THE POWER OF SOUL FORCE

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analysis of the Gandhian philosophy of Satyagraha and how this philosophy has evolved since Gandhi’s assassination. This thesis endeavors to answer the question: How is it possible that a philosophy of strict non-violence be practiced in our modern world if our contemporary, global culture is dominated by war and violence?

This thesis first analyzes three key facets or dimensions of Gandhi’s character that led to the birth, essential nature, and success of Satyagraha: Gandhi’s adroit use of the media to further his cause, Gandhi’s “military” structure of Satyagraha as a “corps” without the violence and, finally, Gandhi’s willingness to sacrifice self or his fellow soldiers as acceptable human losses, not unlike traditional soldiers in a war, to further his campaign.

The discussion then turns to a comparative analysis of two separate Satyagraha campaigns: a campaign in South Africa during the infancy of this philosophy and a campaign in India during the maturity of this philosophy.
In Chapter V, there is an analysis of Martin Luther King, Jr. as an American Satyagrahi who began to actively practice Satyagraha seven years after Gandhi’s assassination. It is concluded that King was successful and innovative in his practice of Satyagraha during the American Civil Rights movement.

In Chapter VI, there is an analysis of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama as a Tibetan Satyagrahi who has practiced Satyagraha since his early life in an effort to achieve Tibetan independence from the Chinese government. It is concluded that His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama is successful in his contemporary practice of Satyagraha and that His Holiness has adapted the philosophy to suit the needs of the Tibetan people in an unprecedented manner.

In Chapter VII, a short commentary is offered confirming the adaptability and relative value of practicing the philosophy of Satyagraha in a modern world dominated by war and violence.
DEDICATION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Thomas Bennet Haggerty, Jr.

I would like to thank my mother, Loretta B. Tee, for her steadfast support and love throughout this process. I would also like to thank Sherry Rollyson for her friendship, kindness and emotional support as well as Linda Hart for her friendship and overall positive attitude. I would like to acknowledge my siblings, Tyler and Baker Tee, for the philosophical discussions and for helping me stay on track. I would like to acknowledge my father, Gary D. Tee, for his insight and our many discussions on the Truth. I would also like to acknowledge the contribution of my dear friend, Ingrid Fortmeyer, for her unwavering positive attitude and willingness to engage in the process of dialectic for the benefit of this project. I would also like to recognize my DC brethren: Ian McGee, Shola Mapaderun, Pete Smeltzer, Aaron Lovett, Dan Rosenfeld and John Fielding for their friendship and inspiration. Finally, I sincerely thank Prof. Ariel Glucklich, my gracious mentor, for his direction and dedication to this thesis as well as his overall dedication to the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi.
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INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Gandhi’s perennial philosophy of Satyagraha\(^1\) is a non-violent, moral equivalent to war. The application of Satyagraha was historically successful in that it united India amid the volatile context of social and political pandemonium that characterized the fractured, burgeoning society. However, there has been significant speculation by the academic, activist and journalistic communities, amid this global culture of war and violence, as to the legacy of Satyagraha and whether or not Gandhi’s philosophy is still alive and being practiced purely today. This thesis asserts that Satyagraha is not limited by history, time and space; that Satyagraha is a living and adaptable philosophy with practical applications in today’s modern world.

This thesis first aims to analyze three aspects or dimensions of Gandhi’s character that led to the birth, essential nature, and success of Satyagraha:

Gandhi’s adroit use of the media to further his cause, Gandhi’s “military”

\(^1\) Truth (satya) implies love, and firmness (agraha) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. Satyagraha is the force that is born of truth and love or non-violence. Mohandas K. Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (New Delhi: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1958), 86-88, 91-92.
structure of Satyagraha as a “corps” without the violence and, finally, Gandhi’s willingness to sacrifice self or his fellow Satyagrahi’s as acceptable human losses, not unlike soldiers in a war, to further his campaign.

Once these criteria are established they will function as a lens in which to evaluate two of Gandhi’s purported spiritual heirs: H.H. the Dalai Lama of Tibet and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. of the United States of America, both of whom have received Nobel Prizes for their contributions to their own unique movements of peace and unity within their respective societies. The guiding question or questions are: did these leaders act in the pure, truth-inspired spirit of Satyagraha and in so doing did they specifically borrow Gandhi’s praxis and structure? What, if anything, did these men add to this philosophy? Furthermore, to what degree was success achieved by the application of Satyagraha in these two modern, distinct struggles for equality and human rights?
CHAPTER I
SELF-EXPERIMENTS WITH THE MEDIA

Far be it from me to claim any degree of perfection for these experiments. I claim for them nothing more than does a scientist who, though he conducts his experiments with the most accuracy, forethought and minuteness, never claims any finality about his conclusions, but keeps an open mind regarding them. I have gone through deep self-introspection, searched myself through and through, and examined and analysed every psychological situation. Yet I am far from claiming any finality or infallibility about my conclusions. One claim I do indeed make and it is this: for me they appear to be absolutely correct, and seem for the time being to be final. For if they were not, I should base no action on them. But at every step I have carried out the process of acceptance or rejection and acted accordingly.


Gandhi was a ‘synthesis yogi’\(^2\) who consciously chose to live his life as a concatenation of self-experiments and interactions with truth. These self-experiments took a myriad of forms and inexorably led to the creation of Gandhi’s perennial, Advaita Vedanta\(^3\) based philosophy of Satyagraha.

Satyagraha is an inner, truth based philosophy of personal conviction and power that, in its application, united a fractured India and inspired movements

\(^2\) I use the term ‘synthesis yogi’ to reflect Gandhi’s ability to display the three main limbs of yoga as described in the Bhagavad Gita: karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga.

\(^3\) George M. Williams, Handbook of Hindu Mythology (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2003).
for civil rights, equality and freedom around the world. Vital to the success of the Satyagraha campaigns are Gandhi’s self-experiments with the media, journalism in particular.

Gandhi, before becoming a social reformer and national leader, was a lawyer turned astute journalist who recognized that media communication was the most effective tool to shape opinion and mobilize popular support. In less than a few months’ stay in South Africa, Gandhi realized the need to become an active and engaged journalist to fight for the rights of the Indian community and in so doing he displayed some of the highest qualities the profession could boast of: courage in the face of adversity, unwavering adherence to truth, pursuit of public causes, and objectivity in presentation of materials. Gandhi’s self-experiments with the media assumed two main forms: letters to newspaper editors in response to biases and articles Gandhi authored himself in journals to expand awareness of prejudice and to further elucidate his philosophy of Satyagraha and the different Satyagraha campaigns.

**Letters To Newspaper Editors**

Gandhi’s first encounter with journalism in South Africa was a direct result of a personal experience of racial discrimination. This occurred only a
few days after Gandhi’s arrival in South Africa. Gandhi was ordered to remove his turban by the European magistrate of Durban court. Gandhi felt this to be unjust. Removing headwear was an act of humiliation and subservience in India. To be ordered to remove headwear was considered an insult.\textsuperscript{4} Gandhi was forced to make a choice, one that would be a turning point in his life, to either conform to standards he felt to be unjust or to protest for his equal rights. Gandhi chose not to remove his turban and to leave the courthouse. This experience, however, motivated Gandhi to write to the press about the prejudice. To Gandhi’s surprise his story garnered him considerable publicity – “I wrote to the press about the incident and defended the wearing of my turban in the court. The question was very much discussed in the papers, which described me as an ‘unwelcome visitor.’ Thus the incident gave me an unexpected advertisement in South Africa within a few days of my arrival there. Some supported me while others severely criticized my temerity.”\textsuperscript{5} This ‘temerity’ would become a trademark of Gandhian journalism. I find this first self-experiment with journalism in South Africa to be a great success for


Gandhi as it revealed to him that he had an engaged audience, that his letter was therefore effective in beginning a dialogue about the inequality experienced and, moreover, it motivated him to further explore journalism and the mass media as a tool to convey his message.

Gandhi’s letters to the editors of South African dailies reveal a structured, methodical, albeit impassioned, approach to fighting injustice in a country where the laws were unfairly stacked against one segment of the populace. Furthermore, Gandhi would achieve this without employing any form of personal attack or argument ad hominem. Gandhi’s ethos and the accompanying literary technique were therefore not to insult or ridicule his opponents, but to change their opinion with sound logic, concrete examples of injustice and argument by analogy.

A compelling example of Gandhi’s unique style is found in his letter dated October 25, 1894 to the Times of Natal, which bore the superciliously worded editorial piece titled, ‘Rammysammy.’ The pith of this editorial was an argument that Indians were inferior beings and therefore did not deserve equal political power as South African citizens in Natal. Gandhi responded:

Does not the very heading ‘Rammysammy’ betray a studied contempt towards the poor Indian? Is not the whole article a needless insult to him? You are pleased to acknowledge that ‘India possesses men of high culture, etc.’ and yet you would not, if you could, give them equal power
with the white man. Do you not thus make the insult doubly insulting? If you had thought that the Indians were not cultured, but were barbarous brutes, and on that ground denied them political equality, there would be some excuse for your opinions. You, however, in order to enjoy the fullest pleasures derived from offering an insult to an inoffensive people, must needs show that you acknowledge them to be intelligent people and yet would keep them under foot.  

Hence, in these few short sentences Gandhi elucidates the illogical position of the editor. On one hand, the editor concedes that Indians are not cultureless and unintelligent, but, in fact, display traits of 'high culture.' Gandhi even acknowledges a circumstance in which such treatment might be acceptable: if the Indian populace was 'barbarous' and unable to display self-control - but this was not the case in Natal. Still, the editor would have his audience draw the conclusion that there is an inherent difference between Indians in South Africa and Indians residing in India, although they share a cultural background and display similar character traits. For Gandhi, this position was untenable. To this end, Gandhi adds:

Then you have said that the Indians in the Colony are not the same as those in India; but, Sir, you conveniently forget that they are the brothers or descendents of the same race that you credit with intelligence, and have, therefore, given the opportunity, the potentiality of becoming as capable as their more fortunate brethren in India, just as a man sunk in the depth of ignorance and vice of the East End of London has the potentiality of becoming Prime Minister in free

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England. You put upon the franchise petition to Lord Ripon an interpretation it was never meant to convey. The Indians do not regret that capable natives can exercise the franchise. They would regret if it were otherwise. They, however, assert that they too, if capable, should have the right. You, in your wisdom, would not allow the Indian or the Native the precious privilege under any circumstances, because they have a dark skin. You would look to the exterior only. So long as the skin is white it would not matter to you whether it conceals beneath it poison or nectar. To you the lip-prayer of the Pharisee, because he is one, is more acceptable than the sincere repentance of the publican, and this, I presume, you would call Christianity. You may; it is not Christ’s.\(^7\)

Gandhi cleverly closes his letter by calling into question the application of this law in relation to the principles of Christianity, principles Gandhi knew all too well from carefully studying the Epistles of Paul and the Sermon on the Mount. If the government were truly acting from a Christian perspective than color prejudice would not have been an issue. Gandhi offered a final closing suggestion and appeal to reason, “Will you reread your New Testament? Will you ponder over your attitude towards the colored population of the Colony? Will you then say you can reconcile it with the Bible teaching or the best British traditions? If you have washed your hands clean of both Christ and British traditions, I can have nothing to say; I gladly withdraw what I have written. Only it will be a sad day for Britain and India if you have many

\(^7\) Ibid.
followers.” Of course, this letter was a harbinger for further debate. It did not directly lead to a repeal of unjust laws, but it did, however, reflect Gandhi’s journalistic fearlessness and his eloquent ability to logically deconstruct an argument, reveal its bias and offer potential solutions while still adhering to his highly moral journalistic standards.

**Articles Written By Gandhi In Journals**

Gandhi viewed his journalism as both a duty and a public service to his community. In this respect, journalism was an outer manifestation of Gandhi’s practice of *karma yoga*. His writings were therefore purpose driven and results oriented. As his journalism was a public service, Gandhi did not want to accept advertisements if possible nor did he expect to make a profit. Gandhi hoped his discourses on truth would soften the hearts of his fellow Indians and therefore garner the receipt of donations from his readers.

Ultimately, Gandhi was associated with six journals in his life, three of which he edited, in a journalistic career that spanned nearly four decades. Gandhi’s first journal, and perhaps the most important one, was *Indian*

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8 Ibid.

