

# Conflict Resolution and Gandhian Ethics

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*In the long run men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, though they should fail immediately they had better aim at something high.*

H. D. Thoreau

*The dignity of human life derives from mankind's continual perseverance in projects for which the universe affords no foothold or encouragement.*

A. MacIntyre

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## INTRODUCTION

A recent review of the latest offering in Gandhiana described the Gandhi book business as a veritable "cottage industry". Although throughout his life the Mahatma encouraged the foundation of cottage industries, this is one of which he would most certainly not have approved. The literature on Gandhi, aside from original works by him or compilations of his works (the *Collected Works*, for example, has recently grown to ninety weighty volumes), is so vast that it fills several large bibliographies.

It appears that anyone who had any dealings at all with Gandhi felt compelled to record the incidents—the biographies alone number some 250 volumes. A great many of these books and articles (*Gandhi Marg*, a journal of Gandhian thought, published quarterly since 1957, then monthly from 1979 to 1989, and now again quarterly, being the chief concentrated source) cover and re-cover already familiar ground, are occasionally sycophantic or offer shallow analyses of Gandhi's thought or techniques, or, at times, even miss the real point in Gandhi's message.

Gandhi himself was sceptical about the value of such writings, even about his own, maintaining that his writings should be destroyed after his death. It is his active achievement that would, he believed, live after him and his example, as it touched those around him, that would effect a change in society rather than his words: "My life," he claimed, "is my message."<sup>2</sup> Although he wrote forewords to over forty books, most of them dealing with various aspects of his philosophy, in an interview with Joan Bondurant he went as far as to say that "satyagraha is not a subject for research—you must experience it, use it, live by it."<sup>3</sup> The Mahatma, however, did add: "I flatter myself with the belief that some of my writings will survive me and will be of service to the causes for which they have been written."<sup>4</sup> Gandhi is now part of history and his words belong to humanity. These words, it is to be hoped, can instil in those who have not yet been touched by his example, or by the example of those following Him, a sense of the idea of Gandhi's philosophy of conflict, a realisation of the possibility that inter-personal and other relations can be conducted in a more effective manner, and a desire to experiment with, experience and live by a code of dignified idealism.

The Gandhian technique of conflict resolution is known by its Gujarati name of *satyagraha* which has variously been interpreted as "passive resistance", "nonviolent resistance", "nonviolent direct action", and even as "militant nonviolence".

"Satyagraha", Gandhi explained, is "literally holding on to Truth and it means, therefore, Truth-force. Truth is soul or spirit. It is therefore known as soul-force." The word was coined out of felt necessity. The technique of nonviolent struggle that Gandhi had evolved in South Africa for the conduct of the Indian indentured labourers' disputes with the government was originally described by the English phrase "passive resistance". Gandhi, however, found that the term "was too narrowly constructed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterised by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence."<sup>6</sup> He decided that a new word had to be coined for the struggle:

But I could not for the life of me find out a new name, and therefore offered a nominal prize through *Indian Opinion* to the reader who made the best suggestion on the subject. As a result Maganlal Gandhi coined the word *Sadagraha* (*sat*: truth; *Agraha*: firmness) and won the prize. But in order to make it clearer I changed the word to *Satyagraha*.<sup>7</sup>

Satyagraha means, in effect, the discovery of truth and working steadily towards it, thus converting the opponent into a friend. In other words, satyagraha is not used against anybody but is done *with* somebody. "It is based on the idea that the moral appeal to the heart or conscience is . . . more effective than an appeal based on threat or bodily pain or violence."<sup>8</sup>

Over the years an enormous body of literature concerning satyagraha has developed. Generally the writings concern themselves with an examination of the various campaigns led either by Gandhi or his disciples, and, in the main, these writings clearly identify the main elements of the technique as truth (*satya*), nonviolence (*ahimsa*) and the relationship of ends to means. Most have realised that the use of the techniques of satyagraha as a policy, that is, a method to be brought into play in a given situation where it is considered effective in securing a victory, is contrary to its primary teaching. It must be a creed, a way of life, to be truly effective.

Gandhi has made the point: "Somehow or other the wrong belief has taken possession of us that ahimsa is pre-eminently a weapon for individuals and its use therefore should be limited to that sphere. In fact that is not the case. Ahimsa is definitely an attitude of society." He added: "It is blasphemy to say that nonviolence can only be practised by individuals and never by nations which are composed of individuals."<sup>10</sup> Martin Luther King was enlightened by the realisation that satyagraha could in fact be

used in conflicts larger than interpersonal conflicts.<sup>1</sup> Most of the literature on Gandhi's nonviolence is concerned with demonstrating just this point. The refutation of the premise that satyagraha is limited in effectiveness to use by individuals has produced voluminous literature—to the exclusion of analyses of the relationship of satyagraha to the individual. The forest has been carefully studied, the trees overlooked.

Gandhian thought has been spelled out and analysed by many. The best books on satyagraha have done an admirable job explaining its precepts, and in part they all do touch on the relevance of these for individuals. None of them, however, analyse satyagraha primarily from the viewpoint of the individual. Dhawan, Shridharani, and Naess examine satyagraha from the perspective of the political scientist, their primary concern being social conflict. Some of them, for example, Iyer, include the individual to the point of concentrating on the central philosophy of Gandhi's political action as a variant of worship, while others, such as Gregg, emphasise the need for realising the importance of human unity in order to solve conflicts effectively. Gregg further looks at the applicability of satyagraha to a Western setting, while Bondurant aims to demonstrate that it is valid in a secularised form.

Although the analyses and insights of these authors will be relied upon at times, the aims of this work will be to bring the various points that they make of direct relevance to the individual in conflict situations together, and then bring satyagraha back specifically to the micro level, that is, back to the individual. Rather than reiterating the already excellent work done on the applicability of satyagraha to the dynamics of group conflict, interpersonal conflict and the position of the individual within larger conflicts will be examined from the Gandhian perspective.

The question of why these smaller and far more common conflicts have been ignored by Gandhian scholars is an interesting one. It appears that the social scientists tackling questions of conflict desired to deal either with more glamorous issues or with issues that appeared more immediately important. After the Second World War (which spurred an academic interest in Gandhi's ideas of nonviolence), the problem of preventing the Cold War from becoming a "hot war" was of primary concern. With the advent of the American Blacks' civil rights movement, led by Martin Luther King, some of the attention shifted to social conflicts. Gandhi's writings were examined in detail from both these perspectives.

If the world is going to be destroyed by war, then a study of a Gandhian mode of conducting interpersonal conflict is irrelevant. Perhaps, however, a change of attitude at the individual level can go part of the way towards changing society from the bottom up so that the danger of larger conflicts is either reduced, or, where they do occur, they can be resolved more constructively. While the world lives in relative peace, life for the vast majority of people goes on day to day with its innumerable conflicts. Attention should not be diverted away from the exploration of the resolution of conflicts at the macro level, nor should studies of micro conflicts be neglected. This area may be somewhat less glamorous. But for an average person leading a "normal" life, it is important to have insights into ways of solving conflicts which occur regularly and in which he or she is *directly* involved so that the quality of life at the individual level may improve.

The conflict resolution literature focuses on strategic and tactical considerations, generally leaving aside psychological, and especially ethical, ones. Rapoport's *Fights, Games and Debates* is the notable exception and will be used to introduce satyagraha as a method of conflict resolution. The literature on law and society and the Gandhian literature are generally interlinked in political theory concerning civil disobedience but not in other areas such as interpersonal conflicts or the role of the legal system as a general mechanism of conflict resolution. This study aims at exploring these areas specifically and to look at the phenomenon of conflict and conflict resolution in the light of Gandhi's moral and ethical thought.

This book comprises three parts. The initial two chapters (the first part) deal with an analysis of conflict and its resolution generally and satyagraha specifically. Chapter One defines conflict and examines its causes and the way it is generally handled. It illustrates the behaviour that leads conflict onto either productive or destructive paths as defined. Chapter Two examines satyagraha as a productive method of conflict resolution. Satyagraha is distinguished from other methods of nonviolent action and its main precepts are examined from the standpoint of the individual.

The second part, comprising four chapters, examines the practical application of satyagraha in the light of the first two chapters. Chapter Three briefly elucidates Gandhi's philosophy in action in the realm of interpersonal conflict, while Chapter Four examines in some depth the possible practical application of satyagraha within our main institutionalised method of conflict resolution, namely the adversary legal system. It also examines industrial conflicts from the perspective of satyagraha.

Chapters Five and Six deal with Gandhi's thoughts on larger conflicts, social and international respectively, and the position of the individual satyagrahi (one practising satyagraha) within these group conflicts.

Part three is an analysis of where the Gandhian tradition fits within the relevant areas of contemporary thought on sociology (Chapter Seven), psychology (Chapter Eight), and ethics (Chapter Nine), and discusses its feasibility in the light of this thought. The concluding chapter (Chapter Nine) further looks at Gandhi's answer to the question of the why (as opposed to the how) of satyagraha.

The technique of satyagraha is essentially founded on an individual attitude towards life. It can, according to Gandhi, be used by nations, communities and individuals, used equally by men, women and children.<sup>12</sup> It is a method that can be used effectively with a close friend or loved one, belligerent stranger, unjust government, or invading army. The training for all kinds of satyagraha, however, begins with the peaceful resolution of small interpersonal conflicts: "If one does not practise nonviolence in one's personal relations with others and hopes to use it in bigger affairs, one is vastly mistaken. Nonviolence, like charity, must begin at home."<sup>13</sup>

Gandhi illustrated the contagious nature of interpersonal satyagraha with an example from his own life:

I learnt the lesson of nonviolence from my wife, when I tried to bend her to my will. Her determined resistance to my will, on the one hand, and her quiet submission to the suffering my stupidity involved, on the other, ultimately made me ashamed of myself and cured me of my stupidity...<sup>14</sup> If I wanted her obedience, I had first to persuade her by patient argument. She thus became my teacher in nonviolence.<sup>15</sup>

He concluded: "You can . . . utilise trifling little occasions in everyday life to cultivate nonviolence in your own person and teach it to your children."<sup>16</sup>

Even in social and national satyagraha, Gandhi places a heavy emphasis on the individual. The logistics and organisation of large-scale campaigns are important, but, in the final analysis, even these campaigns depend on individual suffering, rather than on the inflicting of pain, and "thereby touching the heart of opposing individuals. In fact, according to Gandhi, even in a mass struggle the satyagraha of a committed individual can be such that "If a single satyagrahi holds out to the end, victory is certain." "If there is one individual who is almost completely nonviolent, he can put

out the conflagration," and if a lone individual cannot neutralise violence, "you must take it that he is not a true representative of ahimsa".<sup>17</sup>

Many writers have taken this line and, like Gandhi, have made exhortations to heroism, condemned personal cowardice, and extolled the value of self-suffering. But far more than this is involved as we see when we examine the position of the individual in Gandhian philosophy.

Ultimately all satyagraha is a personal matter. Not only is this – the Gandhian way of solving conflicts—more efficient in the long term and more objectively profitable to an individual than being engaged in zero-sum conflicts, but there are also subjective benefits which are difficult to measure. The Gandhian way of conflict resolution should relieve the individual of feelings of helplessness - in conflict situations. But, more than that, Gandhi clearly states that living within rules required for successful satyagraha is *the type of life that is worth living*. Satyagraha can be a means of providing human dignity and, in the existential sense, give more "realness" to life:

A satyagrahi enjoys a degree of freedom not possible for others, for he becomes a truly fearless person. Once his mind is rid of fear, he will never agree to be another's slave. Having achieved this state of mind he will never submit to any arbitrary action.<sup>18</sup>

Satyagraha is therefore more than a method of conflict resolution that lends itself easily to scientific analysis. It is in fact an ethical system that places heavy emphasis on the quality of the relationship between individuals.

Throughout this book the efficiency of the Gandhian approach to the resolution of conflicts, in the sense of mutual satisfaction with the outcome, will be stressed. The elements that make up this technique-cum-lifestyle will be identified and defined, and the way it can be or has been used by individuals in the complete range of conflict situations will be illustrated. The primacy of the individual in both the subjective and objective sense will be explored. The way in which the Gandhian dialectic offers an opportunity for the achievement of human dignity, which is the cornerstone of human wholeness, by providing a framework in which perceived moral choices can be made and actions taken in the face of inherent dangers, will also be examined.

The successful application of satyagraha in conflict situations is based on a positive belief as to the possibilities for the future and on personal idealism. Gandhi himself claimed that satyagraha was more than idealistic, it was also practical. "I am not a

visionary," he stated, "I claim to be a practical idealist." Gandhi was also, as he often liked to say, an irrepressible optimist. He believed in his ability consciously to change himself for the better, he believed that having "faith in one's ideals constitutes true life, in fact, it is man's all in all", he had an abiding faith in human nature, and without the possession of any tangible proof, he believed that eventually good would win over evil.<sup>19</sup>

With all this emphasis on the individual, one point must clearly be made however. There is a vast difference between Gandhi's concept of the importance of the individual and of what is generally thought of as individualism. The individual as Gandhi desired him to be was an altruistic idealist rather than a hedonist:

Every individual must have the fullest liberty to use his talent consistently with equal use by his neighbours, but no one is entitled to the arbitrary use of the gains from the talents. He is part of the nation or, say the social structure surrounding him. Therefore, he can use his talent not for self only but for the social structure of which he is but a part and on whose sufferance he lives.<sup>20</sup>

The satyagrahi is more concerned with his duties to the world than with the rights he claims for himself, because, as Gandhi notes: "The true source of right is duty. If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed we run after rights, they will escape us like a will-o'-the-wisp."<sup>21</sup>

As the quotations from Gandhi are selected from a vast body of material, a note needs to be added on Gandhian consistency.

Gandhi wrote voluminously and he echoed Emerson's dictum that "foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds".<sup>22</sup> Although attacked for his inconsistency several times, Gandhi never considered consistency to be a paramount virtue:

At the time of writing I never think of what I have said before. My aim is not to be consistent with my previous statements on a given question, but to be consistent with truth as it may present itself to me at a given moment. The result has been that I have grown from truth to truth; I have saved my memory an undue strain. . . . But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writings may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making any

choice they should try to see if there is not an underlying abiding consistency between the two seeming inconsistencies.<sup>23</sup>

As a great many of the arguments presented here are based on Gandhi's own writings, the potential difficulties are obvious. They are, fortunately, not impossible to overcome. As a person grows from truth to truth, his words and actions are bound to be, indeed must be, inconsistent with his own past conduct. With careful selection, the occasionally contradictory quotations can be used in such a way that the spirit of Gandhi's method of conflict resolution is maintained or, at worst, the author's subjective interpretation of that spirit can be systematically argued.

The question of whether all of Gandhi's writings or utterances should be given equal weight is a vexed one. Should extracts from letters, for instance, be taken as seriously as those from his weekly papers, autobiography,<sup>24</sup> or major public speeches? K. M. Munshi, who believed that Gandhi's letters were written specifically with the recipient in mind, said that

the author adjusts his tone, the language and the perspective of every letter with uncanny precision so as to have the desired effect on the addressee. These letters have provided him with the greatest instrument of controlling the conscience of his friends and adherents...<sup>25</sup>

It should be remembered, however, that Gandhi was a voluminous letter-writer and often his notes were replies to strangers. A great many of these letters found their way into his weeklies for general consumption, as did copies of almost everything else that he said or wrote (thanks to the exhaustive efforts of his secretaries).

These newspapers, Gandhi claimed, were not newspapers at all but "views-papers" representing his own views on his personal growth in the knowledge of satyagraha.<sup>26</sup> These, and all his other words, written or spoken, he himself maintained, should be given the same weight: "I can now give myself the certificate that a thoughtless word hardly ever escapes my tongue or pen. I do not recollect ever having had to regret anything in my speech or writing."<sup>27</sup>

This is entirely consistent with the premium Gandhi placed on truth. As A. W. Rao notes, his motto when it came to writing was "think before you ink".<sup>28</sup> In 1925 Gandhi made this even more explicit:

To be true to my faith ... I may not write in anger or malice. I may not write idly. I may not write merely to excite passion. The reader can

have no idea of the restraint I have to exercise from week to week in the choice of topics and my vocabulary . . . Often my vanity dictates a smart expression or my anger a harsh adjective. It is a terrible ordeal but a fine exercise to remove these weeds. The reader sees the pages of *Young India* fairly well dressed up. . . .

If Gandhi was as careful as he claimed with the offerings that appeared in his papers, it seems hardly possible that he took less care over major speeches of national importance. Yet it appears that he neither wrote nor rehearsed them beforehand, nor did he consult notes. Even at the all-important Round Table Conference on the future of British India, in London in 1931, at which he was the sole representative of the All-India National Congress, Gandhi spoke extemporaneously. It would appear, therefore, that he placed equal importance on all his utterances regardless of the audience and that his lapses into rhetoric also occurred with scant regard to the audience. Gandhi's secretary, Mahadev Desai, attempted to explain Gandhi's ability to do this by claiming that "what Gandhi thinks, what he feels and what he says, and what he does are all the same thing. He does not need notes. You and I, we think one thing, feel another, say a third, and do a fourth, so we need notes and files to keep track."<sup>20</sup>

Finally, a further note should be made of the terminology used extensively by Gandhi in his speeches and writings. The dual subjects of God and continence (*brahmacharya*) loom large. Generally the reliance on these topics can be explained in terms of Gandhi's social and cultural heritage, events of deep psychological significance in his life, and by the dictates of the political need to communicate with his main audience, the Indian masses. Sharp points out that Gandhi's eccentricities often get in the way that "foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds".<sup>22</sup> Although attacked for his inconsistency several times, Gandhi never considered consistency to be a paramount virtue:

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Sharp points out that Gandhi's eccentricities often get in the way of Western understanding of him and of satyagraha. Even for religious people, "his constant use of religious terminology and theological language in explanation or justification of a social or political act or policy more often confuses than clarifies".<sup>31</sup> Although Gandhi often speaks of the necessity of a belief in God for the practice of satyagraha (e.g. "Satyagraha is . . . based on an unquestionable faith in God and His justice," a satyagrahi's "strength comes from within, from his reliance on God", "Satyagrahis must cultivate a living faith in God", and "Satyagraha presupposes the living presence and guidance of God"<sup>32</sup>), on a closer examination of his writings, even taking into account his many references to God as a person, it can be seen that in reality for him God is "an undefinable and universal Power that cannot be conceived apart from humanity or from the whole of nature".<sup>33</sup> On many occasions, Gandhi even repudiated the notion of a personal God ("God is not a human being ... God is the force. He is the essence of life. He is pure consciousness", and "I don't believe God to be a personal being in the

sense that we are personal beings"), noting that our concept of God is limited and subjective and suggesting that each person should "think of Him as He best appears to him, provided that the conception is pure and uplifting". For Gandhi, then, God can be viewed in many ways. His own words provide the best summary:

. . . God is Truth and Love, God is ethics and morality. God is fearlessness, God is the source of light and life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist. He transcends speech and reason. He is a personal God to those who need his touch.<sup>35</sup>

Although religion was supposed to have played a major part in his life, it appears that Gandhi's attachment to religion as a theological and metaphysical doctrine was limited. What at first appears to be a religious system can quite accurately be analysed in secular terms and where in his thought religion is identified with theology, rather than ethical teaching, it "occupies the place of a preface to be hurriedly passed over".<sup>36</sup> As Gandhi aged he refined his personal definition of God from "Love" to "Truth" and eventually reversed this formula to read "Truth is God". In fact, all of Gandhi's sociopolitical ideas can logically be derived from truth without the necessity of referring them to any other conception of God.<sup>37</sup> Gandhi's insistence on sexual continence may also confuse many.

He asserts that without the conquest of lust "man cannot hope to rule over self" and that the "Realization of God is impossible without complete renunciation of the sexual desire".<sup>38</sup>

Gandhi believed that "All power comes from the preservation and sublimation of the vitality that is responsible for creation of life" and that "If the vitality is husbanded instead of being dissipated, it is transmuted into creative energy of the highest order."<sup>39</sup> Wilhelm Reich, on the other hand, contends that such repression can manifest itself in pleasurable aggression and possibly even sadism. "Every kind of destructive action", he says, "by itself is the reaction of the organism to the denial of the gratification of a vital need, especially the sexual." He even claims that the "cruel character traits of people with chronic lack of sexual satisfaction" can be understood in this way. He cites "ascetic moralists" (and some have included Gandhi in this category) as examples of such people.<sup>40</sup>

Gandhi's views on sexuality come partly from his social background<sup>41</sup> and partly from such traumatic experiences in his childhood as his marriage at the age of thirteen, the

death of his father soon after the young Gandhi had abandoned his duty of massaging the old man's legs for the bed of his wife, his mind "in the grip of lust", and the death after three days of the first child his wife delivered him when he was sixteen.<sup>42</sup> It is not difficult to understand how such episodes could colour an individual's views on sexuality.

However, brahmacharya for Gandhi was meant to be non-attachment rather than repression and he went as far as to point out: "It may be harmful to suppress the body, if the mind is at the same time allowed to go astray." He even warned a young woman who proclaimed an aim of life-long virginity of the difficulty and told her that if she found it impossible to stick to it, she should act as others did. He warned her to "attempt nothing beyond your capacity". The key to brahmacharya is the control of the mind so that the body can be controlled. The difficulty of this, according to Gandhi, stems from a narrow interpretation of the term as the control of "animal passion" rather than control of all the "organs of sense". He added that "he who attempts to control only one organ, and allows all the others free play, is bound to find his effort futile". Further, he noted that with "simultaneous self-control in all directions the attempt will be scientific and possible of success".<sup>43</sup> As a result of Gandhi's pronouncements on the need for continence, Erikson wondered "whether Satyagraha will remain irretrievably tied to such ascetic idiosyncrasies" as Gandhi's followers cultivate, or whether "it will prove valid anew in a future in which a better knowledge of the role of sexuality in the sensual pleasure in the energy household of men and women . . . will, maybe, move people to true peacefulness".<sup>44</sup>

Along with vegetarianism and non-possession, two other qualities very dear to Gandhi's heart, Gandhi's very subjective brand of sexual morality is *not* necessary for satyagraha as "an ethic principle, the essence of which is a social technique of action".<sup>45</sup> It is submitted that just as Gandhi's philosophy can to a large degree be secularised without doing it grave injury, it can also be stripped of much of its anti-sexual overtones. If however one wanted to devote his or her life completely to the service of humanity and shared Gandhi's metaphysical beliefs, the concept of brahmacharya as he expounded it might become more relevant. He claimed that if a person devotes himself or herself to a life's partner "a boundary wall" will be created "around their love" which prevents them from looking "upon all mankind as kith and kin",<sup>46</sup> At any rate, a non-exploitative sexual morality does, and the other factors may, play a part in what Gandhi considered right living—the satyagrahi lifestyle. Without a

lifestyle in which truth and nonviolence are of paramount importance, social campaigns of satyagraha may be undertaken. But the solution to interpersonal conflicts, which occur daily, will prove impossible to resolve in the Gandhian spirit.

The symbols used by Gandhi were often useful in the context of his time and place but could also, often, be divorced from the essential core of his philosophy. "As with all symbols", notes Cenker, "they should be either renewed or discarded when they lose meaning or significance." Where necessary to avoid confusion the subjects of God and brahmacharya have, therefore, largely been omitted from this work.

## CHAPTER ONE: The Resolution of Conflict

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

William Blake (*A Poison Tree*)

### *Introduction*

All different types of conflict, from the interpersonal to the international, have some elements in common—but there are also major differences between them. Many writers have pointed out that it is neither necessary nor desirable to attempt to encompass various types of conflict under one general theory. They argue that because different types of conflicts have different frameworks, a general theory is inapplicable, and furthermore that "a special theory for a given kind of conflict can provide *greater* understanding of the relevant phenomena than could be provided by a more general theory."<sup>1</sup> The examination of interpersonal conflicts and other types of conflicts, from the perspective of the individual, will not provide the conceptualisation in one general theory of the way conflicts are resolved. It may however go part of the way towards providing the outline of an effective nonviolent process of conflict resolution—one which, by extension, is applicable to conflicts generally, regardless of their substance. A focusing on the substance of a conflict may be important in determining tactics. However, as the Gandhian ideal of conflict resolution emphasises an arrival at truth, rather than at victory in the narrow sense, far more importance will be placed on the processes of conflict rather than the substance.

It should be noted at the very outset that a conflict is not "bad" or "destructive" *per se*. It can be an explicit way to resolve tensions between parties, prevent stagnation, stimulate interest and curiosity; it can be the medium "through which problems can be aired and solutions arrived at"; it can be the root of

personal and social change. Conflicts do not necessarily mean either a breakdown within the relationship or community in which they occur—"they are 'normal' and are indicative of the fact that 'real life processes' continue".<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, Coser has pointed to the possible political function and importance of social conflict when he observed that conflict can have a binding and stabilising effect on the community by eliminating sources of dissatisfaction, providing warning systems that change is required, and ushering in new norms.<sup>3</sup> This observation also holds true for national relations and especially interpersonal relationships.

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### ***Conflict and its causes***

Conflicts have been described as existing "whenever *incompatible* activities occur", when two people wish to carry out acts which are mutually inconsistent, when there is "a state of tension between two actors irrespective of how it has originated or .how it is terminated", when there is "the active striving for one's preferred outcome which, if attained, precludes the attainment by others of their own preferred outcome, thereby producing hostility", and "when one individual, community, nation, or even supranational bloc desires something that can be obtained only at the expense of what another individual or group also desires".<sup>4</sup>

Conflicts can occur between many varying combinations of parties and for a great many different reasons. And they may also take various forms: from personal quarrels, through family, clan and community disagreements; disagreements between individuals and larger groups; disputes between political parties or workers and management; religious and ideological conflicts; to various forms of international disputes. Conflicts "may arise from differences in information or belief... may reflect differences in interests, desires or values . . . may occur as a result of a scarcity of some resource such as money, time, space, position [which includes success, pride, authority, status, recognition, etc.] . . . or . . . may reflect a rivalry in which one person tries to outdo or undo the other".<sup>5</sup>

The diversity of parties to, and motivational reasons for, conflicts make a precise definition of this expression difficult, if not impossible. For these reasons Fink suggests that a broad definition be used. Although he was specifically dealing with social conflicts, his definition is useful for personal as well as national disputes. A conflict, according to this definition, is any "situation or process in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic psychological relation or at least one form of antagonistic interaction".<sup>6</sup>

In Fink's definition, "psychological antagonisms" include such things as incompatible goals, mutually exclusive interests, emotional hostility, factual or value dissensus and traditional enmities; while "antagonistic interactions" "range from the most direct, violent, and unregulated struggle to the most subtle, indirect and highly regulated forms of mutual interference" .<sup>7</sup> In other words:

A conflict emerges whenever two or more persons (or groups) seek to possess the same object, occupy the same space or the same exclusive position, play incompatible roles, maintain incompatible goals, or undertake mutually incompatible means for achieving their purposes.<sup>8</sup>

Conflicts need not have obvious causes, such as a precipitating incident. In all relationships, whether interpersonal or otherwise, there occasionally occurs some form of behaviour which annoys, causes tension to, or engenders resentment in, one of the parties involved. These feelings or the behaviour patterns causing conflicts generally pass with little notice. Occasionally, however, they do lead to open conflicts. The term "conflict" implies a situation in which both actors, or groups of actors, are aware of the incompatibility.<sup>9</sup> Deutsch calls this position "manifest conflict" to distinguish it from the underlying tension or "underlying conflict" out of which it may grow. Some small incident may trigger a manifest conflict which may not be concerned with the same issues as the underlying conflict. Conflicts, therefore, need not always be about what they seem: " 'Manifest' conflict often cannot be resolved more than temporarily unless the underlying conflict is dealt with or unless it can be

disconnected and separated from the underlying conflict so that it can be treated in isolation."<sup>10</sup>

Nader and Todd have broken down conflict situations into three distinct evolutionary phrases. First, there is a "grievance" or "pre- conflict stage" in which an injustice, or grounds for resentment or complaint are perceived by one party. This is followed by what they call the "conflict stage" where the aggrieved party opts for confrontation and communicates his feelings to the offending party, that is, both parties are now aware of antagonism. Finally, the conflict enters the "dispute stage" when it becomes public, and third parties become involved.

Conflicts may move from the first to the second phase because of the discovery of a hitherto unknown incident, or the shift could result from one incident too many within a whole string of events, or one that is qualitatively different from the rest. Such "trigger events", however, may be only part of the reason for escalation. The role of outsiders in potential dispute situations must also be taken into account. They may play an important part in either precipitating a conflict into the dispute stage, or preventing the movement of such development. Fitzgerald *et al.* have noted that an audience can be instrumental in the precipitation of conflicts in situations where an action may otherwise have been scarcely noticed, e.g., where a loss of face occurs. Outside supporters may also precipitate a conflict by bringing otherwise unnoticed behaviour to the attention of one of the parties. Not only can such outsiders give support and aid in the articulation of the problem, but, conversely, they can explain that the party involved is being unreasonable or overreacting, or that there is too much to lose in such a conflict.<sup>11</sup>

Once a conflict has become apparent and open disputing has commenced, there are many ways of trying to bring about a resolution. A conflict can be said to be resolved, for instance, when both parties have given up any hope of changing or amending the situation. In the Gandhian dialectic, however, conflicts can only be said to have been resolved when *all* parties are satisfied with the outcome,

that is, "when some mutually consistent set of actions is worked out".<sup>12</sup> Such solutions obviously greatly reduce the fragility of resolutions.

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### *Ways of dealing with conflict*

Disputes are solved in a variety of ways, including coercion, "lumping it", avoidance, mediation, adjudication, arbitration and negotiation. Some of these methods are more applicable than others to certain types of conflict or to certain situations. Those attempting to overcome a conflict by unilateral means, for example, by using coercion or withdrawing, may suffer the personal costs of either making a resolution more difficult than it need be by increasing the antagonism of the opponent or by totally failing to "resolve" the conflict in the sense that the word has been defined above.

(a) *Coercion*. Coercion can readily be resorted to in conflict situations where one party feels powerless to conduct the dispute in any other way; where power disparities are so great that reciprocity need not be considered, where concern over the crucial issues involved gives way to concern over not yielding, or where "loss of face" becomes an issue. Challenges to beliefs, status and wants continually confront individuals and groups. The usual response to such challenges is opposition, often aggressive, and this can lead to violence. When the resources over which the dispute arose are tangible (money, property, etc.), the dispute can presumably be terminated by sharing, by compromise or by increasing the goods available. Swingle clearly points out that this is not possible with intangible resources (such as beliefs or concepts of "winning" and "not yielding"). In these situations, winning is the value sought and if winning is to have any value, there can be only one winner. He claims that a major factor in "maintaining conflict at a high level of violence is that of the protagonists defining negotiable conflict (focal issue a divisible resource) as non-negotiable (focal issue a non-divisible resource such as "winning").<sup>13</sup>

The problem of "loss of face" must not be underestimated in conflict situations. Even in disputes over the largest possible stakes, it can be of paramount importance—for example, in the Cuban missile crisis "face" and "pride" as well

as "security" were considered important.<sup>14</sup> The need for allowing the Soviets a face-saving way out of the situation was stressed by several of the President's advisers. Robert Kennedy, the then American Attorney-General, admitted:

Neither side wanted war over Cuba, we agreed, but it was possible that either side would take a step—for reasons of "security" or "pride" or "face"—that would require a response from the other side which, in turn, for the same reasons of security, pride or face, would bring about a counter response and eventually an escalation into armed conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Rapoport, in a very useful typology, classifies conflicts as either fights, games, or debates. While we shall return to the notion of "debate" as an ideal for the resolution of conflicts, it is interesting to note here what he says of the other two:

... the essential differences between a fight and a game... is that while in a fight the object (if any) is to harm the opponent, in a game it is to outwit the opponent ... a fight can be idealised as devoid of the rationality of the opponents, while a game on the contrary, is idealized as a struggle in which complete "rationality" of the opponent is assumed.

A fight (attempted mutual coercion), therefore, involves no strategy. It is blind—each adversary merely reacts to situations as they arise. Such a method of dealing with conflict has the obvious disadvantage that the conflict can never be truly "resolved" and, like the game of "chicken", is dangerous, forcing a protagonist to expose himself to risk of loss (usually substantial) in order to threaten the opponent. In other words, although threat may be expressed unilaterally, punishment tends to be bilateral.

(b) *"Lumping it\* and avoidance.* Many grievance situations do not get to the conflict stage. Rather than being resolved, they are sidestepped by the resignation or exit of one party. This happens either by the process of "lumping"...that is, ignoring the issues that gave rise to the problem, or "avoidance" which entails removing oneself from the situation giving rise to the grievance—for example, terminating a relationship. These procedures have obvious costs for the aggrieved person and in the long term may be no solution

at all—merely exchanging actors rather than changing the pattern of interaction that caused the dispute. The reasons why these patterns of behaviour are resorted to include a socialised ethic of not causing trouble, feelings of powerlessness, lack of negotiating skills, fear and cost of courts or, according to Felstiner, a lack of suitable alternatives. He claims that in our society "where non-governmental institutionalised mediation of interpersonal disputes are infrequent, some of the slack may be absorbed by avoidance."

The notion of avoidance is that a party may change his behaviour on account of the dispute in such a way that his relationship with the other disputant is, at least temporarily, shrunk or terminated. The dispute, although not settled, is thus no longer a matter which the disputant believes he ought to do something about.<sup>17</sup>

While "lumping it" has the disadvantage of condemning an individual to continue living in a tension-creating situation, avoidance behaviour also has a great many costs associated with it—both internal and external.

If one "solves" a dispute by severing the relationship with a close friend or leaving a job, the effort taken to find a new friend or job (and the risk that they may not be as good as the old) are the internal prices paid for choosing this mode. These costs could be social, economic or psychological. The psychological cost of avoidance may include attendant feelings of guilt. When an individual limits a relationship

which is socially or personally expected to be intimate or extensive, he may be disturbed by his own breach of social conventions or of his own standards or by his failure to communicate further with a person who has a reasonable expectation that disputes between them will be worked through rather than avoided.<sup>1</sup>

The external costs are those imposed upon an ex-friend or an ex- employer who must also either find new friends or employees or do with fewer. The avoider may even gain benefits by way of feelings of satisfaction from imposing these costs, but then they may lead to further internal costs if the avoided party decides to retaliate against the avoider. Still, further costs can be incurred by

the redirection of hostility that has not dissipated after avoidance measures have been taken. This redirected hostility could be aimed at either an available non-disputant or against the self, creating further external and/or internal cost.

*(c) Mediation, arbitration, adjudication.* When physical aggression (or other coercive measures) or avoidance fails to successfully terminate a conflict situation, or where interpersonal (or intergroup) negotiations break down, the use of third parties to facilitate a settlement through mediation, adjudication or arbitration becomes likely. Although unsuccessful negotiations often result in third-party intervention (requested or otherwise), it is proposed to deal with these latter methods of conflict resolution first, because, when properly conducted, interpersonal negotiations maximise the probability of a lasting resolution with the minimum of cost to either side.

Of the many disputes where negotiations fail relatively few end up before a court, instead one or both parties may decide, even at this late stage, to resort to avoidance or to some unofficial "forum" that "is part of (and embedded within) the social setting within which the dispute arose, including the school principal, the shop steward, the administrator etc."<sup>19</sup>

These situations may involve mediation, arbitration or adjudication. In mediation the third party aids the disputants in reaching an agreement. Both disputing parties have agreed to the presence of the mediator who suggests solutions without any decision-making power. In arbitration situations the disputants have voluntarily abdicated their own decision-making power in favour of that of the arbitrator. In these cases the protagonists explain their perceptions of the conflict situation to a third party whose power to make a decision they have agreed to accept beforehand. An example of such a situation is where two parties voluntarily go to court to achieve the final resolution of a conflict. An adjudication is an autocratic solution whereby the third party has the authority to intervene in the dispute even where one or neither of the protagonists wish it, give a decision and enforce compliance with it. These situations generally occur where one party to a dispute takes court

action compelling the other party to join the proceedings even without his or her consent, or where, for example, an interpersonal dispute leads to a breach of the criminal code and, through the intervention of the police, ends up in court. Except for the type of dispute illustrated by the preceding example many disputes that go to court for arbitration and adjudication do not reach the trial stage because of abandonment, withdrawal or settlement.

As Aubert has pointed out the movement of a conflict from private bargaining to litigation before a law court involves the risk of total loss for one of the parties.<sup>20</sup> This obviously is not in the interest of either side, especially when court costs are taken into account. Why then is this "non-rational" behaviour resorted to?

Conflicts are generally terminated in one of two ways: compromise, where both parties win something and lose something, or by a decision based on fault, where the outcome is one of zero-sum, that is, the winner takes all. Some writers believe that in Western industrial societies we, unlike less complex societies, ever increasingly rely on the latter model:

As societies become more complex and stratified, and hence tend to emphasize rule enforcement as the objective in settling disputes, a different set of institutions is required for the maintenance of order. Instead of institutions directed towards the achievement of compromise and the maintenance of solidarity, institutions designed to sanction the breach of norms are required.<sup>1</sup>

Others, like Unger, claim that as societies become ever more complex, become welfare and corporate states, the opposite trend operates. The rule of law is undermined and tendencies creating a shift towards democratic communities that "look for an alternative to the idea of legality in the notion of a community bound together by a shared experience and capable of developing its own self-revising customs or principles of interaction"<sup>22</sup> are strengthened.

The first scenario points to inbuilt biases in our social structure against compromise and mediation, the second, as the shift from the ideological to reality occurs, sees a great possibility for compromise to play an expanded role in the solution of social conflicts.

