

“Birthing a New Civilization:
Practicing Gandhian Revolutionary Love Force Today”

by
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Because I am both intimidated and inspired,
a song . . .

I'm gonna slow right down,
so I can get there sooner.
I'm gonna slow right down,
so I can get there today.
I'm gonna slow right down,
maybe even come to a full stop.
Maybe if I come to a full stop
I'm gonna get there right away.

“Civilization is not an incurable disease, but it
should never be forgotten that the English people
are currently afflicted by it.”

M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*

Outline of Talk

- 1.) What is this civilization by which the dominant peoples on the earth are afflicted?
Monological reasoning and violence as institutionalized in economic rationality, realpolitik, instrumentalist technology and foundationalist moral philosophy
- 2.) How does Gandhi's vision and practice provide the seeds of an alternative civilization?
Dialogical reasoning and nonviolence as institutionalized in satyagraha, swaraj, constructive programs & trusteeship, and emergent objective moral truth
- 3.) What might be a contemporary equivalent of a Salt March that might move us to satyagraha on a mass scale, Earth swaraj, a technology that embodies ethics and an ethics guided by the “Rainbow Rule” and revolutionary love force?
“Marchathons”, giving “the gift of gifts”, and redirecting income to “Meet the Future Halfway”.

An economy creating ecological collapse . . .

A global governance system based on national security states creating arms races with weapons of mutually assured destruction . . .

A technological program aimed at the exponential development of ever smarter machines that may soon vastly exceed our own intelligence while having no vested interest in our concerns or even our existence . . .

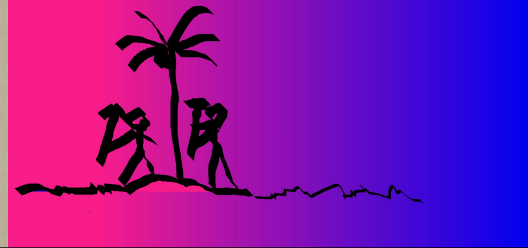
Insistence on grounding ethics in an Enlightenment Rationalism that collapses into moral relativism . . .

Creating existential threats to ourselves -- what are we thinking?

The core problem of our civilization
is not with *what* we are thinking
but with *how*.

What is it about our culture that leads people to define peace in terms of what it is not – as not war or as the absence of violence & conflict – and allows us to say “Nations are warring in the Mideast” but considers it ungrammatical to say “Nations are peacing in Scandinavia”?

Culture of Conflict core metaphor for life:
Two Islanders and only one coconut . . .



A Culture of Peace core metaphor:
the process of birth



Two Basic Frames → of Reasoning with variations ↓	Monological Reasoning modelled on the “rocket science” of Newton	Dialogical Reasoning exemplified by Gandhian and other consensus approaches to conflict transformation
Economics	“ Rational Economic Man ” Individual Producer/ Consumer Maximizing Profit and “Utility”	Rational Historical Agent pursuing meaningful projects in community
Politics & International Relations	Nation States pursuing power through realpolitik	Communities pursuing swaraj through satyagraha
Technology	Pursuit of maximum power to manipulate environment through “smart” algorithms of instrumentalist reasoning	Pursuit of wise and sustainable relationships in community through dialogue
Morality	Seeking foundations in absolute, universal principles or intuitions (e. g. utilitarian, Kantian)	Experimental search for emergent objective Truth through satyagraha

Gandhi’s Method and Strategy of Social Change

Method: Satyagraha = “clinging to truth” or “soul force” or “Truth force” or “love”

“The technique developed by Gandhi for social and political change, based on truth, non-violence, and self-suffering.” – Joan Bondurant, *THE CONQUEST OF VIOLENCE*

In it the means are organically related to the ends as “ends in the making” and Truth is objective but emergent

Swaraj = self-rule

“Hind Swaraj” = “Indian Home Rule”

to be achieved by through a constructive program developing parallel institutions grounded in nonviolence and satyagraha

Some of the steps in Satyagraha Campaigns

Factual investigation
Self purification
Organizing and training
Petitioning
Negotiation
Marches and rallies
Boycott and withdrawal
Acts of non-cooperation – boycott, withdrawal
Nonviolent direct action and civil disobedience
Parallel institutions

