Profound Revolution:
Towards an Integrated Understanding of Contemporary Nonviolence

Saskia van Goelst Meijer

Saskia van Goelst Meijer (1976) finished her Masters degree in Humanistic Studies with a thesis on Gross National Happiness, linking existential questions and international development. She is interested in investigating the interface between questions of personal meaning and social justice. She obtained her PhD, with this dissertation on contemporary nonviolence, and currently works as Assistant Professor at the University of Humanistic Studies in Utrecht.

This dissertation studies nonviolence in the context of Humanistic Studies, a multi-disciplinary academic field that criticallly explores issues of (existential) meaning and humanization; the personal and social aspects of 'good living'.

From this background this study focusses on contemporary nonviolence, using this term not only to point to the absence of violence, but to that which can take its place. Nonviolence is thus understood as a substantive method to create societal and interpersonal change, and even as a paradigm.

The aim of the study is twofold. Firstly to descern if it is possible to understand nonviolence a concept independent from specific cultural, religious or practical context. Secondly to see if from such an independent notion it is possible to develop a framework for analysis and practice.

The Gandhian understanding of nonviolence is the startingpoint ot this study. However, many developments in nonviolence theory and practice have taken place after Gandhi. This dissertation studies the way Gandhian concepts have caried over, and are changed and expanded by other thinkers and practitioners and what remains the same.

From this search it is concluded that five basic elements form the core of contemporary nonviolence: satya (truth-seeking), ahimsa (non-harming), tapasya (self-suffering), sarvodaya (the welfare of all) and swadeshi/swaraj (relational autonomy). Together they point to a specific way of wielding power called integrative power, which lies at the heart of nonviolence.

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
drs. S.L.E. van Goelst Meijer
University of Humanistic Studies

PROFOUND REVOLUTION:
Towards an Integrated Understanding of Contemporary Nonviolence

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Naar een geïntegreerd begrip van hedendaagse geweldloosheid

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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Persons in power should be very careful how they deal with a man who cares nothing for sensual pleasure, nothing for riches, nothing for comfort or praise or promotion, but is determined to do what he believes to be right. He is a dangerous and uncomfortable enemy because his body, which you can always conquer, gives you so little purchase upon his soul.

Sir Gilbert Murray

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Writing your PhD can sometimes be a lonely endeavour, and even though this project often felt like a solo journey, many people offered support, encouragement and friendship along the way. My colleagues Hanne Laceulle and Isolde de Groot had

their own roads to travel but therefore understood the ups and downs of such a journey very well. Isolde, thank you for reminding me that it can actually be done! Hanne, thank you for your unrelenting support and friendship, even at the times that I was not able to respond in kind. Your time will come soon, and I'm cheering all the way!!

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In addition to academics, there is another aspect to my life, taking place in Drenthe. At the end of a road, at the end of a town, tucked away in a corner (litterally) of the country, is were my home has been for the last five years. Moving to Drenthe from what is known there as 'the West', was an adventure in itself. The start of my new life was somewhat bumpy, but whatever happened, I have been truly blessed throughout with the community that I have landed in. All the neighbours at the Nieuweweg, especially the families Habing, Walda/Schipper, and Van der Werf have been neighbours in the truest sense of the word. I often feel empty-handed in comparison, and hope that I will be able to find ways to reciprocate (although you will tell me it's not necessary).

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Living in two worlds is enriching and challenging at the same time. Although for me their continuation is so obvious it is sometimes difficult to explain one world to

another. I'm so glad that it was possible to make a small attempt at bringing them closer together. For this I have to thank my former 'buurwichie' Leonie van der Werf. At the end of the book a translation of the summary in the local dialect of (South-Eastern) Drenthe is added. Living in Drenthe means living with and in the local language since language, locality and identity are, as in many other places, closely connected. Surprisingly or not, it turned out to be quite possible to express 'formal university stuff' in a language that is often considered (by speakers and non-speakers alike) to be merely colloquial. It has brought me much joy to see this translation come into being and I hope that the two worlds that mean so much to me can through it be a bit more opened to each other. A heartfelt thank you goes to Leonie for making this happen. She put a lot of care, time and effort (carved out from her already very busy life) into this project. I hope (and am quite sure) that the new job she will soon start will provide her with many more opportunities to cherish and teach others the value of being multi-lingual within your own country.

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Sasia y Estella; niños del mundo. Gracias por ser quienes son, me hace tan feliz de verles crecer. Ustedes manifiestan un poco de este nuevo mundo global que se

está desarrollando. ¡Espero que haya contribuido un poquito a que su futuro sea bueno dentro de el!

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Saskia van Goelst Meijer
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Nonviolence, Research, Humanistic Studies

> *lesson number one from human history on the subject of*
> *nonviolence, is that there is no word for it.*
> **Mark Kurlansky (2007)**

THERE IS NO WORD FOR IT

Nonviolence has been a part of every major religious tradition and has been practised for centuries (Kurlansky, 2007; Martin, 2005; Nagler, 2004). Yet, no language in the world has a general term to express the idea of nonviolence as an authentic and proactive concept. It is only referred to as a negation of something else. Nonviolence is not violence.

In his book *Nonviolence: The History of a Dangerous Idea* Mark Kurlansky (2007) claims that this is because nonviolence is a profoundly revolutionary concept that "seeks to completely change the nature of society" (Kurlansky, 2007, p. 5) and is "a threat to the established order" (idem.). The notion, he states, has therefore been marginalized and discarded as "a fanciful rejection of one of society's key components" (idem).

Michael Nagler has a slightly different explanation. The lack of a proactive term, he says, is not due to some (conscious or unconscious) conspiracy, but to the fact that the idea is indeed counter-intuitive, yet also primordial and therefore very hard to express. He argues that in ancient literature it was quite common to refer to such profound notions in seemingly negative terms because it was felt that

> phenomena like love, absolute courage, and compassion (…) cannot be fully expressed in fallible, conditioned human language (Nagler, 2004, p. 44).

We could only point to them, by abnegating the opposite. But, he goes on to say, because this was a common practise, people would immediately understand such an abnegation as pointing to authentic and substantive. And so, the negating terminology is ancient, and although we do not understand it immediately as a positive any more, the term has stuck. But that leaves us today with the question: if nonviolence it is not violence, what is it?

Marginal concept or not, nonviolence has often been treated as something profoundly dangerous and its active proponents have been regarded as highly suspicious and as threats to (national) security and stability (Kurlansky, 2007). This might seem odd for something that is at the same time regarded as harmless and powerless.

Nonviolent action is known to invoke tremendous violence in those to whom it is directed. Examples of regimes that brutally beat, arrest, torture or kill

nonviolent activist abound.[1] Apparently, Kurlansky is right in noting that there is something deeply threatening about nonviolence. Perhaps, this is connected to René Girard's analysis that violence, and the mechanism of 'scapegoating' in which the peace and cohesion of one group is secured by (violently) outcasting specific others, are essential characteristics of human societies.[2] The violence that nonviolence provokes could well be an example of Girard's primordial violence, that is needed to maintain the social order, which nonviolence "seeks to change" (Kurlansky, 2007, p. 5). On the other hand, Michael Nagler then might also have a point with his claim that nonviolence itself is something primordial, and so different from what most people are used to that there is (certainly in contemporary languages) no word to express it.

Whatever the case, people who have actively promoted nonviolence in recent times, have stumbled over this lack of adequate terms. It caused them time and again to figure out for themselves what it means. Taken at face value, nonviolence has often been

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[1] Some striking examples can be found in the excellent documentary "A force more powerful" (York, 1999), not just of state violence in response to nonviolent action, but also in interpersonal dynamics. A clip that shows an episode from the Civil Rights Movement in the USA, never failed to shock my students (as it did me the first time I watched it) whenever I have shown it as part of a lecture. A young African-American protester, well-dressed and composed, silently sits at a whites-only lunch-counter in the Southern United States. He is part of a sit-in protest to integrate restaurants. After a few palpable moments of tension, a white customer throws his glass of milkshake at the young man after which others jump up and drag him off his bar-stool and viciously beat him up. Police, billy club in hand, watch on, later arresting the young man for his unlawful conduct (sitting at a lunch-counter). The shock is of course due to the violence towards a clearly unarmed man who is not behaving in any obviously threatening way, but also to the fact that both the police and the white customers seem to find the beating quite justified.

[2] See chapter 4 in this volume for a more in-depth exploration of Girard's theory.

understood to mean passivity, non-interference or even cowardice. To explain that this was not at all what they were getting at, practitioners of nonviolence have, in many instances, come up with their own way to describe the pro-active nature, and explain it to others in contextually relevant terms. Gandhi, for instance, coined the new term satyagraha (holding on to truth) to express his method for waging struggle. People in the Philippines used the phrase *alay dangal (*to offer dignity). But these different terms do not clear up the question as to what nonviolence is. Is one expression of it (satyagraha) the same as another (alay dangal)?

Nonviolence is still the term that is most widely used, certainly in research and in broader (international) discussion on the topic. There is something to be said for settling for this term to use in a wider context and finding context specific ways of expressing it in particular instances, because it leads each movement and person to deeply reflect on what, in their situation, is the bottom line. Noting the inadequacy of the term, I still hang on to it in this study, simply because it is the most commonly used term.

In this study I describe nonviolence in a five-fold way. The five terms that I use are not substitutes for the term nonviolence, but point to elements, or aspects of it. Because this book is a collection of independent articles, each reflecting an aspect of the study as a whole, some overlap and repetition of information is inevitable. Each article on its own needs, for example, an introduction to concepts and their specific uses, and needs to provide context for the topic at hand. Furthermore, the articles represent, at least to a

certain extent, the course of a work in progress. Notions that were in some articles not yet fully developed, are more so in others. I trust that this book as a whole nevertheless provides a complete and in-depth rendition of this study.

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. In the next sections I will describe where this study stands with respect to other studies on nonviolence or related subjects and outline the research question and purpose. Subsequently, I will discuss the importance of nonviolence for and its relation to humanism and humanistic studies. In the last section I will give an overview of the results and some suggestions for future research.

RESEARCH ON NONVIOLENCE

People have been engaged with nonviolence for centuries and during all that time people have also been developing it, thinking about it, testing it out and gathering evidence. To a certain extent this can be called research, though mostly not academic research (Martin, 2005). Research efforts have become more systematic from the 19th century onward, especially since the *satyagraha* movement led by Gandhi.

The roots of contemporary nonviolence as a method for social action lie in the work of Mohandas Gandhi, who used mass organized nonviolence for the first time to create major social and political change (Barak, 2003). Finding roots for his approach in many of the world's religious traditions as well as in the works of Thoreau, Tolstoy, the British suffrage movement and others, he acted as both a thinker and experimenter to

develop his method. His work later inspired many others to develop their own approaches to nonviolence.

Though Gandhi himself was not a scholar, his work has become the subject of much academic work. The most famous is probably the study by Joan Bondurant (1965), resulting in the book *Conquest of Violence* which later had a profound influence on the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Other important studies include work on the Gandhian approach in general (Brown & Parel, 2011; Mamali, 1998; Richards, 1991) on specific aspects of his work (Bilgrami, 2002; Gonsalves, 2010; O'Brien, 2006) and his influence on others (Ardley, 2002; Panter-Brick, 2008; Roberts & Garton Ash, 2009; Scalmer, 2011). Study has also been done into the relevance of Gandhian concepts for other fields like economics (Dasgupta, 1996; Ghosh, 2012; T. Weber, 1999, 2011), post-colonial thinking (Abraham, 2007; H. Trivedi, 2011), and ecology (Burgat, 2004; Cox, 2007; Næss, 2005a).

Most of the nonviolent movements that came after Gandhi have also received quite some academic attention. Examples include the Civil Rights Movements and the life and work of Martin Luther King (Ansbro, 2000; Bruns, 2006; Farmer, 1998; R. H. King, 1996; Roberts, 1968), the Tibetan Independence Movement (Ardley, 2002), the French Larzac movement (Alland & Alland, 2001; G. Williams, 2008) or the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka (Chowdhry, 2005; Thodok, 2005).

Although much attention has been paid in the above mentioned studies to the philosophical backgrounds and the relation between philosophy and practice, many, if not most research into specific movements is

of a sociological nature. The focus is there on questions like: who or what are these movements and what do they do? Who are the key figures? How did they develop? Examples of such research include (Chenoweth, 2011; Zunes, Kurtz, & Asher, 1999). In a similar way, research has been done into nonviolent groups, elements or episodes within large scale conflicts, revolutions or uprisings. Examples include the role of nonviolence in the Second World War (Sharp, 1959; Stoltzfus, 2001), in the collapse of the Soviet Union and other European communist regimes (Bleiker, 1993; Eglitis, 1993; Miniotaite, 2002; Roberts, 1991), in the Arab Spring (Achcar, 2013; Muravchik, 2013; Tripp, 2013) and in the Palestinian Intifada (Hallward, 2011; Hallward & Norman, 2011; Pearlman, 2011).

One of the foremost researchers on nonviolence is Gene Sharp, whose work is also used by activists all over the world. Taking a rigorous and systematic approach Sharp describes hundreds of specific nonviolent tactics (Sharp, 1973a, 1973b, 1973c) and discusses the use of civilian based defence as a viable alternative to warfare (Sharp, 1980, 1985). However, where nonviolence is a moral imperative for people like Gandhi, King or Havel, who stress that its moral framework is just as, if not more, important than the actual actions, Sharp sees nonviolence as simply more effective than warfare (Martin, 2005). The difference between these two approaches is often described as principled versus strategic nonviolence (Nagler, 2006). In Sharps strategic description, the moral framework for (the choice for) nonviolence is considered much less relevant (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993) for the outcome

and the process of a nonviolent struggle. Sharp's strategic approach to nonviolence focuses mostly on the best way to obtain the desired 'objective' outcome (for instance the overthrow of a regime). His work has been very important for understanding the working of specific tactics and for understanding the power dynamics that play a role in a nonviolent struggle. Sharp's work in turn inspired research by others (Chenoweth, 2011; Helvey, 2004; Mattaini, 2003), and forms the basis of the research and practice of the Albert Einstein Institution (Holst, 1990; McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993; Sharp & Albert Einstein Institution, 2010).

But the strategic approach to nonviolence is not shared by all. I already mentioned how most nonviolent leaders emphasise the moral aspects at least as much as the specific tactics. More recently, another aspect has been getting more and more attention, namely the psychology of nonviolence. Inspired by the principles showcased by mass nonviolence, specific interpersonal methods for change have emerged. Probably the most well known is Nonviolent Communication, developed by Marshall Rosenberg (Rosenberg, 2003, 2005). Another that also features in this study is Nonviolent Resistance to teenage violence as developed by Haim Omer (Omer, 2004, 2011; Omer, Schorr-Sapir, & Weinblatt, 2008; Weinblatt & Omer, 2008). These methods and their effects also have themselves become the subject of subsequent study (Burleson, Martin, & Lewis, 2012; Hilsberg, 2005; Lebowitz, Dolberger, Nortov, & Omer, 2012; Nash, 2007; Sears, 2010). What these interpersonal methods emphasise is the connection between action, moral conviction and the psychological

needs, skill and tools that are necessary for nonviolence. In a more general sense these psychological aspects of nonviolence have been getting attention within peace psychology. Examples of such work include (Kool, 2007; Mayton, 2009; Pelton, 1974).

Lastly, the study of nonviolence also takes place within Peace and Conflict studies (Malley-Morrison, Mercurio, & Twose, 2013; Matyók, 2011; Webel & Galtung, 2007), be it in a marginal way (J. Johansen, 2007). This is possibly related to the fact that peace and nonviolence are by no means synonymous, although they are sometimes understood as such. Many peace groups advocate nonviolence, whether strategic or principled, but the important difference with outspokenly nonviolent groups or actors is that the latter focus on the means (the way to come to social change, peace or other specific goals) and the former on the end goal of peace, which means many different things to many different people. Peace, may for instance imply the end or absence of war and violence (negative peace) or it might imply social justice, freedom and autonomy for all, or might even include efforts towards a sustainable world (positive peace) (Galtung, 1969).

Neither positive nor negative definitions of peace automatically imply nonviolence as a means to ensure peace. Nor does the term peace itself necessarily imply nonviolence. There is a big difference between third-party, nonviolent intervention or protective accompaniment as the organization Peace Brigades International (PBI)[3] is doing, and the deployment of

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[3] See: www.peacebrigades.org

armed peacekeeping forces. Yet, both aim to create peace.

QUESTION AND METHOD

According to all above cited research there is something that can be called nonviolence and which can be adopted by groups and individuals. However, it proves to be very hard to find clear and explicit definitions (Govier, 2008). This is perhaps due to the fact that most studies have focussed on specific elements, outcomes or aspects of nonviolence, on the work of specific nonviolence practitioners or thinkers. Or they have focussed on specific contexts each giving a definition that is linked with the focus of their study. Some solve this by first defining violence and then using nonviolence in its literal sense, to point to any method that does not use, or actively counters violence (Arendt, 1970; Galtung, 1969; Govier, 2008). However, with the exception of those who adhere to strategic nonviolence, for most practitioners and thinkers, nonviolence points to something more than just the absence of violence, physical force or war. Rather, it points to a substantive approach, and sometimes it is even referred to as a paradigm (Nagler, 2004). As I have touched upon in the introduction, it has proven very hard to come to a suitable term for this substantive approach, so the word 'nonviolence' is still used, though it causes confusion. The lack of a clear and generally accepted definition for nonviolence adds to this confusion.

It is my view that it is important to come to a more comprehensive understanding of nonviolence, if we are

to assess its usefulness and possibilities in different circumstances. In this research I have attempted to do so, and come to an understanding of nonviolence that does not rest on specific circumstances, but points to its universal characteristics. This has led to the following research question:

What is contemporary nonviolence?

To which the following sub-questions have been added:

Can we understand contemporary nonviolence independent of specific contexts?
Which universal characteristics of nonviolence can be found?
What do these entail?

This research question points at the formation of a definition of nonviolence based on universal elements or characteristics that can be found. Many different forms of definition exist. In this case, the research question points to a theoretical definition (Hurley, 2011). Such definitions are meant to propose a way of thinking about a phenomenon and are to an extent normative, not only descriptive. The five-fold model presented here as nonviolence should be taken as a hypothetical construct (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955) consisting of groups of related attitudes, behaviours and so on, containing surplus meaning. Thus, I do not merely attempt to point out what nonviolence is, or report how the term is used, but attempt to come to a theory that can be used for understanding and further analysis of nonviolence and can be further developed.

The research has been a literature study into the work of nonviolence thinkers, practitioners and movements. The Gandhian understanding of nonviolence has been the starting point of my study. However, even though Gandhi's work provides an important basis for understanding nonviolence, many developments have taken place in nonviolent practice and theory after Gandhi. To come to an understanding of contemporary nonviolence it is therefore important to go beyond Gandhi and also study the way the Gandhian concepts have been taken up by others. In doing so I have looked at which concepts have carried over to the work of other thinkers and practitioners and how these concepts have been developed and changed and what remained the same.

In a similar vein, although I have looked at the life and work of many thinkers, practitioners and movements, my study does not specifically focus on one of them. My question was not how each specifically understood nonviolence or practised it, but which overarching or universal elements (if any) could be found. However, in the description of my research results in the articles or chapters in this volume I do refer to many of the above mentioned individuals and movements, as examples or to clarify and explore the different elements of nonviolence.

It became clear that nonviolence understood solely in a strategic sense does not allow us to understand most of the reasoning and moral aspects that are for so many a fundamental part. I understand nonviolence here therefore in a principled sense and this study focuses on the philosophical and intentional aspects of nonviolence, within which the strategies take shape.

The aim of this study then is twofold. First is to discern if it is possible to understand nonviolence as a substantive and pro-active concept, independent of specific cultural, religious or practical contexts. And, if so, what that would look like. The second is to see if from such an independent notion it is possible to develop a framework for analysis and practice of nonviolence.

HUMANISTIC STUDIES

This research was carried out in the context of humanistic studies, a multi-disciplinary academic discipline that critically explores issues of (existential) meaning and humanization, or personal and social aspects of 'good living'. Humanistic Studies is grounded in humanism, a worldview or meaning frame (Derkx, 2015) that emphasizes the value, dignity and agency of human beings. The aim of humanistic studies is to give a theoretical and practical shape to the humanist pursuit for a meaningful life in a humane (global) society, to critically question and examine its humanist foundations and to contribute to the development of this modern humanist meaning frame (Alma, Derkx, & Suransky, 2010).

In relation to existential meaning, humanistic studies asks and tries to answer questions like: how and when do people find meaning in their life? What makes their life valuable, meaningful, appropriate? Which frameworks do they apply to determine their attitude to life and society? What happens when people experience a sense of loss of meaning? And so on.

Where humanization is concerned it studies issues concerning the fostering of more humane social relations. Questions that are asked in this context are: how can we organize social constellations and societies so that every person can have a humane and meaningful life? Can we create social circumstances that foster the experience of meaning? What would those look like? How can we address social exclusion and unequal power relations on different levels (see also Jacobs, 2002)?

The study of nonviolence is, against this backdrop an important one, I feel. I think that the theory and practice of contemporary nonviolence shares insights and a number of important normative premises with humanism. Yet, I also believe that nonviolence as I have described it in this thesis addresses some difficulties that contemporary humanism and consequently also humanistic studies are confronted with. They are mainly related to the connection between (existential) meaning and humanization. In the following section I will explore the importance of and relation between nonviolence and humanism and humanistic studies.

NONVIOLENCE AND HUMANISM

Humanism has a long standing tradition in The Netherlands is a worldview that holds on to values such as freedom and self-determination, justice, righteousness and solidarity, tolerance, appreciation of diversity and respect for human dignity (Duyndam, Alma, & Maso, 2008). Characteristics of a humanist view of life are confidence in one's own insight and powers of observation, orientation towards dialogue

and an aversion to dogmatism. It is especially since the Enlightenment that humanism is considered a philosophy of life in which the human perspective is a defining factor in the understanding of, and giving meaning to, life and to the world (Derkx, 2011).

Peter Derkx, professor of Humanism and Worldviews at the University of Humanistic Studies, tries to come to a contemporary understanding of humanism that fits the 21st century, and has elaborated on this most recently in his contribution to the Wiley Handbook of Humanism, (Derkx, 2015) and his book *Humanisme en Nooit Meer Ouder Worden* (Derkx, 2011). He posits that humanism is a meaning frame with four characteristics. The first characteristic is that humanism is a context-dependent human product. This, he states, is an epistemological tenet, which implies that from a humanist perspective, worldviews, life stances or meaning frames can't be conceived as objective or neutral positions. This implies that as far as worldviews, life stances or meaning frames are concerned, objective or neutral positions can't exist:

> No human is in a position to survey the landscape of different meaning frames from a neutral height and say how – apart from his own experience and history – life and world should be understood (Derkx, 2015, p. 2).

The remaining three characteristics are of a moral kind. The second characteristic that Derkx mentions is that all human beings are equally endowed with human dignity and ought to treat each other as such. Derkx links this characteristic mostly to individual autonomy and personal responsibility. Each individual can only

decide for him or herself how he or she wants to live, no one else can do this in his/her stead. However, when Derkx connects equality to the recognition of the dignity of all, the larger social context also becomes important. Only societies that recognise this equal dignity of all people can be called humanistic, expressed for instance through the recognition of or standing up for, human rights (Derkx, 2011). This characteristic therefore also has a political connotation and is connected to humanization (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012). Thirdly, Derkx asserts that self-development, linked to positive freedom and autonomy is a moral imperative for humanists. People should use their freedom and autonomy to develop themselves and strive to give their life purpose and meaning (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012). For the last characteristic of humanism Derkx follows Todorov (2003), in stating that humanists ought to cultivate love for specific, vulnerable, unique and irreplaceable people and make them the "highest aim of his or her actions" (Derkx, 2015, p. 5). This characteristic has both personal and political implications (Derkx, 2011). Not only do we as individuals connect to specific people in our lives, societies need to foster options for individual choice in people's lives and prevent people from harming the (options for) individual development of others.

Thus, personal responsibility, autonomy, love for unique and irreplaceable people and self-development take centre-stage in Derkx's view on humanism. This seems to point to a concept of humanism that is mainly focussed on individual well-being and good living. Although he mentions the importance of the social

aspect of humanism by stating that people's actions only get their full meaning from the responses of others and that the social element of human life is not second to the individual aspects (Derkx, 2011), the focus remains on the individual. In this definition of humanism, the equality and equal dignity of people refers to their personal, individual responsibility for their life and its fulfilment.

However, as I have mentioned above, the principle of equality implies humanization. Somehow the human rights and the equal opportunities for each to live a meaningful life, need to be guaranteed and fostered (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012). Derkx mentions that people are deeply social beings and that tensions between the individual and the social good should not be overlooked and goes on to say that it is unhelpful to think of the pursuit of personal meaning as necessarily opposed to the greater good (Derkx, 2011). However, the text says very little about how the two aspects *are* related, or about the way these tensions should be handled. That this is nonetheless an important part of humanism and something that should be worked out, is stressed for instance by Nimrod Aloni in his book *Enhancing Humanity* (Aloni, 2007).

Aloni describes four approaches to the matter of "how to be a human being" (Aloni, 2007, p. 5) that can be considered the founding traditions of contemporary humanism (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012) They are:

> (1) a classical-cultural approach which begins in ancient Greece and continues in various forms in Rome, the Renaissance, and the New Era until the

present day; (2) a romantic naturalistic approach (...); (3) an existential approach built on existential and phenomenological literature and research; and (4) the radical-critical approach that coalesced in the "counterculture" of the 60s (Aloni, 2007, pp. 5–6).

The first three traditions ring through in the description of contemporary humanism summarized above, but the fourth, the radical-critical approach does so much less. This critical approach stresses the need for awareness of and change in the existing social reality. This social reality is not neutral but rather normative and does not grant equal opportunities to all people and all ways of life. The pursuit of personal meaning takes place within socio-political contexts. Furthermore, these social realities directly and indirectly affect the ways in which people are able to pursue their personal fulfilment and lead a meaningful life. They also affect the things that count as personal fulfilment. Moreover, the self-development of one can interfere with that of another (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012). Power relations and the ways in which they are (socially) organized thus play a big role in something as private as the pursuit of a meaningful life.

In contemporary humanism as described above, the importance of social relations and human rights is mentioned and it is acknowledged that the individual and the social good can sometimes be opposed. But this seems to be a thin base, compared with the radical-critical approach that Aloni describes.

Thinkers in this radical tradition emphasize, for instance, the deep psychological effects of oppression, poverty, lack of education and lack of insight into larger societal mechanisms. These forms of deprivation harm

people's abilities "to take their fate into their own hands and act towards changing and improving the reality of their lives" (Aloni, 2007, p. 48). Central in this critical-radical tradition is not just the fulfilment of personal meaning (whether or not in relation others), but "the development of critical awareness and moral sensitivity" (idem.) and finding ways to "rationally, morally and responsibly cope with the main challenges facing humanity in the last third of the 20th century" (idem.). The critical-radical tradition stresses the necessity of social engagement and critical self-reflection, aimed not just at assessing how one's own life is developing, but how it is developing in light of that of others. Dynamics of power, opportunity and opposition are central in this respect.

The principle of equality, that has been described as a humanist fundament, implies that striving towards humanization is important as is critical reflection on the connection between humanization and personal meaning. When engaging with the search for a meaningful life, the question of what this will mean in light of humanization processes needs to be taken into account. The dehumanising aspects of personal development and personal meaning need to be assessed and addressed. Engaging with this kind of reflection makes the tensions between processes of personal meaning and self-development and processes of humanization stand out.

For one thing, when we have to make room for the meaningful fulfilment of the lives of others, our own fulfilment might be compromised. For another, striving towards the personal fulfilment of our lives is not necessarily humanizing. When different trajectories of

personal fulfilment clash, humanization seems to amount to a form of conflict management. Curiously, questions of conflict and conflict management do not really feature in the description of contemporary humanism, nor are they central to humanistic studies (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012). The perspective of nonviolence, with its emphasis on both meaning and worldview, *and* on power relations, social justice and relationality has, in my view, a lot to offer in this respect.

That this perspective is not totally new in (Dutch) humanism, can be gained from the work of Jaap van Praag, founding father of the Dutch humanist movement. His experiences in the Second World War have always been a source of reflection in Van Praag's work. Both before and after the war Van Praag was an active member of different peace organizations and emphasized nonviolence. The humanist worldview was to him an expression of his attempts to live a nonviolent life, and was connected with respect for life and human dignity (Goelst Meijer, 2012). He wrote:

> What it means to be truly human can't be understood from the individual fulfilment of existence, because man can only be fully understood as a human being in the world, between fellow human beings. Thus, the message of humanism is the enunciation of the possibility of an existence in which man, on every stair of development realizes himself through his concern with the non-self (Praag, 2009, p. 69).[4]

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[4] Translation SvGM.

As in nonviolence thinking as it is presented in this study, Van Praag's ideas expressed here a fundamentally relational view on 'what is means to be human'. Such a relational view is also described by other humanistic thinkers like Hans Alma (2005), who explain that processes of meaning giving and personal fulfilment take place in the space of a relationship between an individual and other people or the world. Confrontations with the views of others lead us to a more complex form of being human. But this relational view does not imply that these meetings with others are always easy or conflict-free. Conflicts are part and parcel of every aspect of life. But this is not necessarily a bad thing. Conflicts force us to engage with new perspectives and can ultimately help to create a more complex way of understanding reality. Humanization is then not just about the prevention or removal of conflict, but about handling or preventing its destructive aspects (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012), or in other words about 'waging good conflict' (Lindner, 2009).

HUMANISTIC STUDIES AND NONVIOLENCE

As stated above, nonviolence as it has been presented and analysed in this study is about more than the removal or absence of violence. It represents a way of dealing with social relations that both incorporates questions of meaning and of humanization and deeply relates them. For this reason alone nonviolence is of interest for humanism as a worldview and for humanistic studies as the academic discipline focussed on meaning and humanization. But there are more

specific ways in which humanistic thinking could benefit from reflection on and critique from the nonviolence paradigm. As an example, we can look at the first characteristic of contemporary humanism as stated by Derkx. This epistemological premise is very much in line with the ideas on truth and life-perspectives in the nonviolence paradigm that I have tried to capture with the term *satya*[5].

The basic premise of satya, one of the five elements of nonviolence, is that even if there might be something like an objective or ultimate reality, people can only know and understand it in a relative, contextual sense. Opposing and conflicting truth claims constitute an appeal to: "develop new and more complex conceptions and visions of reality, of different strategies of being in the world, of new forms of good living, both personal and social" (Goelst Meijer, forthcoming).[6] This connects to Derkx's statements about humanism and meaning frames in general, that these are constantly evaluated, challenged and changed by people's experiences, by applying reason and through encounters with others. To a large extent then, the first characteristic of humanism overlaps with ideas found in the nonviolence paradigm. However, a note of difference creeps up towards the end of this section of his article in the handbook of humanism.

In the plea for humanism as an 'inclusive' meaning frame it is stated that an attitude akin to the humanistic one described by Derkx can also be found within other religions and worldviews. "Some Christians, Muslims, Jews etc. are humanists because they accept the core

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[5] See chapter 3 in this volume.

[6] Chapter 3 in this volume.

humanist principles" (Derkx, 2015, p. 3). Although I think it is important to recognize that notions like personal responsibility for one's life, autonomy, love for unique and irreplaceable people and self-development can be found within every other world religion or worldview, and although I do believe that this is essentially what is meant here, I think that the claim that those who adhere to these principles are therefore humanists (regardless of their faith) is somewhat problematic. By claiming that all who adhere to these notions in their religion or worldview are therefore humanists, whether they view themselves as such or not, we run the risk of embarking on a slippery slope of appropriation.

It is perhaps noteworthy that in a different article, in the edited book *Waarvoor je Leeft* (Alma & Smaling, 2010) Derkx himself writes something along the same lines:

> Humanism is to some people a word they use to denote their own worldview and with it all kinds of things they value positively: individual freedom, tolerance, humaneness. (…). If we want to prevent that humanism becomes a receptacle of all kinds of things that we find good or bad according to our individual preferences, we should take the history of humanism seriously and depart from the most important meanings humanism has had in the past centuries (Derkx, 2010, p. 43).[7]

But the remark in the Handbook of Humanism seems to disregard that specific history. Religious believers, oriented towards personal responsibility, autonomy,

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[7] Translation SvGM.

self development and love for specific individuals (and who find motives for this within their respective religions), might not agree with or adhere to humanism as a life stance, with its specific history, at all. Moreover, in the handbook Derkx speaks not just about human*ism*, but about human*ists* and who is or is not one. Thus it becomes a question of identity. By assigning the identity 'humanist' to everyone, even those who specifically consider themselves Muslim, Jew or belonging to whichever other specific faith, who nevertheless also adhere to these four tenets, one runs the risk of stepping over their 'otherness' (Irigaray, 1996), and create precisely the receptacle he says not to want. There is a tension between the wish to define humanism as open, tolerant and dialogical as possible and at the same time define it as a very specific worldview.

As Derkx addresses in his article, humanism itself is a diversified worldview and there will be many groups who call themselves humanist, who do not agree with his definition. But, it is one thing to try and define what humanism is (even if not everyone agrees), but quite another to claim this identity for others who do not claim it for themselves.

I think that the statement in the Handbook of Humanism forgoes something that in the nonviolent paradigm, specifically in relation the notions of satya[8] and ahimsa[9] is very important. It is perhaps best described in the words of philosopher Irigaray (1996) as the recognition of "the other as other". Irigaray states:

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[8] See chapter 3 in this volume.

[9] See chapter 4 in this volume.

> Recognizing you means or implies respecting you as other, accepting that I draw myself to a halt before you as before something insurmountable, a mystery, a freedom that will never be mine, a subjectivity that will never be mine, a mine that will never be mine (Irigaray, 1996, p. 104)

I think that here the nonviolence paradigm has something to offer for thinking through humanism. It certainly offers some important insights for the academic discipline of humanistic studies, concerned with creating a just world in which all can live a meaningful life. 'Drawing oneself to a halt' is also one of the implications of the element tapasya, part of nonviolence, which is described in this study.[10] That this attitude is important in nonviolence is not only expressed by nonviolence thinkers like Gandhi, but also for instance by Evelin Lindner (2006, 2009, 2010), founder of the network on Human Dignity and Humiliation studies.[11] She explains how the recognition of limits in both action and intention are important in dynamics of humiliation and dignity. To her, humiliation and the removal of dignity form the core of violence and violent conflicts (Lindner, 2006). To safeguard the dignity of all, it is important to cultivate an attitude of humility and of something that John Koller has described as "epistemological respect for the view of others" (Koller, 2004, p. 88), *as other,* without the necessity of a claim. That this is not an easy endeavour can be easily understood from the clashes between

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[10] See chapter 5 in this volume.