Whichever scenario is accepted, it must be noted that some forms of conflict are inherently less amenable to negotiation or compromise. In situations of scarcity (that is, where a conflict of interests exists) the usual remedy is achieved through negotiation, but where there is a dissensus (that is, the conflict is one of values) these remedies are not quite as obvious:

As long as a conflict of interest remains relatively pure, it is amenable to solutions through bargaining and compromise on the condition that there is something to give and something to take on both sides . . . When a clash of interests has become associated with a dissensus, bargaining and compromise may be harder to achieve, while the conflict has on the other hand, become amenable to a solution through the intervention of law in the broadest sense.<sup>25</sup>

Although clashing values by themselves may lead to overt conflicts, where one party attempts to convert the other, they tend to result in avoidance. While clashing interests tend to bring people together and increase the likelihood of disputes, clashing values tend to keep people apart creating little likelihood of conflict or the need for resolution. A combination of the two types of clashes, of value and interest, therefore, facilitates the appearance of the dispute in the courtroom—the clashing interests bringing the parties together and the clashing values making compromise difficult.

Besides these "built in" tendencies there are many other factors which can come into play steering a conflict into the generally zero-sum (or to use Aubert's phrase "non-rational") procedures of arbitration and adjudication. These include the overestimation of the likelihood of victory by both sides, the provision of a "moral test case for the individual, which the settlement out of court could not have", the ability to pass costs on to others,<sup>24</sup> an unwillingness to bargain over one's perceived moral rights, ill-feelings towards the opponent which preclude negotiations, negotiations with an opponent being seen as moral weakness making defeat at the hands of a judge preferable, the setting of precedent on which similar future claims can be based, the role played by outsiders who may create fear of being seen as having sold out, and the

avoidance of responsibility and blame for not having done enough to defend the interests involved—especially if the litigant is not alone in the dispute, for example, if family, partners or colleagues are also involved.

*(d) Negotiation.* When facing a conflict there are alternatives to coercion or the reliance upon the judgement of third parties. Like mediation, negotiation is a search for an outcome that is adequately suitable to both parties, but unlike mediation, the dispute is settled bilaterally, that is, the two parties are themselves the decision makers.

The first two of the above methods can be termed competitive modes of conflict resolution, being generally characterised by the presence of a third party with decision making powers, coercive power, emphasis on norms, looking at past behaviour, verdicts, zero-sum decisions and guilt findings. The latter two examples, on the other hand, can be termed compromise modes. They are characterised by the bilateral meeting of the parties involved, the lack of coercive power, emphasis on the pursuit of interests, looking to the future of the relationship, agreements, compromise decisions and the avoidance of guilt or innocence as an issue.<sup>26</sup>

Negotiations are attempts to arrange a new combination of some of the common and conflicting interests of the parties but they can only result in agreement "if there exists at least one set of terms that each party would prefer to having no agreement."<sup>27</sup> Negotiators have various choices open to them, they can accept the other party's offer or propose a preferred alternative. They can also push the dispute to the position where the intervention of a third party becomes a probability either "by refusing to consider the issues further, by refusing to hear the other's views, or by walking out and refusing to return",<sup>28</sup> that is, by accepting the status quo.

Negotiations have the advantage over the other methods of dispute settlement already discussed in that they are most likely to effect lasting resolution to conflict as well as reduce dependence on "experts" thereby making the parties self-reliant, giving them control over important decisions that need to be made

concerning their own lives. As a dialectical process negotiations also occasionally aid the discovery of entirely new approaches to the problem:

The outcome of a negotiation is essentially one that, in each party's opinion in the perceived circumstances, is at least satisfactory enough and is perhaps considered to be the best that is obtainable. It often represents a compromise between the parties' initial demands and expectations but there may be in part or whole, the joint creation of some new terms not originally conceived of by either party.<sup>29</sup>

Further than that, negotiations offer the opportunity for personal growth by exposing each party to the views of the other, providing a situation for learning—the decision being "the culmination of an interactive process of information exchange".<sup>30</sup> This prevents personal, and in the long term and on a larger scale, social and national stagnation—when an agreement between the parties is reached "the position of each has been subtly changed not only by terms offered, but by its experience of the other and exposure to the other's persuasion".<sup>31</sup>

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### ***Destructive versus productive conflict***

A conflict can be termed "destructive" when "the participants in it are dissatisfied with the outcomes and they feel they have lost as a result of the conflict". It is "productive" "if the participants are satisfied with their outcomes and feel that they have gained as a result of the conflict".

Destructive conflicts have a tendency to expand and escalate, becoming independent of the initiating causes—often continuing after these have become irrelevant or have been forgotten. Expansion can occur in the size and number of the issues involved, the size and number of principles and precedents seen to be at stake, the costs participants are willing to bear, the intensity of negative attitudes to the opponent and the number of norms of moral conduct from which behaviour towards the other side is exempted.

Deutsch points out that the outcome of a conflict is never totally determined by objective circumstances, and that actions of the participants are not

inevitably determined by external circumstances: "Whether a conflict takes a productive or a destructive course is thus open to influence even under the most unfavourable conditions."<sup>35</sup>

If this is correct then the onus is placed on each individual to ensure that rather than the conflict becoming a competitive encounter in which as one gains, the other loses, the encounter remains cooperative and thus maximising the chances of a productive conflict resolution.

In a cooperative context a conflict is seen as a common problem in which the opponents "have the joint interest of reaching a mutually satisfactory solution". This process is likely to lead to a productive conflict resolution because "it aids open and honest communication of relevant information between the participants" reducing misunderstandings "which can lead to confusion and mistrust", it tends to limit rather than expand the scope of the conflict by encouraging "the recognition of legitimacy of each other's interests and of the necessity of searching for a solution which is responsive to the needs of each side", and "it leads to a trusting, friendly attitude which increases sensitivity to similarities and common interests, while minimising the salience of differences."<sup>54</sup>

*(a) Behaviour promoting destructive conflict.* If parties to conflict undergoing negotiation or mediation go in with a winner-take-all attitude a lasting "resolution", using the term as it was defined at the beginning of this chapter, is well nigh impossible. In these situations "one party marshalls all its forces to compel the other party to do what the first has decided it wants. Confrontation is from a fixed position and seeks to mobilise the power to win.'

When parties negotiate they are generally trying both to elicit concessions from an opponent *and* to resolve the dispute by coming to an agreement. In practice, especially if too much emphasis is placed on the first aim, each party will often endeavour "to coerce or lure its adversary into making maximal concessions while conceding as little as possible itself".<sup>36</sup> In order to do this various pressure tactics are used in an effort to persuade the opponent to yield. These tactics include threats, refusal to negotiate over certain issues, coercion, deception,

punishments and the use of illegitimate techniques which violate the values and norms governing such interactions.

A study by Wilson and Bixenstine of interpersonal bargaining indicated that unjustified insult, unfair reduction of one bargainer's outcomes by an opponent, or other behaviour posing a threat or damage to "face" usually resulted in retaliation and mutual loss rather than in cooperative effort.<sup>37</sup> This experiment indicates that when bargainers (negotiators) "have been made to look foolish and weak before a salient audience, they are likely to retaliate against whoever caused their humiliation. Moreover, retaliation will be chosen despite the knowledge that doing so may require the sacrifice of all or large portions of the available outcomes".<sup>3</sup> Likewise Siegel and Fouraker concluded from the results of their experiments that "Some negotiations collapse when one party becomes incensed at the other, and henceforth strives to maximise his opponent's displeasure rather than his own satisfaction."

Promises and threats are employed as measures attempting to affect the opponent's behaviour "by altering the perceived gains and cost of his alternative course of action through linking an externally imposed reward or punishment to his relevant alternatives". Their use is based on the assumption that "the other must be externally motivated to comply with one's wishes".<sup>40</sup> Negative sanctions, that is, threats and punishments, and inappropriate sanctions tend to elicit more resistance than do positive sanctions such as promises and rewards. Threatening behaviour is not at all conducive to the discovery of a cooperative solution to a conflict— as Deutsch has pointed out: "Threat induces defensiveness and reduces the tolerance of ambiguity as well as openness to the new and unfamiliar; excessive tension leads to a primitivisation and stereotyping of thought process."<sup>41</sup>

Many consider that "toughness" is a good strategy to be employed in negotiations—a "tough" negotiator being one who starts with high demands and either makes concessions only hesitantly or not at all. Under some circumstances toughness can be a good tactic. Experiments conducted by Bartos found that "those who were tough tended to receive a higher payoff than

those who were soft"<sup>42</sup> but he went on to explain that "the main reason for this was the fact that toughness in the bargaining situation did *not* impede progress towards an agreement too seriously",<sup>43</sup> the toughness was of style. Where toughness becomes "positional commitment" negotiations must break down. Positional commitments, for example non-negotiable demands, involve "communicating inflexibility to the adversary, making it clear to him that no more concessions are forthcoming and that he will have to concede in order to resolve the controversy".<sup>44</sup>

Being tough, when the absolutely minimum acceptable payoff to the opponent is known, will increase the likelihood that negotiations will fail. Being tough, even where there is no subjective positional commitment, can have another drawback:

... a tough person is, by definition, one who demands more than is fair. And demanding more than is fair will be rejected as soon as the unfairness of the demand is obvious . . . Given this hypothesis, the finding that toughness is a good strategy can be placed in proper perspective. This generalization holds for negotiations that start without realistic beliefs about the opponent's payoff. For negotiations which start with realistic beliefs, toughness is less advisable and may be even a definitively bad strategy.<sup>45</sup>

Deception easily creeps into a competitive situation where one or both parties are trying to enhance the credibility of their threats while trying to diminish the credibility of the opponent's threats. Even if deception does not enter the conflict, poor communications, which can be as destructive, are an almost inevitable result of the competitive process. Suspicions and hostile attitudes, which play up the differences and minimise the points of similarity between the parties, make a satisfactory resolution to the conflict at hand ever more difficult.

The use of pressure tactics can be summed up by quoting Pruitt where he maintains that they

are often only partially successful or tend to cancel each other out. In such cases they only serve to delimit the outer boundaries of the solution to the

problem, the points beyond which each party cannot be pushed. They do not lead to a specific solution.

Finally, the violation of values and norms which govern interactions in given situations also have the effect of making a cooperative effort to resolve a conflict more difficult than need be. These rules of "fairness" include rules which are content specific, that is, they specify the appropriate solution to a given problem (for instance, accepting that loud music after midnight is unreasonable), rules of equity which dictate that disputes be settled on the basis of an interpretation of notions of fairness or reciprocity, and finally, mutual responsiveness where each party is expected to make concessions to the extent that the other party demonstrates its need for these concessions.<sup>47</sup>

Although competition is the normal method of conflict solution, the destructive nature of unregulated competitive conflict is well recognised and consequently it is limited and controlled by institutional forms (e.g. the legal system), rules for conducting negotiations, and various social roles (e.g. lawyers and police) and social norms such as "justice", "nonviolence" and "fairness".<sup>48</sup>

*(b) Behaviour facilitating productive conflict.* When pressure tactics are employed to seek resolution of a dispute it is often found that they are incompatible with the aim of persuading the adversary to make concessions, and further, such tactics actually subvert the aim of resolving the conflict.<sup>49</sup>

A cooperative process, which is more likely to result in productive conflict resolution, employs the strategy of persuasion and the tactics of conciliation, minimisation of differences and the enhancement of mutual understanding and goodwill.<sup>30</sup> The aim is to maintain open and honest communication of all information relevant to the participants, thus reducing the likelihood of the development of misunderstandings which often lead to confusion and mistrust. The cooperative process entails the recognition of the legitimacy of the adversary's interests and of the necessity to engage in the search for a solution that adequately meets the needs of both sides. Positions, therefore, should be stated in terms of the problem to be solved rather than a solution to be accepted by the adversary.

This process is analogous with the third mode of conducting a conflict in Rapoport's typology, that is, debate. According to Rapoport, a debate, having the objective of convincing the opponent and making them see things as you see them, is composed of three elements. These can be summarised as {a) conveying the message to the opponent that they have been heard, and understood, (b) delineating the region of validity of the opponent's stand, and (c) inducing the assumption of similarity.<sup>31</sup> In order for this to be done successfully the opponent must not be threatened, a relationship of trust and mutual responsiveness must be built up. It should be remembered that it is easier to move in the direction of cooperation to competition than from competition to cooperation. "Trust when violated", observes Deutsch, "is more likely to turn into suspicion than negated suspicion is to turn into trust."<sup>52</sup>

Trust can be built up by showing a positive interest in the opponent's welfare, and demonstrating a readiness to respond helpfully to their needs and requests. There are however the obvious problems with trust—what if opponents take advantage of a trust-inducing or breakthrough-creating action (such as a unilateral concession) for their own ends? Or if such concession is interpreted as a sign of weakness and thus emboldens the opponent to make more vigorous use of pressure tactics against the one offering the trust-inducing concession? Of course this may happen, but all too often conflicts are conducted on the assumption that it *will* happen if the parties are not sufficiently tough. The cooperative method of conflict resolution does involve the taking of some risk, however this risk is far less than the risk of the loss of a mutually acceptable resolution incurred by the use of pressure tactics.

The other main element of a "debate" is the emphasis placed on mutual responsiveness and reciprocity. This first step in building up the climate for these elements starts with the self. It requires giving others the credit one gives oneself and an undoing of the normal bias "towards perceiving one's own behaviour towards the other as being more benevolent and more legitimate than the other's behaviour towards oneself".<sup>53</sup>

While mutual responsiveness is reasonably altruistic in the first instance, being governed by the other party's needs, it, like the well-established norm of reciprocity (you should help those who have helped you and you should not injure those who have helped you), assumes that in the long term such actions will be repaid. In short, "if you want to be helped by others you must help them".<sup>54</sup>

When people or groups enter into a relationship with other people or groups, an expectation is built up that they will be attentive to the others' needs. This norm however also operates in situations where there is no close relationship and even in situations where power differences might invite exploitation:

The norm thus safeguards powerful people against the temptations of their own status; it motivates and regulates reciprocity as an exchange pattern, striving to inhibit the emergence of exploitative relations which would undermine the social system and the very power arrangements which had made exploitation possible.<sup>55</sup>

Mutual responsiveness can be developed outside of the close relationships in which it is the expected mode of interaction by the performing of acts of generosity:

One party must necessarily start the ball rolling by being generous, and his behaviour at this time may well be an effort to ingratiate or an expression of initial attraction towards the other party. The fact that the ball continues rolling may at first be a matter of reciprocity, with the other party reciprocating this reciprocity. But eventually a norm of mutual responsiveness emerges that is quite distinct from such historical origins.<sup>56</sup>

Bearing these factors in mind Rapoport's ideal cooperative form of conflict resolution is forwarded as the most productive method, the one most in keeping with the Gandhian tradition, and the one upon which a satyagraha campaign can be superimposed without contradiction.

Rapoport claims that where most debates fail in modifying outlooks the failure can be traced to either the unwillingness or the inability of the parties to listen

to each other. The first step for overcoming this potential stumbling block is the removal of threat by the conveyance of assurances that the opponent has been clearly and accurately understood. The best method of doing this is by stating the opponent's case back to them, for in order "To make a dent in the opponent's mental armor, you must make him listen, and something he is sure to listen to is his own case."<sup>57</sup>

Usually in a debate we point out the grounds on which we consider the opponent's position to be *invalid*. Rapoport argues that if we want to reduce threats to the opponent, this procedure must be reversed—we should point out "conditions under which the opponent's point of view *is* valid". Having shown that their point of view has been understood, they should be invited to perform the same exercise with respect to us. This is difficult because there are no rules for such a procedure. This however may be advantageous, for, as Rapoport points out, if there were such rules a game could ensue where the opponent became suspicious that they were being outwitted.

The object of this procedure is to induce the opponent to treat you the way they would wish to be treated, to induce them

to assume that you are like him; that if he feels that he deserves to be believed and trusted; that if he feels that he has been relieved by the removal of threat, then it is to his advantage to relieve you, in order that threats ... do not interfere with the cooperative potentialities of the situation.

With this reversal of the normal procedure of conflict handling, one's own shortcomings and aggressive urges are not imputed to the adversary, instead:

one seeks within himself the clearly perceived shortcomings of the opponent. The opponent often seems stupid or rigid or dishonest or ruthless. It will serve us well to ask ourselves to what extent we resemble him ... To convince, we must be heard, and to be heard, we must be listened to; people listen most attentively to what they like to hear; they like to hear their own shortcomings projected on others, not others' shortcomings projected on them. Our ultimate purpose in raising questions about

ourselves is to induce the opponent to raise similar questions about himself. We see ourselves as intelligent, honest and considerate. It will serve us well to imagine that the opponent possesses these qualities to *some* degree. Maybe he does not, but maybe this "delusion" of ours will induce a similar delusion in him about us.<sup>59</sup>

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### **Conclusion**

Although if one opponent in a conflict is committed to a zero-sum outcome while the other is seeking a cooperative resolution "the usual tendency for such asymmetries in orientation is to produce a change toward mutual competition rather than mutual cooperation",<sup>60</sup> this is not the inevitable outcome. The Gandhian model of conflict resolution rests upon the assumption that a committed individual will be able to resolve conflicts in a productive way if they put maximum effort into the process. Spiegel has established that in conflicts between partners in a close relationship, conflicts do move from the competitive to the cooperative.<sup>61</sup> The Gandhian model rests on the belief that this is also possible in other more distant relationships.

The successful resolution of manifest conflicts, even where the underlying conflicts are completely sidestepped, can also still be useful. The productive resolution of conflict is a learned procedure, and even though our society sets great store by teaching competitiveness and conflict suppression and provides little formal training in the techniques of constructive conflict resolution or provides few institutional resources to aid such actions, each small victory for productive conflict is a step in the right direction. The successful management of manifest conflicts may give the parties the confidence to face more fundamental conflicts in the future.

Likert and Likert come to the same conclusion, arguing that our entire mode of interaction within conflict situations is learned. If zero-sum and other inadequate methods of dealing with conflict are learned, then, they argue, "more effective ways can be learned equally well and, through socialisation,

can be passed on from person to person and from generation to generation".<sup>62</sup> In conclusion, to quote Curie:

It is within the capacity of everyone to increase the number of peaceful relationships in which he is involved, and to decrease the number of unpeaceful ones. If our concepts of peace and unpeacefulness, and consequently our objectives, are clear, there are several spheres of life in which we can take action and in so doing possibly have an effect (though often too indirect and obscure for recognition) upon a larger sphere.<sup>63</sup>

## CHAPTER TWO: Satyagraha: The Gandhian Approach to Conflict Resolution

... I do oppose  
My patience his fury, and am arm'd  
To suffer with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Shakespeare (*Merchant of Venice*)

### *Introduction*

Approached with a limited understanding of the psychology of the disputing process, violence appears to be a superior technique of solving conflicts to nonviolence because it has obvious and tangible strategies and weapons. Nonviolent means are far more difficult to visualise. Also, sceptics can, and often do, present moral dilemmas as ways of debunking nonviolence as a method of resolving conflicts. Neither ignorance as to these techniques nor the criticisms of them prove that conflicts cannot be solved creatively by nonviolent means.

Given that conflicts and clashes of interests will always occur, nonviolent ways of resolving these conflicts have a far greater chance than other methods of falling within Deutsch's definition of "productive", rather than "destructive". Conducting a conflict in a nonviolent non-threatening way prevents the opponent from reacting out of fear in mindless reflex action'. Violence in any of its many forms also has the tendency to become self-perpetuating through the cycle of vengeance and counter vengeance. A productive resolution of conflict is more likely to be achieved if it is based on nonviolence (and this is further increased if conversion is successfully carried out) because, in the words of Gregg, it leaves "no aftermath of resentment, bitterness or revenge, no necessity for further threats or force".

What has been said about violence begetting violence also applies to behaviour that humiliates the opponent. Such humiliation is likely to produce the hatred that may turn to violence. There are, however, other reasons for not using

violence or threatening actions in conflict situations beside their self-perpetrating characteristics. Naess claims:

It is ethically unjustifiable to injure an opponent if it is not verified that he is wrong and you are right. Now, it is always more or less unverifiable that he is wrong and you are right. Therefore, it is always unjustifiable to injure an opponent.

Gandhi himself summed up this position when he remarked that violence is to be excluded "because man is not capable of knowing absolute truth and, therefore, is not competent to punish". This reminder is essential since, as Erikson notes, when we are tempted to violence we parade as the other's policeman, convincing ourselves that regardless of the quality of their actions the other "has it coming to him". However, those who act on such righteousness implicate themselves in a mixture of pride and guilt which undermine their position both "psychologically and ethically".<sup>5</sup>

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### *Types of nonviolent action*

In conflict situations success through nonviolent action can be achieved in three separate ways: (1) accommodation, where the opponent does not believe in the changes made but nevertheless believes that it is best to give in on some or all points to gain peace or to cut losses; (2) nonviolent coercion, where the opponent wants to continue the struggle but cannot because they have lost the sources of power and means of control; and (3) conversion, where the opponent has changed inwardly to the degree that they want to make the changes desired by the nonviolent activist<sup>6</sup> (or indeed, the nonviolent activist himself has so changed). Although preferable to coercion based on physical force or threat, the first two modes of nonviolent conflict resolution are based on power that the respective parties can exert on each other. Powerlessness of one party to a conflict means by necessity that a truly productive outcome will rarely be arrived at. Conversion, on the other hand, operates outside the framework of the interplay between power and powerlessness—the touching of the conscience involves a totally different dynamic.

All three of the forms of nonviolent action in Sharp's typology may succeed in "solving" a conflict. As noted in the previous chapter, accommodation in its common forms of "lumping it" and avoidance has its problems. Both accommodation and nonviolent coercion may resolve conflicts productively in the long term however, because behaviour change may lead to changes in attitude. In the case of nonviolent coercion especially, the opponent may be induced to re-examine their attitudinal position. The coercion will force them to make a decision about whether or not to comply and perhaps further, whether or not they should have complied. The more the coercion, however, the more likely it becomes that the opponent will comply without rethinking his position.<sup>7</sup>

The Gandhian technique of satyagraha rests on the belief that the striving for conversion is the most effective method of conducting a struggle on a pragmatic assessment of the outcome, but more than that Gandhi believed that it is the morally correct way to conduct conflict because only through a dialectical process can truth be arrived at, or at least approached, and such quest for truth is, according to him, the aim of human life.<sup>8</sup>

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### *The dialectics of satyagraha*

Violence to persons and property has the effect of clouding the real issues involved in the original conflict while non-coercive, nonviolent action invites the parties to a dialogue about the issues themselves. Gandhi, therefore, warns that we must "Hate the sin and not the sinner".<sup>9</sup>

When opponents are seen as the valuable human personalities that they are and through nonviolent, non-coercive means the conflict is conducted in such a way that opponents are allowed, or encouraged, to realise their own human potential, existential rewards also accrue to the satyagrahi. Bondurant summarises this proposition admirably when she states that Gandhi

fashioned a method of conflict in the exercise of which a man could come to know what he is and what it means to evolve. In satyagraha dogma gives

way to an open exploration of context. The objective is not to assert propositions, but to create possibilities. In opening up choices and in confronting an opponent with the demand that he make a choice, the satyagrahi involves himself in acts of "ethical existence". The process forces a continuing examination of one's own motives, an examination undertaken within the context of relationships as they change towards a new, restructured, and reintegrated pattern.

This dialectical process is essentially creative and inherently constructive. Its immediate objective is

a restructuring of the opposing elements to achieve a situation which is satisfactory to both the original opposing antagonists but in such a way as to present an entirely new total circumstance... through the operation of nonviolent action the truth as judged by the fulfilment of human needs will emerge in the form of a mutually satisfactory and agreed-upon solution.<sup>10</sup>

The concept of satyagraha has been defined in many ways. Vincent Sheean says ("a little more boldly than Mr Gandhi himself ever did") that it means in essence that "what a man can do is to declare his truth and die for it. This any man can do; and there is no power on earth that can prevent it."<sup>11</sup> In Gandhi's words: "The essence of nonviolence technique is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves"; "Satyagraha is a relentless search for truth and a determination to reach truth"; and "The satyagrahi's object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrong-doer".<sup>12</sup> In conflict situations satyagraha merely means that the satyagrahi follows no other plan than the adherence to nonviolence and has no other goal than to reach the truth. The truth being the end of the process, nonviolence the means to achieve it. Because good ends can never grow out of bad means, the opponent (for the satyagrahi there may be opponents but there are never enemies) is not forced to expose himself to loss. There is no threat, coercion or punishment. The person offering the satyagraha instead undergoes self-suffering with the optimistic belief that the opponent can be converted to see the truth of his or her claim by touching the opponent's conscience, or that a clearer vision of

truth will grow out of the dialectical process for both parties. While satyagrahis try to convert, they must themselves also remain open to persuasion.

Many regard a technique of conflict resolution based on such moral appeals as a political absurdity. They may fail, but if it were otherwise they would in fact cease to be moral. The essential nature of such moral appeals is that they call for a response that can be either given or withheld by those towards whom they are directed. Gandhi however believed that nobody was entirely out of the reach of such appeals "especially if one's goodwill is made sufficiently manifest and one's willingness to suffer for the truth is clearly demonstrated".<sup>13</sup>

Satyagraha in its pure sense aims not so much at changing the behaviour of the opponent as at changing their attitudes *so that* they may then change their behaviour. Changed behaviour without changed attitudes can only be maintained through coercion, which is fundamentally opposed by the philosophy of satyagraha. Satyagraha, then, goes beyond redressing merely the immediate grievance that has surfaced as conflict, but aims to resolve the distrust and friction that are the underlying sources of the conflict. In order to achieve this:

Satyagraha is gentle, it never wounds. It must not be the result of anger or malice. It is never fussy, never impatient, never vociferous. It is the direct opposite of compulsion. It was conceived as a complete substitute for violence. The reformer must have consciousness of the truth of his cause. He will not be impatient with the opponent, he will be impatient with himself. . . .<sup>14</sup>

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### ***The principles of satyagraha***

Satyagraha is far more than a set of actions. It is also an attitude, for example, a boycott may be part of a satyagraha campaign but if the underlying principles of satyagraha are not present then a boycott alone cannot accurately be described as satyagraha. It becomes what Bondurant has termed "duragraha". Unlike satyagraha, duragraha starts off with prejudgements aimed at

overcoming and destroying the position of the opponent.<sup>15</sup> It is not concerned with the initiation of a dialectical process.

The basic precepts and rules of a satyagraha, as opposed to a duragraha, campaign can be systematised in the following ten points:<sup>16</sup>

- (1) Violence is invited from opponents if they are humiliated or provoked. "It is never the intention of a *satyagrahi* to embarrass the wrong-doer. The appeal is never to his fear; it is, must be always to his heart."<sup>17</sup>
- (2) A violent attitude is less likely on the part of a would-be satyagrahi if they have made clear to themselves the essential elements of their case and the purpose of the struggle. The sincere undertaking of a conflict along Gandhian lines requires an affirmative answer to the question: "Is my motive when starting this new direct action unmixed—is it just to realize the goal of the campaign, and not *also* to wish to injure the opponent or due to other deviant motive?"<sup>18</sup>
- (3) Opponents are less likely to use violent means the better they understand the satyagrahi's case and conduct.

As a satyagrahi I must always allow my cards to be examined and reexamined at all times and make reparation if an error is discovered.<sup>1</sup>

... an essential ingredient of nonviolent persuasion is the honest and straightforward dissemination of information... the withholding of information, the making of unsubstantiated charges ...the packaging of an issue, and appeals to greed, prejudice and hatred cannot under any circumstances be reconciled with the philosophy of nonviolence.<sup>20</sup>

- (4) The essential interests which opponents have in common should be clearly formulated and cooperation established on this basis. This is an extension of Rapoport's idea of "debate"—it explicitly avoids his definition of the "game" mentality. Pelton notes that disputes between friends differ from those between strangers or between those who have enmity towards each other. In the former case, the dispute occurs within a framework of much mutual agreement, ties and friendship. In the latter case, the

disagreement itself becomes the most salient source of information that one party has of the other. This can "become the primary base of development of inferences and constructs by and about the disputants". Unchecked by further information from other sources "they can balloon into undifferentiated negative images that can only generate fear and distrust".<sup>21</sup> One way of avoiding this is through personal contact. Many times when Gandhi found himself in a deadlocked position, he tried to interview his critic or antagonist personally.<sup>22</sup> In all cases, whether the dispute is between friends or strangers, whether the parties meet face to face or not, the most important principle in satyagraha is to attempt to see the validity in the opponent's position:

Immediately we begin to think of things as our opponent thinks of them, we shall be able to do them full justice. I know that this requires a detached state of mind, and it is a state very difficult to reach. Nevertheless, for a *satyagrahi* it is absolutely essential. Three-fourths of the miseries and misunderstandings in the world will disappear, if we step into the shoes of our adversaries and understand their standpoint. We will then agree with our adversaries quickly or think of them charitably.<sup>23</sup>

(5) Opponents should not be judged harder than the self:

The golden rule of conduct... is mutual toleration, seeing that we will never all think alike and we shall see Truth in fragment and from different angles of vision. Conscience is not the same thing for all. Whilst, therefore, it is a good guide for individual conduct, imposition of that conduct upon all will be an insufferable interference with everyone's freedom of conscience.

We must refrain from crying "shame, shame" to anybody, we must not use any coercion to persuade other people to adopt our way. We must guarantee to them the same freedom we claim for ourselves.

(6) Opponents should be trusted. Satyagraha is based on the principle "that the only way to make a man trustworthy is to trust him, and the surest way to make him untrustworthy is to distrust him":<sup>25</sup> "I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks. He who trusts has

never yet lost in the world."<sup>26</sup> Pelton, however, notes that trusting behaviour does not unequivocally beget cooperation, it may in fact lead to exploitation. Experiments in this area tend to support this somewhat depressing conclusion; however, the experimenters gave no values to the important subjective payoffs of living by one's personal morality (for example, by standing one's ground in the face of coercion and refusal to comply with injustice<sup>27</sup>):

It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them ... The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary.<sup>28</sup>

This, however, does not imply a martyr complex, for, as Gandhi points out, as a final measure, non-cooperation can be resorted to. The satyagrahi need not wait endlessly for conversion to occur. "When therefore the limit is reached he takes risks and conceives plans of active satyagraha which may mean civil disobedience and the like. His patience is never exhausted to the point of giving up his creed."<sup>29</sup>

(7) An unwillingness to compromise on non-essentials decreases the likelihood of converting the opponent. Satyagraha requires that demands made be the "irreducible minimum"; they should never be lowered just to please the adversary, but both parties should be prepared to "make large concessions on all points except where a principle is involved", in fact in cases short of matters of principle "A satyagrahi never misses, can never miss, a chance of compromise on honourable terms". Gandhi claimed that he himself was essentially a man of compromise "because I can never be sure that I am right".<sup>30</sup> Fundamentally, however, as Bondurant rightly points out, satyagraha is a process of synthesis rather than compromise. "The satyagrahi is never prepared to yield any position which he holds to be the truth", but "he may be persuaded that he is in error in so holding them."<sup>31</sup>

- (8) The conversion of an opponent is furthered by personal sincerity. Opponents are more likely to resort to violence if they believe that the satyagrahi's case is unjust and they are more likely to think this if they see their "own point of view distorted and caricatured, and your case described without regard to your actual, far from perfect, behaviour".<sup>32</sup> Genuine satyagraha, however, by definition being a quest for truth, cannot be used in an unjust cause.
- (9) The best way of convincing an opponent of the sincerity of the satyagrahi is to make sacrifices for the given cause.
- (10) A position of weakness in an opponent should not be exploited. Intrigue and manipulation of opinion are to be rejected, as is surprise "in so far as this takes the form of exploiting temporary advantages in order to embarrass or to bring undue pressure upon one's opponent".<sup>33</sup> Advantage should not be taken of an opponent's weak moments "if they have not been the result of satyagraha, but due to extraneous reasons".<sup>34</sup>

In a pure fight the fighters would never go beyond the objective fixed when the fight began even if they received an accession to their strength in the course of the fighting, and on the other hand they could not give up their objective if they found their strength dwindling away.<sup>35</sup>

Besides the obvious moral reason, such weaknesses should not be exploited because surrender caused by some misfortune suffered by the opponent making it necessary to call off the struggle may leave them, after their surrender, as opposed to the position of the satyagrahi as before the struggle commenced. Surrender without conversion is not the ideal way of terminating a struggle. Conversely, the demonstration of goodwill by not taking advantage of his position may induce the opponent to trust the sincerity of the satyagrahi and "prepare a suitable atmosphere for a settlement".<sup>36</sup>

There have been several examples of such chivalrous action being shown by satyagrahis under Gandhi's generalship. The moral is clearly illustrated in the action and aftermath of a long struggle in South Africa. Gandhi was about to launch a mass satyagraha against the Government in January 1914 when a

general strike of European employees of the Union railways "made the position of the Government extremely delicate". Gandhi called off the protest declaring

that the Indians could not thus assist the railway strikers, as they were not out to harass the Government, their struggle being entirely different and differently conceived. Even if we undertook the march, we would begin it at some other time when the railway trouble had ended. This decision of ours created a deep impression... One of the secretaries of General Smuts jocularly said: "I do not like your people, and do not care to assist them at all. But what am I to do? You help us in our days of need. How can we lay hands upon you? I often wish you took to violence like the English strikers, and then we would know at once how to dispose of you. But you will not injure even the enemy. You desire victory by self-suffering alone and never transgress your self-imposed limits of courtesy and chivalry. And that is what reduces us to sheer helplessness." General Smuts also gave expression to similar sentiments.<sup>37</sup>

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### *The process of satyagraha*

The success of a satyagraha campaign to resolve any conflict rests upon three basic assumptions. They are:

- (1) that there can always be found some elements of common interest to all the contending parties;
- (2) that the parties are, or at least might be, amenable to an "appeal to the heart and mind"; and
- (3) that those in a position to commence satyagraha are also in a position to carry it through to the end.<sup>38</sup>

If these prerequisites are fulfilled the scene is set for the process aimed at the required conversion to be initiated. This can involve several steps, firstly reasoning with the opponent, then persuasion through self-suffering "wherein the satyagrahi attempts to dramatise the issues at stake and to get through to the opponent's unprejudiced judgement so that he may willingly come again onto a level where he may be persuaded through natural argument".<sup>39</sup> This

process of moral appeal through self-suffering in lieu of violence or coercion, Ricard Gregg has aptly termed "moral jiu-jitsu". A moral choice is demanded of the opponent which they otherwise may not even contemplate. Gregg summarises the dynamics of this position by explaining that the attacker loses his or her moral balance:

He suddenly and unexpectedly loses the moral support which the usual violent resistance of most victims would render him. He plunges forward, as it were, into a new world of values. He feels insecure because of the novelty of the situation and his ignorance of how to handle it. He loses his poise and self-confidence. The victim not only lets the attacker come, but, as it were, pulls him forward by kindness, generosity and voluntary suffering, so that the attacker loses his moral balance.

Gandhi himself summarises this process thus:

I seek entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper edged weapon but by disappointing his expectation that I would be offering physical resistance. The resistance of the soul that I should offer instead would elude him. It would at first dazzle him and at last compel recognition from him which recognition would not humiliate him but uplift him.<sup>41</sup>

If the attempts at conversion through these measures fail the tools of non-cooperation or civil disobedience may be brought into play.

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### ***Concepts fundamental to satyagraha***

The concepts which are the fundamental components of satyagraha and the necessary attributes of the satyagrahi have been either noted or implied above. Often these elements, that is, faith in human goodness, truth, nonviolence, self-suffering, the relationship of the means to the end, a rejection of coercion, and fearlessness, take on a particular meaning when viewed from the Gandhian perspective. The interrelationship between them is what is *meant* by satyagraha—therefore an understanding of satyagraha as a method of conflict

resolution and as a way of life, its *raison d'être* and its operation, rests upon the understanding of these concepts.

(a) *Faith in human goodness.* The entire rationale of a method of nonviolent conflict resolution which sees conversion of the opponent as its aim must rest upon the assumption that the opponent is open to reason, that they have a conscience, that human nature is such that it is bound, or at least likely, "to respond to any noble and friendly action".<sup>42</sup>

Gregg maintains that we need neither to go as far as Rousseau in believing that all persons are inherently good from the beginning of their lives, nor can we believe that they are inherently bad with only sporadic aspirations to goodness as does Calvin, in order to maintain a credible belief in the efficacy of nonviolence. It is enough, he claims, to take as our starting point that "each person has inherently all the time both capacities, for good and for evil, , and that both potentialities are plastic".<sup>43</sup>

Gandhi himself echoes this analysis of human nature when he says that "Every one of us is a mixture of good and evil. . . The difference that there is between human beings is a difference of degree".<sup>44</sup> This belief must not only be held in the abstract as a generalisation for humanity but it must be remembered in times of conflict and applied to the opponent in such a way that their dignity as a person and the respect it commands is not infringed, that the opponent is given the same credit in this matter that the satyagrahi would demand for themselves. If this assumption is not made with respect to an opponent they are being classified as inferior or even less human, and this to Gandhi was violence (see below)—a violence that is the direct cause of the grossest forms of physical violence: "Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace is to disbelieve in the godliness of human nature. Methods hitherto have failed because rock-bottom sincerity on the part of those who have striven has been lacking."<sup>45</sup>

A belief in human rationality is as important to satyagraha as is the belief in human goodness. Gandhi himself was certain of this, and his utterances contained many statements of faith such as "Every man may know and most of us do know what is a just and an unjust act"; "Everyone can think for himself";

and "unlike the animal, man has been given the faculty of reason". This, however, need not imply that large areas of non-rationality do not occur in human motivations or behaviour. It merely requires "the assumption that man is endowed with reason, that man can utilize reason to direct his actions, and that a technique for conducting conflict can appeal to the rational in man".<sup>47</sup>

A belief in this combination of reason and goodness allows for a faith in the possibility of conversion, and although this process may take considerable time

A Satyagrahi bids good-bye to fear. He is therefore never afraid of trusting his opponent. Even if the opponent plays him false twenty times, the Satyagrahi is ready to trust him for the twenty-first time, for an implicit trust in human nature is the very essence of his creed.<sup>48</sup>

Religious mythology and the Gandhian legend are resplendent with stories of how self-suffering has brought out the good and the reasonable in an opponent leading to their conversion. There are conversely just as many stories of failure and disillusionment.

