996), pp. 15-22. Wallis and Newton suggested an ideal-type; it was a so perfectly hard body, that, just likely to a macho attitude, preserves its shape in all kinds of impact; shortly, it makes violence to all other bodies. Instead, Leibniz, in order to parallel the clever interpersonal relationships, suggested the ideal-type of an elastic body. Although persisting along two centuries, the former ideal-type was superseded by the latter one. The parallelism leads to consider the military attitude (corresponding to the hard body) is to be superseded by the non-violent one (corresponding to the elastic body). Notice that Sharp's interpretation of a non-violent dynamics, relies on the notion of *jiu-jitsu* (*The theory of Non-Violent Action*, *vol. III: The Dynamics of Non-Violent Action*, op. cit., which is close to the notion of elasticity of a body. The same holds true for the notions of "resilience" and leverage" in K. Schock, *Unarmed Insurrecions. People Power Movments in Non-Democracies* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press, 2005), pp.140-142.

23. In particular, the ideal type of a NVR refers to a fully aware people (that is, in Hegelian terms, a non-violent people *in sich*); it excludes an instrumentalized people (as it occurred in Lenin's revolution) or a people which merely carry out the 198 non-violent techniques which have been listed by Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Non-Violent Action. Vol. II: The Methods of Non-Violent Action, op. cit.*.

24. An attempt of improving of this political view is to refer to a broadly defined notion of "institutions", which may include also the typical institutions of development, although development is a more widespread phenomenon in the society than a single institution.

25. See for instance, Jeff Goodwin's definition of a revolution: "Any and all instances in which a State or a political regime is overthrown and thereby transformed by a popular movement in an irregular, extraconstitutional and/or violent fashion" (*No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2001), p. 5.

26. It is the political view of Adrian Karatnycky and PeterAckerman, *How Freedom Is Won*, *op. cit.*.

27. This point was proved by the recent "Arab revolutions", which sought to achieve (suitable) democracy in Islamic countries.

28. Actually, it is hard to conceive a revolution wanting to achieve the green MoDv by means of violent tools; but for clarity's sake it is useful to add this qualification; because the lack of violent tools constitutes a first evidence for the choice of the green MoDv, a choice which is more difficult to be objectively measured. See my paper: "A paradigm-shift in conflict resolution: War and peace from a history of science viewpoint, P. Koller, H. Puhl (eds.): *Current Issues in Political Philosophy. 19th Int. Wittgenstein Symposium*, Kirchberg, 1996, 106-114, and *La Difesa popolare non-violenta. Premesse teoriche, principi politici e nuovi scenari* (Turin: EGA, 2006), ch. 3.

29. The well-known prisoner's dilemma represents the conflict of almost the same attitudes, there qualified in subjective terms only; that is, a pessimistic attitude vs. a cooperative attitude. Anatol Rapoport, *Strategy and Consciousness* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

30. A. Drago: "The birth of a non-violent political theory", *op. cit.*. These representations may be alternatively characterized as the realms of respectively choices, notions, measurements.

31. A more detailed analysis distinguishes the *scenario* in which a revolution occurs, that is the framework synthesising the political situation, including both the main cause of the conflict and the main political actors. This framework may be a dictatorship, a domination by a foreign State, a colonization, an aggression by foreign countries.

32. This tripartite structure resembles Galtung's "Nature-Culture-Structure" (see "Peace by peaceful conflict transformation. The TRANSCEND approach", *op. cit.*). They mainly differ in their third aspects.

33. Their number is intermediate between the 3 Galtung's categories A-B-C and the 27 categories he deploys in "Peace by peaceful conflict transformation. The TRANSCEND approach", *op. cit.*

34. It gives a description which is similar to what Galtung calls the "diagnosis" of a conflict. Some my papers applied no more than the above illustrated categories for interpreting three study-cases of revolutions: French Revolution ("La scienza e la rivoluzione francese. La rivoluzione francese e la scienza", in *Atti del X Congr. Naz. Storia Fisica*, Fabio Bevilacqua ed. (Cagliari, 1989): 111-127), Italian Resistance (1943-1945) ("L'interpretazione delle Quattro giornate di Napoli secondo due opzioni", in *Mezzogiorno 1943. La scelta, la lotta, la speranza*, Gloria Chianese ed. **(**Napoli: ESI, 1995): 383-408), World political change in the year 1989 (*Difesa popolare non-violenta, op. cit.*, sect.s 7.1-7.2; "The birth of nonviolence as a political theory", *op. cit.*).