[11] See www.humiliationstudies.org

different religious and cultural groups, both within and between countries the world over. But humanization is, in my opinion, connected to cultivating precisely this attitude.

That the cultivation of such an attitude is not something far-fetched, and in fact quite possible to achieve by ordinary people, prove the different examples cited in this study. But these examples also show that training, and a firm commitment to nonviolence are necessary.

In situations in which we are surrounded by others that are thinking, feeling and acting in ways that are similar to our own, the practice of making space for the other will not be so hard. Cultivating love for unique and irreplaceable others, an element of contemporary humanism, becomes a salient issue in situations of conflict, violence and humiliation. This love is not cultivated by reflection and reasoning alone, but by practice and by engaging in situations in which it is put to the test (Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012). In the theory and practice of nonviolence, as described in this study, this cultivation takes centre stage and the practical examples show that in certain circumstances, conflicts and situations of oppression can be humanised from within.

It is remarkable that nonviolence receives little attention in Humanistic Studies and that the emphasis on nonviolence has all but disappeared from contemporary humanist thinking, even though it lies at its foundation. Yet, as described above, nonviolence addresses a lot of topics that are important for humanism and humanistic studies. Both strive, from a value laden (normative) perspective for a humane and

just (global) society in which each person can live a meaningful life in dignity. Both emphasize the role and importance of an existential perspective and of worldviews and connect meaning to humanization. In nonviolence the emphasis is on concrete social (and personal) practises. It is for all of these reasons that I think nonviolence is an important and relevant topic of study for humanistic studies.

In the next section I will present an overview of my understanding of nonviolence, its five elements and how they are linked together by way of a first introduction. In the last section, I will make some suggestions for further research based on my understanding of nonviolence and on the importance and role I see for nonviolence as a topic for study in general and specifically within humanistic studies.

OVERVIEW OF RESULTS

Looking at all these different practises and analyses of nonviolence five elements stand out that are present in each account. The nonviolent approach rests on the search for truth (*satya*), the firm intention not to commit harm (*ahimsa*), aiming for autonomy and self-reliance (*swadeshi/swaraj*) while limiting oneself (*tapasya*) so the well-being of all (*sarvodaya*) can emerge. These five elements, in their Sanskrit terms originating from Gandhi's work, together form a dynamic framework, that is the core of contemporary nonviolence.

The terms were (re)conceptualised by Gandhi in a new way that made them applicable in contemporary society. As a result of all nonviolent efforts and

experience gained after Gandhi's struggle, the meaning of these terms has expanded even more. Although Gandhi mentions all five terms throughout his work, he never made the claim that they together formed nonviolence. Gandhi was not looking for a systematic framework. The term he used for his nonviolence was *satyagraha* (holding on to truth). But to explain satyagraha he referred to each of the terms.

It is my assertion that, when we analyse instances of principled nonviolence, these elements are all present. This does not mean that each individual or group working with nonviolence necessarily uses all these terms, but it does mean that the dynamics they represent are always to be found. Nonviolence, consisting of these five elements, amounts to a specific form of wielding power, best captured with the term integrative power (Boulding, 1990; Nagler, 2004).

In the following sections I will give a brief introduction to these five elements and the way in which they are linked together and come to an answer to the research question. The subsequent chapters of this book consist, with the exception of the first, of articles that each focus on one element specifically. In the next section I take some more time to address the last element, that of sarvodaya, because this element is not addressed in an article of its own.

FIVE ELEMENTS

The first element, explained more in-depth in chapter 3 of this book, is that of satya, meaning 'truth' in Sanskrit. This might seem odd because conflicting truth-claims, can and often do lead to violence. Yet,

satya points to a very specific understanding of truth, or rather to a form of truth-seeking, that prevents this.

For Gandhi the search for truth forms the essence of his work (M. K. Gandhi, 1927a). He is convinced that there was such a thing as universal truth, yet that people could only understand it in a relative sense. Gandhi wants people to examine each situation, and understand what is at stake for all involved. Although people should strive to understand the truth of every situation, one can never claim to be all-knowing. In Gandhian thought, truth is based in experience (Bilgrami, 2011a). We can experience something to be true, yet someone else can come to an opposite conclusion based on his or her own experiences. These truths cannot cancel each other out because both experiences are real. In times of disagreement, it could be that the other party sees something more of the truth than we do, even though we are convinced that we are right. This does not mean that we should give up our own ideas about the truth; it means that we allow for the possibility for both truths to exist. This would make satya an extremely relative concept, except each experience still has universal value. The experience of truth does not lead to a rule for everyone to follow, but it does lead to a rule for oneself to follow. Satya therefore implies that "we are dedicated to the truth we perceive, to the truth we understand" (Thakar, 2005, p. 20). If we live from our own truth as we understand it, setting an example, we can share our truth with others and others their truth with us (Bilgrami, 2011b; Thakar, 2005).

This element also takes a central place in the work of Václav Havel, and in this study I have focussed on his

ideas to explore satya. Havel's work shows that satya demands that we see the world as an arena where different truths meet and interact, something that he denotes with 'the logic of stories'. Both Gandhi and Havel stress that the personal and the political, the individual and the public quest to live in truth as intertwined. The personal search for one's identity and truth are done in private, but acting upon one's truth, is a public act and has social consequences. So, the role of satya in nonviolence is not just a moral imperative to 'live in truth', but a call to action, to participate in the creation of social realities that are more nonviolent.

The second element is that of *Ahimsa,* addressed more in-depth in chapter 4 of this book. Ahimsa literally means 'the absence of the intention to do harm'. Gandhi adapted ahimsa from a philosophical notion that he found to be too "negative and passive" (Parekh, 2001, p. 46) and widened it with ideas from other religions and secular thinkers that were "activist and socially oriented" (idem.). Blended they "yielded the novel idea of an active and positive but detached and non-emotive love" (idem).

Ahimsa also points to addressing harm, for instance through social service. When we encounter circumstances in which we or others experience injustice and we do not venture to remedy the situation, we are, from the point of view of nonviolence, to a certain extent complicit. Thus, acting without the intention to do harm, means addressing the problems we encounter as best we can. However, we should address the situation in a way that does not create

harm in itself. In other words, we can't fight injustice by inflicting harm on the perpetrators.

Ahimsa is that element in a process of nonviolence which calls one to make a qualitative shift in our relationship to others. Instead of hating our opponents one should cultivate goodwill and disinterested love towards all others, regardless of the attitude the other takes towards you. This means, as M.L. King has put it 'condemning the sin, not the sinner' (M. L. King, 2001). Ahimsa thus also requires satya, a search for and an understanding of the different viewpoints of others and their needs.

Whereas in nonviolence thinking this is understood foremost (though not solely) in a social way, a very similar attitude is developed in relation to the natural world, in the context of Radical Ecology. Radical Ecology is a way of thinking that asks how a radical transformation of human "being in the world" can be brought about, that would allow humans and non-human beings both to flourish. In this study I have compared the notion of ahimsa to this specific way of relating to 'the other' that Radical Ecology proposes. The shift in attitude that is proposed by Radical Ecology is not in the first place related to dealing with an antagonistic other (although nature is sometimes cast that way in western thinking), but with an 'other' that is a different life form. However, in both cases the other has a different outlook on life, and different needs for flourishing that might conflict. Although the term ahimsa is seldom mentioned in a radical ecological context, the shift in attitude it represents is very similar, amounting to "saying "yes" to all living beings" (Aristarkhova, 2012, p. 637).

The third element, *tapasya,* which is the subject of chapter 5, is usually the most difficult to grasp, certainly from a western point of view. Its most common translation in the context of nonviolence; self-suffering, brings to mind the idea that nonviolence involves accepting the violence or wrong-doings of the other without responding to them. This interpretation is linked to another common misinterpretation of nonviolence as passivity and acquiescence (Roedel, 2007). However, tapasya points to something completely different.

Tapasya implies the willingness to suffer instead of retaliating when confronted with violence or injustice and subverts the 'reasonable' idea of eliminating suffering for oneself. This breaks the cycle of violence. It is not the same as giving in. It means addressing the violence by not participating in the dynamic it calls for; fight, flight or freeze. Tapasya is thus an agent for self-transformation and strongly related to ahimsa. An example is the firm internal struggle to overcome ill will to the opponent. The removal of ill will is part of ahimsa, engaging in the struggle to do so is a form of tapasya, and so, tapasya also points towards dedication or discipline.

Tapasya is related to satya when it is understood as a means to "penetrate the heart" of those to whom we are appealing. By making the suffering visible by undergoing it openly, it becomes clear that the injustices people face are afflicted on them by other humans. That means that it can also be stopped (Tercheck, 2011), but for that to happen, the problem has to be acknowledged.

In the context of this study I have compared tapasya to the work of philosopher René Girard. To Girard violence is connected to sacrifice. However, in their writings on nonviolence, Gandhi, King and others speak of the role of sacrifice in nonviolence and the dedication of one's life to the well-being of all. The sacrifice that tapasya refers to is the creation of a situation in which the humanity of *all* people can rise to the surface, rather than adhering to self-preservation at the expense of the other.

Girard himself remains sceptical about the practical realities of a nonviolent society, but he states that it would mean "the complete and definitive elimination of every form of vengeance and every form of reprisal in relations between men" (Girard, 1987, p. 197). I maintain that this is what is meant by tapasya.

The fourth aspect is that of *swadeshi/swaraj*. An in-depth exploration of this notion can be found in the final chapter of this book, chapter 6.

Swadeshi means 'from one's own' (swa-) 'country' (-deshi), though the most commonly used direct translation is self-reliance (Cox, 2007). In a political sense swadeshi implies economic and socio-political self-reliance. For individuals it means to be as self-sufficient as possible, to have agency and self-efficacy and create the circumstances that allow you to do so. *Swaraj* means 'self-' (swa) 'rule' (raj). This can refer to political autonomy. But it also implies autonomy at the personal level. Where swadeshi points to empowerment, creating the conditions for independence, swaraj points to actual autonomy and self-rule (Jahanbegloo, 2013).

Put together swadeshi/swaraj point to something slightly different than autonomy in the traditional sense, with which it is often compared (Prabhu, 2008). Rather it points to a form of autonomy that is understood as relational. Relational autonomy departs from the premise that people are essentially social beings, whose identities develop within relations (Sherwin & Winsby, 2011) and who's autonomy is constrained and complicated by but also made possible through relationships. Swadeshi/swaraj points to a form of autonomy in which becoming fully human, fully oneself does not rest on freeing oneself from these ties (Prabhu, 2008), but is rather seen as a search for a "contextually sensitive decision making processes" (Cox, 2007, p. 114). In such a relational approach it becomes crucial to analyse the effect and role of norms, values, institutions, attitudes and beliefs to see how they help or hinder the (capacity for) autonomy development for each person (ibid.) (satya) and to then act in such a way that helps to increase the capacity for autonomous action for each (ahimsa, sarvodaya).

In this study I look at a specific practice of nonviolence to clarify this concept further: a method for working with violent and self-destructive children developed by Israeli Psychologist Haim Omer. Omer's method is to a large extent concerned with empowerment and creating circumstances in which parents (and by extension also the child) are not swept away by each other's responses. Instead they learn to deal with the violence in a way that addresses the problem, and also helps the family as a whole to function better. Swadeshi/swaraj points to such an attitude of autonomy within a web of relations.

The final aspect of nonviolence is *sarvodaya*, or the welfare of all. This is the one element that does not have a separate chapter in this book and so I will elaborate on it here more in depth.

The term sarvodaya, was coined by Mohandas Gandhi, and in his work this notion points mostly to his ideas on the socio-economical organization of India as an independent country, specifically the betterment of the poorest and marginalised. However, as with most of Gandhi's notions, sarvodaya had much wider implications (see also: Mayton, 2001). Sarvodaya points also to the desire and attempts to resolve problematic situations of conflict or injustice with literally the welfare of all in mind, even the parties that could be taken as the perpetrator of violence. The notion in this wider sense has travelled to all other modern nonviolence movements, though often under different names, as a central element of a nonviolence process.

The word sarvodaya appears in Gandhi's work first as the title of his paraphrased translation of John Ruskin's book *Unto This Last* (1921) into his native language Gujarati. Ruskin's book was to a large extent a critique of modernity, specifically of modern industrial capitalism (Parel, 2008). According to Ruskin and Gandhi, modern economic thinking made the mistake of seeing self-interest as the sole motivator of human action. It had overlooked the importance of "social affection" (Parel, 2008, p. 25). According to Gandhi and Ruskin, a healthy economy would take both self-interest *and* social affection into account. Related to this was a critique of the concept of wealth. True wealth does not consist of possessions, which hold only relative value,

according to a corresponding human capacity. A car, for instance, is only valuable to someone who knows how to drive it, or has someone around who can. People without this capacity will not see much value in a car, it will cost money for nothing. To Gandhi and Ruskin, the most fundamental capacity humans have is life itself. Hence, the essence of economics should be the preservation and enhancement of life.

> We must search for wealth not in the bowels of the earth but in the hearts of men... the true law of economics is that men should be maintained in the best possible health, both of body and mind, and in the highest honour (M. K. Gandhi, 1999a, p. 406).

Thus, a healthy economy is one that empowers and uplifts people, and is centred around their well-being in their broadest sense (Parel, 2008).

> Sarvodaya was created by Gandhi from the root sarva, meaning 'everyone' or 'all', and 'udaya' - uplift or betterment. Put together it means 'the uplift of all', or in a more wider used translation 'the welfare of all'. As the title of his paraphrased translation it pointed straight at one of the most fundamental points that Gandhi found in Ruskin's book and wholeheartedly agreed with, an opposition to utilitarianism. Contrary to the utilitarian notion of 'the greatest good for the greatest number', sarvodaya really means the welfare, uplift or benefit, of each and every person (Richards, 1991).

Sarvodaya stands in contrast to utilitarian thinking because it opposes the notion that the good of the minority can be sacrificed for that of the majority. On

the other hand, sarvodaya does not imply that the welfare of the group comes before that of the individual either. Both have to be taken equally into account, the individual and its social embeddedness are both vital for human well-being. However, it is understood that the welfare of the group consists of the welfare of its members. As Gandhi summarized one of Ruskin's tenets: "the good of the individual is contained in the good of all" (M. K. Gandhi, 1927a, p. 157). Once again, the relational view of humanity is stressed here. That this also implies a firm connection between ends and means becomes clear from the work of Glyn Richards who writes:

> The utilitarian approach, if it had been applied to the political life of India, would have led to the forcible ejection of the British on the grounds that the greatest happiness or good of the greatest number in India, namely the Indians themselves, would have resulted from it. Gandhi could not countenance such an approach because it involved rejecting ahimsa and relinquishing sarvodaya (Richards, 1991, p. 45).

In this research I use the term not in this original economic sense but as a wider notion, hinted at in the final part of the quote by Glyn Richards above. Sarvodaya then points to an attitude or a stance from which things are to be handled, namely from an attitude that is tuned to the welfare of all present in a specific situation.

One particular contemporary practice that is closely connected with nonviolence and highlights the salient aspects of sarvodaya is that of Restorative Justice (Johnstone & Van Ness, 2007; Sullivan & Tifft, 2006;

Van Ness, 2010). Restorative Justice is a practise of addressing crimes in a way that does not seek retribution (an equal amount of harm dealt to the perpetrator through punishment), but seeks to repair as much as possible the damage that is done and the re-integration of all parties (Wallis & Tudor, 2008), i.e. with the uplift or well-being of all in mind. In different terms:

> Restorative Justice aims to restore the well-being of victims, offenders and communities damaged by crime, and to prevent further offending (Liebmann, 2007, p. 25).

That this is no simple matter is affirmed by Liebmann when she writes:

> Even if goods are returned or insurance claimed or wounds healed, there are still likely to be emotional scars for the victim. The hope is that, rather than aim to simply restore what has been lost, a dialogue between victim and offender can transform the crime into something different, so that the experience can be a healing one for all concerned (Liebmann, 2007, pp. 25–26).

However, in spite of these difficulties, Restorative Justice is often proposed as a nonviolent way of dealing with crime. I cannot deal with all the complex discussions connected with Restorative Justice as they exists, nor is it my aim to discuss the topic here in such depth. I merely want to cite it as an example of a field in which solving difficult circumstances with the welfare of all (involved parties) in mind is central. The

way nonviolence has been understood in this study implies that in this context the damage done to the victim should certainly not be ignored. It does mean that a deep reflection has to take place on what 'welfare' means for each of the involved parties. And furthermore, on how a situation in which the welfare of all is fostered, can be created. This dynamics makes sarvodaya an integral part of nonviolence.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

These five elements, although here separately explored, form a coherent and dynamic whole that constitutes nonviolence. It is not enough to equate nonviolence with one of the elements. As I understand nonviolence, each of these elements have to be present, because they supplement and support each other. The five elements together form a framework which can be used as a tool for analyses as well as a starting point for formulating practice.

Nonviolence, understood in this five-fold way, implies a specific form of wielding power, for which I use, following Kenneth Boulding (1990), the term integrative power. For Boulding, from the three basic ways of wielding, integrative power is the most important in comparison to the other two; threat and exchange power, which are often together paraphrased as 'the carrot and the stick'. Integrative power is the power of and through human relationships. It is connected to everything that establishes a relation either personal or in the form of institutions or organizations. Of course, both threat and exchange power also make use of a relationship between parties,

without a relationship neither a threat nor a reward would have any bearing. Yet, the threat or reward are a tool through which a relationship is influenced. Integrative power does away away with this 'go-between' and makes use of the relation directly. In chapters 2 and 4 this concept is explored in-depth.

When we look at nonviolence as a praxis, we can also divide it into two distinct but related sections, 'constructive program' (M. K. Gandhi, 1927b) and 'obstructive program' (Nagler, 2004). Obstructive program - the various forms of protest against and non-cooperation with violence and injustice- is the most widely known part of nonviolence.

The constructive side of nonviolence points to the development of new (social) structures that embody and support the nonviolent realities one strives for. On the other hand, constructive activities can themselves become a form of protest when the creation of alternative (parallel) institutions becomes a way to circumvent those that are deemed violent or problematic. In a way, constructive program aims at structural nonviolence. Chapters 2 and 6 specifically address the constructive side of nonviolence.

Therefore, my summarized answer to the main research question 'what is contemporary nonviolence?' is that contemporary nonviolence is a pro-active and substantial mode of conduct, of which the universal characteristics are satya, ahimsa, tapasya, swadeshi/swaraj and sarvodaya, as explained above and explored in more detail in the rest of this book. Together they amount to a specific form of wielding

power, here denoted with the term integrative power. In addition, nonviolence has both an obstructive and a constructive side, which both are expressions of these five elements.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

I think it is important to continue developing theory and conducting research on nonviolence in all its aspects. Even though there are many nonviolent efforts going on around the world today (see for instance: Chenoweth, 2011), the facts and narratives of these efforts seldom reach mainstream news or research agendas. Even in a field like Peace and Conflict studies, the focus is only rarely on nonviolence. Because nonviolence is quite invisible as a distinctive phenomenon on research agendas globally, it remains in many respects quite poorly understood. I think that the development of good theory on nonviolence in all its aspects is a pressing need. Such theory should parsimoniously convey what nonviolence is. It should be able to explain occurring instances, and it should help to identify the instances when they occur. It should, furthermore, help us understand where to look and what to look for (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993) and open up new areas of research and can serve as a starting point for future practice. I have attempted to contribute to this with this research, and my suggestions for further research include the following.

In a general sense I think it is important to come to a more integrated understanding of nonviolence, both in its practices and strategies as well as in its

philosophical underpinnings, and especially on their relation to each other. Much of the research done into nonviolence has been done within specific disciplines and domains which has made it hard to come to shared conclusions and to integrate the different findings into a coherent theory. Quite likely, this contributes to the fact that nonviolence is still such a marginal subject (see also J. Johansen, 2007). My research is an attempt to come to such a more integrated understanding, however, the five-fold model of nonviolence that I have presented here should itself be the object of more scrutiny.

An integrated understanding of nonviolence would make it easier to investigate beliefs, subject claims to criticism and identify points of consensus (McCarthy & Kruegler, 1993). From such an integrated understanding, research could be more coherently structured. It could perhaps lead to the establishment of nonviolence as a specific field of study, within which different sub-areas can be identified, without loosing the opportunity for proper research accumulation and theory building. This would also be beneficial for the development of further nonviolence practices.

An integrated perspective of nonviolence would make it easier to gain insight into the relevance of nonviolence for other fields. Above, I have described the relevance of nonviolence for humanistic studies, but linkages with other fields like psychology, political theory, economics and religious studies could (and should) be more rigorously explored.

From my own perspective, I would like to stress the importance of further developing the connection between nonviolence and humanistic studies. My main

suggestions would include investigating the historic relations between nonviolence thinking and practice and the work of key figures in (Dutch) Humanism, such as Erasmus and, more contemporary, Jaap van Praag (see also Goelst Meijer, 2012; Schuhmann & Goelst Meijer, 2012), Bart de Ligt and others.

Furthermore, resilience (as a translation of the Dutch term *geestelijke weerbaarheid*, which more emphasizes the inner, mental or spiritual aspects of resilience) has been an important research topic over the past few years within humanistic studies and continues to be relevant. Nonviolence provides interesting notions for the ongoing study of this form of resilience.

Likewise, nonviolence provides a salient question for the topic of 'pluralism', which has become the focus of the humanistic research group on globalization studies. Nonviolence deals with both the importance and the problematic elements of pluralism, and does so in a way that links aspects of humanization and existential meaning. Although nonviolence, specifically stressed by the element of satya, underscores the importance of diversity and complexity and of multiple views on reality, it does not imply relativism. Epistemological respect for diversity can only be created when there is a firm will to not harm others, without stepping over one's own 'truths'. In addition, tapasya points to the willingness to 'draw yourself to a halt'. These elements exist in a tense relationship, yet nonviolent practices provide clues as to how to make them work together.

I have stressed in the section on humanistic studies above that nonviolence is an example of an approach

that links issues of meaning and humanization. It provides examples of ways to work towards humanization from an existential angle and, likewise, it provides examples of the 'humanization issues' raised by attempts to answer existential questions. Nonviolence thus could provide clues for the development of a humanistic approach to conflict handling.

Lastly, because humanistic studies is a field that combines academic study with (the exploration and development of) specific practices, it would be interesting to see how specific nonviolence practices relate to humanistic practices, such as humanist counselling or education, and if they could be relevant for each other. Specific contemporary nonviolent practices have been mentioned in this study like 'nonviolent communication', 'nonviolent resistance to violence in families' and 'Restorative Justice'. The relevance of these practices could be studied in relation to, for instance, humanist prison counselling, humanistic education and organizational practices. All these are, I think, important topics to explore further.

CHAPTER 2

Humanization and Development

Constructive Program as Structural Nonviolence?

Thanks to recent scientific developments the world has shrunk to such an extent that the echo of an incident in one part of the world vibrates in other parts with equal intensity. But at the same time increasing contact between and dependence upon different peoples and cultures has ironically widened the gap between the haves and have-nots and has opened up innumerable avenues of friction and distrust.

Razi Ahmad (1993)

HUMANIZATION[12]

The background for this article is the academic research at the University of Humanistic Studies in The Netherlands, whose interdisciplinary research program focusses on 'meaning' and 'humanization'. Humanistic studies aims at understanding and fostering a good and

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[12] This chapter is submitted as: Goelst Meijer, S.L.E. van, Humanization and Development: Constructive Program as Structural Nonviolence? To the: Journal for Peace and Justice Studies.

meaningful life within just institutions and a sustainable global society for all (Kunneman, 2002). Meaning, here, refers to existential meaning, connected with personal answers to questions like: what is the meaning of (my) life? What makes life good and worthwhile? What does it mean to be human? It refers to a personal sense of connection to the world, that one's life is part of a larger context that transcends the immediate here and now, has a purpose, a reason or value (Smaling & Alma, 2010).

Humanization, the other cornerstone of humanistic studies, is concerned with the efforts to create just institutions that make a good and meaningful life possible:

> specific for humanistic studies is that the ways in which people give meaning to their life is critically examined with regard to a just and solidary society. On the other hand the efforts towards a humane society are critically examined. An individual should in the envisioned society, be able to build a meaningful existence (Smaling & Alma, 2010, p. 12).[13]

Humanization and meaning are closely connected. Within the context of humanistic studies, it is understood that existential meaning is a vital aspect of life for every human being. Here humanistic studies is not alone, this assumption is supported by other disciplines such as religious studies and philosophy but also psychology and medicine, although not always part of the mainstream discourse (see for instance: Antonovsky, 1996; Eriksson & Lindström, 2006).

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[13] Translation SvGM

To Victor Frankl, Austrian-American psychiatrist and founder of 'logotherapy', the 'will to meaning', is *the* force that sustains life (Frankl, 1963, 1969). Frustration of this will to meaning leads to a marked loss of well-being, even illness and death. On the other hand, Frankl describes how people can sustain the most incredible hardships as long as life is experienced as meaningful. Frankl bases this conclusion on his work as a psychiatrist and on his experiences in the concentration camps of Nazi Germany. There, he observed that even though all inmates were suffering from physical exhaustion, diseases and extreme psychological stress, some managed to survive while others died, sometimes even from minor inflictions. Frankl observed a clear link between having something to live for and surviving. He stated that:

> There is nothing in the world, I venture to say, that would so effectively help one to survive even the worst conditions as the knowledge that there is a meaning in one's life (Frankl, 1963, p. 109).

From his analyses we can derive the notion that meaning is not something that becomes important when all other problems in life are solved, rather that it is a fundamental aspect of each and every human life.

In her inaugural lecture as professor at the University of Humanistic Studies, Hans Alma states that quite often existential questions are seen as problematic, and as stemming from some kind of life-crisis (Alma, 2005). A crisis can damage the sense of coherence or control that was hitherto experienced. This leads a person to question the meaning of life. Finding an answer is

necessary for normal life to take its course again. In other words, the existential question is seen as a problem that needs to be solved, and once solved the need for existential questions is removed. Alma disagrees with this idea and her views resonate with those of Frankl. To Frankl, meaning is not something that should be sought to repair a damaged life in order to go back to the 'daily goings on', meaning should be part of those 'goings on'. Both assert that the will to (Frankl) and the search for and experience of (Alma) meaning are inherently part of being human.

Recent empirical research into the role of meaning in relation to well-being, supports this. For instance, a study by Fry (2000), suggests that there is a positive relationship between the experience of meaning in life with physical and mental health and general adaptation. Fry concludes from her study that a felt sense of existential meaning helps to "ameliorate suffering, pain and physical distress" (Fry, 2000, p. 384), that a sense of meaning gives hope, and the courage to cope with difficult circumstances. This is supported by Mascaro and Rosen (2005) who state that because humans have such a powerful will toward meaning, existential meaning should be seen as a good in itself. It has intrinsic value, not just utility in the search for well-being.[14]

If the experience of meaning is so pivotal to human life, situations in which that experience is compromised could be termed dehumanizing. Dehumanization, then, comprises not only deprivation, marginalization and

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[14] Frankl takes this even further and states that well-being or happiness is not something one can strive for directly, but that it can only emerge as a 'by-product' of the search for meaning (see: Frankl, 1963, p. 140).

suffering as such, but also the subsequent damage to the possibilities for leading a meaningful life. To inhibit a person's capacity to experience meaning is then in itself a form of dehumanization. In that case humanization can be defined as *the creation and maintenance of (social) circumstances that foster a meaningful life for all*.

On the global level, international development is often perceived as an effort towards humanization, an attempt to create global circumstances that make a meaningful life possible for all. However, even though contemporary international development aid has a history of over 60 years its efforts have not succeeded to bring about humanization for all. On the contrary, it seems that the development in some parts of the worlds has come at the cost of dehumanization in other parts. In the context of development studies, there have been many discussions about how this is possible. In the early 1990s some scholars claimed that international development itself was the problem. Such statements were made by the 'post-development' school (Alloo et al., 2007; Escobar, 1995, 1999; Jenkins, 2000; Luymes, 2006; Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997; Sachs, 2010; Siemiatycki, 2005; Ziai, 2007b). Some went as far as to call development enforced modernization and economization amounting to a form of violence or dehumanization (Ziai, 2007a). Others maintain that, although efforts of development might not have always been successful, a certain level of economic development and modernization is vital for creating a peaceful society that fosters a meaningful life for all its inhabitants. In the next section I will explore

international development as efforts towards humanization.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Although some trace the roots of international development back to missionary work and colonialism (Parfitt, 2002; Thomas, 2000), twentieth century development efforts have always been closely connected to the ideal of modernization, specifically that put forth by Harry Truman in his inaugural speech in 1948. Cowen and Shenton (1996) show that development can actually be understood in two different ways. The first is that of modernization, technological and economic development. The second is the amelioration of problems caused by these processes of modernization, globalization and industrialization. In this stance, development is linked to the fight against poverty and to the improvement of living conditions in the Third World.[15]

Specifically during the 1950s development aid became a political act, linked to both decolonization and the stand-off between the eastern and the western blocks. Aid became a tool to win newly emerging independent countries over to the communist or capitalist sphere of influence. Originally, the term Third World designated those countries that did not want to join either side and sought alternatives (a third way).

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[15] Although I do realize that this term is problematic, I also realize that each term from a range of terms with the same general meaning is in some way problematic. The terms Third World, Global South and developing country each have their own history and semantic difficulties and are each prevalent in specific discourses. For this reason I have chosen in this article to use the terms indiscriminately, as referring to those countries that are mostly at the receiving end of (mainstream) development aid.

In the late 1950s and '60s, multilateral institutions and the governments of the industrialized countries began to draw up development strategies for countries receiving aid, and focussed on economic growth, modernization and the central role of development experts (Black, 2002). At the end of the 1960s, although most development countries had managed to raise their GDP at least 5%, it also became clear that the wealth was not 'trickling down'. The idea emerged that development policies needed to be revised and diversified, adapted more to local needs and become more accommodating to women, minorities and the poorest and most vulnerable in societies. By the 1970s these ideas had given rise to many NGO's, institutes, researchers, and specialists of many different backgrounds (Black, 2002). This multitude of organizations and theories notwithstanding, the desired results were reached only in a few instances (Schuurman, 1993).

When at the beginning of the 1990s the Soviet Union broke apart, the overall consensus seemed to become that modern capitalism was the path for all. Yet, a growing body of literature under the name of post-development, began to offer a radical critique to the theory and practice of international development as modernization. These theorists argued that what was needed was an alternative to development itself (Ziai, 2007a). They believed that the modernist development paradigm that has permeated society is, by its very nature, unable to create real humanization; to foster a meaningful life for all as described above.

POST – DEVELOPMENT

Post-development critique states that development is a distinct creation connected to a political and economic ideology and specific social theory. Development projects have a strong socially constructed aspect, which reflects western thought and interests. Post-development scholars like Escobar (1995, 1999), Esteva (2010), Rahnema (2001; 1997), Sachs (2010) and Rist (1997) viewed development as having invented underdevelopment. Where most other development alternatives were construed within the existing framework of knowledge and power, the post-development school tried to analyse, deconstruct and criticize this discourse.

Esteva argues that the term Development is a "very powerful semantic constellation" (Esteva, 2010, p. 11), because it refers to a natural process of growth. This view of development as a linear and teleological path entailed the creation of social evolutionist ideology, whereby 'barbaric' cultures and peoples could also become 'civilized' over time. This resulted in a problematic hierarchy of nations that are developed and thereby advanced, and those that are underdeveloped and therefore inferior. But it is only from a certain angle that such could be said:

> If one defined violent crime, racism, suicide, isolation, alienation, environmental destruction and the like as major indicators of a 'bad' or 'underdeveloped' society the industrialized countries would hardly be at the top of the 'development' scale (Ziai, 2007a, p. 8).

Post-development ideas have from the outset been heavily criticized in their own right. Some have claimed

that although post-development scholars place themselves outside the development discourse, they are themselves essentialist, viewing development as a uniform enterprise which it is not (see for instance: Nederveen Pieterse, 2010; Parfitt, 2002; Thomas, 2000). They state that the complete dismissal of development is unhelpful with regard to the problems of poverty and marginalization that are a reality for many. Yet, Ziai claims, this criticism notwithstanding, some elements of post-development thinking are by now widely accepted. The first is that the 'traditional' concept of development is indeed Eurocentric, the western society as the norm and others as "imperfect deviations" (Ziai, 2007a, p. 8). The second is that development is connected to the exercise of power. Since development is always framed as positive social change, whoever gets to define the utopian reference point is in a position of power over those who should achieve it (Ziai, 2007b). It is these utopian reference points themselves that post-development criticizes (Rist, 1997). Furthermore, states Ziai:

> Post-development authors have convincingly demonstrated that some measures undertaken in the name of 'development' had disastrous consequences for those supposed to benefit. The violence they had to suffer was directly related to their disempowerment concerning the question whether they wanted this 'development' and to the question who is in a discursive position to define the common good and to dictate what (and who) can be sacrificed to achieve it (Ziai, 2007a, p. 9).

For post-development scholars, this violence is inherent in modernization. But however convincing the arguments of the post-development school are, they do not offer an answer to the question how best to address both the violence inherent in modernity, as well as all the inequality, suffering and marginalization present in the world. Post-development thought does not offer many concrete suggestions on how to come to humanization.

MODERNITY(IES) AND STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE

Johan Galtung coined the term 'structural violence', to point towards violence and dehumanization that happens through and is inherent in social structures. (Galtung, 1969). Structural violence is not directly and deliberately committed by individuals, but rather: "shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (Galtung, 1969, p. 171). Social structures - policies, laws, cultural or religious institutions - can provide settings in which violence is committed by simply complying with the structure.

The classical theories of modernization, upon which the concept of development is based, all assume that modernity as it emerged in Europe should eventually be established globally (Luymes, 2006; Sachsenmaier, Riedel, & Eisenstadt, 2002). Development has been construed as a form of power use by post-development scholars like Escobar (1995, 1999) and Ziai (Ziai, 2007b). They see development as enforced modernization, favouring only one approach to the good life, which hampers those who do not lead a modernized life from deciding over their own future

and limits their autonomy (Rahnema & Bawtree, 1997). Since the utopian points of reference for development are decided by those who give the aid, development has become a way of 'shaping the world' according to the parameters of those who have aid to give (Habermann & Ziai, 2007). It can be argued that the aid is given by those who benefit most from the current global structures and thus have something to gain from keeping those structures intact. Post-development criticizes this form of power wielding over the third world, and calls for the (re-)empowerment of marginalized countries and groups. The question is how this is possible, since those in power will be reluctant to give it up, leaving very little room for change. To post-development thinkers many instances of development are in fact forms of violence (Ziai, 2007a).