Opinion. The first issue of Indian Opinion was released on June 6th, 1903 and was eventually published in Gujarati, Hindi, Tamil and English. This was done to appeal to the widest possible audience. In his Autobiography, Gandhi described his experience with Indian Opinion as a deeply personal and cathartic, successful endeavor:

But after all these years I feel that the journal has served the community well. It was never intended to be a commercial concern. So long as it was under my control, the changes in the journal were indicative of changes in my life. Indian Opinion in those days, like Young India and Navajivan today, was a mirror of part of my life. Week after week I poured out my soul in its columns, and expounded the principles of Satyagraha as I understood it. During ten years, that is, until 1914, excepting the intervals of my enforced rest in prison, there was hardly an issue of Indian Opinion without an article from me. I cannot recall a word in those articles set down without thought or deliberation, or a word of conscious exaggeration, or anything merely to please. Indeed the journal became for me a training in self-restraint, and for friends a medium through which to keep in touch with my thoughts. The critic found very little to which he could object. In fact the tone of Indian Opinion compelled the critic to put a curb on his own pen. Satyagraha would probably have been impossible without Indian Opinion. The readers looked forward to it for a trustworthy account of the Satyagraha campaign as also of the real condition of Indians in South Africa.¹⁰

Consequently, Gandhi’s adroit use of the media via Indian Opinion became an effective, principal tool in his arsenal as the Satyagraha general. This journal gave Gandhi a venue in which to voice his observations and concerns of the

widespread inequalities of Indians in South Africa and India. Furthermore, it
garnered Gandhi troops and supporters for Satyagraha campaigns. Finally,
and perhaps most importantly, it allowed Gandhi to explicate the evolving
philosophy of Satyagraha and in so doing to connect deeply to his
responsibility to his community, which "made the future campaigns workable,
dignified and irresistible."\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Indian Opinion} endured for eleven years and was
paramount to Gandhi's success in persuading the provincial regimes of South
Africa to amend and reshape the authoritarian laws against Indians.

Gandhi chose to return to India in 1915 where he spoke at the Indian
National Congress. Gandhi found an ally in Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a respected
leader of the Indian National Congress, who would provide Gandhi an
introduction to the issues, hardships and struggles faced by the Indian
populace. At this time, Gandhi was persuaded to assume the editorship of two
journals: \textit{Young India} and \textit{Navajivan}. Gandhi’s writings in these journals
focused on the non-cooperation movement and, in 1922, resulted in his arrest,
trial and imprisonment for activities described as subversive and seditious.\textsuperscript{12}
Gandhi would later write, "I hold it to be a virtue to be disaffected towards a

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 287.

\textsuperscript{12} Charles F. Andrews, \textit{Mahatma Gandhi His Life and Ideas} (New York,
New York: Macmillan, 2003), 211.
government, which in its totality has done more harm to India than any
previous system. India is less manly under the British rule than she ever was
before. Holding such a belief, I consider it to be a sin to have affection for the
system...the power of civil resistance is like that of the fabled bird that has the
capacity of rising from its own ashes.”

Gandhi was released from prison
after serving only two years of a six-year sentence in order to undergo
surgery. His recovery would be difficult, but it would not keep him from his
journalistic duties. Ultimately, *Young India* and *Navajivan* served Gandhi well
as forums where he could present his ideas for social and political reform in
India. Many of Gandhi’s articles and editorials from these journals were
reprinted in local and national newspapers, helping spread Gandhi’s
readership throughout India. However, both journals ceased publication in
1932 when Gandhi was again imprisoned for seditious activities.

The journal *Harijan* was Gandhi’s final journalistic medium and,
perhaps, the closest to his heart. By 1940, *Harijan* (English), *Harijan Bandu*
(Gujarati) and *Harijan Sevak* (Hindi) were being published simultaneously.
These journals became Gandhi’s voice to the weakest section of the Indian
populace. *Harijan* is a term Gandhi coined to replace the term ‘untouchable.’

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Gandhi had great affection for the Harijan and, conversely, he held a deep disaffection for the caste system. On a visit to Orissa, Gandhi proposed, “this ‘untouchability’ is our greatest shame. The humiliation of it is sinking deeper and deeper.”

In his struggle to demonstrate the ideal of unity amongst the various castes, Gandhi would go so far as to adopt a young, female Harijan as his daughter, even though, at first, this action angered his wife. Gandhi’s passion for the cause of the Harijan as well as the many other, inter-related social, economic and religious reforms reflected the bulk of his latter work, all of which was given detailed attention within the pages of *Harijan*.

In closing, to say that Gandhi was an adroit manipulator of the media would be an understatement. His accomplishments and successes are far too many to list, but what is evident is that Gandhi skillfully used the media as an adaptive tool to combat prejudice and injustice both in South Africa and in India and to ultimately develop and expound his greater philosophy of Satyagraha. This thesis now turns to analyze Satyagraha proper, as Gandhi’s non-violent, moral and structural equivalent to war.

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15 Ibid., 117.
CHAPTER II

SATYAGRAHA PROPER

Since arriving in South Africa in 1893, Gandhi immediately became involved in securing equal rights and treatment for the Indian Community. Yet, it was not until 1906 that the term ‘Satyagraha’ was applied to Gandhi’s non-violent movement. Gandhi initially used the term ‘passive resistance’ to describe this endeavor, but as the struggle evolved Gandhi realized that only an Indian term, designated by those intimately involved in the struggle, could properly define their campaign for equality.\(^{16}\) Gandhi came to feel ‘passive resistance’ was an inferior term because, “it was too narrowly construed, that it was supposed to be a weapon of the weak, that it could be characterized by hatred, and that it could finally manifest itself as violence.”\(^{17}\)

Therefore, Gandhi sought counsel from his compatriots in order to create a new term that would better define this cause. Gandhi had written extensively about the struggle in *Indian Opinion* and decided to, “offer a


\(^{17}\) Ibid., 318-9.
nominal prize . . . to the reader who made the best suggestion on the subject.”

Gandhi’s cousin, Maganlal Gandhi, won the prize for creating the term ‘Sadagraha,’ itself derived from the concatenation of two root terms, ‘Sad’ a variation of the term ‘Sat,’ or truth, and ‘Agraha,’ or firmness. ‘Sadagraha’ is equivalent to ‘firmness in a good cause.’ However, Gandhi felt the term could be clearer. He conceived the moniker ‘Satyagraha,’ a more focused term. In Satyagraha in South Africa Gandhi described why he chose this term – “Truth (satya) implies love, and firmness (agraha) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement ‘Satyagraha,’ that is to say, the Force which is born of Truth and Love or non-violence, and gave up the use of the phrase ‘passive resistance’ . . . ”

The significance of naming this movement cannot be emphasized enough. A name confers a unique identity. In this world, where expediency and commercialism widely govern the use of language, the importance of

18 Ibid., 319.


precisely defining and naming a movement ensures clear communication of the movements values, goals, objectives and ideals.

**Military Structure**

Gandhi’s non-violent mission has been described as a moral equivalent to warfare minus the violence. There has been considerable scholarship on this subject, but an area that has been neglected is the unique, military styled structure Gandhi employed to achieve his success. It is difficult to overlook the ubiquitous and consistent parallels Gandhi posits between Satyagraha and traditional military imagery, warfare and structure in his writings. Dennis Dalton makes this point succinctly, in quoting Gandhi directly from Gandhi’s *Satyagraha*:

> To cite only a few instances: ‘We are at war against the Government’; ‘The Satyagrahi general has to obey his inner voice’; ‘There must be power in the word of a Satyagrahi general’; what ‘general...has not altered...the plans of his campaign’; ‘both in Satyagraha and military warfare the position of the soldier is very nearly the same...His promise to be under discipline and to obey the general’s command applies even during the period of suspension of hostilities...In ordinary warfare a soldier cannot reason why. In our warfare there is enough scope for reasoning, but there is a limit to it’; ‘A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps...He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or

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foolish...’; “The positively necessary training for a non-violent army is an immovable faith in God, willing and perfect obedience to the chief of the non-violent army and perfect inward and outward co-operation between the units of the army.”

It is logical to infer from the above quotations that Gandhi developed a considerable amount of respect for the military lifestyle and, “the values of courage, self-discipline, perseverance, and obedience to right authority.”

One only needs to read Gandhi’s, “passionate appeals for volunteer enlistments in the Boer War, the Zulu Rebellion, and the First World War,” to be struck by his strong admiration for the virtues of military lifestyle minus the violence. These values comprise what Gandhi would later refer to as ‘the military ideal.’

Traditionally, military organization and structure is hierarchical by nature. Troops are trained and organized by leadership capability, a code of honor/conduct is established and strictly adhered to and obedience to superior officers is the accepted norm. This structure has stood steadfastly the


23 Ibid., 382.

24 Ibid., 382.

test of time, being first employed by the Roman army.\textsuperscript{26} This is precisely why Gandhi chose to build his non-violent army using the same basic structure. At the top of the hierarchy is the Satyagrahi general, a role filled by Gandhi. The role of the Satyagrahi general, however, is more than just leadership in the military sense. The Satyagrahi general was also a spiritual leader whose example motivated the inner experience of his Satyagrahi soldiers. Gandhi, as general, had to first win the hearts of his soldiers before ever designating their actions. So, Gandhi identified and trained his lieutenant generals, majors, captains and lieutenants, who, depending on their capacities for leadership positions coupled with spiritual potential, would fill the roles of Satyagrahi corps leaders and supervisors. These higher-ranking officers would comprise Gandhi’s inner circle. They would eat together and they would pray together. Many of these individuals received Paramahansa Yogananda’s Kriya Yoga initiation with their general in 1935.\textsuperscript{27} The act of spiritual initiation with their leader could only have deepened their collective spiritual resolve and belief in the validity of the Satyagraha technique. These higher-ranking officers would


\textsuperscript{27} Paramahansa Yogananda, \textit{Autobiography of a Yogi} (Los Angeles, California: Self-Realization Fellowship, 1946), 428.
be responsible for the behavior and welfare of the Satyagrahi soldiers that comprised the separate Satyagrahi units.

Ergo, Gandhi structured his non-violent army on proven military values with the added element of spirituality. The importance of this cannot be stressed enough as it directly affects every aspect of a Satyagrahis’ being from the vows taken to the code of conduct observed during a campaign or during time in prison. Every aspect of a Satyagrahis’ life was based on a marriage of discipline, obedience and spirituality. A discussion of the vows a Satyagrahi soldier took will now follow.

**Vows Of A Satyagrahi**

Vows were the foundation of the principled existence of a Satyagrahi soldier. These vows are very similar to the vows a traditional soldier might be asked to keep, but unlike a traditional military vows the vows of the Satyagrahi army are spiritually based. Gandhi postulated that taking vows, “is not a sign of weakness, but of strength.” Therefore, Gandhi proposed a system of eleven vows and observances that he felt every Satyagrahi should follow in his daily life, whether they lived in an ashram or not. These vows

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are: truth, non-violence, chastity, non-possession, fearlessness, control of the palate, non-stealing, bread labor, equality of religions, anti-untouchability and Swadeshi. A brief explanation of each vow follows.

The adherence to truth is the base upon which a Satyagrahi grounds his life. Gandhi firmly believed and taught his disciples, “nothing is or exists in reality except truth. That is why Sat or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact it is more correct to say that Truth is God, than to say God is Truth.”29 The law of Truth can be narrowly interpreted as only speaking the truth and refraining from telling lies. However, Gandhi postulated a broader exposition of this law:

There should be Truth in thought, Truth in speech and Truth in action. To the man who has realized this Truth in its fullness, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it is not truth, and so not true knowledge; and there can be no inward peace without true knowledge. If we once learn how to apply this never-failing test of Truth, we will at once be able to find out what is worth doing, what is worth seeing, and what is worth reading.30

Hence, insistence upon the law of Truth is the vow from which all other vows naturally arise. A Satyagrahi came to understand this law in meditation,

29 Ibid., 37.

through single-minded devotion and indifference to other worldly affairs, and through performing *tapas*, or self-suffering, in order to purify the spirit. This practice of *tapas* is central to the success of a Satyagrahi soldier and will be discussed further in the following chapter.

The vow of non-violence, like the vow of Truth, is to be interpreted in a broader sense. Non-violence therefore extends beyond mere non-injury to human beings. Gandhi postulated that love is the active component of non-violence. In fact, he would refer to non-violence as the law of Love. He further wrote, "the law of love requires equal consideration for all life from the tiniest insect to the highest man. One who follows this law must not be angry even with the perpetrator of the greatest imaginable wrong, but must love him, wish him well and serve him."\(^{31}\) Although Gandhi would have a Satyagrahi apply the law of love to a wrongdoer, he, “must never submit to his wrong or his injustice, but must oppose it with all his might, and must patiently and without resentment suffer all the hardships to which the wrongdoer may subject him in punishment for his opposition.”\(^{32}\) I feel it is important to comment that the law of Love, in accord with Truth, fills the Satyagrahi with an

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 30.

\(^{32}\) Ibid.
unrivaled power to oppose tyranny. A tyrant can never destroy the pure spirit within a Satyagrahi for a Satyagrahi chooses to suffer out of love.

