



When Renunciation Becomes Revolution: The Force Gandhi Called Ahimsa

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“Think Different”



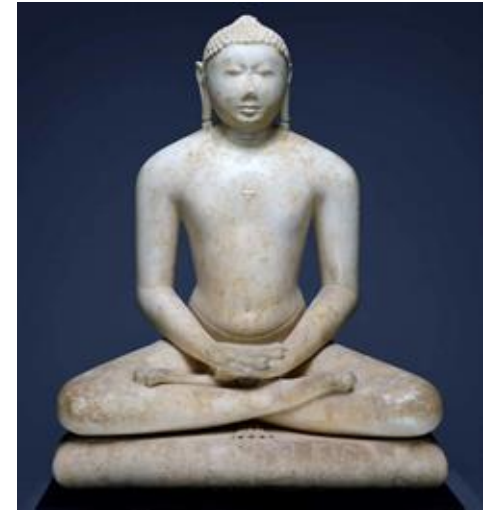
Understanding Nonviolence

A clear definition

"Do not injure, abuse, oppress, enslave, insult, torment, torture, or kill any creature or living being." --Jainism

Although the history of nonviolent resistance movements is ancient, Gandhi was the first one to use this term. The term confused many since its inception.

A virtue involving a commitment to the negation of violence in all aspects of life; and resistance against the systems of violence (exploitation, oppression, torment, subjugation, etc.).



Ahimsa: A Powerful Force to Defy Violence

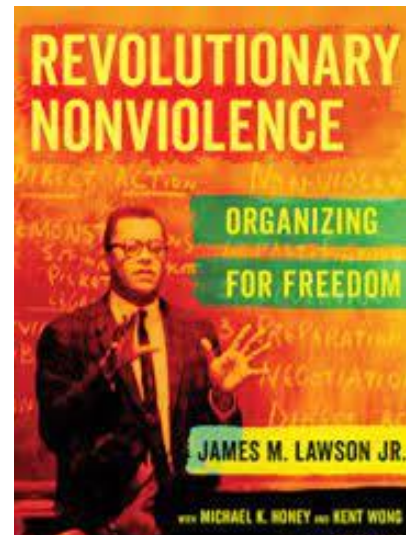
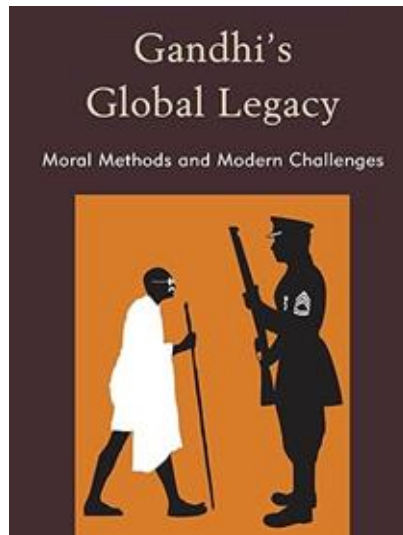
- “When one is established in nonviolence, hostility ceases in his [or her] presence.” —The Yoga Sutra
- Gandhi proclaimed: “Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.” --Gandhi (Harijan, 1935)
- Non-violence would be futile unless the root cause is dealt with, and the root cause in this case is the greed of nations. If there were no greed, there could be no occasion for armaments. The principle of non-violence necessitates complete abstention from exploitation in any form.” Gandhi, December 28, 1931

Understanding Nonviolence

Nonviolence is fight, not flight nor freeze

“Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon.”

--Gandhi (1935)



Practicing Nonviolence in the Current World

Modern day challenges

Nonviolence in 3D

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Dialogue

Dissent

Difference

Renunciation for Action

“He who has realized the misery of mankind in all its magnitude will never be stirred by passion. He will instinctively know the fountain of strength in him, and he will ever persevere to keep it undefiled. His humble strength will command respect of the world, and he will wield an influence greater than that of the monarch.” Gandhi writes in *Young India*, 1926



Non- Possession/Simplicity

“When I found myself drawn into the political coil, I asked myself what was necessary for me, in order to remain untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain, I came definitely to the conclusion... I must discard all wealth, all possessions.” —Gandhi (1931)



Renunciation and Fearlessness

There is fear of disease in enjoyments, there is danger of destruction in having a family, there is danger from kings in having riches, there is danger of ignominy in trying to be respected... there is danger of disputation in discussing scriptures, there is danger from the evil minded in being endowed with high qualities, there is danger of death in having the body thus is everything a cause of fear. **Only complete renunciation is free from fear.**—Gandhi (September 9, 1913)



Gandhi's Ashram Vows: Renunciation Disciplines and Activist Motivations

The eleven vows are:

- (1) Satya: Truth
- (2) Ahimsa: Nonviolence
- (3) Brahmacharya: Celibacy
- (4) Asteya: Non-stealing
- (5) Aparigraha or Asangraha: Non-possession
- (6) Sharira-Shrama: Physical labor or Bread Labor
- (7) Asvada: Control of Palate
- (8) Abhaya: Fearlessness
- (9) Sarva-Dharma-Samanatva: Equal respect for all Religions
- (10) Swadeshi: Duty towards one's neighbour
- (11) Asprishyatanivarana: Removal of Untouchability