35. Galtung calls it the "prognosis" of a conflict.

36. The strategy to be applied to a NVR is called by Galtung a "therapy" of the conflict. To Galtung's tripartited similitude between a conflict resolution and health's care – diagnosis, prognosis and therapy - I prefer the above tripartite notion - static, kinematics and dynamic - for several reasons; *i*) a therapy implicitly assumes one external actor who applies it to the conflicting actors; this hypothesis may be improper in several case-studies, mainly when both actors are self-reliant; *ii*) Galtung does not specify who is the physician applying this therapy; surely not a historian, who cannot apply any therapy to past events, apart from the therapy of the history of the "as if…"; *iii*) a theorist has to represent the viewpoints of each of the opponents within a conflict; instead both diagnosis and therapy see the interactions only of the two different actors; *iv*) my tripartite notion is suggested by the consolidated theoretical experience

cumulated by the natural sciences, in particular the well-known Newtonian theory of mechanics; *v*) moreover, it qualifies the common attitude to naively describe a phenomenon by means of three corresponding viewpoints, i.e. before, after and during the event, respectively corresponding to static, kinematics and dynamics.

37.   In Table 1 each of the main aspects of an objective representation may originate what is called a "revolution" in a much more weak sense than the previous ones. For instance, it is commonly stated that the birth of nuclear weapons constituted a "revolution" in both the international scene and in the relationships between a State and its population. Alco the introduction of the word "non-violence", together with its non-classical logic, evenly started a "revolution" in the way of conceiving conflicts according to an opposite viewpoint.

38.   In describing NVRs Sharp's basic innovation was to appeal to the dynamic notion of *jiu-jitsu*. It essentially relies on psychological factors; therefore, it belongs to the subjective representation. But it pertains also to the motivational representation, because *jiu-jitsu* may change the basic attitude of the aggressor. Unfortunately, Sharp never qualified this dynamics in detail, apart to give mere descriptions of its successes or failures, positive or negative effects, etc. (see *Waging Nonviolent struggle* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 2005) ch. 32). I suggest to interpret this notion as connected to the taboos acting in each human being. Even an oppressor is unable to overcome some psychological limits pertaining to his inner culture, owing to their blocking power on human behaviours. Hence, a taboo pertains not only to subjective representation, but it also works as a negative motivation inside the effective representation. As such, it ought to be added into the effective representation.

39.   Each of these notions suggests a very weaker meaning of the word "revolution".

40.   Franco Fornari, *Psychoanalysis of War* (1966) (New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974).

41.   A *Gestalt* may be defined in the following way. While the eyes perceive the same visual stimulus, the mind may see two different figures, but each one at a different moment; the mind jumps from one figure to the other one, and *viceversa*. An example of this phenomenon is the vision of the well-known drawing of two opposed face profiles; the same drawing is also seen, but at a different moment, as a goblet.

42.   Michael Nagler, "Peace as a Paradigm-shift", op. cit.

43.   Alexander Koyré, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe, op, cit.*. The two sentences are the following: "*Dissolution of the finite Cosmos and geometrization of space*". Notice that their notions are of a subjective kind (e.g., "geometrization", not the objective word "geometry"). An accurate scrutiny of them (see my paper: "The

several categories suggested for the "new historiography of science": An interpretative analysis from a foundational viewpoint", *Epistemologia*, 24 (2001), pp. 48-82 shows that the first sentence translates in subjective terms the two positive choices of the Newtonian paradigm, respectively for the absolutist increase constituted by the actual infinity (*AI*) belonging to the mathematics of infinitesimal analysis, and for the organization based upon axioms from which all scientific laws are drawn (*AO*); whereas the second sentence translates the rejection ("dissolution" is a negative word about the organisation) of the ancient scientific organization which was based on the problem (not *PO*) of understanding the "finite Cosmos" (not *PI*). In order to translate these sentences in social notions, one has to focus the attention on the notions which express the military national defence, which too worked as a paradigm along so many centuries. Then, by exchanging the previously rejected choices for the positive choices, we obtain the two sentences which express both the positive choices and the rejection of the opposite choices characterising the model of the non-violent conflict resolution.