The vow of chastity, or brahmacharya, was of particular importance to Gandhi. Gandhi would attribute much of his success to keeping this vow as it taught him how to control his passions. Self-control was particularly important to the inner development of a Satyagrahi soldier. If a civil resister could not control his passions it would be impossible to keep the first two vows. Gandhi further postulated, “it is not enough that one should not look upon any woman or man with a lustful eye; animal passion must be so controlled as to be excluded even from the mind.”33 Furthermore, his vow should be applied to a marriage in a particular way. Gandhi suggested that husband and wife develop a relationship of purity and strive to live harmoniously as brother and sister. The implication, I feel, is that love, in its purest form, is not physical. This vow is broken by a “sinful touch, gesture or word.”34


34 Ibid., 30.
Gandhi’s fourth vow is that of non-possession. In *Non-Violent Resistance*, he drew the connection between possession and provision for the future.\(^{35}\) In a particularly moving passage Gandhi stated:

> A seeker after Truth, a follower of the law of Love cannot hold anything against tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow; he never creates more than is strictly needed for the moment. If therefore we repose faith in His providence, we should rest assured that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything we require. Saints and devotees, who have lived in such faith, have always derived a justification for it from their experience. Our ignorance or negligence of the Divine Law, which gives to man day to day his daily bread and no more, has given rise to inequalities with all the miseries attendant upon them.\(^{36}\)

Therefore, a Satyagrahi must have complete faith in God to provide for him his welfare. This implies that a Satyagrahi should not possess anything that is not explicitly needed. If God supplies that which is needed, why should a Satyagrahi spend his time acquiring things on his own? For example, it would be a breach of this principle to have a reserve store of food, or to possess more clothing than is needed or to “keep a chair if one can do without it.”\(^{37}\)

In observing the vow of non-possession a simplification of one’s life occurs over a

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\(^{36}\) Ibid., 45-6.

period of time. Such a simplification allows the Satyagrahi to focus on inner development versus outer attainments.

Gandhi’s fifth observance is the vow of fearlessness. Fearlessness is certainly a traditional military vow, such as in fearlessness in battle against the enemy. Yet, for the Satyagrahi, this vow operates on two levels. First, the Satyagrahi strives to attain an inner sense of fearlessness. This inner fearlessness naturally translates to the outer world of the battlefield. Gandhi would state, “One cannot follow Truth or Love so long as one is subject to fear.”

Fear rules the lives of many humans the world over. In Gandhi’s South Africa and India, fear of tyranny abounded. Henceforth, he suggested meditation on fearlessness for a seeker of Truth must shed his fear of everything – “A seeker after Truth must give up the fear of parents, caste, government, robbers, etc., and he must not be frightened by poverty or death.” Such an attitude of fearlessness would allow Gandhi and his cohorts to endure years in prison with a happy mind, one motivated by Love and the virtue of Truth. In a sense, to be fearless in the Gandhian sense of the term is to be un-moveable in one’s thoughts, words and worldly actions.

38 Ibid., 32.

Control of the palate is an observance associated with and a necessary part of the vow of *brahmacharya*. Gandhi’s view on food was that it should be taken like medicine for the body and therefore regulated as such. He stated, “Eating is necessary only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service, and must never be practiced for self-indulgence.”\(^{40}\) Hence, eating was a means to an end and not an end itself. In fact, Gandhi would suggest that eating for pleasure, such as in a wedding feast, violates this principle. Ashram rules regulated which foods were appropriate and which were to be avoided. Gandhi wrote, “one must eschew exciting foods, such as spices and condiments. Meat, liquor, tobacco, *bhang*, etc., are excluded from the ashram.”\(^{41}\) These items were intentionally excluded from ashram life because they are objects that arise passion within the human body and were generally consumed solely for the purpose of increasing pleasure.

The vow of non-stealing extends beyond merely not taking the property of another being for personal gain. Gandhi would associate this vow with the vow of non-possession, or poverty, and the connection he makes between the two is illuminating:

\(^{40}\) Ibid., 30.

\(^{41}\) Ibid.
It is not enough not to take another's property without his permission. One becomes guilty of theft even by using differently anything which one has received in trust for use in a particular way, as well as using a thing longer than the period for which it has been lent. It is also theft if one receives anything which one does not really need. The fine truth at the bottom of this principle is that Nature provides just enough, and no more, for our daily need.  

In connecting the vows of non-possession with non-stealing, Gandhi re-affirms the importance of relying upon God for that which one needs to survive. Furthermore, this vow strengthens the moral conduct of the Satyagrahi as one is taught to respect and appreciate what is given and to not misuse any object for personal gain – ever.

Gandhi adapted the vow of bread labour from Timofei Bondaref. Bread labour was, “labour every able-bodied person had to do simply because they were bodily creatures. Whether rich or poor, every human had to engage, if only for a few hours, in some form of bread labour.” To this idea, Gandhi would add that labor was a sacrament and a yagna, or healthy spiritual endeavor. Gandhi derived such an understanding from contemplating the famous Hindu spiritual text, the Bhagavad Gita. He would further posit,


“Physical labor is essential for the observance of non-stealing and non-possession. Man can be saved from injuring society, as well as himself, only if he sustains his physical existence by physical labor. Able-bodied adults must do all their personal work themselves, and must not be served by others, except for proper reasons.”44 What then would constitute a ‘proper reason?’ If a person was injured or ill, or in the case of children, being served by others would be appropriate – and it would necessarily be the duty of the stronger to serve those who could not not serve themselves.

The vow and observance of the equality of religions may be described as an overall vow of spiritual tolerance. In fact, it was ashram policy to respect all the principle faiths of the world. Gandhi felt that all faiths contained a revelation of Truth, "but as they have all been outlined by imperfect man, they have been affected by imperfections and alloyed with untruth. One must therefore entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as one accords to one's own."45 If this law was observed, peace would naturally arise because conflict between members of different faiths would be eradicated. Thus, the practice of tolerance is also the harbinger of hope. There is hope


that, “the defects in the various faiths may be overcome, and that they may advance, side by side, towards perfection.”

The vow of anti-untouchability is a response to the Indian caste system. The caste system is “The hierarchical classification of the human world into four kinds of beings: *Brahmins* who are intellectuals and priests; *Kshatriyas*, warriors and rulers; *Vaishyas*, farmers and merchants; *Shudras*, who provide various services to members of the higher estates.”  The remainder of the population not contained within a specific caste, are referred to as ‘outcastes’ and ‘untouchables.’ The caste system is cruel and unforgiving to these members of society. In observing this vow, Gandhi sought to end this prejudice and to promote equality amongst beings. Gandhi went so far as to rename these people, applying the term *Harijan*, which means ‘children of God.’ He stated, “The so-called untouchables have an equal place in the ashram with other classes. The ashram does not believe in caste, which it considers has injured Hinduism, because its implications of superior and


inferior status, and pollution by contact, are contrary to the law of Love." A Satyagrahi soldier would therefore happily endure injury to his own self in an effort to secure equal treatment for all beings, of all faiths and of all castes. The removal of untouchability is, therefore, a sacred duty and an important aspect of the overall mission of the Satyagrahi.

The final vow to be discussed is the observance of Swadeshi, or a concern for what pertains to one’s own country. Swadeshi has economic ramifications and posits that a people should serve those closest to themselves first. This principle is compromised if one serves those more remotely situated versus those who are closest to home. Gandhi postulated, “Observance of Swadeshi makes for order in the world; the breach of it leads to chaos. Following this principle, one must as far as possible purchase one’s requirements locally and not buy things imported from foreign lands, which can easily be manufactured in the country.” Such a practice leads to economic strength and harmony within a country. It promotes a strong economy, which, in turn, creates employment for a country’s citizens. Gandhi would further assert that self-interest is contradictory to the observance of

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49 Ibid., 32.
Swadeshi as it, “Enjoins the sacrifice of oneself for the family, of the family for the village, of the village for the country, and of the country for humanity.”

A Satyagrahi soldier strived to live a simple, humble, disciplined and principled existence based upon these eleven vows. The vows defined what a Satyagrahi was, how a Satyagrahi should conduct himself in society and on the battlefield and, finally, what means a Satyagrahi would employ in opposition to tyranny. Ultimately, these vows would become a guiding, organizational force and source of inner strength to the Satyagrahi soldier.

Rules For Satyagraha Campaigns

Gandhi established a set of rules for Satyagraha army to follow during Satyagraha campaigns. These rules are akin to the discipline code of a traditional military while engaged in a campaign. These rules were based on the Satyagrahi vows and reflected appropriate behavior in four aspects of the life of a non-violent soldier: as an individual, as a prisoner, as a unit and, finally, in communal disputes. In response to a readers query, Gandhi listed these rules in a short article titled “Some Rules for Satyagraha” published in Young India on February 27, 1930. These rules are:

50 Ibid., 32.
As An Individual

1. A Satyagrahi, *ie*, a civil resister, will harbor no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.
3. In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger.
4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by the authorities.
5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life, he will, however, never retaliate.
7. Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent, and therefore, also, he may not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of *Ahimsa*.
8. A civil resister will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.
9. In the course of the struggle if anyone insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his own life.

As A Prisoner

10. As a prisoner, a civil resister will behave courteously toward prison officials, and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect; as for instance, whilst he will salaam officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations and will refuse to shout Victory to Sarkar (Government) or the like. He will take cleanly cooked and cleanly served food, which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insultingly served or served in unclean vessels.
11. A civil resister will make no distinctions between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself as superior to the rest; nor will he ask for any conveniences that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as may be required for his physical or spiritual well-being.
12. A civil resister may not fast for want of conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to one’s self-respect.

As A Unit

13. A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.
14. He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free to determine the fitness of the core to satisfy him before joining it; but after he has joined it, it becomes his duty to submit to its discipline irksome or otherwise. If the sum-total of the energy of the corps appears to a member to be improper or immoral, he has a right to sever his connection; but, being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.
15. No civil resister is to expect maintenance for his dependents. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil resister entrusts his dependents to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds of thousands give themselves up to it, they are able to make no previous provision. How much more, then, should be the case in Satyagraha? It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

In Communal Fights

16. No civil resister will intentionally become a cause of communal quarrels.
17. In the event of any such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu, he will be generous toward Mussalmans and others and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save non-Hindus from a Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.
18. He will, to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.
19. If there is a procession of Satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and
they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities.\textsuperscript{51}

Therefore, in listing these specific rules of conduct, Gandhi has supplied his Satyagraha army with a precise code of discipline to follow while engaging in any aspect of a Satyagraha campaign.

\textbf{Satyagraha Training}

Training ensures discipline and success in both the traditional military model as well as the non-violent, Gandhian model. Soldiers are made to constantly perform drills in their areas of expertise so that when confronted with the stress of battle a soldier's action is accurate and precise. In instances of mass civil disobedience specific training was essential to the success of the campaign, otherwise the potential for broken discipline and violence is increased. There are two dimensions to this aspect of Satyagrahia training: the inner dimension of training in patience and fearlessness and the outer dimension of training in understanding the laws of the state.

Training in patience and fearlessness is primarily an inner discipline that a Satyagrahi would address in meditation and silent contemplation. Of

\textsuperscript{51} Mohandas K. Gandhi, "Some rules of Satyagraha," \textit{Young India}, February 27, 1930.
this process, Gandhi wrote, “It simply requires the will not to kill even in retaliation and the courage to face death without revenge. This is no sermon on ahimsa but cold reason and the statement of a universal law. Given the unquenchable faith in the law no provocation should prove too great for the exercise of forebearance. This I have described as the non-violence of the brave.”

Fearlessness is an active and engaged technique in the arsenal of a Satyagrahi soldier. Training in fearlessness and non-violence is diametrically opposed to training in violence. In training for traditional combat a degree of fearlessness is necessary, but for the Satyagrahi it is essential. To this notion Gandhi added, “Violence is needed for the protection of things external, non-violence is needed for the protection of the Atman, for the protection of one’s honour.” Thus, Gandhi’s implication is that cultivating fearlessness is akin to freeing the soul.

The outer dimension of Satyagraha training involved education and was conducted in the form of a classroom styled discourse on morality and the laws of society. Gandhi was adamant that his soldiers were aware of all a


53 Mohandas K. Gandhi, "Fearlessness the Pre-requisite," Harijan, Jan. 9, 1940.
state's laws before engaging in a protest of any one of them. Henceforth, if a citizen didn’t understand a law how could he be justified to engage in a campaign to adjust or change it? Furthermore, Gandhi insisted that a Satyagrahi voluntarily obey these laws even if they were inconvenient and be willing to suffer loss of property and personal freedom in so doing. Ultimately, in a particularly moving passage Gandhi described this outer aspect of Satyagraha training as, “the expression (of Satyagraha training) in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance and thorough cleansing of one's self of all impurities.”

It is, henceforth, an evolutionary process of self-strengthening and self-purification.

