Mr Mosala spoke of the frequency of funerals in Soweto and of the general unsurprise there over Steve Biko's death. He said, "I have never seen the black people so united even during the time of Luthuli who didn't unite blacks the way Kruger has done today.

"For as long as Kruger, Vorster and their henchmen refuse to see reason for that long this country will be kept in a state of uncertainty."

"No amount of persecution will deter us. All we are asking for is a fair share of the economic cake and a fair say in political decision-making, because this is our country – all of us. It is not true that blacks don't want whites. The grievances of blacks are as legitimate as those of the Afrikaners until they assumed power.

"In June 1976 M. C. Botha was reminded that he had organized the protest against the imposition of English on Afrikaans children – and the English did not reply with guns. Kruger was reminded that his Prime Minister was a detainee.

"We are the last generation to speak to whites," warned Mr Mosala. He said that he and his wife had spent their lives trying to build bridges. He spoke affectionately of his white friends and pointed out that whites had been detained, imprisoned, banned, house-arrested in the cause of black liberation. "I owe to my white friends a debt of gratitude that I cannot repay, but I'm not sure that my children will feel this." He told how his wife Bernadette used to take children from the Morris Isaacson school to debate with white school children: but now the black school children would no longer go.

Of the future, Mr Mosala said, "I do not believe the adult black expects change in his lifetime – even Biko did not expect this. All we seek is to come to an agreement on a programme of change that will lead to a sharing of economic and political power – that will bring immediate hope even among my own age group. He ended, "Mr Kruger cannot tell us about communists when he is practising worse. Until the government recognises habeas corpus we cannot be a democracy but qualify as a police state." □

DUALITY IN NONVIOLENCE

by Geoffrey Ostergaard

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Discussions of nonviolence tend, not unnaturally, to focus on the issue of the supposed merits, efficacy and justification of nonviolence when contrasted with violence. In this article, however, I propose to pursue a different task and I shall have little to say directly about the main issue. My object is to explicate the Gandhian concept of nonviolence and I think that this can best be done, not by contrasting nonviolence with violence but by distinguishing two kinds of nonviolence. My thesis, in short, is that nonviolence presents to the world two faces which are often confused with each other but which need to be distinguished if we are to appraise correctly Gandhi's contribution to the subject.

It is only in very recent years that academic researchers have begun to make a serious study of nonviolent action as an unconventional political technique intermediate between constitutional action, on the one hand, and violent revolutionary action on the other. *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* by Gene Sharp catalogues no less than 200 distinct methods of nonviolent action into three broad categories: (1) nonviolent protest and persuasion, (2) nonviolent noncooperation, and (3) nonviolent intervention. The first includes actions which are mainly symbolic in character, such as mass demonstrations, marches, vigils, and teach-ins. The second includes actions which involve the withdrawal of particular types of cooperation with the opponent. Examples, in addition to strikes and boycotts, are mass voluntary emigration, tax refusal, and abstention from elections. In the third category fall those methods which intervene in the situation either, negatively, by disrupting established patterns of behaviour or, positively, by creating new ones. Actions of this kind are the most radical of all and are exemplified by fasts, sit-ins, work-ins, and the establishment of alternative or parallel governments.

In Sharp's terminology, "nonviolent action" is a generic term for a political technique adopted by those who seek to achieve their objects without the inflication, or threat of infliction, of physical injury on opponents. Defined in this way nonviolent action is not synonymous with pacifism or identical with religious or philosophical systems emphasizing nonviolence as a moral principle.