In a study looking at the social interactions of competitors and cooperators Kelley and Stahelski concluded that, although competitive people are often faced with social relationships where cooperation rather than competition is more effective, they may "learn something about the properties of these situations and nothing about the persons involved. Thus, it is entirely possible for [them] to know that there are cooperative *situations* but still to believe that most *persons* are competitively predisposed".<sup>49</sup>

Whether these responses are universal or confined to the culture in which the study was conducted is not clear. These results, however, do not augur well for the success of satyagraha as the prime method of nonviolent conversion. The implication of this study, according to the authors, is

that two types of persons exist in the world whose dispositions are so stable and their interactions so "programmed" by these dispositions that (a) they do not influence each other at the dispositional level, and (b) they do not influence each other's world views.<sup>50</sup>

Satyagraha rests on the belief that opponents can in fact be influenced to alter their dispositions and their world views. This will be discussed further in "self-suffering" below. It should be noted, however, that, as with religious beliefs, belief in the goodness of human nature and the operation of reason ultimately is the optimist's act of faith in the empirically untestable.

(b) *Truth*. Gandhi believed in the need for absolutes by which to orient one's life. He explained this towards the end of his life by noting that "A mere mechanical adherence to truth and nonviolence is likely to break down at the critical moment. Hence I have said that Truth is God."<sup>51</sup> Truth for him, however, was more than a beacon to keep one on the correct path—Truth (*Satya*<sup>52</sup>) was the very reason for existence, the search for Truth being a search for God, "Truth is that which you believe to be true at this moment, and that is your God." In fact Gandhi came "to the conclusion that, for myself, God is Truth. But two years ago, I went a step further and said that Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements . . ."<sup>53</sup>

The metaphysical nature of the connection between "Truth" and "God" is explained by Gandhi in a private letter:

In "God is Truth" *is* certainly does not mean "equal to" nor does it merely mean, "is truthful". Truth is not a mere attribute of God, but He is That. He is nothing if he is That. Truth in Sanskrit means *Sat*. *Sat* means *Is*. Therefore Truth is implied in *Is*. God is, nothing else is. Therefore the more truthful we are, the nearer we are to God. We *are* only to the extent that we are truthful.<sup>4</sup>

Iyer further summarises Gandhi's position of man's relationship to truth in the following paraphrase of various quotations from Gandhi:

As truth is the substance of morality, man is a moral agent only to the extent that he embraces and seeks truth. By truth is not merely meant the abstention from lies, not just the prudential conviction that honesty is the best policy in the long run, but even more that we must rule our life by this law of Truth at any cost. We must say No when we mean No regardless of consequences. He who ignores this law does not know what it is to speak

and to stand for the truth, is like a fake coin, valueless. He has abdicated from his role and status as a moral being. Devotion to truth is the sole reason for human existence, and the truth alone really sustains us at all times. Without truth it would be impossible to observe any principles or rules in life.<sup>55</sup>

It should be noted that Gandhi makes a distinction between "Truth", that is Absolute Truth, and "truth", being relative truth. Gandhi was not a monotheist, he did not believe in a personal God. Regardless of the devotional elements in his religious belief he was in essence a monist. For him God was an impersonal, all-pervading reality ("I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives."<sup>56</sup>). This reality is the Absolute Truth, discoveries on the way to the realisation of Truth he called relative truth: "As long as I have not realised this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold to the relative truth as I have conceived it. That relative truth must meanwhile be my beacon, my shield, my buckler."<sup>57</sup>

While such a quest for Truth, the foundation of the satyagrahi lifestyle, leads to a more honest appreciation of shared humanity, or more directly in Erikson's words "to the next step in man's realization of man as one all-human species, and thus to our only chance to transcend what we are",<sup>58</sup> it may, paradoxically, also lead to conflict. So how is one to decide whose truth is nearer to Truth? The final arbiter in times of such conflict must remain "The 'Still Small Voice' within." We have a duty to live up to truth as we see it at the time. This call of the "Voice of Conscience" is the highest call of all, and it must be obeyed at all costs as this "obedience is the law of our Being"<sup>59</sup>

Because "the human mind works through innumerable media and ... the evolution of the human mind is not the same for all... what may be truth for one may be untruth for another." No one, therefore, "has the right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth". These differences would be greatly reduced with discipline and humility—two very important qualities for satyagraha:

It is because we have at the present moment everybody claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world... Truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility.

While Truth is the goal, *ahimsa* or nonviolence becomes the necessary and only means of realising it. Because of the conflict that may result from the differing conceptions of truth, nonviolence and self-suffering become very important elements in ensuring that coercion does not occur. Gandhi explained this in his testimony before the Disorders Inquiry Committee in 1920 presided over by Lord Hunter. Although this interchange concerned the outbreak of physical violence during mass civil disobedience campaigns it is also applicable to interpersonal conflict where the words "violence" and "nonviolence" take on very broad definitions:

Sir Chimanlal: However honestly a man may strive in his search for truth, his notions of truth may be different from the notions of others. Who then is to determine the truth?

Gandhi: The individual himself would determine that.

Sir Chimanlal: Different individuals would have different views as to truth. Would that not lead to confusion?

Gandhi: I do not think so.

Sir Chimanlal: Honestly striving after a truth differs in every case. Gandhi: That is why the nonviolence part was a necessary corollary. Without that there would be confusion or worse.<sup>61</sup>

Ruskin, a writer who had a great impact on Gandhi, claimed in masterful prose that most of us dislike untruth only when it has an immediate detrimental effect upon us, at other times we may welcome it.<sup>62</sup> Even in its most immediate and obvious sense, that is as a lie (i.e. an intentionally deceptive message which is stated), untruth is often harmful in more than the existential sense discussed above. Bok notes that lying harms liars themselves and causes social separations by doing harm to the general level of trust—both being cumulative

and hard to reverse. The harm done to the self includes the fear that lies will be discovered and consequently relationships altered. Lying may even alter the liar's own conception of their own integrity—the need to shore up lies with further lies may assist in breaking down the psychological barriers against untruth and consequently lower their moral standards.<sup>63</sup>

Untruth is often justified on one of two grounds—both of which the Gandhian formulation of truthfulness rejects completely. Firstly:

False notions of propriety or fear of wounding susceptibilities often deter people from saying what they mean and ultimately land them on the shores of hypocrisy. But if nonviolence of thought is to be evolved in individuals or societies or nations, truth has to be told, however harsh or unpopular it may appear to be at the moment.

Secondly, that when dealing with opponents, ends justify the means at least at this level. Lies may aid victory in a conflict situation, at any rate opponents "should receive the treatment that their behaviour deserves", and opponents through their actions often forfeit "the ordinary right of being dealt with fairly".<sup>65</sup> Satyagraha, being a search for Truth, rejects these justifications. Its method of nonviolence insists that satyagrahis "magnify the mole-hills of our errors into mountains and minimise the mountains of others' errors into mole-hills".<sup>66</sup>

The practical steps towards living the truth include the public admission of mistakes. The confession of an error, Gandhi points out, "is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before", but "it is a million times better to *appear* untrue before the world than to *be* untrue to ourselves".<sup>67</sup> Gregg, the noted writer on nonviolent techniques, also believes that if it is necessary for others to point out our mistakes our honesty comes under doubt while public confessions of faults promote trust.<sup>68</sup> The most important practical way to live the life of truth that satyagraha requires is that "A lover of Truth will not appear different from what he is. His thoughts, words and actions will be harmonious."<sup>69</sup> Lanzo del Vasto, the most prominent European follower of Gandhi, defined truth in this context at a UNESCO

symposium on the position of truth and nonviolence in Gandhi's humanism, by stating that it means

"The outside as the inside." It is obvious that with the inside of others we have no direct contact, but only through the outside. We have contact with the inside only within ourselves. Thus, to live and be in truth means that our appearances and our actions should correspond to what we have within us.<sup>70</sup>

(c) *Nonviolence*. Violence arises from ignorance or untruth, truth conversely arises out of nonviolence:

...without *ahimsa* (nonviolence) it is not possible to seek and find Truth. *Ahimsa* and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to distangle and separate them. They are like two sides of a coin or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which the reverse? Nevertheless, *ahimsa* is the means, Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so *ahimsa* is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means we are bound to reach the end sooner or later.<sup>71</sup>

The discovery of truth is not dependent upon violence; it is in fact obscured by violence. Iyer, for example, notes that the need for violence is often a sign of insecurity and incomplete conviction and that through it victory becomes more important than truth.<sup>72</sup> If violence is used in a conflict situation the sin and the sinner can no longer be separated.

The influence of the New Testament, particularly the Beatitudes, and of Tolstoy's work upon Gandhi's concept of nonviolence is well known. The importance of *ahimsa* for Gandhi echoes Tolstoy when the latter asks:

... how are we to harmonize the conflicts of men, when some consider an evil that others consider to be good, and vice-versa? And so, to consider that an evil which I consider an evil, although my adversary may consider it good, is no answer. There can be but two answers: either we have to find a true and indisputable criterion of what an evil is, or we must not resist evil with violence.

The arguments against violence often revolve around the assumption that it does not work, that there are inherent laws governing violence that prevent it from producing positive results. These may be summarised<sup>74</sup> as follows: (1) Continuity, that is, once you start using violence you cannot escape it. (2) Reciprocity, that is, violence creates, begets and procreates further violence. On this point Gandhi warned that "To answer brutality with brutality is to admit one's moral and intellectual bankruptcy and it can only start a vicious circle . . . (3) Sameness, that is, it is impossible to distinguish between justified and unjustified violence, between violence that liberates and violence that enslaves. No matter how high the goal, violence reduces all practitioners to the same level. Or again, in Gandhi's words "counter-violence can only result in further brutalization of human nature".<sup>76</sup> (4) Violence begets *only* further violence, that is, the ends grow out of the means used; and (5) violence needs to be justified, but such justification is hypocritical; there is no "pure" violence—violence and hatred are always linked.<sup>77</sup>

All of the above points have their critics among the justifiers of "necessary" violence; however, the third point has been scrutinised by some well-known contemporary writers. Violence has on occasions been viewed as more than unmitigated evil, necessary evil or even as a positive action in certain circumstances. It has been cited as occasionally being an existential necessity. Oppressed persons may have to fight their oppressors for their own autonomy and in this way "life-destroying violence becomes life giving violence".<sup>78</sup> This line of argument has been forcefully put by Sartre and Fanon when they discuss the apathy and lack of dignity of those oppressed by colonial exploitation. Such people, in the words of May, "spend their lives as only partially formed human beings". For them "to become alive psychologically and spiritually, some violence is necessary". In other words, powerlessness leads to frustration, which in turn leads to violence and the violence overcomes the powerlessness. Such violence "creates the self", it is "a risking all, a committing all, an asserting all".<sup>79</sup>

Sartre in his preface to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earthy* states that

no gentleness can efface the marks of violence; only violence itself can destroy them. The native cures himself of colonial neurosis by thrusting out the settlers through force of arms. When his rage boils over, he rediscovers his lost innocence and he comes to know himself in that he creates himself.

Fanon himself maintains:

At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force; it forces the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect.<sup>80</sup>

Gandhi, who was instrumental in dismantling the mightiest colonial empire ever known by nonviolent means, could not believe in violence as a "cleansing force"; however, like both Sartre and Fanon, he saw the need for self-respect, going so far as to say that "where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence". The crux of his message was that generally these are *not* the only two alternatives—"nonviolence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment".<sup>81</sup> To the degree that this further alternative is realised Sartre and Fanon are advocating revenge rather than a means of productively resolving conflicts.

When reviewing Fanon's work, pacifist Quaker writer Barbara Deming remarked that whenever Fanon used the word violence, one could read nonviolence and the meaning would be the same.

For Fanon "cleansing violence" may be a means for providing, or restoring, dignity and self-respect, whereas for Gandhi "Nonviolence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour, but not always to possession of land or movable property." For nonviolence, however, some self-respect must be present before a conflict situation can be dealt with because only with such self-respect can one be strong enough voluntarily to endure suffering that, it is to be hoped, will cause the change of heart in an opponent, which is the goal of satyagraha: "Individuals or nations, who practice nonviolence, must be prepared to sacrifice . . . their all except honour".<sup>85</sup>

For Gandhi nonviolence means far more than what is implied by the negative terminology used in English. Ahimsa (for which there appears to be no better translation than "nonviolence") means more than not doing physical harm to an opponent. It embodies a positive concept—it requires doing, not merely the refraining from injury. Ahimsa

is not merely a negative state of harmlessness but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. But it does not mean helping the evil-doer to continue the wrong or tolerating it by passive acquiescence. On the contrary, love, the active state of ahimsa requires you to resist the wrong-doer.

Gandhi in fact defined ahimsa as "love" in the Pauline sense, "and yet" it is "something more than the love defined by St. Paul, although I know St. Paul's beautiful definition is good enough for all practical purposes".<sup>85</sup> The principle of ahimsa, therefore, "is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by hatred, by wishing ill to anybody. It is also violated by holding on to what the world needs".<sup>86</sup>

As a Hindu, Gandhi had a strong sense of the unity of all life. For him nonviolence meant not only the non-injury of human life but of all living things. Injury of living things is bad *per se*, but in order to eat some such injury must take place. It is an evil but a necessary evil. It is, he believed, also warranted in the case of dangerous snakes, rabid dogs and monkeys "where they have become a menace to the well-being of man". To the dismay of orthodox Hindus, he even advocated the killing of cows under certain circumstances and appeared to be in favour of euthanasia in extreme cases of suffering.<sup>7</sup> He also realised the possible need for physical violence directed at other humans in rare cases of self-defence of third parties.

In interpersonal relationships, Gandhi construed the word *ahimsa* in such a way that its meaning was very wide. His definition included not treating another with less dignity than was warranted by a shared humanity. Not only does dehumanisation pave the way for violence, but dehumanisation *is* violence.

Violence in a relationship is characterised as relating to another as a thing, relating, to use Martin Buber's phrases, as "I - It" rather than "I - You". Other people must always be treated as ends rather than as means. As Kaufman points out in the introduction to his new translation of the Buber classic, there are many ways in which we treat each other as means—in business transactions, seeking help or a cure for loneliness, etc. In these situations where the other is a means by the very nature of the interaction, they can nevertheless be treated as an end also. An "I - It" situation can be transformed in this way through politeness, the showing of respect, affection, admiration "or one of the countless attitudes that men call love".<sup>88</sup>

"The way of violence works as a monologue", states Ramana Murthi, "But the nature of nonviolence is a dialogue".<sup>89</sup> Violence and injustice, even at this level, are only committed against others to the extent that they are not regarded as fully human. The refusal to use violence indicates a respect for both the personality and moral integrity of the opponent. It aims at establishing a realisation of an existing mutually shared humanity. Satyagraha is capable of, indeed aims at, creating the conditions necessary for such a dialogue in Buber's sense: "There is necessarily a dialogue in nonviolence, because through it you wish to convince the other party and to bring him to discover in you not his adversary, but a man like him."<sup>90</sup>

Gandhi firmly believed that such nonviolence must be lived day by day: "It is not like a garment to be put on and off at will Its seat is in the heart and it must be an inseparable part of our very being." In other words, it should become a creed rather than a policy, and to be a creed nonviolence "has to be all-pervasive". One "cannot be nonviolent about one activity . . . and violent about others". Practicing nonviolence as a policy, however, may be useful in that there is always a hope of the policy developing into a creed:

Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a thing, it is possible that I may end by becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.<sup>91</sup>

In its practical application this may-mean that in a situation where one finds it difficult to actually love an opponent it is still possible to act towards them "on the assumption that all men's lives are of value, and that there is something about any man to be loved, whether we can *feel* love for him or not".<sup>92</sup>

According to Gandhi, the best training ground for nonviolence is the home:

The alphabet of *ahimsa* is best learnt in the domestic school, and I can say from experience that if we secure success there, we are sure to do so everywhere. For the nonviolent person the whole world is one family.

It should begin "with our children, elders, neighbours and friends. We have to overlook the so-called blemishes of our friends and neighbours and never forgive our own." He further points out that "The very first step in nonviolence is that we cultivate in our daily life, as between ourselves, truthfulness, humility, tolerance, loving kindness", and adds quite emphatically that "Nonviolence is impossible without humility."<sup>93</sup> Dhawan notes further that the connection between occupation and nonviolence should not be overlooked, that "one must engage in occupations that involve the least violence". These "occupations should be fundamentally free from violence and should involve no exploitation of others."<sup>94</sup>

*(d) Creative self-suffering.*

... the individual seldom changes his life merely in accordance with the indications of reason, but as a rule, in spite of the new meaning and the new aim\* indicated by reason, continues to live his former life and changes it only when his life becomes entirely contradictory to his conscience, and, therefore agonizing . . .<sup>95</sup>

With these words Tolstoy encapsulates one of the reasons that self-suffering is so important for satyagraha. The role of self-suffering is to break a deadlock, to "cut through the rationalised defenses of the opponent".<sup>96</sup> "Reason has to be strengthened by suffering and suffering opens the eyes of understanding", because an "appeal of reason is more to the head but penetration of the heart come\* from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding of man".<sup>97</sup>

Pelton claims that this idea of self-suffering "melting the heart" of the opponent is a gross oversimplification, that it may even "elicit a negative reaction towards the victim".<sup>98</sup> Gandhi, however, insisted on retaining a faith in human nature that maintained that such a process does work. Gandhi warned that the suffering or hardship undertaken had to be functional, he "was not in favour of martyrs or differing not caused by acts conducive to the solution of the present conflict or future conflicts".<sup>99</sup> "Let us all be brave enough to die the death of a martyr", intones Gandhi, while warning in the same breath that no one should "lust for martyrdom". The opponent must not be encouraged to act against the satyagrahi to bring on self-suffering because "brutalising the adversary can but make his conversion the more difficult". This brutalisation must be avoided so that the opponent is not compelled to inflict punishment—"the secret of satyagraha", according to Gandhi, "lies in not tempting the wrong-doer to do wrong"<sup>100</sup>

Gandhi's civil disobedience campaigns generated many instances which appeared to be eliciting the negative reaction Pelton warned against. However, eventually a positive attitude change was often forced on the attacker. Negley Farson, a correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*, reported in 1930 one such incident he was eye-witness to. A large and powerful Sikh leader was offering no resistance to a savage *lathi* (steel tipped bamboo stick) beating:

He was being struck on the head. I stood about six feet from him and watched. He was hit until his turban came undone and his topknot was exposed. A few more blows and his hair came undone and fell down over his face. A few more and the blood began to drip off his dangling black hair. He stood there with his hands at his sides. Then a particularly heavy blow and he fell forward on his face ... I could hardly hold myself back ... I watched him with my heart in my mouth. [The police officer] drew back his arm for a final swing . . . and he dropped his hands down by his side. "It's no use," he said, turning to me with half an apologetic grin. "You can't hit a bugger when he stands up to you like that." He gave the Sikh a mock salute and walked off.

Such action, explains Gandhi, "does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer ... it means the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant." Self-suffering aims to demonstrate the sincerity of the sufferer as an appeal to the opponent and also aims to purify the sufferer by proving their own sincerity to themselves. Gandhi mentions both these practical and existential benefits of self-suffering (in this case when talking of the extreme position of a nonviolent state involved in a violent international conflict) when he says:

Suffering injury in one's own person is... of the essence of nonviolence and it is the chosen substitute of violence to others. It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for satyagraha, but because I know that it results in the long run in the least loss of life, and, what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice.<sup>102</sup>

Both the sufferer and the opponent are transformed. The opponents by being forced to confront their views on the nature of the truth of the given situation and possibly by being converted, and the sufferer by being morally enriched in not compromising fundamental principles.

Even where self-suffering does not touch the conscience of the opponent it can have objective benefits in a conflict situation, especially in social conflicts. The opponent may be converted indirectly (or coerced by nonviolence) if the endured suffering moves public opinion to the side of the satyagrahi(s). Gandhi has on occasion claimed that "the method of reaching the heart is to awaken public opinion".<sup>103</sup>

Care must be taken that self-suffering does not change satyagraha into duragraha through coercion or violence against an opponent. Self-suffering by an adult against a child for instance can become moral vindictiveness and thus "do violence" to children by forcing "on them decisions for which they are not ready". Erikson (pointing an accusing finger at Gandhi) explains that nonviolence may not be enough:

the possibility that here self-suffering could harbour the despotism of a cruel (of "cruelly kind") father who, by his self-suffering hurts ever so much more

unfathomably than an outright angry one; whereupon the children feel punished, if not "crushed"—but by no means persuaded.

Care must be taken to ensure that "self-abnegation become self-affirmation and a tool of truth rather than a weapon of revenge".<sup>104</sup> Besides the hoped-for efficacy of self-suffering to appeal to the reason of an opponent it has one other very important function—"if this kind of force is used in a course that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes".<sup>105</sup> Finally, it should be remembered that self-suffering is a necessary part *per se* of any nonviolent action, because, as Sharp points out, it is the price paid for maintaining resistance in a nonviolent way.<sup>106</sup>

(e) *Means and ends.* Alinsky, in a cynical appraisal of Gandhi as a leader of nonviolence movements, asks rhetorically whether Gandhi's stance on means and ends "was not simply the only intelligent, realistic, expedient program which Gandhi had at his disposal". Showing little understanding of the central importance of the relationship of means to ends as an essential principle of Gandhi's thought, he claims that if Gandhi "had guns he might well have used them in an armed revolution against the British which would have been in keeping with the tradition of revolutions for freedom through force." In total opposition to Gandhi, he claims that the real question is not "Does the end justify the means?" but whether this *particular* end justifies this *particular* means.<sup>107</sup>

Along with Huxley, who asserted that "Good ends ... can only be achieved by the employment of appropriate means", and that "The end cannot justify the means, for the simple and obvious reason that the means employed determine the nature of the ends produced,"<sup>1</sup> Gandhi maintained:

The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree: and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.

They say "Means are after all means." I would say, "means are after all everything." As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and ends.

... if one takes care of the means, the end will take care of itself.

These principles for Gandhi were not merely a reflection of the Hindu belief in *karma*. The law of reaping what you sow applied as much in this life as it affected future lives:

There is a law of nature that a thing can be retained by the same means by which it has been acquired. A thing acquired by violence can be retained by violence alone . . .<sup>110</sup>

Three days before his death, in an interview with Vincent Sheean, Gandhi claimed: "No good act can produce an evil result. Evil means, even for a good end, produce evil results."<sup>111</sup>

Huxley notes that the almost universal desire to believe in short cuts to Utopia makes us less than dispassionate when looking at means "which we know quite certainly to be abominable".<sup>112</sup> Satyagraha, being a search for truth requires such dispassion, and being nonviolent insists that satyagrahis do more than merely focus on the means of an opponent "and condemn him for his inhumanity" while focusing only on their own ends and revelling in their righteousness.<sup>113</sup>

Quoting the line "All men desire peace, but very few desire those things which make for peace" from Thomas a Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, Huxley adds: "the thing that makes for peace above all others is the systematic practice in all human relationships of nonviolence." It is the primary means to this important end, and echoing Gandhi he adds that it is also the primary means to the most important end of Truth:

If violence is answered by violence, the result is a physical struggle. Now, a physical struggle inevitably arouses in the minds of those directly and even indirectly concerned in it emotions of hatred, fear, rage and resentment. In the heat of conflict all scruples are thrown to the winds, and all the habits of forbearance and humaneness, slowly and laboriously formed during generations of civilized living, are forgotten. Nothing matters any more except victory. And when at last victory comes to one

or other of the parties, this final outcome of physical struggle bears no necessary relation to the right and wrong of the case: nor in most cases, does it provide any lasting settlement to the dispute.<sup>114</sup>

If techniques employed by satyagraha are used as means to an end in a conflict situation, that is, to secure victory, the process becomes one of duragraha. The users lose their integrity and purity of intention and the "campaign is essentially futile even if victorious in some superficial way".<sup>115</sup> Gandhi made it clear that he believed his energies had to be devoted to looking after the purity of the means rather than to seeing if they would be the most expedient way of achieving the immediate goal:

I feel that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means. The method may appear to be long, perhaps too long, but I am convinced that it is the shortest.<sup>116</sup>

In line with these principles Gandhi called off a major civil disobedience campaign in early 1922 after twenty-two policemen were murdered in the town of Chauri Chaura. He had pledged that the campaign would be nonviolent and this incident was the final straw forcing him to totally reverse the agitation against the British.<sup>117</sup> He did not mind that the opponent had the opportunity to "glory in our humiliation and so-called defeat". It was better, he claimed, "to be charged with cowardice and weakness than to be guilty of denial of our oath and to sin against God".<sup>118</sup> Fischer noted the significance of this move (the rationale being one that Alinsky would, it appears, not understand), when he remarked that had Gandhi not been nonviolent by creed he could have championed an uprising that may have driven the British from India.

But Gandhi would not purchase independence at the price of national blood drenching; a free India born in murder would bear the mark on her forehead for decades. He sacrificed the end, doubtful in any case at the time, because bad means would poison it.<sup>119</sup>

Means can be chosen merely by deciding to live by certain rules. If the ethics of these rules are not shared by others, conflicts are bound to arise. When dealing with these conflicts the principles with which the satyagrahis started still serve

as guidelines for their actions.<sup>120</sup> Huxley suggests that the golden rule to be kept in mind when ends and the means to achieve them are chosen is to ask whether the result will be to transform the society to which they are applied "into a just, peaceable, morally and intellectually progressive community of non-attached and responsible men and women".<sup>121</sup>

*(f) Rejection of coercion.* Because perceptions of truth vary-from person to person and no one can be absolutely certain that their perception is the correct one, Gandhi cautions against the use of coercion. He makes it clear that "there is no such thing as compulsion in the scheme of nonviolence. Reliance has to be placed upon the ability to reach the intellect and the heart"; and makes the policy statements that "nonviolence is never a method of coercion, it is one of conversion", and that "coercion is an offspring of violence. Conversion is the fruit of nonviolence and love."<sup>122</sup>

Nonviolent coercion is not to be seen as a just means of settling conflicts because it not only militates against the moral development of the parties to the conflict, or because it fails to express the respect which nonviolence claims for an opponent, but also because it does nothing to clarify the Truth, to confirm the justice of the objectives sought.<sup>123</sup> In short, it does not encourage a dialectical process.

The problem of deciding just what coercion is, however, is not an easy task. It can be defined as the use of force, including moral force, to compel an opponent to act in a way that is contrary to either their will or judgement.

Despite his insistence on a principle of non-coercion, and on a broad definition for the term, at times Gandhi himself was guilty of it. Some of his interpreters, for example Bondurant, claim that as a method satyagraha itself contains a positive element of coercion. She points out that the tools of non-cooperation, boycott and strike, which can be used in satyagraha, do involve elements of compulsion which may effect a change on the part of the opponent which was originally against their will.<sup>124</sup> Case meanwhile asserts that satyagraha is "explicitly *nonviolent* and implicitly *coercive*",<sup>125</sup> and Shridharani likewise claims that satyagraha does contain an aspect of coercion, albeit in a modified form,

which he prefers to call the *compelling* element.<sup>126</sup> Occasionally, such distinctions are difficult to make, and the question of just where to draw the line and remain within the spirit of satyagraha is equally perplexing. Naess attempts this task in the following hypothetical situation:

Suppose, for a moment, that *M* carries *P* against his will into the streets where there is a riot, and that as a consequence of what he sees *P* changes some of his attitudes and opinions. Was the change coerced? We suggest that the change of *P*'s opinions or attitudes was not coerced, but that *P* himself was coerced into seeing something that caused the change. The distinction is relevant, because *satyagraha* is certainly incompatible with coerced changes of opinions or attitudes.<sup>127</sup>

The most illuminating examples in this area also gave rise to some of the greatest controversies in Gandhi's life, that is, to his use of the fast. Gandhi held that "fasting for the sake of personal gain is nothing short of intimidation". A fast amounts to coercion or undue influence if an opponent in a conflict gives in because they did not want the person fasting to die rather than because they had been converted. In such situations Gandhi unhesitatingly advocates resistance to such undue influence. He claimed, in keeping with his belief that self-suffering in an unjust cause should affect only the sufferer, that "there is no occasion ... at any time"<sup>128</sup> for yielding to the pressure of such a fast.

Many of Gandhi's own fasts, for example his last, in January 1948 for communal peace, had no selfish motive but did have a coercive element. The leaders of the warring religious communities gave assurances of peace on Gandhi's terms because they did not want the death of the Mahatma on their hands. In some of his other fasts the element of coercion was even more blatant. The 1918 fast during the Ahmedabad textile mill workers' strike upheld the strikers' resolve and pressured the owners to give in to their demands. The two fasts in Yervada prison during 1932 saw the Government give in on the question of separate electorates for Harijans and the prison officials give in on a stand concerning the type of work prisoners could do. In 1939 a fast against the civil liberties record of the ruler of Rajkot forced government intervention, not the

conversion of the ruler. Regardless of these doubtful examples, Gandhi has warned against a general use of this weapon in satyagraha.<sup>129</sup>

Coercion very rarely leads to conversion. Gandhi himself had "observed that things done under the pressure of a fast have been undone after the fast is over. If such a thing happens it would be a tragedy of the highest degree." If a fast, however, convinces an opponent and converts them by forcing them to think about the issues, thus enabling them to see the justice in the position of the person undergoing the fast, then that is not coercion. This outcome cannot, however, be predicted without fail and so Gandhi warns that such measures can *only* be used against those who are near and dear and then "not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a father who drinks". Because the fast can so easily become a weapon of violence Gandhi warns against its use "unless it is used by one skilled in the art".<sup>130</sup>

Coercion in any form is not in keeping with the spirit of satyagraha; moral coercion, however, is always preferable to physical coercion. It can galvanise public support and has a greater chance of leading eventually to conversion than has physical coercion. It is generally also more indicative of sincerity than a mere reliance on strength would be.

(g) *Fearlessness*. A certain amount of courage is obviously necessary to endure self-suffering and to Gandhi it was an axiom that "nonviolence and cowardice are contradictory terms" "The path of true nonviolence", he points out, "requires much more courage than violence"; however, he firmly believed that it was possible for a violent person to someday become nonviolent, there being no such hope for cowards. The possession of arms was, for Gandhi, a sign of fear and cowardice,<sup>131</sup> and cowards could never be moral.

Along with his famous dictum that violence was preferable to cowardice, Gandhi explained that, although "violence is not lawful, when it is offered in self-defence or for the defence of the defenceless, it is an act of bravery far better than cowardly submission". In fact:

If you feel humiliated, you will be justified in slapping the bully in the face or taking whatever action you might deem necessary to vindicate

your self-respect. The use of force, in the circumstances, would be the natural consequence if you are not a coward. But if you have assimilated the nonviolent spirit, there should be no feeling of humiliation in you.<sup>132</sup>

An atmosphere of fear and impotence makes people helpless even to accomplish the simplest of things. Without fearlessness the growth of other noble qualities becomes difficult—"how can one seek Truth, or cherish love, without fearlessness", asks Gandhi rhetorically. The courage that satyagraha calls for is not dependent on physical strength, "it is not a matter of muscle, it is a matter of the heart. The toughest muscle has been known to tremble before an imaginary fear".<sup>133</sup>

How then is one to find this element of fearlessness? Even trying to be fearless out of a policy rather than a creed can work; however, care must be taken that it does not become an emasculating cloak for weakness. In the end such courage must come from "determined and constant endeavour,... by cultivating self-confidence",<sup>134</sup> and "from an indomitable will".

### CHAPTER THREE: Interpersonal Conflict

Who will direct our anger against that which is truly terrible, and not at that which is merely near?

A. Solzhenitsyn (*One Word of Truth...*)

Satyagraha, as used in interpersonal conflicts, often depends on the degree to which its values have been internalised rather than on a conscious adoption of tactics. Gandhi claimed that "there is no royal road" to achieve this. It will only be possible "through living the creed in your life which must be a living sermon". This "presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance, and thorough cleansing of one's self of all impurities",<sup>1</sup> which in turn requires working through "a wide and varied experience of interior conflict".<sup>2</sup> These interior conflicts, for example the questioning of one's own motives and prejudices, the sincere attempt to see if in fact the other's position is nearer the truth, and if need be admitting one's errors, are in some measure alternatives to wider conflicts.

As Lanza del Vasto explains, the point on which nonviolence has its foundation is that "there are no unjust people ... at least, nobody is unjust and wicked in his own eyes". Evil, then, "is not *an* evil, but something partially good taken for total good, an immediate good taken for eternal good". The opponent then is "just a man who is mistaken". When this realisation is made it frees the other from being an object of hate because "it would be useless, ridiculous, out of place, and completely unjust to hate a man because he is mistaken".<sup>3</sup>

At this point the critics of nonviolence often attack the pacifist approach or justify not trying nonviolent solutions by posing the hypothetical case in which the satyagrahi is either themselves attacked, or is witness to the attack upon another.<sup>4</sup> It is unlikely that such an eventuality will occur in the lifetime of average individuals— most human conflicts take place in quite different circumstances. Lanza del Vasto, therefore, warns against using such "extreme, exceptional, and overpowering" imaginary circumstances for formulating

general rules or drawing conclusions from them concerning legitimacy of action.<sup>5</sup> The striving for nonviolence, instead of planning for such possible eventualities, accepts that if they did occur they would be still taken care of somehow (just as if they had been planned for), while during the rest of one's life other almost daily conflicts could be solved in more cooperative ways.

The rule for reconciling the duty of resistance to evil on the one hand and of ahimsa on the other, according to Gandhi, "is that one should ceaselessly strive to realise Ahimsa in every walk of life and in a crisis act in a manner that is *most natural* to him. The result will be nonviolence to the extent to which he has successfully striven." Eventually such conscious striving will be internalised and "spontaneous reactions in a crisis will be nonviolent".<sup>6</sup>

In the language of Christ or Gandhi, Lanza del Vasto explains, if we are able to control our actions we should, or if we have internalised nonviolence sufficiently we will, if struck on one cheek turn the other. The returning of evil for evil, rather than ending evil, doubles it. No one, he claims, is so bad as to continue "taking advantage indefinitely of the opening given to him and his own impunity", and even those mad with rage have been known to stop "as if thunderstruck when you do not retaliate". The reason for behaving this way, for accepting self-suffering rather than retaliating, is that "your enemy is a man". In fights the enemy is generally dehumanised, is seen as a beast or monster, and "that is the moment—and not now—when you must stick to the hard truth that he is a man—a man like yourself", and "if he is a man, the spirit of justice dwells in him as it dwells in you".<sup>7</sup>

Where the defence of a third party is in question Gandhi does not take as narrow an approach as one of his mentors, Tolstoy, did. Tolstoy was firm in his belief that

the justification of violence used against a neighbour for the sake of defending another man against worse violence is always incorrect, because in using violence against an evil which is not yet accomplished, it is impossible to know which evil will be greater.<sup>8</sup>

Gandhi, however, insisted that injustices had to be fought and his intolerance of cowardice prompted him to explain that self-defence and defence of third persons even if violence is involved "is the only honourable course where there is unreadiness for self-immolation". He was even willing to go as far as to claim that nonviolence may be compatible with killing, but *never* with hating:

Even Manslaughter may be necessary in certain cases. Suppose a man runs amuck and goes furiously about sword in hand, and killing anyone that comes in his way, and no one dares to capture him alive. Anyone who despatches this lunatic, will earn the gratitude of the community and be regarded as a benevolent man.<sup>9</sup>

When Gandhi was asked by his eldest son what action he should have taken had he been present when Gandhi was almost fatally assaulted in 1908, whether he should have run away and seen his father killed or whether he should have used the physical force that he wanted to use in defense of Gandhi, he was informed that "it was his duty to defend me even by using violence".<sup>10</sup>

Gandhi was fond of pointing out that satyagraha can be used in broader fields, as it can in the everyday domestic situation; however, he was eye-ful to add "that he who fails in the domestic sphere and seeks to apply it only in the political and social sphere will not succeed".

Those who harbour feelings of fear will always be potential enemies. Fear is a deep-seated emotion that is hard to fight. The false impression of fearlessness is easily seen through by others and therefore what must be aimed at for internalised nonviolence is the removal of fear and its replacement with trust. As Naess observes, personal relationships are an area where this substitution can be commenced as a first step towards integrating it as a life-style.<sup>12</sup>

Most conflicts are in the order of zero-sum, both parties having the desire to dominate. Often this is born of fear or insecurity, the feeling that if one yields, or shows trust, advantage will be taken of them. The function of nonviolent resistance in these conflicts is never to harm the opponent or impose a solution on them, against their will, but to help both parties into "a more secure,

creative, happy and truthful relationship". This can be achieved by remaining nonviolent despite the hardships and apparent losses, and by

respect for personality, good will, acts of kindness, adherence to truth, disciplined order, a belief that human unity and underlying similarities are more enduring and important than human differences, and a steady series of deeds in accord with that belief.<sup>13</sup>

In dyadic conflicts, of which domestic quarrels are a good example, "non-cooperation, civil disobedience of the orders of the offender if he happens to be in exercise of authority, suffering of hardships that came as a result of this resistance, fasting, etc."<sup>14</sup> may be employed, but the chief measures to be used will be persuasion and discussion. The Gestalt therapist Fritz Perls claims that in the world a peculiar polarity exists between listening and fighting: "People who listen don't fight, and people who fight don't listen."<sup>15</sup> With more listening he believes that the number of hostilities would greatly diminish. Listening and seeing the other's point of view, however, must be more than an intellectual exercise, it must contain a sincere desire to understand, it must have empathy. This clarifies the issues and aids the search for truth.<sup>16</sup>

The genuine quest for truth in conflict situations has the byproduct of changing perceptions as the circumstances and the underlying causes become more apparent, for "the action of an individual depends directly on the way in which he perceives the situation".<sup>17</sup> This means that satyagrahis cannot remain rigid in their attitude but must, while hoping to win the opponent over, be willing to change their own attitudes with the dictates of the unfolding facts.