**Defining Success In A Satyagraha Campaign**

In a traditional military conflict success is achieved by defeating the opponent via combat or, at a minimum, by seriously frustrating the opponent’s objectives while meeting one’s own objectives. A Satyagraha campaign, in contrast, does not share these traditional goals. Gandhi wrote, “the


Satyagrahi's object is to convert, not coerce, the wrong-doer.\textsuperscript{56} This implies a process of mass inner purification of the society as a whole. A successful Satyagraha campaign would end in cooperation with the opponent and a mutual understanding and promotion of the just end that needs to be recognized by the opponent. An excellent example of this is found in the Champaran Satyagraha. In this campaign, the application of Satyagraha led to the mutual understanding that the local indigo farmers deserved a higher wage and more autonomy in which to operate their businesses. The local government recognized this and adjusted their practices accordingly.

Furthermore, success in a Satyagraha campaign is intimately tied to the notion of means and ends. Gandhi was adamant that means and ends in a campaign are inseparable. Hence, Gandhi believed only peaceful means could bring peaceful ends and that violent means could never bring peaceful ends, only violent ones. This is in direct opposition to the military belief that violence can bring a lasting peace. This philosophy is also opposed to the notion of ‘any means necessary.’ In a famous passage, Gandhi wrote, “means are, after all, everything...as the means so the ends. The means may be likened to a seed and the end to a tree and there is the same inviolable connection

\textsuperscript{56} Mohandas K. Gandhi, "Requisite Qualifications," Harijan, March 25, 1939.
between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.”\textsuperscript{57}

Nevertheless, given the choice between cowardly inaction or violence, Gandhi would state, “I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honor than she should, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonor. But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment.”\textsuperscript{58}

In closing, Gandhi’s philosophy of Satyagraha is structured on a military model as a moral equivalent to war without the violent component. This structure and organization was integral to the success of Satyagraha campaigns. Gandhi, as general, created a strict code of vows and rules to be judiciously observed by his Satyagraha army. These vows and observances, though similar to a traditional military, carry the added element of spirituality. Ergo, Satyagraha is steeped in an understanding of Truth and based on the proper application of the law of Love. Truth, in this sense, is the application of appropriate active means relative to the situation at hand in such a way that includes an element of moral responsibility within it. Hence, as one scholar


\textsuperscript{58} Mohandas K. Gandhi, "Violence the Choice," \textit{Young India}, November 8, 1920.
noted, “to be firm in the truth is to transform that situation by bringing out its hidden moral dimension and, by pressing that upon all the other people involved, to overwhelm the resistance vested in their political and economic interests and categories.” Now that the structure and philosophy of Satyagraha has been established, as well as the vows of a Satyagrahi and the rules that a Satyagraha army followed, which provide a full description of the Satyagrahi experience, the analysis will turn to the notion of self-sacrifice as an essential tool of the Satyagrahi.

CHAPTER III

THE VIRTUES OF SELF-SACRIFICE AND CONSCIOUS SUFFERING

There should be no sorrow felt over one’s sacrifice. That sacrifice causes pain, loses its sacred character and will break down under stress. One gives up things that one considers to be injurious and, therefore, there should be pleasure attendant upon the giving up...In true sacrifice all the suffering is on one side – one is required to master the art of getting killed without killing, of gaining life by losing it...A Satyagrahi must always be ready to die with a smile on his face, without retaliation and without rancor in his heart.

M.K. Gandhi quoted in Homer A. Jack, *The Wit and Wisdom of Gandhi*

Gandhi, as Satyagrahi general, exemplified the relationship between active and engaged political protest against tyranny, oppression and injustice and the capacity to voluntarily accept suffering as a form of self-sacrifice to achieve a higher end. Self-sacrifice may be described as the act of deliberately following a course of action that has a high risk of suffering or death (that could otherwise be avoided) in order to achieve a perceived benefit for others. Gandhi’s practice of self-sacrifice was essential to his practice of non-violence.

In essence, Gandhi’s practice of non-violence can be seen as incorporating two essential conceptual elements. The first of these elements is the idea of *ahimsa*, or non-injury to all living beings, which stems from a deep appreciation of the equal moral value of all life. The second of these elements is the voluntary acceptance and willingness to endure suffering by the
protestor as a means of appealing to the conscience of the oppressor without inflicting harm on the oppressor. Gandhi achieved this end by employing two specific techniques: the conscious courting of police repression, arrest and violence as well as acts of tapas, or spiritual austerities, such as fasting for extended periods of time. Gandhi and his Satyagraha army willingly and selflessly accepted suffering, not for personal gain but in order to promote a higher good, that is, the possibility of equal rights for Indians abroad and an Indian self-rule at home.

Before addressing Gandhi’s techniques of self-sacrifice, the concept of fearlessness must be addressed. Fearlessness is a specific vow that a Satyagrahi soldier promised to continually cultivate and always keep. Yet, more than a vow, fearlessness is an inner posture and a mental attitude that presupposes the actions of a Satyagrahi. In Young India, Gandhi wrote, “fearlessness is the sine qua non for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek truth or cherish love without fearlessness? As Pritam has it, ‘the path of Hari (the lord) is the path of the brave, not of cowards.’ Hari here means truth and the brave are armed with fearlessness, not with the sword,
the rifle or other carnal weapons which are affected only by cowards.”

Gandhi identifies the posture of fearlessness with spiritual attainment – and attainment, by its nature, is an evolutionary process. Henceforth, through continual meditation on God and fearlessness the Satyagrahi gradually sheds that which binds him in ignorance to this world. This fearlessness is all encompassing and, “connotes freedom from all external fear – fear of disease, bodily in injury or death, of disposssession, of losing one’s nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on.” Gandhi also identified fearlessness as “the secret of Satyagraha” by observing how “a Satyagrahi enjoys a degree of freedom not possible for others, for he is truly a fearless person. Once his mind is rid of fear, he will never agree to be another’s slave. He who has attained to the Satyagraha state of mind will remain ever victorious, at all times and places and under all conditions irrespective of whether it is a government or a people he opposes, whether they be strangers, friends, or relatives.” Therefore, it may be inferred that for Gandhi


2 Ibid., 2.

fearlessness is a characteristic of self-mastery and this self-mastery trumps the notion of slavery in its mental and physical manifestations. Such self-mastery and control are extremely powerful tools in warfare. So powerful, in fact, that it would allow a Satyagrahi to happily court oppression, violence and imprisonment by police.

Therefore, Gandhi, having cultivated fearlessness in himself and his troops, began to employ the technique of consciously courting and inviting suffering from the police/state in order to expose and combat the tyranny he and his fellow Indians experienced. There are countless examples of Gandhi soliciting such treatment and he did so in a rather honest and direct manner. An excellent illustration of this behavior is found in the famous Salt Satyagraha campaign. Gandhi wrote a letter to Viceroy Lord Irwin outlining his objectives: to apply Satyagraha via engaging in a peaceful march to the sea where, upon arrival, Gandhi would violate British law by illegally processing salt and promoting similar behavior among his fellow Indians. This letter operated on two different levels. First, it was a plea, which was ignored, to the Viceroy to consider adjusting or repealing the law. Second, this letter functioned as an invitation to publically arrest Gandhi. Gandhi wrote, “if my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the eleventh day of this month I shall proceed with such co-workers at the ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the
salt laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil."\(^6\) Gandhi arrived in Dandi, Gujarat on April 5\(^{th}\) 1930. Thousands of Indians had joined him and his original group of 78 ashramites. The enormous turnout reflected the overall success of this campaign. Gandhi was approached by the Associate Press and, in an effort to further raise global awareness of the Indian oppression; Gandhi applied his adroit media skills in offering an interview to an Associate Press journalist:

I cannot withhold my compliments from the government for the policy of complete non-interference adopted by them throughout the march....I wish I could believe this non-interference was due to any real change of heart or policy. The wanton disregard shown by them to popular feeling in the Legislative Assembly and their high-handed action leave no room for doubt that the policy of heartless exploitation of India is to be persisted in at any cost, and so the only interpretation I can put upon this non-interference is that the British Government, powerful though it is, is sensitive to world opinion which will not tolerate repression of extreme political agitation which civil disobedience undoubtedly is, so long as disobedience remains civil and therefore necessarily non-violent .... It remains to be seen whether the Government will tolerate

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as they have tolerated the march, the actual breach of the salt laws by countless people from tomorrow.64

The day following this famous interview, Gandhi held his usual prayer session. This prayer session ended with Gandhi, flanked by thousands, processing salt and suggesting that his fellow Indians do the same and actively boycott British salt. The aftermath of this act resulted in a mass Satyagraha where British goods and textiles we boycotted en masse. This, in turn, resulted in the imprisonment of over 60,000 Indians across the continent. Gandhi followed his actions at Dandi, Gujarat with another letter to Viceroy Lord Irwin. This letter stated Gandhi’s intent to travel to the Dharasana Salt factory in Gujarat, where he and his followers would further apply Satyagraha. This letter resulted in Gandhi being jailed, without trial, in April 1930, where he would remain until 1931. This outraged the Indian population. During his sojourn in prison the impact of Gandhi’s self-sacrifice and the success of the Salt Satyagraha was recognized the world over. Time Magazine named Gandhi ‘man of the year 1930’ and upon his release from prison in 1931 Viceroy Lord Irwin agreed to hold negotiations with Gandhi on equal terms. This was significant in the fact that the Viceroy had never recognized Gandhi’s position or authority as an Indian leader. Henceforth, without ever bearing arms and

through applying self-sacrifice in the Satyagraha campaign, Gandhi was able to enact change.

Another technique in Gandhi’s peaceful arsenal was the application of *tapas*, or self-sacrificial acts of spiritual austerities, in order to bring awareness to Indian oppression. Gandhi’s practice of *tapas* mainly took the form of a fast where he would not consume food or water. Gandhi skillfully used the fast as a method of non-violent resistance in which he and other participants fasted as an act of political protest, or to provoke feelings of guilt, or to achieve a common goal such as a policy change. Of his practice of fasting, Gandhi highlighted the spiritual element and subtext. He wrote, “I am not responsible for these fasts. I do not undertake them for my amusement. I would not torture the flesh for the love of fame. Though I bear joyfully the pangs of hunger and many other discomforts of fasting, let no one imagine that I do not suffer. These fasts are bearable only because they are imposed upon me by a higher Power and the capacity to bear the pain also comes from that Power.”

Overall, Gandhi’s fasts were extremely effective. Gandhi fasted to atone for the sins of his friends, family, local businesses and all his countrymen. His

scope was enormous. Gandhi also fasted to foster unity among disparate groups such as the Hindus and Muslims or the Untouchables in India. In 1918, Gandhi fasted to protest low wages of mill workers in Ahmedabad, India. This fast lasted three days. The idea of an emaciated Gandhi suffering for the cause of the mill workers was motivation for the mill workers to not break their protest. Gandhi wrote, “my fast was undertaken not on account of lapse of the mill-owners, but on account of that of the labourers in which, as their representative, I felt I had a share. With the mill-owners, I could only plead; to fast against them would amount to coercion. Yet in spite of my knowledge that my fast would put pressure upon them, as in fact it did, I felt I could not help it. The duty to undertake it seemed to me to be clear.”

After the three-day fast ended, the mill owners raised the wages of their workers to a more acceptable level. Thus, a calculated act of tapas emerged again as a successful non-violent technique for change.

As a method of protesting the Rowlatt Act, Gandhi again employed the technique of fasting, but on this occasion he called on all citizens of India to join him in solidarity. On April 6th, 1919 a mass, one day fast was observed

where citizens spent the day in prayer, fasting and not conducting business of any sort. This course of action came to Gandhi in a dream. In his Autobiography, Gandhi wrote, "...we should call upon the country to observe a general hartal.\textsuperscript{67} Satyagraha is a process of self-purification, and ours is a sacred fight, and it seems to me to be in the fitness of things that it should be commenced with an act of self-purification. Let all the people of India, therefore, suspend their business on that day and observe the day as one of fasting and prayer."\textsuperscript{68} A mass fast of this nature was both a clever and an effective technique. It reflected the mass view of the people as willing to sacrifice for their own cause while reflecting to the people they could actively join Gandhi to make a difference. Hence, it was publicized greatly throughout India as a success in newspapers and periodicals that a majority of the population supported the movement for Indian independence. The British Raj had no choice but to acknowledge the growing support behind Gandhi and his Satyagrahi army.