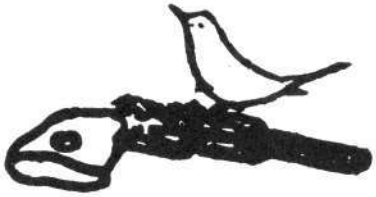
In the West, the interest of political scientists and political activists in Gandhi has centred largely on his use of various methods of nonviolent action. It is assumed that it is possible to abstract from Gandhi his technique and to ignore his philosophy and metaphysics and also his peculiar social ideas, such as "the fad" of reviving the *khadi* (hand spun cloth) industry by means of the *charkha,* or spinning-wheel. This assumption rests, in turn, on more general assumptions: that techniques are merely techniques, neutral between various social philosophies, and that means are clearly separable from ends in the sphere of human action. To make explicit these assumptions is to indicate the risk involved in treating Gandhi in this way. For it is an essential element in Gandhi's thought that, in human action, means are not separable from ends. Means precede ends temporally, but the two are morally indistinguishable and, in the last

analysis, are convertible terms. Or, to put it in another way, means, according to Gandhi, are never merely instrumental: they are always end-creating and part of a continuous chain of events infused with value. And, because means and ends are convertible terms, one can, in a sense, forget about the ends and concentrate on the means—which are ends-in-view – sure in the knowledge that, if the means are pure, the ends also will be pure. To act otherwise is, in effect, to abandon one's end which then becomes a mere utopia and worse—a mental construct by which one rationalizes actions which are in fact inconsistent with it. For Gandhi, utopias should be for today, not for tomorrow – after the revolution. The real revolution is now. Referring to violent revolutionaries whose ultimate ideals he shared, Gandhi rejected their means as self-defeating. "I would use", he said, "the most deadly weapons if I believed they would destroy the system. I refrain only because the use of such weapons would only perpetuate the system."

For Gandhi, then, nonviolence is both an end and a means. But, to appreciate the full significance of treating nonviolence in this way, it is necessary to look more closely at his philosophy of action. This philosophy is composed of three main elements: Truth, Nonviolence, and Self-suffering. The three are inextricably fused together, but, if one can be considered more basic than the others, then that one would be, not nonviolence but truth. This much is suggested by the term Gandhi coined to describe his philosophy: "satyagraha", meaning literally "the firm grasping or holding on to truth". But, in Gandhi's usage, "truth" has a wider connotation than it has in English. "Satya" derives from the Sanskrit "sat" which means being and, also, abiding, actual, right, wise, self-existent essence as anyting really is, as anything ought to be. For Gandhi, "satya" embraces not only factual and logical truth but also moral truth and metaphysical truth. Truth as the ground of being and as "the substance of all morality", exists as an absolute and merits a capital T. But one important aspect of Truth is that, in life at least, it is given to people – even to those considered Mahatmas – to glimpse only faintly this absolute. The truth that people actually express, therefore, is always relative, never absolute. This limitation is inherent in the nature of life and it is because of this limitation that the search for Truth must proceed by the way of nonviolence.

The Indian term for nonviolence is "ahimsa", meaning literally "non-injury or non-harm to all sentient beings". Conceived positively, "ahimsa" would be more fittingly translated into English as the simple four letter word: "love" – except that "love" is not a simple word. If we translate it thus, we must not equate it with erotic love. The Christian concept of agapaic love, signifying good will rather than good feeling towards other persons, comes perhaps nearest to Gandhi's meaning. Thought of in this positive way, nonviolence is not to be identified with non-killing. Indeed, as a votary of nonviolence, Gandhi explicitly justified some types of killing of sentient creatures. People are justified in killing when it is necessary to sustain their bodies; when it is necessary to protect those under their care; and for the sake of those whose life is taken.

The same considerations led him to insist that nonviolence born of cowardice was not genuine *ahimsa*. Those who have not overcome all fear, including the fear of death, cannot, in his view, practise *ahimsa* to perfection. If the choice was between cowardice and violence, then the latter was always to be preferred. To practise nonviolence,



in his sense, requires the possession of several positive qualities. These include: courage in the face of violence, truthfulness of thought and word, adherence to the ideal of non-possession, and the qualities of the *brahmacharya,* meaning by that not celibacy but control of all the senses. Above all, the practise of nonviolence requires the presence of love and the total absence of hatred or any other form of ill-will to others, including one's adversaries. In Gandhi's words: "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 by dissociating yourself from him even though it may offend him or injure him physically."