44. Antonino Drago, *Difesa popolare non-violenta,* op. cit., pp. 142-153.
45. The table shows that even Sharp's interpretation is confined to the contents of some cases only; they are the three cases of the objective representation (but in the second case he reduces the non-violent political interaction to a pragmatic interaction, which is not so much different from the usual one), plus the second cases of the effective and the subjective representations.
46. Such a detached kind of interpretation may be recognised in both Gene Sharp, *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*, (Boston: P. Sargent Publ., 1979), and Johan Galtung, *Gandhi Today* (Amhedabad, 1992).
47. Also popular accounts of the revolutions; for ex. David Lapierre and Larry Collins, *Freedom at Midnight*, (New York: Harper, 1971 on Indian revolution.
48. Mohandas Karamchandra Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, Amhedabad, 1909.
49. This last appraisal is not original; since the year 1908 Sorel declared "barbarous" a violent revolution, to which he suggested as an alternative a general strike; which in fact, is a basic non-violent technique. George Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (1908), (New York: Dover 2004).

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Gandhi and Pranami Vaishnavism

Nagindas Sanghavi

OF ALL THE PARAMETERS that shaped the complex personality of Gandhi, Religion, undoubtedly was the most potent and the most comprehensive force. Gandhi himself has defined the centrality of spiritual aspirations that guided and goaded him throughout his adult life.

Gandhi in his Autobiography has made copious references to the religious denominations to which he got exposed from early childhood. Gandhi mentions his chanting Ramanama as a protection against his fears of ghosts and he recited Ramraksha Stotra like other pious Hindus. He used to be a silent listener to the religious discussions among Hindu, Jain and Parsi friends of his father while Gandhi served him. As he grew up intellectually in England and had his horizon widened in South Africa, Gandhi freed himself from the shackles of his childhood fears and rituals. But childhood impressions might have lasted longer than he was aware of and such impressions might have blossomed forth in his attitudes and approaches that became the distinguishing characteristics of Gandhian belief system. There are amazing similarities in Gandhi's social philosophy and the social attitudes of the religious sect to which his family belonged.

Gandhi has specifically mentioned that his parents were Vaishnavas and abhorred meat eating. But Vaishnavism is much more than a mere matter of food. Vaishnavism is a generic term and there are innumerable sects under its umbrella. These sects are mutually exclusive and are intensely hostile to one another. The hymn [Vaishanvjan To Ten Re Kahiye] that Gandhi loved so dearly and which describes in very lucid terms the character and the qualities of a true Vaishnava, is tabooed by all Vaishanava sects and would not be allowed to be recited in their

temples or during their rituals and festivals. Its author Narsinh, as also Gandhi would be totally unacceptable to any of the sects of Vaishnavism as both refuse to pay the necessary homage to the respective Acharyas of the sects concerned. Gandhi called himself a Hindu and a Vaishnava but he was too eclectic to be classified as either of them.

Vaishnavism, a vibrant manifestation of Bhakti is the most popular stream of Hinduism today and it has played an immensely significant role in the intellectual history of India. We know almost nothing about the emergence and the early history of Bhakti. Bhagwat Puran, accepted as authentic scripture by all Vaishnav sects, declares that Bhakti originated in Tamilnadu, matured in Karnatak and grew old and decrepit in Gujarat. But it got rejuvenated in Vrindavan. It then spread all over North India. The devotional cult of Vaishnavism was immensely popular in medieval India and it inspired intense activity in the fields of literature, painting, sculpture, music and dancing.

Shri sect of Vaishnavism of Tamilnadu is the second oldest sect of Vaishnavism and traditionally, Ramajuja is acclaimed as the best known Acharya of Vaishanvism. Vaishnavism, professed reverence for Vedic literature and all its Acharyas were great scholars of Vedant; but it quietly and firmly rejected Vedic ritualism, Upnishadic Intellectualism, Buddhist Nihilism as also the Asceticism of Jains. The Acharyas of all the Vaishnav sects were Brahmins but Vaishnavism denies hierarchy of caste system and the dominant position of Brahmins therein. Vaishnavism transcends the exclusivity of Brahminism by admitting women, lower castes and even untouchables in its spiritual domain. Its earliest propagators—the twelve Alwaras of Tamilnadu include an untouchable, a low caste robber and a prostitute.

Gandhi has mentioned in passing the Vaishnava denomination of his family which has gone largely unnoticed by his biographers. Gandhi has mentioned that his mother and his wife belonged to the Pranami or Nijanandi sect of Vaishnavism. Probably his entire family was Pranami. Gandhi belonged to the Modh sub-caste of Vanias and many Modhas in this region were and are Pranami Vaishnavas. Immediately after the marriage, Gandhi couple was taken to a Pranami Temple in the neighborhood to untie the nuptial knot so that the marriage can be consummated.