Gandhi's Renunciation Served the Following Purposes:

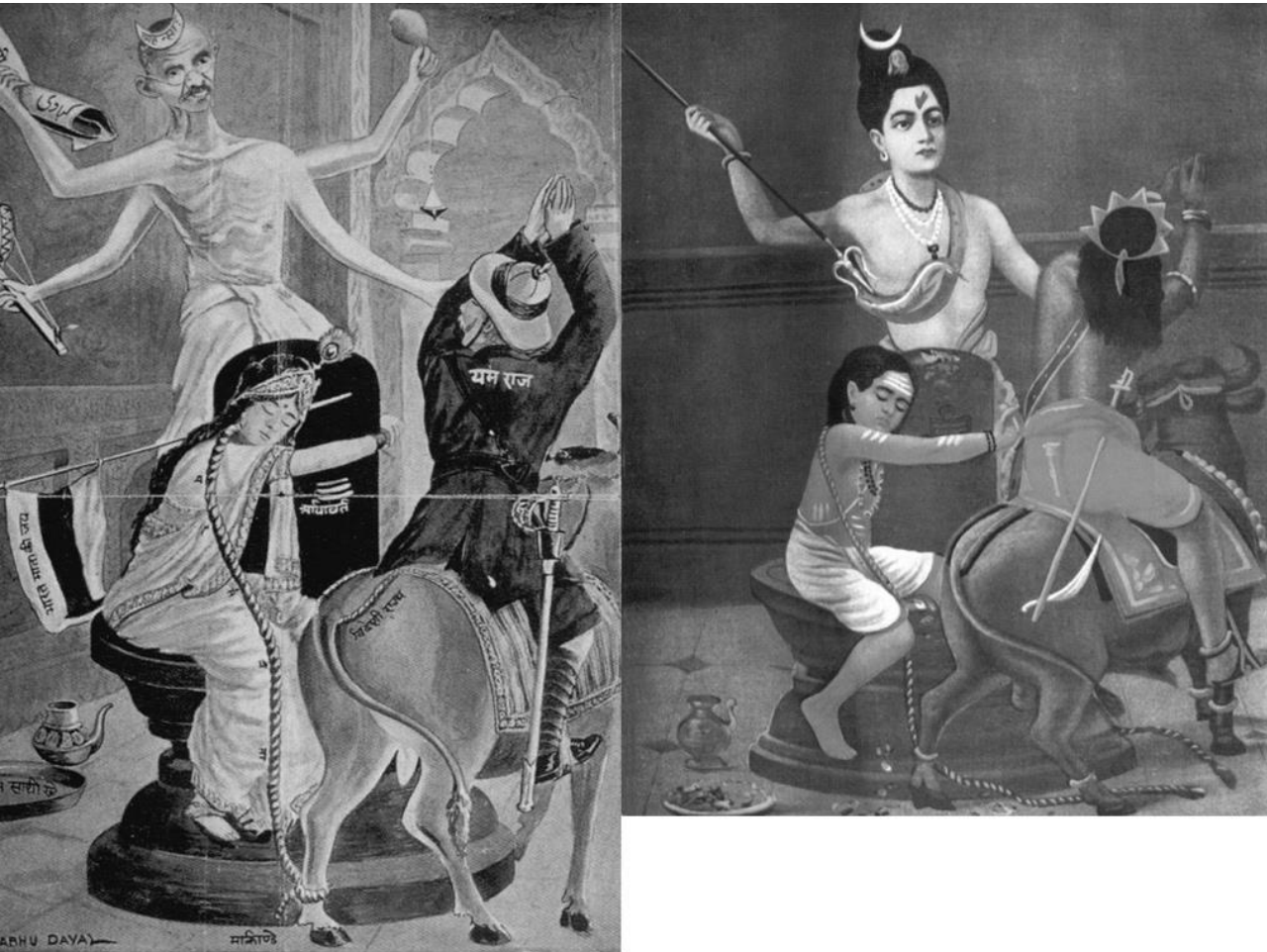


Figure 1

1. Personal Empowerment
2. Renunciation of worldly attachments in order to serve humanity
3. Activation of the legendary powers (*siddhis*) ascribed to ascetic practices
4. Application of personal ascetic practice to a mass level by establishing ashram communities
5. Transformation of spiritual practices (fasting, *tapas*, nonviolence, etc.) into activist tools such as non-cooperation, self-suffering, and passive resistance, in order to reform social ills of India and defy British rule.

IDEAS

+ ACTION

= CHANGE

Practicing Nonviolence in the Current World

01

Principled nonviolence:

Love and truth are the spiritual basis of nonviolent action.

02

Fight not flight:

Nonviolence is more than non-harming; it is saying NO to the culture and conditioning of violence; focusing on Sarvodaya (Uplift of all)

03

Consistency:

Nonviolence can only be achieved through nonviolent means

Nonviolent Movements

“A Community dedicated to Nonviolence becomes a Movement.” --Veena Howard





May the force of nonviolence be with you...