Truth and Nonviolence are, in Gandhi's philosophy, intimately related. In one sense, Truth has primacy because Truth may be thought of as the end and Nonviolence, or Love, the means. And if ever one found oneself in a situation where there appeared to be a conflict between Truth and Nonviolence, one would have to place Truth first. But, since ends and means are not in fact separable, Truth and Nonviolence may be thought of as two sides of a single coin. In the search for Truth in action, one turns up the nonviolent side of the coin. Nonviolence is essential because absolute Truth is unknowable to humans: to use violence is to make the unwarranted assumption that one has achieved the absolute Truth. Joan Bondurant in *The Conquest of Violence* expresses the relationship thus: "To proceed towards the goal of Truth – Truth in the absolute sense – the way must lead through the testing of relative truths as they appear to the individual performer. The testing of truth can be performed only by strict adherence to ahimsa – action based on refusal to do harm, or more accurately, upon love. For truth, judged in terms of human needs, would be destroyed, on whichever side it lay, by the use of violence. Nonviolence or ahimsa becomes the supreme value, the one recognisable standard by which true action can be determined."

The third element in Gandhi's philosophy of action, self-suffering, is the one that, perhaps, presents most difficulty for the Westerner, despite (or is it because of?) the example of Jesus. Like the concept of *ahimsa,* Gandhi's notion of it is rooted in an ancient Indian concept: *tapasya,* suffering or sacrifice voluntarily undergone as a means to individual self-realisation. In this sense, it forms the basis of the ascetic practices we associate with yogis – fasts, strict bodily discipline, vows of chastity, and other measures of self-restraint. To many Westerners, such practices smack of masochism, but their object is not perverted pleasure but self-mastery as a step towards self-realisation. Those who undertake *tapasya* seek to purify themselves by purging away the dross of life, the material things which distract from life's real purpose. But it also has a larger meaning and purpose which are related to nonviolence in action. In this larger sense, it links up with the Socratic idea that it is always better to suffer evil than to inflict it. As Gandhi saw it, "Suffering injury in one's own person is . . . of the essence of nonviolence and is the chosen substitute for violence to others."

Tapasya plays an important role in the mechanism of satyagraha. First, it demonstrates to the opponent one's seriousness of purpose, indicates to them that one's opposition is not frivolous, and constitutes a guarantee of one's sincerity. Secondly, it shows the opponent that one is completely fearless. Since satyagrahis are prepared to suffer even unto death, their nonviolence cannot be dismissed as the act of a weak and cowardly person. In this way, the opponent is reluctantly compelled to respect the satyagrahi. And, thirdly, in Gandhi's words, "it opens the eyes of understanding". It constitutes a way of reaching the opponent's heart when appeals to the head (rational argument) have failed. By a kind of shock treatment dramatising the position of the satyagrahi, writes Bondurant, "suffering operates . . . as a tactic for cutting through the rational defences which the opponent may have built".

In this aspect of *tapasya,* there is, one may observe, a large element of faith which shows that satyagraha, in the last analysis, is a closed system, incapable of disproof. The presupposition is that "no soul is beyond redemption", that the heart of even the most wicked opponent will eventually be touched. And if satyagrahis fail to achieve this, the fault lies with the satyagrahi: the non-violence they have been practising has not been sufficiently pure. The three elements of Gandhi's philosophy of action, Truth, Nonviolence, and Self-suffering, enable us to pinpoint his contribution to nonviolent action considered as a political technique. This contribution may be expressed as the clarification of the two types of nonviolent action which I mentioned at the outset. For convenience, I shall refer to them as "satyagraha" and "passive resistance" – the latter a term commonly used to describe the technique. In outward appearance, the two forms of nonviolent action have much in common and may involve the use of similar methods, as listed by Sharp. But they differ in their inward character, in their spirit, and in their styles and manner of action.