In September 1932, while in jail, Gandhi undertook a "fast unto death" to improve the status of the Hindu Harijan, or Untouchables. The British, by

\footnote{A Hartal is an Indian term that refers to a general strike.}

\footnote{Ibid., 460-1.}
permitting the Untouchables to be considered as a separate part of the Indian electorate in the Communal Act, were, according to Gandhi, countenancing a severe injustice. Although he was a member of an upper caste, Gandhi was the great leader of the Indian movement dedicated to eradicating the unjust social and economic ramifications of the caste system. Destroying the concept of ‘untouchability’ became a personal mission for Gandhi and he was more than willing to sacrifice his own life for his beloved Harijan. Ultimately, this fast was successful politically for Gandhi. His objectives were met, as the British Raj feared that if Gandhi died a mass revolution would have broken out in India. They had no choice but to concede and on September 26th, 1932 the Raj changed the Communal Award and Gandhi’s seven day fast was broken.

In conclusion, Gandhi, as Satyagrahi prime leader, adroitly reflected the fearlessness necessary to sacrifice self and inspire similar acts of self-sacrifice in others in order to widen awareness of the Indian oppression by the British Raj and to bring about political change in India and abroad. The two techniques Gandhi employed most were: first, the conscious courting or taunting of authority in order to bring about police violence, oppression and arrest and, second, the willingness to apply tapas, usually in the form of an act of fasting. In Gandhi’s own humble words he describes his vision - “India, by finding true independence and self-expression through Hindu-Muslim unity
and through non-violent means, i.e., unadulterated self-sacrifice, can point a way out of the prevailing darkness.” Gandhi was assassinated on January 30th 1948 after leaving a prayer gathering. His life culminated in the ultimate sacrifice for his cause. Now that the elements of Satyagraha have been established, this thesis will turn to a comparison of Satyagraha campaigns.

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CHAPTER IV
SATYAGRAHA FROM INFANCY TO MATURITY

Complete civil disobedience is rebellion without the elements of violence in it. An out-and-out civil resister simply ignores the authority of the State...He never uses force and never resists force when it used against him. In fact, he invites imprisonment and other uses of force against himself...Submission to the State law is the price a citizen pays for his personal liberty. Submission, therefore, to a State law wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realizes the evil nature of a State is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to society whilst he is endeavoring to compel the State, without committing a moral breach, to arrest him...A body of civil resisters is like an army subject to all the discipline of a soldiers life...One perfect civil resister is enough to win the battle of right against wrong.

Gandhi, M.K., *Young India*, Oct. 11th, 1921

Gandhi began his self-experiments with civil disobedience in South Africa and coupled the results to a truth-based, moral commitment to form Satyagraha as a living, adaptable philosophy and weapon of mass protest of right against the tyranny of wrong. Gandhi viewed civil disobedience as a sacred duty and a service he owed to his fellow Indians, as aspects of his own unique karma and dharma. Like Gandhi, his philosophy would grow to fit

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1 *Karma* came to mean any correct ethical activity and was connected to *dharma* (duty, righteousness). Ergo, if one’s *karma*, in the sense of action, is in accord with *dharma*, one will have ‘good karma’ that will lead to a good rebirth. If one’s *karma* (action) is adharmic, against *dharma*, the ‘bad karma’ that results may play out in lifetime after lifetime. A favorite saying used to
the needs of the peoples it so judiciously strove to serve. Henceforth, this thesis would be remiss without a discussion of the evolutionary nature of Satyagraha. Ergo, Satyagraha was necessarily practiced differently in its’ infancy in South Africa than it was practiced in its’ maturity in India. This chapter will endeavor to identify the ways in which Satyagraha evolved over the forty years Gandhi practiced it.

**Satyagraha In South Africa**

Gandhi described “the advent of Satyagraha” in South Africa to have occurred on Sept. 11th, 1906 in a community meeting where the Indian citizens of the Transvaal decided to stand in solidarity against an act that would force them to be fingerprinted and register with the Registrar of Asiatics.71 As a first endeavor, Gandhi could not have chosen a better cause as this act effected every Indian in the Transvaal. If this act passed every Indian would have to carry on his person registration papers and if an Indian refused to register he could be fined, jailed or deported. Gandhi saw the far-

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reaching implications of such an ordinance and described it thus, “As it seems to me, it is designed to strike at the very root of our existence in South Africa. It is not the last step, but the first step with a view to hound us out of the country. We are therefore responsible for the safety, not only of the ten or fifteen thousand Indians in the Transvaal but of the entire Indian community in South Africa. Again, if we fully understand all the implications of this legislation, we shall find that India’s honour is in our keeping. For the Ordinance seeks to humiliate not only ourselves but also the motherland.”

This nationalistic fervor brought 3000 Indians together in a Jewish theater where an oath was taken to not submit to the proposed “Black Act.” After this, Gandhi organized non-violent means of protest of the Black Act, such as meetings with government officials and even a journey to England to plead their case to British authorities. A basic structure of Satyagraha campaigns began to emerge, in five steps: first, negotiation of the differences and an initial attempt to resolve them, second, mobilization of supporters with proper training, third, demonstration in a public forum of the issues to solidify support and present a truthful resolution, fourth, organized non-


4 Ibid., 69.
cooperation including boycotts, strikes, peaceful disruptions, blockades and sit-ins, and, finally, the creation of a parallel entity to replace the old opponent that both sides agree to accept. If these five steps did not bring about the desired solution, Gandhi would return to the first step and increase both strength and intensity. This basic structure would further evolve as Gandhi gained experience through further self-experiments with civil disobedience and politics.

The second thrust of the Satyagraha campaign in South Africa continued in 1912 as a result of the Transvaal government’s “breach of trust” in passing a law that all marriages “not performed according to Christian rights” were to be deemed invalid. Ergo, all Indian marriages performed in accord with traditional Indian rites would be invalid and “the many married Indian women in South Africa in terms of this judgment ceased to rank as the wives of their husbands and were degraded to the rank of concubines, while their progeny were deprived of their right to inherit the parents’ property.”

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7 Ibid., 169-70.
Obviously this judgment was found to be insufferable for all Indians, as marriage was considered to be a sacred institution, but to female Indians in particular. In addition to the marriage judgment, the Transvall government decided to levy an unjust, three pound tax on every indentured laborer and each of their family members. This led to a widespread outrage amongst the Indian community. Therefore, in 1913, Gandhi again applied Satyagraha, but this time on a mass scale. Gandhi asked all Indians to strike until this tax was repealed and invited women to join this Satyagraha campaign, something he had previously not done. Hence, Satyagraha evolved once again and expanded its' scope to include all Indians, men and women alike. In the *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Gandhi observed, “The whole community rose like a surging wave. Without organisation, without propaganda, all - nearly 40,000 - courted imprisonment. Nearly ten thousand were actually imprisoned...”

Gandhi led The Great March of 2,200 workers and their families from Newcastle to the Transvaal border and was jailed for the fourth time. There was then a spontaneous strike by all Indian workers in Natal, the biggest general strike that the country had ever seen. Thousands of Indians were confined in prisons and mine compounds where the prisoners were subjected

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to cruel treatment and forced labor, amounting to no less than government-supported slavery. Many striking workers were brutally assaulted and a number of them were killed or wounded. Some Europeans like Henry Polak, Hermann Kallenbach and A.H. West, who had become admirers and associates of Gandhi, identified with the Indian cause and even went to prison.

Supporters of the struggle in the European community, though a very small minority, included many churchmen and prominent public figures - such as Olive Schreiner, the writer, William Hosken, leader of the Progressive Party, and Vere Stent, an editor. As a result of Gandhi’s formidable willpower and the sacrifices of his Satyagraha army as well as the growing support of prominent non-Indians, General Smuts was obliged, in the face of the determination of the Indian community, backed by a powerful national agitation in India and pressure from Britain, to sign an agreement with Gandhi, conceding all the main demands of the Satyagraha campaigns.

Therefore, Gandhi, having achieved considerable success in applying Satyagraha over the last eight years in South Africa, decided to return to India, where his living philosophy would further adapt to suit the needs of his fellow

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10 Ibid., 197-8.
Indians in their homeland.

**Satyagraha In India**

Gandhi’s first book, *Hind Swaraj (Indian Home Rule)*, was written and published in 1909 before his return to India, for which it very much set the stage for Gandhi’s later self-experiments with Satyagraha and civil disobedience.† Gandhi’s work in India stretched from his return in 1914 to his death by assassination in 1948. Gandhi’s striking impact on Indian political life during that period grew out of his role in leading a number of Satyagraha campaigns, some more successful than others, and all evolutionary by nature.

Gandhi first applied Satyagraha in India during the Champaran campaign. In Champaran, thousands of serfs and indentured laborers were forced to grow indigo instead of the food crops they needed for survival. These crops were purchased at extremely low prices by the British hegemony, which employed militias to keep the workers suppressed. This led, inexorably, to a population embroiled in abject poverty. Gandhi wrote extensively of the poverty he experienced in Champaran in the pages of *Young India* and *Harijan*.

At one point, Gandhi was ordered to leave the area by the local government. Gandhi refused and, escaping arrest, was able to gather many thousands of peasants to stand with him in peaceful protest. Gandhi remarked that the structure and discipline of this campaign was applied at a level not yet achieved—“All of them had express instructions not to concern themselves with grievances against planters or with politics. People who had any complaints to make were to be referred to me. No one was to venture out of his beat. The friends carried out these instructions with wonderful fidelity. I do not remember a single occasion of indiscipline.” Ultimately, Gandhi’s goals were met and the conditions of the Champaran laborers were improved. The first Satyagraha on Indian soil was a success and the structure of Satyagraha was stretched to new levels with participants, their discipline and intensity to peacefully seek justice.

Gandhian Satyagraha would again evolve in the Ahmedabad Mill Workers campaign of 1918. Up to this point in time, Satyagraha was applied in response to hardships inflicted upon Indians from an opposing government such as the British Raj. Yet, in this campaign Satyagraha would be tested in an

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entirely new way, in a struggle between Indian labor classes. The Ahmedabad mill workers desperately required a raise in wages and asked Gandhi to intervene. Gandhi was hesitant as he had established a local ashram and enjoyed good relations with both the mill workers and the mill owners. Nevertheless, a labor strike of 21 days ensued. After three weeks, the mill workers began to waver in their faith. This led Gandhi to declare a fast in a meeting of the mill workers. Gandhi stated, "Unless the strikers rally,' I declared to the meeting, 'and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food." This fast led to solidarity amongst the workers and forced the mill owners to concede. No one wanted to be responsible for the death of an emaciated, fasting Gandhi. This Satyagraha was essentially a success in so much that the ends of the campaign were met and Satyagraha was applied in an entirely new way, peacefully conquering class differences.

The period of time from late 1919 to February 1922 was known as the "non-cooperation movement," a period of mass civil disobedience and Satyagraha, led by the now-seasoned Satyagrahi general M.K. Gandhi and his army of peaceful civil resisters. Up until this point, no Satyagraha campaign

\[13\] Ibid., 430-1.
had generated the enormous numbers of the Rowlatt Satyagraha. This Satyagraha campaign was in protest of the Rowlatt Acts, which were a series of legislations that imposed authoritarian restrictions upon the Indian people. The notion of habeus corpus was discarded, and the police and army were empowered to search and seize property, and to detain and arrest any Indian without the slightest need for evidence. This legislation was promulgated by the British Parliament, the Imperial Legislative Council and the Viceroy, himself. In response to this, Gandhi called upon all Indians to, “boycott British goods, British courts, British schools, British honors, British jobs – in short, to withdraw Indian support from the vast, monstrous Machine of Empire until it ground to a halt.” Gandhi had never asked so much of the participants in a Satyagraha campaign. However, this campaign was not entirely successful. Gandhi had to suspend the Satyagraha against the Rowlatt anti-terror bill due to a breach of discipline that led to arson, looting and violence against Englishmen. On April 13th, 1919 Brigadier General Dyer ordered his troops to fire upon an unarmed crowd without warning, killing 379 people and wounding 1,137. Gandhi would later call this “a Himalayan

14 Stanley Wolpert, India (Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2006), 110.

15 Ibid., 63.
miscalculation to encourage disobedience to law when the protesters were not properly disciplined in non-violence.”

Fearing a further slide into violence and anarchy, Gandhi called for the struggle to be suspended. Gandhi was arrested in the same year and sentenced to be imprisoned for six years, but was released in 1924.