The Pranami or Nijanandi is a less known sect and it belongs to the Little Tradition of Vaishnavism. It emerged in the first quarter of the 17th century at Jamnagar—hardly 100 Kms away from Porbunder where Gandhi was born and where he passed his early childhood. This sect has several interesting features which are not found in other Vaishanav sects. But these features are very similar to what Gandhi taught later.

This is the only Vaishnava sect that claims to incorporate the

teachings of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and copiously uses Arabic words and Sufi terminology in its scriptures. Most of their scriptures are written in Hindi language and Pranamis use Arabic and Devnagari scripts for writing Hindi slogans in their temples. They are free from gender discrimination and Kesarbai was installed as the second Acharya of the sect in 1690. In theory, all Vishnava sects reject Untouchabilty but the theory is seldom put in practice. Ramanuja was the first Acharya to allow temple entry to the Untouchables in 12th century. Nijanandi sect is however the only Vaishnav sect that has been permitting not only temple entry but also inter-dining since 17th century. All castes including untouchables sit together for food during their religious feasts though there are no inter-caste marriages among them. Gandhi does mention his asking his mother about untouchability but he has not recorded her answer. Gandhi might have put her in a terrible dilemma because the strongly prevalent social taboo contradicted her Nijanandi faith.

Pranami teachers sidestepped the tradition of Vaishnav Acharyas to write scholastic treatises in Sanskrit and its scripture is written in the then spoken languages like Gujarati, Sindhi, Jati but especially in Hindi which Prananath declared to be easily understood by people all over north India.

The history of Pranami Vaishnavism stands in sharp contrast to that of all other sects of Vaishanvism. Devchand, the founder died [1654] rather unknown and unsung. But the sect that had sprouted in Gujarat survived him. His pupil Mehraj better known as Mahamati or Prananath stayed in Arabia for five years [1647-52] as a business manager and got acquainted with spoken Arabic language and with the tenets of Islam and probably with Christianity and Judaism too. He admired some of their concepts and mentions them in the books he wrote.

He was charged with misappropriation of funds after the death of his employer. He returned to Jamnagar to take up the post of the Diwan of Jamnagar. [1655-58]. He was charged with embezzlement of funds and was imprisoned for a year. He was cleared of the charge but was held a hostage by the Sultan of Junagadh for non- payment of dues. After his release, he resigned his post and devoted himself to the propagation of the new faith. Such propagation is known in the sect as Awareness or Jagani. He was 40.

The sectarian feuds soon drove him out of Saurashtra [1665] and he traveled to Surat where he stayed for a year and a half. It was at Surat that he broke with the main branch and established the second major centre of Pranami sect. He now wrote several books using two nom de plums —Indravati while writing in Gujarati and Mahamati while writing in Hindi. He himself has never used Prananath as a name

and we do not know when and why this term of endearment reserved for husbands started getting used for him. He has, by now, replaced Devchand as THE teacher for the sect.

His missionary travels to spread the teachings of Devchand in the neighboring areas were interrupted as his second wife [Tejabai] was kidnapped by Arab pirates and he spent two years [1668-71] visiting various ports of Arabia arranging ransom to secure her release.

A lifelong activist in contemporary politics, he traveled to Bharuch and then went to Delhi to protest against the imposition of Jezia tax on Hindus by Aurangzeb, the last of the Great Mughals. His efforts to rouse Rajput princes to fight against Aurangzeb failed; but he found [1683] a kindred spirit in Chhatrasal of Panna who had been fighting against the Mughals since 1671. Prananath settled at Panna and lived there till his death in 1695. Panna is now the third major centre of the sect. Pranami sect languished in Gujarat but spread rapidly in Central India and is now strongly entrenched in Odisha [Orissa], Nepal and Sikkim.

Those, who so wish, can draw a few parallels in the life stories of Gandhi and Prannath but parallels are few. Gandhi certainly was not a Pranami. Prannath claimed to be the Mehdi of the Muslims, Kalki of the Hindus and Buddha all at the same time while Gandhi declined to be called even a Mahatma.

Prananath was a prolific writer in a variety of languages Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, Sindhi, Jati. He had started writing while still in prison at Jamnagar. He wrote three books there that were later accepted as Nijanandi scriptures and the remaining 11 were written over the next forty five years in order to sustain his mission of awakening [Jagani] of the kindred souls.

The Nijanandi approach to social stratification was profoundly influenced by the long process of amalgamation of the concepts of Islam and Hinduism- a process that started with Kabir in 12th century and ended with Prince Dara Shukoh, the eldest brother of Aurangzeb. Dara was sentenced to death by the Muslim fundamentalists for writing a book listing the similarities between Upnishads and Koran. The Mughal Emperor Akber's prolonged conferences attempting to evolve a universal religion- Sulah-e-Kul that would incorporate the best concepts of Hindus, Jains, Muslims and Christians came to nothing. The Pranami tradition mentions the close contact between Prananath and Chintamani a follower of Kabir.