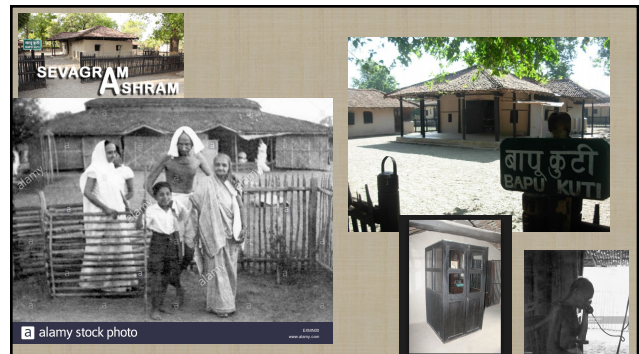
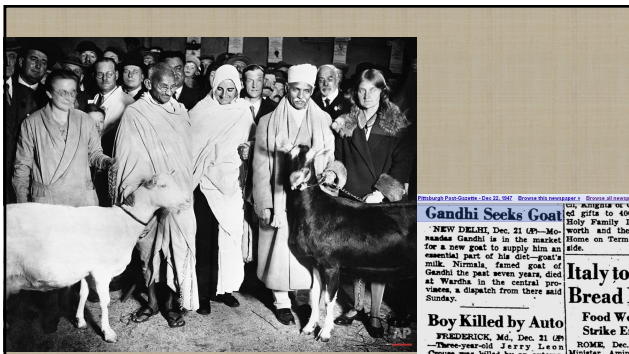
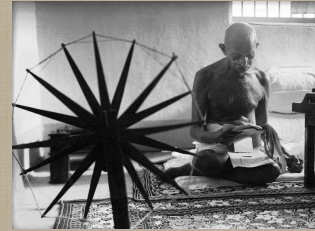
Monological concept of love: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Dialogical concept of love: "Love your enemies."

Rainbow Rule: Do unto others as they would have you do unto them.

Some images of constructive program work for Hind Swaraj:



Some other constructive program elements:

Schools and universities and research centers

Alternative dispute resolution centers

Alternative health using traditional methods

Music and morning songs

Interfaith worship

Gardens

Ashram communities for living and acting together

Building a nonviolent "army" – a mass movement of full time followers



Salt March
Satyagraha



Some questions for discerning **Satyagraha for Earth Swaraj**

1. What specific forms of satyagraha might we be called on to take in laboring under the concern for birthing a new civilization using revolutionary love force?
2. To what extent does the action contemplated exemplify the features of satyagraha: testing our convictions, bearing witness that persuades other's hearts, and exercising "truth force"? In this action, how are the means related to the ends?
3. In what ways might the actions be scalable and synergistic so as to yield progressively more systematic social change and an emergent Earth Swaraj?
4. Is there some core action project that might have the kind of clarity and power that the Salt Satyagraha exemplified?

Some ideas for a campaign comparable to the Salt Satyagraha:

- To transform the economy:
 - "marchathons"
 - "giving the gift of gifts"
 - "meeting the future halfway" – reducing personal consumption by 50%
 - Scale up with prayer or affinity groups, churches, ...
- In ways that could fund a new global governance of Earth Swaraj:
 - Nonviolent Peaceforce
 - Nonviolent Drones
 - People's tribunals with decisions enforced by satyagraha and "convergence"
- And fund and develop ethical technology
 - "embodying morality and embedding it in community"
 - in corporations by rejecting limited liability
 - In weapons and other systems by including humans in algorithms
 - Build "Heartbook" instead of Facebook communities

Meeting the Future Halfway

Household Budget

Income	100%
Personal Consumption	50%
Solidarity	? :-)
Responsible Investment	? :-)
Social and Political Action	? :-)

Marchathons

If a million of us go on a marchathon, how much will we raise for the Global Climate Fund?

Scaling up with others

Giving the Gift of Gifts

100% Holiday, 2018

One hundred dollars

Giving the Gift of Gifts

Appendix of Additional Slides

Concepts of Truth

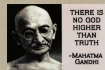
Monological: Correspondence, Coherence
Pragmatist, Post-Modernist

vs.