A final example of the evolutionary nature of Satyagraha can be found in the Temple Road or Vaikom Satyagraha of 1924. This Satyagraha campaign would reflect an evolution and increase in range and scope. This campaign would directly confront the caste system in an effort to eradicate untouchability and to win equal rights and representation for the Harijan, or untouchable, caste – a mission close to Gandhi’s heart. This Satyagraha would reflect an historic struggle for the Harijans’ right to use the public road close to the Vaikom Mahadeva temple to Lord Shiva, which paved the way for the Temple Entry Proclamation of the Travancore government, symbolized a movement for justice and equality across the country during the freedom struggle. The agitation was borne out of the extreme injustice done to the Harijan, whose untouchability and denial of the right to use public roads were an extremely shameful aspect of the then social order. Through the

application of Satyagraha and negotiation, Gandhi brokered a deal in which the government agreed to withdraw the prohibitory orders passed in February 1924, and Gandhi agreed to withdraw the Satyagraha. Of this action Gandhi wrote "Swaraj is a meaningless term, if we desire to keep a fifth of India under perpetual subjection, and deliberately deny to them the fruits of national culture. We are seeking the aid of God in this great purifying movement, but we deny to the most deserving among his creatures the rights of humanity. Inhuman ourselves we may not plead before the Throne for deliverance from the inhumanity of others." Government let the roads on three sides of the temple (north, south and west) open for public but the eastern approach road, and the two roads leading to it from the north and south remained reserved to the higher castes only. Some scholars view this campaign as not being entirely successful, though not being a complete failure, as the Harijan were granted access to the road on three out of the four sides. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this thesis this Satyagraha displays an evolution of scope in which Gandhi was able to apply Satyagraha to an aspect of society deemed inferior, in what still is the biggest class struggle in modern India.

In conclusion, Gandhian Satyagraha is an evolutionary philosophy that grew to accommodate the needs of the people it was meant to serve. The application of Satyagraha in South Africa reflected a period of infancy and experiment that led to the growth evidenced in the application of Satyagraha in India, some forty years later. Still, Satyagraha has continued to evolve and is a valid tool to combat injustice to this day. This thesis will now turn one of the famous “children of Gandhi,” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who successfully led the non-violent campaign for African American equal rights in the United States.
CHAPTER V
KING: AMERICAN SATYAGRAHI

In any nonviolent campaign, there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustice exists; negotiations; self-purification; and direct action...Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks to so dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored...We know through painful experiences that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor, it must be demanded by the oppressed...One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that 'an unjust law is no law at all'...Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963

Martin Luther King, Jr., like Gandhi, was a paradigmatic civil disobedient whose unwavering adherence to truth and judicious practice of non-violent resistance to injustice was essential to the success of the American civil rights movement of late 1950's-1960's. King has been described as a "child of Gandhi" and one only needs to read King's work to see the abundant parallels between his life and Gandhi's life, his application of Satyagraha in America and Gandhi's application of Satyagraha in India and the overall equivalence of the moral, political and spiritual philosophy of both men. King began his civil rights campaign just seven years after Gandhi's assassination.

King’s endeavors as a spiritual heir to Gandhian philosophy were ultimately successful and became a testament to the living nature and adaptability of the philosophy of Satyagraha. This chapter will analyze King’s involvement in the civil rights movement on three Gandhian principles integral to the success of a non-violent campaign: adroit use of the media to further the Satyagraha offensive and to bring a greater awareness to the struggle for equality, the ability to apply Gandhian structure and training to the Satyagraha corps as a non-violent army of peaceful civil resisters and, finally, the willingness to engage in activities of self-sacrifice and to promote such activities in his fellow Satyagrahis in order to further the overall Satyagraha initiative.

**King: America’s Great Communicator and Finest Orator**

King’s rise as a communicator was meteoric and his ability to shrewdly manipulate the media became tantamount to the success of the American civil rights movement. In many ways, King became a media celebrity after the Rosa Park protest on December 1st, 1955 that inexorably started the Montgomery Bus Boycott. King planned, structured and led this boycott that lasted 385 days and resulted in King’s home being bombed and King being arrested and
serving a brief sojourn in jail.\textsuperscript{88} This campaign ended with a United States District Court ruling in \textit{Browder vs. Gayle} that ended racial segregation on all Montgomery public buses.\textsuperscript{89} Henceforth, King became a nationally recognized public figure, a veritable celebrity in the struggle for equal rights in America. Celebrities in the non-violence arena bring a unique visibility to the struggle and help promote the overall efficacy of non-violence as an effective technique. King's example, by being widely circulated via television and radio, provided an inspiration to others and helped recruit new, principled activists.\textsuperscript{90}

The primary medium in which King chose to communicate with the world was that of the public speech. King's famous speech, \textquotedblleft I Have a Dream,\textquotedblright is perhaps the finest speech ever given on American soil by, arguably, America's most superlative orator and, furthermore, is an excellent representation of King's ability to passionately communicate his ideas of the necessity for civil reformation in America. King delivered this speech to an

\textsuperscript{88} Larry and Schellenberg, John Fisk, \textit{Patterns of Conflict, Paths to Peace} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 115-6. 

\textsuperscript{89} Martin Luther King, Jr., \textit{The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.: Volume I: Called to Serve, January 1929-June 1951} (Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1992), 8-9. 

electrified audience of 250,000 Americans of all racial, political, economic and spiritual backgrounds on the steps to the Lincoln Memorial, Washington, DC on August 28th, 1963 as a part of the March on Washington for Civil Rights and Jobs campaign. The speech was greatly publicized in the print, radio and television media. I will now endeavor to analyze excerpts of this speech in an effort to display the universality of King’s words and why they make him a peerless communicator. King spoke:

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood... I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character... One day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.”

These words exude a humble power and carry a specific cadence that is difficult to recreate. The word that makes the first sentence remarkable is probably "red." That concrete, simple descriptor sets the scene in the mind of the audience. Those who have been to Georgia will acknowledge that, "yes, the


hills are red." The picture becomes tangible in another way for King's global audience, such as people from China or Italy or Britain, who have never been to Georgia, might imagine via the second echo and implication of King's words - the sense of a red, bloody battleground today contrasted with the simple, peaceful table of brotherhood tomorrow.93 There is a pleasant, simple sense, too, of ordinariness about the metaphor of the "table of brotherhood." Most of us sit down every day at tables with intimates and friends to share a meal and the contents of our days.’ Being at table with someone is a unifying experience, though it is not extraordinary. We give little thought to the lineage of grandparents or great-grandparents of who sits at that table with each one of us nor do we often consider their struggles. This simple sentence takes something that was at King’s time difficult to picture and transforms it into a vision that is effortless, conventional and even natural. King then offers the powerful and, for that time, rather controversial image of black and white children holding hands. After he has introduced this quiet, uncomplicated idea to his audience - black and white sitting down in brotherhood - he raised the stakes by adding children as a variable of the equation. The most inflexible stereotypes are often assuaged when the emblem of small children is raised.

93 Ibid., 77-8.
However tightly a tribe defines itself and however fiercely the opposition is disliked, there is usually an iota of room created in thinking of a child from the side of the opposition. Thus, King cleverly sent his own small children as metaphoric emissaries to the hearts of his audience. A few sentences later, having built a firm foundation on the personal, King decided to take this argument from the personal to the divine. King spoke:

...one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.94

King makes a parallel between divinity and equality in this section. The powerful implication is that granting equal rights for all American citizens is, in essence, a choice of making divine values incarnate on American soil. Just a few moments later the speech builds to its climax, one of the best uses of repetition in the history of public discourse, the famous "freedom ring" sequence. In a resounding cadence, King spoke:

Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York.
Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!
Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!
But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!
Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!
Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.
And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual:

“Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!”

Supported by Dr. King’s tremendous speaking voice, the repetition, use of alliteration and anaphora, and clarity of this message roused the inspired audience of 250,000, which included the presidential administration, to readiness for the final, triumphant conclusion that America needed to immediately adjust its policy as regards civil rights. Ultimately, King’s ability to use the media to communicate his ideas is proven through longevity of media attention. As one scholar commented, “that is not to say that King’s dream is irrelevant for today. It is as poignant now as it was 40 years ago. Signs of significant progress keep the dream alive...Further, Martin Luther

95 Ibid., 96.
96 Carol Elizabeth Carr, Public images of Martin Luther King (Columbus, Ohio: The Ohio University Press, 1977), 2.
King, Jr. day, a national holiday celebrated in January every year, helps keep that dream alive. Its celebration is cause for seminars, essays, (media) attention and speeches commemorating King’s life and for calling on Americans to renew their commitment to their beloved community.”

Therefore, in the true Gandhian sense, King adroitly used the media to further the American civil rights Satyagraha.

**King: Leadership and Structure**

King was a master planner, organizer and leader whose passion for equal rights for all Americans was equaled in scope only by his adherence to the efficacy of non-violent resistance techniques. As with Gandhi, King served the function of Satyagraha general and sat at the top of the hierarchy of his army of peaceful, Satyagrahi soldiers. To his strength, King was extremely particular about his inner circle of secondary leaders, many of whom travelled to India and met with Gandhi himself and learned the application of Satyagraha directly from its’ founder. King, as leader, embodied the notion that a general is only as strong as his subordinate officers and, complementary to this notion, that an army is only as effective as its’ individual soldiers.

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Henceforth, King surrounded himself with the right lieutenant generals to advise him on structure as well as to train his individual foot soldiers.

It is worthwhile to note that Gandhi felt a deep connection to his African American visitors and between Gandhi’s struggle in India and the struggle of African Americans in the US. Gandhi wrote a letter entitled, “To the American Negro: A message from Mahatma Gandhi,” where Gandhi stated:

Let not the 12 million negroes be ashamed of the fact that they are the grandchildren of the slaves. There is no dishonour in being slaves. There is dishonour in being slaveowners. But let us not think of honour or dishonour in connection with the past. Let us realize that the future is with those who would be truthful, pure and loving. For, as the old wise men have said, truth ever is, untruth never was. Love alone binds and truth and love accrue only to the truly humble.98

This letter reflected Gandhi’s solidarity with the movement and further expressed the universality of his message that Satyagraha can be applied anywhere to any worthy cause. This message was delivered in person to a few key men, such as Benjamin Mays, Bayard Rustin and the reverend James M. Lawson, who would later form King’s inner circle of lieutenant generals and advisors and help him organize, train and lead his army of civil resisters. King most valued their living contact with Gandhi, Gandhi’s advisors and with their

training in India on the application of Gandhian techniques. By skillfully relying on his subordinates, King was able to focus his actions on bringing attention to the message itself. To this end, King was thoroughly successful.

Benjamin Mays is a pivotal figure in that he was the first person to introduce King to the writings and teachings of Gandhi in 1946, ten years after Mays met with Gandhi in India.\(^9^9\) Mays introduced King to Gandhi primarily through his Tuesday chapel lectures. Mays was fortunate enough to interview Gandhi for 90 minutes at Gandhi’s Sevagram ashram in Wardha, India while Mays was the dean of Howard University’s School of Religion. Mays would later communicate to King that the discussion focused on the techniques of non-violence and the problem of untouchability. Gandhi stated, “non-violence is the most invisible and effective method for major change, whereas violent activity has visibility although it is always transitory.”\(^1^0^0\) Mays expressed his concern to Gandhi as regards the feasibility of using non-violent means on a mass basis in the US. Gandhi’s response was that discipline and training were essential, and he insisted that it could be practiced on a mass scale. “When activated,” Gandhi stated, “non-violence travels with extraordinary velocity,

\(^9^9\) Ibid., 182.

\(^1^0^0\) Ibid., 182.
and then it becomes a miracle.”

Mays conveyed this information to King, with an emphasis on the necessity of sound training and discipline. King was captivated by Mays’ lectures and inspired by Gandhi’s endorsement that Satyagraha would work on US soil. Mays served as King’s mentor throughout Kings’ life and as a key strategist during the ten years civil rights Satyagraha.

Bayard Rustin was essential to King as a veteran, albeit controversial, civil rights organizer. Rustin was a Quaker and a “brilliant peace activist with ties to many progressive religious and civil rights organizations such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Congress of Racial Equality.” Rustin is best known as the main organizer of the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom where 250,000 people gathered peacefully. Rustin would also serve King as a primary counselor on Gandhian techniques of non-violence, as Rustin had travelled to India in 1948 to learn these techniques at a conference organized by Gandhi just prior to his assassination. Rustin and King co-authored an article titled, “Turning Point in Civil Rights,” published in March, 1962 in Liberation Magazine, then a new publication of the War Resisters League, a group to whom Rustin had ties. In this article, the authors

101 Ibid., 183.

passionately state:

The young people, who first participated in the sit-ins demonstrations, were still another instance of the Negro’s initiative imagination in non-violently challenging structures which could not be breached by routine court cases. No honest historian of the future can possibly continue the history of those who made America great and ignore the names of those young people. The freedom rides which were also begun by the young, grew to such proportion that they eventually encompassed people of all ages, and the halt, lame and blind. Not even the mad dogs of the southern sheriffs were able to deter these brave peoples from their chosen destinations, and the bombs of the would-be murderers stopped not on Freedom Rider until it was completed, or its participants were in jail. We Southern Negroes believe it is essential to defend the right of equality now. From this position we will not and cannot retreat. Fortunately, we are increasingly aware that we must not try to defend our position by methods that contradict the aim of brotherhood. We in Montgomery believe that the only way to press on is by adopting the philosophy and practice of non-violent resistance.103

King’s faith in Rustin is endorsed in the act of co-authoring this letter that outlined the overall objectives of the civil rights movement. Rustin’s ability to organize mass numbers of people coupled with his direct experience with non-violent training in India was truly an asset to King an the civil rights Satyagraha.