As mentioned, the resolution of interpersonal conflicts along Gandhian lines depend to a large degree on how far the principles of satyagraha have been internalised; however, there are various techniques that can be learned which will aid in the cooperative solution of such conflicts. These techniques are in keeping with the Gandhian ideal of nonviolence, that is, treating the other as a "you" rather than as an "it".

When interpersonal conflicts arise, whether they be between parties having differing degrees of authority (for example, parent/ child in the home or

teacher/student in the school) or between parties having theoretically equal power (friends, marriage partners, etc.) the general ways of bringing conflicts to an end are for the parties to attempt to impose their will on each other, for authority figures to exercise their authority, or for one party to give in. The first of these "zero-sum" approaches (authoritarian) may produce resentment and hostility in the loser, provide them with little motivation to carry out the solution, requires heavy enforcement, inhibits the growth of self-responsibility, self-discipline and creativity, fosters dependence and submission (mainly out of fear), and may make the winner feel guilty).<sup>18</sup>

The second approach (permissiveness) is of the "Okay-you-win, I-give-up" method of dealing with conflict. In the winner this may foster selfishness and reduce their respect for the loser. For the loser it fosters resentment towards the winner, makes them feel guilty about not getting their needs met and may require the loser to be pushed into an authoritarian approach. In these conflict situations those without power or authority learn to cope by rebelling, retaliating, dishonesty (lying, cheating, blaming others, etc.), submitting or even fantasising and regressing.<sup>19</sup>

The use of these zero-sum methods will generally have the outcome of solving the manifest conflicts where the parties have unequal power (but *not* in the sense in which "true" solutions were defined in Chapter One). Where the parties are of relatively equal power zero-sum methods often result in bitter stalemates making cooperative methods of solving disputes in these circumstances perhaps even more important. Cooperative approaches to conflict solution avoid these negative outcomes.

A technique, appropriate in cases where personal needs rather than values or beliefs are the focus of the conflict, which allows one to express underlying conflicts is called the "I-Message". In interpersonal conflict the initial response is often destructive, taking the form of blame which generally obscures the real issues underlying the conflict. Reformulating negative statements of blame into "I- Messages" (which explain the feelings of the speaker as the result of unacceptable behaviour by the other and give the speaker's perception of the

consequences of the behaviour to themselves, rather than the more usual blaming of the other for unacceptable behaviour and its consequences), can aid the clarification of the issues and steer the conflict onto a constructive and cooperative path. "You- Messages" that are very often sent, unlike "I-Messages", tend to provoke resistance and rebellion.<sup>20</sup>

Another technique that can clarify the real issues in an interpersonal conflict and thus aid its solution is the role-reversal technique of switching viewpoints where each party honestly tries to argue for the other's viewpoint, while the other listens. These techniques are applicable in domestic situations or with friends and neighbours where there is a sufficient degree of rapport.

In line with Rapoport's insistence on the importance of being correctly heard and understood, and Gandhi's insistence on establishing the truth, the techniques of "active-listening" and "mirroring" could be used until hearing *what* the opponent in a conflict is saying becomes second nature. The essence of active listening is mirroring back what has been said. This assures the accuracy of listening and also "assures the sender that he has been understood when he hears his own message fed back to him accurately". Active listening can help to solve immediate interpersonal conflicts or it can be used by a third party to help one of the antagonists in a conflict situation clarify their own feelings and think creatively about possible solutions.<sup>21</sup>

Where active listening is used to reach a solution to an immediate interpersonal conflict its effectiveness excludes conflicts over the collision of values or beliefs. In these cases it is hard to point to "tangible and concrete effects" of the annoying behaviour of one party on the other. (It should be noted, however, that authoritarian and permissive win/lose methods also have limited success in truly solving these types of problems.) One must live and be a model for one's own value system while trying to become more accepting. Gordon suggests, as a way of seeking truth, that in conflicts over values or beliefs the individual has a duty to honestly ask themselves "why do I find it so difficult to accept someone who chooses to be different from me?"<sup>22</sup>

Of course Gandhi did not know of these techniques; however, he was fond of emphasising the need for caring and cooperative interpersonal relations that these techniques may aid to achieve. He firmly believed that the home was the training ground of satyagraha—that it was the world in microcosm—and how we reacted to aggression from strangers or handled our disagreement with them depended upon that training. The care and attention paid to small seemingly unimportant conflicts is as important as that given larger disputes, "For it will be by those small things that you shall be judged."<sup>23</sup>

## CHAPTER FOUR: Legal and Industrial Conflicts

... the more skilful the actor in conflict, the more restricted he is in the choice of his moves (the ideal strategist has but one choice).

N. A. Bailey

The word "dispute" commonly conjures up images of either a courtroom battle or an industrial confrontation. It is proposed here to examine these two forms of conflict from the Gandhian perspective. Fortunately, there is a wealth of material left by Gandhi of his personal accounts of resolving these types of disputes—he was after all an active lawyer in his earlier years (as well as being a defendant at regular intervals throughout his life) and, in 1918, shortly after his return to India from South Africa, he became deeply involved in the Ahmedabad labour dispute out of which grew the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association—"the most powerful labour union in the country".<sup>1</sup>

### A. *The Adversary System of Legal Dispute Settlement*

In this section two areas will be examined in detail: (1) alternatives to courtroom adjudication in simple civil cases and (2) the position of the defendant facing a criminal charge. Some clues as to the conduct, along Gandhian lines, of such traditional areas of court disputes as the issue of conflicts between consumers and manufacturers, or disputes arising between individuals and large organisations can be inferred from the areas examined and from the general rules of *satyagraha* as outlined in Chapter Two.

Our legal system is one of the major methods of nonviolent conflict resolution between individuals where the main techniques— bilateral negotiation, intervention by an interested third party, petty squabbles or avoidance—are not, or are no longer, applicable. It is our primary institutional solution to problems of conflict.<sup>2</sup> The Gandhian process of conflict solving sees the appearance of a civil case in court as a failure of the parties to settle the dispute and emerge as the friends the model aims at. The court stage generally precludes the Gandhian dialectic from ever coming into play between the opponents. Although it may be a truism it must be realised that individuals

often see no other choice open to them than to go to the police or a lawyer owing to the mistrust of the other disputant and/or a general feeling of impotence in being able to carry out their own negotiations. Even when a civil case is in the hands of lawyers a settlement may be reached short of actual judicial adjudication but rarely will one party see the other's point of view and have undergone a process of "conversion" thereby removing the source of such future disagreements and the need for ensuing litigation.<sup>3</sup> After all, as Chambliss and Seidman point out, once a certain point is reached our legal system is concerned with sanctions and is "no longer a device by which reconciliation and compromise [are] accomplished".<sup>4</sup> When a conflict enters the stage of litigation there is not only the risk of total loss for one of the parties but also the possibility that they will have to pay costs—not the best method of fostering a cheerful acceptance of the outcome.

Conflicts between individuals and the state also often come before the courts. Such conflicts stem either from minor disputes between neighbours, friends and relatives that escalate out of proportion to the original cause resulting in the intervention by the police, requested or otherwise. They may also occur when individuals unilaterally perpetrate a breach of the criminal code that is detected (and the offender is prosecuted). In our adversary system of legal dispute settlement, the parties to these disputes generally do not confront each other in court. Often the defendants hire, or are allocated, counsel to conduct the dispute settling process for them by proxy. In the case of criminal matters where the defendant is unrepresented, and in our lowest courts this is in the majority of cases, the accused party often acquiesces through impotence to the prosecution's handling of the trial. Where there are two opposing lawyers (or lawyer and police prosecutor) these parties are not trying to convert each other, they have no animosity towards each other and in fact may be good friends. They are doing a job—for them the conflict is orchestrated rather than real.

Even though the conflict maybe a form of play acting on the part of the lawyers (if not their clients) there are still rules by which such procedures could be

undertaken in a Gandhian spirit. To some degree our ambiguous and rather vague code of legal ethics tries to ensure this; however, the code is often acknowledged in the breaking rather than in the observance.'

The defendant in a criminal case can also undertake his own defence, or direct that his defence be undertaken, in such a way as to ensure the minimum violation of his human dignity—even though such a procedure may not be entirely free of personal cost.

### *Alternatives to court in civil cases*

Where the disputants cannot resolve their own conflict and lawyers are hired rather than police called, this need not necessarily preclude the Gandhian dialectic from coming into play—the lawyer becoming the catalyst. With this approach there are many obvious problems. It is considered unethical, for good conflict of interest reasons, for one lawyer to be acting for both parties. If both parties have engaged counsel then the process also generally seems to have been eliminated. There can however be creative opportunities on the part of the lawyer if he/she is willing to grasp them, and is willing to take some professional risks in order to attempt a permanent settlement of the dispute where both parties emerge satisfied. Gandhi saw lawyers as mediators rather than the conductors of ordinary legal negotiations.

In reminiscing over his first major legal case, the one that initially took him to South Africa as a young unsuccessful Indian attorney, Gandhi noted:

The lawyers' fees were so rapidly mounting up that they were enough to devour all the resources of the clients, big merchants as they were. The case occupied so much of their attention that they had no time left for any other work. In the meantime mutual ill-will was steadily increasing. I became disgusted with the profession. As lawyers the counsels on both sides were bound to rake up points of law in support of their own clients. I also saw for the first time that the winning party never recovers all the costs incurred. . . . This was more than I could bear. I felt it was my duty to befriend both parties and bring them together.<sup>6</sup>

Instead of working towards the mere extraction of payment from the opposing party or engaging in any form of tactic which increased the distance between the protagonists, Gandhi worked to reconcile their differences in an atmosphere where each tries to see the other's point of view, where the parties ideally become friends. An independent arbitrator was arranged between the parties, a compromise was reached, a time for settling debts agreed upon, and "both parties were happy over the result" which was reached out of court. As a result of this case Gandhi claimed:

I have learnt the true practice of law. I had learnt to find out the better side of human nature and to enter men's hearts. I realised that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven asunder. The lesson was so indelibly burnt into me that a large part of my time during the twenty years of my practice as a lawyer was occupied in bringing about private compromises of hundreds of cases. I lost nothing thereby—not even money, certainly not my soul.<sup>7</sup>

Even if such a process cannot be undertaken in all civil cases that come to a lawyer, every practising lawyer sees many cases where a party approaches them out of sheer frustration at not being able to communicate effectively with the perceived opponent and where the legal process of resolving some petty dispute will cost the complainant in fees and time far more than they will gain as a result of the adjudication. The avoidance of such court cases by the promotion of self-help-centered dialogue could form part of the lawyer's role.

In answer to the retort, "You tell me that when two men quarrel they should not go to a law-court. This is astonishing," Gandhi could quite simply reply, "whether you call it astonishing or not, it is the truth." This he argues because in the event of two parties quarrelling,

An ordinary man would ask them to forget all about it, he will tell them that both must be more or less at fault, and will advise them no longer to quarrel. But they go to lawyers. The latter's duty is to side with their clients and to find out ways and arguments in favour of clients to which they (the clients) are often strangers.

When disputes enter the legal process the disputants lose control not only of the outcome of the process but also of their own ability to handle the situation—they become less than self-sufficient, more reliant on experts. Gandhi talks of the British courts in India being part of the machinery used to maintain imperialist political control. This was undoubtedly true; however, it must be remembered that law in all systems serves much the same function of securing adherence to certain rules designed to prevent conflicts. Courts are the means of solving those conflicts that nevertheless still occur. As important as this control may be for the smooth functioning of society, where courts can be avoided they should be, because satisfaction for both parties cannot generally come from the defeat of one of them. The denial of individual ability through the hire of third parties can be avoided, and the satisfaction of coming to grips with and solving problems that require toleration, patience and understanding retained by avoiding courts where possible. In short, only those actually involved in the conflict can be parties in the dialectic out of which justice emerges, and justice and truth can only emerge from this process. Gandhi illustrated his thinking on this issue when he argued:

Truly, men were less unmanly when they settled their disputes either by fighting or by asking their relatives to decide for them. They became more unmanly and cowardly when they resorted to the courts of law. It was certainly a sign of savagery when they settled their disputes by fighting. Is it any less so, if I ask a third party to decide between you and me? Surely, the decision of a third party is not always right. The parties alone know who is right. We, in our simplicity and ignorance, imagine that a stranger, by taking our money, gives us justice.

A further point to be made here is that courts, which are set up to deal with conflicts in our society, may not be doing their job. A study by Merry of an American inner-city housing project found that while residents often resort to courts for the management of interpersonal and crime-related disputes, the legal machinery available rarely resolves these disputes, the court functioning as a sanctioning rather than as a dispute settling forum. She concludes that in

the absence of alternative effective modes of resolving disputes, either formal or informal, disputants resort to violence, avoidance and "lumping-it".<sup>10</sup>

The courtroom adjudication is intended as a final resolution of the dispute; however, the only guarantee of finality is the settling of the dispute that originally formed the public conflict. If the conflict before the court is an offshoot of an underlying conflict, a binding decision by a court may not resolve the attitudes between the parties which gave rise to the manifest conflict but may further exacerbate them.

In order for a conflict to be settled bilaterally out of court at least one of the disputants must take an approach to the dispute that sees the court as a failure of human communication (or, of course, the legal representative must place a far greater emphasis on negotiation than on appearing before court) or, as the second best, a separate alternative forum must be provided.

The first attempt at a system aimed at avoiding legal adjudication and giving the disputants a measure of control over the outcome of civil disputes in the Gandhian spirit has recently been examined in Australia with the investigation of the feasibility of the American idea of community justice centres. A background paper examining the scheme noted its difference from the traditional courtroom adjudication:

the courts are required to give a judgement with respect to the particular claim or charge before them. Their procedural rules are designed to exclude from the evidence they hear, any concerns which are not immediately relevant to the isolated issue being litigated. Adjudication is pervasively concerned with question of right and wrong, of guilt and innocence, of winner and loser.<sup>11</sup>

It has been noted that many traditional forms of dispute settlement mechanisms have disappeared from our urbanised society— gone are the respected elders, policeman on the beat, the trusted priest, etc. The establishment of community justice centres means that the court need not be the only institutional alternative.

Although it has been argued that when dealing with "off the street" (i.e. non-referred) cases these centres may be handling work that would not otherwise go to court (an argument which cannot be disproved) and thereby not keeping these types of disputes out of the court at all,<sup>12</sup> they *are*, however, keeping cases that are referred to them out of court and are training disputants in the art of self-management of their conflicts and probably leading to a decrease in the number of unpleasant situations where the actual conflict has been sidestepped by avoidance.

These centres "assist the parties to compromise and to re-orient their behaviour towards each other" through the good offices of the mediator. It is the mediator's job to "assist the parties to come to their own resolution of their dispute". He has no power to compel settlement "but must rely on the mutual agreement of the disputants who must also see that it is in their interest to make settlement work".<sup>13</sup> While the outcome sought is an accommodation between the parties, rather than the conversion aimed at by satyagraha, it comes far closer to the Gandhian ideal than the other possible outcomes offered by our legal system.

Such centres (in the American experience) are generally staffed by lawyers and are referred cases by the police, state prosecutors or magistrates, that would otherwise have resulted in far more costly, and it would seem less productive, court hearings. It appears that "the programmes are highly effective in producing both lasting resolutions of disputes and significant justice system savings".<sup>14</sup> They also show that potential litigants can maintain relative autonomy over this very important area of human relations.

### ***The satyagrahi as defendant***

There may be cases, for example those arising out of a civil disobedience campaign against a law seen as immoral, where a satyagrahi may find himself or herself in court. Such court appearance in the course of satyagraha does not result from an investigation of an offence followed by the forceful arrest of the defendant. It generally results from the breaker of the law voluntarily

submitting to arrest and accepting the legally laid down consequences for such a breach.

The literature on nonviolence contains many records of trials for civil disobedience—from Socrates to modern conscience objectors or anti-war protesters—where the defendants argued their own positions and accepted the penalty that such a conflict entails. Because of the general acceptance of authority of the state to make and enforce laws, and because of the basically law-abiding nature of those taking a Gandhian approach in the field of politics, civilly disobedient defendants usually plead guilty. As a general rule they also refuse bail preferring to await trial in prison, rather than becoming "class collaborationists", by denying themselves a privilege which is unavailable to the poor, or they may "refuse to post bail because they believe the commitment of money implies that their promise to appear in court may not be sincere".<sup>15</sup> Very often, because they believe that they have nothing to hide and refuse to play what they see as a game, coupled with a preference for maintaining the greatest possible autonomy in the conducting of their lives, such defendants represent themselves.

Gandhi offers similar advice to *all* those who come before the courts, even those who are tried as non-political criminals:

It is much to be wished for that people would avoid litigation. "Agree with thine adversary quickly" is the soundest legal maxim ever uttered. The author knew what he was saying. But it will be asked, what when we are dragged, as we often are, to the courts? I would say "do not defend". If you are in the wrong, you will deserve the sentence whatever it may be. If you are wrongly brought to the court and yet penalized, let your innocence soothe you in your unmerited suffering. undefended, you will in every case suffer the least and what is more you will have the satisfaction of sharing the fate of the majority of your fellow-beings who *cannot* get themselves defended.<sup>16</sup>

Most people do not have Gandhi's ability to view prison as a rest home<sup>17</sup> and going to jail may not have the same political significance it had in India during

agitation against British rule where the filling of prisons was employed as a conscious tactic. Self-suffering after a breach of an unjust law can, however, still serve the purpose of convincing fellow citizens and legislators of the sincerity of the action, of opening minds to the possibility of second thoughts on the issues involved, and moving them to a feeling of compassion. In response to the suggestion that the incarceration for civil disobedience means that the sacrifice of the law breaker is wasted, Gandhi replied

that a consecrated resolve is more potent in its action than mere physical action can ever be. The discipline that they will be acquiring in prison will help the nonviolent organization of the people outside and instil fearlessness among them ... will inspire the whole people by his example and may induce a heart change even in the opponent who, freed from fear, will the more readily appreciate his simple faith and respect it.<sup>18</sup>

The "do not defend" canon, while indicating a guilty plea, does not mean that the occasion of a trial should not be used to put the reasons for the condemned action before the public. Gandhi's most famous trial speech is a classical example of this. It was made in March 1922 when he and a co-defendant were charged under s. 124A of the Indian Penal Code with publishing four anti-British articles written by Gandhi for *Young India*. Characteristically they pleaded guilty. Gandhi's oral statement, in what was to become known as the "Great Trial", contained an assumption of responsibility for outbreaks of violence in Madras, Bombay and Chauri Chaura. Gandhi explained that he had the choice of either submitting to a system which he believed had done irreparable harm to his country or to risk the violence of the people when he presented them with the truth of the situation. Although he wanted to avoid violence he chose the latter course of action, and regrettably, as he explained, it had occurred and so he asked for no mercy from the court but requested the highest possible penalty:

...non-cooperation with evil is as-much a duty as cooperation with good... Nonviolence implies voluntary submission to the penalty for non-cooperation with evil. I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the

highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen. The only course open to you, the Judge, is either to resign your post and thus dissociate yourself from evil, if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent; or to inflict on me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the common weal.<sup>19</sup>

Prison is the naturally occurring outcome of such a stand. Because of Gandhi's regard for laws in a democratic state and because of the basically anti-elitist character of his philosophy, although he made a distinction between "habitual criminals and persons who have committed not a moral but a merely statutory offence" and between "innocent prisoners", that is satyagrahis, and "confirmed criminals", he maintained that for civil disobedience to remain civil, breaches of laws assume "the strictest and willing obedience to the jail discipline because disobedience of a particular rule assumes a willing acceptance of the sanction provided for its breach". A person imprisoned for "political reasons", therefore,

will make no distinction between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself as superior to the rest, nor will he ask for any conveniences that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition.

They may, however, in Gandhi's ethical scheme,

... civilly resist such regulations as are not only irksome or hard to bear but are humiliating or specially designed to degrade non-cooperators... self-respect demands willing obedience to gaol discipline. The same self-respect may require resistance to misbehaviour euphemistically called discipline.<sup>20</sup>

### ***B. Industrial Conflict***

In any zero-sum dispute the object is victory rather than truth. For Gandhi the reverse is always the aim. His approach to industrial conflict is, ideally, not one

of zero-sum, or even of compromise, but one leading to the truth through mutual problem solving.

Conflicts within industry that often lead to strikes have been seen as having economic and/or social determinants. Gandhi in his role as a union organiser dealt particularly with the former, but as a social critic he addressed himself to the latter explanations also. These social determinants include changes in the social structure of the plant or changes in management policies, frustrations that result from a lack of communication with the management, a feeling of powerlessness resulting from the lack of opportunity in having an effective voice in the running of the industry, and basic conflicts of interests between workers and management.

These determining characteristics of industrial conflict need not, of course, lead to overt disputes between the two groups involved. They may result in an increased turnover of staff or absenteeism. Where overt conflicts do occur, they may serve to reduce tension and provide a solution to conflict-producing situations.

As workers and management depend on one another for their existence, industrial disputes must have as their outcome a continued viable *modus vivendi*. The likelihood of industrial conflict could be lessened by a greater involvement of employees in the affairs of their workplace. Gandhi likewise believed that if conflict between labour and capital is to be avoided "labour should have the same status and dignity as capital". For him workers were co-owners in industry and as such "their organization should have the same access to the transaction of the mills as the shareholders".<sup>21</sup> Desai, Gandhi's secretary, in his account of the Ahmedabad Textile Labourers' struggle also put the ultimate goal of labour as securing co-ownership of the means of production "on a footing of equality with the so-called owners".<sup>22</sup>

This should only happen, according to Gandhi, after the workers had realised their own strength. The class war, in reality, he believed, was one between intelligence and unintelligence:

The conflict between monied classes and labourers is merely seeming. When labour is intelligent enough to organize itself and learns to act as one man, it will have the same weight as money if not much greater.<sup>23</sup>

Once this has come about through the nonviolent means of satyagraha, Desai continues,

the "owners" will not force (the labourers) to strike, but will of their own accord embrace them as brothers and make them partners. Nonviolence yields such extraordinary fruits. This, however, calls for patience, restraint, discipline, unity and faith in the organization.<sup>24</sup>

Until workers achieve this ideal economic and social pressures will lead to open dispute, and how this will be handled depends on the relationship between the parties. Good relationships are only necessary where one side does not have the power to dominate the other totally. For Gandhi to a large degree such domination rests on the acquiescence of the oppressed—when the workers had realised their strength they could press their claims as equals. This depends on neither side having the aim of destroying the other, and, according to Gandhi, while workers may be opposed to management they ought to endeavour to maintain friendly relations with individuals who are its members.

Diesing maintains, in agreement with Gandhi, that good relationships make genuine agreements possible whereas if the relationship is bad "chances of agreement are missed through misunderstanding, energies are absorbed in useless belligerency, and dealings are distorted by attempts to retaliate for imagined past injustices and insults".<sup>25</sup>

The bluster and flexing of verbal muscle that generally accompanies negotiations in their early stages, is graphically described by Douglas.<sup>26</sup> Their purpose, *inter alia*, is to find the "bargaining range", within which an agreement can be found that is more advantageous to each side than a resort to force. The opportunities for maximising the likelihood of reaching such an agreement are enhanced, according to R. J. Hawke, one-time president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, by following a few simple principles, including: (1) working put in advance a full and detailed preparation of the

claims and positions to be adopted in negotiations; (2) "honesty about one's own position and a sense of reality in terms of understanding the position of the other side"; and, (3) "flexibility as the negotiating procedures unfold".<sup>27</sup>

The final two of these very reasonable sounding principles can cause some problems. Satyagrahis must fight what they see to be an injustice at all costs, with firmness and inflexibility, while being ready for reconciliation or changing their attitudes completely if the dictates of truth so require. The question of honesty is even more vexed in this context. Gandhi cuts out much of the scope of negotiations when he claims that

in Satyagraha the minimum is also the maximum, and as it is the irreducible minimum, there is no question of retreat, and the only movement possible is an advance. In other struggles, even when they are righteous, the demand is first pitched a little higher so as to admit of future reduction, and hence the law of progression does not apply to all of them without exception.

This technique of never asking for more than is felt warranted as a bargaining measure removes much of the possibility for manoeuvre in negotiations. It means that no bargaining range, that is, "stretch of territory within which the parties propose to move around until they can reach consensus on a single settlement point", is set up. Where one side only operates on the Gandhian principle the other side may not realise that what is said is what is meant. Without the haggling, although one party has stated, in Douglas' words, that 'this is it', it may mean little to the other who has not "personally *experienced the futility of seeking more*".<sup>29</sup>

The Gandhian technique, however, still allows for a shifting of position as perceptions of truth alter and does have the added advantage of preventing opponents from forcing concessions and then claiming a victory of sorts. It leaves only one party playing the game, the other cannot retreat, leaving the opponent little room for face saving. Mediators can be of benefit in these situations, because they may force the parties, including satyagrahis, to come to a clearer realisation of truth and thus allow for appropriate flexibility.

If all else failed in an industrial dispute Gandhi noted that "strikes are an inherent right of the working men but must be considered a crime immediately the capitalists accept the principle of arbitration". In other words, strikes (that is nonviolent non-cooperation with the employers), can only be resorted to after all legitimate means of settling the dispute have been tried. These means include: (a) moral appeals to the conscience of the employers to concede just demands, and (b) if these fail, a resort to voluntary arbitration, where the decision of the umpire would bind the parties.<sup>31</sup> On the second anniversary of the Ahmedabad Mill Hands Strike, Gandhi himself made this point quite clearly: "In order to seek justice without resorting to violence, an appeal to the good sense of the employers and acceptance of arbitration principle are always desirable."<sup>32</sup> Gandhi also observed that as society becomes alienated "from its old basis of religion and social ethics", these being replaced by the "cash nexus", strikes can become "a universal plague". He warned that "the public has no means of judging the merits of a strike, unless it is backed by impartial persons enjoying public confidence". This means that "arbitration accepted by the parties or a judicial adjudication" should be employed, and if this is done "the matter does not come before the public". In other words, where the dispute was not over a matter of fundamental principle, because of the threat of the "strike plague" and because in mass conflicts where all the workers have not accepted nonviolence as a creed and are not considered as equals by capital the operation of the dialectic process of arriving at truth is unlikely. Gandhi in these situations, makes an exception to his rule that courts should be avoided. Where the necessary procedures cannot be agreed upon the dispute becomes a strike and goes public. If a strike is justified and if conducted absolutely peacefully it must succeed. But, "obviously, there should be no strike which is not justifiable on merits. No unjust strike should succeed. All public sympathy must be withheld from such strikes."<sup>33</sup>

How then does one decide what claim is fair in an industrial dispute stemming from economic considerations? During the 1918 Mill Strike Gandhi proposed that the following two questions had to be answered to decide the wage increases to be sought:

- (1) What increased wages should the weavers get to enable them to lead a simple but contented life?
- (2) Can the mills give the increase or not? If they cannot give it in full, how much can they afford to give? <sup>4</sup>

Gandhi laid down the following general principles<sup>35</sup> for the conduct of the workers in instances of overt disputes with management:

- (1) The workers or their leaders (among whom there must be perfect correspondence and understanding<sup>36</sup>) should not exaggerate their demands; they should study the pros and cons of the case carefully before formulating their demands. They should always be ready for correction if the opposite party is able to convince them that they are wrong.
- (2) The weapon of the strike, which is really the very last weapon in the armoury of the industrial workers, should not be resorted to unless all peaceful and constitutional methods of negotiations, conciliation and arbitration are exhausted. Even during the course of a strike, workers should be prepared for any just settlement or a reference to arbitration. (This assumes "practical unanimity among the strikers".)<sup>37</sup>
- (3) Peaceful and nonviolent behaviour, even under provocation, is the *sine qua non* for obtaining justice through any mass struggle of this type. While on strike the workers should not damage the property or injure the person of anybody. They should bear no ill-will towards their employers or their officers, as they are fighting the evil in the employers and not the employers personally.<sup>38</sup>
- (4) The workers should be self-respecting and, therefore, they should not rely on the funds raised by sympathisers for the successful conduct of the strike. A striking worker should find alternative employment during this period to maintain themselves and their family, and no work should be considered below one's dignity. This is because "there is nothing more injurious to... morale and self-respect than enforced idleness", and because labour cannot "prolong a strike indefinitely, so long as it looks to pecuniary support from public subscriptions or alms or depends on the

resources of its union and no strike can absolutely succeed which cannot be indefinitely prolonged".

- (5) A strike is a form of satyagraha. Strikers, therefore, must not submit to superior force or hardship. .Once they make a resolve they keep firm to it and even at the cost of privations, including starvation, they stick to the resolution.
- (6) While on strike the workers should be truthful, courageous, just and free from hatred or malice towards anybody, and should be prepared for voluntary service putting their faith in God.

New methods of strike, for instance, wild-cat strikes, sit-ins and tool-down strikes, are aimed at coercion and therefore are not on the lines suggested by Gandhi. Strikes in essential services were also counselled against by Gandhi who believed that in such cases other less objectionable ways, which caused less dislocation to public life, should be employed for obtaining redress. In such strikes, where coercion is the main motive, "none of the alternatives, i.e. the demand of the resisters and the pressure they exert, appeals to the opponent's judgement and he has to choose between two evils". This is not the case in strikes undertaken as a form of satyagraha. There

the demand is kept so transparently, so unquestionably, legitimate and morally conducive to the welfare of both of the parties that even when the opponent, under the stress of self-interest, resists the satyagrahi's demand he is conscious of the intrinsic moral correctness of the latter's demand and behaviour. Thus the satyagrahi wins by sapping the moral defences of the opponent, and the pressure of his resistance, though it is compelling, is persuasive. Strike and boycott [in the traditional Western sense], on the other hand, frighten the opponent by the prospect of suffering and loss and coerce him.<sup>40</sup>

A strike can nevertheless be successful in achieving its material ends through coercive means, that is, where the opponent has not come to see the justice of the strikers' demands but has simply caved in under pressure. This merely proves, suggests Gandhi, "that the employers were weak and had a guilty conscience" rather than the justice of the strikers' cause. Where a conflict

cannot be won through industrial action, for example, where there is enough other surplus labour to replace strikers, a strike is no remedy. The only remaining remedy, and it is one that Gandhi believed must be taken to ensure dignity even at the cost of starvation, is resignation.<sup>41</sup> One other aspect of industrial conflict on which Gandhi had quite a lot to say was the question of the sympathetic strike. Generally, he believed that nonviolent strikes were to be limited to those workers who were suffering the actual grievance for which redress was sought.

Thus, if the match manufacturers, say, of Timbuctoo, who were quite satisfied with their lot, strike out of sympathy for its mill hands who are getting starvation wages, the match manufacturers' strike would be a species of violence. They may and should help in a most effective manner by withdrawing their custom from the mill-owner of Timbuctoo without laying themselves open to the charge of violence.<sup>42</sup>

Gandhi, however, did concede that \*it was possible to conceive of occasions when those who are not directly suffering may be under an obligation to cease work. For example, if in the above case

the masters in the match factory combine with mill owners of Timbuctoo, it will clearly be the duty of the workers in the match factory to make common cause with the mill-hands ... In the last resort, every case has to be judged on its own merit. Violence is a subtle force. It is not always easy to detect its presence though you may feel it all the same.<sup>43</sup>

The strike is one of the main political weapons of non-cooperation. However, for the sake of truth political strikes and strikes for economic betterment or over work conditions should not be mixed. Therefore, to "precipitate labour strikes from a political motive so long as labour is politically ignorant is to exploit labour and to embarrass the Government and both are a species of violence".<sup>44</sup> Although industrial relations is concerned with more than the individual in conflict, dealing with the adjustment of power within, and between, groups, here too Gandhi stresses the personal morality of the individuals making up the groups over political expediency.

## CHAPTER FIVE: Civil Disobedience and Social Conflict

If men cannot refer to common values, which they all separately recognizes, then man is incomprehensible to man. The rebel demands that these values should be clearly recognized as part of himself because he knows or suspects that, without them, crime and disorder would reign in the world. An act of rebellion seems to him like a demand for clarity and unity.

Albert Camus (*The Rebel*)

### *Introduction*

Very close to the end of his long life, despite the bloody upheavals following the partition of British India, Gandhi was still able to claim quite emphatically that "Satyagraha can rid society of all evils, political, economic and moral".<sup>1</sup> Satyagraha, being a resistance to evil in the context of social conflict,<sup>2</sup> includes as its most visible form opposition to unjust laws. In the political field, where most of the satyagraha campaigns in pre-independent India occurred, struggles generally consist "in opposing error in the shape of unjust laws . . . Hence Satyagraha largely appears to the public as Civil Disobedience or Civil Resistance".<sup>3</sup>

Because Gandhi felt that satyagraha was "one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a satyagrahi exhausts all other means before he resorts to satyagraha". If this is not done "haste will itself constitute violence" and, therefore, the civil disobedience, or other action carried out in the course of a social conflict, will not constitute satyagraha. While a readiness for negotiation had to be maintained, Gandhi realised that "the stage of negotiation may never be reached", adding quickly that this "must not be the fault of the satyagrahi". The satyagrahi will then "appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him", and only then will he resort to Satyagraha. Satyagraha, therefore, requires patience, eschewing all "short-violent-cuts to success", and, therefore, regardless of the worthiness of motives, the relationship of the means to the

end must be borne in mind and "violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes" are to be opposed:

When you have failed to bring the error home to the law-giver [or other oppressor] by way of petition and the like, the only remedies open to you, if you do not wish to submit to error, are to compel him to yield to you either by physical force or by suffering in your person, by inviting the penalty [or repression] for the breach of his laws [or refusal of cooperation].<sup>4</sup>

The theoretical treatment of civil disobedience to unjust laws in Western literature often begins with an analysis of Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* and with two of Plato's *Dialogues of Socrates—Apology* and *Crito*. Interestingly enough these sources were also extremely important in the formation of Gandhi's political philosophy. Although it appears that he read these texts the year following the mass meeting of Indians in the Empire Theatre in Johannesburg on 11 September 1906, the date taken as the commencement of his (as it was then called) passive resistance campaigns, when an oath was taken to disobey the newly promulgated Indian Registration Ordinance, their influence on his growing philosophy of civil disobedience is obvious.

A great deal of Thoreau's writing is echoed by Gandhi. Both, for example, believed that if a law is unjust in a minor way then it should be let go,

but if it is of such a nature that it requires you to be the agent of injustice to another, then, I say, break the law. Let your life be a counter friction to stop the machine; What I have to do is to see, at any rate, that I do not lend myself to the wrong which I condemn.<sup>5</sup>

Gandhi also closely parallels Socrates<sup>6</sup> when he claims that the seeming breaking of a law is not in fact breaking the law if it is done under three limitations: (1) that a higher law, that of the conscience, is followed, (2) that the law is broken nonviolently, and (3) that the violator is cheerfully and willingly prepared to pay the full penalty of such violation.<sup>7</sup> This distinction may partially explain the differing emphasis (some say contradiction)<sup>8</sup> between *Apology* in which Socrates places truth higher than the law<sup>9</sup> and *Crito* where he appears to say that laws of the state must be obeyed, and court decisions, even

where wrong or unjust, must be abided by.<sup>10</sup> It is interesting to note that while Gandhi read both works he chose to translate (into his native language, Gujarati) and disseminate only *Apology*. Although many of the arguments of *Crito* were incorporated into his political philosophy perhaps Gandhi thought that the distinctions between primary and secondary sanctions (see below) may have been confusing to his relatively little educated audience.

### ***Individual civil disobedience***

The position of the lone satyagrahi engaged in conflict with a larger group is best illustrated by the case of civil disobedience (being the "breach of immoral statutory enactments"<sup>11</sup>) against the government. Such disobedience, to constitute satyagraha, must be carried out openly and must aim at changing the given law rather than rejecting the system of which the law is part, consequently punishments must be willingly accepted.

Those who strive for ideals often find that their conscience is in conflict with authority or stated laws. Gandhi was quite adamant that

no matter what legislation is passed over our heads, if that legislation is in conflict with our ideas of right and wrong, if it is in conflict with our conscience, if it is in conflict with our religion, then we can say that we shall not submit to that legislation.<sup>12</sup>

Gandhi clearly believed in the authority of the state in a democratic society.<sup>13</sup> One has a duty to obey all laws except those that are contrary to the conscience *and* cause a tangible harm to the welfare of the populace. "Only when a citizen has disciplined himself in the act of voluntary obedience to state laws", explains Gandhi, "is he justified on rare occasions deliberately but non-violently to disobey them and expose himself to the penalty of the breach." He further pointed out that if one wanted to both live in society and retain individual independence of action the points of utter independence must be limited to matters of first rate importance. "In all others which do not involve a departure from one's personal religion or moral code, one must yield to the majority."<sup>14</sup> This inherent law-abidingness is further explained by Gandhi when he points out that

A satyagrahi obeys the laws of society intelligently and of his own free will because he considers it his sacred duty to do so. It is only when a person has thus obeyed the laws of society scrupulously, that he is in a position to judge as to which particular rules are good and just and which are unjust and iniquitous. Only then does the right accrue to him of the civil disobedience of certain laws in well-defined circumstances.