To be specific, in the first place satyagraha is principled nonviolence. Passive resistance, in contrast, is adopted, not on grounds of principle but because one is weak – lacks the means of violence to secure one's objective – or because one recognises that, in some particular situation, the use of violent means is inexpedient, i.e. it will not be the most efficient way of achieving one's objective, and may even be counter-productive. It was this distinction which Gandhi had in mind when he contrasted nonviolence as a creed with nonviolence as a policy, and the non-violence of the strong with the nonviolence of the weak.

Leading on from this distinction is a difference about the scope of nonviolence. Because the nonviolence of satyagrahis is principled, for them – but not for the passive resister – it is something which they seek to apply to all social relationships, not merely *selected* relationships. For the passive resister, nonviolence is like a raincoat to be worn or not worn according to the state of the weather. For the satyagrahi, it is like skin, something which is perpetually renewed but never worn out or cast off. Seeking to apply nonviolence to all social relationships, the satyagrahi, unlike the passive resister, strongly emphasises what Gandhi called his "constructive programme" – measures or actions of social reform, such as the promotion of *Khadi* and the uplift of the outcastes in India, which, on the face of it, have no connection with the confrontation of the principal opponent.

A third difference may be expressed by saying that satyagraha is truth-oriented, whereas passive resistance is power-oriented. Passive resistance, although an unconventional political technique, belongs squarely in the realm of power politics. It is an attempt to use force, albeit nonviolently, to achieve one's end. The idea is to direct the power at one's disposal at the weak points in the opponent's defences, and to use it with sufficient skill to overcome them, so that they are compelled to stand down, or at least to make concessions. Passive resisters are not concerned with truth: they know, or think they know, that truth is on their side. They assume that error is all on the side of the opponent: the opponent is wrong and must therefore be compelled to acknowledge the right. The desired outcome of the conflict is, consequently, prejudged. Passive resisters struggle *against* their opponent, seek a victory *over* their opponent; and see the end result as a change of relations which will benefit themselves and *discredit* their opponent. Because power and not truth is central to their orientation, passive resisters are likely to be careless of truth in the limited factual sense. They may exaggerate the fault of their opponent and wilfully misinterpret their opponent's statements and actions; and, as a way of improving their bargaining position in the final negotiated settlement, they may state their own claims at a point higher than they are really prepared to settle for. Again, fearful of giving anything away to their opponent, passive resisters are likely to be secretive in planning and in carrying out action. If they can catch the opponent unawares, so much the better, and so much nearer the "victory". In short, passive resistance shares many of the characteristics we associate with conventional politics when we call it "a dirty game".

In contrast, satyagraha is always practised *with* opponents, not against them. The opponent may experience and define the action of the satyagrahi as a form of coercion, but coercion is not the essence of the situation. The struggle belongs essentially to the realm of moral values, not power politics. The satyagrahi seeks to transcend conventional power politics in an effort to establish a new kind of politics. No victory is sought over the opponent, but rather a resolution of the conflict which will be of real benefit to *both* sides – Satyagrahis naturally believe that they are right and their opponent is wrong, but they do not assume that truth is *all* on one side. Recognising that people can achieve only relative not absolute truth, satyagrahis maintain an open mind which is prepared to admit the valid claims of the opponent. And, although they are always ready to negotiate and to reach an honourable settlement, their posture is not that of a bargainer. They put forward proposals that they genuinely believe in and stick to them or modify them in the light of their understanding of what truth and love demand in the developing situation. Hopefully, what they seek through the conflict is a deeper realisation of the truth, a new level of understanding, by *both* parties. Since truth is at the forefront of their minds. satyagrahis scorn secrecy and manoeuvring in their actions, and they refuse to take unfair advantage of any weaknesses they may discern in their opponent's defences.

The distinction between being power-oriented and truth-oriented leads to other important differences. Passive resistance is a form of nonviolent *coercion*: it seeks to compel the opponent to do something against their will. Satyagraha, in contrast, is not intentionally coercive: it seeks always to *convert* the opponent, to persuade them voluntarily and willingly to do what is right. Since conversion not coercion is the aim, the satyagrahi is careful to choose methods which are appropriate to this aim. Methods which humiliate and harass an opponent are not conducive

to their conversion. They are more likely to generate fear, hatred and continued resistance. And even if they appear to succeed, they may well embitter subsequent relations between the parties and lay the seeds of future conflicts. Respect for the person of the opponent is essential to satyagraha, and this involves keeping clearly in mind the distinction between a person and the evil they represent.