The reverend James Lawson has been described as the “living connector” between Gandhi and King, an essential human component to King’s

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103 Ibid., 243-4.
success as civil rights Satyagrahi general. Like May and Rustin, Lawson was invaluable in that he had lived and worked in India and was “heavily steeped in Gandhian ideals.” Lawson was introduced to King by one of his Oberlin professors. King urged Lawson to come south, telling him, "Come now. We don’t have anyone like you down there." Lawson would also be integral to King visiting India and meeting Gandhi’s relatives and advisors. As an organizer, Lawson was adroit at recruiting student volunteers by giving “spellbinding” speeches about love and non-violence, based directly on Gandhian philosophy. In one such speech, which led to the recruitment of several hundred students, Lawson said, “Love is the force by which God binds man to Himself and man to man. Such love goes to the extreme; it remains loving and forgiving even in the midst of hostility. It matches the capacity of evil to inflict suffering with an even more enduring capacity to absorb evil, all the while persisting in love...We will accept the violence and the hate, absorb it

104 Ibid., 187.


without returning it.”107 In Nashville, Lawson trained many of the future leaders of the 1960’s Civil Rights Movement, among them Diane Nash, James Bevel, Bernard Lafeyette, Marion Berry, and John Lewis. In 1959 and again in 1960, these and other Lawson-trained activists launched the Nashville sit-in campaigns to challenge segregation in downtown Nashville stores. Along with activists from Georgia and elsewhere in the South, they formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in April 1960. Lawson’s students also played a leading role in other civil rights campaigns such as the Open Theater Movement, the Freedom Rides, the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, the 1963 Birmingham Children’s Crusade, the 1965 Selma Voting Rights Campaign, and the 1966 Chicago Open Housing Movement.108 It is safe to posit that Lawson was an invaluable lieutenant general to King, who relied heavily on his extensive knowledge of recruiting, organizing, inspiring and leading his peaceful soldiers.

King’s deft ability to surround himself with the right subordinate leaders is a testament to his ability to structure and delegate authority within his army of non-violent Satyagrahi soldiers. King, as Satyagraha general, much

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107 Ibid., 291.

108 Ibid., 291.
like Gandhi himself, was an excellent judge of character and capacity, a master of motivation and structure and an impassioned leader who used his assets to strengthen both his resolve and the resolve of the mission.

**King and The Notion Of Sacrifice**

Sacrifice is central to the success of any Satyagraha campaign and the willingness to consciously endure self-suffering is central to the life and development of the individual Satyagrahi. King was no stranger to self-sacrifice as it took many forms in his life. The crux of King’s civil disobedience mirrors Gandhi’s example. King openly defied laws he considered to be unjust and willingly accepted the punishment and the accompanying suffering. This suffering generally took the form of isolation in jail time. King wrote in his “Letter from Birmingham Jail”:

> In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law, as would be the rabid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.\(^\text{109}\)

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King knew that going to jail was a necessary component of the civil rights movement, though it was difficult for King at times. His wife Coretta stated that, “Jail-going wasn’t easy for him because he never liked to be alone.”

Nevertheless, King recognized jail-going was necessary because, “it signified the willingness to suffer for a cause and King believed in the redemptive power of unearned suffering.” King would go so far as to quote Gandhi regarding the redemptive power of unearned suffering when he said, “rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood.” Furthermore, King said, “if physical death is the price that some must pay to free their children from a permanent life of psychological death, then nothing could be more Christian.”

Ultimately, King’s fate met the above statement when he was assassinated at the age of 39 years old, being shot at 6:01 p.m. April 4, 1968 in

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112 Ibid., 204.

Nashville, Tennessee. King’s life ended in glory and in accord with his ideals – the civil rights movement was more important than any one being, even the emblematic Satyagrahi general himself.
CHAPTER VI

HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH DALAI LAMA: LIVING SATYAGRAHI

I accept the prize with profound gratitude on behalf of the oppressed everywhere and for all those who struggle for freedom and work for world peace. I accept it as a tribute to the man who founded the modern tradition of non-violent action for change – Mahatma Gandhi - whose life taught and inspired me. And, of course, I accept it on behalf of the six million Tibetan people, my brave countrymen and women inside Tibet, who have suffered and continue to suffer so much. They confront a calculated and systematic strategy aimed at the destruction of their national and cultural identities. The prize reaffirms our conviction that with truth, courage and determination as our weapons, Tibet will be liberated.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama T. Gyatso, 1989 Nobel Peace Prize Speech

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet, Tenzin Gyatso, is the political and spiritual leader of the Tibetan people. The nation of Tibet was invaded by and forcefully taken by the Chinese government in 1950. In 1959, subsequent to the ongoing Chinese occupation of Tibet, the 14th Dalai Lama sought refuge within India. The Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was instrumental in granting a safe haven to the Dalai Lama and his fellow Tibetans. The Dalai Lama has since been in refuge in Dharmasala, in the state of Himachal Pradesh in northern India, where the Central Tibetan Administration (the Tibetan government-in-exile) is also established. HHDL

114 His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet from this point onwards will be referred to as HHDL for the sake of expediency.
has worked continuously for the welfare of his people and nation within a strict non-violent paradigm. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, in a famous presentation speech comparing HHDL to Gandhi and the dharma of Satyagraha whilst simultaneously offering Gandhi tribute and due respect, albeit posthumously. It was a ceremonial “passing of the torch” with recognition from the Nobel Committees’ end to the Mahatma Gandhi as the first, organized proponent of true, active and engaged non-violence and civil disobedience – given with respect to HHDL, himself a contemporary Satyagrahi and an adept of inner control, conviction and truth, as both spiritual and political leader of the peaceful nation of Tibet in exile. This thesis will now analyze the career of HHDL on the three guiding principles of a successful Satyagrahi general: the ability to use the mass media to further awareness of the cause, the use of Gandhian structure and leadership to create and manage a Satyagrahi army and, finally, the ability and willingness to engage in activities of self-sacrifice in order to further the Satyagraha campaign.

**HHDL: Master Of Modern Media Manipulation**

HHDL is a popular figure in contemporary, Western media and his ability to use the mass media to serve the cause for Tibetan independence from China is unparalleled. HHDL had certainly attained a celebrity media
status due to his excellent rapport with Western journalists. However, it has been argued that celebrity activist status, such as that of HHDL, can, “draw attention away from the collective, participatory nature of non-violent action and away from the importance of quiet, rational, behind-the-scenes leadership roles.”\textsuperscript{115} Though there is wisdom in this assertion, this thesis denies that claim and asserts that the celebrity media status of HHDL is an integral part of and has only served to further the Tibetan cause. In fact, the biggest media draw of HHDL is the burgundy, saffron and gold clad, “simple monk,”\textsuperscript{116} himself. HHDL radiates a disarming, magnetic personality and spontaneous frankness that is as passionate about human issues as he is about Tibetan independence. Furthermore, HHDL and the Tibetan cause have benefited from the advent of modern media, such as the Internet, satellite television and even contemporary film,\textsuperscript{117} in a way that neither King nor Gandhi might have imagined possible. HHDL’s primary way of disseminating his cause is through


\textsuperscript{117} The films \textit{7 Years in Tibet} and \textit{Kundun} have brought great exposure to the Tibetan cause for independence.
extensive global travel, interviews and public speeches chronicling the Tibetan struggle coupled with his unwavering belief in non-violence as an effective technique to enact lasting social and political change.

An excellent representation of HHDL’s media style can be found in one of his most recent interviews with BBC Chinese editor, Shirong Chen, given on August 6th, 2009. This interview is important for a few key reasons. First, it reflects HHDL’s fearless attitude of confronting his oppressors on their home turf, but in an open, peaceful forum. Furthermore, this is a unique and contemporary way of applying Satyagraha, using all the sophisticated tools of the modern media to reach as many beings as possible. Through a non-violent discourse and negotiation, given to a well-respected, global media service like the BBC, HHDL is seeking to change the mind and, subsequently, the behavior of his opponent. Since the audience is global, awareness to the Tibetan struggle becomes a global issue, not just an issue localized to East Asia and China. A selection of key excerpts of this interview follows:

**Shirong Chen:** 2009 marks the 50th anniversary of the Uprising, but the world’s attention seems to be attracted by something else - the rioting in Xinjiang province. It has claimed more than 190 lives and more than 1600 wounded. What’s your view on the events in Xinjiang?

**Dalai Lama:** These are very sad and also today quite a lot of Han brothers and sisters suffered. I think firstly, any violence is wrong. Secondly that kind of riot no help to solving the problem.
Shirong Chen: So are you saying you condemn the violence in Xinjiang?

Dalai Lama: Yes, I fully disagree (with the violence). The word is condemnation - usually people use that word. Last year, one Xinhua reporter asked me 'you didn’t condemn the Tibetan demonstrations in Tibet'. And I told him I firmly believe in non-violence. Condemn, this word as far as I know - of course my understanding of this English word is limited - but still I think condemnation is something very harsh and negative attitude. So I usually avoid using that word. So I totally disagree with their violent activities...

Shirong Chen: Have you noticed the CCTV station screened the documentary 'One Year in Tibet' last week - the BBC commissioned documentary? Do you take this as a positive signal?

Dalai Lama: I think the best thing is - we have human language - so best thing is, should send a message, should send a letter rather than just some (indirect) signal here and there.

And secondly, the Chinese government considers our problem as domestic problem. And we also. You see, until 1965, we approached the UN. The last UN resolution regarding Tibet was passed in 1965. Since then, we prefer (dealing with China) - (even when) China was still in Cultural Revolution there, but we felt approaching the UN may not be a realistic way, so better to communicate directly. Then we already made up in our mind the Middle Way approach, finalised in 1974. Until end of 1978 we never received any signal. Then some verbal message from central government, mainly Deng Xiaoping, through some official in Hong Kong to my elder brother. Then we immediately responded.

Shirong Chen: So you’re waiting for a signal. In your position as the 14th Dalai Lama you are taking the Middle Way approach. But time is ticking, time is running out. Are you concerned things are not moving as fast as you would like? In other words, do you feel an urgency to come to a deal with Beijing?

Dalai Lama: Urgency, in terms of the situation inside Tibet. Now there’re really constant threats, always fear, some kind of rule of terror. Very much so there. So that I really feel that creates some sort of urgency. But as far as myself, in the last 50 years, I, often described as a
homeless person, found a very happy new home. And then my life also, getting older, but Tibet issue is an issue of an ancient nation, their rights. This is nothing to do with my life. If I die, soon, very very soon, I do not feel some worry, because the Tibetan spirit - at least more than 2000 years - Tibetan spirit there. So in future the Tibetan spirit will remain.

**Shirong Chen:** But you are practical as well. You see the younger generation of Tibetans, they may not be that patient, and they may not take that Middle Way approach.

**Dalai Lama:** Yes. There are growing signs of frustration among Tibetans, not only outside but inside also. That sometimes I’m a little worried. A few years ago (I think 6 or 7 years ago), I met one Tibetan. He was a Party member working in one department. He told me his age (was) around 40. He mentioned that people aged 60, 70, 80 - because of their past sort of too much terrified experience - they feel they cope OK with the present situation. The younger generation, below 30-40, they see, they feel the situation is very bad for them, too much resentment. However, till Dalai Lama remain, they have to follow Dalai Lama’s wish or instructions and non-violence. After Dalai Lama (is) gone, then "we (young people) should have a free hand", that kind of expression I received. It is quite serious.\(^{118}\)

This interview reflects the key points of HHDL’s non-violent paradigm in the struggle for Tibetan independence and displays HHDL’s adroit media praxis.

In his own simple and frank style, HHDL is able to bring a sense of urgency to the Tibetan cause while simultaneously eschewing the violence and remaining true to his philosophy of the middle path, compassion and non-violence. He

states multiple times that he “fully disagrees with the violence.”

Furthermore, HHDL comments on the BBC documentary being screened at the time of the interview. He is thankful for the media support and the global attention to the Tibetan struggle. And, finally, at the close of the interview, HHDL shows concern for the future. Despite the oppression that young Tibetans experience, he urges them to remain true to the non-violent paradigm he so judiciously preaches. Ultimately, all of this is accomplished within a global setting via the BBC, where this interview has been made available as a printed transcript as well as on radio, television and the Internet. Henceforth, this approach ensures maximum exposure for the Tibetan cause. Such exposure and global pressure on the Chinese government is therefore applied in a sincere effort to begin negotiations and to cease the violence within the Tibetan borders.