The paradigm of nonviolence offers a critique to (enforced) modernization that is similar to that of post-development. At the same time it offers suggestions for humanization, through what is called Constructive Program. It also offers a suggestion on how to understand and counter the various forms of 'power over' that are found problematic by the post-development school. In the following paragraphs I will try to explain these concepts.

NONVIOLENCE

The roots of nonviolence as a method for social action lie in the 19th century in the works of Thoreau, Tolstoy, the British suffrage movement and others, culminating in the work of Mohandas Gandhi, who for the first time used mass organized nonviolence to create major social

and political change (Barak, 2003). His work directly inspired people like Martin Luther King, Lanza del Vasto, Dom Helder Camara and even today functions as a jumping off-point for many individuals or organizations that use a nonviolent approach. Each translates Ghandi's concepts to their own circumstances, expanding and elaborating different elements. This has led to the emergence of nonviolence as a paradigm; a coherent set of ideas that provide a framework for understanding (social) reality (Slattery, 2003). When analysing this paradigm, five basic elements emerge, that form the core of contemporary nonviolence: s*atya, ahimsa, tapasya*, *sarvodaya* and *swadeshi/swaraj*. These Sanskrit terms were re-conceptualized by Gandhi in a new way that made them applicable in contemporary society. Today, as a result of contemporary nonviolent efforts and experience gained since Gandhi's struggle, their meaning has expanded even more.[16] The five elements together form a framework which can be used as a tool for analyses as well as a starting point for formulating practice. In the following paragraph I will explore these five principles.

FIVE ELEMENTS

The first element is *satya*, meaning 'truth' in Sanskrit, and for Gandhi the search for truth formed the essence of his work (M. K. Gandhi, 1927a). To Gandhi, truth was both universal as well as particular. He was convinced that there was such a thing as universal truth, yet

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[16] Not all nonviolent practitioners used these terms, but the principles can be found in all work on nonviolence.

people could only understand it in a relative sense. Gandhi wanted people to examine each situation, to get to understand what was at stake for all involved, so as to arrive at a fuller understanding of truth. Although people should strive to understand the truth of every situation, one can never claim to be all-knowing. Bilgrami (2011a) explains how, in Gandhian thought, truth is based in experience. We can experience something to be true, yet someone else can come to an opposite conclusion based on his or her own experiences. These truths then do not cancel each other out, both experiences being real. In times of disagreement, it could be that the other party sees something more of the truth than we do, even though we are convinced that we are right. This does not mean that we should instantly give up our own ideas about the truth, it means that we allow for the possibility for both truths to exist. This would make *satya* an extremely relative concept, were it not for the fact that each experience still has universal value. The experience of truth does not lead to a rule for everyone to follow, but it does lead to a rule for oneself to follow. *Satya* therefore implies that "we are dedicated to the truth we perceive, to the truth we understand" (Thakar, 2005, p. 20). If we live from our own truth as we understand it, setting an example, we can share our truth with others and others their truth with us (Bilgrami, 2011b; Thakar, 2005).

Ahimsa, literally meaning 'the absence of the intention to do harm', implies nonviolence on the physical level, but also through words, behaviour and thoughts (Nagler, 2006). *Ahimsa* came to mean not only harmlessness in a negative sense, avoiding harm, but

also in a positive sense, as addressing 'harm' for instance through social service. When we encounter circumstances in which we or others experience injustice and we do not venture to remedy the situation, we are from the point of view of nonviolence to a certain extent complicit. Thus, acting without the intention to do harm, means addressing the problems we encounter as best we can.

Out of the five elements *tapasya* is usually the most difficult to grasp, certainly from a western point of view. *Tapasya* translates as both 'heat' and 'suffering'. The role of tapasya in nonviolence is threefold. First, it implies the willingness to suffer instead of retaliating when confronted with violence or injustice. This breaks the cycle of violence. It is not the same as giving in. It means addressing the violence by not participating in the dynamic it calls for; fight, flight or freeze. Tapasya then becomes an agent for self-transformation. An example is the firm internal struggle to overcome ill will to the opponent (Burrowes, 1996; Pelton, 1974). *Tapasya* also points towards dedication or discipline. Living according to 'truth' might require discipline which can amount to 'suffering'.

The fourth element of nonviolence is *sarvodaya*, or the welfare of all. In a particular situation it would mean the welfare of all involved in the situation. Solving any form of injustice or conflict through nonviolence means addressing the injustice, not the person committing it. In the Christian vocabulary of Martin Luther King; 'condemning the sin, not the sinner' (King, 2001). The welfare of all can, for instance, not be served if punishment for an injustice causes harm in its own right. Means and ends have to be in accordance.

The fifth element is that of *swadeshi/swaraj*. *Swadeshi* means self-reliance, being able to care for yourself, act independently. In a political sense *swadeshi* implies economic self-reliance and having your own institutions. For individuals it means to be as self-sufficient as possible, to have agency and self-efficacy and create the circumstances that allow you to do so. *Swaraj* means self-rule. This can refer to political autonomy. But it also implies autonomy at the personal level, like not giving in to impulses or habits or coercion by others (*tapasya*), not violating the autonomy of others (*ahimsa*), being able to make your own choices based on the truth as you understand it (*satya*), with a view to the welfare of all (*sarvodaya*). It is thus a relational concept of autonomy, meaning that one's autonomy can only exist in relation to that of others.[17] Taken together these five elements form the basis for a process of nonviolence.

PRINCIPLE AND STRATEGY

Nonviolence is often understood in two distinct ways: as either a principle or as a strategy (Nagler, 2006). Of the two, strategic nonviolence has been the most widely studied. Strategic nonviolence points to nonviolence as a method for struggle, which can be applied for a number of (strategic) reasons. Either because one does not condone the use of violence on religious, ethical of cultural grounds or because one feels nonviolence is

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[17] To completely explore the concept of relational autonomy here, would take too long. For an excellent introduction to the concept see: (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000) and for an in-depth exploration of its role in nonviolence see chapter 6 in this volume.

simply the most sensible method.[18] A thorough study of strategic nonviolence and the various methods that can be applied in its context has been done by Gene Sharp (Sharp, 1973b). He refers to nonviolence as a way of confronting the opponent's power by performing a form of "political Jiu-Jitsu" (Sharp, 1973b, pp. 451, 453), using various forms of protest, non-cooperation, and nonviolent intervention. What his study addresses only to a limited extent, as is true for strategic nonviolence in general, is the correspondence between ends and means and the importance of nonviolence as an attitude.

Nonviolence as an attitude, applied in all parts of life, is what is referred to as principled nonviolence (Nagler, 2006). Someone adhering to principled nonviolence would use the various strategic methods when engaged in conflict or struggle, but would in all other circumstances also try to apply nonviolence. Where strategic nonviolence focuses solely on behaviour, principled nonviolence focuses on nonviolence as a way of being in the world (rooted in the fivefold framework outlined above) from which behaviour, but also thought, speech and understanding of the world follow.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAME

When we look at nonviolence as a praxis, we can also divide it into two distinct but related sections, 'constructive program' (M. K. Gandhi, 1927b) and 'obstructive program' (Nagler, 2004). Obstructive

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[18] Possible reasons are that the opponent is much stronger, or that one cannot get the necessary weapons, or the use of violence would harm the public opinion on the cause.

program - the various forms of protest against and non-cooperation with violence and injustice- is most widely known. Yet, for Gandhi, obstructive program was only an aid to the constructive side (. Many have recognised, like Gandhi did, that it is not enough to get rid of dehumanising practices without creating something better to take its place:

> In cases where political revolutions have taken place but the population is not organized to exercise self-determination, the creation of a new society has been extremely difficult. In some cases, the usurpation of power by a new dictatorship has been the result; in others, there has been political regime change without fundamental social or economic transformation (Sheehan, 2006, p. 5).

Gandhi created a program of 18 points, all of which were to contribute to the uplift of the country (M. K. Gandhi, 1927b). To Gandhi, constructive programe meant building the new society in the shell of the old (Sheehan, 2006) and comprised the "construction of complete independence by truthful and nonviolent means" (A. Gandhi, 1997, p. 4) (. It aimed at building self-confidence among the people and at the creation of structures that would satisfy human needs in a just manner. Robert Burrowes observes:

> the constructive program is (…) designed to facilitate the development of new social structures that foster political participation, cultural diversity, economic self-reliance, and ecological resilience. (…), if new types of structures are not being created to replace the old, then even a successful nonviolent defence will

merely deliver control of the old and inadequate state structure to a new elite (Burrowes, 1996, p. 216).

Gandhi was adamant that the subjugation of the Indian people by the British was partly due to their own, miss-perceived weakness and that it was by the correction of this perception that *swadeshi* and subsequently *swaraj* would be possible.

> Given that Indians had contributed to their state of dependence and subjugation, Gandhi reasoned that they had a role to play in reclaiming home rule. India's political autonomy, according to Gandhi, depended on social and cultural reform (L. Trivedi, 2007, p. 6).

Although Gandhi's 18-point program comprised such things as access to appropriate education, promotion of health and hygiene, the use of local language, economic equality and the empowerment of women, the main focus came on the production of *khadi*, or homespun cotton. This served both a very concrete, and a number of deeply symbolic, but no less important goals. Before colonization the production of cloth had been a major village industry and Indian fabric was considered one of the best in the world. During colonial rule, it was one of the main products the British took from India. Taking back the production of cotton cloth both damaged British economic profits and made affordable cloth once again available to all Indians. Furthermore it showed that there was nothing inferior about India's traditional methods. In other words, constructive programe was aimed at creating

swaraj and *swadeshi* at the personal level, so that those could become a political reality as well.

Gandhi was not the only one for whom a constructive program was crucial. One of his contemporaries, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, for instance, started his nonviolent resistance to the British occupation of the Northwest Frontier Province by opening schools for the local population (R. C. Johansen, 1997).[19] Eventually, this developed into the organization *Khudai Khidmatgars.*[20]

> Shaped in the image of an army, but completely dedicated to nonviolence the Khudai Khidmatgars were committed to create economic, social and political change. The Khidmatgars worked completely voluntary dedicating their work to God, their oath stating that '…I am a Servant of God, and as God needs no service, but serving his creation is serving him, I promise to serve humanity in the name of God (Easwaran, 1999, p. 111).

The Khidmatgars "opened schools, worked on local development projects, promoted hygiene and sanitation, and maintained order at public meetings" (R. C. Johansen, 1997, p. 59). Women were admitted to their ranks, on an equal standing with the men. The Khidmatgars:

> did not simply vow to use non- violence in a crusade to oust the British. (…) Ghaffar Khan and his co-workers sought to help people win self-respect and human dignity through human solidarity - a solidarity

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[19] This area is part of today's Pakistan and Afghanistan

[20] Kudhai Khidmatgars translates as Servants of God

with others that would hinge on refusing to use violence against another person (R. C. Johansen, 1997, p. 59).

Like Gandhi, Khan was convinced that the Pashtuns themselves were to a large extent responsible for their occupation. [21] Not that the British were not responsible, on the contrary, their treatment of the Pashtuns was brutal and devastating. But Khan believed strongly that the blood feuds and tribal rivalry that was such an intricate part of the Pashtun culture, would have to end in order to create a healthy society. "He was convinced that the pervasive violence of his society was responsible for its inability to uplift itself" (R. C. Johansen, 1997, p. 58).

The fact that Gandhi and Khan both understood the predicament of their peoples as partly their own responsibility is an important, though perhaps somewhat problematic aspect. They did not maintain that in case of injustice it is the responsibility of the victim. What they did maintain has something to do with their view on power. To Gandhi and Khan (and later to others like Martin Luther King and Vaclav Havel) the powerlessness of their peoples is a *perceived* powerlessness. They maintain that there is another form of power that could be applied that is able to counter the power that perpetrators have over victims. They understand nonviolence as a way to harness what Kenneth Boulding (1990) calls integrative power.

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[21] Pashtuns are one of the largest ethnic groups in Afghanistan today.

INTEGRATIVE POWER

Power is often related to our ability to make others do what we want, regardless of their own wishes or interests (M. Weber, 1991). In a more general sense, Boulding states it is a way to 'get things done'. For Boulding, from the three 'faces', or ways of wielding of power, integrative power is the most important in comparison to the other two; threat and exchange power, which are often together paraphrased as 'the carrot and the stick'. Integrative power is the power of human relationships. It is connected to everything that establishes a relationship either personal or in the form of institutions or organizations. Love, respect, legitimacy and consent are all expressions of integrative power. Although it is the power that is least understood, it is the kind of power that underlies all other forms. In everyday life most forms of exercising power consist of a combination of the three faces. But there are certain emphases. Exchange power is most prominently present in anything connected to the economy, but also to everything that uses incentives (the carrot) to get things done. Yet, for instance, legitimacy and trust, both forms of integrative power, play a huge role in the stock exchange, and without regulations and the penalties to back them up production and trade cannot proceed. Threat power is present in the military, but also in anything else that uses some form of penalty to make things happen (the stick). The military symbolizes threat power, but cannot exist without exchange power in the form of money, nor without integrative power in the form of morale and legitimacy. Underlying all forms of power is integrative power. Systems and institutions can only function if

people cooperate. Even in the staunchest dictatorships, as soon as enough people stop cooperating, the system collapses.

Because all human beings exist within relationships, integrative power is open to all, even to those who are traditionally assumed to have no power. "It is this definition of power, as a process that occurs in relationships, that gives us the possibility of empowerment" (Page & Czuba, 1999, p. 3). Boulding's analysis explains why nonviolence, understood as the wielding of integrative power, can function as both a means to resist violence and a means to create new systems. When looking for alternatives to development the creation of new 'development structures' and the withdrawal of participation from those who are deemed problematic is a step in that direction. In the next section I will explore 'constructive program' as a way to do so.

The constructive work was meant to evoke this integrative power in people who saw themselves as being at the mercy of threat and exchange power. Thus, constructive program holds keys for humanization (creating just institutions that foster a meaningful life). It is a way to make it possible for people to perceive themselves as being able to wield power, even though from a certain angle they could be viewed as powerless.

CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAM AND MODERNIZATION

Inherent in constructive program, is a firm critique of modernization (A. Gandhi, 1997; Jahanbegloo, 2013; Terchek, 1998). Constructive program was meant to address structural violence, in fact one could say it is

an attempt at structural nonviolence. From the point of view of nonviolence, development as enforced modernization is indeed a form of structural violence. Not only because it disadvantages people who do not lead a modern life, but also because it enforces a way of life that favours a limited amount of aspects of the human experience (Jahanbegloo, 2013). Khan and Gandhi emphasize traditional approaches in their work, which has often led to the idea that they are traditionalists. They are not.[22] They both use and criticize aspects of modernity and tradition alike. Furthermore they use traditional approaches to the good life to criticize modernity, because modernity hardly criticizes itself. Gandhi's criticism of modernity focuses on its lack of restraints. Gandhi sees the essence of modernity as 'taking charge of the world', whereas to him the essence of the good life is to take charge of ourselves, so we are free to decide how we want to be in the world (Terchek, 1998).

In the next section I want to explore two 'alternative' development approaches that each in their own way de-link development from modernization and embody the nonviolent principles outlined above: Endogenous development and Undeveloping the North.

NONVIOLENT DEVELOPMENT?

Concluding from the analyses above, a nonviolent approach to development would resemble a constructive program, building institutions that harness integrative power. It would be foremost based on local visions of the good life, giving rise to a diversity of

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[22] For a more in-depth discussion on this matter see (Terchek, 1998)

development paths. From a nonviolent viewpoint, each develops himself or his own society or community, with a view towards the welfare of all. For this, it might be necessary to restrain certain developments of one group or person, so as not to harm or marginalize others. Both Undeveloping the North (UtN) and Endogenous development (ED) fit within this aim.

UNDEVELOPING THE NORTH

BUKO (Bundeskoordination Internationalismus, or Federal Coordination of Internationalism) originated as an overarching network of small German development initiatives. Over the years, the organization grew increasingly critical of the concept of development and its consequences. In their search for 'a truly global perspective on liberation and emancipation', 'the political and utopian points of reference' within the organization shifted (Habermann & Ziai, 2007). BUKO focussed on formulating a new kind of internationalism, in which the need and action for global change were conceptualised from both the North and the South.

> In this, they not only intended to reject the aspects of domination in modernity's promise of development, but also investigated the extent to which people in the north were complicit in it (Habermann & Ziai, 2007, p. 215).

The organization opened up to other groups, working on other themes related to social justice and global change, such as racism, feminism, immigration rights and queer issues, which it saw as inherently connected. To the participants in BUKO the implications of the

rejection of development went beyond development itself. It was connected to the rejection of a hegemonic model of understanding the world, in which a specific mode of behaviour was both explicitly and implicitly enforced (see Spehr, 1997). In this light, the dismissal of development as done by the post-development school was not enough, because it still implied that: "If development was to be implemented in the South, and it failed in the South, it is there that we should look for alternatives" (Habermann & Ziai, 2007, p. 212). But, if we are looking for a truly global perspective on humanization, opposition and change should not only come from those who are affected most negatively by the current global situation. Those who benefit should also re-evaluate the current situation and instigate change.

> Undeveloping the North refers strictly speaking not to a geographical area, but to a social order and a system of domination which is based on the unequal access and exploitation of labour and nature. (…) Undeveloping means disempowering the North, pushing back asymmetrical access and domination in all its dimensions, (…) in order to provide space for autonomous ways of living (Habermann & Ziai, 2007, p. 216).

Christoph Spehr links UtN to autonomy, when he states that the North has to be restructured so that it can become self-sufficient and does not have to lean heavily on the resources of the south as it does now (Spehr, 1996, 1997). Spehr explains that UtN is conceptualized as an attempt to curb those structures that force people(s) to give up their labour and (natural)

resources at every cost. This is something that happens throughout the world, regardless of the location. Indeed, the global North has too much intervention power vis-à-vis the global South. But UtN also involves curbing environmentally destructive practices and revaluing locally appropriate techniques and ways of life (Spehr, 1996). Likewise, it involves curbing the global sector, both through divestment as well as individual non-participation. Buying local is one example of how this can be practised. Thirdly, UtN calls for the reform of global labour and the de-privileging of formal work: reducing the emphasis on formal wage labour. This would imply the access to basic social security measures for all, loosening the compulsion to 'sell at any price' as well as rejecting the divide between formal and informal labour and the division of labour along gender lines. Fourthly, it involves radical regional autonomy, re-establishing personal and local-collective (instead of corporate) control of spaces and social relations and establishing (agricultural) co-operations catering to local needs, instead of the world market. UtN implies taking completely different viewpoints seriously, even if they are pre-modern or stem from a very specific cultural background. Likewise it implies not throwing away modern or technical solutions simply because they are modern.

UtN is not a call to return to a pre-modern lifestyle. Nor is it a romantic ideal of pure, natural, and simple living. Rather, it is a call to the reduction of coercion and the enhancement of global autonomy. It radically politicizes subsistence (Spehr, 1997). Choosing a lifestyle based on locally available resources (both natural and social) and devoid of coercion quite likely

means taking a step back in terms of available options and luxuries. Such a step back becomes a political act when taken with a view toward global development and humanization.

In other words Undeveloping the North is a radical re-imagining of North-South relations, global governance and global economic and social organization, that implies a radical restructuring of the current way of life, especially in the North. Thus, it calls for a situation in which people(s) are not forced to comply with one specific model of the good life (in moral, cultural, spiritual, economic and political sense), but rather are free to find their own models. It is an attempt at institutional diversity.

ENDOGENOUS DEVELOPMENT

Another approach that takes an alternative viewpoint on development and radically criticizes its strong emphasis on modernization is Endogenous Development. Endogenous (from within) Development refers to an approach that is based on people's own criteria for well-being and the good life (Hiemstra, 2010).

> It is mainly, though not exclusively, based on locally available resources, such as land, water, vegetation, knowledge, skills and competencies, culture, leadership and the way people have organized themselves (Haverkort, 2007, p. 31).

Although ED is based in local practices, it has "an openness that allows for the integration of outside knowledges and practices" (Röling, 2007, p. 101). The

basis of ED thinking is to take the actual and specific situations of a locality and work from there to come to solutions to problems or to open up new roads for development. Extra-local inventions are not cast aside necessarily, but are

> deconstructed and recomposed to suit local conditions, perspectives and interests, and local resources thereby become the conceptual standard against which the utility of the extra-local is evaluated (Jenkins, 2000, p. 307).

> The approach, therefore starts by looking inward to discover, recover, or invent the identity of the territory, from which resources to drive and define development can be generated (Ray, 1999, p. 259).

That this dynamic between intra- and extra local resources is important explains Gaston Remmers when he observed that in a certain project:

> The contributions of outsiders, both with respect to their knowledge (...) ideological convictions and different background, have been able to break through (...) local power structures and stimulate individual profit making.(...) It must be stressed, however, that endogenous development should also be understood as a process over which the local people have control (Remmers, 1994, pp. 148–9).

In other words, outside influences can lead to valuable innovations or provide new perspectives when old habits have become counterproductive. Yet, the decision making process and thus, the control over which outside interventions to incorporate should be in

local hands. ED does not imply non-modernization, but it does imply controlled and selective modernization and it implies taking local and traditional practices as seriously as modern ones.

ED rests on the assumption that all communities in principle have the capacity for self-determination and development. Niels Röling states that ED as an approach is especially important in terms of developing self-confidence and creating just institutions (Röling, 2007). It generates a firm idea of and being grounded in one's own potential, wishes and needs and of one's place in the world.

That endogenous development is not only suitable for countries 'in the south', proves the research done by Van der Ploeg into ED initiatives in Europe (Ploeg & Dijk, 1995; Ploeg & Long, 1994). Here also, ED developed as a response to loss of local traditions, environmental problems as a result of industrial farming and the felt loss of local cohesion. European farmers-organizations are trying to revive traditions or prevent local and sustainable practices from disappearing. The specific and very diverse styles of farming that developed over centuries to cope with ecological and social particularities were systematically eliminated from scientific farming (Haan & Ploeg, 1994; Roep & Bruin, 1994). Yes, modern farming has led to greater yields and has, from that angle, been a success. But the environmental and social "side effects" (Roep & Bruin, 1994, p. 219) are severe enough to rethink the approach. Local strategies are not only more suitable in an instrumental sense but are also deeply meaningful. "Each style of farming reflects a specific normative perspective on farm development

(how 'good' farming practices are socially defined)"
(Roep & Bruin, 1994, pp. 220–1). Furthermore, many
local practices (agricultural or other) are deeply
connected to cultural and social practices as well as
religious beliefs and views of one's place and purpose
in life.

TOWARDS CONSTRUCTIVE DEVELOPMENT?

Of these two approaches, it is most easy to construe
Endogenous Development as an example of
constructive program. It offers a pro-active approach to
development that fits the local context, from within. ED
emphasizes *satya* since part of the process is a search
for which elements of both tradition and modernity are
best suited in each situation. It emphasizes
swadeshi/swaraj in that it starts from peoples' own
ideas about the good life and the process aims to
empower people to take their own development into
their own hands, on their own terms. This itself leads to
social changes, and is a way to harness integrative
power. It is perhaps less obvious to understand
Undeveloping the North as an example of constructive
program. From the perspective of nonviolence this
approach puts more emphasis on *tapasya*, asking the
global North to take a step back. But the approach also
calls for autonomy and self-sufficiency by emphasizing
that the global North should be able to take care of
itself. The two approaches together change the view
from development as something that happens in the
Third World to something that happens everywhere and
connect the development of one county to that of
another. Thus, a global vision for development is

created, geared towards *sarvodaya*, the welfare of all. For this to happen, a drastic reform of global structures and institutions is necessary. Local self-sufficiency is something that can only be created pro-actively by the people of the locality. Undeveloping the North can therefore not be understood as merely an obstructive idea. It is also a constructive program aiming to build those (global) structures that allow for the welfare of all.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In this article I have attempted to look at nonviolence as a method towards humanization and used the example of international development, to do so. From the background of humanistic studies, which studies existential meaning and humanization I have defined humanization as efforts towards creating social circumstances that foster a meaningful life for all. International development is often seen as a humanization effort, contributing to the improvement of global socio-economic circumstances so the possibility of a meaningful life can come within reach of all. Development, as it is understood today, has a history of roughly 60 years and is rooted in modernity thinking. Development was meant to make a modern life possible around the globe. Yet, development efforts have not always been successful. Specifically from the point of view of post-development thinking, development is seen as a process of enforced modernization. Such a process has been conceptualised as a form of structural violence, systematically depriving non-modernized people(s) of the power to define their own ways of good

living. Therefore, post-development thinkers are not satisfied with development alternatives which are just different ways towards the same goal. They want alternatives to development, that can conceptualise processes of humanization from a more inclusive angle. Although some of the insights of post-development have made it into the mainstream development discussions, true alternative ways towards humanization have not emerged on a global scale. Even the post-development school itself did not formulate many concrete alternatives.

Modern nonviolence thinking is rooted in the work of Gandhi, upon which others have since elaborated through theory and action. The nonviolent approach rests on the search for truth (*satya*), the firm intention not to commit harm (*ahimsa*), limiting oneself (*tapasya*) so the well-being of all (*sarvodaya*) can emerge. Such a process is firmly connected to the harnessing of integrative power, which is connected to autonomy and self-reliance (*swadeshi/swaraj*). Like post-development, nonviolence inherently criticizes modernity. Specifically those aspects that exclude all other views of 'the good' and thus contribute to a diminishing diversity. From the perspective of nonviolence, constructive program is way to combat structural violence. Constructive program comprises autonomous and pro-active ways to create new institutions, resting on the principles of nonviolence, that allow for a diversity of approaches to the good life, specifically those that are appropriate within the local context. In a way, constructive program aims at structural nonviolence. How to envision such practices on a global scale can be seen from both 'Endogenous Development' as well as 'Undeveloping

the North', both of which embody nonviolence practices. Neither one of these approaches are presented here as a panacea. They have been tried in practice on a limited scale and each present their own problems. Yet they offer a truly alternative vision for conceptualising global processes of development so that they can become more humanizing.

The scope of this article does not leave enough room to elaborate on all discussed concepts as in-depth as they deserve, leaving quite some room for discussion. Also, further studies into the different aspects of humanization, nonviolence and their relation to development should be done. Likewise, study into the implementation and outcomes of approaches like 'Undeveloping the North' and 'Endogenous Development', and how these relate to the theoretical underpinnings elaborated above, would make the discussion more nuanced. Yet, I hope to have shown that from the paradigm of nonviolence it becomes possible to think about processes of humanization in a way that is not exclusively tied to one understanding of the good life, and why this is important from both a humanistic and a global perspective.

CHAPTER 3

The Power of the Truthful

Understanding Satya in Nonviolence Through the Work of Gandhi and Havel

The logic of a story resembles the logic of games, a logic of tension between what is known and not known, between rules and chance, between the inevitable and the unforeseeable. We never really know what will emerge from the confrontation, what elements may yet enter into it, and how it will end; it is never clear what potential qualities it will arouse in a protagonist and what action he will be led to perform by the action of his antagonist. For this reason alone, mystery is a dimension of every story. What speaks to us through a story is not a particular agent of truth; instead, the story manifests the human world to us as an exhilarating arena where many such agents come into contact with each other.

Václav Havel (1988)

INTRODUCTION[23]

Conflicting global narratives on good or right living, based on conflicting truth-claims, can and often do lead to violence. We need not look far to find examples in

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contemporary religious, ethnic or ideological conflicts that confirm this. Yet, one of the central elements in the practice of nonviolence is that of *satya*, a Sanskrit term best translated as 'truth'. In this article I will address this paradox by arguing that satya points to a very specific conception of truth, which I will explore by examining satya in the lives and work of both Mohandas Gandhi and Václav Havel. I use the term nonviolence here not only to point to the absence of violence in solving problems, but as a coherent set of ideas and practices that provide a framework for understanding (social) reality.

The roots of contemporary nonviolence lie, to an important extent, in the work of Mohandas Gandhi. Gandhi construed nonviolence, an ancient religious and philosophical concept, into a new systematic and pro-active way that made it applicable in contemporary society. He used it as a guiding principle in his own life and as a method for waging struggle against injustice and oppression. Since Gandhi, nonviolence has been a method of addressing conflicts and injustices for both large social movements, as well as for private people in interpersonal conflicts. An example of this latter case is the method of Nonviolent Communication, devised by Marshall Rosenberg (Rosenberg, 2003, 2005). Prominent examples of nonviolent social movements are the civil rights movement in the USA, the overthrow of president Marcos in the Philippines of the 1980s and the movement of Charter 77 in then Czechoslovakia, of which Václav Havel was a distinguished member. Each translates Gandhi's concepts to their own circumstances, expanding and amending different

aspects. This has led to the emergence of a nonviolence paradigm (Nagler, 2004), in which five basic elements appear: satya or 'truth', *ahimsa* or 'the intention not to harm', *tapasya* or 'self-suffering', *sarvodaya* or 'the welfare of all' and *swadeshi/swaraj* or 'authenticity and relational autonomy'.

Each of these elements is a complex and layered notion and each is equally important in a process of nonviolence. I will focus in this paper specifically on the element satya, or truth. I denote these concepts here with the Sanskrit terms originating in the work of Gandhi, because I believe these terms are able to adequately capture this complexity. I pose that satya as a central element is present in each nonviolent process. This does, however, not necessarily mean that the term satya itself is used in all circumstances. Even so, it is my claim that although in different contexts different terms are used, they point to what in a general sense can be called satya. To clarify this concept and its role in nonviolence I will start by explaining the origin of the term in the work of Gandhi and go on to compare this with the work of Václav Havel and his intellectual mentor Jan Patočka who both focus overtly on the importance of 'living in truth'.

GANDHI'S TRUTH

Satya derives from the Sanskrit root *sat* meaning 'to be'. It refers both to truth in the sense of truthfulness or honesty, and to truth as 'that which exists', or reality. Gandhi's search for truth is directed towards understanding reality at the deepest level as well as living in accordance with that understanding. This

'search for truth' formed the essence of his work. He gave his socio-political struggles the name *satyagraha*, meaning truth-force,[24] and his life was to become a string of 'experiments with truth' (M. K. Gandhi, 1927a). To Gandhi, truth is both universal as well as particular. He is convinced that there was an Ultimate Truth, but is equally convinced that people can only understand it in a relative sense. What is more, one can only find it in experience (Chatterjee, 1986).

Although Gandhi's thought is firmly based in the specific Hindu tradition of his native Gujarat, it is also shaped by elements of other religious traditions like Jainism and Christianity, as well as secular and political works of, among others, Ruskin and Thoreau (Bilgrami, 2011a). Gandhi refutes the idea that an understanding of truth and reality can come from knowing dogmas or religious or theoretical principles. Fundamental to his ideas on truth is the Jain concept of *anekantavada* or "...the many sidedness of all phenomena" (Steger, 2006, p. 342). In explaining this position, Gandhi points to the parable of the blind men and the elephant. Wanting to know what an elephant is like, the blind men gather round the animal and each examine the elephant by touching it. Every man comes to a completely different conclusion as to what an elephant is like, based on the part it was able to touch. 'The Elephant is thin and squirmy' says the one who has touched the tail; 'it is solid and steady' concludes the one who has touched the leg. None are wrong, since each has felt something that is indeed part of the

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[24] The word satyagraha was coined by Gandhi to denote his method for socio-political change. It consists of *satya*, truth, and *agraha*, to hold on to, or to firmly grasp. Literally it means 'to firmly hold on to truth', but it is mostly translated with truth-force.

elephant, but the complete elephant is all these parts put together, and more. Gandhi's satya is therefore not (solely) a notion that departs from postulates about truth. Gandhi departs from the premise that each truth "carries the conviction it does for those who experience it, and not for others" (Bilgrami, 2011a, p. 96). We can experience something to be true, yet others can come to an opposite conclusion based on their own experiences. These truths then do not cancel each other out, both experiences being real, but they each represent different facets of reality. Gandhi states:

> It has been my experience that I am always true from my point of view, and am often wrong from the point of view of my honest critics. I know that we are both right from our respective points of view. (…) The seven blind men who gave seven different descriptions of the elephant were all right from their respective points of view, and wrong from the point of view of one another, and right and wrong from the point of view of the man who knew the elephant (M. K. Gandhi, 1999c, p. 410)

Thus, to Gandhi the realization that our truths only represent facets of the ultimate truth leads him to an "epistemological respect for the view of others" (Koller, 2004, p. 88).

When we take this at face-value, it would follow that satya is an extremely relative concept, almost a matter of taste. Yet in all of Gandhi's life and work it shows that he cares deeply and that his convictions are no mere matter of taste. As said, to Gandhi satya has both a relative and a universal meaning. Understanding Ultimate Reality as plural Gandhi sees each particular

experience of truth as representing Universal Truth. Therefore each particular understanding of truth does have universal value, since it represents something of the human experience (Bilgrami, 2011a). Gandhi called people to examine each situation, to get to understand what was at stake for all involved, so as to arrive at a fuller understanding of truth. Although people should strive to understand the truth of every situation, one can never claim to be all-knowing. Therefore, in times of disagreement, it could be that the other party sees something more of the truth than we do, even though we are convinced that we are right. This does not mean that we should instantly give up our own ideas about the truth; it means that we allow for the possibility for both truths to exist.

Because Gandhi denies the possibility for any one person or group to hold absolute truth, he also denies the ability for any one person or group to pass ultimate judgement, or to create dogmatic rules that everyone should follow (Steger, 2006). Therefore, to Gandhi, satya is intertwined with another of the fundamental principles in nonviolence: *ahimsa*, or 'the absence of the intention to do harm' (Nagler, 2006). Harm, here does not only point to the effects physical, emotional or verbal violence, but is also the consequence of ill will, of negative attitudes and criticisms against others. As I will explain below, Gandhi does not mean that one should uncritically agree with all other views, what he does mean has to do with the way in which we act when confronted with a conflicting truth claim.

When we create universal principles from our own experiences it follows that others, who do not follow the same principle are wrong and deserve our criticism and

contempt. It is this attitude that to Gandhi lies at the bases of violence. When confronted with an opposing truth claim, we should not try to enforce our own view, or coerce others into taking our stand. One cannot find truth without practising *ahimsa*. In criticizing others we place ourselves and our own view above others. Instead, according to Gandhi, truth can only be found through the interaction of competing views of reality and the integration of those competing visions into a more complex notion of truth (Cortright, 2008). Similarly, Gandhi emphasizes the connection between means and ends, which he sees as two sides of the same coin. If human beings cannot have absolute knowledge, neither can they have a full conception of the 'ends' of their actions. But the means they use to get there are "certain and concrete" (Cortright, 2008, p. 215). Our means should therefore reflect our ends and that leaves *ahimsa*, acting with the intention not to harm, as the only defendable means trough which truth can be realized (Steger, 2006).