Dialogical: Emergent, Transformational

Roles of Nonviolence and Self-Sacrifice in "Clinging to Truth"/Satyagraha

1. Testing: To test personal convictions
2. Witnessing: To witness to others in order to persuade
3. Empowering: To resist falsehood and empower Truth



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- The Ways of Peace: A Philosophy of Peace as Action, by Gray Cox, online at: <https://breathonthe water.com/2015/12/16/the-ways-of-peace-a-philosophy-of-peace-as-action/>
- Reframing Ethical Theory, Pedagogy, and Legislation to Bias Open Source AGI Towards Friendliness and Wisdom. By Gray Cox, at: <https://jetpress.org/v25.2/cox.htm>
- Quaker Approaches to Research: Collaborative Practice and Communal Discernment by Gray Cox et. al. at: <http://www.quakerinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/QAR-QIF-web.pdf>
- Songs at graycox.bandcamp.com

Let us consider some paradigmatic exemplars of an alternative way of understanding reasoning – as “dialogical” rather than “monological”. These exemplars include Quaker communal discernment, the Gandhian satyagraha, and a wide variety of other traditions of nonviolent negotiation and conflict transformation. (Cox 1986, Sheeran 1996, Bondurant 1988) The first definitive feature of them is that they understand the reasoning process as involving two or more real rather than hypothetical agents who typically have substantively different practices for interacting with the world and systematically different starting points provided by their varied language, beliefs and norms.



The challenge of the reasoning process is for these parties to negotiate those differences and develop new language, practices and plans of action on which they can agree. A second feature of the exemplars I have in mind, is that they are committed to seeking genuine agreement through nonviolent practices of investigation and persuasion that forgo violent threats to coerce an unwilling consent.



A third feature of these exemplars is that they understand the elements and aspects of the reasoning process in “emergentist” rather than “static” or “reductionist” ways. For instance, they understand the meaning and truth of sentences, the identities of the selves and communities stating them, and many of the social realities they are interacting with as things that emerge and grow or otherwise develop during the dynamic course of negotiation.

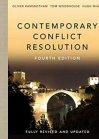
Many of the distinctive practices of rationality in these traditions focus, precisely, on methods for getting shared meanings to emerge in forms that express increasingly truer views of our options and are found more agreeable.

To illustrate, briefly, one such strategy is to provide methods to creatively generate multiple options that might productively redefine the situation. Consider the kind of hypothetical dilemma focused on in many courses on ethics: A surgeon has five patients in need of different organs for lifesaving transplant.

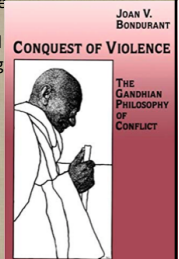


She has a healthy young patient napping in a private room. Should she harvest his organs – sacrificing the one for the many like a good Utilitarian – or abhor such an option like a self-respecting Kantian? In real life, we would want to reject the horns of this dilemma and search for alternatives. We might invite others into the dialogue who have knowledge of other sources of organs, ways of prolonging the ill patients’ lives while awaiting suitable transplants, ways of substituting artificial devices or treatment regimes for the organs or ways of brainstorming other creative options – like inviting one of the terminally ill patients to sacrifice his organs to save the others. The search for new ways of framing peoples’ interests and the options available can often provide “win/win” outcomes by “increasing the size of the pie” or even provide outcomes that stop framing the situation as a conflict that results in winners and sees it instead as a shared problem participants are seeking solutions for.

Research on negotiation and conflict transformation has yielded detailed accounts of these strategies and a host of others that help parties “get to Yes” – like “focusing on interests”, “separating the people from the problem” and “searching for objective, independent criteria”. In recent decades, research on ways such strategies may vary in different situations, settings, and cultural traditions has been especially productive. (Fisher 1996, Chew 2001, Cox 2014, Bartoli 2011, Ramsbotham 2016)



Perhaps the most challenging situations for dialogical reasoning involve people ready to use violence – either directly in attacks or indirectly through institutionalized power imbalances that create structural violence. Fundamental to genuinely dialogical reasoning is the respect for others that is grounded in I/thou relationships that preclude the appeal to violence to settle disputes. (Buber 2013) Instead, following Gandhi, the appeal is to forms of “clinging to truth” or “satyagraha” that provide compelling witness to emergent, objective moral truths. Such witness involves self-sacrifice that can “melt the heart” of the Other and also provide a check on the moral clarity of the self offering sacrifice. Further, such witness is characterized by a refusal to cooperate with injustice and wrongdoing.