Prananrh does mention Bible, Koran and Torah but his acquaintance with them appears to be extremely tenuous as was his knowledge of Vedic literature. He followed Kabir and Nanak in preaching the unity of Hindus and Muslims and like Nanak, he replaced the idol of Krishna

by a book. In Pranami temples the scriptural text is worshipped together with symbolic representation of Krishna and Radha [a peacock feather, a flute and a crown for Krshna and a blouse piece for Radha] .

It is quite apparent that Gandhi had never read the scriptures of the sect to which his family belonged. The impact of Christianity and of the Victorian society on Gandhi might have made erotic and esoteric aspects of Pranamis totally repulsive to Gandhi. The sect had adopted the erotic form of Bhakti from Chaitanya and Pushti sects and had made it all the more voluptuous with its followers aiming at participating in the eternal orgasm [Akhand Sukh]. All the leading celebrities of the sect were the female attendants of Shyamaji the sexual partner of Krishna in the continuous Raslila in the Paramdham. They are mentioned in the literature of the sect only by their female names. They claim that they have understood the esoteric implications of Ras better than even Shukdev the traditional author of Bhagwat. The followers call themselves Sundersath or the companions of Sunderbai the sect name for Devchand. They are the chosen souls who have lost their way in the world till they were awakened by Prannath. They alone would be admitted in the Paramdham the abode of eternal bliss.

PROFESSOR NAGINDAS SANGHAVI obtained his Master's degree from the University of Mumbai and taught in three renowned colleges in Mumbai for thirty years. [1950-81]. After his retirement he has contributed to Journals such as Economic and Political Weekly, Freedom First and India. He wrote *Gujarat a Political Analysis* [The center for developing Society South Gujarat University-Surat] and his *Gujarat at Cross Roads* Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan]. His *Agony of Arrival-Gandhi in South Africa* [Rupa Publishers] has been acclaimed as a work of considerable research. He was awarded the best commentator on Political issues by the Government of Gujarat in 1996. He is a frequent visitor to Madison [Wisconsin] to talk about the philosophy of Yoga and allied subjects.
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Mahatma Gandhi and Two Attitudes of Religion

Arvind Sharma

Iт SEEMS THAT, WHEN one comes in contact with a religion other than one's own, one faces a basic choice: whether to accept it in some way or another, or to reject it all together. Mahatma Gandhi's life provides illustrations of both. The following experience he had with Mr. Coates, a Quaker, is representative of the second attitude of rejection.

> But Mr. Coates was not the man easily to accept defeat. He had great affection for me. He saw, round my neck, the *Vaishnava* necklace of Tulasi-beads. He thought it to be superstition and was pained by it. "This superstition does not become you. Come, let me break the necklace."
> "No, you will not. It is a sacred gift from my mother."
> "But do you believe in it?"
> "I do not know its mysterious significance. I do not think I should come to harm if I did not wear it. But I cannot, without sufficient reason, give up a necklace that she put round my neck out of love and in the conviction that it would be conducive to my welfare. When, with the passage of time, it wears away and breaks of its own accord, I shall have no desire to get a new one. But this necklace cannot be broken."
> Mr. Coates could not appreciate my argument, as he had no regard for my religion. He was looking forward to delivering me from the abyss of ignorance. He wanted to convince me that, no matter whether there was some truth in other religions, salvation was impossible for me unless I accepted Christianity which represented *the* truth, and that my sins would not be washed away except by the intercession of Jesus, and that all good works were useless.[1]

Mahatma Gandhi's own attitude towards other religions, by contrast, seems to imply a kind of acceptance. This may be in part due to his family background for he informs us how, as a child, he was exposed to various religions in a hospitable way:

> In Rajkot, however, I got an early grounding in toleration for all branches of Hinduism and sister religions. For my father and mother would visit the *Haveli* as also Shiva's and Rama's temples, and would

take or send us youngsters there. Jain monks also would pay frequent
visits to my father, and would even go out of their way to accept food
from us—non-Jains. They would have talks with my father on subjects
religious and mundane.