To Gandhi, satya is also about putting his own truth at the service of others, so that everyone has the opportunity to develop a deeper level of satya. Each particular understanding of truth, although not an absolute, does have universal value since it represents a part of reality (Bilgrami, 2011a). It is here that he makes the connection with the other understanding of satya, that of honesty or truthfulness. Our experience of truth cannot lead to a rule for everyone to follow, but it does lead to a rule for oneself to follow: "the very idea of principles (or doctrines) is replaced by the idea of exemplarity" (Bilgrami, 2011a, p. 118). Satya therefore implies that "we are dedicated to the truth we perceive,

to the truth we understand" (Thakar, 2005, p. 20). If we live from our own truth as we understand it, setting an example, we can share our truth with others and other truths become available to us. Since these truths are all representations of Ultimate Truth, the confrontation with other views leads to a new experience, making a deeper understanding of satya possible.

When confronted with a view that is in direct opposition to our own, or which is perceived as wrong, the only option is that of persuasion, not coercion. By completely and honestly acting upon the truth we perceive, thus presenting a different reality, we might persuade the other to change their view, or we might change our own. The other option is to search for a "mutually satisfactory and agreed-upon solution" (Bondurant, 1965, p. 195). But this can only happen if we take the experience and the truth of others as serious as those of ourselves. Conflicts are thus an opportunity to come to a higher, more complex understanding of truth, provided they are dealt with nonviolently. In other words, to Gandhi, real truth emerges in the 'in-between', in the spaces between different experiences that are related.

TRUTH TELLING IN WESTERN DISCOURSE

A lot has happened in the theory and practice of nonviolence since Gandhi. Although the direct connection with the eastern traditions and their understanding of truth is not necessarily present in each nonviolent process, the search for truth and living up to it, certainly is. Sometimes it is phrased as 'speaking truth to power'. In the practice of Nonviolent

Communication it takes the shape of looking for the thoughts, feelings and needs we have and communicating them honestly.

To investigate how this concept of truth in nonviolence, emerges in other contexts than that of Gandhi, I will explore the life and work of playwright, activist and former Czech president Václav Havel, who speaks and writes about 'living in truth' in the context of a totalitarian regime. Although Havel does not mention Gandhi in his writings, their ideas show a remarkable resemblance. Like Gandhi, Havel's aim is to 'live in truth', and like Gandhi the basis for this truth lies for Havel in experience, pluriformity, responsibility and selfless action.

Havel finds a philosophical foundation for his ideas in the work of Jan Patočka (Findlay, 2002). Patočka, phenomenological philosopher, student of bot Heidegger and Husserl, was one of Havel's intellectual mentors and together with Jiří Hájek, Havel and Patočka became the spokespersons of the Czechoslovak dissident movement around Charter 77.

This movement gained its name from the publicly disseminated document, the Charter, in which a group of dissidents demanded that the Czechoslovak government implemented the human rights it claimed to grant its citizens by signing the Helsinki Accords.[25] It

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[25] The Helsinki Declaration on Principles Guiding Relations between Participating States, was the result of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, held in Finland in 1975. Most European countries, including most communist states as well as Canada and the USA signed the declaration. The signing states promised to respect each other's sovereignty, guarantee their citizen's human rights, fundamental freedoms and self-determination and to work towards international cooperation and the peaceful settlement of disputes. Because the declaration did not have the status of a treaty, it was not legally binding. It did however become an important document for various resistance groups, specifically in communist states, on the bases of which they claimed the right to resist and speak out openly.

eventually became one things the Czechoslovak dissident movement rallied around. The charter was openly signed, eventually by hundreds of dissidents. The regime's response to the publication of what it called an anti-state document was harsh. Most of the early signatories were arrested and spent years in prison, Jan Patočka died as a result of the police interrogation (Findlay, 2002; Havel, 2011; Kohák, 1989; Pirro, 2002).

Havel is very explicit about his philosophical debt to Patočka (Pirro, 2002), stating that reading Patočka's work at an early age had been "instrumental in shaping his life" (Havel, 2011, p. xv) and that Patočka's Socratic-style lectures and seminars had been an important inspiration to the dissident movement in communist Prague (Havel, 2011). One of the areas in which Havel is inspired by Patocka is his understanding of the resistance movement as a work of philosophy – in – action (Popescu, 2012), resting on a commitment to 'living in truth'.

To Patočka, philosophy is the labour of searching for morality and meaning in experience (Popescu, 2012). Practising philosophy leads one to uncover the truth about reality, specifically the reality of human existence (Martínková, 2006). This in turn creates an imperative to take up the responsibility to act in accordance with that truth (Popescu, 2012). Part of the practice of philosophy is what Patočka denotes with the Platonic term 'care of the soul', the activity of carefully examining reality, through the practice of Socratic questioning (Chvatík & Abrams, 2011; Findlay, 2002, 2009; Martínková, 2006) to gain clarity about "what the human being really is" (Martínková, 2006, p. 64). Once

one engages with this practice of philosophy it is no longer possible to simply accept any solid certainties about reality:

> Nothing of the earlier life of acceptance remains in peace; all the pillars of the community, traditions, and myths, are equally shaken, as are all the answers that once preceded questions, the modest yet secure and soothing meaning, though not lost, is transformed (Patočka, Dodd, & Kohák, 1996, pp. 39–40).

To Patočka, care of the soul does not only mean questioning the cosmological or natural reality of human existence, but social reality as well.

> it means questioning the forms and patterns that are being transferred by society and which we have been taking for granted. It means reconsidering various alleged truths about (…) the whole moving human being in the world. It means a turn to authenticity – living from what I am and trying to find out for myself, without neglecting or hiding some unpleasant and annoying aspects (Martínková, 2006, p. 64)

Living in truth thus also means accepting the painful and problematic aspects of life, including one's finitude. In what Patočka has called a 'naïve' life it is possible to hide behind false certainties and so to overlook the problematic aspects. In a conscious life this overlooking is not possible one must face up to the truth of existence. But, says Patočka, by becoming aware, transformation happens. Human reality:

> is something that changes when we become conscious of it. A naive and a conscious situation are two

different situations. Our reality is always situational, so that if it is reflected on, it is already different by the fact of our having reflected on it (Patočka as cited in Findlay, 2002, p. 54).

Perhaps not surprisingly, Patočka's ideas show some resemblance with the work of Foucault who has on a number of occasions[26] lectured on the subject of *parrhesia*, or truth-telling as a moral and political virtue (Foucault, 1983, 2010, 2011). Both Foucault and Patočka look to Greek, and specifically Platonic, philosophy to ground their ideas on truth. At first sight, Foucault's explanation of parrhesia seems to completely overlap with Patočka's ideas when he says:

> *parrhesia* is a verbal activity in which a speaker expresses his personal relationship to truth, and risks his life because he recognizes truth-telling as a duty to improve or help other people (as well as himself). (...) the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy (Foucault, 1983, p. 5).

However, looking more closely at Foucault's explanation, some important differences become apparent that are significant, especially in the context of nonviolence. Most important is that parrhesia in Foucault's analysis is agonistic. Parrhesia has to be a form of criticism towards he interlocutor, not towards

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[26] Foucault gave two series of lectures on parrhesia in Paris at the Collège de France in January – March 1983 and in February- March 1984, and one at the University of California, Berkeley in October – November 1983.

the self, which is why Foucault connects it to danger. It is only parrhesia if the *parrhesiast* (the person who applies parrhesia) in some way runs the risk of being in danger, of losing something he values because of his criticism (a friendship, a job, even his life). And in this sense, Foucault states that parrheisia is always directed from below, from someone who deems himself able to speak the truth, to above, towards someone who holds some form of power to do damage to the parrhesiast (Foucault, 1983, 2010, 2011).

In Patočka's analysis, however, the other does not take such a central place. For Patočka, living in truth is done foremost for its own sake, because it makes life meaningful and truly human. Insights into the essence of human life compel one to take up the responsibility to live accordingly. Instead of criticism, living in truth is rather a form of selfless service. That such a life in truth often amounts to a form of criticism because it leads one to criticize existing social structures, or because it leads one to step outside mainstream notions, and that such a life is often indeed uncomfortable and dangerous, is essentially a coincidence.

Furthermore, for Patočka, direct criticism of others is problematic because the practice of care of the soul consists of an ongoing search for the essence of human reality, an ever questioning attitude (Chvatík & Abrams, 2011; Martínková, 2006; Pirro, 2002). In this sense, Patočka's 'living in truth' is closely related to Gandhi's views on satya, where Foucault's parrhesia is this not so much (see also: Steger, 2006). Especially the necessity for criticism towards the other in parrhesia, which, as we have seen in Gandhi's work, goes against

the grain of ahimsa and anekantavada, severs this connection. Gandhi replaces criticism with exemplarity, whereby one's insights to truth compel one to act in accordance with them, but do not compel others. Examples of others might lead to new insights, but these can't be enforced. Therefore, not all kinds of truth-practices can, in the context of nonviolence, be denoted with the term satya. To gain a better understanding of this idea of exemplarity in a very concrete and practical sense, we can look at the work of Václav Havel.

HAVEL'S STORY-LOGIC

One of the important ways in which Havel follows Patočka is in the belief that introspection and giving an account of that introspection through action is a way of "both doing and transcending experience" (Popescu, 2012, p. 10). Contrary to Patočka though, Havel is not an academic philosopher who strives to create a coherent and consistent theory (Pirro, 2002), he speaks primarily to ordinary people (Brooks, 2005). Havel is, like Gandhi, an activist who is foremost concerned with social change and with the application of ideas and their practical effectiveness. But his work is grounded in the practice of philosophy, of introspection, as Patočka describes it and to a certain extent he turns Patočka's abstract philosophy into a concrete way of resisting (Pirro, 2002; Tucker, 2000).

Havel starts his long career by writing plays, his philosophical and political essays follow later. Both his essays and his plays contain detailed analyses of the workings of the totalitarian system and the way it

should or could be resisted. Havel's life and work take shape in the context of the communist (post-)totalitarian regime of Czechoslovakia, after the second world war. It is this regime that creates, according to Havel, a situation that forces all its citizens to live a lie.

This lie consists of the monolithic truth the regime enforces, denying people to live in accordance with their own truths. Following Patočka, and resonating Gandhi, Havel sees this as a form of violence and he proposes 'living in truth' as a way out. The regime also uses overt violence to enforce compliance and to dispose of any possible threat. But what is much worse, Havel says, is the constant dehumanization it inflicts on every individual and on society by imposing a "monologically premised world view on a plurally constituted reality" (Pirro, 2002, p. 231).

Havel illustrates this in his essay *The Power of the Powerless* (Havel, 2009)*.* There he depicts a greengrocer who puts the slogan 'Workers of the World Unite!' in his shop window, between the carrots and onions. This poster has been given to him by the government. He puts the slogan in the window not because he believes in it or because he thinks it has any bearings on his vegetables. He hangs the slogan so he is able to survive within the system, thus perpetuating it. He is probably right, if he does not hang the slogan, he would probably lose his job. But by complying he signals to all other citizens that this is the proper way to behave, thus perpetuating the system. People, states Havel,

need not accept the lie. It is enough for them to have accepted their life with it and in it. For by this very fact, individuals confirm the system, fulfil the system, make the system, *are* the system (Havel, 2009, p. 15).

The regime, with its monolithic truth, needs people to focus on their own survival *within* the system. All pervasive as it is, the system relies on compliance. It cannot tolerate any views outside the ideology; it has no room for different lived experiences. It exist for nothing else than its own perpetuation. Were the greengrocer one day to stop behaving in the way that is expected of him, and start acting in accordance with his own world-views, experiences, truths, he would not have simply committed an individual offence, but something that has a much wider impact "by breaking the rules of the game, he has disrupted the game as such" (Havel, 2009, p. 21).

Havel, who writes not as a scholar but is most of all an author and playwright, sees this in the frame of what he calls 'the logic of stories' (Havel, 2009). Havel uses the term stories in a very specific way. To him, to monolithic truth of the regime is not a story, in fact it is the opposite. Stories, in the way Havel thinks of them, are not depictions of unified truths but present an arena where different truths and logics meet and interact. He states:

Every story begins with an event. This event - understood as the incursion of one logic into the world of another logic - initiates what every story grows out of and draws nourishment from: situations, relationships, conflict. The story has a logic of its own as well, but it is the logic of a dialogue, an encounter,

the interaction of different truths, attitudes, ideas, (...) that is, of many autonomous, separate forces (...). Obviously, the totalitarian system is in essence (and in principle) directed against the story (Havel, 1988, p. 3).

The regime, says Havel aims for the destruction of the story. And the destruction of the story, is the destruction of the human instrument of knowledge and self-reflection. Here, Patočka's insights ring through. If the greengrocer were to question the forms and patterns that are transferred by the regime, and reconsider its alleged truths, he would transform his life from a naïve to a conscious one. But Havel also shows why this ideology and the option of naivety is alluring:

To wandering humankind it offers an immediately available home: all one has to do is accept it, and suddenly everything becomes clear once more, life takes on new meaning, and all mysteries, unanswered questions, anxiety, and loneliness vanish (Havel as cited in Brooks, 2005, p. 495).

The ideology presented by the regime offers ready-made certainties to hold on to and provides an opportunity to ignore all life's problematic questions. And so, living in truth is not for the faint of heart.

Like Gandhi, Havel points to accepting the consequences of one's actions, as part of living in truth and taking responsibility. Havel's work emphasizes the ability of seemingly impotent people to break through this all-pervasive system and transform society by taking responsibility for their individuality, through

speaking about and acting upon their personal truths based in lived experience (Carey, 1992). As soon as people set out to discover their own truth and live in accordance with it, they provide others with an option to discover their own humanity in turn. To phrase it in terms of nonviolence: by presenting their own truths next to that of the totalitarian regime, they help to create a fuller picture of satya.

The main aim of Havel's writings is not to overthrow the regime (although his work has ultimately contributed a great deal to that result). The aim is to create immediate changes in the daily lives of ordinary people so that they might recover their humanity (Schell, 2003, p. 202). To Havel this humanity is found in the ability of people to explore their own stories and those of others, to live in a world of multiplicity and make choices based on their own understanding of truth and the perspectives of others, of the interactions of different logics that arise in confrontations.

CONSTRUCTIVITY

In this last section I want to focus on the wider implications of everything that has been discussed above and there are two things that I would like to highlight. One is the connection between the obstructive and the constructive side of nonviolence and the second other, related thing is the interrelation between the personal and the political sides of nonviolence.

Both Gandhi and Havel stress that the personal and the political, the individual and the public quest to live in truth as intertwined. The personal search for one's

identity and truth are done in private, although such a process is always influenced by the social context. Acting upon one's truth, especially in the form of exemplarity as I have described before, is a public act and has social consequences. This is what Havel aims to do through his writings. Framed in narrative terminology Havel's work presents a counter-narrative (Bamberg, 2004) against the monolithic narrative of the regime, providing others with a more complex concept of reality and thus the ability to live more truthful, both socially and private. Havel's example of the greengrocer makes this clear. The greengrocer does not just become a better, more sincere person himself by refusing to hang a slogan in his shop that he does not believe in, he also contributes to a fundamental change in the system. So, the role of satya in nonviolence is not just a moral imperative to 'live in truth', but a call to action, to participate in the creation of social realities that are more nonviolent.

It is important to note here that every nonviolent effort therefore includes both an obstructive and a constructive program. Living in truth as Havel describes can be an act of obstruction, disrupting the workings of a monolithic system but it can also be an act of construction, part of the creation of new structures. This requires of course an individual commitment. However, creating a more nonviolent society requires a more structural approach as well, "transforming the thinking 'I' into an acting 'we'" (Pirro, 2002, p. 233).

Constructive program[27] comprises autonomous and pro-active ways to create new institutions, resting on the principles of nonviolence, and points to "building the new society in the shell of the old" (Jahanbegloo, 2013, p. 88) and the "construction of complete independence by truthful and nonviolent means" (M. K. Gandhi, 1927b, p. 4) Although the obstructive side of nonviolence is most discussed and perhaps most obvious, for Gandhi the obstructive program was only an aid to the constructive side (Sheehan, 2006) However, constructing nonviolent social institutions is a long and tedious process and it is not something that will wield immediate, visible results and is often neglected. Robert Burrowes observes:

> if new types of structures are not being created to replace the old, then even a successful nonviolent defence will merely deliver control of the old and inadequate state structure to a new elite (Burrowes, 1996, p. 216).

That this is the most difficult part, we can see reflected also in the case of former Czechoslovakia. Samizdat writings, the creation of 'floating universities' and other such "embryonic structures independent of the state" (Uhl, 2009, p. 122) did lay a foundation for the creation of a democratic Czechoslovakia. Havel's writings had a big influence on the re-emerging of civil society and the public life (Larsen, 1994). However, these embryonic structures were not developed enough and Havel as president of the new, democratic Czechoslovakia was ultimately unable to prevent the rise of new sentiments

[27] For an in-depth discussion on constructive program, and several examples see chapter 2 in this volume.

and structures that curbed 'living in truth'. The rise of strong nationalism, even tied-up with anti-semitism (Larsen, 1994) and the rushing in of neo-liberal economics (ultimately leading to the split of Czech Republic and Slovakia) are but two examples of how the actual societal changes only paid lip service to Havel's (and Patočka's) ideas. Joanne Sheehan describes this in more general terms when she says that:

> In cases where political revolutions have taken place but the population is not organized to exercise self-determination, the creation of a new society has been extremely difficult. In some cases, the usurpation of power by a new dictatorship has been the result; in others, there has been political regime change without fundamental social or economic transformation (Sheehan, 2006, p. 5).

Yet, this does not in any way devalues the attempts of Havel or the general conclusion that satya, and 'living in truth' is a fundamental aspect of nonviolence. The importance of the obstructive side has been discussed above. The constructive side needs to gain far more importance, even centre stage as Gandhi also realized in the practice of nonviolence. But the two sides are fundamentally connected and the same principles apply for both. Robert Pirro summarizes:

> What ought to result (...) is a community of people better able to mediate personal interest and public good in both their thinking and their actions. The experience on which this political outcome of well-adjusted citizenship hinges is a state of contemplative contact with existence. And if not everyone chooses or is able to achieve this state, then those who have

must be counted on to convey its politically relevant lessons in a (…) convincing manner (Pirro, 2002, p. 253).

SATYA IN NONVIOLENCE

Conflicting global narratives, based on conflicting truth-claims can and often do lead to violence. Yet, as I have tried to show in this article the notion of truth is also central in nonviolence. However, in the context of nonviolence truth is understood in a very specific way, which I have denoted here with the Sanskrit term satya, taken from the work of Mohandas Gandhi. The role of satya in the work of Gandhi has often been discussed, but mostly as a very context specific and culturally defined notion. But as I have tried to point out in this article this element of satya can also be found in the work of other groups and individuals that engage with nonviolence, although they might not use that specific term and that it is in fact a central element. These different practices in different context expand and amending our understanding of the role of satya in nonviolence. The work of Václav Havel provides a clear example of the specific use of truth in nonviolence, from a western context.

Although he does not use the term, Havel's work shows that satya demands that we see the world as an arena where different truths meet and interact, something that he denotes with 'the logic of stories'. Satya then, does not point to a monolithic conception of truth. Gandhi has pointed out how satya is rooted in an understanding of reality as plural (*anekantavada*). It is

therefore impossible for one individual or group to (claim to) represent the complete truth.

Following Patočka, Havel's 'living in truth' shows how the search for our own truth and living in accordance with it is a way of preserving our own humanity, but also a way of helping others find theirs. Patočka, Havel and Gandhi all show that the enforcement of one truth over another amounts to a form of violence and dehumanization, in Havel's term the destruction of the story. But they also provide us with ways to prevent and resist such violence, and aim for re-humanization.

Satya represents the constant strive to come to a fuller, more complex picture of truth, based in lived experience. Conflicting visions of truth each represent facets of (human) reality. This leads to the connection with *ahimsa*, or acting with the intention not to harm. The confrontation with other truth claims and perspectives on good living provides us with the opportunity to develop new and more complex conceptions and visions of reality, of different strategies of being in the world, of new forms of good living, both personal and social. Havel's work also shows that this is not an easy road to travel and that there are plenty of reasons not to embark on it, the costs can be great. Patočka's death as a result of speaking out through the Charter 77 has on a number of occasions been compared to the death of Socrates (Chvatík & Abrams, 2011) and although Havel's life eventually took a different turn, his living in truth led him to imprisonment, censorship and harassment. Choosing for survival within the system is an understandable choice. However, in the context of

nonviolence it is precisely through giving up this understandable option that a new form of power is gained. The work of both Gandhi and Havel shows us something of how this mechanism works. I believe that in a globalizing world in which people are in an ever increasing manner confronted with conflicting global narratives on good living, the insights of Gandhi and Havel are crucial.

CHAPTER 4

For the love of all

Ahimsa in Nonviolence and Radical Ecology

*There is a difference here between proactive nonharming and
"doing nothing."*

Irina Aristarkhova (2012)

INTRODUCTION[28]

Our world is experiencing an ever growing ecological
crisis, which makes it necessary for humanity to
reshape the way it is dealing with the planet. Grave
challenges for the future of humanity and the earth as a
whole have emerged as a result of ecological and
economical conduct over the past few centuries.
According to some, the environmental crisis is
intertwined with other crises (financial, social,
political), which has led both scholars and activists to
call for a fundamental change in the global paradigm.
Where socio-political change is concerned, part of this
paradigm change has been attempted through
nonviolence. Pioneered as a method in the early 20th
century by Mohandas Gandhi for addressing injustice,

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[28] This chapter is submitted as: Goelst Meijer, S.L.E. van, For the Love of All: Ahimsa in
Nonviolence and Radical Ecology, to: Environmental Philosophy.

it has since been taken up by many more individuals and organisations around the world. Nonviolence practices and notions can also be found in certain streams of ecology. One central element in the method of nonviolence is ahimsa, 'the absence of the intention to do harm'. In this article I will explore both ahimsa and radical ecology, to both explain the role and significance of ahimsa in nonviolence and to see if and how the two notions can clarify and supplement each other.

Since the second half of the twentieth century, concern for the state of the environment has grown exponentially. Humanity is increasingly confronted with the growing negative ecological effects of its actions. Various forms of pollution have proved very hard to clean up (Conway & Pretty, 2013; Metcalfe & Derwent, 2005; Meuser, 2010; Whitacre, 2007), and the depletion of resources (Kröger, 2013), loss of biodiversity (Dronamraju, 2008; Naeem, Bunker, & Hector, 2009; O'Riordan & Stoll-Kleemann, 2002), global warming, climate change and rising ocean levels (Maslin, 2004; Metcalfe & Derwent, 2005; Scott-Cato & Hillier, 2010; Shiva, 2008) can't reasonably be overlooked anymore. This has led to the emergence of many global environmental organizations (Curran, 2006; Haigh, 2002; Merchant, 2005; Shiva, 1988; L. Williams, Roberts, & McIntosh, 2011), the emergence of green political parties throughout the world (Bomberg, 1998; Goodin, 2013) and multilateral initiatives to take action. But the views on *how* to address these problems vary widely (Bomberg, 1998;

Goodin, 2013; Rogelj et al., 2010; Wulfhorst & Haugestad, 2006; Zimmerman, 1997).

In the view of some, solving environmental problems is seen as incompatible with solving human social problems, of which there are also many (Tanner & Horn-Phathanothai, 2014). Solving global problems then becomes a choice between addressing social issues (famine, war, diseases) or ecological problems. However, in other views both kinds of problems are seen as deeply interrelated and is it argued that real solutions can only be created through a comprehensive global paradigm shift in which humanity transforms the way it deals with the planet and all its inhabitants (Bronner, 2002; Merchant, 2005; Zimmerman, 1997). Radical Ecology is one stream of thought that takes the latter view.

The term 'Radical Ecology' might conjure up images of activists chained to oil platforms, settling themselves in tree tops to save the redwoods or committing nightly break-ins into laboratories to free the guinea pigs. Although some activists and organizations like Earth First!, Greenpeace or the Dutch Milieudefensie (Environmental Defence) certainly place themselves within the scope of Radical Ecology, my focus here is on radical ecological *thinking* and the philosophical framework it provides (Zimmerman, 1997).

Radical Ecology is premised on the idea that a fundamental transformation is needed in order to deal with the current ecological crisis (Birkeland, 1993; Merchant, 2005). This transformation concerns the relationship between the human and the non-human world, and in addition, humanity's relationship with itself (Birkeland, 1993). The term 'radical' points to the

desire for a paradigm shift that changes "the cultural and institutional infrastructure - our frameworks of thinking, relating, and acting" (Birkeland, 1993, p. 15).

It can be argued that in western thinking radical ecological thought started in earnest with the advent of Deep Ecology, though earlier traces can be found for instance in the work of Thoreau (Thoreau, 2004; Thoreau & Moldenhauer, 2004a, 2004b), Emerson (Emerson, 2009) and Aldo Leopold (Knight & Riedel, 2002; Leopold, 1970; Lorbiecki, 2011). In addition to Deep Ecology, radical ecological thinking is informed by Ecofeminism (Birkeland, 1993; Gaard, 1993; Ruether, 2005; Twine, 2001) and Social Ecology (Bookchin, 1982; Pepper, 1993) and also by certain religious views (Abdul-Matin, 2010; Ruether, 2005; Setia, 2007). What unifies these streams of thought is a sense that a radically different way of seeing, valuing and relating to the natural environment is necessary in order to turn the current ecological crisis around.

A very similar paradigm shift, that calls for a transformation of humanity's relationship with itself and its place in the world is deemed necessary from the perspective of nonviolence (Nagler, 2004). I use the term nonviolence here not only to point to the absence of violence in solving problems, but as a coherent set of ideas and practices that provide a framework for understanding (social) reality. This nonviolence paradigm mostly focusses on socio-political change, but its visions for alternative ways of relating, of organizing and of being in the world have profound implications for our ways of dealing with the environment (Moolakkattu, 2010; Sasikala, 2012).

The roots of contemporary nonviolence lie, to an important extent, in the work of Mohandas Gandhi, who construed nonviolence, an ancient religious and philosophical concept, into a new systematic and pro-active way that made it applicable in modern society. When we look at this paradigm, we can see five basic elements emerge that together form the core of nonviolence: *satya* or 'truth-seeking', *ahimsa* or 'the intention not to harm', *tapasya* or 'self-suffering', *sarvodaya* or 'the welfare of all' and *swadeshi/swaraj* or 'authenticity and autonomy'. Each of these elements is a complex and layered notion and each is equally important in nonviolence. I will focus in this paper specifically on ahimsa.

I will argue here that ahimsa consists of a conscious change in the way we relate to 'the other' and deal with 'otherness'. Ahimsa denotes an attitude towards others in which we make every effort not to harm their chances of 'being', their dignity and chances for self-development. Whereas in nonviolence thinking this is usually (though not solely) understood in a social way, in Radical Ecology a very similar attitude is developed in relation to the natural world. Radical Ecological thinking can help to clarify the fundamental shift towards 'the other' that ahimsa represents. On the other hand, Radical Ecology is sometimes accused of taking a misanthropic stance (Zimmerman, 1997). The notion of ahimsa points to an attitude of non-harming towards the other, but one that is fundamentally bound up with an attitude of non-harming towards oneself, because it departs from a relational view of reality. Thus, ahimsa shows that such a misanthropic stance is

ultimately counterproductive in the search for a way of living that allows room for all different ways of 'being'. To explore this point further I will start with a general overview of Radical Ecology in the next section, after which I will explore the notion of ahimsa and, ultimately, what they mean in relation to each other.

RADICAL ECOLOGY

As mentioned above, it can be argued that Radical Ecology started, at least in a western context with Deep Ecology, rooted in the environmental thinking of Norwegian philosopher Arne Næss (2005c; 2008). In addition, Ecofeminism and Social Ecology, which both to a certain extent consist of a critique to Deep Ecology have a major role in radical ecological thinking. In this section I will explore these three thought streams more in depth to see how they constitute Radical Ecology as a movement that searches for radically different way of seeing, valuing and relating to the natural environment.

Deep Ecology emerges in Arne Næss's work in contrast to 'shallow ecology'. The shallow approach to ecology consist according to Næss of an attempt to solve environmental problems through legal, technical and institutional solutions that focus on short term results and do not question the core values of modern industrial society (Besthorn, 2012; Haigh, 2002; Lane, 2006; Merchant, 2005). Furthermore, in shallow approaches, environmental degradation is seen as problematic only as far as it has an impact on human well-being (Besthorn, 2012). Instead, in Næss's thinking the focus is on the relationships between humans and the ecological systems of which they are

part, and rests on the idea that each element in these ecological systems has intrinsic value:

> The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves (…). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes (Næss, Rothenberg, & Næss, 1989, p. 29).

His idea of intrinsic value is rooted in the notion that all beings are deeply and interdependently related, and are all part of a greater whole. This interrelatedness is understood here in a very specific way. Neil Evernden explains:

> To the western mind, interrelated implies a causal connectedness. Things are interrelated if a change in one affects the other. So to say that all things are interrelated simply implies that if we wish to develop our "resources," we must find some technological means to defuse the interaction. (…) But what is actually involved is a genuine intermingling of parts of the ecosystem. There are no discrete entities (Evernden, 1996, p. 16).

Because all beings, including humans, are seen as integrated parts of a bigger whole, their worth cannot be reduced to a function of another's well-being. All have intrinsic worth and the 'right' to flourish as they are. Therefore, humans, like all other beings, should live in a way that does not harm other's chances for well-being and self-development (Besthorn, 2012). Næss dismisses the idea of a hierarchy in which humans have the right to control or dominate nature and use it as they see fit. Doing so would harm the

integrity of other life forms and thus the ecological system of which humans also are a part. This would also amount to harm to humans themselves (Besthorn, 2012). Thus, Deep Ecology is concerned with creating 'ecological justice', a situation in which all life forms are able to flourish in their own ways. For this to happen, according to Næss, we need to make a shift from an anthropocentric to an ecocentric view of the world (Drengson & Devall, 2010). To Næss, this begins with the shift from a concept of a personal self to that of an ecological self (Haigh, 2002). As can be seen from Evernden's quote above, if one takes genuine interrelatedness as a starting point, one has to give up, at least to a certain extent the idea of separateness. To Næss this implies giving up the idea of a separate self and replacing it with an ecological concept of self (Devall, 2001) in which:

> human beings (...)will cease to think of themselves as being discrete individuals and will see themselves as parts of an all-encompassing ecological whole. Only then, humans will recognize that the conservation of the world is the conservation of themselves, and they will participate fully in this conservation without reservation or sense of painful duty. The task of "self-realizing" is not a challenge to cultivate the moral integrity to think of others but rather to conceive of the world so broadly that we see ourselves as a part of everything (Lane, 2006, p. 77).

The critique of both Ecofeminism and Social Ecology on Deep Ecology thinking is, among other things, that Deep Ecology in its search for an ecocentric worldview, too easily takes humanity as a unified whole and that

the attitude of this whole is often cast as unanimously anti-ecological. Both Social Ecology and Ecofeminism see a lack of political awareness and critique in Deep Ecology's thinking. Bothe Ecofeminism and Social Ecology point to a deep seated link between the rationale of domination and exploitation of the earth and that of groups of humans by other groups. They insist that the much needed transformation to curtail the ecological crisis will not simply arrive by changing our (ecological) consciousness, but that humanity needs to work at restructuring its internal attitudes and institutions.

Ecofeminism agrees with the Deep Ecology stance that most ecological problems today stem from the "atomistic, hierarchical and dualistic" (Zimmerman, 1997, p. 277) way of operating of modernity. However, Ecofeminism does not see anthropocentrism as the root cause of the problem, but rather androcentrism or patriarchy. Ecofeminism sees patriarchy as a "logic of domination" (Zimmerman, 1997, p. 2) that not only views maleness and rationality as superior and opposed to femininity and emotionality, but also values culture over nature. This leads to the domination of women, but also to the domination of non-human life. Because nature is linked to the feminine, like women it has to be tamed, ordered and brought under control. What needs to happen to change the environmental crisis around according to Ecofeminism is a dismantling of patriarchy (Zimmerman, 1997).

Ecofeminists are also concerned that the 'expanding self' concept of Deep Ecology glosses over the importance of diversity and particularity (Gaard, 1993, 1997).

> Identification and holism neglect difference. The whole, such as a rainforest or planet Earth itself, contains not only magnificent trees, birds, and other life forms, but trash, sewage, and clear-cut landscapes. Both identity and difference are necessary to a new ecological philosophy and ethics (Merchant, 2005, p. 111).

Ecofeminists don't see a need for an ever expanding concept of self that identifies with everything, but for highly specific identifications "such as love for a local landscape" (Merchant, 2005, p. 111). Ecofeminists worry that the idea of the ever expanding self brings egotistical motivations in through the back door. When humanity realizes that harming nature is harming the self, "Rational Man will then presumably change His ways" (Gaard, 1993, p. 29). Ecofeminism instead stresses the importance of emotional and spiritual engagement with the natural world, from which a deeply felt concern and genuine care for 'the other' might arise. So, it is not so much concern for the self, however expanded it might be, but genuine concern for the other, in all its otherness that is key in Ecofeminism.

The third important source for radical ecological thinking is Social Ecology. Formulated by Murray Bookchin (1982) as a socio-ecological critique to modern society, Social Ecology views the ecological crisis as the outcome of authoritarian social structures in general, in which the inferior is forced to behave according to the rules of the superior and in which it is normal and acceptable that the superior uses the inferior for its own good. Social Ecology disagrees with

Ecofeminism that all such structures of domination are connected with patriarchy. Instead, environmental destruction rests on the perceived split between humans and nature, which itself is a result of distorted social relations in which elites control and use the masses for their own needs:

> We must re-examine the cleavages that separated humanity from nature, and the splits within the human community that originally produced this cleavage (Bookchin, 1982, p. 42).

Like Deep Ecology, Social Ecology sees human beings as fundamentally natural beings whose well-being is "inextricably bound-up with the well-being of the natural world" (Zimmerman, 1997, p. 2). But, unlike Deep Ecology, the transformation envisioned by Social Ecologists is foremost social. Whereas Deep Ecology is not really concerned with the relations between humans and looks only towards the transformation of the relations between humans and nature, the key for Social Ecology lies in the creation of a counter-culture that is socially and economically egalitarian and truly democratic and participative. However, from the Deep Ecology perspective comes the critique that more egalitarian social relations do not necessarily lead to a more egalitarian relationship with nature.