And again:

Civil disobedience presupposes a scrupulous observance of all laws which do not hurt the moral sense... Thoughtless disobedience means disruption of the State. The first thing, therefore, for those who aspire after civil disobedience is to learn the art of willingly obeying the State laws, whether they like them or not. Civil disobedience is not a state of lawlessness, but presupposes a law-abiding spirit, combined with self restraint.<sup>15</sup>

The state's claim to obedience, therefore, is primary in all cases except where it contradicts the necessity of obedience to the Law of Truth. In a well ordered state this will be rare but when it occurs "it becomes\* a duty that cannot be shirked". Gandhi explicitly maintains the right of every citizen to be civilly disobedient even in a democratically elected state'. It is the "inherent right of a citizen" which he "dare not give ... up without ceasing to be a man":

It is possible to question the wisdom of applying civil disobedience in respect of a particular act or law; it is possible to advise delay and caution. But the right itself cannot be allowed to be questioned. It is a birthright that cannot be surrendered without surrender of one's self respect.<sup>1</sup>

In Gandhi's scheme the conscience, then, is the final arbiter in deciding whether laws should be complied with. It is, however, not enough merely to break laws, but, as with the general principles of satyagraha, changes of the unacceptable laws should be aimed at through conversion of the majority of the populace and the law makers. The state (that is, the majority who voted for it) also has the right to stand by its beliefs—and if no conversion takes place has the right to punish the disobedient satyagrahi. As Kripalani points out, every law gives the subject two alternatives, that is, to obey either the primary

sanction (the law itself) or the secondary sanction (punishment for not obeying the primary sanction).<sup>17</sup> In this sense the satyagrahi who contravenes a law and voluntarily accepts the punishment can be said to be obeying the law. Gandhi, following this line of argument, was firm in his opinion that "civil disobedience is the purest form of constitutional agitation".<sup>18</sup> These political "crimes", however, could be distinguished from non-political crime. Those who broke the laws and accepted the penalties, that is citizens who were law-abiding except for their political agitations, were friends of the state.<sup>19</sup> Criminal disobedience, that is, disobedience to all or any law selected at random and coupled with the intention of avoiding punishment, can lead to anarchy, compelling "every state to put down criminal disobedience by force. It perishes if it does not."<sup>20</sup> Criminal disobedience plays no part in satyagraha.

In a democratic state only defensive civil disobedience is permissible—that is, "involuntary or reluctant nonviolent disobedience of such laws as are in themselves bad and obedience to which would be inconsistent with one's self-respect or human dignity". Where the state is corrupt, repressive or dominated by an imperialist power the "citizen" may "revolt", that is, break laws even for symbolic purposes in order to bring down the system. As the authority of the state is not accepted it need not be cooperated with. This Gandhi termed "aggressive, assertive or offensive civil disobedience"—being a

nonviolent, wilful disobedience of laws of the state whose breach does not involve moral turpitude and which is undertaken as a symbol of revolt against the State. Thus disregard of laws relating to revenue or regulation of personal conduct for the convenience of the state, although such laws in themselves inflict no hardship and do not require to be altered, would be assertive, aggressive or offensive civil disobedience.<sup>21</sup>

Where an individual becomes an "outlaw" the place for him, as a just person in an unjust state, is in prison. Personal liberty is gained at too high a price when that price is the submission to the laws of a state in which an individual does not believe. Such a person, along with the satyagrahi in a democratic state using civil disobedience as a form of constitutional agitation and willingly

accepting the penalties, compels the state to arrest them. This often poses no difficulty as the disobedient is viewed by those who do not share their views as a nuisance. Such civil disobedience becomes "a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil state"<sup>22</sup> or evil within a state.

Because civil disobedience, whether it be aggressive or defensive, aims ultimately at conversion, Gandhi placed very strong emphasis on the word "civil" in the definition of the technique. To be civil, disobedience "must be sincere, respectful, restrained, never defiant, must be based upon some well-understood principle, must not be capricious and above all must have no ill-will or hatred behind it"; in this way it would appear to be civil "even to the opponent", who "must feel that the resistance is not intended to do him any harm".<sup>23</sup>

Civil disobedience aims to force the opponent and public into making a choice. As Rudolph and Rudolph correctly claim, for Gandhi, civil disobedience, along with other forms of satyagraha, "was a means to awaken the best in an opponent",<sup>24</sup> the rationale being that some laws are wrong and in breaking them others are asked to question their own beliefs as to those laws without coercion or violence. If they continue to believe in the justice of the disobeyed law the penalty will be gladly suffered. The opponents are merely being asked a question that they must consider and answer.<sup>25</sup> The satyagrahis do not inflict their views on others—the suffering involved is self-suffering. The moral pressure thus exerted by the satyagrahi paves the way for the possibility of conversion. This process, as explained by Gregg, occurs, when the opponent,

with the audience as a sort of minor . . . realizes the contrast between his own conduct and that of the victim. In relation to the onlookers, the attacker with his violence perhaps begins to feel a little excessive and undignified—even a little ineffective—and by contrast with the victim, less generous and in fact brutal.

### *Group social conflict and the individual*

Dhawan notes that individuals are more likely to be amenable to reason and more alive to moral considerations than a group. In group satyagraha, as opposed to individual satyagraha, the need to remain nonviolent and truthful becomes more difficult "because the emphasis in group action tends to shift from inner purity to external conformity, and this tells on the potency of soul-force".<sup>27</sup> In recognition of this, after the suspension of mass civil disobedience in 1933 following the gradual demoralisation of its leaders, Gandhi continued to permit individual civil disobedience.

Gandhi himself was the leader of one group of disputants in large-scale social conflicts in regard to the position of oppressed Indians in South Africa and against the British imperialist state in his native India. He also recommended that satyagraha be used by U.S. Blacks in achieving their rights.<sup>28</sup> He realised the pitfalls in mass satyagraha but saw the necessity for it and consequently used it when the need arose. Although the dialectic of mass satyagraha as practiced by Gandhi stops short of *class* conflict, Lannoy reminds us that it refuses "to balk at creative *social* conflict".<sup>29</sup>

As noted above, satyagraha in the form of civil disobedience can even be used against a government. Through mass action it can even bring down a state when "no alternative presents itself .but open application of force". Shridharani points out that this step is not to be taken lightly: "Satyagraha is to be employed only when anything, except violence and war, is more desirable than the existing state of affairs."<sup>31</sup> Gandhi believed that no government can control a person who does not sanction such control and that the government of people is impossible without their consent.<sup>32</sup> The necessity for such a withdrawal of consent and the initiation of satyagraha to overthrow a government presumably would never be justified in a democratic state. "Mass satyagraha" in these instances, Gandhi claims, "does not abolish legislatures, committees, investigating bodies and conferences. But it controls them, puts them in their proper place, and renders them less capable of doing harm."<sup>33</sup> When satyagraha is used against the rulers in this less ambitious fashion Gandhi still warns that

there must be no exclusive focusing on "the misdeeds of the Government, for we have to convert and befriend those who run it. And after all no one is wicked by nature".<sup>34</sup>

In any social satyagraha, whether against the government, a group or an individual, before taking any action an individual must first convince themselves of the truthfulness of the cause. They must "never act as a mere functionary, a representative of an institution or an underling, but always as an autonomous, fully responsible person". Realising the danger of indiscipline in tense situations of mass action, however, Gandhi held that once the decision has been made by an individual to embark upon a course of action along with others, the orders of the leaders must cheerfully be obeyed: "He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to the higher authority."<sup>36</sup>

Cleaving to nonviolence in group social conflict situations may undercut the ability of the opponent to employ overly harsh measures of suppression or retaliation. If they do use measures that appear to be disproportionately harsh they run the risk of alienating not only neutrals but also, eventually, supporters and allies. Satyagraha campaigns must, therefore, be carefully planned and executed.

Mass satyagraha progresses in stages, the stage to be reached and the length of time before progressing to the next stage may be dictated by the type of opponent and the circumstances, but always the general rules of satyagraha concerning truth, nonviolence, means and ends, self-suffering and coercion must be followed for that campaign to be satyagraha in more than name only.

In group conflict, the action to be taken before the adoption of satyagraha, according to Naess, can be divided into the following stages:<sup>37</sup>

- (1) The non-partisan analysis of the conflict and its background.
- (2) The clarification of essential and long-range interests which the conflicting groups have in common.

- (3) The definition of reasonable long-range aims which all of the contending parties might envisage and agree to.
- (4) The formulation of these aims in a precise and concrete way, coupled with an attempt to ensure that the contending parties understand them.
- (5) In the case of a persistent refusal by one party to accept the defined aims, an attempt at compromise by making nonessential changes in the definition.

Bondurant<sup>38</sup> goes on to systematise the steps to be taken in the actual satyagraha campaign (in this instance against a government, especially a repressive one) as:

- (1) Negotiation and arbitration. All established channels to be exhausted before undertaking further steps.
- (2) Preparation for group action. Discussion, examination of motives and self-discipline exercises started.<sup>39</sup> Issues at stake, appropriate action, circumstances of opponents and public opinion examined.
- (3) Agitation including the distribution of propaganda, marches, etc. commenced.
- (4) Issuing of an ultimatum. Future steps to be taken are brought to the notice of the opponent if no agreement is reached.
- (5) Economic boycott and strikes, including picketing and general strike, commenced.
- (6) Non-cooperation. Non-payment of taxes, boycott of schools and other public institutions undertaken.
- (7) Civil Disobedience. Breaking of selected laws because they are central to the grievance or are symbolic.
- (8) Usurping the functions of government.
- (9) Parallel government.

As with political oppression, economic oppression and exploitation, racism and sexism rest to a large degree on the acquiescence of the exploited. With this in mind, Gandhi noted that "exploitation of the poor can be extinguished not by effecting the destruction of a few millionaires, but by removing the ignorance of the poor and teaching them to non-cooperate with the exploiters".<sup>40</sup> It was partly for the educative purpose of pointing this fact out to the oppressed that Gandhi instituted what he called the "Constructive Programme". This Constructive Programme was originally part of the struggle to obtain India's independence. It involved future leaders in the struggle and put them in contact with the masses (it is not enough, Gregg points out, to work *for* people, they must be worked *with*<sup>41</sup>) as well as helping to bring about the society Gandhi envisaged free India as being. The programme, in its original context, dealt mainly with the problems of communal unity, the removal of untouchability, the reestablishment of rural industries, village sanitation, prohibition, basic education for all (including adults), national language, education in health and hygiene, and work towards economic equality.<sup>42</sup> This aimed at producing "something beneficial to the community, especially to the poor and unemployed" and provided "the kind of work which the poor and unemployed can themselves do and thus self-respectingly help themselves".<sup>43</sup>

For Gandhi this constructive work offered replacement for what the nationalists were opposing at the very time that they were opposing it. Without it, civil disobedience, if it succeeded in overthrowing the imperialist rulers, would exchange one group of leaders for another leading to "English rule without the Englishmen . . . the tiger's nature, but not the tiger . . ." <sup>44</sup> This again reflects Gandhi's view that good ends can only grow out of the use of proper means.

In large-scale social conflict situations Gandhi always coupled constructive work to civil disobedience, sometimes seeming to say that constructive work was an aid to civil disobedience and at other times putting the formula around the other way. Civil disobedience, he claimed, was capable of use as a technique for the redress of local wrongs or in order to rouse local consciousness or conscience, alone however it could never be used in a general cause such as,

for example, independence. For civil disobedience to be effective "the issue must be definite and capable of being clearly understood and within the power of the opponent to yield". It could, however, be used to assist a "constructive effort" in such a case. In the first two uses of civil disobedience listed no elaborate constructive programme is necessary, but in the latter case civil disobedience without it becomes "mere bravado and worse than useless". Constructive work, in other words, becomes a key weapon in the undertaking of large and general nonviolent campaigns, and perhaps such campaigns are not fully nonviolent unless accompanied by some kind of constructive activity.<sup>45</sup>

In a campaign against a war or nuclear installation the constructive social element would take the form of recruitment of others to help build a movement, the education of public opinion, etc. If civil disobedience is aimed at alleviating the oppression of a minority group, it would include working with that group to help them learn their rights, to organise themselves, etc. It would be designed to prevent the action from being an academic exercise on the part of the demonstrators, and to keep them in human contact with those that they aim to assist, or those that share the common struggle.

Besides being "socially useful and brotherly", constructive work has a subjective side: furnishing a discipline for nonviolence. It provides a tangible function for satyagrahis while the "proper channels" are being exhausted—it is "able to compensate for the apparent lack of headway towards the specific objectives of the struggle". Besides the positive aspect of influencing public opinion, it aids morale by giving the satyagrahi something positive to do rather than merely leaving him or her to suffer the negative aspects of frustration while waiting for something to happen:

... among all morally healthy and vigorous people there is, in relation to any great conflict, an imperative need for deeds... It must be action which is expected to advance towards power to win settlement of the specific issue . . . without a programme of practical performance in which any person can take part (i.e. a programme other than talk) many pacifists cannot maintain

their belief. The moral and psychological need for deeds is compelling. Without such exertion pacifism seems and feels too negative.

It is for these reasons, Gregg suggests, that such former distinguished pacifists as Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell abandoned their faith in pacifism at the outbreak of the Second World War.<sup>47</sup> Horsburgh makes the further point that constructive work as a "requirement of satyagraha has been much neglected in recent years, especially in the West" and suggests that Martin Luther King's "gradual loss of influence within the American civil rights movement was largely due to this oversight."<sup>48</sup>

The final major element in Gandhi's view of the way social conflicts should be resolved was his theory of "trusteeship". He believed that the owners of wealth had the choice before them of voluntarily converting themselves into trustees of their wealth for the poor, or class war. In keeping with his "hate the sin and not the sinner" dictum Gandhi claimed that we must seek to "destroy capitalism, not the capitalist". "I must not aim at his destruction. I must strive for his conversion."<sup>49</sup> In other words Gandhi disputed the Marxist claim that class antagonisms that occur in society are irreconcilable.

Trusteeship to some degree at least depends on a realisation of the oneness of humanity and on a belief in the moral correctness and desirability of non-possession and voluntary poverty. This has a basis in the Hindu philosophical tradition. In a secular, industrialised and consumerist society the idea may be a little more difficult to get across convincingly. Gandhi was against redistribution of wealth by coercion because he maintained that any future nonviolent state had to be built upon nonviolent foundations. A redistribution of wealth by force would require continuing force to maintain the structure. Trusteeship was his method of introducing the principles of satyagraha into this particular realm of social conflict:

As soon as a man looks upon himself as a servant of society, earns for its sake, spends for its benefit, then purity enters into his earnings and there is ahimsa in his venture. Moreover, if men's minds turn towards this way of

life, there will come about a peaceful revolution in society, and that without any bitterness.<sup>50</sup>

All who believed in a more equal distribution of the country's (or for that matter, the world's) resources would reduce their wants to the minimum, ensure that their earnings were free from dishonesty, renounce the desire for speculation and live in a way that is in keeping with the newly acquired satyagrahi philosophy of life. The rich person would not be forcibly dispossessed of their wealth, it being hoped that "he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for the society".<sup>51</sup>

Although Gandhi, characteristically, assumed the honesty of the trustee, he planned that in a free and nonviolent India the idea was to have legislative backing. In the meantime where the rich refused to become the guardians of the poor, Gandhi "lighted on nonviolent, non-cooperation and civil disobedience as the right and infallible" solution, noting that the rich "cannot accumulate wealth without the cooperation of the poor in society".<sup>52</sup>

This "non-cooperation" as envisaged by Gandhi was "a protest against... participation in evil":

Its object should not be to punish the opponent or to inflict injury upon him. Even while non-cooperating with him, we must make him feel that in us he has a friend and we should try to reach his heart by rendering him humanitarian service whenever possible.<sup>53</sup>

Such non-cooperation is a duty and a step towards the dignity obtainable through self-help for the individual:

No one is bound to cooperate in one's own undoing or slavery. Freedom received through the effort of others, however benevolent, cannot be retained when such effort is withdrawn. In other words such freedom is not real freedom. But the lowliest can feel its glow as soon as they learn the art of attaining it through nonviolent non-cooperation.

This whole area of social conflict places a great emphasis on the individual, first of all to refuse to be ruled or exploited any longer, and secondly, as with the case of the rich, to examine one's own life-style to determine the degree to which he or she is also responsible for the oppression or exploitation of others. This introspection is particularly important to ensure that the chain is broken, to ensure, for instance, that labour aims at sterilising capital rather than, as is often the case, wanting to "seize that capital and become capitalist itself in the worst sense of the term"<sup>55</sup>

Finally, it should be noted that Gandhi himself saw the difficulty of making his theory of trusteeship a practical reality; however, he affirmed his faith in it, stating: "I adhere to my doctrine of trusteeship in spite of the ridicule that has been poured upon it. It is true that it is difficult to reach. So is nonviolence".<sup>56</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Although social conflicts can be extremely complex, the importance of the individual cannot be overlooked even in the subjective sense. Whether changes in the unequal nature of society can in fact be brought about by the moral transformation of individuals or only through changing the prevalent structures, Gandhi does point to things that the individual themselves can do to make their own life more worthwhile subjectively, while perhaps aiding the introduction of objective structural changes. Gandhi was fond of saying that satyagraha depends on the quality of the participants, rather than their quantity, and his thought concerning the individual, in this area of conflict especially, can be summed up by the amalgamation of a few well worn phrases—not only does the revolution start here, but the buck also stops here.

## CHAPTER SIX: International Conflict

With folded arms and steady eyes,  
And little fear and less surprise,  
Look at them as they slay  
Till their rage has died away.  
  
Then they will return with shame  
To the place from which they came,  
And the blood thus shed will speak  
In hot blushes on their cheek . . .

Shelley (*The Masque of Anarchy*)

### *Introduction*

For Gandhi the rules of morality that ought to guide the lives of individuals should likewise guide the interactions between nations. The rules governing means and ends, truth and nonviolence were, for him, equally applicable in the international sphere.

Gandhi personally participated in the Boer War, Zulu "Rebellion" and the First World War as the leader of ambulance corps or as a recruiting officer. Initially such actions resulted from patriotic feelings as a citizen of the British Empire and later were justified by arguments containing touches of political pragmatism (for example, "if we would improve our status through the help and cooperation of the British, it was our duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need", and "I thought that England's need should not be turned into our opportunity, and that it was more becoming and far-sighted not to press our demands while the war lasted"<sup>1</sup>). His philosophy of nonviolence in these matters firmed as his regard for British justice declined.

The second World War led to the clarification of Gandhi's ideas—not only were the Jewish people faced with Nazi genocide, but India was also facing Japanese invasion. Speaking of Nazi oppression he claimed that if ever there could be "a

justifiable war in the name of humanity" then the "war against Germany . . . would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war":

While all violence is bad and must be condemned in the abstract, it is permissible for, it is even the duty of, a believer in *ahimsa* to distinguish between the aggressor and the defender. Having done so, he will side with the defender in a nonviolent manner.

This is because Gandhi's

sympathy must *not* be interpreted to mean endorsement in any shape or form of the doctrine of the sword for the defence of even a proved right. Proved right should be capable of being vindicated by right means as against the rude, i.e. sanguinary means.<sup>2</sup>

Even when one's own country is threatened with invasion from the outside Gandhi warns against using violence to meet violence "for the defence has to resort to all the damnable things that the enemy does, and then with greater vigour if it has to succeed". This of course cannot mean pacifism in the sense of non-resistance, for Gandhi. Because a satyagrahi never yields to brute force, he has a duty to defend property to which he has a just claim. This is done by "fighting" using different means, by engaging in a "war without weapons". Even this is done in a positive way, that is it aims at the conversion of the opponent, rather than the negative way of waging conventional conflict minus the violence.

### ***War without violence: The Nation***

In the 1960s Herbert Marcuse made the pointed comment that "nonviolence is not a virtue; it is a necessity".<sup>5</sup> Modern war technology is tending to make the concept of defence obsolete. Nuclear weapons are primarily for the destruction of enemies rather than the defence of borders. The new weaponry aims to protect a state through deterring attack from the outside, rather than repelling an attack already underway. The emphasis here is on the second of the two possible ways of preventing war as defined by Ikle. That is, war can be prevented "by rendering the use of arms so unattractive that a nation would rather tolerate existing conflicts or frustrations than start a war". The other

way is to eliminate "the source of conflict that would lead a nation to resort to the use of arms" <sup>6</sup> This second approach relies on conciliation, unilateral steps towards disarmament and a truth seeking, non-Machiavellian foreign policy backed up with a programme of civilian defence if an invasion should nevertheless occur.

Civilian defence, unlike conventional warfare, does not aim to defend particular objects such as borders and buildings, but is concerned with the defence of the whole body of society ("our way of life").<sup>7</sup> It concedes the physical taking over of the country in practical terms (although Gandhi did propose the idea of a "living wall" at the border to stop invading armies from entering) substituting political struggle for aggressive war. The aggressor becomes akin to a domestic tyrant and civil disobedience and non-cooperation become the tactics.

The degree to which civilian defence can work in turning back an invading army before it becomes entrenched is unknown—it has never been tried; however, non-cooperation with invaders or imperialist rulers has worked in the past.<sup>8</sup> The technology of warfare has reached the stage that civilian defence becomes progressively more attractive as a possible organised alternative to conventional war.

A theoretically nonviolent country, living by the rules applicable to the satyagrahi, cannot defend itself with arms. Horsburgh points out that this would not only be morally wrong from the Gandhian standpoint but that it would also be ineffective because

a Gandhian way of life would produce citizens who lacked the ruthlessness that is essential if armed force is to be used successfully. But it is also because such inconsistency would be impossible unless the community came to be pervaded by hypocrisy or cynicism; and these must undermine the country's attachment to Gandhian values.

The likelihood of such a state coming into existence in the foreseeable future is very small; in fact, although Gandhi believed "that a state can be administered on a nonviolent basis if the vast majority of the people are nonviolent", he

thought that the concept contained a fundamental contradiction. For him "the State" was an unnatural and undesirable system of authority with violence in a concentrated and organised form.<sup>10</sup> Given this difficulty with States, and the fact the majority of people in no state have been converted to nonviolence in the Gandhian context, the tension between countries may still be reduced by tailoring foreign policy to conform with Gandhian values.

The primary method of achieving this is the adoption of civilian defence as an alternative to military defence. A country doing this is less likely to be invaded because it would no longer be seen as a threat, making the rationalisations for an attack less plausible.<sup>11</sup> A move to this line of defence requires the initial step of unilateral disarmament.

Gandhi saw that for a less armed world "some nation will have to disarm herself and take large risks".<sup>12</sup> Such unilateral action, it seems, will reduce international tensions rather than merely encourage stronger nations to strike. Osgood proposed his "Graduated and Reciprocated Initiative in Tension Reduction" as a strategy to commence the process by such unilateral means. He believes that if one side makes a small unilateral gesture of disarmament to reduce tension and the other side reciprocates a further such move should be made—thus starting a process of disarmament. If the opponent does not reciprocate after the first move, the side making the initial gesture should wait and then make a second move regardless. He claims that in this way tension would be so reduced that the other side would eventually respond.<sup>13</sup> That this does in fact work has been validated in various simulation games.<sup>14</sup> In the present political climate, immediate and complete unilateral disarmament, which would be Gandhi's ideal, may not be practical, but Osgood's proposals could indicate a productive start towards universal disarmament.

Because armaments are controlled by economic factors to a large degree, "real disarmament cannot come unless the nations of the world cease to exploit one another". Immediately exploitation has ceased "armaments will be felt as a positively unbearable burden".<sup>15</sup> War does not always result from perceived external threat. Conflicts may result from a dispute over a scarce resource, or

they may be used as means of solving internal problems of a country by providing employment, creating group cohesiveness by diverting aggression outwards or bolstering a self-image of honour and courage.<sup>16</sup>

Gandhi's ideal society would aim to resolve international conflicts by helping its neighbours alleviate their economic problems and endeavouring to remain on friendly terms with them by aiding them "with superior technical knowledge, to develop their local resources to the utmost extent".<sup>17</sup> That it would cease to exploit these neighbours is axiomatic. Gandhi's definition of exploitation is very broad, encompassing the belief that he who claims as his own "more than the minimum that is really necessary for him is guilty of theft".<sup>18</sup> This applies to nations as it does to individuals:

If I take anything that I do not need for my immediate use, and keep it, I thief it from somebody else. I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no dying of starvation in this world. But so long as we have got this inequality, so long we are thieving.

Gandhi was willing to push this line of reasoning to its logical conclusion (as political leaders are not—words condemning inequality are seen as being adequate). If our aid programmes are not sufficient to reduce our theft then our neighbours must be invited "to come and to share our resources, and live as we have been trying to do. If there is not enough to go around, we must all tighten our belts; but yet not exclude anyone who is really in want".<sup>20</sup>

If either such a hypothetically sharing and nonviolent society or another society deciding to defend itself by peaceful means were nevertheless attacked there would, according to Gandhi, be two ways open for it to cope with the aggressor. Firstly,

to yield possession but not cooperate with the aggressor... the second way would be nonviolent resistance by the people who have been trained in the nonviolent way. They would offer themselves as fodder for the aggressor's

cannon... the unexpected spectacle of endless rows upon rows of men and women simply dying rather than surrender to the will of an aggressor must ultimately melt him and his soldiery.<sup>21</sup>

The ever practical Gandhi points out that "there will be no greater loss in men than if forcible resistance was offered; there will be no expenditure in armaments and fortifications". An army, he adds, that is brutal enough to go "over the corpses of innocent men and women would not be able to repeat that experiment".<sup>22</sup>

The second way, as elicited by Gandhi, could only be effective if undertaken by a community where everyone is a true satyagrahi. In such a case there would be no need to organise additional elaborate civilian defence programmes because the most effective nonviolent measures would occur spontaneously. This of course is an excessively Utopian dream and even Gandhi points out that a country cannot adopt nonviolent alternatives to war until the hearts of the people are changed to the point where "by laying down their arms they feel courageous and brave".<sup>23</sup>

In talking of the "true art of self-defence" and arguing against the concept of justifiable violence as "unavoidable self-defence" Gandhi spelled out the psychological underpinnings of the concept of such nonviolence:

The aggressor had always a purpose behind his attack; he wanted something to be done, some object to be surrendered by the defenders. Now, if the defender steeled his heart and was determined not to surrender even one inch, and at the same time to resist the temptation of matching the violence of the aggressor by violence, the latter could be made to realize in a short while that it would not be paying to punish the other party and his will could not be imposed in that way. This would involve suffering. It was this unalloyed self-suffering which was the truest form of self-defence which knew no surrender.<sup>24</sup>

This is elaborated on in what many critics consider was the most outrageous request Gandhi ever made. In July 1940 he called upon the English to surrender to the Germans and adopt nonviolent means of defence, not because they

could not fight on, "but because war is bad in essence". He stressed the "noble and brave way" of fighting "without arms or with nonviolent arms". He urged the English to invite Hitler into the country and take what he wanted but never to give "your soul, nor your minds". He warned:

You will never kill [Nazism] by its indifferent adoption. Your soldiers are doing the same work as the Germans. The one difference is that, perhaps, yours are not as thorough as the Germans. If that be so, yours will soon require the same thoroughness as theirs, if not much greater. On no other condition can you win the war. In other words you will have to be more ruthless than the Nazis.

Gandhi therefore believed that nonviolent defence is an ideologically correct as well as a practical measure. Although the discipline for the living wall approach to the defence of borders may be unlikely, he believed that "our way of life" could be so defended and the aggressor either converted or forced to give up the quest. He firmly believed that given proper training and proper generalship, nonviolence in this sense "can be practiced by masses of mankind".<sup>26</sup> An even more fundamental precedent than training and leadership for success is for the mass of citizens to believe emotionally in the validity of "our way of life"; and as Horsburgh points out this will depend upon the level of social justice reached within the state. The community must also have achieved an "extremely high level of social discipline" that is voluntarily accepted by the populace, which "must not depend in any large measure upon the use of traditional methods of law enforcement".<sup>27</sup>

The Gandhian approach to war and national defence has, obviously, been criticised—often vehemently. Raman, a former follower, for instance, was outraged that, while India was threatened by the danger of Japanese invasion, Gandhi could advocate a completely nonviolent approach. At this stage Gandhi was claiming that "men can slaughter one another for years in the heat of batde, for them it seems a case of kill or be killed. But if there is no danger of being killed yourself by those you slay, you cannot go on killing defenceless and unprotesting people endlessly. You must put down your gun in self-disgust."<sup>28</sup>

Raman argued that this would manoeuvre the country "into a state of helplessness [that] will and does lead to bitterness and to frustration, not to the sublime adoption of a great new method of warfare of which Gandhi dreams".<sup>29</sup>

The sceptic Orwell also questioned the validity of civilian defence in certain circumstances. In his essay "Reflections on Gandhi" he says:

It is difficult to see how Gandhi's methods could be applied in a country where opponents of the regime disappear in the middle of the night and are never heard of again. Without a free press and the right of assembly, it is impossible not merely to appeal to outside opinion, but to bring a mass movement into being, or even to make your intentions known to your adversary.<sup>30</sup>

Whether severe repression of a civilian resistance non-cooperation movement is enough to break the morale of the population, and bring an end to such resistance, seems to depend less on the level of repression than upon the degree of the political unity of the population. In fact Boserup and Mack claim that while civilian resistance "does not seem very likely to hold out for long against massive repression" such repression also works against the oppressors themselves. They claim that it is unlikely that such repression "would go on for any length of time if opposed by nonviolent means only. In the long run the liabilities of such a policy are too great".<sup>31</sup>

There obviously are problems with, and danger involved in, civilian defence, but when viewed alongside the risks afforded by the theory of nuclear deterrence it becomes relatively tolerable. Gandhi himself answers the critics by pointing out the paradoxical view generally taken of war and nonviolence: "in the case of nonviolence, everybody seems to start with the assumption that the nonviolent method must be set down as a failure unless he lives to enjoy the success thereof" while this is not said of preparation for war—of rushing "into a hailstorm of bullets to be mown down".

Gandhi concludes: "In Satyagraha more than in armed warfare, it may be said that we find life by losing it."<sup>32</sup>

A step by step systematisation of actions and their consequences in cases of the invasion of a nation has been set out by N. K. Bose, who was Gandhi's personal secretary for a time in 1946-7. These steps can be summarised as:<sup>33</sup>

- (1) First a band of satyagrahis (the *Shanti Sena*, or Peace Army in Gandhi's terminology) is sent to confront the aggressors and talk to them if possible, tell them that they are wrong in their actions, "even while they are prepared to be mowed down, yet not lift a finger in order to hurt the 'enemy' in so-called self-defence"
- (2) If the "enemy" moves on to occupy the land, no scorched earth policy is to be resorted to. Gandhi was quite adamant on this point:

There is no bravery in my poisoning my well or filling it in so that my brother who is at war with me may not use the water . . . there are bravery and sacrifice in my leaving my wells, crops and homestead intact, bravery in that I deliberately run the risk of the enemy feeding himself at my expense and pursuing me, and sacrifice in that the sentiment of leaving something for the enemy purifies and ennobles me.<sup>34</sup>

This is not to be done out of fear but because I refuse to regard anyone as my enemy—that is, out of a humanitarian motive. The invaders are to be lived with peacefully, but on the satyagrahi's terms. "The latter must be made to feel that they are welcome to live as workers and equals sharing in the toil and upkeep of the satyagrahi's social system."

- (3) Apart from this there is no submission on the part of the satyagrahis, they refuse to obey orders but not in such a way as to "make the occupational force to feel that their lives are threatened". Here the full force of complete non-cooperation is brought to bear, including refusal to work in administration, refusal to accept honours from the regime, refusal to pay fines and taxes, a boycott of courts, schools and products manufactured by

the oppressor; strikes and the deliberate breaking of unjust or symbolic laws.

- (4) If the satyagrahis are firm enough, cling to truth and are nonviolent enough (so as not to leave the occupiers afraid or on the defensive) "members of the enemy camp will start thinking ... the effects of indoctrination to which they have hitherto been subjected will begin to wear out". Bertrand Russell notes that War is brutal and horrible, but seems to ennoble by the fact that the warrior risks his life. If no one resists, the heroism is gone; if the brutality survives, it can no longer command admiration, while all the fine talk becomes laughable.<sup>35</sup>
- (5) The aim is to convert the general and soldiers of the opposing army. If the general proves intractable, then by converting the common soldier "the evil represented by the general would become isolated" and he "would find it increasingly difficult to maintain his authority".<sup>36</sup>

The problems of being confronted by nonviolent non-cooperation, as seen from the aggressor's point of view, were explained by Galtung as the following: territorial control is gained without difficulty, but as the local population would not cooperate their facilities could not be used effectively, their solidarity would make a divide and rule policy impossible, their non-cooperation will lead them to reject economic, social, cultural and political imports. The conquered country becomes "a millstone around our necks". The alternative of bombing them into submission means exposure "to criticism and dissent from within and without". All that is left is to ignore the non-cooperating locals and stick to the bases.

If the non-cooperation is complete enough so that the administration ceases to function or crumbles, it is "theoretically possible" that into the resulting vacuum would step the "people's representatives".<sup>38</sup> Gandhi, however, did not elaborate on the steps in this process.

Gandhi also had the complete answer for critics who doubted the efficacy of his methods against the likes of Hitler, who know no pity. "As a believer in nonviolence" he could not, he said, "limit its possibilities":

Hitherto he and his likes have built upon their invariable experience that men yield to force. Unarmed men, women and children offering nonviolent resistance without any bitterness in them will be a novel experience for them. Who can dare say it is not in their nature to respond to the higher and finer forces? They have the same soul as I have.

Gandhi also added:

If Hitler is unaffected by my suffering, it does not matter. For I have lost nothing worth. My honour is the only thing worth preserving. That is independent of Hitler's pity.<sup>39</sup>

### *War without violence: The individual*

Douglass, an academic theologian, - implores us not to overlook the true position of the individual in war. "At the centre of war", he notes, "is killing and being killed." The secondary aspect of war, the possibility of being killed, may have occurred to a soldier and stricken him with fear, but the primary aspect, that of killing, too often remains overlooked "beneath layers of socially assumed indifference towards the life of the enemy".<sup>40</sup> The essential character of war is the killing of people. Gandhi further reminds us that war "demoralizes those who are trained for it. It brutalizes men of naturally gentle character".<sup>41</sup>

What then should the individual, a satyagrahi, do if their country is at war? If the nonviolent of a country remain a "hopeless minority" and cannot change the hearts of the masses and so wean them from war, they themselves must nevertheless "live nonviolence in all its completeness and refuse to participate in war".<sup>42</sup>

There are some apparent discrepancies over time in Gandhi's writings on this point. At one point he claims that

when two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of *ahimsa* is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet wholeheartedly try to free himself, his nation and the world from war.

Some of his later far more hard-line pacifist writings seem to contradict this, and to a degree indicate the trend of Gandhi's thoughts as he aged. The above quotation, from his *Autobiography*, and later writings, however, are less dissimilar when the important Gandhian proviso that violence is preferable to cowardice, is taken account of.

For Gandhi the individual had a role to play at two levels. First, they had to be actively non-cooperative with the warring nation, whether their own or an outside aggressor. They could not consider passive resistance to be enough:

Merely to refuse military service is not enough. To refuse to render military service when the particular time arrives is to do the thing after all the time for combating the evil is practically gone. Military service is only a symptom of the disease which is deeper. I suggest to you that those who are not on the register of military service are equally participating in the crime if they support the state otherwise. He or she who supports a state organized in the military way—whether directly or indirectly—participates in the sin.

Secondly, the hard core with a higher awareness, training and commitment to nonviolence, had the duty of leading the masses in non-cooperation programmes in such a way as to ensure that they do not stray onto the path of violence, so that eventually "even common people would ultimately begin to subscribe inwardly to nonviolence as a faith".<sup>45</sup>

The relationship the satyagrahi has with the "enemy" was illustrated by Gandhi when he alluded to the possible Japanese invasion of India:

Nonviolent resisters would refuse them any help, even water. For it is no part of their duty to help anyone to steal their country. But if a Japanese had missed his way and was dying of thirst and sought help as a human being, a nonviolent resister who may not regard anyone as his enemy, would give water to the thirsty one.<sup>46</sup>

### **Conclusion**

Gandhi had not solved the problem of "civilian defence", but he did sketch a broad outline of policy for action which is left for others to fill out. He claimed

that his methods of waging war are at least as, or probably more, effective than violent methods. Although many would argue against this proposition it seems that Gandhi's claim at the least is not disprovable. Boulding's First Law states that what exists, is possible. Frank .quite correctly points out, therefore, that because "nonviolent action exists and has succeeded under some circumstances . . . this alone destroys the contention that nonviolent methods of conflict are hopelessly at variance with human nature".<sup>47</sup>

There are, however, other factors beside effectiveness to be taken into account when assessing the usefulness of Gandhi's alternatives to war as a means of solving international conflicts. These factors weigh heavily on the side of Gandhi's methods. (This is especially important from the Gandhian standpoint which refuses to put ends above means). The most important of these is that nonviolent equivalents to war suffer fewer of the moral deficiencies that war suffers from.

Finally, Horsburgh makes the point that, although "the achievements of nonviolence in India owe as much to Gandhi's moral greatness as to the techniques of satyagraha themselves", "the right method, if persisted in, can do much to produce the right man".<sup>48</sup> Gandhi emphasised that this is something that training for violence cannot do.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: The Position of the Individual

If you haven't the strength to impose your own terms upon life, you must accept the terms it offers you.

T. S. Eliot (*The Confidential Clerk*)

Gandhi's emphasis on the individual and his premise that by changing individuals one changes the world appears to be at odds with modern sociological tradition which emphasises the "priority" of society, and views individuals as the product of the social order. To a large degree Gandhi held with the traditionalists that the individual preceded society—the social structure derived from the qualities of the individual.

He was fond of making seemingly simplistic pronouncements on the importance of the individual: "The individual is the supreme consideration", "Ultimately it is the individual who is the unit", "If the individual ceases to count what is left of society?" and "I have discovered that man is superior to the system he has propounded".<sup>1</sup> These statements, which span twenty-five years, show a strong concerned humanist streak in Gandhi while concealing the degree to which these often unsophisticated pronouncements can mesh with current sociological thought.