**HHDL: A Satyagrahi General and His Monastic Army**

HHDL’s life is synonymous with discipline and structure in a way that is different from Gandhi and King. As Dalai Lama, HHDL was born the spiritual and political leader of the Tibetan people. The position of Dalai Lama is a

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119 Ibid.
birthright and each reincarnation\textsuperscript{120} is considered to be a holy being, an emanation of the Buddha\textsuperscript{121} of compassion and mercy\textsuperscript{122} and the essence of the spirit of Tibet itself. Of this lineage, the current Dalai Lama offered this explanation: “Their reincarnations occur whenever conditions are suitable, and do not mean that they leave their state in Nirvana.\textsuperscript{123} In simile, it is rather as reflections of the moon may be seen on earth in placid lakes and seas when conditions are suitable, when the moon itself remains in its course in the

\textsuperscript{120} Reincarnation or transmigration points to a conception of the universe in constant change, a universe following nature laws and rhythms, the declining ages of each cosmic cycle. Humans fit into this chain of life via karma with stories of births and rebirths of the soul on its path to find the divine. George M. Williams, \textit{Handbook of Hindu Mythology} (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2003), 26-7.

\textsuperscript{121} Buddha translates directly to “awakened one,” and refers to a being who has liberated himself from Samsara and attained the heaven of Nirvana. Damien Keown, \textit{A Dictionary of Buddhism} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 42.

\textsuperscript{122} The Dalai Lama is a human manifestation of the Buddha of mercy and compassion, Chenresig. The current Dalai Lama is the 14\textsuperscript{th} in this line. Patricia Marcello, \textit{The Dalai Lama: A Biography} (West Port, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2003).

\textsuperscript{123} The attainment of Nirvana marks the end of cyclic existence in Samsara, the cycle of birth and rebirth. Nirvana is the solution to Samsara and can be viewed as an attainment of a pure land heaven where no suffering exists. Damien Keown, \textit{A Dictionary of Buddhism} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 194-5.
sky...Dalai Lamas are tulkus\textsuperscript{124} but also bodhisattvas.”\textsuperscript{125} This refers to their innate desire to return to life, in order to help others attain enlightenment.

Henceforth, the Tibetan people worship and revere the Dalai Lama as the highest, living spiritual authority on Earth. Furthermore, the Tibetan people adhere to the Dalai Lama’s instructions and edicts on how to live life, from a perspective of non-violence and love (that values life above all else), because they view HHDL as an actual holy being who has transcended the human condition and returned to guide humanity to the state of enlightenment.

Ergo, the position of Dalai Lama as a Satyagrahi general is logical and further justified by his soldiers on the foundation that he is a realized being.

The structure of HHDL’s non-violent army is akin to Gandhi’s military structured corps, but with the unique added element of monastic discipline. Gandhi taught his followers a specific code of discipline when they came to learn Satyagraha, usually as adults, whereas the average Tibetan monk was raised and indoctrinated from childhood (average entry age is six years old), within the disciplined Tibetan monastic community. As established earlier, an

\textsuperscript{124} A Tulku is a term descriptive of certain Tibetan teachers who are said to reincarnate over a number of generations. Ibid., 313.

\textsuperscript{125} A Bodhisattva forgoes his own final enlightenment, though he has attained a state of inner peace, until all other beings in Samsara have attained enlightenment. Bodhisattvas are in this world, but not of it. Ibid., 38.
essential element of a Satyagraha army is discipline and this discipline is vow and oath based and functions to direct the behavior of the individual Satyagrahi soldier. This condition is perhaps most purely embodied in the monastic army of HHDL. At the helm of the army is the Satyagrahi general, HHDL, and from this position subordinates emanate outward to form the remaining structure of the army. In this unique paradigm, the general is an enlightened leader, trans-human and endowed with unique knowledge and strategy. The lieutenant generals are akin to the seasoned, fully-ordained, monastic abbots, who oversee the spiritual and temporal education of hundreds of inferiors. The majors are akin to the senior monks who have taken the 253 vows of a fully-ordained Tibetan monk. The majors, captains and lieutenants are akin to that subsection of the monastic community that has taken one of the tiers of the middling and introductory vows whereas the foot soldiers are akin to the novice monks, who have taken the basic ten vows. Obedience to authority was central to a monks’ training, much the same way that obedience to a superior is essential to success in a traditional military setting.\footnote{Georges J.B. Dreyfus, \textit{The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk} (Berkeley, California, 2003), 112-8.}
The paradigm of the Tibetan Satyagrahi, just as the Gandhian soldier, is grounded in the practice of love, or *ahimsa*, and expounded to the world via non-violent demonstrations and protests. The Tibetan corps did not engage in *hartals*\(^{127}\) as did the Gandhians in India. Since the majority of Tibetan monastic army went into exile with HHDL in 1959, their form of Satyagraha is applied outside the traditional borders of Tibet. Tibetan Satyagraha is more tightly focused on raising global awareness from a non-violent, loving position. An excellent example of this is the demonstration staged on October 10\(^{th}\), 2007 outside of the Chinese embassy in New Delhi.\(^{128}\) Hundreds of monks gathered at the Chinese embassy and applied Satyagraha in the form of a peaceful gathering where mantras and prayers were recited for the evolution of the souls of the Chinese oppressors – just as in the Gandhian model, the oppression itself was sought to be purified from within the oppressor himself. During this protest, no acts of violence were committed, but some 30 monks were arrested. Jail time furthered awareness of their protest in the media –

\(^{127}\) Hartals are mass actions of civil disobedience where no work is done nor is money transacted. Mahatma Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1957), 459-60.

and as all Satyagrahi soldiers are taught, serving time in jail for the sake of their campaign is a joyous and meaningful duty.

HHDL: Self-Sacrifice In The Tibetan Tradition

Self-sacrifice is as essential to a Satyagrahis’ principled existence as it is to a Tibetan monastics’ humble, vow-based being. From a spiritual point of view, HHDL teaches that self-sacrifice is a necessary component of attaining liberation from suffering. Liberation is attained through the practice of meditation and the recitation of mantras, two practices that shed ignorance from the mental continuum and promote inner development. The term liberation has multiple meanings. Liberation can refer to the Theravada\textsuperscript{129} notion of freedom from desires, passions and delusions to the Mahayana\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{129} Theravada refers to one of the earliest schools of Buddhism, from the Pali canon. Damien Keown, \textit{A Dictionary of Buddhism} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 300.

\textsuperscript{130} Mahayana refers to a movement embracing a sweeping reinterpretation of fundamental religious ideals. Mahayana focus is on cultivating compassion coupled with wisdom. The term directly translates to “Great Vehicle.” Ibid, 167.
view of freedom from conventional views of reality to the Vajrayana\textsuperscript{131}
freedom of moral and ethical dualism. This spiritual freedom allows the
Satyagrahi monk to engage in seemingly miraculous activities of protest. An
image that is all too familiar to the Western world is the self-burning of
Vietnamese monks in 1963 Vietnam. Though these monks were not Tibetan,
they are truly emblematic and are united in the brotherhood of Buddhist
doctrine. Self-immolation is an ultimate act of self-sacrifice, defiance and civil
disobedience. The individual, realizing he is singular amid a greater cause that
affects many, chooses to consciously end his own life in an effort to expound
awareness of the struggle.\textsuperscript{132} Such acts are not central to Vietnam; Chinese
Buddhist monks have exercised self-immolation recently in acts of defiance
against the Tibetan occupation.\textsuperscript{133}

Furthermore, HHDL has publically stated that the Chinese military
makes a point of jailing the most popular and devout Tibetan teachers that, out
of compassion and a willingness to sacrifice self in order to serve others,

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\textsuperscript{131} Vajrayana refers to the tantric Buddhist disciples. The term directly
translates to “diamond vehicle,” and is considered the most sophisticated of
Buddha’s teachings. Ibid, 322.
\textsuperscript{132} Christopher S. Queen, \textit{Engaged Buddhism} (Albany, New York: SUNY
\textsuperscript{133} James A. Benn, "Burning for the Buddha," \textit{Journal of the American
\end{flushright}
remained in Tibet instead of going into exile. HHDL posited the importance of some teachers remaining behind to teach, keep the spiritual traditions alive and to set an example of acceptable non-violent protest. HHDL was certainly aware that these monks could be tortured and as Satyagrahi general he allowed them to be sacrificed to serve the greater campaign. Of course, these Satyagrahi soldiers who chose to stay were certainly aware that they would likely be made to suffer in order for the Chinese military to assert dominance over the Tibetan populace. Yet, in the spirit of self-sacrifice they chose to stay anyway. This choice has everything to do with their training and discipline. In *Buddhist Acts of Compassion*, Pamela Bloom interviewed a number of lamas\textsuperscript{134} that served time in a Chinese run Tibetan prison. A teacher referred to only as Rinpoche\textsuperscript{135} in the book chronicled his experience and his sacrifice to the author on a meditation retreat in France:

For fifteen years, as a young man, this Rinpoche and his elderly master had been imprisoned inside Tibet as victims of Chinese persecution. Although he did not go into details, the conditions they had to endure were of the roughest sort, with many days chained together in their dark, dirty cell. The Chinese, he said, not content with normal torture,


\textsuperscript{135} Rinpoche is a Tibetan title of respect that translates as “precious guru.” Ibid, 237.
had been determined to persecute devout Tibetans in the worst possible way by denying them the right to meditate; every time their eyes closed they were beaten. But because the Chinese did not understand that Tibetans actually meditate with their eyes open, the two were able to continue their prayers and meditation in secret...Unfortunately as the years went by the abuse only got worse...he had even to endure the loss of his master who died next to him one night in their cell...he and his master had been practicing the technique called Tonglen, which is the practice of breathing in the suffering of others and breathing out light.136

This moving account depicts the loathsome conditions some Tibetan monks were made to endure while simultaneously reflecting the indomitable Satyagrahi spirit they reflected – despite the torture and death of his master, violence was never an option as it violated this soldiers’ code of discipline. Furthermore, this monks’ commitment to the application of ahimsa, or love, is evident via the practice he continually engaged in, Tonglen, that served to purify the soul of his oppressors. Now, through Bloom’s book, and through Rinpoche’s public discourses, this story will reach a wider audience and expand awareness to the human rights violations the Tibetans still experience in their occupied homeland today.

Unlike his fellow Satyagrahi generals Gandhi and King, HHDL has fortunately not been assassinated for his political and social beliefs. In fact,

HHDL is extremely active and engaged in the Tibetan cause for independence to this day. HHDL travels extensively, engaging world leaders and requesting assistance for the Tibetan government in exile while also offering a service to the public via discourses on compassion, love and mercy. This “simple monk” also offers spiritual initiation to disciples and writes books on Buddhist philosophy and meditation practice while he simultaneously oversees government affairs. Ultimately, HHDL is an excellent example of what a true Satyagrahi is meant to reflect: a loving, ego-less heart focused on the service of others, a disciplined willingness to sacrifice self for others and a firm commitment to non-violence in all activities and endeavors. Gandhi would undoubtedly be proud of his spiritual son, HHDL, and the progress he has made in the application of Satyagraha.
CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Mahatma Gandhi’s perennial philosophy of Satyagraha is a non-violent, moral equivalent to war. The application of Satyagraha was historically successful in that it united India amid the volatile context of social and political pandemonium that characterized the fractured, burgeoning society. This thesis has shown that Satyagraha is not limited by history, time and space; that Satyagraha is a living and adaptable philosophy with practical applications in today’s modern world.

This thesis first analyzed three key aspects or dimensions of Gandhi’s character that led to the birth, essential nature, and success of Satyagraha: Gandhi’s adroit use of the media to further his cause, Gandhi’s “military” structure of Satyagraha as a “corps” without the violence and, finally, Gandhi’s willingness to sacrifice self or his fellow soldiers as acceptable human losses, not unlike traditional soldiers in a war, to further his campaign.
Once these criteria were established they served to function as a lens in which to evaluate two of Gandhi’s most important spiritual heirs: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. of the United States of America and H.H. the Dalai Lama of Tibet, both of whom received Nobel Prizes for their contributions to their own unique movements of peace and unity within their respective societies. These leaders acted in the pure, truth-inspired spirit of Satyagraha and in so doing they specifically borrowed and expanded upon Gandhi’s praxis and structure. What, if anything, did these men add to this philosophy? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama embraced the advent of modern technology and used innovations in the media to widen their audience and expand awareness of their respective struggles. In addition, each “child of Gandhi” also contributed to the planning and structural elements within a Satyagraha campaign. And, finally, each modern Satyagrahi general achieved a significant degree of success in his struggle for equal rights, with the continuing struggle of the Tibetan people and the popularity of the Dalai Lama gaining momentum in the global arena every week. I assert, sans doubt, that Gandhi’s non-violent legacy is alive and thriving, just as the Mahatma envisioned it, adapting to the unique needs of the people it intends to serve.
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