Radical Ecology as a whole has absorbed the viewpoints and mutual critiques of these different streams. It is thus not a unified stream of thought that works from or towards a fixed ideology. Rather, it is a way of thinking that searches within a certain 'bandwidth' how a radical transformation of human 'being in the world' can be brought about, that would

allow humans and non-human beings both to flourish. From the perspective of Radical Ecology such flourishing can only happen if we focus on the ecological, or interrelated nature of life, without losing sight of the particular needs of all species. In that sense it is a form of Deep Ecology, that is not satisfied with finding (shallow) legal, technical and institutional solutions to the ecological crisis. Radical Ecology stresses the need for a change in consciousness, but also for the need of a transformation of humanity's concrete ways of acting and understanding itself. In this area, Radical Ecology runs the risk of becoming misanthropic, when it points to an understanding of humanity solely as the destructor of the planet for instance. It is here that the concept of *ahimsa* as it is understood in nonviolence thinking, might have something to offer. In the following sections I will explore this notion of ahimsa and the way it has developed in nonviolence thinking and practice.

AHIMSA

The Sanskrit word *ahimsa* represents an ancient Hindu, Jain and Buddhist concept. The word is a negation of *himsa*, often translated with harm or violence, which is derived from the root *han;* to strike, slay or kill (Bondurant, 1965; Chapple, 1987). It is thought that the word himsa is a desiderative, meaning *the desire* to hurt[29] (Bondurant, 1965; Phillips, 2013). Ahimsa then

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[29] Stephen Phillips explains: "The desiderative form is also used for will and intention, thus "will to X," and ahimsa intention not to harm, i.e., nonharmfulness. (...) the etymological lesson is that the word connotes an attitude of personal policy. Nonharmfulness is an attitude one adopts, or tries to adopt. The idea suggests a rule, or set of rules, governing effort and action" (Phillips, 2013, p. 285).

means 'the absence of the desire to harm' (Chapple, 1987; Vajpeyi, 2012).

The notion of ahimsa can be found, although in different forms, in all the Indian renouncer-traditions[30] (Chapple, 1998), where it is understood as a holistic concept that rests on the identification of oneself with all others (Kumar, 2004; Shastri & Shastri, 1998). The Vedic (Hindu) tradition provides a theoretical basis for this view, stating that everything in the universe is "interconnected, interrelated and interdependent" (Shastri & Shastri, 1998, p. 70). The yogic tradition takes ahimsa as one of the central virtues and renounces the slaughter of animals for sacrificial reasons or food. Over time, the understanding of ahimsa evolved to also include non-harm through speech and thought (Bondurant, 1965; Shastri & Shastri, 1998).

Although in the classical texts of Buddhism the term ahimsa is mentioned only sporadically (Chinchore, 2005) refraining from harm is one of the religion's central precepts. In most Buddhist traditions ahimsa is connected to the development of the 'right' mental states[31] and the attempt to become free of those mental states that lead to violent behaviour; any form of enmity. Buddhism stresses the importance of intentionality in ahimsa.[32] Causing harm is morally wrong if caused intentionally, but unintentional harm is

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[30] Buddhism, Jainism and Yoga.

[31] One of the core concepts in Buddhism is 'the Eightfold Path', consisting of the cultivation of right view, right intention, right speech, right action right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

[32] See the comments by Stephen Phillips above, note 29.

often not seen as himsa (Chinchore, 2005; Keown, 2005).

For the Jains ahimsa is the central focus of religion and life (Chapple, 1993), in a radical and comprehensive way. Ahimsa is extended to all living beings, but where in the Buddhist tradition the focus is on the intention and on mental states, Jainism looks at action. They also extend the meaning of ahimsa to include the prevention and reparation of harm (Koller, 2004). Jainism recognizes that complete ahimsa is impossible in life, but Jain monks attempt to practice ahimsa in all actions. For lay people, the emphasis is on "minimizing harm and choosing positive actions that have benign effects" (Rankin, 2013, p. 154). In all these traditions ahimsa points to an attitude of refraining from hurting others, including non-human life forms and to a world-view in which all life is interrelated.

GANDHI'S AHIMSA

In the west, the term ahimsa is perhaps most widely known in relation to Gandhi and his nonviolent social change. For Gandhi ahimsa was indeed one of the fundamental aspects of his practice. Though Gandhi himself was a devout Hindu, both Buddhism and especially Jainism have influenced his commitment to ahimsa (Ansbro, 2000; Bilgrami, 2011a). Influenced also by his Christian schooling, his studies in London and his life in South-Africa, Gandhi's political thinking is highly original. It blends aspects of diverse world religions with political theory and ideas of contemporary secular thinkers like Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Ruskin (M. K. Gandhi, 1996). He expands the

meaning of traditional Indian concepts and uses them in new socio-political way. In the case of ahimsa he converts this ancient moral principle into a principle of action that can be used as a force in the world to create social change. To the ancient principle of non-harm, Gandhi adds the dimension of active love or good will (Ansbro, 2000).

> In its negative form, it means not injuring any living being, whether by body or mind. I may not therefore hurt the person of any wrong-doer, or bear any ill will to him and so cause him mental suffering. (...) In its positive form, ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If I am a follower of ahimsa, I must love my enemy. I must apply the same rule to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father or son (M. K. Gandhi, 1999b, p. 252).

He is adamant that ahimsa should be applied in the same way to everyone, not just to those who love us. Gandhi understands ahimsa also to mean the rejection of 'inner violence' or 'violence of the spirit:

> Ahimsa is not the crude thing it has been made to appear. Not to hurt any living thing is no doubt a part of ahimsa. But it is its least expression. The principle of ahimsa is not to hurt by evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill of anybody. It is also violated by holding on to what the world needs (M. K. Gandhi, 1945, p. 6).

Although Gandhi is convinced that we should not harbour ill will or hatred against anyone, people should not cease to hate practices and systems of oppression

or exclusion. He recognized that his practice of ahimsa could not allow for a toleration of structural violence,[33] or violence and injustice in general.

Just like in the ancient religious traditions that generated ahimsa, Gandhi's views rest on an understanding of all life as interrelated. In this view the well-being or suffering of one affects all others (Joseph, 2012). Therefore, ahimsa can never be construed as passivity. Resisting injustice should be done as an act of ahimsa towards oneself and to the perpetrators. Their unjust behaviour harms their own humanity just as much as it harms others. Tolerating injustice or violence actually amounts to two forms of himsa to both victim and perpetrator, who would be allowed to continue harming themselves by harming others. Ahimsa thus required actively opposing systems of injustice and: "the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant" (Ansbro, 2000, p. 5).

To Gandhi, ahimsa is closely related to another of the central aspects of nonviolence: that of *satya*[34], or truth- seeking. In Gandhi's life and work ahimsa and satya are the core concepts. To him, nonviolence is essentially a quest to understand the deepest truth about reality, and to find ways to live in accordance with that truth. He is convinced that there was an Ultimate Truth, but is equally convinced that people could only understand it in a relative sense. People can only come to know something about the truth of reality through their experience. But because people have very different experiences in life, their views on truth will

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[33] See for an explanation of this term both Galtung (1996) and chapter 2 in this volume.

[34] See for an in-depth explanation of satya chapter 3 in this volume.

also differ vastly. These truths then do not cancel each other out, because all the experiences are equally real. They each represent different facets of reality. This leads Gandhi to have an "epistemological respect for the views of others" (Koller, 2004, p. 88). Confronted with views of reality that are completely opposed to our own, we have no choice but to take them seriously, as representations of reality. This does not mean we have to part with our own views, after all these also represent Ultimate Reality. It does mean that we have to look for ways of action that can respect both truths and that we remain open to the possibility that our confrontation with the view of the other, which is an experience, might lead us to change our mind (or the other might change his mind when confronted with our truth).[35] This adds another dimension to the idea that we are all interrelated:

> This understanding encompasses the insight that other beings are not "other" to themselves; that they are themselves just as much as we are ourselves. It is this insight that enables us to see the "other" on its own terms, from its own side, rather than as merely the "other", that is opposed to us. And this ability to see the other person as not merely the "other", but as identical to our own self (…) operationalizes ahimsa (Koller, 2004, pp. 86–7).

As Koller explains, ahimsa implies meeting the other on his/her own terms, without stepping over your own terms. The operationalization of ahimsa lies in the realisation that others are not identical to us in the

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[35] For a more in-depth exploration of satya and its role in nonviolence see chapter 3 in this volume.

sense that they are the same, but in the sense that they live in the world on their own terms and have their own way of being, like we do. Ahimsa points to the active attempt to create a situation in which each can fully live.

AHIMSA AS AN ELEMENT OF NONVIOLENCE AFTER GANDHI

Although the word ahimsa has a specific background in Indian philosophy and religion, Gandhi expanded and slightly altered the meaning of this ancient term and used it as an active element in the practice of nonviolence. That this element has always been deemed vital by those who engage with nonviolence even though they might not approach it from a Hindu, Buddhist or Jain perspective, can be seen for instance from the work of Abdul Ghaffar Khan[36] (Bondurant, 1965; Easwaran, 1999; R. C. Johansen, 1997) and Martin Luther King (M. L. King, 2010a, 2010b).

Khan was a Muslim activist in what is today the border region of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Starting out by building schools and setting up projects to improve hygienic conditions in his native area, he moved on to political activism. Kahn founded an organization known as the Khudai Khidmatgars (Servants of God). Shaped in the image of an army the Khidmatgars struggled nonviolently to improve social conditions in the region and eventually for independence from Britain (R. C. Johansen, 1997). To the Pashtun people, the word ahimsa had little to no meaning. Invoking the Islamic

[36] For a more in-depth discussion of Ghaffar khan and his work see chaper 2 in this volume.

concept of *sabr* (patience, endurance) and referring to a Qur'an verse stating that one should

> respond to evil with what is good, and your enemy will become like a close and affectionate friend (Qur'an verse 41:34 as quoted in: Halverson, 2012).

For Khan the emphasis was addressing the harm that was inherent in the social conditions in his native area, both those inherent in Pashtun culture and those inflicted by the British. The Kudhai Khidmatgars worked both towards social uplift for all and towards a diminishing of the violent tribal practices such as blood feuds.

A few decades later, Martin Luther King translated Gandhi's ideas to the American (Christian) context and equated ahimsa with *agape*. Agape refers to one of three forms of love that are discerned in the Greek philosophical tradition and is translated by King as a form of active good-will or benevolence towards all living beings (Atack, 2012). King uses the notion of active love in a very specific sense:

> In speaking of love at this point, we are not referring to some sentimental or affectionate emotion. It would be nonsense to urge men to love their oppressors in an affectionate sense. Love in this connection means understanding, redemptive goodwill (M. L. King, 2010a, p. 92).

King's redemptive love is a disinterested kind of love in the sense that it is love for others for *their* sake, not for the benefits that the relation brings to oneself. Therefore, one should not distinguish between friends

or enemies but aim at preserving, restoring or creating a sense of community (M. L. King, 2010a), something that King often referred to as the creation of a 'beloved community' (M. L. King, 2010b). King resonates Gandhi's notion that all life is interrelated. In one instance King explains his idea by citing from a letter by novelist James Baldwin:

> The really terrible thing, old buddy, is that you must accept them. And I mean that very seriously. You must accept them and accept them with love. For these innocent people have no other hope. They are, in effect, still trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it. They have had to believe for many years, and for innumerable reasons, that black men are inferior to white men. Many of them, indeed, know better, but, as you will discover, people find it very difficult to act on what they know. To act is to be committed, and to be committed is to be in danger. In this case, the danger, in the minds of most white Americans, is the loss of their identity... But these men are your brothers—your lost, younger brothers. And if the word integration means anything, this is what it means: that we, with love, shall force our brothers to see themselves as they are, to cease fleeing from reality and begin to change it (Baldwin, 1963, pp. 23–4).

From this description it becomes understandable how ahimsa works as an element of transformation in a process of nonviolence. Ahimsa refers to the removal of the *intention* to harm. Inadvertently causing harm would not constitute himsa, yet, the intention itself would. Gandhi, King, Khan and others, have shown that

ahimsa means changing one's attitude towards the other and see him not as a separate 'other' but as part of a shared constellation of relations. In such a shared constellation of relations committing 'harm' towards one of the elements (another person) becomes harm to oneself because it damages the shared network of which the self is part.

RELATING TO THE OTHER

Thus, ahimsa is that element in a process of nonviolence which calls us to make a qualitative shift in our relationship to others. Ahimsa points to an internal process of re-framing in which one attempts to discover and transform any feelings of enmity and actions that might cause harm, and to cultivate goodwill and disinterested love towards all others, regardless of the attitude the other takes towards you. The active nonviolence of Gandhi, Khan and King is mainly directed at social change and in the context of their work this 'other' points to other humans, adversaries. The term ahimsa is seldom mentioned, however, when we look at the paradigm shift towards the natural world proposed by Radical Ecology something very similar is at stake; amounting to "saying "yes" to all living beings" (Aristarkhova, 2012, p. 637).

Radical Ecology strives towards a world that is sustainable and both ecologically and socially just, by critically examining the current attitude that underlies our socio-economic, political and cultural institutions, and by working towards transformation. It is thus not only concerned with environmental conservation, but also with the creation of alternative forms of economic,

political and social organization. Although the different streams in radical ecological thinking each lay a different emphasis and sometimes conflict over specific viewpoints, Radical Ecology as a whole calls for a fundamental transformation of our attitude towards the other, but here 'other' emphatically includes non-human species, nature and the cosmos in general.

The shift in attitude that is proposed by Radical Ecology is not in the first place related to dealing with an antagonistic other (although nature is sometimes cast that way in western thinking), but with an 'other' that is a different life form. However, in both cases the other has a different outlook on life, and different needs for flourishing that might conflict with our own.

The overlap in thinking between Radical Ecology and nonviolence is not entirely surprising. Years before Arne Næss formally started his work on Deep Ecology, he made an extensive study of Gandhi's work (Næss, 2005b). In his later writings on Deep Ecology Næss often mentioned his indebtedness to Gandhi in his thinking on ecology (Næss, 2005a; Næss et al., 2008; T. Weber, 1999) and has even stated that his work on Deep Ecology is really an outgrowth of his thinking on Gandhi and Spinoza and his experiences in the mountains of Norway (Devall & Sessions, 1985; T. Weber, 1999). Gandhi's influence is especially visible in Næss's ideas on self-development (T. Weber, 1999; Zimmerman, 1997). It led Næss to conclude that true self-development could only happen in relation to the self-development of all other beings, and that (social) action to create circumstances that foster development for all, including all oher species, is an integral part of this process (Zimmerman, 1997).

Ecofeminists have criticized Naess' ideas on an expanding self, because it would lead one to overlook profound differences between individual people, groups or species, and stepping over the "otherness" of the other.

As Koller has explained, seeing the other as connected to oneself does not point to understanding the other as the same, thereby overlooking its otherness. Rather, it points to the realisation that the other is "not 'other' to itself" (Koller, 2004, p. 86) and is identical to us *in that sense*. It points to the attempt to see the other, as much as possible, "on its own terms" (idem.). Given the influence of Næss' thinking on Radical Ecology it is not surprising that Gandhian elements can be found there. What *is* rather surprising is that Gandhi or his ideas are so seldom mentioned either in Deep Ecology or in Radical Ecology in general (T. Weber, 1999).

As I have explained above, the notion of ahimsa in its ancient form, especially in the context of Jainism was extended towards all living beings (Aristarkhova, 2012; Chapple, 1998; Kumar, 2004; Long, 2009). Although Gandhi himself certainly extended ahimsa to include all living beings (M. K. Gandhi, 1945), he referred to ahimsa mostly in the context of his social struggle. Gandhi adapted ahimsa from a philosophical notion that he found to be too "negative and passive" (Parekh, 2001, p. 46) and widened it with ideas from other religions and secular thinkers that were "activist and socially oriented" (idem.). Blended they "yielded the novel idea of an active and positive but detached and non-emotive love" (idem.). When nonviolence was used in other contexts, for instance by Khan and King,

the element of ahimsa (although not always mentioned by that name) was infused with new notions, such as the Muslim concept of *sabr* and the Christian notion of agape.

I think it is necessary to revive ahimsa's ancient roots and broaden its understanding once more in the direction of other living beings and nature as a whole. Radical Ecology shows us, through its internal debates that social and ecological issues are so intertwined that in our globalized twenty-first century world they can't be taken as separate issues any more (Merchant, 2005). The concept of ahimsa, as developed through nonviolent practices and thinking can give clues how to approach these crises in a way that does justice to the interrelatedness of the problems.

Radical ecological movements are often accused of, and sometimes indeed take, a misanthropic stance. The notion of ahimsa points out that such a stance is ultimately unproductive. Ahimsa points to the realisation that the lives of humans and the lives of non-human species are intertwined and that harm to one ultimately amounts to harm of all. This means that ecological problems can't be reasonably solved in a way that leaves no space for humans to flourish. On the other hand, concrete changes in the way humanity views itself and acts on the planet is necessary for the natural world to flourish likewise. Attitudes in which humanity as a whole, or specific human groups are, for whatever reason, perceived as superior and therefore entitled to more resources or chances for self-development are likewise unhelpful. Such attitudes of

superiority and entitlement exist in similar ways towards different social groups and to nature.

Ahimsa denotes an attitude towards others in which we make every effort not to harm their chances of 'being', their dignity and chances for self-development, by consciously changing the way we relate to them, and by actively cultivating an attitude that helps others to flourish. The cultivation of such an attitude is no simple task as Gandhi, Khan, King and Radical Ecological thinkers have equally shown. But from the perspective of nonviolence it is the only way to come to the fundamental changes that radical ecology is calling for.

CHAPTER 5

The Nonviolent Sacrifice

The Role Of Tapasya In Nonviolence

non-violence, combined with the acceptance of suffering, can move a conflict beyond mutually exclusive antagonism to a shared sense of responsibility for resolving the conflict.

Ian Atack (2012)

INTRODUCTION [37]

According to René Girard, one of the leading thinkers on the role of sacrifice in human society, violence lies at "the foundation of the world" as we know it (Girard, 1987). His theory holds that violence is part of the dynamic of human communities because human beings are mimetic creatures. Mimesis, according to Girard, is the unconscious imitation of desires in which everyone is engaged, which leads people to desire the things their important others desire.

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Because people desire the same things as the people around them, this eventually leads to intense rivalry. This predicament would create complete social chaos, a situation of all against all were it not for a periodic release of tension in the form of violence against a scapegoat. Blaming a scapegoat for the tension and the violence in the group unites its members against a common enemy. A sacrifice, then, is a ritualized form of ousting a scapegoat.

In his narrative on the Kapsiki people in *Sacrifice Revisited*, Walter van Beek (forthcoming) shows that sacrifice can enhance the sense of community and belonging. Tensions and problems seem to be reduced through such a ritual. According to Girard, this can be explained because the sacrifice is a ritualized reminder of how previous inter-group violence was reduced by ousting the scapegoat. Furthermore, it allows for an accepted amount of violence to take place, in a confined setting, which in turn helps to prevent large amounts of violence from erupting within the community. Thus, sacrifice, community, and violence (and temporary peace) are necessarily connected.

That this connection between sacrifice and violence is only one possible view on sacrifice Kathryn McClymond shows in her book *Beyond Sacred Violence* (2008). She advances that although violence often is a part of sacrifice, the two are not interchangeable. Because sacrifice, as Van Beek suggests as well, plays such an important role in bringing communities together, she urges us to consider a broader understanding of sacrifice. Violence against a scapegoat is only one (and as McClymond states: limited) way in which sacrifice can serve to create unity.

It is noteworthy, in my view, that nonviolence thinkers, practitioners, and movements often use the image of sacrifice. Moreover, in the context of nonviolence thinking sacrifice is also connected to the strengthening of communities. However, it is not connected to the use of violence. The question I will try to answer in this article is: how can we understand the concept and role of sacrifice in a process of nonviolence?

In the following paragraphs, I will first briefly introduce *tapasya,* the term used here to denote the element of sacrifice and the acceptance of suffering present in all nonviolent practices. I will then explore Girard's ideas on mimesis and sacrifice. I will go on to explore an alternative reading of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Bible text that, according to Girard, is chiefly responsible for the creation of a sacrificial understanding of the Gospels. However, Eugene Webb suggests that the Epistle to the Hebrews points to a different understanding of sacrifice, tied to nonviolence. By looking at Webb's interpretation of Hebrews, and comparing his notion of sacrifice to the writings of major nonviolent actors in modern history, we might gain some insight into the role of sacrifice in nonviolence thinking. I will show that tapasya points to a non-sacrificial (in Girardian terms) understanding of sacrifice. In the last sections, I will explain this difference and draw on the popular uprising against the dictatorship in the Philippines in the 1980s as a practical example.

NONVIOLENCE

The roots of nonviolence as a way toward (social) change lie in the work of Mohandas Gandhi, who was the first to

use mass organized nonviolence to significantly alter the socio-political reality of his age. His understanding of nonviolence included not merely the absence of violence but also what was to take its place. He understood nonviolence as a concrete tool that could be used to create change, a tool for which he used the term *satyagraha* or truth-force. Gandhi construed nonviolence in a new, systematic and pro-active way that made it applicable to modern society. His work directly inspired others like Martin Luther King, Lanza del Vasto and Dom Helder Camara (see for instance: Alland & Alland, 2001; Ansbro, 2000; Bruns, 2006; Câmara, 1971; Lanza del Vasto, 1974; G. Williams, 2008) and still functions as a jumping-off point for many others, individuals or organizations that want to work with nonviolence. They take up Ghandi's concepts and translate them to their own circumstances, expanding and elaborating on different elements. When looking closely at these theories and practices of nonviolence from around the world, five core elements emerge that together create a dynamic framework. These five elements, in their Sanskrit terms originating from Gandhi's work, are: *satya*, or 'truth-seeking', *ahimsa* or 'the absence of the intention to do harm', *sarvodaya* meaning 'the welfare of all', *swadeshi/swaraj* which points to autonomy, and tapasya or self-suffering. These are ancient religious terms, reconceptualised by Gandhi in a way that made them suitable for socio-political action. As said above, their meaning has expanded even more through the work of subsequent nonviolence scholars and practitioners.[38] Each

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[38] Not all nonviolence movements or practitioners use these terms, but the principles that they represent can be found in all works on nonviolence.

of these elements is a complex and layered notion and in this article I cannot do justice to all of them. My focus here is on the element of tapasya.

TAPASYA

Out of the five core elements of nonviolence tapasya is perhaps the most difficult to come to terms with, certainly in a Western context. Its most common translation in the context of nonviolence: self-suffering, brings to mind the idea that nonviolence involves accepting the violence or wrong-doings of the other without responding to them. This interpretation is linked to another common misinterpretation, that of nonviolence as passivity and acquiescence in the face of conflict or injustice (Roedel, 2007). In this paragraph, I will try to show how both tapasya and nonviolence in general point to something completely different.

The Sanskrit term tapasya literally means 'produced by heat', and goes back to the root *tapas* meaning heat, suffering, or austerity. Kathryn McClymond writes that the term is already found in the Rig Veda, one of the oldest Hindu texts, and its meaning evolved from pointing to the heat of the ritual sacrificial fire to being associated with the 'inner heat' of asceticism.

> … devotional practices that are understood to generate a kind of spiritual heat are, in effect, replicating one of the activities performed in traditional sacrifice: heating, which is, of course, simultaneously destructive and constructive. In traditional sacrifice a distinct material substance is heated on an outdoor altar. In devotional practices an

internalized, subtle substance is heated by devotional practices within the body (McClymond, 2008, pp. 156–7).

Thus, tapasya refers to 'that which is produced by the inner heat of austerity or suffering'. Over the centuries the term has also come to mean 'the undertaking of personal discipline' and is also translated as self-control, (spiritual) effort, tolerance, or transformation (see for instance: Adele, 2009).

TAPASYA IN NONVIOLENCE

In Gandhi's work, tapasya is one of the key aspects of a nonviolent process. Nonviolence is to Gandhi a spiritual quest as much as a socio-political one. In fact, he does not view those two realms as truly separate. The quest for truth, which he sees as the essence of his work, is a quest for God or Ultimate Reality. His goal is to attain enlightenment (M. K. Gandhi, 1927a). But, Gandhi realizes, such an internal quest for truth is meaningless without living up to it in the public realm.

Because self-purification is an essential element in the attainment of enlightenment in the Hindu tradition, Gandhi takes a vow of asceticism which forms the base of his tapasya.[39] However, in the course of his lifetime, his understanding of this vow changes. From the vow of celibacy and abstinence of an earnest spiritual seeker, Gandhi comes to regard it as a mode of conduct that has important socio-political implications. Likewise, in a more general sense, his understanding of tapasya changes from a

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[39] This vow is called Brahmacharya in the Hindu tradition and is a vow to lead a life of religious seeking and includes restrictions on diet, conduct and possessions.

purely personal process of purification to an essential element in a nonviolent process of social change.

In his writings, Gandhi uses the term tapasya in different ways, even though it always contains elements of its original meaning of purification through internal suffering, and of sacrifice and transformation. He subverts the 'reasonable' idea of eliminating suffering for oneself, and throughout his writings provides different motivations for doing so. One of the motivations is that it can easily become an excuse for using violence. If eliminating suffering from one's life is a reasonable motivation for doing things, it can become a reason to inflict suffering on others. Tapasya is thus a way of directing attention away from the self.

Furthermore, Gandhi uses tapasya to refer to the process of overcoming fear, specifically the fear of suffering and death, and to the cultivation of self-discipline (Groves, 2000). He wants practitioners of nonviolence to give up the habit to 'fight or flight', and to commit themselves to nonviolent behaviour under all circumstances, while staying put in the situation and addressing the conflict or injustice at hand. Part of that process is the firm internal struggle to overcome ill will against the opponent, and even taking this one step further by cultivating love for the adversary. This is a moral standpoint, but it also has a very practical aspect. The willingness to suffer instead of retaliating when being confronted with violence or injustice is the only attitude that breaks a cycle of violence. Justice can only be won, so states Gandhi, by a love that does not impose suffering on the (unjust) other.

Related to this is the understanding of tapasya as a means to 'penetrate the heart' of those to whom we are appealing. Gandhi uses tapasya as a tool to make the suffering visible by undergoing it openly. Gandhi wants to demonstrate that the injustices people face are afflicted on them by other humans. By making this visible, it becomes clear that because it is perpetrated by other people it can also be corrected, the injustice can be stopped (Tercheck, 2011). But for that to happen, the injustice first has to be acknowledged. He argues that appealing to reason alone sometimes is not enough to get the message across. Visible "suffering", he argues, "opened the eyes of understanding" (Steger, 2006, p. 344).

As Gandhi sees it, tapasya is a complex and dynamic element. Separately, suffering and love are not enough. Simply loving your opponent without an attempt at change is impotent. Suffering by itself has very little value, and if accompanied by hatred and anger would even be counterproductive (Parekh, 2001). Combined they instigate action and change. One has to actively engage in tapasya and be willing to suffer for one's goal, refusing to comply with untruth and accepting the consequences (Brown & Parel, 2011). Thus, tapasya is a medium of change and transformation of oneself, the opponent, and the situation at large.

The concepts of sacrifice and suffering are also central to the work of Martin Luther King, who was deeply inspired by Gandhi, but in a much more psychological way (Groves, 2000). King describes his nonviolent philosophy in his article *An Experiment in Love* (M. L. King, 1990). Like

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Gandhi, he stresses the importance of accepting suffering and giving up all inclinations to self-preservation as the essence of nonviolence:

> that [which] characterizes nonviolent resistance is a willingness to accept suffering without retaliation, to accept blows from the opponent without striking back. "Rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood", Gandhi said to his countrymen. The nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary, but never to inflict it. He does not seek to doge jail. If going to jail is necessary, he enters it as "a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber (M. L. King, 1990, p. 18)

According to King, nonviolent resistance led people to self-respect, courage, and inner strength (Groves, 2000), which he called the emergence of a new kind of power. King wrote:

> Humanity is waiting for something other than blind imitation of the past. If we want truly to advance a step further (…) we must begin to turn mankind away from the long and desolate night of violence. May it not be that the new man the world needs is a nonviolent man? (…) This not only will make us new men, but will give us a new kind of power (…). It will be power infused by love and justice (M. L. King, 2001, p. 332)

How can we understand this 'new kind of power' as a social and psychological reality? Here I turn to Kenneth Boulding's analysis of power, in which he distinguishes

integrative power as the kind of power both Gandhi and King talk about.

INTEGRATIVE POWER

Power is sometimes related to the ability to make others do what we want (M. Weber, 1991). In a more general sense, peace scholar Kenneth Boulding states, it is the ability to "get things done" (Boulding, 1990, p. 15). According to Boulding, power can be exercised in three different ways, depending on the consequences. These three ways he calls the 'faces' of power. First he discerns *threat* power, which can be paraphrased as: "You do something I want or I'll do something you don't want" (Boulding, 1999, p. 10). It underlies all forms of punishment and retaliation.

The second form of power is *exchange* power, the power to produce and trade. This is paraphrased as: "Give me something I want and I'll give you something you want" (Nagler, 2004, p. 29). Together the first and the second form are often called 'the carrot and the stick'. The third kind of power is called *integrative* power. It is the power to create relationships and bring people together. Integrative power can be summarized as: "I'm going to do what I believe is right, something authentic, and we will end up closer" (Nagler, 2004, p. 29). For Boulding (1990, 1999), from the three 'faces' or ways of wielding power, integrative power is the most important. Integrative power is the power of human relationships. It is connected to everything that establishes a relationship either on a personal level or in the form of institutions or

organizations. Love, respect, legitimacy and consent are all expressions of integrative power.

In everyday life most forms of exercising power consist of a combination of the three faces. But there is a difference in emphasis in various areas. Exchange power is most prominently present in anything connected to the economy, but also to anything in which incentives (the carrot) are used to get things done. Yet also legitimacy and trust, both forms of integrative power, play a huge role in the stock exchange, and without regulations and the penalties to back them up production and trade cannot proceed. Threat power is present not only in the military but wherever some form of penalty is used to make things happen (the stick). The military symbolizes threat power, but cannot exist without exchange power in the form of money, nor without integrative power in the form of morale and legitimacy. Underlying all forms of power is integrative power. Systems and institutions can only function if people cooperate. Even in the most rigid dictatorship, as soon as enough people stop cooperating, the system collapses.

Since all human beings exist within relationships, integrative power is open to all, even to those who are traditionally assumed to have no power. "It is this definition of power, as a process that occurs in relationships, that gives us the possibility of empowerment" (Page & Czuba, 1999). Both Gandhi and King asserted that the kind of power used in processes of nonviolence can emerge by being authentic and truthful and by going through the inner process of shifting our sense of personhood away from our self and giving up our inclination to enhance or preserve our own interests.

For a better understanding of these ideas, it may be worthwhile to look more in-depth at the views of René Girard, who connects sacrifice to violence. Furthermore, we may examine the work of Eugene Webb, who provides an alternative reading of some of Girard's sources, one that points more towards nonviolence.

RENÉ GIRARD: MIMETIC DESIRE

René Girard is one of the leading thinkers on the role of violence and sacrifice in human society. His theory of mimetic desire describes how and why humanity is locked in an on-going cycle of violence, even though we find (temporary) ways to limit violence to a minimum. Girard claims that violence lies at the "foundation of the world" as we know it (Girard, 1987). At the heart of Girard's theory is the concept of mimetic desire. Simply put, it is the unconscious tendency present in all human beings to imitate the desires of significant others. In other words, people desire things because important people around them (models) desire them. This leads to conflict because the model becomes a rival with whom we have to compete, or so it seems, for the object of our desire. Because mimesis happens in every person, these conflicts can become so all-pervasive in communities that they destroy the societal structure if they are not restrained in time.

Girard states that our deepest desire is actually not for objects – our deepest desire is to *be (J. G. Williams, 1996, p. 227)*. Ultimately, we are not really interested in the actual object that our models desire, but in their 'being', or as Oughourlian (2010) puts it, in their autonomy, or sense

of self. Powerful others make us feel they know 'how to be', and that the things they desire support them in their 'being'. People desire what important others desire, because they feel those things will in turn support them in their own 'being' (Roedel, 2010; J. G. Williams, 1996). They do not realize that the desires of the model are mimetic as well, tied to the desires of yet another model.

Early in their evolution, human beings discovered that if rising tensions and violence are diverted and laid upon a victim, they are relieved in the rest of the group. This process of victimization is called scapegoating. A person or a group, appearing to be vulnerable for some reason, gets blamed for the tensions and violence that exists in the community (J. G. Williams, 1996). Then, through the same process of mimesis, the blame and hatred against this scapegoat become shared feelings within the community. Former rivals become new allies by 'ganging up' against the common enemy. The scapegoat is driven out of the community, defeated or marginalized. His or her well-being is sacrificed to preserve the well-being of the group. This leads to a temporary relief from the violence and animosity, but since nothing has really changed (people remain mimetic beings) the process is bound to repeat itself in the future. Imperative in this process is that the people who as a group sacrifice the scapegoat are ignorant of what they are doing. For the mechanism to work it is necessary that the group is convinced that the victim is rightfully blamed. This, however, makes anyone a potential scapegoat at some point. Because ousting the scapegoat is only a temporary solution, somewhere in the future a new victim will (have to) be found to once more release the tension.

Societies have found different ways of dealing with this threat, for instance through laws, but also through ritual sacrifice. Such a ritual, in which not a real victim but a substitute is sacrificed, serves, according to Girard, as a reminder of the actual moment of scapegoating. It reminds the audience of both the initial violence and the peace that came after the scapegoat was sacrificed. Furthermore, such a ritual serves as a temporary outlet for the violence in the group, in a contained setting. But these systems of restraint, in turn, help to keep the scapegoat mechanism hidden and thus contribute to the necessary continuation of sacrifice. Whenever the system suffers from stress, or collapses, real violence may once more flare up, leading to real victims. What might work to end this cycle of violence, in Girard's vision, is the public discovery and understanding of the scapegoat mechanism. Understanding the mechanism and its consequences would provide humanity with a rational choice to act differently.

JESUS' SACRIFICE

According to Girard, the Jewish prophetic tradition was evolving towards the discovery and disclosure of the scapegoat mechanism (Girard, 1987). The life of Jesus of Nazareth, in his view, is the culmination of that process. Girard states that the death of Jesus on the cross was meant to lay bare the mimetic process by providing a public example, and not as a sacrifice to appease God (as interpreted in modern Christianity) (Girard, 1986). Jesus' innocence is so very obvious that when he is picked as a scapegoat, "violence reveals its own game" (Girard, 1987,

p. 205). However, as Girard states, the revelation was "more than its recipients could bear" (Webb, 2005, p. 1) and, in time, the Gospels were being interpreted in a sacrificial way. This helped to create a Christian tradition that revolved mostly around the sacrifice of Jesus who died on the cross to wash away the sins of the world. And so, instead of uncovering the scapegoat mechanism for society at large and instigating a paradigm shift, the narrative of Jesus, interpreted in a sacrificial way, actually helps to keep the process hidden. Girard sees the Epistle to the Hebrews as the main biblical text in which this misinterpretation was made. Because of this misinterpretation, even in our society today processes of scapegoating and sacrifice and the violence that accompanies them can be found everywhere. This sacrificial violence is tied, according to Girard, to a form of self-preservation in which the violence is laid on the other, a scapegoat, to get rid of it in our own society.

