

## Gandhi Outline

Philosophy (from Mahatma Gandhi: *Selected Political Writings* Hackett 1996)

- I. Introduction
  - A. Satyagraha: power of non-violence
  - B. Ethical superior to fear power and stronger
    - a. diluted by contamination w/ anger or enmity
    - b. excludes every kind of violence
- II. Truth is One
  - A. Polish professor: on absolute truth
  - B. Changeable
  - C. Independence of countries
  - D. Are some incapable of self-governance
  - E. Gandhi
    - a. Truth itself: non-violence
    - b. Truth and love: infinite
    - c. We know enough for guidance
    - d. Man is self governing
    - e. Freedom to err and set themselves right
    - f. Independence of each country
      - i.) no inherent incapacity for self-government in any nation
      - ii.) no inherent capacity for governing others
      - iii.) German imperialist and democrats
- III. Crime of Chauri Chaura (1922)
  - A. Provocations don't justify
  - B. Only virtue: truth and non-violence
  - C. Politically unsound but religiously sound
  - D. Better charged with cowardice and weakness than guilty of sin against god
  - E. Better untrue to the world than to ourselves
  - F. 5 days fast
    - a. Fasting should be private
    - b. But punishment is public
    - c. The only way that love punishes is by suffering
- IV. What is Truth?
  - A. From the gospel
    - a. This has not been answered
    - b. Absolute truth: total and all embracing
    - c. Indescribable because it is god
    - d. God is truth
    - e. Everything else is truth in a relative sense
    - f. He who understands truth follows nothing but truth in thought, speech and action

- g. Comes to know God: *moksha* liberation
- h. If one could do this swaraj would be ours
- i. No easy matter

V. Letter to a Hindoo

A. Tolstoy: Russian Nobleman

- a. Pleasure
- b. European writer par excellence
- c. Politics is vengeful
- d. Hurts us and our enemies
- e. Instead return good for evil
- f. One who suffers needn't seek no redress
- g. Slavery consists in submitting to an unjust order
- h. The universality of ethics on non-violence in all religions
- i. Rejects "time honored" method of violence

VI. On *Ahimsa*

A. From all the religions

B. But even if they didn't teach him this he would continue to maintain these teachings

C. Ahimsa to the fullest: the snake will submit cf. Saint Francis of Assisi

- a. Negative condition
  - i.) non injury, non harm
- b. Positive
  - i.) largest love
  - ii.) Incompatible with cowardice
  - iii.) Requires the most courage

VII. Non-violence

A. Not angry

B. Complete innocence

C. To all life

D. Taught by Hindu, Koran, Bible

E. Man doesn't become divine when he personifies innocence in himself he only becomes human

F. Non violence: a perfect state

G. Presently we are part man and part beast

H. In ignorance and arrogance we say we fulfill our purpose when we return blow for blow

I. We pretend retaliation is the law of being

J. In scripture retaliation is nowhere obligatory but only permissible

K. Restraint is obligatory

- a. Retaliation is an indulgence requiring elaborate regulating
- b. Restraint is the law of being
- c. Highest perfection is the highest restraint

d. Suffering is the badge of the human tribe

L. Nature of non-violence to my brother no different than non-violence to the universe

M. The Hardest “fiber” must melt in the fire of love

N. Does not hold forth the possibility of future revenge

VIII. My Path

A. Experimental

a. Not proven yet

b. No secret methods

c. No weapon but non-violence

d. Don't know what the Bolsheviks mean

i.) Wrong in so far as they are violent and atheistic

ii.) I associate with anarchist to wean them from their error

iii.) No permanent good can be the outcome of untruth and violence

IX. On the Verge of It

A. I'm your follower and have been jailed for it

B. Doesn't the salvation of 33 million justify the death of a few hundred

a. Gandhi

b. No principle worth the name is not wholly good

c. Though violence may produce good it is only temporary; the harm it does is permanent