As Iyer points out, "Gandhi refused to believe ... that society is governed by laws of growth which are beyond the ability of any individual to alter."<sup>2</sup> At the heart of all his personal and social actions "lay an insistence that individual will and reason can effect social and political change".<sup>3</sup> In fact Iyer goes as far as to accept that Gandhi developed his concept of truth "in an effort to undermine external authority and to reaffirm the moral autonomy and authority of the individual as an agent and an active performer in the arena of politics and social life"<sup>4</sup> At any rate Gandhi firmly believed in the perfectibility of the individual and of the flow through effect to society:

I do not agree that our ideologies, ethical standards and values are altogether a product of our material environment without any absolute basis outside it. On the contrary as we are so our environment becomes.<sup>5</sup>

Gandhi however was aware of the practical aspects presented by the reverse of this argument, for example, the alienation of the individual through feelings of powerlessness caused by massive centralisation in modern society. He was very concerned with increased power of states which seem to lead to a corresponding decrease in civil liberties:

I look upon an increase in the power of the state with the greatest fear because, although while apparently doing good by minimising exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality, which lies at the root of all progress.<sup>6</sup>

If a person loses this freedom "he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man".<sup>7</sup> It is obvious that Gandhi is thinking here as a politician rather than as a sociologist, and many sociologists would argue that his statements beg the question as to what exactly this freedom that must be protected is. Gandhi also makes the claim that "A small body of determined spirits fixed by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history."<sup>8</sup> Gandhi believed in the almost unlimited nature of individual ability; he saw the individual as the subject rather than the object of history, and he firmly believed that the relationship between the individual and society was one of the parts determining the whole.

Will Durant rightly claimed that Gandhi made "very little application of history to the understanding of the present",<sup>9</sup> and Gandhi himself admitted to Romain Rolland that he had learned very little from history, stating: "My method is empiric, all my conclusions are based on personal experience."<sup>10</sup> To paraphrase Bhattacharyya, Gandhi either did not, or could not, recognise individuals as products of social relations in the sense that the sociologists have generally taken them to be—that is, insisting that individuals must be looked at in their

social and historical milieu, meaning that man must be discovered "in his origin, in his evolution, in the development of society, in his history".<sup>11</sup>

Sociological thought then is concerned with the individual in society, how they act and why, and what cultural factors go into making them what they are. Sociological theory is a scientific tool that aims to explain these interrelationships. This chapter will analyse Gandhi's ideas concerning the individual's ability to change society in the light of modern sociological knowledge and thereby evaluating the applicability of satyagraha.

In the sociological tradition to a large degree wholes are seen as determining the parts: the individual is not seen as having quite the freedom that Gandhi claims for them—the individual is moulded by the social forces acting upon them—their likes and dislikes, values and modes of behaviour are those of his culture. Charles H. Cooley, in his holistic approach to social structure, noted that the consideration of the individual apart from the society of which they are a member is as artificial as considering society apart from individuals. He remarked that not only did most people see the two as separate and antithetical but that they, like Gandhi, considered the former as antecedent to the latter. Most people would admit that individuals make society but "that society makes persons would strike many as a startling notion". Although he could see no good reason for "looking upon the distributive aspect of life as more primary or causative than the collective one", he ventured to say:

The reason for the common impression appears to be that we think most naturally and easily of the individual phase of life, simply because it is a tangible one, the phase under which men appear to the senses, while the actuality of groups, of nations, of mankind at large, is realised only by the active and instructed imagination.<sup>12</sup>

For Cooley society is far more than a mere sum of the individuals within it having an organisation and life process "that you cannot see in individuals separately". The individual is its product receiving their heredity, language and education from the society of which they are a member.<sup>13</sup>

George Herbert Mead likewise held that mind presupposes and is a product of the social process rather than the other way around. He distinguished the social and individual theories of the mind and self by arguing:

The latter theory takes individuals and their individual experiencing—individual minds and selves—as logically prior to the social process in which they are involved, and explains the existence of the social process in terms of them; whereas the former takes the social process of experience or behaviour as logically prior to the individuals and their individual experiencing which are involved in it, and explains their existence in terms of that social process.

Of the great sociologists, Durkheim perhaps goes the farthest in postulating that the individual is a subject whose goals and aspirations cannot be understood without knowing the social system of which they are a member. Durkheim, along with the others mentioned, maintains that a person is born into a society which already has a definite structure and which conditions their personality, that they are only one of the elements of the totality of relationships which make up a society, and that these relationships are not created by any single individual but are made up of the various interactions between individuals. Added to this, for him society is far more than the source of impersonal rules and values, over and above this society "possesses all the spiritual characteristics necessary to arouse in an individual the sense of being in relationship with a morally superior being". "A superior life\* emanates from society, which "reacting upon the elements [individuals] who produce it, elevates them to a superior form of existence and transforms them". This interpretation, as well as Durkheim's statement that "there is only one moral power . . . which stands above the individual and which can legitimately make laws for him, and that is collective power", goes against Gandhi's value position on this subject.<sup>15</sup>

For Gandhi collective moral rules need not be superior to individual moral judgements. One should remain loyal to institutions *as long as* they are conducive to, *inter alia*, personal growth. Where they impede it, Gandhi boldly

proclaims, stressing subjective discretion, it is an individual's "duty to be disloyal to it".<sup>16</sup> The moral development of society, for Gandhi, stems from the moral development of the individual.

Not all major sociological theorists however downplayed the ability of the individual to change their environment. Simmel saw society and the individual as being in a dialectical relationship, the "synthesis or coincidence of two logically contradictory determinants: man is both social link and being for himself, both product of society and life from an autonomous center".<sup>17</sup> Max Weber went as far as to say that the above theories of social determinism need not apply in all cases. Weber saw individuals as a composite of general characteristics derived from social institutions and as actors of social roles but believed that "this holds only for men in so far as they do not transcend the routines of everyday life". H. H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills note that Weber's concept of charisma serves to underline his view "that all men everywhere are not to be comprehended merely as social products".

Even more than the abstract power of collectives, the march of history, or more specifically changes in the economy brought about by changing modes of production, lead to changes in the individual in the Marxian analysis. For Marxists then, it is the individual's social existence that determines their consciousness rather than the consciousness of individuals that determines their existence. Many interpreters of Marx place little emphasis on the individual as a prime mover of the unfolding of the path of history that will ultimately lead to a society free from violence and exploitation in which individuals are free once the state, classes and private property have been abolished. The individual becomes an instrument for the removal of obstacles which temporarily impeded this predetermined historical progression. The revolutionary individual was one who was in the right place at the right time to be of assistance to the historical changes in society, but as they were also a product of that society they could not by themselves instigate changes that were not ready to come about anyway. This transformation in which changes in the structure of the state lead to individual changes is governed by economic laws.

The proposition that the role of the individual has been underplayed in the Marxist analysis of history, or at least in many interpretations of it, has been stated strongly by several critics.<sup>19</sup> Marx himself in his "Third Thesis on Feuerbach" made the point:

The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringings, forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educator must himself be educated.<sup>20</sup>

These arguments, as the latter writers mentioned above show, need not lead to the necessary acceptance of one or the other of two mutually exclusive theories of social process and events—one individualistic and the other holistic. Peter Berger, in his *Invitation to Sociology*, notes that occasionally there are "cases where individuals succeed in capturing enough of a following to make their deviant interpretations of the world stick, at least within the circle of this following". He maintains that society is an objective fact that coerces and even creates the individuals within it, while on the other hand "it is also correct to say that our own meaningful acts help to support the edifice of society and may on occasion help to change it". Agreeing with Weber he makes the point that men "*can* say 'no' to society and have often done so":

it is possible, though frequently at considerable psychological cost, to build for oneself a castle of the mind in which the day-to-day expectations of society can be almost completely ignored. And as one does this, the intellectual character of this castle is more and more shaped by oneself rather than by the ideologies of the surrounding social system.

Gandhi would argue that the normal expectations of society can be ignored, as suggested by Berger, without going to the length of "retiring from the social state".

The authenticity of existence can, and often does, run counter to the playing of socially defined roles. The question of whether one is acting in such "bad faith" depends on whether the role is played blindly or knowingly and willingly.

Because Gandhi maintains that the individual moulds themselves to fit in with society<sup>22</sup> he can claim that by acts of will one can go against socially determined modes of behaviour.

Early Christian thought emphasised the belief that changes in society could be effected if individuals were changed, and Hindu thought allows for the existence of the truly free being, the *jivan-mukta*, who has abolished, or transcended, all conditioning. The sociological anti-thesis to this was that individuals were strongly held by their social conditioning and would only change as social conditions changed. According to Prasad, Gandhi realised that under the original thesis great individuals could come forth while society degenerated, while under its anti-thesis society could be enriched while the individual lost their freedom.<sup>23</sup> Gandhi's social philosophy encompassed both an enriched society and free individuals. Changes in social conditions are dependent upon changes in the hearts of men and women which begin, obviously, at the individual level. This does not happen through the inevitability of progressive historical change—persons must consciously, individually as well as eventually collectively, endeavour to bring about changes in their own lives and surroundings. He claimed that not only did people change society but that they had to take an active stance to ensure that this occurred. The responsibility for the state of society rests personally with each individual. When talking of the change to a more ideal social system, a socialism where there is "none low, none high", Gandhi asserted:

we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like seize the game when it comes our way. This is no socialism. The more we treat it as a game to be seized, the further it must recede from us. Socialism begins with the first convert.<sup>24</sup>

Gandhi was no theoretician; in line with his idealism that individuals could change themselves and their society he merely explored, on an *ad hoc* basis within the rules of satyagraha, individual and social paths that had consistency with the goals sought.

The focus on the individual and his/her responsibility for changing the world through changing the self is aptly conveyed in Gandhi's conviction that nonviolence and methods of solving disputes nonviolently are contagious if conducted in the right spirit. "The more you develop it in your own being the more infectious it becomes till it overwhelms your surroundings and by and by might over sweep the world."<sup>25</sup> And further:

Nonviolence is like radium in its action. An infinitesimal quantity of it embedded in a malignant growth acts continuously, silently and ceaselessly till it has transformed the whole mass of the diseased tissue into a healthy one. Similarly even a little of true nonviolence acts in a silent subtle, unseen way and leavens the whole society.

It must be noted, however, that Gandhi was not an advocate of mere self-reform trusting that the benefits would eventually filter through to society at large. Gandhi himself led large mass movements that were concerned with social issues. Satyagraha means fighting injustices. Self-reformation cannot come about in isolation, selflessness is a key to its attainment. Reformation of society and the self are inextricably linked—reform yourself and you have started to reform the world, reform the world nonviolently and you will have reformed yourself. This interplay between the individual and society can be seen when Gandhi speaks of the attainment of *swaraj* (independence) for India. He announces that once you stop regarding yourself as a slave you cease to be one. You will have changed your self-conception *and* through the measures of boycotting the institutions of former rulers will have started changing society; thus "... if we become free, India is free.... It is Swaraj when we learn to rule ourselves. It is, therefore, in the palm of our hands . . . such Swaraj has to be experienced each for himself."<sup>27</sup> Current sociological knowledge does not indicate that Gandhi's interpretation of the interplay between society and the individual is necessarily invalid; it merely means that stepping outside the social norms to change society is not easy. The sociological debate, however, has great bearing on the question of whether satyagraha, as developed by Gandhi, has any applicability as a method of conflict resolution outside of the social setting in which it was developed. As the individual is indebted to their

society for a great many of their modes of behaviour so too are their responses to interpersonal conflict institutionalised. From the point of view of Durkheim and others, Gandhi's "philosophy" cannot be separated from Gandhi the person, or from the cultural traditions, historical circumstances, or the economic, political and social organisation of the society in which satyagraha emerged as a technique of conflict resolution. All societies have their own shared concepts of moral rules and dispute processing practices which allow members of the society to live together with minimum frictions and conflicts— methods imported from a foreign social setting may not "fit". As Rudolph and Rudolph point out, at least in theory much of the West's adversary legal tradition and political life embodies "the belief that conflicts are best resolved through the frank confrontation of alternatives, the clear articulation of opposites, their clash and the victory of one alternative over the other", while "Traditional Indian ideas of conflict management in both politics and law . . . tend to stress arbitration, compromise, and the de-emphasis of overt clashes, of victories and defeats."<sup>28</sup>

Further, if satyagraha is more than a mechanical method for conducting conflict in a nonviolent manner and more than a step by step approach to resisting evil and injustice but is also, as Gandhi certainly claimed that it was, a way of life, then the question of applicability is even more immediate. We live in a modern industrialised society and to the degree that this society predetermines and predefines what we do, think and believe as Gandhi's social background did for him, the transportation of satyagraha, across cultural lines and historical times, may not be valid.

As we have seen from Gandhi's interpretation of the relationship between society and the individual, these arguments would personally not trouble him at all. Society does not make the individual in his view. The individual makes themselves, and makes their society. They can choose their modes of behaviour. Satyagraha, according to Gandhi, is a science and consequently crosses cultural barriers. Nonviolence too is universal, being "the law of our species", "the great Eternal Law governing man" and as a law "must hold good for all".<sup>29</sup>

The validity of Gandhian techniques for non-Hindu society, however, can be demonstrated without posing the beliefs of a sociologist like Berger, who claims that individuals can break out of their social conditioning by acts of will, against the beliefs of the strict social determinists like Durkheim. Gandhi was *not* a mere personification of Indian traditions. He often defied accepted traditions and orthodoxies.<sup>30</sup> He firmly asserted that evil must be fought rather than merely accepted or understood—and this is far more of a Western than Hindu concept.

Gandhi's critics have often pointed to the inapplicability of satyagraha to a Western setting, especially as a response to Gandhi's appeal for Jews to use satyagraha as a response to Nazi persecution. They claim that his words "have meaning within the context of Hindu tradition" and that "they provide some understanding of the patience or passivity of the Indian peoples in the face of centuries of oppression".<sup>31</sup> These critics have failed to note that, although Gandhi's roots were deep in Indian tradition, his philosophy of life was formed in British-dominated India and South Africa, he was educated as an English attorney-at-law in London, that he often acknowledged his debt to the Western thinkers such as Ruskin, Tolstoy and Thoreau.<sup>32</sup> His attachment to the Sermon on the Mount is well known,<sup>33</sup> and greatly influenced his interpretation of his Hindu spiritual reference the *Bhagavad Gita*. During his third visit to London in 1909 he spent considerable time meeting suffragette leaders like Emmeline Pankhurst and attending their rallies, and of the over 250 books known to have been read by him almost 200 are by Western authors (excluding English translations of Eastern texts) including, besides several by the three mentioned above, such names as Besant, Carlyle, Goethe, Shaw, James, Plato, Spencer, Mazzini, Shakespeare, Bunyan, Huxley, Milton and Bacon. All of these Western cultural influences went into the making of Gandhi, the author of satyagraha. Bondurant explains that the emergence of satyagraha then "cannot be explained in terms of the Indian traditional ideal alone. Western objectives—social equality, economic prosperity, basic popular social action—played their role". Satyagraha is an amalgam of the two models postulated by the Rudolphs.

That Gandhian techniques can be used by non-Hindus is amply demonstrated by their successful use in Europe by Lanza del Vasto and Danilo Dolci, in America by Martin Luther King Jr. and by Moslem tribesmen under the leadership of Abdul Ghaffar Khan in what is now northern Pakistan. With regard to this last group, Bondurant points out:

The development among the Frontier Pathans of a movement committed to the use of satyagraha as a means for promoting social and political objectives, demonstrates the potential appeal of the technique among a people unfamiliar with a tradition or philosophy enjoining nonviolence.

And further:

The point of greatest significance for a study in the philosophy of action is that satyagraha could be, and was, adopted by a people to whom the concepts of *ahimsa*, *tapasaya* [sacrifice or self-suffering] and *satya* were unfamiliar ... That this was achieved is a matter of primary interest for those who are concerned with the conditions under which the technique may be employed and by whom it may be adopted.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps satyagraha has greater problems crossing the barriers of time. Maron points out that with modernisation there is a powerful trend towards intensive institutionalisation of social living to the exclusion of the personal element, and along with this the exclusion of the basis of morality. This brings the individual up against a "system" which is immune to the moral influence on which satyagraha depends. Thus, he concludes, modernism and satyagraha are incompatible.<sup>36</sup> It may be difficult to argue against this position. Gandhi would maintain, perhaps a little naively, that in the final analysis all institutions are made up of individuals who are open to moral influence. This argument, however, cannot be used against the applicability of satyagraha as a method for resolving interpersonal conflicts, nor would it greatly worry Gandhi who believed in the duty of each individual to struggle against injustice even where victory is seemingly impossible, not just to help reach that victory, which may still occur, but for the sake of the dignity of the satyagrahi.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: Aggression and the Problem of the Will

*The fundamental question is: what have you made of your life?*

J.P. Sartre (*La Question*)

As a man thinketh so he is. Man is tending to become what we have thought that he is.

J.W. Krutch

### **Introduction**

The primary question concerning aggression in conflict situations is whether it is inevitable that at least sometimes we will come to blows or go to war—inevitable not because we perceive it as the only means of achieving a satisfactory solution to the conflict but because it is biologically or psychologically determined that in situations where we are faced with certain stressful stimuli, or have been conditioned in a certain way, we will necessarily react violently. If people are innately violent and there are major limitations on free-will in making rational or conscious choices about the direction their lives will take then the proposal of a method of nonviolent resolution to conflict entailing an eschewing of violence and malice in the face of frustrations, and which requires difficult choices on the most fundamental of moral issues, appears to have little validity. The questions concerning the avoidability of violence, and free-will versus determinism are complex, but the current state of knowledge in these areas can be interpreted as being quite compatible with satyagraha.

### **Aggression**

Aggression is a necessary element of day-to-day living when it manifests itself in the applied form of self-assertion. This is important because "through the aggressive drive to actualise the self. . . each individual develops as a person". In his later writings Adler referred to aggression as the "striving for perfection" or "upward striving" and Clara Thompson points out that "Aggression is not

necessarily destructive at all. It springs from an innate tendency to grow and master life which seems to be characteristic of all living matter". The problem arises when aggression exhibits itself in the pure rather than applied form, that is, as violence. It is in this sense that the word aggression will be used. The words "aggression", "violence" and "nonviolence" will be discussed as methods of struggle, "that is actions, or activities considered or performed by parties to a dispute as means of conducting the conflict and trying to achieve the ends disputed".<sup>1</sup>

According to some, violence is determined by instinct while to others it is learned or has psychologically based causes. The biological theories concerning man's aggression can be divided into two schools of thought. Konrad Lorenz is the leading figure among the ethologist (the "instinct" school), while the behaviourist school is typified by such archrivals of Lorenz as Ashley Montagu and J. P. Scott. Lorenz argues that people are aggressive by instinct and that this aggression includes intra-species aggression. Aggression for Lorenz means violence with malice between members of the same species when both want the same thing. "There cannot be any doubt", he writes, "in the opinion of any biologically minded scientist, that intra-specific aggression is, in man, just as much of a spontaneous instinctive drive as in most other higher vertebrates."<sup>2</sup> The thesis of the ethologists is that humans, as well as other animals, are innately aggressive and this often leads to violence when conflict situations arise. Human violence leads to bloodshed and death more frequently than similar violent behaviour among other animals because people do not have the same built-in inhibitory behaviour responses. According to Lorenz, most other animals have deadly teeth and claws which enable them to kill extremely efficiently. To ensure the preservation of the species as a whole they have corresponding mechanisms that allow them to discontinue the violent actions once the enemy has deferred to their superior strength. The less well naturally armed an animal is the less well the response is developed. Humans, the argument goes, are very poorly armed and consequently the compensatory response is also poorly developed. Lorenz believes that "the invention of artificial weapons upsets the equilibrium of killing potential and social

inhibitions". He goes on to argue that what remains of these already weak mechanisms is weakened still further by our present ability to kill at a distance: The distance at which all shooting weapons take effect screens the killer against the stimulus situation which would otherwise activate his killing inhibitions. The deep, emotional layers of our personality simply do not register the fact that the working of a forefinger to release a shot tears the entrails of another man.

For Lorenz, therefore, aggression is not merely a learned mode of reacting to frustration but is biologically determined. He has powerful allies amongst the psychoanalysts for this argument. Later in his life when Freud finally admitted the existence of an aggressive instinct independent of sexuality he was able to claim: "Conflicts of interest between man and man are resolved, in principle, by the recourse to violence. It is the same in the animal kingdom, from which man cannot claim exclusion." He continues: "the slaughter of a foe gratifies an instinctive craving" and "the upshot of these observations ... is that there is no likelihood of our being able to suppress humanity's aggressive tendencies."<sup>4</sup>

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud makes the point even more strongly:

... men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved ... they are, on the contrary, creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a powerful share of aggressiveness . . . *Homo homini lupus* [man is a wolf to man]. Who in the face of all his experience of life and of history, will have the courage to dispute this assertion? As a rule this cruel aggressiveness waits for some provocation or puts itself at the service of some other purpose, whose goal might also have been reached by milder measures. In circumstances that are favourable to it, when the mental counter forces which ordinarily inhibit it are out of action, it also manifests itself spontaneously and reveals man as a savage beast to whom consideration towards his own kind is something alien.<sup>5</sup>

In Freud's view this aggressive instinct was linked with his familiar death instinct in that it was primarily directed against the self. In an attempt to preserve the self these instincts had to be diverted—the choice for him was

that either we ourselves or others became the objects of our aggression. The consequence, he claimed, of renouncing outwardly directed destructiveness leads to turning its force back upon ourselves.<sup>6</sup>

Freud seems to be pointing to the inevitability of aggression. Lorenz does, however, offer a solution to the problem of violence in mankind. It is based on the recognition of the innateness of this trait by policy makers and the consequent organisation of the functioning of society in such a way as to take cognizance of, and allow an outlet for, this drive in a ritualised fashion, for example, by encouraging more sporting (including international sporting) activities.

If as Lorenz, Freud, and others claim, humans are innately aggressive then talk of the notion of "brotherly" love is a mere platitude. Lorenz's critics take delight in indicating that the people and nations who engage in the most sport are not generally those that are the least violent off the sports field after having discharged their instinctual aggressive drives in a ritualised manner.<sup>7</sup> Often the meekest members of our society do not like competitive sports at all—the theory does not explain the existence of nonviolent people. The critics go on to point out that animals are not necessarily intrinsically aggressive as Lorenz claims, weakening the value of his extrapolations from animals to humans.<sup>8</sup>

The other side of this nature/nurture debate is headed by those authorities who maintain that violent behaviour is learned—our culture providing the young with many violent models, illustrating the argument by pointing to peaceful cultures where such models are absent.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, they say, such forms of behaviour "are to a great extent learned and arbitrary, and we *could* change them should we choose to do so!"<sup>10</sup> Montagu asserts that "men and societies have made themselves according to the image they have had of themselves, and they have changed in accordance with the changing image they have developed".<sup>11</sup>

If violent aggression is biologically innate then the nonviolent management of conflicts may well be impossible. As long as there is doubt about this hypothesis it may be bad faith to opt for the Lorenzian approach:

... for those who are ready to grasp at such an explanation of human aggression it provides relief for that heavy burden of guilt most individuals carry about with them for being as they are. If one is born innately aggressive, then one cannot be blamed for being so.<sup>12</sup>

Montagu points out that this "tendency to accept violence as a normal form of behaviour" may become acceptable to us "when we are told that it is man's nature to be violent, a bequest from his prehistoric ancestors". The biological determinist may be even more dangerous than merely allowing individuals to go on acting in the potential bad faith that they are unaccountable for their violent actions—they may in fact be creating a real self-fulfilling dimension to social prophecy. A widespread belief that human wars are instinctive, for example, would tend to make them inevitable. Acceptance of the determinist position in this area could lead to a crippling of the move, or even the possibility of a move, towards a nonviolent form of conflict resolution.

Gandhi firmly believed in the basic goodness and nonviolent nature of humanity. Wholly unlike Lorenz, who believes that the unreasonable intra-specific aggression resulting in bloody conflicts and wars engaged in by supposedly reasonable human beings, can only be explained in terms of aggressive innate drives, Gandhi observes that "human intercourse is either violent or nonviolent. Fortunately for humanity, nonviolence pervades human life and is observed by men without special effort".<sup>14</sup> He points out that if humankind was not basically nonviolent, it "would have been self-destroyed ages ago". Gandhi believed that history recorded happenings outside of the ordinary. Because nonviolence is the everyday form of interaction for humankind, "History does not and cannot take note of this fact."<sup>15</sup>

J. P. Scott, also arguing against the instinctivists, has shown that in the face of aggression animals will try out a series of reactions and settle on the one that appears to give the best effect. Where the defender is weaker and/or less

experienced than the attacker the eventually settled upon technique may well be nonviolent (taking, for example, the form of submission). After reviewing several experiments, which by training either increased or decreased violence among animals, Scott asserts: "We may conclude that training has a powerful effect on aggression, both in magnifying the motivation towards it, and in repressing fighting. It follows that you can understand yourself in terms of the kind of training to which you have been subjected."<sup>16</sup>

The neobehaviourists (for example, B. F. Skinner) go one step further claiming that human behaviour is completely determined by past environmental rewards. As Eric Fromm points out, however, this totally ignores human passions and claims that they will always behave as their self-interest requires, that egotism and self-interest are more important than all other human passions.<sup>17</sup>

In arguing against these learning theory determinists, Scott maintains that individuals can consciously not only understand the source of violently aggressive impulses but teach themselves to be less violent. If experience is the best teacher, and people can reason out why they act the way that they do, then they have the potential to conclude that in the long run nonviolence may give the best effect in conflict situations by breaking the nexus between violence and further violence. As a method it may prove to be the most expedient. Finally Scott concludes that people can train themselves to be nonviolent: "The best scientific method for the control of undesirable aggression is that of passive inhibition, which means that you form a habit of non-fighting simply by not fighting." Gandhi believed similarly, stating: "I am an irrepressible optimist. My optimism rests on my belief in the infinite possibilities of the individual to develop nonviolence." He continued, pointing out, "If the method of violence takes plenty of training, the method of nonviolence takes even more training, and the training is much more difficult than the training for violence," but "The very first step in nonviolence is that we cultivate in our daily life, as between ourselves, truthfulness, humility, tolerance, loving kindness."<sup>19</sup>

Lannoy, an interpreter of Gandhi, summed up this area succinctly when he stated that:

Nonviolence is a *synthesis* arrived at by resolving an inner conflict between aggressive and non-aggressive *instincts*. Nonviolence is not an instinct but an ethical stance which demands training and self-discipline.<sup>20</sup>

Aggressive behaviour has been accounted for not only as the manifestation of an innate violent drive determined by genetic factors, or as a learned way of responding to particular situations, but also as a reaction to frustrations. Frustrations arise when feelings of strong needs are coupled with feelings of being prevented from satisfying those needs:

Fighting arising from competition for dominance, food, sexual partners or territory clearly attests to the role of external stimulation in animal aggression. The aggressive activity in these cases is the product of some perceived obstacle to the attainment of a desirable goal state.<sup>21</sup>

Very often this obstacle will be another human being, leading to a conflict situation:

Frustration is... likely to lead to aggression because in many cases the cause of frustration is another individual, and attacking him will drive him away or cause him to stop his activity. In other words, aggression is a useful response in many frustrating situations.<sup>22</sup>

Frustration, of course, need not lead inevitably to aggressive conflict or anger. Where it leads to increased effort, as opposed to avoidance, it can result in the discovery of new solutions to the problems at hand. Where a person causes frustration in another there is, however, no guarantee that the other will act in the most constructive way possible. Furthermore the party posing the frustration inducing obstacle may not be aware that they are causing an aggressive response. The aggression may be directed at a third party. Gandhi himself was no psychologist,<sup>23</sup> he did, however, realise that if frustration is the chief trigger of hostile aggression then living in ways that cause less frustration to those with whom we come into contact would tend to reduce aggression. As we have noted, all frustration is not followed by aggression; therefore, it is not

the necessary outcome—although perhaps it is perceived as the most appropriate given the alternatives at the time. With the introduction of further alternatives it may no longer be regarded as the most appropriate outcome in similar circumstances. The Gandhian approach to conflict resolution is based on the provision of such an alternative.

Frustrations leading to violence may also have a deeper psychological cause than merely being a reaction to certain situations. Rochlin, for example, argues that aggression stems from threats, real or imagined, to the self-esteem of an individual leading to hostility, hatred and eventually violence. Adler, likewise, argued that aggression is one form of neurotic behaviour used to safeguard self-esteem. Rollo May maintains that "deeds of violence in our society are performed largely by those trying to establish their self-esteem, to defend their self-image, and to demonstrate that they too are significant", while Toch suggests that "violence feeds on low self-esteem, and a sense of inadequacy". Others have gone as far as to suggest that "the unhappiness that arises from the frustration of action and consequently thwarted self-realisation and deprivation of freedom is nearly bound to be violent".<sup>24</sup> If violence is caused even in part by the frustrations of powerlessness then in a conflict situation there is hope for the avoidance of violence if the conflict is conducted in such a way as not to threaten the self-esteem of the opponent. Satyagraha, the Gandhian technique of conflict resolution, never aims at defeating the opponent, only to convert them, thus avoiding the possibility of increasing his feelings of inadequacy and to take the argument from the other side, "Nonviolence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour."

It would appear, therefore, that there is no single proven cause of violence. It appears, according to Gunn, to have three determinants, (1) weapons, (2) precipitants, and finally (3) human attitudes. Of these, he says, attitudes are "by far the most important because, basically, it is man's view of himself, his inner aggressive needs, his relationship with fellow man that finally determines whether violence occurs or not. If violent attitudes were to disappear

altogether, then precipitants could not trigger a fight and weapons would lie idle".<sup>26</sup>

In summary, to quote Gandhi: "Man's nature is not essentially evil; brute nature has been known to yield to the influence of love. You must never despair of human nature."<sup>27</sup> In the Gandhian framework of conflict resolution "a soberly optimistic view of man's potential (based on recognition of mankind's attainments, but tempered by knowledge of its frailties) is a precondition for social action to make actual that which is possible".<sup>28</sup>

### *The problem of the will*

In the last part of this chapter we noted Scott's contention that people can choose to be nonviolent. This presupposes that individuals have the will to choose the type of behaviour they would like to exhibit and consciously train themselves to make this part of their normal way of behaving.

Gandhi did not have much to say directly on the question of whether man has free will or whether his actions are determined, and what he did say is often obscure or contradictory. His sparse statements on the matter include the following: "Man has got choice, but as much of it as a passenger on a ship has. It is just enough for him. If we don't use it, then we are practically dead"; "Man is the maker of his own destiny in the sense that he has the freedom of choice as to the manner in which he uses his freedom. But he is no controller of results"; "My belief in the capacity of nonviolence rejects the theory of permanent inelasticity of human nature"; "Man can change his temperament, can control it, but cannot eradicate it"; ". . . how far a man is free and how far a creature of circumstance—how far free-will comes into play and where fate enters the scene—all this is a mystery and will remain a mystery". He also pointed out that we cannot command results; we can only strive" and that "it is man's privilege to overcome adverse circumstances". Finally, he is quoted as saying: "It is true that we are not quite as free as we imagine. Our past holds us." In the following sentence, however, he warned against putting too much emphasis on this by saying: "But like all other doctrines it may well be ridden to

death. We are the makers of our own destiny. We can mend or mar the present and on that will depend the future."<sup>29</sup>

This collection of somewhat contradictory Gandhian rhetoric becomes clearer when it is placed beside Gandhi's philosophy in action, when it is viewed in the light of the tasks that he set for himself. As Horowitz rightly points out: "The doctrine of free will in social action is implicitly assumed in Gandhi's philosophy. It is free will which leads the man of character from a competitive, egoistic approach to life to the practice of altruism."<sup>30</sup> Bondurant adds that "the element which leaves no doubt as to the distance of Gandhi's position from that of the determinist is his insistence upon the power of man's will together with reason to effect changes in his society."<sup>31</sup>

The free-will/determinist debate is one of the most difficult of philosophical problems with, as O'Connor maintains, neither the determinists nor the libertarians (proponents of the argument for free will) providing arguments that suffice to establish their case. Both sides hold ideological positions "that are utterly opposed to each other and offer little in the way of common ground".<sup>32</sup> This debate, however, does have an important bearing on Gandhi's view of humanity and consequently the ability of each individual to deal with conflict situations so as to maximise not only tangible payoff but also a feeling of self, of dignity. As Davis points out, if the determinist position is true then during a conflict situation the arguments manifest themselves mechanically. He asks rhetorically what it would be to win such an argument and answers: "It would mean that one of us put out considerations which appealed psychologically to the other, and with such a force as to determine one antagonist's mind to the other's position. But who is to say that truth has prevailed?"<sup>33</sup>

The determinist position holds that all events follow immutable laws and therefore an act of will, too, is always determined by the innate character and motives of the individual. Decisions therefore being necessary rather than free. This is because individuals have neither made nor can control their character or motives—they are the necessary products of the innate tendencies and external influences which have been effective during their lifetime.<sup>34</sup>

In the same vein many psychologists claim that the unconscious influences or motivates action which we would otherwise consider to be free. Hospers has gone as far as to hold that "The unconscious is the master of every fate and the captain of every soul."<sup>35</sup> Freud himself noted that we often felt that we did have a free will but that we also realise that for many of our decisions there is no conscious motivation . . . "what is thus left free by the one side receives its motivation from the other side, from the unconscious; and in this way determination in the physical sphere is still carried out without any gap"<sup>36</sup>

The behaviourists, led by Skinner, come to similar conclusions. Skinner himself maintains that we will get over our simplistic notions of free will when more is learned in the field of behavioural psychology—"We will have to abandon the illusion that men are free agents, in control of their own behaviour, for whether we like it or not we are all controlled."<sup>37</sup>

He finds delight in quoting Voltaire when the latter remarked that liberty is "When I can do what I want to do" with the proviso that "I can't help wanting what I do want." To him a man "who possesses a 'philosophy of freedom' is one who has been changed in certain ways by the literature of freedom", and the idea of an autonomous individual is merely "a device used to explain what we cannot explain in any other way. He has been constructed from our ignorance, and as our understanding increases, the very shaft of which he is composed vanishes."<sup>38</sup>

In value laden language, Skinner claims that in the "pre-scientific view" the individual is seen as being

free to deliberate, decide and act, possibly in original ways and he is given credit for his successes and blamed for his failures. In the scientific view ... a person's behaviour is determined by genetic endowment traceable to evolutionary history of the species and the environmental circumstances to which as an individual he has been exposed.<sup>39</sup>

As new evidence comes to light both credit and blame will be shifted from the individual to the environment. The inevitable consequences of this knowledge

will, he asserts, naturally be resisted by "those who are committed to traditional values".<sup>40</sup>

Lorenz and the instinctivists, as we have already seen, believe that our behaviour is subject to the same causal laws of nature as all animal behaviour. To think of ourselves as being different, even to the point of having free will is, they claim, a self-deception.

Eric Fromm, in a summary of these arguments, pointed out their necessary consequence:

In spite of the great differences between instinctivistic and behaviouristic theory, they have a common basic orientation, they both exclude the *person*, the behaving man, from their field of vision. Whether man is the product of conditioning, or the product of animal evolution, he is exclusively determined by conditions outside himself, he has no part of his own life, no responsibility, and not even a trace of freedom. Man is a puppet, controlled by strings—instinct or conditioning.<sup>41</sup>

This of course answers none of Skinner's accusations that such a view is merely the intransigence of a "pre-scientific" traditionalist. The argument has been put that a belief in determinism may be more beneficial to the individual and society than holding onto the notion of free will. Farrer, for example, suggests that unlike free will, determinism is at least a practical faith, informing us not to despair of causal explanation—"it holds before us the hope of causal explanation, it gives us a programme to work upon".<sup>42</sup> If we continue to believe, as Gandhi would have us believe, that we have "our lives to make", our attitudes may be so affected that we will suffer the "ordeal of Phaeton".<sup>43</sup>

The belief most of us have in freedom of our wills is itself determined, say the determinists, and this may have the positive aspect of forcing us to work harder at situations than if we believed that there was no relationship between our actions and the outcome; the price we must pay for such belief, however, as Farrer noted, is the possible burden of guilt or remorse over a failure.

The libertarians counter with the argument that a belief in the determinist position may be an indulgence in bad faith—how can people be blamed or be

deserving of punishment when they were powerless to either decide rightly or to abstain from wrong actions?

Libertarians offer many varied definitions for the free will theory. O'Connor defines an act as free "if and only if the agent could have done otherwise, *all circumstances remaining the same*",<sup>45</sup> while Lamont claims that a person:

who consciously comes to a decision between two or more genuine alternatives ... is free to do so and is not completely determined by his heredity, education, economic circumstances and past history as an individual.<sup>46</sup>

For Lamont causal principles do operate: "Your inborn qualities and characteristics are the hand you are dealt; your freedom of choice is the way you play it."<sup>47</sup> Campbell, the leading contemporary advocate of free will, goes a little further believing that not all human actions or decisions are predetermined either by heredity or the environment. Such causal principles do operate, he claims, but some actions transcend these causal laws. This "contra-causal freedom . . . posits a breach of causal continuity between a man's character and his conduct".<sup>48</sup> This definition seems to most closely approximate Gandhi's position.