Interestingly enough, Eugene Webb, emeritus professor of International Studies and Comparative Religion at the University of Washington, has a very different interpretation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and claims Girard has made an oversight (Webb, 2005). In fact, in Webb's interpretation, the sacrifice in Hebrews points to nonviolence.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS

The Epistle to the Hebrews, a Bible text consisting of an anonymous, early Christian homily, depicts a community of believers in the middle of a hostile environment (Attridge, 2012). The text's aim is to affirm and inspire the faith of the

community in difficult times and motivate the people to remain steadfast (Attridge, 2012; Richardson, 2012). It is the only book in the New Testament in which sacrificial imagery takes such a central place, and the text is often interpreted in a literal way, as pointing to the necessity of sacrificial offerings (Gelardini, 2005). Eugene Webb suggests that Girard correctly states that the traditional reading of Hebrews is sacrificial. But, according to Webb, Girard himself makes the same mistake. Instead, the text should be read metaphorically. Not the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews misunderstood the story of Jesus but the medieval interpreters of the text. Webb states that in fact the author of Hebrews urged his intended audience to live a nonviolent life, and that the metaphors would have been well understood at the time (Webb, 2005).[40]

To show the metaphoric meaning of the sacrifice in Hebrews, Webb starts by re-interpreting some key elements of the text. The first is the image of Jesus as the son of God. In the Jewish community of the first century, Webb claims, referring to someone as the son of God did not necessarily mean that this person was seen as divine. It referred to either a person who was living in accordance with the laws of God or a calling upon people to do so. In that latter sense it was also used for the people of Israel as a whole. It was a call upon the Israelites to live righteously.[41]

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[40] In recent years René Girard has himself come to a similar insight and mentions in an interview that his conclusions on the Epistle to the Hebrews, based on the sacrificial language alone, has been a misinterpretation. See: (Adams & Girard, 1993). See also: Hardin (1992).

[41] For a comprehensive outline of the Semitic use of the term "son of God" and its use in the Hebrew Bible and among the early Christians, see S. Herbert Bess (1965).

> To say in the first century Jewish milieu that Jesus was 'son of God' was to say that he truly fulfilled the calling of Israel to live in sonship to God (Webb, 2005, p. 4).

Webb's claim is substantiated by other scholars, who note that in the Semitic context of the Hebrew Bible 'son' is often used to denote close affiliation, not just literal sonship.

> In Semitic usage "sonship" is a conception somewhat loosely employed to denote moral rather than physical or metaphysical relationship. Thus "sons of Belial" (Jg 19:22 etc.) are wicked men, not descendants of Belial; and in the NT the "children of the bride chamber" are wedding guests. So a "son of God" is a man, or even a people, who reflect the character of God (Hastings, 2005, p. 143).

Also, the term 'son of God' seems to indicate metaphorically leaders and rulers, 'the first among their people', who were thought to be exemplary and who based their authority in God (Aherne, 1912). Likewise, Webb states, we should regard the image of sacrifice in Hebrews in a metaphorical way. Hebrews does not portray Jesus as fulfilling a sacrifice of atonement, to appease God or to mitigate the mimetic violence. Jesus is not portrayed as fighting for his own survival but as choosing to lay bare the scapegoat mechanism by undergoing it, so that others might see it for what it is. The sacrifice consists in the surrender of his own well-being. But this is not to say that he sacrificed himself in the traditional (Girardian) sense.

Raymund Schwager, a theologian and Girardian scholar, supports this view (Schwager, 1999).[42] He states that the author of Hebrews uses the notion of sacrifice metaphorically and is thus able, "through a massive hermeneutical reinterpretation" (Schwager, 1999, p. 183), to give it a completely new meaning. Jesus answers the call to live in sonship by not fighting his opponents and by suffering the crucifixion willingly. He sees his opponents as people who do not really know what they are doing. In Girardian terms, they act under the influence of the mimetic process and, like most people, are not aware of that. Jesus *is* aware of it and thus he is able to see them as victims along with him.

> He himself [Jesus] was a victim insofar as he was killed and they were victims in killing, insofar as they were under the spell of an external power. For him, then, killing was an act done both to him and to them, even if in very differing ways (Schwager, 1999, p. 187).

Thus, Jesus stands no longer in opposition to his antagonists. He sides with all the victims of the mimetic mechanism and undergoes the scapegoat mechanism together with them. From that angle, the division between perpetrator and victim of violence ceases to exist. Through this action Jesus transforms the passivity that is inherent in the mimetic process. "Suffering which is affirmed becomes a new form of activity" (Schwager, 1999, p. 187). This inner transformation is what the author of the Epistle to the

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[42] Based on Schwagers theory, Poong-In Lee (2011) comes to the conclusion that not only is a non-sacrificial readig of Hebrews possible, in fact it is one of the Bible texts that to a large extent supports Girard's theories.

Hebrews metaphorically calls a sacrifice. Schwager points out that this is not a simple act of self-destruction. Jesus complies with the actions of his antagonists, but not with their motives. "Jesus' judges and his executioners wanted to punish a criminal; he himself on the other hand wanted to give himself (…) for the many" (Schwager, 1999, p. 187).

TAPASYA AS NON-SACRIFICIAL SACRIFICE

In their writings on nonviolence, both Gandhi and King speak of the role of sacrifice and the dedication of one's life to the well-being of all, rather than adhering to self-preservation at the expense of the other, something Girard himself calls "unanimity minus one" (1979, p. 259). The sacrifice that tapasya refers to is the creation of a situation in which the humanity of *all* people can rise to the surface. Schwager's example of Jesus' identification with his opponents points in this direction (Schwager, 1999). By regarding them not as opponents, but as fellow victims, their humanity is stressed and rivalry is diminished. Roedel adds to this:

> Within mimetic theory, this requirement of absolute nonviolence, renouncing vengeance and even self-defence, derives from an understanding of violence as arising from rivalries that the parties involved are unable to recognize. It denies the commonly held distinction between self-defence and the violence that one initiates, because it holds that both are the product of rivalries in which all parties are responsible (Roedel, 2010, p. 2).

Moreover, Gandhi and King assert that such a shift in personhood, away from the self, leads to the emergence of a different kind of power or force, which can be harnessed to achieve tremendous results. Both Gandhi and King understand nonviolence as essentially the wielding of this force, which Boulding calls integrative power (Boulding, 1990). To Gandhi and King, nonviolence is concerned with both the (internal) process of bringing out this power and the (external) process of implementing it.

From this concept of integrative power we can come to an understanding of why sacrificing the self is not the same as self-sacrifice. It is a transformative process that rests on a profound understanding of the self as relational, in which hurting another person ultimately means hurting the self, and vice versa, since self and other are intertwined. The intentional aspect of tapasya then becomes clear. It indicates a sacrifice of the 'separated' self with the intention to benefit 'the whole' (*sarvodaya*)[43]. Sacrificing the self is a transformative process that leads to and rests on integrative power and includes a conception of the self as relational. The shift of focus is not towards self-negation, but rather towards relationship. A sacrifice of the self, made with the intention to benefit 'the whole' with an aim to intensify the relation between the whole and the self is completely different from self-sacrifice.

Girard posits that it is possible to interpret the Gospels in either a sacrificial or non-sacrificial way. In a similar vein, I propose there can be a non-sacrificial way of looking at the concept of sacrifice itself. According to Eugene

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[43] For a more in-depth discussion of the term *sarvodaya* and its use and role in nonviolence see chapter 1 in this book.

Webb, the Epistle to the Hebrews should be read as a metaphor. The sacrifice that is mentioned in the text does not point to a literal sacrifice in the Girardian sense, but to the sacrifice of 'self', which happens through a process of (self-)transformation. I suggest that tapasya in nonviolence, which invokes sacrificial imagery, refers to precisely such a non-sacrificial sacrifice.

Although neither Gandhi nor King use any of the Girardian terms, the role of tapasya or self-suffering they describe is to expose the working of violence in specific situations so that a transformation becomes possible (Roedel, 2008). For this, as Gandhi has pointed out, reason alone is not enough. For the mechanism to become consciously understood it has to be made clearly visible. To become free from the imprisonment of the mimetic mechanism, one needs to develop insight into its structure and to be willing to give up all the 'normal' comforts that it brings, among which are a sense of power, a sense of 'fitting in', and a sense of being protected from intense vulnerability. Giving up 'normalcy' can certainly feel like a sacrifice, and this is what tapasya refers to (Hudson, 2001).

Girard himself remains sceptical about the practical realities of a nonviolent society, but he states that it could only emerge when people continuously refuse to act in accordance with it: "Only the unconditional and, if necessary, unilateral renunciation of violence can put an end to [mimetic rivalry]" (Girard, 1987, p. 197). He continues to state that "it means the complete and definitive elimination of every form of vengeance and every form of reprisal in relations between men (Girard, 1987, p. 197). I maintain that the practice of nonviolence is an

attempt at the first and that tapaysa points to the second statement.

How then can we translate the above into concrete notions for the study and practice of nonviolence today? To answer that question it might be helpful to look at a practical example of a nonviolent movement in which this dynamics has played a central role.

ALAY DANGAL

One of the problems nonviolence thinkers and practitioners are facing is the absence of a positive term for nonviolence as a practice and an attitude. There is no term in use today that captures the wielding of integrative power as well as the attitude of serving the whole rather than preserving the self. This means that in many instances practitioners of nonviolence have come up with their own terms to describe their efforts. During the people's uprising in the Philippines against the regime of president Marcos in the 1980s, the term of choice was *alay dangal*, Tagalog for 'to offer dignity'.[44] The nonviolent struggle of the Philippine people, aided by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) and grassroots organizations tied to the Catholic Church, came to rest on the practice of offering dignity.[45]

According to the movement's organizers, the Catholic teachings held that human dignity was given to each and every individual and was unalterable and inextinguishable.

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[44] Tagalog is one of the main languages spoken in the Philippines.

[45] CORD-Mindanao, AKKAPKA and NAMFRE among others. For more information see Zunes (1999).

In the contemporary situation of dictatorship and oppression, however, this dignity of the people was ignored. Inspired by the work of both Gandhi and King, which rests on a relational worldview in which one's dignity is tied up with that of all others, the organizers felt this also meant the oppressors ignored and diminished their own dignity. In other words, the Philippine community was in need of the restoration of its dignity. Restoring dignity through offering it to every person would become the way to resist.

The movement itself was one form of offering dignity, embodying the refusal to live under undignified circumstances any longer. The practice of alay dangal involved the willingness of the protesters to suffer the retaliations of the regime, forgoing their own safety, fear and anger. It also meant that the resisters kept addressing the soldiers, who were sent to contain and beat down the protests, as individuals instead of representatives of the military. In other words, they addressed them not as opponents but as fellow humans. The resisters offered gestures of friendship, such as the sharing of food, and refused to resort to any form of humiliation, violence or degradation. Eventually, this led many soldiers to desert and join the uprising, unwilling as they were to answer dignity with violence and humiliation. Desertions subsequently escalated to such an extent that the Marcos regime fled the country (see for instance: Sasaran, 2006).

This dynamic of dignity and humiliation forms the core of the work of Evelin Lindner, the Founding President of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies.[46] In her view,

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[46] See also: www.humiliationstudies.org

humiliation is the essence of violence, dignity being its opposite. Perhaps surprisingly, Lindner ties dignity to humility and maintains that they are very closely related and, moreover, that humility and dignity provide healing for humiliation and violence.

> While humiliation is painful, a closely related word, namely humility, points at healing, particularly in a normative context that is defined by human rights. Inclusive and shared humility, embedded in relationships of mutual respectful connection, can heal wounds of humiliation and prevent future mayhem. Arrogant dominators need to be met with respect and not subjected to humiliation—they need to be humbled into adopting shared humility and mutual recognition of equal dignity. Victims who feel humiliated, do not undo this humiliation by brutal arrogation of superiority over their perceived humiliators, but by inviting everybody into mutuality, into connecting in shared, wise humility (Lindner, 2006, p. 173).

Humility is not the same as self-humiliation. Rather, it points to a secure sense of self, self-dignity, and so being able to draw the focus away from the self. By consciously 'offering' dignity to everyone around (even to those whom we might feel do not deserve it), we cut through the vertical conceptions of humanity that are so intertwined with mechanisms of violence and scapegoating. We sacrifice our self-preserving tendencies, our habitual patterns tied to our fears of being too vulnerable and powerless. As Girard showed, these tendencies run deep and the risk of being vulnerable is real, but letting go of them leads to a transformation in the direction of a truer

sense of autonomy, another way of 'being' and a different kind of power. This dynamic of sacrificing the self for the shared dignity of all people, bringing integrative power to the surface, is captured in alay dangal, that is to say, creating an example of nonviolence as a life stance in which tapasya, an attitude of humility, sacrificing the desire-self and offering dignity (and the study of how to do this) are central.

CHAPTER 6

Interdependent Independence

Swadeshi/Swaraj as Relational Autonomy in
Nonviolence

*For those who wish to change themselves and thereby
change the world, neither thought nor action poses a
problem.*

M. Paranjape (2009)

INTRODUCTION[47]

With this article I aim to show the specific function
swadeshi/swaraj has in a process of nonviolence. It is
often assumed that the pursuance for swaraj
(autonomy) through swadeshi (self-sufficiency) was
specific for the Indian struggle for independence, led
by Gandhi (see for instance: Gonsalves, 2010, 2012). In
this article I will try to show why I disagree with this
assumption. I will argue that swadeshi and swaraj
combined, are a necessary element in nonviolence, no

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[47] This chapter is submitted as: Goelst Meijer, S.L.E. van, Interdependent
Independence: Swadeshi/Swaraj as Relational Autonomy in Nonviolence, to: Peace and
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matter which context it is practised in. Together, I will argue, the terms point to a specific form of autonomy. In this article I will try to show what this specific form of autonomy implies in nonviolence. In addition, I aim to show in this article that, although nonviolence as a tool for change is often seen as something that is useful only at the socio-political level, it can also be used for creating change at the interpersonal level and that although swadeshi/swaraj takes on a different shape there, the essential process is still the same. To do so I will examine Nonviolent Resistance (NVR), a method for working with troubled adolescents developed by Israeli psychologist Haim Omer (2004, 2011). In his method, the element of swadeshi/swaraj plays a significant role.

It is important to note that I use the term nonviolence here not to point to the absence of violence, but rather to a substantial method for creating change.

The development of nonviolence from a religious and philosophical notion towards a method for change started in the 19th century with the works of Thoreau, Tolstoy, Marshall and Day and others (Barak, 2003), culminating in the work of Mohandas Gandhi, who for the first time used mass organized nonviolence to create large-scale social and political change, first in South Africa and later in India. Gandhi based himself on religious teachings from various traditions as well as on the work of (near) contemporary thinkers. However, for Gandhi nonviolence never lost its religious and philosophical roots. According to him, outer change rested on inner change and nonviolence was both a way of life as well as a tool towards humanization.

Gandhi's work has been an inspiration and jumping-off point for many nonviolence movements in the world. From the Civil Rights movement in the U.S. led by Martin Luther King, to the Philippine uprising against General Marcos, the Polish Solidaridad movement led by Lech Walenza and many more (see for instance: Ansbro, 2000; Zunes et al., 1999).

Each nonviolent movement, individual or organization took up Gandhi's concepts directly or indirectly, and translated them to their own circumstances, expanding and elaborating different elements. This has led to the emergence of a nonviolent paradigm that constitutes a coherent set of values, assumptions practices and ideas about reality. Thus, nonviolence is not just a method for social struggle, but also an integrated way of 'being in the world'.

Analysing this nonviolence paradigm, I find five central elements: S*atya* (truth seeking)*, ahimsa* (the absence of the intention to harm)*, tapasya* (self-suffering), *sarvodaya* (the welfare of all) *and swadeshi/swaraj* (relational autonomy). These five elements, in their Sanskrit terms originating from Gandhi's work, together form a dynamic framework, that forms the core of contemporary nonviolence. This does not mean that each individual or group working with nonviolence necessarily uses all these terms, but it does mean that the elements themselves are always present. Each of these elements is a complex and layered notion and in this article I cannot do justice to all of them. My focus here is on the element of swadeshi/swaraj.

In the following sections I will first clarify the concepts swadeshi and swaraj independently, by

tracing the history and different uses of the terms. Then, I will explain why I take them together as one of the fundamental elements in nonviolence by comparing them to a similar notion that in recent years has developed in a western context: relational autonomy. I will then explore Haim Omer's method of Nonviolent Resistance to further investigate the specific function of swadeshi/swaraj in contemporary nonviolence.

SWADESHI

In its most literal sense swadeshi means 'from one's own' (swa-) 'country' (-deshi), though the most commonly used direct translation is self-reliance (Cox, 2007). The term is also often used in an economic sense, for instance in relation to Gandhian economics[48] (Joseph & Mahodaya, 2011), where it points to the use and consumption of products of local origin (Dasgupta, 1996) but also to the "value in indigenous-ness" (Cox, 2007, p. 112).

In the Indian struggle for independence the term was first used in the Bengal[49] anti-partition movement (L. Trivedi, 2007). This movement started as a reaction to the decision of the British colonial regime to split the region, which was the most important centre of Indian nationalism at that moment, in two parts. Although officially the measure was said to be for administrative

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[48] A school of economic thought based on the principles for socio-economic justice as expounded by Gandhi, connected with the ideas of some of the thinkers that Gandhi drew inspiration from, like Henri David Thoreau and John Ruskin. In the European context Ernst Friederich Schumacher (1993) is one of the most well-known thinkers in this field.

[49] Bengal is an Indian state, of which Calcutta is the capital. However, ethnically and culturally the region Bengal also includes what is today Bangladesh.

reasons, it was clear to many that it was an attempt to curb Bengal nationalism (Sartori, 2003). The Swadeshi Movement (1903-1908) that erupted in protest consisted of a boycott of British goods. Because Britain's colonisation of India was mostly economically motivated it made sense to rebel economically. Historically, cotton fabrics were one of India's most famous products and played a big part in its colonization (L. Trivedi, 2007). In the early eighteenth century Britain exported large amounts of Indian fabrics to Europe and other parts of Asia. The profits of this trade helped to finance the British industrialization, which eventually made it more profitable to export only raw cotton from India and weave the fabrics in British factories. In the early nineteenth century the flow of products was reversed and Lancashire had become the world's textile centre instead of India (Gonsalves, 2010). British-made textiles from Indian cotton, machine-woven and much cheaper, were exported to India, effectively destroying the indigenous Indian textile market. Boycotting British fabrics, therefore, became one of the focal points of the first Swadeshi Movement.

The second Swadeshi Movement, led by Gandhi (1920 onwards), draws inspiration from the previous movement, but has a much broader aim. As is his custom, Gandhi expands on the original meaning of the term and infuses it with spiritual, psychological, ethical and practical meanings that make it applicable in various circumstances (Cox, 2007).

Although it becomes much more than just an economic concept (Bondurant, 1965; Dasgupta, 1996;

Pandharipande, 2011; L. Trivedi, 2007), the economic element remains important in Gandhi's use of swadeshi. His Swadeshi Movement is part of the struggle for independence (swaraj, which I will discuss below), and Gandhi is convinced that true independence can't come about, if India is not able to care for itself economically. But, in Gandhi's opinion economic self-sufficiency is not to be understood only at the national level. In fact, for Gandhi, self-sufficiency on the national level is not possible without self-sufficiency at the community and individual level. Therefore, Gandhi emphasizes the constructive side of swadeshi, much more than the first Swadeshi Movement. In the second movement cotton also takes a central place, but Gandhi focuses more on the production and use of *Khadi*, hand spun and hand woven cotton, than only on the boycott of British-made cloth.

The obstructive side, the various forms of protest against and non-cooperation with violence and injustice, is clearly present in a boycott. But Gandhi is adamant that each nonviolent effort should have a constructive element as well, which is perhaps even more important than the obstructive (A. Gandhi, 1997; M. K. Gandhi, 1927b; Nagler, 2004). Gandhi is sure that it is not enough to get rid of problematic practices or institutions, without creating something better to take its place. And so, he comes up with a Constructive program that should lead to the "…construction of complete independence by truthful and nonviolent means" (M. K. Gandhi, 1927b, p. 4). Gandhi's constructive program consists of 18 specific points that should contribute to the uplift of the country (M. K.

Gandhi, 1927b) and the spinning of khadi takes centre stage.

The destruction of India's village industry has led to mass unemployment and mass poverty. In Gandhi's view, in a country with such a large (rural) population this problem can't be solved though industrialization. The revival of the village industries is the only thing that will bring real economic independence. Because cotton spinning had been practised by Indian villagers for ages it is not hard to revive the skill. It requires minimal investment, most of the tools can be easily hand-made and spinning can be taken up or left at any moment, making it well suited as a part-time activity (Dasgupta, 1996). The urban population should buy and wear the khadi, instead of foreign or machine made cloth, as a form of service to the rural population and as a way to show "solidarity and equality" (Mattaini, 2013, p. 139). It is the moral duty of those with money, to spend it in such a way that the their fellow countrymen will benefit from it.

In a broader sense, the call to buy and use khadi also expresses the need for swadeshi (self-sufficiency) on the community level. This is connected to Gandhi's ideas about the roots of Indian colonization. Gandhi is convinced that he Indian population has played an important role in its own predicament:

> The English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them (...). They came to our country originally for purposes of trade (...). They had not the slightest intention at the time of establishing a kingdom. Who assisted the company's officers? Who was tempted at the sight of their silver? Who bought

their goods? History testifies that we did all this (M. K. Gandhi, 1998, p. 35).

And therefore, it is up to the Indian people themselves to reclaim home rule, by instigating their own social and cultural reform.

Thus, home spinning became not only an economic activity but also a psychological and political process (Bondurant, 1965). In a psychological sense, making khadi, (and swadeshi in general), helped to reinstate Indian products and indian-ness, as something to be proud of instead of something that was inferior. Furthermore, it demonstrated in a tangible way that India could very well provide for itself. By focussing on producing and using khadi, Indians would liberate both themselves as well as each other from the notion that they were dependent on the British for their well-being, and so Gandhi declared that: "The very thing that was a cause of our slavery [cotton] will open the door to our freedom" (M. K. Gandhi, 1999d, p. 383).

By extension, swadeshi on the community level also meant neighbourliness (Dasgupta, 1996; Joseph, 2012; Ramakrishnan, 2013; T. Weber, 2007). In this explanation swadeshi "restricts us to the use and service of our immediate surroundings to the exclusion of the more remote" (M. K. Gandhi, 1999b, p. 159). The word 'service' is especially important here. Swadeshi points not only to the use of local resources or neighbourliness for economic and ethical reasons, but as a form of service directed at strengthening the community. Self-sufficiency is thus not to be understood as an individualistic focus on satisfying one's own needs, but as taking responsibility for life in one's immediate surroundings. By ensuring that one's

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immediate surroundings are functioning well a fundament is created upon which the well-fare of all (*sarvodaya*, another of the five central elements of nonviolence) can rest.

But swadeshi does not imply an uncritical acceptance of anything local. Rather, it means the critical examination of the context, the local customs, products, and attitudes, and amend them where they are found unsatisfactory. In Gandhi's words:

> This is the use of my immediate religious surrounding. If I find it defective, I should serve it by purging it of its defects" (M. K. Gandhi, 1999b, p. 159).

In a broader sense, swadeshi points to "the understanding of contexts from within and from below" (Gonsalves, 2010, p. 124) and to understanding "the value and importance of place-specific knowledge" (Cox, 2007, p. 109).

With swadeshi, and with khadi in particular, Gandhi strives to "empower, unite and liberate his people" (Gonsalves, 2010, p. XIX). Just as a self-sufficient country rests on self-sufficient communities, so does community swadeshi rest on swadeshi on the individual level. For instance, in the context of the nonviolent movement towards independence it means that:

> everyone, every individual participant in the movement was responsible for his own process of nonviolence he/she had to confront the enemies within: his own fear, his hatred for the opposing party and his temptation for an armed rebellion (Gonsalves, 2010, p. 79).

And so, swadeshi points to activities that create the foundations of autonomy and independence, and is a form of empowerment, of ensuring that autonomous acting can take place.

SWARAJ

To Gandhi, swadeshi is fundamentally bound up with *swaraj* or 'self-' (swa) 'rule' (raj) (Pandharipande, 2011). *Hind Swaraj* (M. K. Gandhi, 1998) is the title of one of Gandhi's central works in which he explains his vision for Indian independence (Cox, 2007; M. K. Gandhi & Parel, 1997; Mehta, 2011). Just as swadeshi means much more than economic self-sufficiency, swaraj means much more than political independence. It points to sovereignty, but more importantly to the inner freedom and self-determination of the individual and its communities (Pradhan, 2012). Where swadeshi points to empowerment; to creating the conditions for independence, swaraj points to actual autonomy and self-rule (Jahanbegloo, 2013)

National independence is not real swaraj to Gandhi. Swaraj rests on self-control, responsibility for one's actions and their consequences (M. K. Gandhi & Parel, 1997), and like swadeshi, swaraj is a relational concept. Peter Cox explains:

> Understanding the self as fundamentally contextualised and relational, it [swadeshi/swaraj] inevitably conveys restraint, and the demands of understanding and working within limits. Freedom is not defined by lack of restraint but by an ability to operate within the bounds of possibility and proper order of mutual interdependence (Cox, 2007, p. 115).

Because Gandhi is concerned with the actual lives of common people (Bondurant, 1965). for him the personal is political and vice versa. Swadeshi and swaraj serve as a bridge between the two (Paranjape, 2008). Gandhi's emphasis in the whole process of becoming autonomous is on local reforms and "individual effort" (Bondurant, 1965, p. 180). In a process of swadeshi we engage ourselves with our immediate situation. We have to figure out what's going on, how we can address problems, which resources we have, how those need to be adapted, what we might need from others or what others might need from us. Focussing thus on our own situation and acting accordingly, is swaraj. Because the terms swadeshi and swaraj are so closely related and can be said to represent 'two sides of the same coin', I use them jointly to denote one element of nonviolence.

Swadeshi/swaraj expresses the conviction that true liberation or freedom can only be developed from within. Within the country, within the community and most fundamentally within the individual (Cox, 2007) It might be helpful to use the image of concentric circles. From the perspective of swadeshi/swaraj each individual is to govern himself, and become an active member of a community that in turn is self-governing (Jahanbegloo, 2013). Neighbourliness is emphasized, so that communal self-governing becomes possible. The community itself should then apply those same principles towards its surrounding communities, which should each also be as self-sufficient and self-ruling as possible. Localities should work together in regions,

regions in states and states within the nation. Ultimately, nations should work together globally. Thus, true independence is conceptualised as interdependence, with an emphasis on mutual service.

Peter Gonsalves (2012) claims that swadeshi and swaraj are very specific to the Indian independence struggle. In his view the swadeshi movement addresses the specific roots and problematic aspects of Britain's occupation of India. Its focus on economic independence for the masses, for instance in the form of khadi, and more generally in the form of building viable institutions to ensure independence are, in his view, specific for the context of colonised India. He states that nonviolence is practised in other circumstances without aiming for swadeshi or swaraj. I disagree with this view. Although I do agree that khadi and certain other specific aspects of Gandhi's constructive program (such as the removal of untouchability) are highly specific for the Indian context, I would argue that both swadeshi and swaraj, as general principles and understood in their wider implications are not. In fact, I argue that they are fundamental elements of nonviolence no matter which context it is practised in. This, I will explore in the next sections

RELATIONALITY

Put together swadeshi and swaraj point to a form of autonomy. However, this is not autonomy in the traditional sense, with which it is often compared (Prabhu, 2008). Rather, as Cox summarizes

> autonomy is not license but freedom in relation. Autonomy should therefore be read not as an isolationist and exclusive self-identification formed by the erection of exclusive barriers, but as the overcoming of heteronomy (Cox, 2007, p. 115).

In the traditional liberal understanding, the Kantian view that autonomy is a defining characteristic of rational and free moral agents (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000) and is a property of the individual will, rings through. A person is autonomous in as far as she can exercise her will without being influenced by the "desires, inclinations, or the orders of others" (Russell & Tokatlian, 2003, p. 3). Complete autonomy, though desirable, is seldom possible in everyday life (Rossler, 2002). It is even less possible for those people (often women) whose everyday lives are highly shaped by the desires, and needs of others, for instance through their roles as primary care givers.[50]

Perhaps not surprisingly, in feminist thinking the concept of *relational autonomy (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000)* developed, as a critique of this traditional liberal understanding (Christman, 2004). It is used to conceptualise a different form of autonomy that does justice to the emphasis feminist thinking lies on the relationality of life and reality, and of the self.

Where in the liberalist understanding of autonomy the self is defined as 'individual' in the sense of 'separate', in relational autonomy the self is understood as constituted by social ties (Christman, 2009).

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[50] This understanding of autonomy, leading to the (empirical) conclusion, f.i. by Lawrence Kohlberg, that women are therefore generally less capable of developing complete moral maturity, is profoundly problematized by Carol Gilligan (1993).

Relational autonomy departs from the premise that people are essentially social beings, whose identities develop within relations (Sherwin & Winsby, 2011), and who's autonomy is likewise developed within, constrained and complicated by but also made possible through relationships.

> "Relational autonomy" is the label that has been given to an alternative conception of what it means to be a free, self-governing agent who is also socially constituted and who possibly defines her basic value commitments in terms of interpersonal relations and mutual dependencies (Christman, 2004, p. 143)

Such a view of autonomy would do justice to relations of dependence and interdependence (such as relations of care and mutual support), communal identifications and "the dynamics of the physical body" (Barvosa-Carter, 2007, p. 1) that are fundamental to human life (Christman, 2004). It also holds that the support of others is necessary for the exercise of autonomy.

> there is a social component built in to the very meaning of autonomy. That is, the subject-centred activities of reflecting, planning, choosing, and deciding that enter into self-determination are social activities in both a subjective and an objective sense. Subjectively, material for reflection is built on the foundation of a shared past and future expectations that involve others' participation (Donchin, 2000, p. 239).

Autonomy is seen in this view as a process of finding a personal balance within constantly changing relations, a search for a "contextually sensitive decision making

processes" (Cox, 2007, p. 114). Autonomy is not just what helps us to remain an individual in the midst of relations, but is the process of being an individual because of them. In the relational view of autonomy people can only develop autonomy through social interaction (Friedman, 2013), in a context of meaning, values and reflective practices that are always constituted by and through relations. To take this one step further, we can say that the practice of autonomy itself is thus a social practice. Not only are we formed by social relations, our (autonomous) dealings within them help to form others as well as the larger social fabric. Both of the latter again have bearing upon ourselves (Friedman, 2013).[51] Thus, our autonomy and our use of it is connected to the nature of the social context. This context can impede autonomous action, but is at the same time both the means through which and the field in which autonomy is enacted (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000). Then, it becomes crucial to analyse the effect and role of norms, values, institutions, attitudes and beliefs to see how they help or hinder the (capacity for) autonomy development for each person (Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000) and to act in a way that helps to increase the capacity for autonomous action for each.

Swadeshi/swaraj points to such a form of autonomy in which becoming fully human, fully oneself does not rest on freeing oneself from relations and their influence (Prabhu, 2008), but to cultivating autonomy and cultivating the circumstances that enable

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[51] In my article on the role of *satya* (truth telling) in nonviolence, chapter 3 in this book, I explain how, in a similar vein, for Gandhi and Havel 'living in truth' is not just an individual choice that has bearing on one's personal life but also a social and political act that increases options for others and helps to shape (change) social reality.

autonomy. I will try to clarify this further, in the next section, by looking at a specific practice.

NVR

Often, nonviolence practices are thought of in the context of social movements working for civil or political change, or in the context of individual change and development (see for instance: Easwaran, 2011). However, in recent years some nonviolent practices have been developed, that focus on the interpersonal level. As becomes clear from the outline of relational autonomy, the interpersonal is an important locus of swadeshi/swaraj.

One of those practises, that has been gaining quite some attention is Nonviolent Communication (NVC) devised by Marshall Rosenberg (Rosenberg, 2003, 2005). Put briefly, NVC is a method that teaches people to stop making habitual responses to the demands of others, or to conflicts, based only on personal value judgements. Instead people learn to make independent responses based on actual engagement with the other and his or her needs as well as on their own needs in the situation (Mayton, 2009; Rosenberg, 2003). According to Rosenberg, and to many people who apply the method in their life and work, this technique helps to "diffuse [sic.] a potentially violent situation and can precipitate nonviolent behavior when interpersonal conflicts occur" (Mayton, 2009, p. 241).

While only a small volume of research literature exists on this method, NVC is applied today in a growing number of fields, including health care (Sears, 2010), education (see for instance: Burleson et al.,

2012) the justice system (Nash, 2007) conflict resolution (Dickinson, 1998; Lasater & Lasater, 2009) and many more.

Another, lesser known practice that is none the less making headway and is showing promising results, is the training model devised by Israeli psychologist Haim Omer (2004, 2011) for parents of children that exhibit violent or (self-)destructive behaviour. This training, called Nonviolent Resistance (NVR) by Omer, aims to help parents cope with and change the problematic behaviour of their child. Omer positions his method emphatically within the nonviolence paradigm, referring to Gandhi (1927a), King (2001), Sharp (1973a, 1973b, 1973c) and others (see Omer, 2004) as having laid the ground stones upon which this training is built.

The point of the NVR training is to equip parents (or other care takers) with both concrete responses to the violence, as well as with a general sense of empowerment during troubling family circumstances. It rests on what Omer calls 'New Authority' (NA) (Omer, 2011). When confronted with extreme behaviour of their child, parents usually find that they have no effective way to respond. Quite often parents end up in a struggle for control over the household with their child. They are mostly not willing to use violence, but find that their ordinary ways of dealing with their child and establishing authority fail. This then leads parents to feel utterly helpless and these feelings of helplessness increase the risk that they eventually do become violent themselves or respond extremely harsh to the child's behaviour, thereby escalating the

situation (Omer, 2004). This then leaves parents with a sense of failure and brings on more feelings of helplessness. Another common response of parents is submission. They give in to the demands of the child so as to try and preserve an atmosphere of normalcy and peace in the family. Especially if there are other children in the family, parents go to great lengths to try and preserve some sense of regular family life. Submission of the parents then increases demands by the child. Both kind of responses (which in many cases happen side by side) establish their own spiral of escalation. The NVR method attempts to break through these cycles.