d. We are responsible for the present state of things: the English will be powerless to do evil if we will but do good

e. Independence requires mass education

f. Non-violence a coin not of the mint of the British multi-headed monster

X. Letter to Narandas Gandhi

A. Path of truth narrow as it is straight

B. Ahimsa means truth

C. The truth exists: God

D. The only means to it is ahimsa

E. Love not hate

F. Even in arrest: love your enemies

G. Pray for them

H. Islam has expanded not by the sword but by the prayerful love of the saints

XI. Civility

A. Civility, good manners, humility seem to have no place in the building of the modern character

- B. But they are expressions of non-violence
  - a. Incivility and insolence indicate a spirit of violence
  - b. Politeness disarms anger and hatred
  - c. Incivility increases hostility
  - d. Incivility delays the cause
  - e. Be civil to those who disagree with you, to those who remain in government service
  - f. Civility doesn't mean flattery
  - g. Love the different castes, religion, those who wear foreign clothes
- C. Egotism: the egoist thinks too much of himself and his body
- D. Man of self-respect respects and recognizes that of others
- E. Egotist keeps aloof and judges the world: thinking himself superior to the whole world
- F. Non violence non cooperation movement should cultivate civility
- XII. Need for Humility
  - A. Non violence leads to humility
  - B. Reliance on rock of ages
  - C. Not a movement of bluster, brag, bluff
  - D. Like the mango tree that bows while it bears fruit
  - E. Haughty speech betrays a want of confidence
  - F. Civil disobedience is not lawlessness but presupposes a law-abiding spirit combined with self-restraint
- XIII. Satyagraha
  - A. Truth force: holding to the truth
    - a. **Excludes violence because man is not capable of knowing absolute truth and therefore is not competent to punish**
    - b. Not a weapon of the weak
    - c. Passive resistance doesn't preclude violence
    - d. Civil disobedience: breach of immoral statutory enactments
    - e. Associated with Thoreau
    - f. Regardless of the sanctions
    - g. No-co-operation: withdrawing cooperation from a corrupt state
      - i.) suitable for children and the masses
    - h. satyagraha is not passive resistance
      - i.) Holds to the truth
      - ii.) Not passive
      - iii.) Wishes no ill will
      - iv.) Might is right/survival of the fittest
      - v.) Neither of which is wholly true
      - vi.) **If ill-will was the chief motive force in the world the world would have been destroyed long ago**
      - vii.) We are alive solely because of love
      - viii.) Antecedents: Daniel, Socrates, Satyagrahis
      - ix.) No fear for the body

- x.) Doesn't give up the truth
- xi.) Doesn't vent anger
- xii.) Only has compassion
  
- i. Demand for historical evidence for satyagraha
  - i.) History is principally armed conflict
  - ii.) Historical many have resort to it though:
  - iii.) Father/ son
  - iv.) Man/ Wife
- j. **How can one call something unjust?**
  - i.) Satyagrahi must judge for himself
  - ii.) If the truth is on his side he will win
  
- k. What is the good of one person resisting and being destroyed?
  - i.) **History shows that all reforms have begun with one person**
  - ii.) Fruit is hard to come by without self-sacrifice(tapasya)
  - iii.) **The tapasya of Jesus wasn't sufficient for Europe; they will need many**
  
- l. Difficulty of education ignorant peasants
  - i.) they Believe in dharma
  - ii.) They have devotion though
  - iii.) Difficulty of finding a leader requires much more fearlessness and resolve
  - iv.) Even a Nero would melt before love
  - v.) Satyagraha → Swaraj
  - vi.) Duragraha: hatred increases
  - vii.) Satyagraha as solution to social problems: Hindu-Muslim, caste etc