Is there any evidence that this is the correct position however? We all feel that we do on occasions make choices which go against our strongest desires and which require an effort of will. Campbell claims that this freedom operates only in situations where moral temptation forces the self into making a decision between duty and inclinations. His only proof for this position, one which would not satisfy the determinists, is that through introspection people "feel certain of the existence of such activity from the immediate practical experience of themselves".<sup>49</sup> Over one hundred years ago Sidgwick framed this "common sense" argument in similar terms, stating that the one "argument of real force" against the determinist position is "the immediate affirmation of consciousness in the moment of deliberate action".<sup>50</sup>

Along with Scott, and certainly along with Gandhi, other libertarians have maintained that free will is at least partially dependent on knowing the self through analysis of motives. Benn and Peters point out:

Many causal connections discovered by psychologists may only hold good provided that the people whose actions are predicted in accordance with the law remain ignorant of what it asserts. And it is practically impossible to ensure that this is the case. So, if people know the causes on which a prediction of a certain type of behaviour is based, and if they deliberate before acting they may do something different from what is predicted, just because they recognise these causes.<sup>51</sup>

In this scenario the reconstruction of lives and changing of habits may be a long and difficult task. The first and ultimately crucial step in this process is to make the decision to alter one's behaviour. According to Davis, "one may not desire particular right things, but one may desire to begin to desire them".<sup>52</sup> In other words individuals have it within their power to build up habits in themselves or to tear down already existing habits. In this non-fatalistic line of thought "Deliberations and choice may not precede every action, but habits are set up as a result of such deliberation and choice".<sup>53</sup> An even more radical free will line of argument is taken by the existentialist writers, especially Sartre, for whom historical forces, heredity and environment do not determine human behaviour. They try to justify the freedom of the individual by placing the will in a position of primary importance in human nature. Although our lives may "naturally tend in the direction our past and our circumstances have inclined us, and thus we tend to drift through life almost always following the course of least resistance",<sup>54</sup> making life easier and removing the awesome responsibility of feeling the inadequacy of our present lives, for Sartre such behaviour is living in bad faith, for him man defines himself by his actions—we make ourselves what we are by what we do.

Sartre is diametrically opposed to writers such as Skinner in his beliefs of human freedom. Where Skinner claims that our lives are determined but we like to think that we are free, Sartre maintains that we are free but like to

deny it. In defining "man's situation as a free choice, with no excuses and no recourses", Sartre claims, "every man who takes refuge behind the excuse of his passion, every man who sets up a determinism, is a dishonest man,"<sup>55</sup> a person acting in, as he calls it, bad faith.

Sartre believes that we have no essential human nature; we become whatever we choose to become by doing and feeling what we choose; in other words, we choose not merely our actions but also our characters and our morality. He strongly disagrees with the notion that there is a distinction between "wholly free acts, determined processes over which the free will has power, and processes which on principle escape the human will", individuals, in his words, are "condemned to be free":

. . . for human reality, to be is to *choose oneself*, nothing comes to it either from outside or from within which it can *receive or accept*. Without any help whatsoever, it is entirely abandoned to the intolerable necessity of making itself be—down to the slightest detail. Thus freedom is not a being; it is *the being* of man.<sup>56</sup>

Knowing that we can act otherwise than we do gives rise to "anguish"—a consciousness of our freedom. This is such a vastly burdensome responsibility that it is far easier to live in the self-deception of bad faith pretending that we do not have this freedom.

As with the Skinnerian analysis, there is no proof that Sartre's interpretation of this complex philosophical position is the correct one. Besides the disadvantages of possible feelings of guilt at not living up to one's expectations of oneself when all possibility of excuse has been removed, and the possibility of using a belief in unlimited individual power to change as an excuse to forestall the taking of any action, this existential belief in human freedom has many positive aspects. Most importantly, it is a statement enjoining people to strive to take part in the creation of the type of world they believe in:

... in creating the man that we want to be, there is not a single one of our acts which does not at the same time create an image of man as we think he ought to be. To choose to be this or that is to affirm at the same time the

value of what we choose, because we never choose evil. We always choose good, and nothing can be good for us without being good for all ... I am creating a certain image of man of my own choosing. In choosing myself, I choose man ... Certainly, many people believe that when they do something, they themselves are the only ones involved, and when someone says to them, "What if everyone acted this way?" they shrug their shoulders and answer, "Everyone doesn't act that way." But really what one should always ask himself, "What would happen if everyone looked at things that way?"<sup>57</sup>

When Gandhi claims that life should be a quest after truth, and that this must be sought continuously—as the choice of actions in the Sartrean schema must continually be made—he is not saying that the choice of a satyagrahi lifestyle is merely a choice for the self, but that it is also a universalisable choice for all. A truth-seeking life can be "what is to be chosen" but one based on falsehood and deception cannot, for truths can do without lies while untruths cannot do without the truths they must be measured against. Gandhi places great store by the transcendental nature of truth—for him it is analogous to the existential search for freedom.

Gandhi believed that individuals had the power to change themselves by force of will and although perhaps he would not have gone as far as Sartre when the latter claimed that our characters and emotions are totally and freely chosen by us, it should be remembered that Gandhi did not live long enough to be exposed to Sartre's writings. Although it is mere speculation, the existential current throughout Gandhi's own writings points to a strong likelihood that he would have felt an affinity with this strand of Sartre's thought. Gandhi, in line with his belief in the basic goodness of human nature, maintained that through self-suffering the conscience of a protagonist can be pricked to the degree that they will realise the nature of their behaviour after this forced confrontation and then have the ability to consciously decide to change their character by taking positive steps which will gradually turn this freely chosen mode of acting into a second nature.

Gandhi suggests that there is a powerful tool which can aid anyone in the quest for a changed nature. At first sight this tool—the vow—appears, paradoxically, to be one which contradicts the Sartrean notion of freedom: Sartre maintained that there is no limit to our freedom except "that we are not free to cease being free".<sup>58</sup> For the existentialists, however, it can be the exact opposite, because in the choice of committing oneself to one position rather than any of a series of other possibilities what the individual is doing is in effect choosing *themselves*. "It is out of its decision that the self emerges. A self is not given ready-made at the beginning. What is given is a field of possibility, and as the existent projects himself into this possibility rather than that one, he begins to determine who he shall be."<sup>59</sup>

As Iyer correctly points out, for Gandhi, the vow "far from closing the door to real freedom, opens it". Vows enable acts which are not possible by ordinary self-denial to become possible through extraordinary self-denial.' "Vows are both a recognition of the fickleness of human nature and an additional aid to even the strongest minds." To Gandhi then "a vow really means unflinching determination, without which progress is impossible".<sup>60</sup> As he pointed out, "The strongest men have been known at times to have become weak. God has a way of confounding us in our strength. Hence the necessity of vows." "The vow I am thinking of", he wrote, to distinguish it from public vows,

is a promise made by one to oneself. We have to deal with two dwellers within. Rama and Ravana. God and Satan. Ormuzd and Ahriman. The one binds us to make us really free, and the other only appears to free us so as to bind us tight within his grips. A "vow" is a promise made to Rama to do or not to do a certain thing, which if good we want to do but have not the strength unless tied down, and which if bad we would avoid but have not the strength to avoid unless similarly tied down. This I hold to be a condition indispensable to growth.<sup>61</sup>

Vows therefore can be used as a tool to remake the self, as an aid to the will, however, they are not to be taken lightly, for "A man who breaks a pledge he has deliberately and intelligently taken forfeits his manhood and becomes a

man of straw."<sup>62</sup> Gandhi went as far as to say that "it is better to die than to break a vow knowingly and deliberately taken".<sup>63</sup> Gandhi's use of the vow again reinforces the role played by free will in his philosophy.

As already noted none of these arguments can prove one side against the other in the freewill/determinist argument; however, if one does have the ability to do otherwise than one has in fact done in a given situation then one loses much by treating oneself as if one were not autonomous, did not have the freedom of will to make a choice. If one *is* free, then to treat oneself as otherwise, that is acting in bad faith, is to deny one's human essence, to degrade oneself, to forfeit one's humanity. If our next actions, our lives are predetermined and we act as though they were not, we have lost little.

### *Conclusion*

Whether the unfolding knowledge of the emerging sciences of ethology and sociobiology will eventually prove that freedom and dignity, and therefore Gandhi's ethical scheme, are illusory is unanswerable at present. A refutation or vindication of the validity of Gandhi's conclusions at this time rests on little more than ideological bias.

In the Gandhian model the individual comes to a conflict situation as one who is not innately aggressive and has the freedom of will to resolve conflicts in a nonviolent way freely chosen. This position can best be summed up by the following words from Green:

. . . man by his nature, is not irrevocably locked into any one form of behaviour, it is for him to choose what he will be . . . But choose he must. That *is* part of his nature. Other animals must suffer what the Fates decree. Only man can make a moral choice. To abdicate that choice is to abandon mankind.<sup>64</sup>

## CHAPTER NINE: Conclusion: A Gandhian Ethics

He only earns his freedom and existence, who daily conquers them anew.

Goethe (*Faust*)

Satyagraha is a dialogue; therefore, listening to the other, treating them as a reasonable and reasoning equal is essential. This is an extremely important consideration in conducting conflicts along productive lines—that is, along lines that help to ensure that the resolution of any dispute leaves all the parties satisfied with the outcome. If a party feels that they have been heard and understood, if they have not had to "lose face" and have not been threatened or coerced, this is far more likely. Because satyagraha is based on the aim of seeking the truth in any given situation and employs only nonviolent means to arrive at this goal, the probability of productive resolutions are greatly enhanced.

It appears that satyagraha "works" within this framework, but it also does far more—it gives the individual mastery over their own life, provides them with a mode of conflict resolution that does not rely on expert and institutional methods over which their control is lost. The legal system "takes over" the conflicting process and decreases the probability of productive outcomes.

Gandhi believed that to a large degree individuals were masters of their own destiny, that they could transcend their social conditioning and that biological and psychological forces acting upon them did not leave them a machine that acted its life out according to a set plan. Most of all, however, Gandhi was convinced that people were not innately violent. The Gandhian individual has choice. This choice includes the ability to attempt the resolution of conflicts by nonviolent cooperative means even where this is not the background mode of operation within the social structure to which the person belongs. More than that, ways of behaving that go towards making the nonviolent action that satyagraha depends upon second nature can also be learned.

Satyagraha, then, from the Gandhian perspective, is a viable, autonomy-producing method of conflict resolution. Its stress on the shared humanity of all, including opponents, also makes it ethically superior to other methods of conflict solution.

The previous eight chapters, after briefly noting these reasons for the use of satyagraha as the way of resolving conflicts, focused largely on how, in various situations, this could be done. For Gandhi, however, there was another and even more important reason for satyagraha. He saw the satyagrahi lifestyle, in which satyagraha is the natural way of resolving conflicts, as the life worth living.

### *Conflicts: Why Satyagraha?*

Gandhi firmly believed that life could not be compartmentalised, that actions, and the reasons on which actions are based, whether they be political, economic or social, are interrelated, and that these actions have a direct bearing upon the achievement of the ultimate aim of life. Gandhi himself named this aim as Truth or *Moksha*, which in a Western perspective can be translated as self-realisation (or the "manifestation of one's potential to the greatest possible degree" ), and claimed that his life including his "ventures in the political field are directed to this same end".<sup>3</sup> The ideal of conscientious action which is conducive to the attainment of this aim must, in Gandhi's moral philosophy, continually be borne in mind—and this obviously includes the way one goes about resolving conflicts.

Sharp and Gregg both point out that the conversion of an opponent may not be achievable in all cases—that occasionally they must be defeated first.<sup>4</sup> The problem is how to know this in advance. How long does one keep up satyagraha before accepting failure? If a satyagraha action is commenced with the attitude that failing the achievement of the desired result within a certain specified period (that is, if satyagraha is used as a policy rather than a creed) another method will be used, then the desired outcome may be doomed to non-actualisation from the outset. Satyagraha, to be effective, requires complete effort.

The satyagrahi lifestyle is one which reduces the likelihood of conflicts reaching the grievance stage. It is based on humility yet it is designed to build self-respect, it teaches patience and toleration in the face of insults, it does not threaten opponents, it insists on compromise on all but fundamental matters of principle, and it acknowledges the truth in the opponent's position. Satyagraha campaigns, on the other hand, are methods of fighting where conflicts have reached this stage. That in this sense satyagraha is effective has, it is to be hoped, been sufficiently illustrated by examples throughout the preceding chapters, but it should be noted that as a method it guarantees no automatic and unfailing success; no method of conflict resolution does. Naess sums up Gandhi's probable answer to those who are pessimistic as to the utility of satyagraha as a solver of conflicts as: "Have you tried? I have, and it works."<sup>5</sup>

Gandhi was quite aware that his belief in a better, more peaceful world resulting from the increased practice of nonviolence could not be proved by argument, but this did not overly concern him. His answer was that if satyagraha failed the attempt has not been pure enough:

Supposing I cannot produce a single instance in life of a man who truly converted his adversary, I would then say that it is because no one has yet been found to express Ahimsa in its fullness.<sup>6</sup>

The failure to reach an ideal, therefore, is not to be seen as the defeat of either the individual or the ideal. Personal victory comes from effort and although the ideal may remain ever unattained it is never unattainable.<sup>7</sup>

This along with his assertion that "sometimes men of truth appear to have failed, but that is no more than a fleeting appearance",<sup>8</sup> may well leave empiricists grossly unsatisfied. Iyer, however, quite correctly points out that it would certainly be wrong to judge satyagraha "entirely on utilitarian grounds, on the practical results achieved", because the doctrine depends essentially "on non-utilitarian assumptions".<sup>9</sup> Even where satyagraha does fail to resolve a conflict, the subjective benefit of dignity that comes from leading a moral life, is *always* present and this is missing with other methods.

### *Gandhian ethics*

Ethics can generally be defined as the realisation of the need to justify one's life and the decision to be ethical entails the choice of a particular value: "the sense of satisfaction derived from knowing that one may judge his own life as he would judge another's and find it good".<sup>10</sup> This requires some critical self-analysis and for Gandhi the quest for Truth largely depended upon the truth about the self. When Gandhi claimed that an individual's "highest duty in life is to serve mankind and take his share in bettering its condition", he added that this could not be done unless one understands and respects the self. True morality, that is, life based on following ethical rules, then, for Gandhi, consists not in conformity but in discovering the subjectively true path and in fearlessly following it:

It is noble voluntarily to do what is good and right. The true sign of man's nobility is the fact that, instead of being driven about like a cloud before the wind, he stands firm and can do, and in fact does, what he deems proper.<sup>11</sup>

Gandhi wondered how this "true morality" that disregards loss or gain, life or death, and is ever ready to sacrifice the self for an ideal, could be practised "without the support of religion". He concluded, in a rather circular fashion, that in order to survive the difficulties in its path such "true morality" had to be grounded in religion—it had to be a living creed rather than a policy of expedience. He included the non-orthodox religions in his definition by explaining that this in fact meant that "morality should be observed as a religion".<sup>12</sup>

The "highest form of morality" in Gandhi's ethical system is the practice of altruism (defined by the sociobiologist Wilson as self-sacrificing behaviour performed for the benefit of others<sup>13</sup>). The rewards for altruism/self-suffering are external to the extent that they aid the satisfactory resolution of conflicts, but even independent of these there are subjective rewards. From the view of existentialist philosophy even selfless self-destruction may provide a dramatic avenue for self-affirmation. Gandhi was firmly convinced that to suffer wrongs was less degrading than to inflict them, and he felt that degradation was most

complete when injustice provoked individuals to fight back with further injustice.<sup>14</sup>

In the Gandhian analysis whether altruism is a function of sympathy and empathy or whether it occurs out of self-interest (even where the cost is self-destruction and the only benefit a prior enhanced self-image) is not important. Sympathy and empathy are tied to self-interest. The ability to feel them shows that one is near the Truth, and one becomes nearer the Truth by feeling them.

The rewards may not be those usually sought for specified behaviour but Gandhi was adamant that "a man does some good deed ... not... to win applause, but he does it because he must": it is man's purpose for existence; we are what we do.<sup>15</sup>

For Gandhi it was never enough that an individual merely avoided causing evil; they had to actively promote good and actively prevent evil. The problems of the minority could never be overlooked, the individual was of too great an importance to be disregarded in favour of the abstract "good of the many". His philosophy diverges from the utilitarian principle of striving to maximise the happiness of the majority. Truth could not be measured by majority vote, therefore

A votary of *ahimsa* cannot subscribe to the utilitarian formula. He will strive for the greatest good of all and die in the attempt to realise the ideal . . . . The greatest good of all inevitably includes the good of the greatest number, and therefore, he and the utilitarians will converge in many points in their career but there does come a time when they must part company, and even work in opposite directions.

He uses the First World War as an example:

Judged by the standards of nonviolence the late war was highly wrong. Judged by the utilitarian standard each party has justified it according to its idea of utility ... Precisely on the same ground the anarchist justifies his assassinations. But none of these acts can possibly be justified on the greatest-good-of-all-principle.<sup>16</sup>

Gert, placing this argument in the context of the relationship of means to ends, warned that the harm done by the utilitarian talk of promoting good rather than preventing evil "cannot be overestimated". Moral and utilitarian ideals are separate and must be seen as such. Failure to do this has

contributed to the mistaken view that promoting good justifies the violation of moral rules. It has also opened the way to the view that other ideals, even those that could not be publicly advocated sometimes justify the violation.<sup>17</sup>

In conflict situations it can be difficult to remember to forsake possible satisfaction by the active prevention of evil to the opponent by working for the good of all parties.

The question of why one should act in a moral way has occupied much time in the history of philosophical inquiry. Gandhi's answer that happiness, religion and wealth depend upon sincerity to the self, an absence of malice towards, and exploitation of, others, and always acting "with a pure mind",<sup>18</sup> possibly does little to solve the dilemma. Others have attempted to close the debate with arguments reminiscent of Gandhi's. Taylor, for example, claims that the ultimate moral aspiration is "to be a warm hearted and loving human being", adding that it is the ultimate answer "because no question of *why* can be asked concerning it without misunderstanding it ... It invites one to *be*", he continues, "rather than commanding him to *do*, and yet it cannot fail to enoble whatever one does".<sup>19</sup>

### ***Gandhi's ontology***

An analysis of Gandhi's metaphysical thought shows that, for him, the reasons for being moral (that is, leading a satyagrahi lifestyle) are directly related to his views on the nature and meaning of human existence.<sup>20</sup>

Although Gandhi placed the individual at the centre of his moral thought as a free acting being, he strongly stressed that the nature of human nature was one of cooperation rather than individualism. In order to fulfil their nature the individual had to exercise their individualism for the good of all, and this

included working towards the reformation and reorientation of society to enable a greater scope for the self-realisation of all individuals. Because of this relationship the converse was also true:

I do not believe that an individual may gain spiritually and those that surround him suffer. I believe in *advaita* [monism or non-dualism]. I believe in the essential unity of man and for that matter all that lives. Therefore I believe that if one man gains spiritually the whole world gains with him and, if one man fails, the whole world fails to that extent.<sup>21</sup>

Gandhi's ethics, therefore, stems not from the intellectually deductive formula, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" (or its variant, "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you"), but on the statement of faith that "what in fact you do to others, you also do to yourself". This belief in the possibility of changing and perfecting the self, a possibility open equally to all, means that for him the choice of an individual is a choice for mankind because the self and mankind are ultimately one. Gandhi's approach to conflict is, therefore, a major part of the quest for self-realisation, because

- (1) Self-realisation presupposes a search for truth.
- (2) In the last analysis mankind is one.
- (3) Himsa against oneself makes complete self-realisation impossible.
- (4) Himsa against another is himsa against the self.
- (5) Himsa against another makes complete self-realisation impossible.

This does not mean that at its heart Gandhi's philosophy is only applicable to monists. The concept of universalisability, of acting only in a way that one could publicly advocate all others should act, serves the same purpose. If morality is to move from the order of merely *doing* to that of *being* it presupposes in an individual the need to develop the ability to perceive others as persons "as important to themselves as we are to ourselves, and to have a lively and sympathetic representation in imagination of their interests and the effect of our actions on their lives".<sup>23</sup> This does not depend on one's ultimate theological beliefs.

Gandhi's claim that "faith in one's ideals alone constitutes true life, in fact, it is man's all in all" is perhaps backed up to some degree by Bondurant's observation of some of Gandhi's followers. She claims that a life of ideals requires a good deal of self-discipline, and those who have mastered this to enable them to act constructively may find, she claims as many Gandhians have, "a sense of becoming, or realization of self that makes the demanding tasks required not only tolerable but also attractive". While noting that "the goal ever recedes from us" Gandhi likewise sees this as no cause for despair because "satisfaction lies in the effort, not in the attainment. Full effort is full victory."<sup>24</sup>

While the striving after nonviolence may be difficult it "is the only permanent thing in life... [and] is the only thing that counts . . . [therefore] whatever effort you bestow on mastering it is well spent". The key to the attainment of nonviolence is courage. The following quotation from Gandhi, while originally said in a political context, serves equally well in illustrating this:

The so called master may lash you and try to force you to serve him. You will say, "No, I will not serve you for your money or under a threat." This may mean suffering. Your readiness to suffer will light the torch of freedom which can never be put out.<sup>25</sup>

The freedom he speaks of can be read to mean the existential freedom that comes with the dignity of being one's own person, of making a commitment to live ethically, of standing up to the dictates of one's psychological masters and pressures to conform. In this sense satyagraha was, for Gandhi, "mainly educative" helping to train the soul and develop character so as to aid the quest for perfection.<sup>26</sup>

In the area of conflict this means straightforwardness, sincerity and acting from inward conviction. The opponent always knows where the satyagrahi stands and the satyagrahi becomes increasingly aware of the innermost drives that often dictate the course of conflict because they have taken pains to confront reality and face the truths that are relevant to the situation.<sup>27</sup>

Carl Rogers sums up this web of accurate and honest interrelationships between experience, awareness and communication by the term "congruence". The

greater the level of congruence, where one is aware of what one is experiencing and able to communicate it accurately to both the self and others, means that one is more "whole" or nearer the Truth. It also means that the greater the congruence within the parties the less likelihood interpersonal relationships have of being ambiguous. This means "a tendency toward more mutually accurate understanding of the communications, improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; [and] mutual satisfaction in the relationship". Where the communicated "incongruence" is greater the ensuing relationship will have the opposite characteristics. Rogers goes on to point out that personal courage is required because to communicate one's full awareness of the relevant experience in interpersonal relationships can be threatening as it contains the risk of rejection. While it may take a long time and hard work to maximise the probability, still with no guarantee of automatic success, that awareness accurately reflects what one is experiencing "there is a continuing existential choice as to whether my communication will be congruent with the awareness I do have of what I am experiencing", and the direction of the evolution or otherwise of interpersonal relationships may well lie in this "moment-by-moment choice".<sup>28</sup>

The more congruent the person the greater the chance of successful conflict resolution along the Gandhian lines. The more one strives to live by the dictates of satyagraha the greater the congruence will be. The fully congruent person is one who has achieved their full potential.

Happiness in Gandhi's metaphysics is expressed in a similar vein; as "an enlightened realisation of dignity and a craving for human liberty which prizes itself above mere selfish satisfaction of personal comforts and material wants", while the meaning of life is based on striving to actualise what he calls the law of love in action:

The more I work at this law, the more I feel the delight in life, the delight in the scheme of the universe. It gives me a peace and a meaning of the mysteries of nature that I have no power to describe.

### *Satyagraha and mere mortals*

Mahatma Gandhi set high standards for himself and had faith in the possibility of achieving them:

...I am an irrepressible optimist, because I believe in myself. That sounds very arrogant doesn't it? But I say it from the depths of my humility ... I am an optimist because I expect many things from myself. I have not got them, I know, as I am not yet a perfect being...<sup>30</sup>

Woodcock in his small popular biography of Gandhi summed up the core of Gandhi's philosophy in action when he noted that "with an extraordinary persistence he made and kept himself one of the few free men of our time".<sup>31</sup> Is it possible for all to attain this freedom, to find the courage to undergo self-suffering and mercilessly seek the truth, and return love for violence? Or is this only possible for Mahatmas ("Great Souls")? In short, is satyagraha a viable method of solving conflicts for those that are not Gandhis?

Basham once noted that on his first visit to India, not long after Gandhi's death, he found cities, towns and railway stations displaying posters of his feet and the message, "He showed us the way". A few years later all the posters had disappeared and had been replaced by splendid statues of Gandhi.<sup>32</sup> The process of neutralisation by deification had begun. No longer was Gandhi to be a source of inspiration for all to strive a little harder to lead a better life: after all he was far more than merely human, he had become a saint—and saints are to be admired or worshipped but not followed.

The Gandhi as saint myth has been as destructive of the spread of satyagraha as a method of conflict resolution, and the satyagraha lifestyle as the foundation of a worthwhile life, as Gandhi himself had been in promoting them. Bose points out that Gandhi has often been "depicted as a man without traits which belong to common human beings . . . men readily take shelter under the view that while nonviolence is good for superhuman beings like Gandhiji, it is beyond the reach of the average individual".<sup>33</sup> Many of the dozens of biographies of Gandhi are in fact hagiographies aiding the process of neutralisation—destroying Gandhi's impact while glorifying his name.

Books that depict Gandhi "warts and all" have the positive attribute of showing that he was human, achieving his greatness by immense struggle rather than by divine providence. Gandhi continually, throughout his life, rejected the superhuman claims made for him. He stated quite clearly that

The basic principle on which the practice of nonviolence rests is that what holds good in respect of oneself equally applies to the whole universe. All mankind in essence is alike. What is therefore possible for me, is possible for everybody.<sup>34</sup>

Gandhi maintained that eventually we would become what we believe ourselves to be. If we offer satyagraha "believing ourselves to be strong, two clear consequences result from it. Fostering the idea of strength, we grow stronger and stronger every day. With the increase in our strength, our *Satyagraha*, too, becomes more effective ..." Towards the end of his life he concluded that his work would finally be finished when he had convinced "the human family that every man or woman, however weak in body, is the guardian of his or her self-respect and liberty" regardless of the odds.<sup>35</sup>

Perhaps Fischer pinpointed the essence of Gandhi's greatness, in relationship to these points, when he remarked that it "lay in doing what everyone could do but doesn't."<sup>36</sup>

In the Introduction it was stated that "If the world is going to be destroyed by war then a study of a Gandhian mode of conducting interpersonal conflict is irrelevant." This of course is true in the sense that if the world is destroyed there will no longer be interpersonal conflict because there will be no persons. Hopefully it has been demonstrated that by conducting these smaller conflicts in a Gandhian way, larger ones may be prevented. From the point of view of Gandhian ethics, however, it should be stressed that if the world is to be destroyed that makes it all the more important for the individual to retain his or her dignity by adhering to a personal belief in soul-force regardless of the odds. To the degree that this is achieved even the destruction of the world becomes irrelevant.

## Notes

### INTRODUCTION

1. *Harijan*, 1 May 1947.
2. Quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. 8, p. 111.
3. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 146.
4. *Harijan*, 24 April 1939.
5. *Young India*, 23 March 1921.
6. Gandhi, *Autobiography*, p. 266.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Kumarappa, foreword to Gandhi, *Non-Violent Resistance*, p. iii.
9. Gandhi pointed out that there is a "distinction between a policy and creed. A policy may be changed, a creed cannot. But either is as good as the other whilst it is held." *Young India*, 30 July 1931.
10. See *Harijan*, 12 November 1938 and 25 August 1940.
11. King, *Stride Towards Freedom*, pp. 96-7.
12. *Harijan*, 5 September 1936.
13. *Harijan*, 28 January 1939.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Quoted in Pyarelal, *A Pilgrimage for Peace*, p. 90.
16. *Ibid.*
17. See Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. xiv; and *Harijan*, 8 September 1940 and 14 March 1936.
18. *Indian Opinion*, 22 February 1908.
19. See *Young India*, 11 August 1920, 23 October 1924, 13 August 1925, 22 November 1928, and 20 March 1930; *Harijan*, 10 December 1938 and 28 January 1939.
20. *Harijan*, 2 August 1942.
21. *Young India*, 8 January 1925.
22. *Young India*, 13 February 1930.
23. *Harijan*, 30 September 1939. This explanation was an answer to a Congressman who was inquiring as to Gandhi's attitude to the Second World

*War. Gandhi noted that he could no longer be the "self appointed recruiting sergeant" that he had been during the last war, but, nevertheless, his sympathies were entirely with the Allies.*

24. While it should be remembered that autobiographical writings have a notorious tendency to be inaccurate, they do indicate the way their authors want to be perceived. As this work is concerned with Gandhi's thought, rather than Gandhi the man, his autobiography and *Satyagraha in South Africa* will be used extensively.
25. Quoted in Rao, "Gandhi the Writer", p. 121.
26. *Harijan*, 24 September 1938.
27. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. 53.
28. Rao, "Gandhi the Writer", p. 122.
29. *Young India*, 2 July 1925.
30. Quoted in Easwaran, *Gandhi the Man*, p. 112.
31. Sharp, *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*, p. 2.
32. See *Young India*, 18 February 1926, 2 August 1926; and *Harijan*, 3 June 1939.
33. Quoted in Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 94.
34. See *Harijan*, 18 August 1946, 22 June 1947; and Shukla, *Conversations of Gandhiji*, p. 36.
35. *Young India*, 5 March 1925.
36. Morris-Jones, *Politics Mainly Indian*, p. 69. In a letter to Will Durant Gandhi confessed that "religion and morality are, for me, synonymous terms". Durant, *On the Meaning of Life*, p. 84.
37. See *Young India*, 31 December 1931; and Doshi, "Gandhi's Moral Individual in an Immoral Society", p. 103.
38. See *Young India*, 24 June 1926; and *Harijan*, 2 November 1936.
39. *Harijan*, 2 November 1936.
40. Reich, *The Function of the Orgasm*, pp. 164-5.
41. For an examination of sexuality in Hindu culture see Lannoy, *The Speaking Tree*, pp. 113-23. Cf. Seshagiri Rao, "Mahatma Gandhi and Sexual Morality", pp. 506-7.
42. See Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, pp. 7-9, 24-6.

43. See Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir*, pp. 8-9; Desai, *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, p. 312; and *Harijan*, 15 June 1947. Gandhi included impure thoughts and anger as breaches of brahmacharya. See *Harijan*, 23 July 1938.
44. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth*, p. 251.
45. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 12. This is further illustrated when, speaking of vegetarianism, Gandhi maintained that "Meat eating is a sin for me. Yet, for another person, who has always lived on meat and never seen anything wrong in it to give it up simply in order to copy me, will be a sin." *Harijan*, 9 April 1946.
46. Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir*, p. 7.
47. Cenker, "Gandhi and Creative Conflict", p. 166.

### Chapter One: THE RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT

1. Fink, "Some Conceptual Difficulties in the Theory of Social Conflict", p. 413.
2. See Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict*, pp. 8-9; and Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliations*, p. 15.
3. Coser, *The Function of Social Conflict*, pp. 154-5.
4. See Deutsch, "Conflicts: Productive and Destructive", p. 7; Nicholson, *Conflict Analysis*, p. 2; Aubert, "Competition and Dissensus", p. 26; Likert and Likert, *New Ways of Managing Conflict*, p. 7; and Curie, *Making Peace*, p. 3.
5. Deutsch, "Conflicts; Productive and Destructive", p. 8.
6. Fink, "Some Conceptual Difficulties...", p. 456.
7. Ibid.
8. North, "Conflict: Political Aspects", p. 226.
9. Le Vine distinguishes five forms of behaviour that are indicative of a conflict situation: physical aggression, public verbal dispute, covert verbal aggression, breach of expectation and avoidance. Le Vine, "Anthropology and the Study of Conflict: An Introduction".
10. Deutsch, "Conflicts: Productive and Destructive", p. 10.
11. Fitzgerald, *et al.*, "A Preliminary Discussion of the Definitional Phase of the Dispute Process", pp. 9-17.
12. Nicholson, *Conflict Analysis*, p. 2.
13. Swingle (ed.), *The Structure of Conflict*, p. ix.

14. Swingle, "Dangerous Games", p. 267. Although "loss of face" seems to play an important part in the conduct of many conflicts its role changes from conflict type to conflict type, for example in international politics "face" relates to the credibility of power, while in interpersonal conflicts it represents an ego defence.
15. Quoted in Swingle, "Dangerous Games", p. 267.
16. Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates*, p. 10.
17. Felstiner, "Avoidance as Dispute Processing", p. 695.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 697.
19. Galanter, "Justice in Many Rooms", p. 3.
20. Aubert, "Courts and Conflict Resolution".
21. Chambliss and Seidman, *Law, Order and Power*, pp. 34–5. This view has been challenged by some authors who claim that it merely reflects a "noble savage" ideology in respect of rural communities. See Starr and Yngvesson, "Scarcity and Disputing"; and Danzig and Lowy, "Everyday Disputes and Mediation in the United States".
22. Unger, *Law in Modern Society*, pp. 192-3, 202-3.
23. Aubert, "Competition and Dissensus", pp. 30-1.
24. In business matters courts are often routinely used to end conflicts. A court order backed by force can be the agreed way to settle disputed transactions, with all parties happy to accept the outcome. The costs are paid by the company out of profits and perhaps "passed on" to the consumer.
25. See Komesar, "Towards an Economic Theory of Conflict Choice", pp. 5-7; Aubert, "Courts and Conflict Resolution", p. 46; and Aubert, "Law as a Way of Resolving Conflict", p. 282.
26. Starr and Yngvesson, "Scarcity and Disputing", p. 553.
27. Ikle, "Negotiations", p. 117.
28. Gulliver, *Disputes and Negotiations*, p. 78.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
31. Vickers, *Freedom in a Rocking Boat*, p. 151.
32. Deutsch, "Conflicts: Productive and Destructive", p. 10.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

34. Ibid., pp. 23-4.
35. Likert and Likert, *New Ways of Managing Conflict*, p. 59.
36. Pruitt, "Methods for Resolving Differences of Interest", p. 134.
37. Wilson and Bixenstine, "Forms of Social Control. . .", pp. 338-58.
38. Brown, "The Effects of the Need . . .", p. 119.
39. Siegel and Fouraker, *Bargaining and Group Decision Making*, p. 100.
40. Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict*, p. 140.
41. Deutsch, "Conflicts: Productive and Destructive", p. 30.
42. Bartos, "Determinants and Consequences of Toughness", p. 65.
43. Ibid.
44. Pruitt, "Methods for Resolving . . . p. 134.
45. Bartos, "Determinants and Consequences of Toughness", p. 65.
46. Pruitt, "Methods for Resolving . . .", p. 139.
47. Ibid., p. 135.
48. Deutsch, "Conflicts: Productive and Destructive", p. 25.
49. See Pruitt, "Methods for Resolving . . .", p. 136; and Deutsch and Krauss, "Effect of Threat upon Interpersonal Bargaining", p. 188.
50. Pilisuk and Skolnick conclude from their experiments that there is "support for the effect of honest prior announcement of moves in interaction with conciliatory steps as productive of cooperative behaviour". Pilisuk and Skolnick, "Inducing Trust", p. 133. See also Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict*, p. 352.
51. Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates*, pp. 11, 286-7.
52. Deutsch, "Conflicts: Productive and Destructive", p. 15.
53. Ibid., p. 14.
54. Gouldner, "The Norm of Reciprocity", p. 173.
55. Ibid., p. 174.
56. Pruitt, "Methods for Resolving . . .", p. 151.
57. Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates*, p. 291.
58. Ibid., pp. 287-8.
59. Ibid., p. 306.
60. Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict*, p. 388.
61. Spiegel, "The Resolution of Role Conflict Within the Family".

62. Likert and Likert, *New Ways of Managing Conflicts*, p. 69.
63. Curie, *Making Peace*, p. 274.

## Chapter Two: SATYAGRAHA: THE GANDHIAN APPROACH TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. Deming, *Revolution and Equilibrium*, p. 211.
2. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, p. 109.
3. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 32.
4. *Young India*, 23 March 1921.
5. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth*, p. 412.
6. Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, p. 706. For a detailed analysis of "accommodation" and "nonviolent coercion" see pp. 733-55.
7. Pelton, *The Psychology of Non-violence*, p. 224.
8. Satyagraha will not always be successful As with all other methods of conflict resolution it will have its share of failures, however Gandhi firmly believed that the greater the degree of nonviolence exhibited by the satyagrahi the greater the chances of success. In the case of the theoretically totally nonviolent person it would invariably succeed—"with no rancour left behind, and in the end the enemies . . . converted into friends". *Harijan*, 12 November 1938.
9. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. 230.
10. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, pp. vi-vii, 192, 195.
11. Sheean, *Lead, Kindly Light*, p. 118.
12. *Harijan*, 25 March 1939, 29 April 1939, and *Young India*, 19 March 1925.
13. Horsburgh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 36. See also Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 161.
14. *Harijan*, 15 April 1933. *Conversion of an opponent may take a far greater time than bringing a conflict to a head through violence. Attempts may be met by unresponsiveness. Therefore, patience and understanding are two important qualities that need be cultivated. For further discussion of this topic see* qualities that need be cultivated. For further discussion of this topic see Horsburgh "Nonviolence and Impatience", *Gandhi Marg*.
15. Bondurant, "Satyagraha Versus Duragraha", p. 101. *Gandhi*, p. 101.

16. Adapted from Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, pp. 70-84.
17. *Harijan*, 25 March 1939..
18. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 104.
19. *Harijan*, 11 March 1939.
20. Pelton, *The Psychology of Non-Violence*, p. 86.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
22. See Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, p. 211.
23. *Young India*, 19 March 1925.
24. *Young India*, 23 September 1926, and 9 February 1921.
25. Gregg, "The Best Solver of Conflicts". For a further discussion of such "therapeutic" trust (i.e. "trust which aims at increasing the trustworthiness of those in whom it is reposed") see Horsburgh, "The Ethics of Trust".
26. *Young India*, 4 June 1925.
27. See Pelton, *The Psychology of Non-Violence*, pp. 22–5.
28. *Young India*, 26 December 1924.
29. *Young India*, 6 February 1930.
30. See Bose, *Studies in Gandhism*, p. 115; Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 46; *Young India*, 16 April 1931; and Fischer, *A Week with Gandhi*, p. 102.
31. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, pp. 197, 220. According to Gandhi, however, "essentials" or "eternal principles" were to be defended unto death. *Harijan*, 5 September 1936.
32. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 104.
33. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 36.
34. Bose, *Studies in Gandhism*, p. 116.
35. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 247.
36. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 104.
37. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 295.
38. Adapted from Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, pp. 60-2.
39. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p.-11.

40. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, p. 41. Elsewhere Gregg points out that this induced loss of self-confidence is not to be interpreted in the sense that the opponent becomes despondent—"Nonviolent resistance does not break the opponent's will but alters it; does not destroy his confidence, enthusiasm and hope but transfers them to a finer purpose." Ibid., p. 76.
41. *Young India*, 8 October 1925.
42. *Young India*, 4 August 1920.
43. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, p. 131.
44. *Harijan*, 10 June 1939.
45. *Harijan*, 16 May 1936.
46. Gandhi's paraphrase of Ruskin's *Unto This Last* in *The Selected Works*, vol. IV, p. 46; *Harijan*, 11 August 1940, and 5 May 1946.
47. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 194.
48. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 147.
49. Kelley and Stahelski, "Social Interaction Basis . . .", p. 89.
50. Ibid.
51. Quoted in Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 156.
52. *Satya means more than a narrow interpretation of the English word—it includes the connotations "real, sincere, existent, pure, good, effectual, valid".* Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, quoted in Iyer, op. cit., p. 150.
53. See *Harijan*, 21 September 1934; Desai, *The Diary of Mahadev Desai*, p. 249; and *Young India*, 31 December 1931.
54. Letter to P. G. Mathew, 9 July 1932, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi (CWMG)*, vol. L, p. 175.
55. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 157.
56. *Young India*, 4 December 1924.
57. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. xiii.

58. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth*, p. 413.
59. *Young India*, 4 August 1920; *Harijan*, 24 November 1933; and *Gandhi, God is Truth*, pp. 33–4.
60. *Harijan*, 24 November 1933, and *Young India*, 31 December 1931.
61. Quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. 1, p. 282.
62. See Ruskin, "The Lamp of Truth", p. 64.
63. Bok, *Lying*, pp. 13, 24-5.
64. *Harijan*, 19 December 1936.
65. Bok, *Lying*, p. 135-6.
66. Quoted in Bhattacharyya, *Evolution of the Political Philosophy of Gandhi*, p. 295.
67. *Young India*, 16 February 1922.
68. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, p. 140.
69. Quoted in Desai, *The Diary*, p. 249.
70. Quoted in Mahadevan (ed.), *Truth and Nonviolence*, p. 60. Shukla notes that "Gandhi repeatedly asked men and women to appear as they are and never let it be said of them that they 'are not what they seem'. This naturalness or absence of pose, too, was, in his view, a part of truthfulness". Shukla, *Gandhi's View of Life*, p. 3.
71. Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir*, p. 6.
72. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 249.
73. Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, p. 55.
74. Adapted from Ellul, *Violence*, pp. 94-104.
75. *Harijan*, 1 June 1947.
76. *Harijan*, 20 October 1940.
77. Ellul, *Violence*, p. 103-4.

78. May, *Power and Innocence*, p. 96. Curie makes the important point that while "some may maintain that violence ennobles the perpetrator no one can say that in regard to the product of his violence—a man dead or maimed. If peace signifies a condition in which the potential evolution of each individual is more highly realized, then violence is its antithesis". Curie, *Making Peace*, p. 200.
79. May, *Power and Innocence*, pp. 187-8, 192-3.
80. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, ppi 18, 94.
81. *Young India*, 11 August 1920.
82. See also Deming, *Revolution and Equilibrium*, pp. 194-221.
83. *Harijan*, 5 September 1936.
84. *Young India*, 25 August 1920. Gandhi adds: "It is no nonviolence if we merely love those that love us. It is nonviolence only when we love those that hate us." From a private letter, dated 31 December 1934, quoted in Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 17.
85. *Harijan*, 14 March 1936. St. Paul's definition states that "Love is patient and kind, it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope and patience never fail". 1 Corinthians 13:4–7.
86. Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir*, p. 5.
87. See Gandhi, *Ashram Observances in Action*, p. 39; *Harijan*, 5 May 1946, 9 April 1946, and 20 March 1937; and Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p.'65.
88. Buber, *I and Thou*, pp. 16-17.
89. Ramana Murti, "Buber's Dialogue and Gandhi's Satyagraha", p. 608.
90. Eteki-Mboumoua in Mahadevan (ed.), *Truth and Nonviolence*, p. 135.
91. *Young India*, 12 August 1926; *Harijan*, 12 October 1935, and 1 September 1940.
92. Deming, *Revolution and Equilibrium*, p. 204.

93. *Harijan*, 21 July 1940, 18 January 1942, 2 April 1938, and 6 May 1939. Besides humility, nonviolence also requires enterprise. Gandhi notes: "In order to test ourselves we should learn to dare danger and death, mortify the flesh, and acquire the capacity to endure all manner of hardship." *Harijan*, 1 September 1940.
94. Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 69. See also Lanza del Vasto, *Warriors of Peace*, pp. 23-4.
95. Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, p. 117.
96. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 228.
97. *Young India*, 19 March 1925; and Gandhi quoted in Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, p. 709.
98. Pelton, *The Psychology of Non-Violence*, p. 143.
99. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 85.
100. Quoted in Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 143.
101. 10.1. Farson, "Indian Hate Lyric", p. 144.
102. *Young India*, 11 August 1920, and 8 October 1925.
103. *Young India*, 19 March 1925; see also *Young India*, 8 October 1929.
104. Erikson, *Gandhi's Truth*, pp. 242, 248-9.
105. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule*, p. 79.
106. Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, p. 709.
107. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*, pp. 24, 38-9. See also Lewis, *The Case Against Pacifism*, pp. 23-41.
108. Huxley, *Ends and Means*, p. 9.
109. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, p. 71; *Young India*, 17 July 1924, and *Harijan*, 11 February 1939.
110. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 306.
111. Sheean, *Lead, Kindly Light*, p. 197.
112. Huxley, *Ends and Means*, p. 25.

113. Pelton, *The Psychology of Non-Violence*, p. 44.
114. Huxley, *Ends and Means*, p. 138-9.
115. Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, p. 59.
116. *The Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 17 September 1933.
117. See Gandhi's letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, dated 19 February 1922. CWMG, vol. XX, p. 435.
118. *Young India*, 16 February 1922.
119. Fischer, *Gandhi*, p. 71.
120. See Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, pp. 49-51.
121. Huxley, *Ends and Means*, p. 32.
122. See *Young India*, 23 September 1926; *Harijan*, 23 July 1938, 25 March 1939; and *Young India*, 26 November 1931.
123. See Horsburgh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 33.
124. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 9.
125. Case, *Non-Violent Coercion*, p. 379.
126. Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, p. 264.
127. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 92.
128. *Young India*, 30 September 1926; *Harijan*, 6 May 1933, and 25 January 1948.
129. For an uncomplimentary analysis of Gandhi's fasts see Raman, *What Does Gandhi Want?* pp. 107-13.
130. *Harijan*, 25 January 1948; *Young India*, 1 May 1924; and *Harijan*, 1 March 1939.
131. *Young India*, 31 October 1929; 4 November 1926, 16 June 1927, 31 October 1929; *Harijan*, 15 July 1939, 4 August 1946.
132. *Harijan*, 27 October 1946 and 9 March 1940.
133. *Young India*, 6 June 1929; *Gandhi, From Yeravda Mandir*, p. 19; and *Young India*, 16 July 1931.
134. *Harijan*, 2 April 1938; *Gandhi, From Yeravda Mandir*, p. 19; and *Young India*, 11 August 1920.

### Chapter Three: INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

1. *Harijan*, 14 March 1936.
2. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 54.
3. Lanza del Vasto, *Warriors of Peace*, pp. 8-9.
4. On the way that he handled being attacked at night by bandits, see Lanza del Vasto, *ibid.*, pp. 35-9. Several other instances of individual nonviolent resistance overcoming hate and aggression are recorded in Sorokin, *The Ways and Power of Love*, pp. 48-58.
5. Lanza del Vasto, *Warriors of Peace*, pp. 34-5.
6. Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. II, p. 505.
7. Lanza del Vasto, *Warriors of Peace*, pp. 6-7, 14.
8. Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, p. 39.
9. *Harijan*, 20 July 1935; and *Young India*, 4 November 1926.
10. *Young India*, 11 August 1920.
11. Quoted in Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 135.
12. Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, p. 50.
13. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, pp. 57, 152.
14. Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 135. See also Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, pp. 62-70.
15. Perls, *et al.*, *Gestalt Therapy*, p. 11.
16. See Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 54, for how introspection as to the degree the faults we perceive in others are present within ourselves produces the link between honesty and toleration.
17. Lewin, *Resolving Social Conflicts*, p. 139.
18. Gordon, *P.E.T. Parent Effectiveness Training*, pp. 153-9; and Gordon, *T.E.T. Teacher Effectiveness Training*, pp. 184-9.
19. Gordon, *P.E.T.*, pp. 159-63, 175-85; and Gordon, *T.E.T.*, pp. 189-90, 201-9.
20. Gordon, *P.E.T.*, pp. 115-19; Gordon, *T.E.T.*, pp. 136-42; and Coover *et al.* *Resource Manual for a Living Revolution*, pp. 91-3.
21. Gordon, *P.E.T.*, pp. 60-70; and Gordon, *T.E.T.*, pp. 145-7.
22. Gordon, *P.E.T.*, pp. 266-80; and Gordon, *T.E.T.*, pp. 286-7, 306.
23. *Harijan*, 27 July 1935.

## Chapter Four: LEGAL AND INDUSTRIAL CONFLICTS

1. Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 256.
2. Feistiner notes that generally courts "cost money and time, are slow and mystifying, and tilted against the poor, the uninitiated and the occasional user". Where they fail to cope "much of the slack may be absorbed by avoidance". Feistiner, "Influences of Social Organisation on Dispute Processing", pp. 85-6.
3. It should be noted that many legal disputes are "one-off" affairs that do not result in future problems. In any case "A change of heart", according to Gandhi, "can never be brought about by law, it can only be effected through inner conversion. When such is accomplished then there is no longer any need of compulsive laws." Quoted in Bose, *My Days with Gandhi*, p. 144.
4. Chambliss and Seidman, *Law, Order and Power*, p. 35.
5. For an elaboration of these arguments and a Gandhian interpretation of how a lawyer, either in his role of defence counsel or prosecutor, should conduct a case, see Weber, "Legal Ethics/Gandhian Ethics".
6. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. 111.
7. Ibid., p. 112.
8. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, pp. 54–5.
9. Ibid., pp. 56-7.
10. Merry, "Going to Court".
11. *The Community Justice Centre Project: a paper issued by the Coordinating Committee on Community Justice Centres, Department of the Attorney-General and of Justice, N.S.W. 1979.*
12. For criticisms of the community justice centre movement, see Tomasic, "Mediation as an Alternative to Adjudication".
13. *The Community Justice Centre Project, op. cit., p. 3. The function of the mediator has been summarised by Deutsch as:*
  - (1) "Helping the conflicting parties identify and confront the issues in conflict", which may have become obscured by rhetoric or the proliferation of issues.

- (2) "Helping provide favorable circumstances and conditions for confronting the issues", by providing a neutral ground on which to conduct the conflict.
  - (3) "Helping remove the blocks and distortions in the communication process so that mutual understanding may develop."
  - (4) "Helping establish such norms for rational interaction as mutual respect, open communication, the use of persuasion rather than coercion, and the desirability of reaching a mutually satisfying agreement."
  - (5) "Helping determine what kinds of solutions are possible and making suggestions about possible solutions."
  - (6) "Helping make a workable agreement acceptable to the parties in conflict" i.e. one where neither party "loses face."
  - (7) "Helping making the negotiations and the agreement that is arrived at seem prestigious and attractive to interested audiences, especially the groups represented by the negotiators." Deutsch, *The Resolution of Conflict*, pp. 382-8.
14. The Community Justice Centre Project, op. tit., p. 3.
  15. Harvey, *The Theory and Practice of Civil Disobedience*, p. 17.
  16. *Young India*, 23 July 1919.
  17. Gandhi entitled a small booklet, compiled from letters he wrote to members of his ashram from the Yeravda prison near Poona in 1930, *From Yeravda Mandir*. The word "mandir" means "temple".
  18. *Harijan*, 3 June 1939.
  19. *Young India*, 23 March 1922.
  20. See *Young India*, 1 May 1924, 5 June 1924, 15 December 1921, 27 February 1930, and 17 November 1921.
  21. *Harijan*, 13 February 1939.
  22. Desai, *A Righteous Struggle*, p. v.
  23. *Harijan*, 19 October 1935.
  24. Desai, *A Righteous Struggle*, p. vi.
  25. Diesing, "Bargaining Strategy . . .", p. 369.
  26. Douglas, "The Peaceful Settlement. . .", pp. 72-3.
  27. Hawke, *The Resolution of Conflict*, p. 53.

28. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 191.
29. Douglas, "The Peaceful Settlement. .pp. 73, 79.
30. *Young India*, 5 May 1920.
31. Aziz, "Application Prospects of Gandhian Approach to Industrial Relations", p. 149.
32. *Young India*, 5 May 1920.
33. *Harijan*, 22 September 1946.
34. See Appendix A: "Statement on Behalf of the Workers" in Desai, *A Righteous Struggle*, pp. 73-84.
35. Based on a summary by Khandubhai Desai in Bose, *Gandhian Technique and Tradition*, p. 19.
36. Quoted in Gandhi, *Economic and Industrial Life and Relations*, p. lxxxviii.
37. *Young India*, 16 February 1921.
38. Neither should violence be used against non-strikers (*Young India*, 16 February 1921) and this includes "blacklegs" or "scab" labour: "Strikers should not fight them but plead with them, tell them that theirs is a narrow policy and that they [the strikers] have the interest of the whole labour at heart. It is likely that they will not listen in which case they should be tolerated." *Harijan*, 7 November 1936.
39. *Young India*, 16 February 1921, 22 September 1921, and *Harijan*, 3 July 1937; and Gandhi, *Economic and Industrial Life and Relations*, p.c. The point, however, is to maintain a strike situation rather than opt for permanent alternative employment. The fact that the workers can thus support themselves will put additional pressure—in the form of fear of permanently losing their workers—on the employers. See pamphlet no. 14 issued during the Ahmedabad strike in Desai, *A Righteous Struggle*, pp. 61-4.
40. See *Harijan*, 13 April 1947, and 10 August 1947; and Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 263.
41. *Young India*, 16 February 1921.

42. *Young India*, 18 November 1926.
43. Ibid., but even here the sympathetic strike "must be taboo until it is proved that the men have exhausted all the legitimate means at their disposal". *Harijan*, 11 August 1946.
44. Quoted in Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, pp. 255-6.

## Chapter Five: CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

1. *Harijan*, 20 July 1947.
2. All conflicts that occur between members of a society are by definition social conflicts; here, however, discussion will be limited to non-legal, non-industrial conflicts where one of the parties at least is made up of more than a single individual, that is, the individual is pitted against the group, the individual against the state, the group against the group, and the group against the state.
3. *Young India*, 14 January 1920.
4. *Harijan*, 24 June 1939; *Young India*, 20 October 1927, 11 December 1924, and 14 January 1920.
5. Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience", p. 259. See also *Indian Opinion*, 7 September 1907, and 14 September 1907.
6. Gandhi refers to him as a "great satyagrahi" who "adopted satyagraha against his own people", *Indian Opinion*, 4 April 1908.
7. Kripalani, "The Case for Civil Disobedience . . .", p. 136.
8. See Wozzley, "Socrates on Disobeying the Law", pp. 299-318.
9. *Apology 29D* where Socrates states that even if the court were to discharge him on the condition that he gives up philosophical debate and inquiry he would disobey the order, and continues with the often quoted: "O men of Athens, I say to you, . . . either acquit me or not; but whichever you do, understand that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times" (30C). Jowett (trans, and ed.), *The Dialogues of Plato*, p. 123.
10. Socrates believed that a civilised state provided the best opportunity for personal growth and that a man who is free but chooses to live in a state gives an undertaking to obey the law (*Crito* 5 ID), and because the state's

- survival depends on obedience to the law so it must be obeyed even if unjust (50B). Jowett, *The Dialogues of Plato*, pp. 143-56.
11. *Young India*, 23 March 1921.
  12. *Indian Opinion*, 22 August 1908.
  13. Gandhi's ideal society was a stateless society of enlightened anarchy (*Young India*, 2 January 1930). He admitted that he was not sure what this *Ramrajya* (Kingdom of Heaven on earth) would be like exactly or even that it was more than a model to strive towards rather than a goal that could actually be achieved. *Harijan*, 5 May 1946.
  14. Kripalani, "The Case for Civil Disobedience", p. 139; and *Young India*, 15 July 1920.
  15. Quoted in Kripalani, *ibid.* This conception is further summed up by Gert's formula that everyone is always to obey a law "except when he could publicly advocate violating it". See Gert, *The Moral Rules*, pp. 96, 120.
  16. Kripalani, *ibid.*, pp. 131–2; *Young India*, 5 January 1922.
  17. Kripalani, "The Case for Civil Disobedience", p. 140.
  18. *Young India*, 15 December 1921.
  19. "... immediately a person quarrels both with the rule and the sanction for its breach he ceases to be civil and lends himself to the precipitation of chaos and anarchy. A civil resister is... a philanthropist and a friend of the State." *Young India*, 15 December 1921.
  20. *Young India*, 5 January 1922.
  21. *Young India*, 9 February 1922.
  22. *Young India*, 10 November 1921.
  23. *Young India*, 24 March 1920, and *Harijan*, 27 April 1940.
  24. Rudolph and Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition*, p. 184.
  25. See Prosch, "Limits to the Moral Claim of Civil Disobedience", p. 52.
  26. Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, p. 43.
  27. Dhawan, *The Political Philosophy*, p. 105.
  28. See *Harijan*, 14 March 1936.
  29. Lannoy, *The Speaking Tree*, p. 395.
  30. Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, p. 274.
  31. *Ibid.*

32. *Indian Opinion*, 21 May 1910, and 1 December 1914. It is likely that Gandhi's thinking was influenced by the following incident recounted by Tolstoy regarding voluntary servitude. "A brave rural judge who, upon arriving at a village where the peasants had been riotous and whither the army had been called out, undertook to settle the riot in the spirit of Nicholas I, all by himself, through his personal influence. He sent for several wagon-loads of switches, and, collecting all the peasants in a corn-kiln, locked himself up with them, and so intimidated the peasants with his shouts, that they, obeying him, began at his command to flog one another. They continued flogging one another until there was found a little fool who did not submit and shouted to his companions to stop flogging one another. It was only then that the flogging stopped, and the rural judge ran away from the kiln. It is this advice of the fool that men of the social order do not know how to follow, for they flog one another without cessation, and men teach this mutual flogging as the last word of human wisdom." Tolstoy, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, pp. 223-4.
33. Quoted in Shukla, *Gandhi's View of Life*, p. 138.
34. *Harijan*, 30 March 1940.
35. Naess, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*, p. 68.
36. *Young India*, 27 February 1930. It must, however, be borne in mind that these instructions were issued in the course of enormous campaigns of civil disobedience where a large percentage of those taking part were illiterate and had limited understanding of the tactics of the movement. See also *Gujarati Navajivan*, A May 1930; CWMG, vol. XLIII, pp. 379-82.
37. Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, p. 60.
38. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 40; see also Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, pp. 21-3.
39. Shridharani adds "self-purification" here.
40. *Harijan*, 28 July 1940.
41. Gregg, *A Discipline for Non-Violence*, p. 13.
42. See Gandhi, *Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place in Gandhi, The Selected Works*, vol. IV, pp. 333-74.
43. Gregg, *A Discipline for Non-Violence*, p. 5.

44. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, p. 30.
45. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme*, op. cit., pp. 369-70; Horsburgh, "Non-violence and Impatience", p. 359; and *Harijan*, 25 March 1939.
46. Gregg, *A Discipline for Non-Violence*, pp. 4–5; and Horsburgh, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 58.
47. Gregg, *A Discipline for Non-Violence*, p. 4.
48. Horsburgh, "Nonviolence and Impatience", pp. 359-60.
49. *Harijan*, 31 March 1946, and *Young India*, 26 March 1930.
50. *Harijan*, 25 August 1940. 31. *Ibid*.
51. See *The Modern Review*, October 1935; *Harijan*, 31 March 1946, and 25 August 1940; and *Young India*, 26 November 1931.
52. *Young India*, 1 June 1921, and *Harijan*, 12 November 1938.
53. *Young India*, 20 April 1920.
54. Quoted in Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 89.
55. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme*, p. 359.

## Chapter Six: INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

1. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. 290.
2. *Harijan*, 26 November 1938, 21 October 1939, and 14 October 1939.
3. *Harijan*, 15 March 1942. "Hitlerism will never be defeated by counter-Hitlerism. It can only breed superior Hitlerism raised to the «th degree." *Harijan*, 26 June 1940.
4. See Boserup and Mack, *War Without Weapons*, pp. 21-36.
5. Quoted in Friedman, "The Power of Violence . . .", p. 319.
6. Ikle, *Every War Must End*, p. 108.
7. Ebert, "Preparations for Civilian Defence", pp. 152-3.
8. See Skodvin, "Non-Violent Resistance During the German Occupation", pp. 136-53; Bennett, "The Resistance Against German Occupation of Denmark 1940-5", pp. 154–72; Lanza del Vasto, *Warriors of Peace*, pp. 194-221; Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, pp. 3-39; and Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, pp. 63-105.
9. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 112.

10. *Harijan*, 13 April 1940, and 12 November 1938; and *The Modern Review*, October 1935.
11. See Roberts, "A Case for Civilian Defence". "The weakest State", claims Gandhi, "can render itself immune from attack if it learns the art of non-violence." *Harijan*, 7 October 1939.
12. *Harijan*, 12 November 1938.
13. See Osgood, *An Alternative to War or Surrender*.
14. See Crow, "A Study of Strategic Doctrines ..pp. 580-9; and Pilisuk and Skolnick, "Inducing Trust . . .", pp. 121-33.
15. *Harijan*, 12 November 1938.
16. Frank, *Sanity and Survival*, p. 92.
17. *Harijan*, 13 April 1940.
18. Gandhi, *Ashram Observations in Action*, p. 58.
19. Quoted in Bose, *Selections From Gandhi*, p. 75.
20. *Harijan*, 13 April 1940.
21. Ibid.
22. *Young India*, 13 December 1931. For a criticism of the "living wall" method of resistance to an invading army see Roberts, "Civilian Defence Strategy", pp. 238-40.
23. *Harijan*, 28 January 1939.
24. *Harijan*, 31 August 1947.
25. *Harijan*, 6 July 1940.
26. *Harijan*, 17 December 1938.
27. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 124.
28. Quoted in Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 815.
29. Raman, *What Does Gandhi Want?*, p. 99.
30. Orwell, *The Collected Essays*, p. 529.
31. Boserup and Mack, *War Without Weapons*, p. 90.
32. *Harijan*, 28 July 1940.
33. Bose, *Studies in Gandhism*, pp. 112-13.
34. *Harijan*, 12 April 1942.
35. Russell, *Which Way to Peace?*, pp. 141-2.
36. Bose, "Gandhian Approach to Social Conflict and War", p. 269.

37. Quoted in Boserup and Mack, *War Without Weapons*, p. 134.
38. See Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 632.
39. *Harijan*, 15 October 1938.
40. Douglass, *The Non-Violent Cross*, p. 242.
41. *Indian Opinion*, 12 February 1910.
42. *Harijan*, 28 January 1939.
43. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. 292; see also *Harijan*, 17 October 1936
44. *Young India*, 31 December 1931.
45. Bose, "Gandhian Approach to Social Conflict and War", p. 262.
46. *Harijan*, 16 March 1942.
47. Frank, *Sanity and Survival*, p. 270.
48. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 165.

### Chapter Seven: THE POSITION OF THE INDIVIDUAL

1. *Young India*, 13 November 1924; *Harijan*, 28 July 1946, and 1 February 1942; and *Young India*, 13 July 1921.
2. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 117.
3. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 118.
4. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 173.
5. Quoted in Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 137. This remark was made after Gandhi's "exhaustive study" of Marxian literature during his last detention in Poona during 1942-4. It was a reply to his secretary Pyarelal's request to get Gandhi to give his appraisal of various aspects of Marxist philosophy, after the former remarked that "Marx showed us that our ideologies, institutions and ethical standards, literature, art, customs, even religion, are a product of an economic environment".
6. *Modern Review*, October 1935.
7. *Harijan*, 1 February 1942.
8. Quoted in Vidyarathi, "Contributions of Mahatma Gandhi to Indian Social Thought", p. 24.

9. Durant, *The Case for India*, p. 115.
10. Quoted in Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. 3, p. 143.
11. Bhattacharyya, *Evolution of the Political Philosophy of Gandhi*, pp. 492-3.
12. Cooley, *Human Nature and Social Order*, pp. 38, 42.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
14. Mead, *Mind, Self and Society*, pp. 222-3.
15. Quoted in Walhork, *Durkheim*, pp. 63-4, 73, 75.
16. *Young India*, 13 August 1925.
17. Quoted in Coser, *Masters of Sociological Thought*, p. 184.
18. Gerth and Wright Mills, *From Max Weber*, p. 73.
19. See Plekhanov, *The Role of the Individual in History*; Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* and Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology*.
20. Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, vol. 2, pp. 365-6.
21. Berger, *Invitation to Sociology*, pp. 146, 149, 164, and 152-3.
22. "I value individual freedom, but you must not forget that man is essentially a social being. He has risen to the present status by learning to adjust his individualism to the requirements of social progress.... willing submission to social restraint for the sake of the well-being of the whole society enriches both the individual and the society of which one is a member." *Harijan*, 27 May 1939.
23. Prasad, *Social Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 149.
24. Quoted in Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 140-1. This definition of the ideal type of socialism that he wanted India to strive for resulted from a discussion with Socialists which led to their demanding that Gandhi formulate a definitive summation of his views on the subject.
25. *Harijan*, 21 January 1939.
26. *Harijan*, 12 November 1938. M. N. Roy, the international communist, founder of Radical Humanism and long time arch Indian critic of Gandhi (who became quite pro-Gandhian in his old age; see Dalton, "Gandhi and Roy: the Interaction of ideologies in India"), summed up Gandhi's position admirably by claiming that "When a man really wants freedom and to live in a democratic society he may not be able to free the whole world ... but he can to a large extent at least free himself by behaving as a rational and moral being, and if

*he can do this, others around him can do the same, and these again will spread freedom by their example." Quoted in Tinker, "Nonviolence as a Political Strategy: Gandhi and Western Thinkers", p. 255.*

27. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, p. 65. It has been suggested that Gandhi's emphasis upon the individual may have been, at least in part, a political ploy to overcome the troubling question of whether there was a pre-existing Indian nation that had been conquered by Britain, or whether it was yet to develop after the departure of the British bureaucracy. Rothermund claims that "Gandhi circumvented this by making the individual the focus of the nation as essentially consisting of individuals who feel that they belong to it. Further, by emphasising the spiritual unity of all individuals Gandhi could pre-suppose an immanent solidarity which was much 'stronger than an abstractly conceived national sovereignty." Rothermund, "The Individual and Society in Gandhi's Political Thought", p. 314.
28. Rudolph and Rudolph, *The Modernity of Tradition*, p. 187.
29. *Harijan*, 24 September 1938, 22 October 1938; *Young India*, 11 August 1920; and *Harijan*, 22 February 1942.
30. For example, his defiance of caste barriers, championing the cause of untouchables and his belief in the emancipation of women.
31. Maron, "The Non-Universality of Satyagraha", p. 280.
32. Gandhi claimed that Tolstoy's book *The Kingdom of God is Within You* "overwhelmed me. It left an abiding impression on me. Before.. .. this book, all the other books given me.... seemed to pale into insignificance". Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, pp. 114-15; and that Ruskin's *Unto This Last* "marked the turning point in my life", *ibid.*, pp. 248-50. See also Narasimhaiah (ed.), *Gandhi and the West*; and *Harijan*, 9 August 1942.
33. In fact it appears that the influence of Christianity upon him was so great that South African friends were convinced that the young Gandhi's conversion was imminent. See Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, pp. 98-104, 112–15.
34. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 144.
35. *Ibid*, pp. 131,140. Shridharani adds that "My contact with the Western world has led me to think that, contrary to popular belief, Satyagraha, once consciously and deliberately adopted, has more fertile fields in which to grow

and flourish in the West than in the Orient. Like war, Satyagraha demands public spirit, self-sacrifice, organization, endurance and discipline for its successful operation, and I have found these qualities displayed in Western communities more than in my own." Shridharani, *War Without Violence*, p. 12.

36. Maron, "The Non-Universality of Satyagraha", p. 284.

### Chapter Eight: AGGRESSION AND THE PROBLEM OF THE WILL

1. See Hemming, *Individual Morality*, pp. 120-1; Storr, *Human Aggression*, p. 19; Thompson, *Interpersonal Psycho-Analysis*, p. 179; and Pontara, "The Concept of Violence", p. 19.
2. Lorenz, "Ritualised Fighting", p. 49.
3. Lorenz, *On Aggression*, pp. 206-9.
4. Freud, "Letter to Albert Einstein", pp. 239-40, 245.
5. Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, pp. 48-9.
6. Rochlin, *Man's Aggression*, p. 100.
7. See Sipes, "War, Sports and Aggression", pp. 64-86; Montagu, *The Nature of Human Aggression*, pp. 276-82; Berkowitz, "Experimental Investigations of Hostility Catharsis", pp. 1-7; and Berkowitz, "Simple Views of Aggression", pp. 50-2.
8. Montagu's edited work (*Man and Aggression*) contains the views of several such critics. See especially the chapters by Barnett, "On the Hazards of Analogies", pp. 75-83; Helmuth, "Human Behaviour: Aggression", pp. 92-109; and Carrighar, "War is Not in Our Genes", pp. 122-35. See also Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, pp. 89-181.
9. At present our society, through the mass media and accepted methods of child rearing etc. provides far more violent than nonviolent models. See Pillbeam, "An Idea we can Live Without", pp. 110-21; and Belschner, "Learning and Aggression", pp. 61-103.
10. Pillbeam, "An Idea we can Live Without", p. 120.
11. Montagu, *The Nature of Human Aggression*, p. 295.
12. Montagu (ed.), *Man and Aggression*, p. xviii.

13. Montagu, *The Nature of Human Aggression*, p. 293.
14. Gandhi, *Ashram Observances in Action*, p. 39. See also *Young India*, 1 October 1931.
15. *Young India*, 21 January 1930; Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, p. 78. He goes on to say that when "Two brothers quarrel, one of them repents and re-awakens the love that was lying dormant in him; and the two again begin to live in peace; nobody takes note of this. But if the two brothers ... take up arms or go to law . . . their doings would be immediately noticed in the press . . . and would probably go down in history"
16. Scott, *Aggression*, p. 127.
17. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, p. 40.
18. Scott, *Aggression*, p. 127.
19. *Harijan*, 28 January 1939, 14 May 1938, and 2 April 1938. Talking of the control of anger, Gandhi implies that it can be learned, stating, "it is a habit that everyone must cultivate and must succeed in forming by constant practice". *Harijan*, 11 May 1935.
20. Lannoy, *The Speaking Tree*, p. 379.
21. Berkowitz, "Aggression: Psychological Aspects", p. 168.
22. Scott, *Aggression*, p. 128.
23. 23? A few weeks before his assassination he admitted that "Though many psychologists have recommended a study of psychology, I am sorry, I have not been able, for want of time, to study the subject." *Harijan*, 23 November 1947.
24. See Rocfrlin, *Man's Aggression*, pp. 216, 230, 244; Ansbacher and Ansbacher (eds.), *The Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler*, pp. 367-73; May, *Power and Innocence*, p. 23; Toch, *Violent Men*, p. 269; and Gray, *On Understanding Violence*, p. 29.
25. *Harijan*, 5 September 1936.
26. Gunn, *Violence in Human Society*, p. 150.

27. *Harijan*, 5 November 1938.
28. Eisenberg, "The Human Nature . . .", p. 56.
29. See Shukla, *Conversations of Gandhiji*, p. 28; Gandhi, *All Men are Brothers*, p. 174; *Harijan*, 7 June 1942; Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 130; Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. 21; *Harijan*, 6 May 1939; Tendulkar, *Mahatma*, vol. 8, p. 226; and Ganguli, *Gandhi's Social Philosophy*, p. 111.
30. Horowitz, *War and Peace in Contemporary Social and Philosophical Theory*, p. 83. This is further implied by Gandhi when he says: "A moral act must be our own act; it must spring from our own will." Gandhi, *Ethical Religion in The Selected Works*, vol. IV, pp. 1-35, at p. 11.
31. Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p. 31.
32. O'Connor, *Free Will*, p. 122.
33. Davis, *The Free Will Question*, p. 74.
34. Schlick, "When is Man Responsible?" p. 52.
35. Hospers, "Free Will and Psychoanalysis", p. 82.
36. Freud, "The psychopathology of Everyday Life", p. 254.
37. Skinner, *Science and Human Behaviour*, p. 438. Many geneticists take as strong a determinist position as do the behaviourists. Some, like Darlington argue along parallel lines putting heredity in the place of environmental conditioning, see Darlington, *The Facts of Life*.
38. Skinner, *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, pp. 41, 193, 196.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
40. *Ibid.*
41. Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, pp. 70-1.
42. Farrer, *The Freedom of the Will*, p. 297.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 300. Phaeton was the son of the Greek sun god Helios whose infamously bad driving of the sun chariot set the sky on fire.

44. The determinists here argue that punishment is valid because it will be a conditioning factor, determining future actions.
45. O'Connor, *Free Will*, p. 82.
46. Lamont, *Freedom of Choice Affirmed*, p. 17.
47. Ibid., p. 154.
48. Campbell, "Is 'Free Will' a Pseudo Problem?", pp. 459-60.
49. Campbell, *In Defense of Free Will*, p. 41.
50. Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics*, pp. 55-6.
51. Benn and Peters, "Human Action and the Limitations of Causal Explanations", p. 96.
52. Davis, *The Free Will Question*, p. 58.
53. Benn and Peters, "Human Action and ...", p. 97.
54. Davis, *The Free Will Question*, p. 33.
55. Sartre, "The Humanism of Existentialism", p. 57.
56. Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 553, 440-1.
57. Sartre, "The Humanism of Existentialism", pp. 37-8.
58. Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 439.
59. Macquarrie, *Existentialism*, p. 185.
60. Iyer *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, pp. 74, 78.
61. Letters to J. C. Kumarappa, dated 16 November 1930 and 31 October 1930, CWMG vol. XLIV, pp. 312, 264.
62. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 78.
63. Letter to P. C. Ray, dated 9 September 1918, CWMG vol. XV, pp. 43-44.
64. Green, "Foreword" to Selg (ed.), *The Making of Human Aggression*, p. 3.

## Chapter Nine: CONCLUSION: A GANDHIAN ETHICS

1. " Salvation" in the sense of liberation from the cycle of birth, death and rebirth by achieving perfection.
2. Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, p. 28.
3. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, p. xii.
4. See Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, pp. 89-90; and Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, pp. 731–3.
5. Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, p. 78.
6. *Harijan*, 14 March 1936.
7. See *Young India*, 27 August 1925, and 31 December 1931.
8. *Indian Opinion*, 8 February 1908.
9. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 302.
10. Barnes, *An Existentialist Ethics*, p. 9. Gandhi explained man's ability to do this when he noted: "Man has two windows to his mind: through one he can see his own self as it is; through the other, he can see what it ought to be." Gandhi, *Ethical Religion in The Selected Works*. vol. IV, pp. 1-35, at p. 5.
11. Gandhi, *ibid.*, p. 32, 33, 8, and 24.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
13. Wilson, *Sociobiology*, p. 117.
14. See Chaitanya, *Gandhi's Quest of Being in Becoming*, p. 14.
15. Gandhi, *Ethical Religion in The Selected Works*, p. 7; and *Harijan*, 1 June 1935.
16. *Young India*, 9 December 1926. Gandhi adds that the doctrine of utilitarianism "means in its nakedness that in order to achieve the supposed good of 51 per cent the interest of 49 per cent may be, or rather, should be sacrificed. It is a heartless doctrine and has done harm to humanity". Quoted in Desai, *The Diary*, p. 149.
17. Gert, *The Moral Rules*, p. 134.
18. Gandhi, *Ethical Religion in The Selected Works*, p. 34.
19. Taylor, *Good and Evil*, p. 255. Perhaps this view is bad faith applied to problems too complex to be easily analysed. It is however important in understanding the basis of satyagraha. Ernest Jones believes that "whenever

- an individual considers a given (mental) process as being too obvious to permit of any investigation into its origin, and shows resistance to such an investigation, we are right in suspecting that the actual origin is concealed from him—almost certainly on account of its unacceptable nature." Quoted in Waddington, *The Ethical Animal*, p. 185.
20. Gandhi explained to Will Durant that "the glimpse of the 'Divine essence' is impossible without full development of the moral sense". Durant, *On the Meaning of Life*, p. 84.
  21. *Young India*, 4 December 1924.
  22. Adapted from Naess, *Gandhi and the Nuclear Age*, p. 28-33.
  23. Frankena, *Ethics*, p. 69.
  24. *Young India*, 22 November 1928; Bondurant, "The Search for a Theory of Conflict", p. 22; and *Young India*, 9 December 1922.
  25. *Harijan*, 14 March 1936, and 24 February 1946.
  26. See *Young India*, 3 November 1927.
  27. *Harijan*, 20 May 1939; and see Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression*, p. 63.
  28. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person*, pp. 344, 346.
  29. *Young India*, 5 March 1931; and Gandhi, *The Law of Love*, p. 3.
  30. *Young India*, 13 August 1925.
  31. Woodcock, *Gandhi*, p. 6.
  32. Basham, "Foreword" to Ray (ed.) *Gandhi, India and the World*, p. 13.
  33. Bose, *My Days with Gandhi*, p. 97.
  34. *Harijan*, 29 April 1939.
  35. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, p. 105; and *Hindusthan Standard*, 6 August 1944.
  36. Fischer, "Miscellaneous Notes . . .", p. 61.

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