He had, besides, Musalman and Parsi friends, who would talk to him about
their own faiths, and he would listen to them always with respect, and
often with interest. Being his nurse, I often had a chance to be present at
these talks. These many things combined to inculcate in me a toleration
for all faiths.[2]

Mahatma Gandhi subsequently refers to reading the Bible at the
instance of a Christian friend,[3] of learning about "the prophet's
greatness and bravery and austere living,"[4] and reading Washington
Irving's *Life of Mahomet and His Successors*,[5] and of also reading *The
Sayings of Zarathustra*.[6] Contact with Abdulla Sheth also gave Mahatma
Gandhi "a fair amount of practical knowledge of Islam."[7]

However, to describe one's attitudes towards other religions
only in terms of rejection and acceptance may be simplistic because
both the attitudes are capable of refinement. The attitude of
rejection for instance, may (1) extend to an entire religious tradition
or (2) may be confined to those parts of it one considers
objectionable. Thus a Christian might reject Hinduism in its entirety,
or reject those parts of it which as a Christian one finds (a) morally
or (b) theologically objectionable.

Similarly, the acceptance of another tradition is not such a
straightforward matter as it might appear at first sight. After all,
one way of accepting it would be to accept it all together, to the
extent of converting to it! Hence acceptance implies two levels:
accepting it for oneself or accepting it as a religion of the other on
the person's own terms. Here again the latter attitude is capable of
being developed in two directions: (1) accepting a religion as a
religion of the other without further criticism or (2) even after
accepting it as the other's religion, distinguishing between those
parts of it which one thinks of as positive aspects of it and others
which one thinks of as negative.

This kind of "critical" acceptance, in a curious coincidence of
opposite, may not be far removed from "critical" rejection!

Notes and References

1. Mohandas K. Gandhi, An Autobiography: The Story of My
    Experiments with Truth (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993) p. 123-124.

2. *Ibid.,* p 33.
3. *Ibid.,* p. 68.
4. *Ibid.,* p. 69.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 159.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.,* p. 106.

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Book Reviews

Rekha Talmaki, *Socio-Economic Development of Tribal Women: Changes and Challenges*, **Delhi: The Women Press, pages-xxiii+222, 2012, price: Rs. 895**

Rekha Talmaki has made a serious and commendable effort at conducting survey based research on socio-economic status of tribal women in Valod (South Gujarat**)** where committed Gandhian workers have dedicated more than 5 decades of their lives in village development activities based on Gandhian principles. Her personal field visits have played a crucial role in bringing new insights and analysis with gender lens. She has examined tribal women's predicament in the context of status of women in India in general where main factors in determining socio-economic status have been income, education and occupation. She has provided an exhaustive literature review focusing on occupational life, health profile of tribal women and tribal women's status in decision making in the family. She has also evaluated the situation to find out to what extent Gandhian ideology of Antyodaya is implemented vis-a-vis tribal women, who are the poorest of the poor in the economic ladder and at the bottom of the pyramid.

The author has rightly used a conceptual framework of social exclusion that includes socio-economic parameters of inequality, poverty, among others. She has highlighted indicators such as working status and demographic aspects of tribes in Gujarat as well as size and distribution of scheduled tribe. She also reveals that sex ratio of tribal women in Gujarat is relatively higher than the rest of the country. The question is, does that indicate that they enjoy better status in socio-economic, cultural, educational and political lives? Social geography of Surat reveals volatile changes due to industrialization, urbanization and globalization. In what way have these factors affected lives and survival strategies of tribal women? The author has made an honest attempt to answer these mind boggling questions.

With the help of questionnaire for tribal women that was administered on 498 women respondents from 11 villages selected as sample. They belonged to the age group of 18-59 years. Gandhian institutions working among them and financial institutions located in

the tribal areas also have been covered. She has revealed that large number of Halpatis or Dublas is found very prominently in Surat district. They are very poor, because they do not get permanent employment. They are very good in taking care of animals. SUMUL and local milk co-operatives encouraged them for animal husbandry and since then they have started keeping cattle and other animals for milk production. It emerges from this study that the tribal communities, particularly women have been excluded from mainstream economic development for long. The study was conducted to find out the socio-economic status of tribal women in Valod. Though their improved status is showing positive changes, it is also necessary to pay attention on many other aspects for the better and overall development of these women.

The most attractive feature of this study is that it brings to the fore the efforts of veteran Gandhians such as Shri. Babubhai Shah, Smt. Savitaben Chaudhari and Smt. Dashriben Choudhari. Popularly known as Dashariba, the eminent Gandhian and freedom-fighter, who was born in 1918 in a tribal family (as she told) has been the role model for all tribal women in the region. At present she is residing in Vedchhi. She took part in the freedom struggle and taught reading and writing to Smt. Kasturba Gandhi. It can be a very good example of how these tribal men and women were actively participating in the freedom struggle. After independence, also, Dashariben devoted her full life to educate people.