The method is aimed at helping parents overcome their feelings of helplessness by providing them with responses that neither give in nor lash out, but do provide resistance to the violence of the child (Omer, 2004, 2011; Rodenburg, Breugem, & Tempe, 2010; Weinblatt & Omer, 2008). Omer tries to outline a new way of exercising authority, firmly rooted in nonviolence. Instead of attempting to control the behaviour of the child, NA rests on the assumption that parents can only control themselves. Where traditional forms of authority are often based on hierarchy and distance, NA is based on "presence and proximity" (Omer, 2011, p. 4).

Even though Omer's method is meant to be used in a family context NVR deliberately applies a terminology of struggle, resistance and power. Parents need to resist the violent behaviour of the child, and restore their own power in the household. This terminology sometimes makes parents or therapists hesitant to use the method, because it seems that the child is

presented as the (sole) perpetrator and its voice is insufficiently heard (Newman & Nolas, 2008). However, the term power is used in a very particular way in NVR. The aim of the method is not to overcome, subdue or control the child, but rather to reinstall the parents (and subsequently also the child's) sense of self-worth and personal power.[52] The idea is to protect both the child as well as the parents from the destructive effects of the violence and lead everyone in the family to a constructive way of responding to occurring situations and to each other.

The responses of the NVR method are based on a firm commitment to nonviolence. In the training parents pledge to refrain from using violence (a given for most parents), but also from humiliating or derogating speech. Instead of applying punishment, the parents learn to contrast the aggression with a different kind of response (Jakob, 2011, p. 8), and Omer states that:

> Opting for nonviolent resistance means acting so that the perpetuation of oppression and violence is gradually made impossible (Omer, 2004, pp. 7–8).

In the training parents are presented with a number of concrete actions to take when violence or high-risk behaviour occurs. Many of these are directly derived from methods used in nonviolent social action. The most important ones are sit-ins, telephone rounds, tailing and forms of strike.[53] Parents are also asked to break the silence and "lift the veil of secrecy"(Weinblatt

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[52] This different way of wielding power can be seen as an instance of integrative power as described by Kenneth Boulding (Boulding, 1990, 1999). For an in-depth discussion on this notion see chapters 2 and 5 in this book.

& Omer, 2008, p. 78) about the violence. They should call on their own social network and inform other people in the child's life, such as teachers, family members and other parents, of their situation and the decision to apply NVR and ask them to support the process.

Complete openness is also applied towards the child (Rodenburg et al., 2010). Parents inform the child about their intentions to stop the violence and to use NVR, and about which steps are taken and why. Parents are encouraged to continuously perform acts of reconciliation and respect towards the child (without surrendering). In a way, parents are asked to seek cooperation with the child to end the violence. Even though the child might not be willing to cooperate, the parents must emphasize and maintain the positive aspects of the relationship. Through this, the parents convey the message that "we are your parents and we are in your life and will not let you go" (Omer, 2004, 2011; Rodenburg et al., 2010; Weinblatt & Omer, 2008).

Just as with nonviolence in the socio-political realm, NVR relies on personal interposition, contact and persistent presence, in this case parental presence (Omer et al., 2008). Parental presence refers not only to general or psychological presence in the child's life, but also the physical presence of the parent at the moment or the place when the child is showing the problematic behaviour. The parent goes in person to the location where the child uses drugs or alcohol, interposes himself when the child is violent towards

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[53] The specific techniques and steps of the method can be found in the Handbook of Nonviolent Resistance that is a separate section in (Omer, 2004).

someone else, and constantly resist unwanted behaviour. During a sit-in, for example:

> the parents enter the child's room, sit down, and announce to the child that they will stay there and wait for the child's proposal to avoid the problem behavior that triggered the sit-in. The parents are instructed to remain quiet, strictly avoiding arguments and provocations. The sit-in lasts up to 1 hr [sic] (unless an acceptable proposal is made by the child). The therapist prepares the parents to withstand the various reactions that the child might evince without escalating. The sit-in thus serves also as a valuable training ground for the parents in the prevention of escalation. The sit-in is envisaged not as a punishment, but as a means of manifesting parental presence and increasing the parents' capacity of resisting without escalating (Weinblatt & Omer, 2008, p. 80).

The method is a form of constructive, rather than obstructive resistance (Omer et al., 2008). It is aimed at actively creating a new situation and new relationships in the household. The claim of NVR is that by focussing on changing parent's reactions to the violence, the behaviour of the child will gradually change, because the desired effect, (power and control in the household) is no longer reached (Omer, 2004). This might seem overly idealistic, but the method is receiving growing international acclaim and being implemented, researched and further developed to be used in different contexts (see for instance: Avraham-Krehwinkel & Aldridge, 2010; Lebowitz et al., 2012; Omer et al., 2008).

SWADESHI/SWARAJ IN NONVIOLENCE

Omer's NVR clearly highlights the way in which swadeshi/swaraj plays a role in nonviolence. The primary goal of NVR is to establish a change of behaviour in the parents, rather than the child. Parents have to give up the idea that they can control the behaviour of their child, but they might be able to influence the child through a change in their own actions. This shift in focus reduces parental helplessness, because parents are no longer burdened by the notion that they are responsible for changing the child.

> Acceptance of the limits of control is reflected (…) in the substantial difference between punishment and resistance. Punishment is an attempt at control. This is particularly obvious in the psychological concept of *negative (or positive) reinforcement*. (…)The situation differs when a parent or teacher *resists* undesirable behavior by the child (…). The difference between resistance and punishment is not just semantic. The attention of the authority figure displaying resistance is focused on conveying a clear and determined stance, whereas meting out punishment focuses solely on results (Omer, 2011, p. 16)

The new behaviour rests on increasing parental presence, preventing escalations, implementing and persevering in nonviolent responses and measures and creating openness toward and gaining support from the surrounding network (Jakob, 2011).

The NVR training teaches parents to assume responsibility for their own part in the escalation process. This is not the same as laying the blame for the child's behaviour with the parents. The question is

not one of blame, but one of response toward the behaviour and responsibility for one's actions. And so, NVR is to a large extent concerned with empowerment and creating circumstances in which parents (and by extension also the child) are free to act autonomously rather than be swept away by each other's responses, and it is precisely this that is conveyed by swadeshi/swaraj.

Feminist thinking on relational autonomy stresses the importance of understanding the self as a self-in-context, and describes the different options for autonomy that become thus available, but also the kind of behaviour that it demands (Cox, 2007; Friedman, 2013; Mackenzie & Stoljar, 2000). When the self is understood as a self-in-context, it becomes clear that a form of self-restraint is necessary and that one needs to find one's way within the limits given by the context (Cox, 2007), rather than look for a way to be as free of those limits as possible. Explained in terms of Omer's New Authority, self-restraint becomes a basis for authority and autonomy, because it frees

> those in authority from the compulsion to triumph, and to retaliate when provoked. Although the traditional authority figure felt compelled again and again to protect his honor, the new one is free to decline any invitation to an imagined duel (Omer, 2011, pp. 8–9).

Omer's method is a good example of the working and importance of swadeshi/swaraj, a form of relational autonomy on the interpersonal level. But the same principles apply on the social level. The parents can't directly change the behaviour of their child in Omer's

NVR method, and likewise, social movements that use nonviolence to establish civil or political change mostly can't control the system, the oppressor or adversary. However, similar to the situation of the parents in Omer's method, they *can* change the way in which they operate within the situation or the system, or how they behave towards their adversary. Summarized: one does not have to change the system. By changing behaviour, the system will change. This is not some form of magic, but a result of systems being sets of relations.

Swadeshi/swaraj is the element of nonviolence that affirms "agency, even in the subaltern[54], it turns the actor towards the local, the indigenous, the self" (Cox, 2007, p. 112). Even in a position that is perceived as powerless, some form of agency still exists.

Gandhi's above cited comments on India's own responsibility for its colonization point to that. And, just like the parents in the NVR method are not to blame for there children's behaviour, for Gandhi it is also not a matter of assigning blame. Rather, it is a way of affirming that the subaltern is not just a bystander, but plays a role in the situation as it exists. Therefore, it can also play a role in changing it.

> This agency, and the resources with which to express it may not be articulate. It may be latent or suppressed or ignored and devalued in the

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[54] Subaltern is a term used by Antonio Gramsci (see for instance: Gramsci, 1992) to denote those social groups that are not part of, not represented by, or are actively excluded from, the formal power structures of their society. At the same time those groups are used to define the hegemonic group. For example: during colonisation, the British as a colonizing power were not a homogeneous group, but consisted of different socio-economic groups, with varying degrees of status, power and so on. Yet, all British were part of the political elite, because they were non-Indian and therefore had certain rights. The political system was set up to deny the Indian population representation, even though certain Indians (for example local rulers) were allowed a certain amount of power (see for instance: Beverley, Fish, & Jameson, 1999; H. Trivedi, 2011).

> contemporary context, but nevertheless (...) such resources are implicit (Cox, 2007, p. 113)

Swadeshi/swaraj represents the need for empowerment and for the creating a situation in which real autonomy can happen. In other words, it points to building infrastructure and institutions, to the build up of formal relations, that make communal autonomy possible. In Gandhi's Swadeshi movement, this can be found in the emphasis on the constructive element. The mere boycott of British goods is not enough; it would still not mean true independence. To make the Indian independence possible it is necessary to create economic autonomy for the masses. Cotton had been produced in India from time immemorial. Reviving the cotton industry and reclaiming this as a source of income for India therefore made sense. Economic autonomy must mean self-sufficiency for the masses, not just for an upper-class of industrial owners. The lower classes would still depend on the cheapest goods available. Therefore, the people of India should provide a service to each other by committing to the use and production of khadi, helping each other to be independent.

And thus, swadeshi/swaraj is about more than just being able to fend for yourself. It is a form of service. The kind of autonomy it represents is not just concerned with the self, but with the self-in-context. Nonviolence implies that we act autonomously, consciously within a set of relations, with a view to serve others and support their autonomy, create situations in which this is possible for others and for ourselves and address situations in which this is not.

SUMMARY

In this dissertation research I look at nonviolence in the context of humanistic studies, a multi-disciplinary academic field that critically explores issues of (existential) meaning and humanization, personal and social aspects of 'good living'. From this academic background I attempt to answer the central research question of this study: What is contemporary nonviolence?

I use the term nonviolence not only to point to the absence of violence, for instance when solving problems or conflicts, but as substantive method, or even a paradigm. Nonviolence has been a part of every major religious tradition and has been practised for centuries and in every part of the world. Yet, no language in the world has a general term to express the idea of nonviolence as an authentic and proactive concept. It is only referred to as a negation of something else. Nonviolence is not violence.

People who have actively promoted nonviolence in recent times, have stumbled over this lack of adequate terms. It caused them to figure out for themselves what it means. Taken at face value, nonviolence has often been understood to mean passivity, non-interference or even cowardice. To explain that this was not at all what they were getting at, practitioners of nonviolence have, in many instances, come up with their own way to describe the pro-active nature. Gandhi, for instance, coined the new term satyagraha (holding on to truth) to express his method for waging struggle. In the Philippines it became *alay dangal (*to offer dignity). But

these different terms do not clear up the question as to what nonviolence is. Is one expression of it (satyagraha) the same as another (alay dangal)?

The aim of this study is twofold. First is to discern if it is possible to understand nonviolence as a substantive and pro-active concept, independent of specific cultural, religious or practical contexts. And, if so, what that would look like. The second is to see if from such an independent notion it is possible to develop a framework for analysis and practice of nonviolence. The thesis consists of five independent but related articles and an overarching chapter, in which I try to answer these questions.

The Gandhian understanding of nonviolence has been the starting point of my study. However, even though Gandhi's work provides an important basis for understanding nonviolence, many developments have taken place in nonviolent practice and theory after Gandhi. To come to an understanding of contemporary nonviolence it is therefore important to go beyond Gandhi and also study the way the Gandhian concepts have been taken up by others. In doing so I have looked at which concepts have carried over to the work of other thinkers and practitioners and how these concepts have been developed and changed and what remained the same.

Although I have looked at the life and work of many thinkers, practitioners and movements, my study does not specifically focus on one of them. However, in the description of my research results I do refer to many individuals and movements, as examples or to clarify and explore the different elements of nonviolence.

It became clear that nonviolence understood solely in a strategic sense does not allow us to understand

most of the reasoning and moral aspects that are for so many a fundamental part. I understand nonviolence therefore in a principled sense and this study focuses on the philosophical and intentional aspects of nonviolence, within which the strategies take shape.

After an analysis of these diverse descriptions of nonviolence, I conclude that five basic elements form the core of modern nonviolence: satya (truth-seeking), ahimsa (non-harming), tapasya (self-suffering), sarvodaya (the welfare of all) and swadeshi/swaraj (relational autonomy). These five elements together point to a specific way of wielding power that is best denoted with the term 'integrative power' as coined by Kenneth Boulding.

Each of these elements is a complex and layered notion and I pose that these elements are present in and equally important to each application of nonviolence. In this dissertation I try to analyse these five elements, what they imply and what their role is in nonviolence, by exploring the work of Vaclav Havel, Haim Omer and René Girard, among others, as well as radical ecology and endogenous development.

I denote these elements with the Sanskrit terms originating in the work of Gandhi. I argue that these terms are suitable to adequately capture this complexity and coherence. Gandhi already used these mostly ancient terms in a slightly new and amended way, often without shedding their original meaning. As a result of contemporary nonviolent efforts and experience gained since Gandhi's struggle, their meaning (in the context of nonviolence) has expanded even more. This does, however, not necessarily mean that the terms themselves are used in every context. Even so, it is my claim that although in different

contexts different terms are being used, they point to these same elements.

The first element is *satya*, meaning 'truth' in Sanskrit. To Gandhi, truth was both universal as well as particular. He was convinced that there was such a thing as universal truth, yet people could only understand it in a relative sense. Gandhi wanted people to examine each situation, to get to understand what was at stake for all involved, so as to arrive at a fuller understanding of truth. Although people should strive to understand the truth of every situation, one can never claim to be all-knowing. In Gandhian thought, truth is based in experience. We can experience something to be true, yet someone else can come to an opposite conclusion based on his or her own experiences. In times of disagreement, it could be that the other party sees something more of the truth than we do, even though we are convinced that we are right. This does not mean that we should instantly give up our own ideas about the truth, it means that we allow for the possibility for both truths to exist. This would make *satya* an extremely relative concept, were it not for the fact that each experience still has universal value. The experience of truth does not lead to a rule for everyone to follow, but it does lead to a rule for oneself to follow. *Satya* therefore implies that "we are dedicated to the truth we perceive, to the truth we understand".

This element takes a central place in the work of Václav Havel, and in this study I have focussed on his ideas to explore satya. Havel's work shows that satya demands that we see the world as an arena where different truths meet and interact, something that he denotes with 'the logic of stories'. Both Gandhi and Havel stress that the personal and the political, the individual and the public quest to live in truth as

intertwined. The personal search for one's identity and truth are done in private, but acting upon one's truth, is a public act and has social consequences. So, the role of satya in nonviolence is not just a moral imperative to 'live in truth', but a call to action, to participate in the creation of social realities that are more nonviolent.

Ahimsa, literally meaning 'the absence of the intention to do harm', is the second element. It implies nonviolence on the physical level, but also through words, behaviour and thoughts. *Ahimsa* came to mean not only harmlessness in a negative sense, avoiding harm, but also in a positive sense, as addressing 'harm' for instance through social service. When we encounter circumstances in which we or others experience injustice and we do not venture to remedy the situation, we are from the point of view of nonviolence to a certain extent complicit. Thus, acting without the intention to do harm, means addressing the problems we encounter as best we can.

Whereas in nonviolence thinking this is understood foremost (though not solely) in a social way, a very similar attitude is developed in relation to the natural world, in the context of Radical Ecology. Radical Ecology is a way of thinking that searches how a radical transformation of human "being in the world" can be brought about, that would allow humans and non-human beings both to flourish. In this study I have compared the notion of ahimsa to this specific way of relating to "the other" that Radical Ecology proposes. This shift in attitude is not in the first place related to dealing with an antagonistic other (although nature is sometimes cast that way in western thinking), but with an "other" that is a different life form. However, in both cases the other has a different outlook on life, and different needs for flourishing. Although the term

ahimsa is seldom mentioned in a radical ecological context, the shift in attitude it represents is very similar, amounting to "saying "yes" to all living beings".

Ahimsa points to the realisation that the lives of all are intertwined and that harm to one ultimately amounts to harm to all. Attitudes in which humanity as a whole, or specific human groups are, for whatever reason, perceived as superior and therefore entitled to more resources or chances for self-development are harmful. Ahimsa denotes an attitude towards others in which we make every effort not to harm their chances of 'being', their dignity and chances for self-development, by consciously changing the way we relate to them, and by actively cultivating an attitude that helps others to flourish, even those we see as enemies, or those who we try to resist. The cultivation of such an attitude is no simple task as Gandhi, Khan, King and Radical Ecological thinkers have equally shown. But from the perspective of nonviolence it is the only way to come to the fundamental changes.

Out of the five elements *tapasya* is usually the most difficult to grasp, certainly from a western point of view. *Tapasya* translates as both 'heat' and 'suffering'. The role of tapasya in nonviolence is threefold. First, it implies the willingness to suffer instead of retaliating when confronted with violence or injustice. This breaks the cycle of violence. It is not the same as giving in. It means addressing the violence by not participating in the dynamic it calls for; fight, flight or freeze. Tapasya then becomes an agent for self-transformation. An example is the firm internal struggle to overcome ill will to the opponent. *Tapasya* also points towards dedication or discipline. Living according to 'truth'

might require discipline which can amount to 'suffering'.

In the context of this study I have compared tapasya to the work of philosopher René Girard. To Girard violence is connected to sacrifice. However, in their writings on nonviolence, Gandhi, King and others speak of the role of sacrifice in nonviolence and the dedication of one's life to the well-being of all. The sacrifice that tapasya refers to is the creation of a situation in which the humanity of *all* people can rise to the surface, rather than adhering to self-preservation at the expense of the other.

Girard himself remains sceptical about the practical realities of a nonviolent society, but takes it to mean a complete elimination of vengeance and reprisal. I maintain that this is what is meant by tapasya.

The fourth element is that of *swadeshi/swaraj*. *Swadeshi* means self-reliance, being able to care for yourself, act independently. In a political sense *swadeshi* implies economic self-reliance and having your own institutions. For individuals it means to be as self-sufficient as possible, to have agency and self-efficacy and create the circumstances that allow you to do so. *Swaraj* means self-rule. This can refer to political autonomy. But it also implies autonomy at the personal level, like not giving in to impulses or habits or coercion by others (*tapasya*), not violating the autonomy of others (*ahimsa*), being able to make your own choices based on the truth as you understand it (*satya*), with a view to the welfare of all (*sarvodaya*). It is thus a relational concept of autonomy, meaning that one's autonomy can only exist in relation to that of others. And here, it becomes clear that the five elements are interrelated.

In this study I look at a specific practice of nonviolence to clarify swadeshi/swaraj: a method for working with violent and self-destructive children developed by Israeli Psychologist Haim Omer. Omer's method is to a large extent concerned with empowerment and creating circumstances in which parents (and by extension also the child) are not swept away by each other's responses, but can deal with the violence in a way that addresses the problem, and also helps the family as a whole to function better. Swadeshi/swaraj points to such an attitude of autonomy within a web of relations.

The fifth element of nonviolence is *sarvodaya*, or the welfare of all. In a particular situation it would mean the welfare of all involved in the situation. Solving any form of injustice or conflict through nonviolence means addressing the injustice, not the person committing it. In the Christian vocabulary of Martin Luther King; 'condemning the sin, not the sinner'. The welfare of all can, for instance, not be served if punishment for an injustice causes harm in its own right. Means and ends have to be in accordance. One particular contemporary practice that is closely connected with nonviolence and highlights the salient aspects of sarvodaya is that of Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice is a practise of addressing crimes in a way that does not seek retribution (an equal amount of harm dealt to the perpetrator through punishment), but seeks to repair as much as possible the damage that is done and the re-integration of all parties i.e. with the uplift or well-being of all in mind.

These five elements, form a coherent and dynamic whole that constitutes nonviolence. As I understand nonviolence, each of these elements have to be present,

as they supplement and support each other. The five elements together form a framework which can be used as a tool for analyses as well as a starting point for formulating practice. Nonviolence, understood in this five-fold way, implies a specific form of wielding power, for which I use, following Kenneth Boulding, the term integrative power.

For Boulding, from the three basic ways of wielding, integrative power is the most important in comparison to the other two; threat and exchange power, which are often together paraphrased as 'the carrot and the stick'. Integrative power is the power of and through human relationships. It is connected to everything that establishes a relation either personal or in the form of institutions or organizations.

When we look at nonviolence as a praxis, we can divide it into two distinct but related sections, 'constructive program' and 'obstructive program'. Obstructive program - the various forms of protest against and non-cooperation with violence and injustice- is the most widely known part of nonviolence.

The constructive side of nonviolence points to the development of new (social) structures that embody and support the nonviolent realities one strives for. On the other hand, constructive activities can themselves become a form of protest when the creation of alternative (parallel) institutions becomes a way to circumvent those that are deemed violent or problematic. In a way, constructive program aims at structural nonviolence.

Therefore, my summarized answer to the main research question 'what is contemporary nonviolence?' is that contemporary nonviolence is a pro-active and substantial mode of conduct, of which the universal characteristics are satya, ahimsa, tapasya,

swadeshi/swaraj and sarvodaya, as explained above and explored in more detail in the rest of this book. Together they amount to a specific form of wielding power, here denoted with the term integrative power. In addition, nonviolence has both an obstructive and a constructive side, which both are expressions of these five elements.

Nonviolence has both personal as well as social implications and in this light nonviolence can be seen as a tool for humanization, resting in processes of existential meaning giving, making nonviolence an important topic in the context of humanistic studies.

SAMENVATTING

In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik geweldloosheid tegen de achtergrond van de humanistiek. Humanistiek is een multidisciplinaire wetenschap die zingeving en humanisering, de persoonlijke en sociale kanten van 'goed leven', kritisch onderzoekt en bestudeert. Vanuit deze academische achtergrond probeer ik de centrale vraag van dit onderzoek te beantwoorden: wat is hedendaagse geweldloosheid?

Ik gebruik de term geweldloosheid hier niet alleen om te verwijzen naar de afwezigheid van geweld, bijvoorbeeld bij het oplossen van conflicten of problemen, maar vooral ook om te verwijzen naar een eigenstandige methode of zelfs een paradigma. Het idee van geweldloosheid is terug vinden in iedere grote religieuze traditie en wordt al eeuwen lang in de praktijk gebracht, overal ter wereld. Toch is er in geen enkele taal een algemene term te vinden die het idee van geweldloosheid als authentiek en proactief concept uitdrukt. Telkens wordt het uitsluitend als een negatie benoemd. Geweldloosheid is geen geweld. Maar, wat is het dan wel?

Mensen die zich in de recente geschiedenis actief met geweldloosheid hebben beziggehouden zijn ook steeds tegen dit gebrek aan adequate terminologie aangelopen. Dat heeft hen er toe aangezet voor zichzelf uit te zoeken wat geweldloosheid precies inhoudt. Op het eerste gezicht wordt geweldloosheid vaak verstaan als passiviteit, niet-inmenging, of zelfs lafheid. Om uit

te leggen dat dit absoluut niet was waar zij op doelden, hebben deze beoefenaars van geweldloosheid vaak hun eigen termen bedacht die wel recht deden aan de pro-actieve aard van het concept. Gandhi bijvoorbeeld, bedacht de term *satyagraha* (vasthouden aan waarheid) voor zijn methode om voor sociale rechtvaardigheid te strijden. Op de Filipijnen werd het *alay dangal* (het aanbieden van waardigheid). Maar deze verschillende termen geven geen helder antwoord op de vraag wat geweldloosheid is. Is de ene uitdrukking ervan (satyagraha) echt hetzelfde als de andere (alay dangal)?

Het doel van deze studie is tweeledig. Ten eerste om te zien of het mogelijk is hedendaagse geweldloosheid te begrijpen als een zelfstandig en proactief concept, los van specifieke culturele, religieuze of praktische contexten, en zo ja, hoe dat er dan uit zou zien? Ten tweede om te zien of het vanuit zo'n eigenstandig concept van geweldloosheid mogelijk is een kader te ontwikkelen voor analyse en het vormgeven van praktijken.

Het proefschrift bestaat uit vijf afzonderlijke (maar samenhangende) artikelen en een overkoepelend hoofdstuk, waarin ik probeer deze vragen te beantwoorden.

De Gandhiaanse opvatting van geweldloosheid is het vertrekpunt van dit onderzoek. Echter, hoewel Gandhi's werk een belangrijke basis vormt voor het begrijpen van hedendaagse geweldloosheid, hebben er veel ontwikkelingen in het denken over en praktiseren van geweldloosheid plaatsgevonden ná Gandhi. Om tot een goed begrip ervan te komen is het daarom belangrijk om verder te kijken en te bestuderen op welke manier

Gandhi's concepten zijn overgenomen door anderen. Ik heb bekeken welke elementen terug zijn te vinden in de theorieën en praktijken van anderen en hoe deze concepten zich daar verder hebben ontwikkeld en zijn veranderd, en wat hetzelfde gebleven is.

Hoewel ik het leven en werk van verschillende denkers, doeners en groepen heb bestudeerd, richt mijn onderzoek zich niet specifiek op één ervan. Bij de beschrijving van mijn onderzoeksresultaten refereer ik aan verschillende individuen en bewegingen als voorbeelden en om de elementen te verhelderen en uit te werken.

Het is daarbij duidelijk geworden dat wanneer geweldloosheid uitsluitend wordt opgevat in een strategische zin, we de redeneringen en morele overwegingen die voor velen een fundamenteel onderdeel zijn van geweldloosheid niet kunnen berijpen. Ik vat geweldloosheid daarom in principiële zin op en dit onderzoek richt zich op de filosofische en intentionele aspecten waarbinnen de strategieën worden vormgegeven.

Na een analyse van de diverse beschrijvingen van geweldloosheid, concludeer ik dat vijf basiselementen de kern van hedendaagse geweldloosheid vormen: *satya* (het zoeken naar waarheid), *ahimsa* (niet-schaden), *tapasya* (het aangaan van lijden), *sarvodaya* (streven naar het welzijn van allen) en *swadeshi/swaraj* (relationele autonomie). Deze vijf elementen samen, wijzen in de richting van een specifieke vorm van machtsuitoefening die het best kan worden aangeduid met de term "integratieve macht" die is bedacht door Kenneth Boulding.

Elk van deze elementen is een complex en gelaagd begrip. Naar mijn mening zijn deze elementen noodzakelijkerwijs aanwezig in iedere uiting van geweldloosheid en allemaal even belangrijk ervoor. In dit proefschrift tracht ik deze vijf elementen, wat ze impliceren en wat hun rol in geweldloosheid is, te doorgronden door onder andere het werk van Vaclav Havel, Haim Omer en René Girard te exploreren, evenals de Radicale Ecologie en "endogenous development".

Ik duid deze elementen aan met de termen uit het Sanskriet zoals die voorkomen in het werk van Gandhi, omdat die mijns inziens geschikt zijn om de complexiteit en samenhang van de elementen goed uit te drukken. Gandhi gebruikte deze (soms eeuwen oude) termen al op een enigszins nieuwe en aangepaste manier, vaak zonder hun oorspronkelijke betekenis los te laten. Als gevolg van de hedendaagse geweldloze inspanningen en ervaringen die zijn opgedaan sinds the strijd van Gandhi, heeft hun betekenis (in de context van geweldloosheid) zich nog verder uitgebreid. Dat wil echter niet zeggen dat deze termen daadwerkelijk in iedere situatie gebruikt worden. Desondanks is het mijn these dat hoewel in verschillende situaties verschillende uitdrukkingen worden gebruikt, ze steeds naar deze vijf elementen verwijzen.

Het eerste element is satya, dat 'waarheid' betekent in het Sanskriet. Zoals gezegd is het werk van Gandhi mijn vertrekpunt. In Gandhi's opvatting is waarheid zowel universeel als specifiek of relatief. Hij is er van overtuigd dat er één universele waarheid of realiteit bestaat, maar dat mensen die alleen ten dele kunnen

kennen en begrijpen. Bovendien is in zijn opvatting de realiteit meervoudig. Gandhi wil dat mensen iedere situatie onderzoeken en bevragen om te ontdekken wat daarin belangrijk is voor alle betrokkenen. Op die manier kunnen mensen tot een groter inzicht in de waarheid komen. Hoewel hij vindt dat mensen moeten streven naar een zo volledig mogelijk inzicht in iedere situatie, kan niemand zeggen dat hij of zij alwetend is.

In het Gandhiaanse denken is waarheid gegrond in de ervaring. We kunnen iets als waar ervaren, maar iemand anders kan tot een tegenovergestelde conclusie komen op basis van zijn of haar eigen (heel andere) ervaringen. In het geval van onenigheid kan het zo zijn dat de andere partij meer ziet van de waarheid dan wij, ook al zijn wij er van overtuigd dat we gelijk hebben. Dat wil niet zeggen dat we onze ideeën over de waarheid meteen moeten opgeven, het wil zeggen dat we de mogelijkheid voor het bestaan van beide waarheden moeten openhouden. Dat zou satya een uitermate relativistisch begrip maken, ware het niet dat iedere ervaring nog steeds universele waarde heeft, alle ervaringen zijn echt. De ervaring van één specifieke waarheid kan niet leiden tot een regel die iedereen moet volgen (dat zou de echtheid van andere ervaringen ontkennen), maar wel tot een regel voor onszelf. Satya impliceert dus dat we toegewijd zijn aan de waarheid zoals wij die ervaren.

Hoewel hij het woord niet gebruikt staat dit element ook centraal in het werk van Václav Havel, en in dit onderzoek wend ik me tot zijn ideeën om het begrip satya verder uit te werken. Havel laat zien dat satya vraagt dat we de wereld beschouwen als een arena waar verschillende waarheden elkaar ontmoeten en op

elkaar inwerken, iets wat hij benoemd als 'de logica van verhalen'. Zowel Gandhi als Havel benadrukken dat het persoonlijke en het politieke, de individuele en de publieke zoektocht naar waarheid nauw met elkaar verweven zijn. De persoonlijke zoektocht naar je identiteit en je eigen waarheid is vooral een privé aangelegenheid, maar het handelen vanuit je waarheid is een publieke daad en heeft gevolgen in en voor je sociale omgeving. De confrontatie met andere waarheden biedt een gelegenheid om tot diepere en meer complexe inzichten te komen. Het opleggen van één waarheid die voor iedereen zou moeten gelden is daarentegen dehumaniserend en gewelddadig omdat zij de mogelijkheid van andere ervaringen ontkent. Daarom is het nodig dat wij onze eigen waarheid uitdragen, zodat anderen daarmee geconfronteerd kunnen worden. Havel laat zien dat dit nog niet zo simpel is. We stellen onze eigen inzichten ermee ter discussie, stellen onszelf bloot aan kritiek en in situaties waarin vooral één specifieke versie van de waarheid gewenst is, bijvoorbeeld in een dictatuur, kan dit grote gevolgen hebben. Maar het handelen vanuit je eigen waarheid kan daarmee ook een vorm van verzet en van sociale verandering zijn. Je toont ermee in de praktijk aan dat de opgelegde waarheid niet de enige is en helpt daarmee ruimte te scheppen voor de waarheid van anderen. De rol van satya in geweldloosheid is dus niet alleen die van een morele opdracht om in waarheid te leven, maar ook een oproep tot handelen, tot het realiseren van een sociale werkelijkheid die geweldlozer is.

Ahimsa, het tweede element, betekent letterlijk 'de afwezigheid van de intentie schade toe te brengen'. Het

impliceert geweldloosheid op het fysieke niveau, maar ook in woorden, gedrag en zelfs gedachten. Geleidelijk aan heeft ahimsa naast de negatieve betekenis (het vermijden van schade) ook een positieve betekenis gekregen, die van het aanpakken van situaties waarin schade wordt toegebracht, bijvoorbeeld via sociale dienstverlening. Wanneer we geconfronteerd worden met omstandigheden waarin ons of anderen onrechtvaardigheid wordt aangedaan en we niet proberen iets aan die situatie te veranderen, zijn we vanuit het gezichtspunt van geweldloosheid tot op zekere hoogte medeplichtig. Handelen zonder de intentie schade toe te brengen betekent dus het aanpakken van problemen, voor zover dat in ons vermogen ligt.

Binnen het denken over geweldloosheid wordt dit element in de eerste plaats (maar niet uitsluitend) op een sociale manier opgevat. Echter, in de context van de Radicale Ecologie wordt een soortgelijke houding ontwikkeld maar dan in relatie tot de natuurlijke omgeving. De Radicale Ecologie is een denkstroming die zoekt naar hoe een radicale transformatie van 'het mens-zijn in de wereld' tot stand kan worden gebracht, die ertoe kan leiden dat zowel menselijke als niet-menselijke wezens in gelijke mate kunnen floreren. In dit proefschrift heb ik het begrip ahimsa vergeleken met deze specifieke manier van 'zich verhouden tot de ander' die de Radicale Ecologie voorstelt. In de Radicale Ecologie gaat het niet zozeer om een verschuiving in de verhouding tot een ander als tegenstander (hoewel de natuur soms wel zo afgeschilderd wordt) maar tot een ander die een andere levensvorm is. Desondanks heeft de ander in beide

gevallen een andere visie op het leven en heeft heel verschillende dingen nodig om te kunnen floreren. Hoewel de term ahimsa in de Radicale Ecologie nauwelijks gebruikt wordt is de houdingsverschuiving die wordt nagestreefd gelijksoortig. Deze komt neer op het werkelijk kunnen bevestigen van de ander (in al zijn anders-zijn).

Ahimsa verwijst naar het besef dat de levens van allen met elkaar verbonden zijn en dat het schaden van de één uiteindelijk neerkomt op het schaden van iedereen. Het standpunt dat specifieke groepen mensen, of de mensheid als geheel, op wat voor grond dan ook superieur zouden zijn aan andere groepen en daarom recht zouden hebben op meer middelen voor of kansen op zelfontwikkeling is schadelijk. Ahimsa vertegenwoordigt een houding ten opzichte van anderen waarin we er naar streven hun kansen op leven, hun waardigheid en hun mogelijkheden tot zelfontwikkeling niet te schaden en zelfs proberen hun welzijn en ontwikkeling te bevorderen. Zelfs ten opzichte van tegenstanders en ook terwijl we ons tegen hen verzetten. Het cultiveren van zo'n houding is niet eenvoudig zoals Gandhi, Martin Luther King en ook de Radicaal Ecologen laten zien. Maar binnen geweldloosheid is het de enige manier waarop er werkelijke veranderingen tot stand gebracht kunnen worden.