XIV. First of August

- A. Organization and Discipline
- B. Self correction

XV. Evidence before the Committee

- A. Satyagraha: holding to truth and truth force
- B. Relativity of truth means that one maintains truth but may discover one's error and revise one's beliefs through self suffering and patience**
- C. Politically opposing unjust laws
- D. When petitions fail**
- E. Accepting the penalty for the breach of law
- F. Civil disobedience
- G. Obedience to unjust laws is a dishonor
- H. Is there a difference as to which laws are just/ unjust (yes)
- I. Violence is eliminated

- J. Satyagrahi: gives his opponent the same right of independence
- K. Too Drastic
  - a. It can be used with one's own father
- L. Isn't a danger to peace?
- M. No it is peaceful
- N. Unpardonable acts of the mob
- O. Individual decides truth for herself (thus confusion)
  - a. Thus the importance of the corollary acceptance of satyagraha (non-violence)
  - b. No possibility of confusion for him who honestly holds to the truth with non-violence

#### XVI. Constitutionality

- A. Just and religious doctrine
- B. Non-violence
- C. For India: justice with sacrifice; it is constitutional to disobey violence
- D. It is not constitutional in this unconstitutional government
  - a. Dyer's crawling order
  - b. Anti-untruth; not anti-British
  - c. Shastras: no cooperation between justice and injustice
  - d. Cooperation is a duty when the government protects your honor
  - e. Lawyers should stop practicing
  - f. Withdraw children from school
  - g. Schools are factories for making government servants
  - h. Give up titles
  - i. I rebuke my brother because I love him; I love the British
- E. I'm not a saint
- F. Non-cooperation is a duty for a saint and an ordinary citizen
- G. Europe upholds the doctrine of the sword: India the doctrine of suffering

#### XVII. Doctrine of the Sword

- A. Coward: fear motivates you to non-violence (objection)
- B. You have violence in your heart
- C. Cunning, shrewd
- D. Waiting for the right time
- E. **Sword force is brute force and requires no intelligence**
- F. By misdirecting our intelligence we may use it for killing
- G. Though aided by intelligence brute force remains the law of the beasts
  - a. Self in a state of nascence
  - b. No self knowledge
  - c. Like animals enveloped in darkness
  - d. Man has some activities in common with animals but can distinguish good from evil and has self knowledge
  - e. Animal world is the world of brute force
  - f. Human world: winning others by the power of love
  - g. Awake to your true nature: renounce the law of the jungle

- h. 1908 attack
  - i.) What are the son's duties?
  - ii.) Don't strike back or submit tamely
  - iii.) Better to take arms than to submit out of cowardice
  - iv.) **Strength to fight: overcoming fear**

XVIII. Salt Satyagraha of 1930: non violent movement as revolution

- A. Civil disobedience
- B. It may be a duty to disobey all the laws
- C. A mass civil disobedience movement must be tried in a calm atmosphere: calmness of strength not weakness
- D. Restraint in the movement is South Africa
- E. **Arrest the normal condition of life**
- F. **Jails as health resorts**

XIV. Letter to Lord Irwin

- A. British rule as a curse
- B. Impoverished the dump millions
  - a. Exploitation
  - b. Political serfdom
  - c. Sapped foundations of culture
  - d. Disarmament: spiritually degrading
  - e. Taxes
  - f. Foreign administration (most expensive in the world)
    - i.) comparison of salaries
- C. Non-violence: an active force
- D. Announces his plans: victories of truth have never been won without risks
- E. Conversion
- F. Salt tax is most iniquitous from the poor man's standpoint
- G. Duty of disloyalty
- H. This state can never evoke loyalty
  - a. corrupt
  - b. inhuman laws
  - c. worse administration: capricious
  - d. loyalty to such a state a sin; disloyalty a virtue
  - e. Disobedience to laws of an evil state a duty
  - f. **Violent disobedience deals with men who can be replaced**
  - g. **Leaves the evil untouched**
  - h. **The danger of civil disobedience is only in the only because it is a partially tried remedy**