The author states that women in Valod perform various income generating activities. They are either engaged in agricultural activities or in Papad Udyog or in dairy production prominently. Very few women in this sample, i.e. 11, are engaged in Anganwadi activities and only four women work in government jobs. Those women, who are involved in agricultural activities, are also involved in Papad Udyog or in milk production. For example, Halpati women are basically agricultural labourers but they are doing well in dairy production. Women do not possess any land but those who are members of Self Help Groups are managing livestock and are having their own accounts in the banks. They are owners of those animals, who give them not only economic self-sufficiency but also make them empowered. Their economic status has been improved only because of Lijjat Papad and Milk Co-operatives. More than 50 per cent women also know the market value of their product. Women's leadership in micro finance has been a marked feature of the activities of Gandhian institutions in the region. They are active in Vedchhi Pradesh Seva Samiti (VPSS), Valod; Lijjat Papad Grihaudyog, Sampoorna Kranti Vidyalaya and Gandhi Vidyapith- Vedchhi, Traditional agriculture

sector could not give them better economic status and social status. However, because of the above mentioned occupations their economic and social status has improved in the last two decades. There are only 11 women working in Anganwadi, but today along with Papad Udyog and Milk Co-operatives, Anganwadi activities are also increasing as Sakhi Mandals are emerging with the help of Anganwadi workers.

Decision making, economic status and empowerment always go hand in hand. More than 70 per cent women told that their status has changed drastically. They see themselves in a different perspective and are thinking about the empowerment of their own daughters and well-being of the entire family. More than 50 per cent women said that, improvement in the economic status gives them status in the family and in the society. Remaining women, though their status has not been improved, are well aware of their future. They wish that their future would be good. They do not want their children to suffer as they have suffered. They demand good educational and job facilities for their children. They want good educated husbands for their daughters. The habit of alcohol is still persisting in tribal communities; hence mothers want partners who are teetotalers for their daughters.

It is so encouraging to note that respondents from Vedchhi want to do something for their community and village. Respondents from Ranveri want their daughters to be educated, so that they would teach their children. It shows that, women from all the villages are well aware of their status. They have understood the importance of education. In the sample, there were very few widows, but nearly 50 per cent women said that there should be some special schemes only for widows. Those women, who stay below poverty line, want to improve their economic status.

Educational process among tribals started with Vedchhi Movement and was later invigourated by late Shri. Jugatram Dave, Founder of Swaraj Ashram – Vedchhi in 1930. Udyogwadi Unit started in 1954 and various programmes were undertaken by late Shri Babubhai Shah. A separate women's section was started in Udyogwadi Unit. Women started getting guidance, income generating activities and vocational training from this Unit. Lijjat Papad Unit provides occupation based on self-sufficiency. All these institutions make women empowered in Valod.

Self Help Groups, milk co-operatives, increasing participating of women in political activities, agitation against deforestation and alcohol by Self Help Groups, educational status of women and their children, accessibility to all kinds of infrastructural activities,

improved decision making capacity in all important aspects, knowledge and use of contraceptives show positive changes in the socio-economic status of tribal women in Valod. This improvement has not taken place overnight. Gandhian ideology definitely played a very important role in this respect. Self Help Groups are emerging on a very large scale in Valod taluka. Development from the grass-root level, a dream of Gandhi, is now becoming a reality.

The author recommends greater investment in tribal women's education, vocational training, meaningful participation of tribal women in local self government bodies, anti alcohol efforts and prevention of domestic violence among tribal families thrugh collective efforts and social intervention.

I congratulate Ms. Rekha Talmaki for her work and hope that readers from a wide variety of backgrounds, social scientists, political activists, researchers, policy makers and women's organizations will deliberate on the issues raised in this book.

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Mrinal Gore: A Unique and Unassuming Personality

Prem Singh

MRINAL GORE (1928-2012), the socialist leader, passed away on July 17, 2012 in Mumbai. In the 84 years of her life, 70 were spent in political struggle. She gave up her career in medicine in 1942 to join the Quit India Movement. Thereafter she became associated with Rashtra Sewa Dal and joined the Socialist Party in 1948. In 1961 she was elected to Bombay Municipal Corporation (BMC). She contested the Maharashtra Assembly elections in 1972 from Goregaon as Socialist Party candidate and won with a strong margin. In 1975 she opposed the Emergency while remaining underground. Later she was arrested and imprisoned. In the 1977 elections she won the Northern Bombay seat on a Janata Party ticket with a resounding margin and entered the Parliament. Once again in 1985 she won the Maharashtra Assembly seat as a Janata Dal candidate. She was an active participant in the Goa Liberation movement and Samyukta Maharashtra movement.