Such nonviolent direct action can provide effective sanctions to urge the Other to comply with justifiable moral claims, giving Truth power (Rediehs 2015) The effectiveness of such non-violent direct action has been extensively studied and shown to be as or more powerful and successful than violent methods of resistance and revolution. (Sharp, Chenoweth)



Gandhi's vision for freeing India from the British Raj grounded the change in nonviolent satyagraha campaigns of boycott, salt making, et cetera that extended to every walk of life, generating parallel institutions for law, agriculture, education, health, et cetera. (Gandhi, Bondurant) Indian home rule or “Hind Swaraj” would be won, in this way, by displacing the colonial state with indigenous – nonviolent – institutions. Facing an irrational global security system appealing, ultimately, to mutually assured destruction, we need to likewise pursue an “Earth Swaraj” through systematic development of parallel institutions using nonviolence to rule the world from the ground up.



From the ground up, we can fund such institutions if we who are consumers with First World levels of income begin to spend half or more of it as agents of history instead of addicts to consumption. We can spend on acts of solidarity, socially responsible investment, and political change in order to both cut our ecological footprint in half and transform the world. We can make this shift in five stages, 10% a year, by progressive increases in expenditures on charity, retirement investment, and political action – and by drawing on cultural practices of fundraising for community events and family gifts. For example, a million person march for climate change can be transformed into a “march-athon”, raising a billion dollars for the Least Developed Countries Fund.



Instead of giving loved ones objects at holidays, we can give them checks to donate to worthy causes that enhance the world they love. Giving such “gifts of giving”, can nurture our shift to a new framework of reasoning. Instead of “Rational Economic Man”, mono-logically pursuing endless increase in material consumption, we may become “Rational Agents of History”, in dialogue and collaboration, pursuing a worthy future.

The technology of science and institutional management that currently fuels consumption is guided, fundamentally, by mono-logical algorithms that pursue profit and GDP through creation of an ever “smarter planet”. This threatens us with the creation of artificial intelligences (AI) that may surpass us in power and perhaps render us useless and extinct. To insure any AI that runs our planet is friendly to humans, good in intents, and wise in actions, we need to insure that the methods of dialogical reasoning – including Gandhian satyagraha – are “em-bodied” in its program structures and incarnations.

Such dialogical reasoning is essential to being human. “In-carnating” it in global economic, political, technological and spiritual institutions provides our only coherent hope for survival that can give life enduring meaning – through creating not just a “smarter planet” but a “Wiser Earth”.



Some Assumptions underlying Two Traditions of Reasoning

	Dominant Enlightenment Tradition of Monological Reasoning	Dialogical model exemplified by Gandhian, Quaker and other traditions of nonviolent communal discernment
Meaning	atomistic	Interanimating holism, emergence
Truth	Correspondence vs. coherence vs. instrumental	Multiple criteria and emergent-grounded in Presence and nonviolence
Feeling's relation to Reason	Disjoint	Continuous
Self	Autonomous individual	Social, transitional, interdependent
Metaphors	Inference, algorithmic computation, Critical reasoning as war two islanders & one coconut	Shared problem solving, Cultivation, birth and midwifery

Figure 1. Success Rates of Nonviolent and Violent Campaigns, 1900-2006

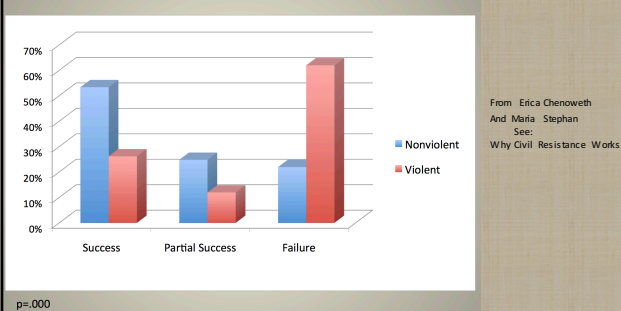
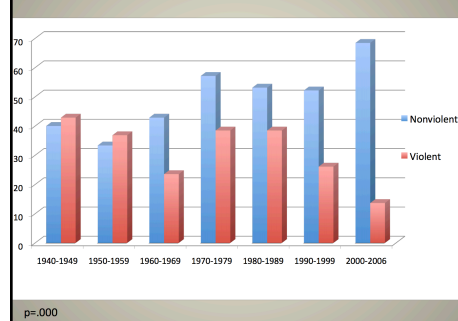


Figure 2. Success Rates by Decade, 1940-2006



Some useful books:

- By Gandhi:
 - Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule
 - My Experiments with Truth
 - Satyagraha in South Africa
- The Conquest of Violence, Joan Bondurant
- India after Gandhi, Ramachandra Guha

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