XV. Rules of Satyagraha

- A. Means insistence on truth
- B. It can be used against: parents, wife, children, world
- C. No room in it for violence; it is not physical
- D. Satyagraha doesn't burn others but self; joyfully suffering to the death

- E. As individual
  - a. Harbor no anger
  - b. Submit to arrest, attachment of property
  - c. Excludes swearing
  - d. As prisoner: courteous, proper pride
  - e. As Unit: obedience
  - f. Regarding communal fights: avoid religious quarrels

XVI. Render Unto Caesar

- A. Civil disobedience contrary to the teachings of Jesus?
- B. The question was a trap (Jesus refused to answer it)
- C. Preaching and teaching point to non-cooperation
- D. Disregarded the priesthood
- E. Disdain for his trial

XVII. Non-violence during riots?

- A. Goondas have no living contacts and thus no scruples
- B. Goondas don't drop from the sky
- C. Cultivate relationships
- D. Can one fast against them?
- E. Those who have become goondas

XIX. Are fasts coercive?

- A. They awaken love in the opponent
- B. Fasting and non-violent action: it is an appeal to their better natures
- C. Fasting to attain selfish objects are coercive
- D. Well defined limits to fasting: you can't fast against a tyrant but only a lover
- E. For reform not extortion

XX. Power of the people

- A. Power comes from the people
- B. Imagine if all civilly resisted no police force could stop them**
- C. Political power is a means to bettering the human condition** (not an end in itself)
- D. In an ideal state there is no political power because there is no state
- E. Thoreau: That government is best which governs least

XXI. Who is a socialist?

- A. Socialism a beautiful word: equality, unity
- B. Unity is conspicuous by its absence
  - a. division by religion etc
  - b. Socialism says we must convert the world first
  - c. Socialism begins with the first convert**
    - i.) Pure as crystal
    - ii.) Impure means: impure ends**



iii.) Truth: non violence without which socialism is impossible

C. Economic equality: to each according to his needs (Marx)

- a. Balance diet
- b. Decent house
- c. Education
- d. Medical Relief

D. Contrast with Socialism

- a. Not forcible conversion (conversion and hate power through propaganda)
- b. Conversion not coercion
- c. Education of public opinion
- d. Inequalities of intelligence and opportunity will last to the end of time
- e. **Destruction of capitalist must mean destruction of the worker; no human being is so perfect as to warrant his destroying him whom he wrongly considers to be wholly evil.**

## XXII. Democracy and non-violence

A. Why do you say, "Democracy can only be saved through non-violence?"

- a. **Democracy sustained by violence cannot provide for or protect the weak**
- b. **Democracy: the weakest have the same opportunity as the strongest: this only can happen through non-violence**
- c. America, South Africa owned by a few capitalists, sustained by violence
- d. **Western democracy: diluted Nazism or Fascism**
- e. War: a share of the spoils
- f. U.S. and slavery: hypocritical
- g. India: non-violent attempt at evolving democracy
- h. **Democracy and violence can ill go together**
- i. States that are today nominally democratic have either to become totalitarian or truly democratic through courageous non-violence
- j. **Non-violence can be practiced by individuals, non-violence can be practiced by states which are composed of individuals**

B. Independence of India

- a. Must begin at the bottom (village level)
- b. Non-violence not possible without a belief in God
- c. Not a pyramid but a circle with concentric circles within it
- d. An oceanic circle: composed of the individual in the center never aggressive ever humble
- e. Utopian

- i.) Euclid's point has value though incapable of being drawn
  - ii.) Let India have this picture though never realizable in completeness
  - iii.) We must have a proper picture of what we want before we have something approaching it
- f. In this picture every religion has its full and equal place: we are leaves of a majestic tree whose trunk can't be shaken off its roots
  - g. There is no room for machines that replace human labor and would concentrate power in a few hands
  - h. Every machine that helps every individual has a place
  - i. To his Nephew: emancipate your own self. In your emancipation is the emancipation of India