As per the Maharashtrian tradition, people addressed her respectfully as Mrinaltai. After winning the BMC elections, she launched a successful movement first at Goregaon and then throughout the city to ensure the availability of drinking water for the common men and women. The movement, made successful by great public support and participation, earned her fame as Pani Wali Bai. During the 90's she struggled relentlessly against the new economic policies and their negative impact. She was closely associated with peoples' movements, Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) in particular. She also fought against the US multinational power sector company Enron.

The unique feature of Mrinal Gore's political work was that there

was absolute clarity in her mind from the very beginning about the section of people who needed her attention, about the issues/problems that had to be addressed, and about the values that were to be upheld. She always worked for the poor and deprived. Her focus was on life's basic needs and civic amenities. Her political work was based on the values of democracy, socialism and secularism. For her politics was the synonym for sacrifice not power. Morarji Desai, PM in the Janata Party government, wanted to make her the Health Minister in his Cabinet. But Mrinal Gore said that instead of being a minister, she would prefer, like all times, to work among the common people. In this way, she never lost sight of her mission and area of work.

She was particularly sensitive towards the issues related to women like gender equality, women's rights and inter-caste marriage. She herself had entered into an inter-caste marriage in 1948 with the well known socialist leader keshav Gore. At that time she was only twenty. Ten years after marriage, Keshav Gore passed away in 1958. But Mrinal Gore continued her life of struggle, along with the CPI leader Tara Reddy and CPM leader Ahilya Rangnekar. When she joined the Assembly for the second time, Mrinal Gore drew public attention towards female foeticide through a private member bill. The ban on sex-selective abortions by the Maharashtra Assembly in 1986 was the consequence of Mrinal Gore's serious efforts.

One of the very special features of Mrinal Gore's personality was that she refused to believe that solutions lay in the passing laws. If the leadership is not serious to the peoples' problems, merely passing laws will be of no use. She believed that human concerns and sensitivity is a necessary consideration for political leaders. Her own political struggle was always motivated by a humane and caring concern for the deprived masses of the country.

In the present times, socialist ideals and movement is going through a critical phase within India and also on the international scene. Crisis is witnessed even on capitalism, but the possibility of socialism emerging as an alternative to capitalism is extremely thin. The 3-4 Latin American countries which have successfully protested against imperialist capitalism are still in the grip of nationalist capitalism. The Arab revolution too does not carry the socialist dream in its womb. In such times, the passing away of a die-hard socialist leader like Mrinal Gore is definitely an irreparable loss. This is particularly true in India where all governments and mainstream political parties have become the facilitator of corporate capitalism and politics in itself has become synonym of bargaining.

It was her exceptional quality that during the last days when she was seriously unwell and nearly unable to walk, Mrinal Gore did not

give up her positive frame of mind. She played an important role in the formation of Socialist Party in Hyderabad on May 28 2011. She was present in the meetings held in Mumbai to discuss the revival of the Socialist Party and extended her full support for the move. She said that she would be a natural member of the party following its formation.

This was my first meeting with her in person. She used to come to the sitting room on her wheel chair and expressed her views in a concise manner. One never had the opportunity for a detailed discussion with her, beyond the routine salutations. But it was adequate to leave a lasting impact of her personality in one's memory.

On July 19 , the Socialist Party organised a condolence meet in Delhi to pay respect to her. We had requested the press to cover the condolence meet. Not one among the print and electronic media arrived at the meeting. Most speakers at the meeting noted with anger that the country's leaders and the media made hardly any note of her passing away. The press people or leaders who wrote or spoke on her demise called her a 'social activist' and not a socialist leader, which she really was. In his condolence message on the net, Prof. Kamal Nayan Kabra wrote that although he did not undermine the importance of film artists, it was beyond comprehension how the media that gone overboard to report the demise of cine star Rajesh Khanna, totally ignored the passing away of Mrinal Gore. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in calling her a social worker in his condolence message, deprived her of her political identity and struggle. It seems obvious that according to him there is no need for socialist politics in today's India.

But Mrinal Gore is in no need of recognition and citations from political leaders and media. She was truly unique and self-effacing. Our deepest respects for Mrinaltai!

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