Van de vijf elementen is *tapasya* meestal het moeilijkst te bevatten, met name vanuit een westers perspectief. Tapasya kan worden vertaald zowel met 'hitte' als met 'lijden' en het speelt op op drie manieren een rol in geweldloosheid. Ten eerste verwijst het naar de bereidheid om het lijden aan te gaan, in plaats van

te kiezen voor vergelding wanneer we geconfronteerd worden met geweld of onrechtvaardigheid. Dit doorbreekt de geweldsspiraal. Tapasya wil niet zeggen dat we moeten toegeven aan geweld of het lijdzaam moeten ondergaan. Het wil zeggen dat we bewust uit de gebruikelijke dynamiek van 'vluchten, vechten of bevriezen' stappen. De tweede rol van tapasya is daarom die van zelf-transformatie. Een voorbeeld is de innerlijke worsteling om over aversie tegen een tegenstander heen te komen. Ten derde verwijst tapasya naar toewijding en discipline. De beoefening van satya en ahimsa bijvoorbeeld vereist training, geduld en de bereidheid om tegenstand en kritiek te ontvangen.

In dit onderzoek heb ik de notie van tapasya vergeleken met het werk van de filosoof René Girard. Een centraal thema in het werk van Girard is dat van 'het offer' dat hij verbindt aan geweld. Echter, mensen als Gandhi en Martin Luther King hebben het ook vaak over het brengen van offers, maar juist in de context van geweldloosheid. Het offer dat Girard beschrijft is dat van een zondebok, die wordt opgeofferd en uitgedreven om de cohesie van de oorspronkelijke groep te waarborgen. Iedere vorm van geweld is een afspiegeling van dit mechanisme, stelt Girard. Binnen geweldloosheid speelt een ander offer een rol, daar gaat het er om de gerichtheid op het eigene op te offeren, zodat er ruimte ontstaat voor diversiteit en het welzijn van allen ontplooid kan worden.

Girard stelt dat wanneer mensen de dynamiek van de zondebok en het offeren ervan zouden doorzien, zij in staat zouden zijn een andere keuze te maken en de samenleving, waar volgens hem geweld nu een

fundamentele rol in speelt, anders zouden kunnen vormgeven. Hoewel hij zelf sceptisch blijft over de reële mogelijkheid om dit tot stand te brengen stelt hij dat dat in ieder geval zou betekenen dat mensen iedere impuls tot vergelding en wraak zouden moeten opgeven. Binnen het denken over geweldloosheid staat men daar minder sceptisch tegenover en verschillende voorbeelden uit de praktijk laten zien dat mensen daarin een heel eind kunnen komen, hoewel dit veel moeite kost. Tapasya is het element in geweldloosheid dat dat uitdrukt.

Het vierde element is *swadeshi/swaraj*. Swadeshi betekent zelfstandigheid. In politieke zin verwijst swadeshi naar economische zelfstandigheid en het hebben van eigen instituties. Op het persoonlijke niveau betekent het zo zelfvoorzienend mogelijk te zijn, en onafhankelijk en doelmatig kunnen zijn. Het verwijst ook naar het kunnen creëren van omstandigheden die zelfstandigheid mogelijk maken. Swaraj betekent zelfbestuur. Dit kan verwijzen naar politieke autonomie, maar ook naar autonomie op het persoonlijke vlak. Swadeshi en swaraj hangen nauw samen en zijn in dit onderzoek dan ook samengenomen. Tegelijkertijd zijn ze ook verbonden met de andere elementen van geweldloosheid. Swadeshi/swaraj verwijst bijvoorbeeld naar het vermogen impulsen, gewoonten of dwang van anderen te kunnen weerstaan (tapasya), het kunnen maken van eigen keuzes gebaseerd op de waarheid zoals jij die ervaart (satya), waarbij je zicht houdt op het welzijn van alle betrokkenen (sarvodaya) zonder de autonomie van anderen aan te tasten (ahimsa). Swadeshi/swaraj drukt daarmee een relationeel concept van autonomie uit. De

relationele opvatting van autonomie gaat er van uit dat autonomie alleen gestalte krijgt in relatie tot de autonomie van anderen.

Om dit element verder uit te werken bestudeer ik in dit proefschrift een specifieke praktijk; een methode voor het omgaan met gewelddadige en/of zelfdestructieve kinderen die is ontwikkeld door de Israëlische psycholoog Haim Omer. De methode van Omer richt zich in belangrijke mate op de empowerment van ouders en opvoeders en op het creëren van omstandigheden waarin ouders en kinderen niet meer worden meegezogen in elkaars reacties. Pas dan kunnen zij met de problematische situatie aan de slag gaan op een manier die het probleem werkelijk aanpakt en waardoor het gezin als geheel beter kan functioneren. Zeker in gezinsverband staat het belang van de relaties, maar ook het daarbinnen zelfstandig kunnen functioneren centraal. Swadeshi/swaraj verwijst juist naar die dynamiek.

Het vijfde element tenslotte, is *sarvodaya,* oftewel 'het welzijn van allen'. In specifieke situaties verwijst dit naar het welzijn van alle betrokkenen in de situatie. Wanneer we door middel van geweldloosheid een conflict of een vorm van onrecht willen aanpakken, wil dat zeggen dat we proberen het probleem aan te pakken zonder daarbij de ook het welzijn van de 'dader' of tegenstander uit het oog te verliezen. Omdat geweldloosheid uitgaat van een relationeel mensbeeld kan het welzijn van allen niet gewaarborgd worden als het verzet tegen onrechtvaardigheid zelf ook schade veroorzaakt. Een eigentijdse praktijk die de prangende aspecten van dit element goed weergeeft is herstelrecht. Herstelrecht verwijst naar een heel scala

van methoden om om te gaan met criminaliteit, en met daders en slachtoffers van misdrijven, op een manier die niet in de eerste plaats is gericht op vergelding. Hierbij wordt gezocht naar manieren om, voor zover dat mogelijk is, de schade te herstellen en/of een weg te vinden waarop zowel dader als slachtoffer op een zo goed mogelijke manier verder kunnen met hun leven.

Deze vijf elementen zijn een coherent en dynamisch geheel en vormen gezamenlijk geweldloosheid. In geweldloosheid zoals dat in dit onderzoek is opgevat moeten alle vijf elementen aanwezig zijn omdat ze elkaar aanvullen en ondersteunen. Zou één van de elementen ontbreken dan kan er niet werkelijk van geweldloosheid spraken zijn. De vijf elementen samen vormen een analyse-instrument alsook een uitgangspunt voor het formuleren van praktijken. Geweldloosheid op deze vijfvoudige manier opgevat, impliceert een specifieke vorm van omgaan met en uitoefenen van macht. Deze specifieke vorm duid ik hier aan met de term integratieve macht.

Volgens Kenneth Boulding is van de drie mogelijke vormen van machtsuitoefening integratieve macht de belangrijkste in vergelijking met de andere twee: dreigingsmacht en uitwisselingsmacht. Deze twee laatste vormen worden vaak kort aangeduid met 'de wortel en de stok'. Uitwisselingsmacht is ieder geval van machtsuitoefening waarbij sprake is van één of andere vorm van beloning en kan worden samengevat als 'doe iets dat ik wil, dan doe ik iets dat jij wilt'. Bij dreigingsmacht wordt macht uitgeoefend door te dreigen met één of andere vorm van straf (via boetes, vergelding, bestraffing) en kan worden samengevat als

'doe iets dat ik wil, anders doe ik iets dat jij niet wilt. Deze twee vormen van machtsuitoefening komen we in het dagelijks leven tegen op allerlei niveaus en in bijna ieder gebied van ons leven (onderwijs, opvoeding, in relatie tot de overheid, in de economie etc.).

Integratieve macht echter is machtsuitoefening die direct is verbonden met menselijke relaties, zowel persoonlijke relaties als in de vorm van instituties en organisaties. Liefde, respect, maar ook legitimiteit en instemming zijn allemaal uitdrukkingsvormen van integratieve macht. Hoewel het de vorm van machtsuitoefening is die het minst begrepen wordt, ligt deze vorm ten grondslag aan beide andere vormen. Omdat ieder mens in een web van relaties bestaat en ook dreigings- en uitwisselingsmacht relaties veronderstellen speelt integratieve macht in iedere situatie een rol. Dit betekent ook dat zelfs groepen waarvan op het eerste gezicht wordt verondersteld dat zij geen of weinig macht hebben (ze hebben bijvoorbeeld niets in handen om mee te dreigen of niets om mee te belonen) toch macht hebben in de vorm van integratieve macht. Zij kunnen bijvoorbeeld hun instemming met of deelname aan bepaalde structuren stoppen of zelf nieuwe relaties en structuren creëren die een alternatief bieden. Bij integratieve macht gaat het er niet om de ander iets te laten doe, maar om zelf iets anders te doen waardoor (als gevolg van de relaties) dingen op een andere manier kunnen verlopen. Zoals de analyse van Boulding ook laat zien, is dit precies waar het bij geweldloosheid om gaat.

Wanneer we naar praktijken van geweldloosheid kijken kunnen we die onderverdelen in twee verschillende maar aan elkaar verbonden vormen; het

constructieve en het obstructieve programma. Het obstructieve programma bestaat uit alle vormen van protest en verzet tegen en niet meewerken aan geweld en onrechtvaardigheid. Dit is de meest bekende en zichtbare vorm van geweldloosheid.

De constructieve kant van geweldloosheid verwijst naar de ontwikkeling van nieuwe structuren en verbanden die de geweldloze realiteit waar men naar streeft uitdrukken en ondersteunen. Tegelijkertijd kunnen constructieve activiteiten zelf ook een vorm van protest zijn wanneer ze bijvoorbeeld leiden tot parallelle instituties die de werking van bestaande (problematische) structuren omzeilen of tegenwerken. In zekere zin is het constructieve programma een vorm van structurele geweldloosheid.

Al het bovenstaande in acht genomen is mijn kort samengevatte antwoord op de centrale vraag van dit onderzoek: 'Wat is hedendaagse geweldloosheid?' als volgt.

Hedendaagse geweldloosheid is een pro-actieve en eigenstandige wijze van handelen waarvan de universele elementen satya, ahimsa, tapasya, swadeshi/swaraj en sarvodaya (zoals hierboven beschreven en verder uitgewerkt in dit boek) zijn. Samen verwijzen deze elementen naar een specifieke vorm van machtsuitoefening: integratieve macht. Geweldloosheid heeft zowel een obstructieve als een constructieve kant, die beide uitdrukkingen zijn van de vijf genoemde elementen.

Geweldloosheid heeft zowel persoonlijke als sociale implicaties en in dat licht kan geweldloosheid worden gezien als een methode voor humanisering, geworteld

in zingevingsprocessen. Dit maakt het tot een belangrijk onderwerp van studie voor de humanistiek.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Saskia van Goelst Meijer (1976) finished her masters degree in Humanistic Studies with a thesis on Gross National Happiness, linking existential questions and international development. During her studies she worked, studied and travelled throughout the world, developing her interest in investigating the interface between questions of personal meaning and social justice. She obtained her PhD, with a dissertation on contemporary nonviolence, from the University of Humanistic Studies, where she currently works as Assistant Professor. Her research focus is on 'Existential Questions in a Global Society'. In addition she is the proud owner of a small-scale organic farm in the North-East of The Netherlands.

SAMENVATTING

vertaling: Leonie van der Werf

In dit proefschrift onderzuuk ik geweldloosheid tegen de achtergrond van de humanistiek. Humanistiek is een multidisciplinaire wetenschap die zingeving en humanisering, de persoonlijke en sociale kanten van 'goed leven', kritisch onderzöcht en bestudeert. Vanuut dizze academische achtergrond probeer ik de centrale vraog van dit onderzuuk te beantwoorden: wat is de hedendaagse geweldloosheid?

Ik gebruuk de term geweldloosheid hier niet allennig om te verwiezen naor de afwezigheid van geweld, bijveurbeeld bij het oplossen van conflicten of problemen, maar veural ok om te verwiezen naor een eigenstandige methode of zölfs een paradigma. Het idee van geweldloosheid is trugge te vinden in elke grote religieuze traditie en wordt al eeuwenlang in de praktiek bracht, overal ter wereld. Toch is der in gien enkele taol een algemiene term te vinden die het idee van geweldloosheid as authentiek en proactief concept uutdrukt. Het wordt allennig as een negatie benuumd. Geweldloosheid is gien geweld. Maar, wat is het dan wel?

Mensen die zich in de recente geschiedenis actief met geweldloosheid bezigholden hebben, bennen ok steeds tegen dit gebrek an adequate terminologie anlopen. Dat hef ze der toe aanzet veur zichzölf uut te zuken wat geweldloosheid precies inholdt. Op het eerste gezicht wordt geweldloosheid vaak verstaon as

passiviteit, niet-inmenging, of zölfs lafheid. Om uut te leggen dat dit absoluut niet was waor zij op doelden, hebben dizze beoefenaars van geweldloosheid vaak hun eigen termen bedacht die wel recht deden an de proactieve aard van het concept. Gandhi bijveurbeeld, bedacht de term *satyagraha* (vastholden an de waorheid) veur zien methode om veur sociale rechtvaardigheid te strieden. Op de Filipijnen wurd het *alay dangal* (het aanbieden van waordigheid). Maar dizze verschillende termen geven gien helder antwoord op de vraog wat geweldloosheid is. Is de iene uutdrukking dervan (satyagraha) echt hetzölfde as de andere (alay dangal)?

Het doel van dizze studie is tweeledig. Ten eerste om te zien of het mogelijk is hedendaagse geweldloosheid te begriepen as een zölstandig en proactief concept, lös van specifieke culturele, religieuze of praktische contexten, en zo ja, hoe dat der dan uut zul zien? Ten tweede om te zien of het vanuut zo'n eigenstandig concept van geweldloosheid mogelijk is een kader te ontwikkeln veur analyse en het vormgeven van praktijken.

Het proefschrift bestiet uut vief afzonderlijke (maar samenhangende) artikels en een overkoepelnd hoofdstuk, waorin ik probeer dizze vraogen te beantwoorden.

De Gandhiaanse opvatting van geweldloosheid is het vertrekpunt van dit onderzuuk. Echter, hoewel Gandhi's wark een belangrieke basis vormt veur het begriepen van hedendaagse geweldloosheid, hebben der veul ontwikkelingen in het denken over en praktiseren van geweldloosheid plaatsvunden náo

Gandhi. Om tot een goed begrip dervan te kommen is het daorom belangriek om verder te kieken en te bestuderen op wukke manier Gandhi's concepten bennen overneumen deur andern. Ik heb bekeken wukke elementen trugge te vinden bennen in de theorieën en praktijken van andern en hoe dizze concepten zich door verder ontwikkeld hebben en bennen veranderd, en wat hetzölfde bleven is.

Hoewel ik het leven en wark van verschillende denkers, doeners en groepen bestudeerd heb, richt mien onderzuuk zich niet specifiek op iene dervan. Bij de beschrieving van mien onderzuuksrissultaten riffereer ik an verschillende individuen en bewegingen as veurbeelden en om de elementen te verheldern en uut te warken.

Het is daorbij dudelijk worden dat wanneer geweldloosheid uutslutend wordt opvat in een strategische zin, we de redeneringen en morele overwegingen die veur veulen een fundamenteel onderdeel bennen van geweldloosheid niet begriepen kunnen. Ik vat geweldloosheid daorom in principiële zin op en dit onderzuuk richt zich op de filosofische en intentionele aspecten waorbinnen de strategieën vormgeven worden.

Nao een analyse van de diverse beschrievingen van geweldloosheid, concludeer ik dat vief basiselementen de kern van hedendaagse geweldloosheid vormen: *satya* (het zuken naor waorheid), *ashima* (niet schaden), *tapasya* (het angaon van lieden), *sarvodaya* (streven naor het welwezen van allen) en *swadeshi/swaraj* (relationele autonomie). Dizze vief elementen samen, wiezen in de richting van een specifieke vorm van machtsuutoefening die het best anduud kan worden

met de term "integratieve macht" die is bedacht deur Kenneth Boulding.

Elk van dizze elementen is een complex en gelaagd begrip. Naor mien mening bennen dizze elementen noodzakelijkerwies anwezig in elke uting van geweldloosheid en allemaol even belangriek derveur. In dit proefschrift tracht ik dizze vief elementen, wat ze impliceren en wat hun rol in geweldloosheid is, te deurgronden deur onder andere het wark van Vaclav Havel, Haim Omer en René Girard te exploreren, evenas de Radicale Ecologie en "endogenous development".

Ik duud dizze elementen an met de termen uut het Sanskriet zoas die veurkommen in het wark van Gandhi, omdat die naor mien mening geschikt bennen om de complexiteit en samenhang van de elementen goed uut te drukken. Gandhi gebruukte dizze (soms eeuwen olde) termen al op een enigszins neie en angepaste manier, vaak zonder hun oorspronkelijke betekenis lös te laoten. As gevolg van de hedendaagse geweldloze inspanningen en ervaringen die opdaon bennen sinds de stried van Gandhi, hef hun betekenis (in de context van geweldloosheid) zich nog verder uutbreid. Dat wul echter niet zeggen dat dizze termen daodwarkelijk in elke situatie gebruukt worden. Desondanks is het mien these dat hoewel in verschillende situaties verschillende uutdrukkings gebruukt worden, ze steeds naor dizze vief elementen verwiezen.

Het eerste element is satya, dat 'waorheid' betekent in het Sanskriet. Zoas zegd is het wark van Gandhi mien vertrekpunt. In Gandhi's opvatting is waorheid zowel

universeel as specifiek of relatief. Hij is dervan overtuugd dat der ien universele waorheid of realiteit bestiet, maar dat mensen die allennig ten dele kennen kunnen en begriepen. Bovendien is in zien opvatting de realiteit meervoldig. Gandhi wul dat mensen elke situatie onderzuken en bevraogen om te ontdekken wat daorin belangriek is veur elk die berbij betrökken is. Op die manier kunnen mensen tot een groter inzicht in de waorheid kommen. Hoewel hij vindt dat mensen moeten streven naor een zo volledig mogelijk inzicht in elke situatie, kan gieniene zeggen dat hij of zij alwetend is. In het Gandhiaanse denken is waorheid grond in de ervaring. We kunnen iets as waor ervaren, maar iene anders kan tot een tegenovergestelde conclusie kommen op basis van zien of heur eigen (hiele andere) ervarings. In het geval van onienigheid kan het zo weden dat de andere partij meer zöt van de waorheid as wij, ok al bennen wij der van overtuugd dat we geliek hebben. Dat wul niet zeggen dat we onze ideeën over de waorheid opgeven moeten, het wul zeggen dat we de mogelijkheid veur het bestaon van beide waorheden openholden moeten. Dat zul satya een utermate relativistisch begrip maken, ware het niet dat elke ervaring nog steeds universele weerde hef, alle ervarings bennen echt. De ervaring van ien specifieke waorheid kan niet leiden tot een regel die iederiene moet volgen (dat zul de echtheid van andere ervarings ontkennen), maar wel tot een regel veur onszölf. Satya impliceert dus dat we toewijd bennen an de waorheid zoas wij die ervaren.

Hoewel hij het woord niet gebruukt stiet dit element ok centraal in het wark van Václav Havel, en in dit onderzuuk wend ik me tot zien ideeën om het begrip

satya verder uut te warken. Havel lat zien dat satya vrag dat we de wereld beschouwen as een arena waor verschillende waorheden mekaar ontmoeten en op mekaar inwarken, iets wat hij benuumt as 'de logica van verhalen'. Zowel Gandhi as Havel benaodrukken dat het persoonlijke en het politieke, de individuele en de publieke zuuktocht naor waorheid nauw met mekaar bennen verweven. De persoonlijke zuuktocht naor joen identiteit en joen eigen waorheid is veural een privé angelegenheid, maar het handeln vanuut joen waorheid is een publieke daod en hef gevolgen in en veur je sociale omgeving. De confrontatie met andere 'waorheden' bödt een gelegenheid om tot diepere en meer complexe inzichten te kommen. Het opleggen van ien waorheid die veur iederiene zul moeten gelden is daorentegen dehumaniserend en gewelddadig omdat zij de mogelijkheid van andere ervarings ontkent. Daorom is het neudig dat wij onze eigen waorheid uutdragen, zodat andern daormet confronteerd kunnen worden. Havel lat zien dat dit nog niet zo simpel is. We stellen onze eigen inzichten dermet ter discussie, stellen onszölf bloot an kritiek en in situaties waorin veural ien specifieke versie van de waorheid wenst is, bijveurbeeld in een dictatuur, kan dit grote gevolgen hebben. Maar het handeln vanuut joen eigen waorheid kan daormet ok een vorm van verzet en van sociale verandering weden. Je tonen dermet in de praktijk an dat de opgelegde waorheid niet de ienige is en helpt daormet ruumte te scheppen veur de waorheid van andern. De rol van satya in geweldloosheid is dus niet allennig die van een morele opdracht om in waorheid te leven, maar ok een oproep tot handeln, tot het

realiseren van een sociale warkelijkheid die geweldlozer is.

Ahimsa, het tweede element betekent letterlijk 'de afwezigheid van de intentie schade toe de brengen'. Het impliceert geweldloosheid op het fysieke niveau, maar ok in woorden, gedrag en zölfs gedachten. Geleidelijk an hef ahimsa naost de 'negatieve' betekenis (het vermijden van schade) ok een 'positieve' betekenis kregen, die van het anpakken van situaties waorin schade wordt toebracht, bijveurbeeld via sociale dienstverlening. Wanneer we confronteerd worden met omstandigheden waorin ons of andern onrechtvaardigheid andaon wordt en we niet proberen iets an die situatie te verandern, bennen we vanuut het gezichtspunt van geweldloosheid tot op zekere hoogte medeplichtig. Handeln zonder de intentie schade toe te brengen betekent dus het anpakken van problemen, veur zover dat in ons vermogen lig.

Binnen het denken over geweldloosheid wordt dit element in de eerste plaats (maar niet uutslutend) op een sociale manier opvat. Echter, in de context van de Radicale Ecologie wordt een soortgelieke holding ontwikkeld maar dan in relatie tot de natuurlijke omgeving. De Radicale Ecologie is een denkstroming die zöcht naor hoe een fundamentele transformatie van 'het mens-weden in de wereld' tot stand bracht kan worden, die dertoe kan leiden dat zowel menselijke as niet-menselijke wezens in gelieke mate kunnen floreren. In dit proefschrift heb ik het begrip ahimsa vergeleken met dizze specifieke manier van 'zich verholden tot de ander' die de Radicale Ecologie veurstelt. In de Radicale Ecologie giet het niet zozeer om een verschoeving in de verholding tot een ander as

tegenstander (hoewel de natuur soms wel zo wordt afschilderd) maar tot een andere die een andere levensvorm is. Desondanks hef de ander in beide gevallen een verschillende visie op het leven en hef hiele andere dingen neudig om te kunnen floreren. Hoewel de term ahimsa in de Radicale Ecologie nauwelijks wordt gebruukt is de holdingsverschoeving die naostreefd wordt gelieksoortig. Dizze komp neer op het warkelijk kunnen bevestigen van de ander, (in al zien anders-weden).

Ahmisa verwes naor het besef dat de leven van allen met mekaar verbonden bennen en dat het schaden van de iene uuteindelijk neerkomp op het schaden van iederiene. Het standpunt dat specifieke groepen mensen, of de mensheid as geheel, op wat veur grond dan ok superieur zulden weden an andere groepen en daorom recht zulden hebben op meer middeln veur of kansen op zölfontwikkeling is schadlijk. Ahimsa vertegenwoordigt een holding ten opzichte van andern waorin we der naor streven hun kansen op leven, hun waordigheid en hun mogelijkheden tot zölfontwikkeling niet te schaden en zölfs proberen hun welwezen en ontwikkeling te bevordern. Zölfs ten opzichte van tegenstanders en ok terwijl we ons tegen heur verzetten. Het cultiveren van zo'n holding is niet ienvoldig zoas bijveurbeeld Gandhi, Martin Luther King en ok de Radicaal Ecologen zien laoten. Maar binnen geweldloosheid is het de ienige manier waorop der warkelijke veranderingen tot stand bracht kunnen worden.

Van de vief elementen is *tapasya* meestal het moeilijkst te bevatten, met name vanuut een westers perspectief. Tapasya kan vertaald worden zowel met

'hitte' as met 'lieden' en het speult op drie manieren een rol in geweldloosheid. As eerste verwes het naor de bereidheid om het lieden an te gaon, in plaats van te kiezen veur vergelding wanneer we worden confronteerd met geweld of onrechtvaardigheid. Dit deurbrek de geweldsspiraal. Tapasya wul niet zeggen dat we moeten toegeven an geweld of het liedzaam moeten ondergaon. Het wul zeggen dat we bewust uut de gebrukelijke dynamiek van 'vluchten, vechten of bevriezen' stappen. De tweede rol van tapasya is daorom die van zölf-transformatie. Een veurbeeld is de innerlijke worsteling om over aversie tegen een tegenstander hen te kommen. As derde verwes tapasya naor toewijding en discipline. De beoefening van satya en ahimsa bijveurbeeld vereist training, geduld en de bereidheid om tegenstand en kritiek te ontvangen.

In dit onderzuuk heb ik de notie van tapasya vergeleken met het wark van de filosoof René Girard. Een centraal thema in het wark van Girard is dat van 'het offer' dat hij verbindt an geweld. Echter, mensen as Gandhi en Martin Luther King hebben het ok vaak over het brengen van offers, maar juust in de context van geweldloosheid. Het offer dat Girard beschref is dat van een zondebok, die opofferd en uutdreven wordt om de cohesie van de oorspronkelijke groep te waarborgen. Elke vorm van geweld is een afspiegeling van dit mechanisme, stelt Girard. Binnen geweldloosheid speult een ander offer een rol, daor giet het der om de gerichtheid op het eigene op te offern, zodat der ruumte ontstiet veur diversiteit en het welwezen van iederiene ontplooid worden kan.

Girard stelt dat wanneer mensen de dynamiek van de zondebok en het offern dervan zulden deurzien, zij

in staot zulden wezen een andere keuze te maken en de samenleving, waor volgens hum geweld nou een fundamentele rol in speult, anders zulden kunnen vormgeven. Hoewel hij zölf sceptisch blef over de reële mogelijkheid om dit tot stand te brengen stelt hij dat dat in elk geval zul betekenen dat mensen elke impuls tot vergelding en wraak zulden moeten opgeven. Binnen het denken over geweldloosheid stiet men daor minder sceptisch tegenover en verschillende veurbeelden uut de praktijk laoten zien dat mensen daorin een hiel eind kommen kunnen, hoewel dit veul muite kost. Tapasya is het element in geweldloosheid dat dat uutdrukt.

Het vierde element is *swadeshi/swaraj.* Swadeshi betekent zölfstandigheid. In politieke zin verwes swadeshi naor economische zölfstandigheid en het hebben van eigen instituties. Op het persoonlijke niveau betekent het zo zölfveurzienend mogelijk te weden, en onafhankelijk en doelmatig kunnen weden. Het verwies tok naor het kunnen creëren van omstandigheden die zölfstandigheid mogelijk maken. Swaraj betekent zölfbestuur. Dit kan verwiezen naor politieke autonomie, maar ok naor autonomie op het persoonlijke vlak. Swadeshi en swaraj hangen nauw samen en bennen in dit onderzuuk dan ok samenneumen. Tegeliekertied bennen ze ok verbonden met de andere elementen van geweldloosheid. Swadeshi/swaraj verwes bijveurbeeld naor het vermogen impulsen, gewoonten of dwang van andern te kunnen weerstaon (tapasya), het kunnen maken van eigen keuzes baseerd op de waorheid zoas jij die ervaren (satya), waorbij je zicht holden op het welwezen van elk die derbij betrökken is (sarvodaya)

zonder de autonomie van andern an te tasten (ahimsa). Swadeshi/swaraj drukt daormet een relationeel concept van autonomie uut. De relationele opvatting van autonomie giet dervan uut dat autonomie allennig gestalte kreg in relatie tot de autonomie van andern.

Om dit element verder uut te warken bestudeer ik in dit proefschrift een specifieke praktijk; een methode veur het omgaon met gewelddadige en/of zölf-destructieve kindern die ontwikkeld is deur de Israëlische psycholoog Haim Omer. De methode van Omer richt zich in belangrieke mate op de empowerment van olders en opvoeders en op het creëren van omstandigheden waorin olders en kindern niet meer metzeugen worden in mekaars reacties. Pas dan kunnen zij met de problematische situatie an de slag gaon op een manier die het probleem warkelijk anpakt en waordeur het gezin as geheel beter kan functioneren. Zeker in gezinsverband stiet het belang van de relaties, maar ok het daorbinnen zölfstandig kunnen functioneren centraal. Swadeshi/swaraj verwes juust naor die dynamiek.

Het viefde element tenslotte, is *sarvodaya,* oftewel 'het welwezen van iederiene'. In specifieke situaties verwes dit naor het welwezen van elk die derbij betrökken is in de situatie. Wanneer we deur middel van geweldloosheid een conflict of een vorm van onrecht an wullen pakken, wul dat zeggen dat we proberen het probleem an te pakken, zonder daorbij ok het welwezen van de 'daoder' of tegenstander uut het oog te verliezen. Omdat geweldloosheid uutgiet van een relationeel mensbeeld kan het welwezen van iederiene niet waarborgd worden as het verzet tegen onrechtvaardigheid zölf ok schade veroorzaakt. Een

eigentiedse praktijk die de prangende aspecten van dit element goed weergef is herstelrecht. Herstelrecht verwes naor ene hiel scala van methoden om om te gaon met criminaliteit en met daoders en slachtoffers van misdrieven op een manier die niet in de eerste plaats richt is op vergelding. Hierbij wordt zöcht naor manieren om, veur zover dat mogelijk is, de schade te herstellen en/of een weg te vinden waorop zowel daoder as slachtoffer op een zo goed mogelijke manier verder kunnen met heur leven.

Dizze vief elementen bennen een coherent en dynamisch geheel en vormen gezamenlijk geweldloosheid. In geweldloosheid zoas dat in dit onderzuuk opvat is moeten alle vief elementen anwezig weden omdat ze mekaar anvullen en ondersteunen. Zul ien van de vief elementen ontbreken dan kan der niet warkelijk van geweldloosheid sprake weden. De vief elementen samen vormen een analyse-instrument en ok een uutgangspunt veur het formuleren van praktijken. Geweldloosheid op dizze viefvoldige manier opvat, impliceert een specifieke vorm van omgaon met en uutoefenen van macht. Dizze specifieke vorm duud ik hier an met de term integratieve macht.

Volgens Kenneth Boulding is van de drie mogelijke vormen van machtsuutoefening integratieve macht de belangriekste in vergelieking met de andere twee: dreigingsmacht en uutwisselingsmacht. Dizze twee laatste vormen worden vaak kort anduud met 'de wortel en de stok'. Uutwisselingsmacht is elk geval van machtsuutoefening waorbij sprake is van ien of andere vorm van beloning en kan samenvat worden as 'doe iets dat ik wul, dan doe ik iets dat jij wullen'. Bij

dreigingsmacht wordt macht uutoefend deur te dreigen met ien of andere vorm van straf (via boetes, vergelding, bestraffing) en kan samenvat worden as 'doe iets dat ik wul, anders doe ik iets dat jij niet wullen.

Dizze twee vormen van machtsuutoefening kommen we in het dagelijks leven tegen op allerlei niveaus en in bijna elk gebied van ons leven (onderwies, opvoeding, in relatie tot de overheid, in de economie etc.) Integratieve macht echter is machtsuutoefening die direct is verbonden met menselijke relaties, zowel persoonlijke relaties as in de vorm van instituties en organisaties. Liefde, respect, maar ok legitimiteit en instemming bennen allemaal uutdrukkingsvormen van integratieve macht. Hoewel het de vorm van machtsuutoefening is die het minst wordt begrepen, lig dizze vorm ten grondslag an beide andere vormen.

Omdat elk mens in een web van relaties bestiet en ok dreigings- en uutwisselingsmacht relaties veronderstellen speult integratieve macht in elke situatie een rol. Dit betekent ok dat zölfs groepen waorvan op het eerste gezicht verondersteld wordt dat zij gien of weinig macht hebben (ze hebben bijveurbeeld niks in handen om met te dreigen of niks om met te belonen) toch macht hebben in de vorm van integratieve macht. Zij kunnen bijveurbeeld hun instemming met of deelname an bepaalde stucturen stoppen of zölf neie relaties en structuren creëren die een alternatief bieden. Bij integratieve macht giet het der niet om de ander iets te laoten doen, maar om zölf iets anders te doen waordeur (as gevolg van relaties) dingen op een andere manier kunnen verlopen. Zoas de

analyse van Boulding ok zien lat, is dit precies waor het bij geweldloosheid om giet.

Wanneer we naor praktijken van geweldloosheid kieken kunnen we die onderverdelen in twee verschillende maar an mekaar verbonden vormen; het constructieve en het obstructieve programma. Het obstructieve programma bestiet uut alle vormen van protest en verzet tegen, en niet metwarken an geweld en onrechtvaardigheid. Dit is de meest bekende en zichtbare vorm van geweldloosheid.

De constructieve kaante van geweldloosheid verwes naor de ontwikkeling van neie structuren en verbanden die de geweldloze realiteit waor men naor streeft uutdrukken en ondersteunen. Tegeliekertied kunnen constructieve activiteiten zölf ok een vorm van protest weden wanneer ze bijveurbeeld leiden tot parallelle instituties die de warking van bestaonde (problematische) structuren omzeilen of tegenwarken. In zekere zin is het constructieve programma een vorm van structurele geweldloosheid.

Al het bovenstaonde in acht neumen is mien kort samengevatte antwoord op de centrale vraog van dit onderzuuk: 'Wat is hedendaagse geweldloosheid?' als volgt.

Hedendaagse geweldloosheid is een pro-actieve en eigenstandige wieze van handeln waorvan de universele elementen satya, ahimsa, tapasya, swadshi/swaraj en sarvodaya (zoas hierboven beschreven en verder uutwarkt in dit boek) bennen. Samen verwiezen dizze elementen naor een specifieke vorm van machtsuutoefening: integratieve macht. Geweldloosheid hef zowel een obstructieve as

constructieve kaante, die beide uutdrukkings bennen van de vief genuumde elementen

Geweldloosheid hef zowel persoonlijke as sociale implicaties en in dat licht kan geweldloosheid zien worden as een methode veur humanisering, worteld in zingevingsprocessen. Dit maakt het tot een belangriek onderwerp van studie veur de humanistiek.