The satyagrahi seeks to separate opponents from their evil and to treat them as people. The satyagrahi's refusal to inflict physical injury on their opponent but the willingness to accept such injury themselves is their signal to the opponent that they think of themselves as the opponent's fearless brother/sister and wish the opponent to think likewise.

In short, passive resistance is a power struggle in which nonviolence figures as a tactic and presents a negative face. Satyagraha, although it too involves struggle, is above all a search for truth in which nonviolence, adopted as a principled way of life, appears as a positive, moral force – the force of truth and love. Passive resistance, when practised skilfully, may produce favourable results, but these are likely to be limited and temporary gains, setting the stage for future conflict. When practised unskilfully, it may, like violent action, serve simply to exacerbate the situation.

Satyagraha, on the other hand, with truth as its lodestar, never fails: it is creative nonviolence leading to a constructive transforming of relationships. This transformation not only effects a change of policy but also ensures a basic re-structuring of the situation which led to the conflict. Conducted in a way that is fundamentally supportive of and reassuring to the opponent, the outcome of the struggle is always educative to both sides, and it leaves no legacy of bitterness behind.

Satyagraha and passive resistance, as I have outlined them, may best be seen as "ideal types" of nonviolence, or perhaps better, as two models of nonviolent action at opposite ends of a continuum, like the economists' models of perfect competition and monopoly. Any concrete instance of nonviolent action will, almost certainly, contain elements of both but with leanings towards one rather than the other. Even the Gandhian campaigns in India bear this out, as Gandhi came to appreciate towards the end of his life. Most of those who joined him in the struggle for independence, especially the bulk of politicians in the Indian National Congress, were passive resisters rather than satyagrahis. It is not surprising, therefore, that Congress leaders ignored what is called Gandhi's Last Will and Testament, written on the eve of his assassination. In this remarkable document, Gandhi urged Congress to disband as a political party and to transform itself into a Lok Sevak Sangh – an association for the service of the people: a constructive work organisation which would undertake the task of completing a non-violent revolution, bringing real independence to the masses of India. Power-oriented rather than truth-oriented, the politicians retained Congress and proceeded to build up a conventional nation-state relying for its defence on military force. Gandhi is still hailed as the Father of the Indian Nation, but the central message of his life has been largely ignored by most of those who have given him this label.

One final point. From the perspective of political thought, Gandhi may be seen as the polar opposite of Machiavelli, the thinker who ushers in the period of modern politics. With his conception of *real politik* and his notion of *raison d'etat,* with the end justifying the means, Machiavelli insisted that the realm of politics must be separated from the realm of ethics. Ethics has its rules, but politics too has its rules, and they are very different. Princes must bear this in mind and, as politicians, give precedence to the rules of politics where they conflict with the rules of ethics. Gandhi explicitly refused to make such a separation, insisting that there is only one realm of reality, and that "what is morally right cannot be pragmatically wrong or politically wrong or invalidated on grounds of apparent futility" (Sampson). But it is a feeble interpretation of Gandhi to see him as trying simply to put together again what Machiavelli had torn asunder. Beneath the stark differences in the thinking of the two, there is an underlying common thought: the practice of power politics cannot by any logic be reconciled with the precepts of ethics. To this Machiavelli responds: So much the worse for ethics! But Gandhi responds: So much the worse for power politics! And he proceeds to attempt to transcend power politics and to pioneer a new kind of politics – the politics of truth and love. To tough-minded politicians and to the hard-headed political scientists who legitimate the ways of politicians. Gandhi's attempt appears absurd, an impossible enterprise. But to such people Gandhi had an answer which may contain more insight than the trite formula: "politics is the art of the possible". "Our task", he said, "is to make the impossible possible by a demonstration in our own conduct". □