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Gandhi as peacebuilder: The social psychology of Satyagraha and concept of truth and non-violence

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Abstract

Gandhi was a great supporter of Truth and Non-violence. He had a great importance to the concept of Truth and Non-Violence. Truth or Satya, Ahimsa or Non-Violence are foundation of Gandhi's philosophy. The word 'Non-violence' is a translation of the Sanskrit term 'Ahimsa'. He stated that in its positive form, 'Ahimsa' means 'the largest love, the greatest charity'. Moreover he stated that Ahimsa binds us to one another and also to God. So it is a unifying agent. Gandhi wrote, 'Ahimsa and Love are one and the same thing'. According to Gandhi the word 'Satya' comes from the word 'Sat' which means 'to exist'. So by the term 'Satya' Gandhi also means that which is not only existent but also true. Gandhi said that Truth and Non-Violence are the two sides of a same coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which the reverse? Ahimsa is the means; Truth is the end. I will discuss the Gandhian concept of Truth and Non-Violence elaborately in this paper.

Keywords: Truth or Satyagraha, non-violence or ahimsa, characteristics of non-violence

Introduction

Qualities and Characteristics of Satyagrahi. Identification of Truth and God Gandhi was a great supporter of Truth and Non-violence. He had a great importance to the concept of Truth and Non-Violence. Truth or Satya, Ahimsa or Non-Violence is foundation of Gandhi's philosophy. The word 'Non-violence' is a translation of the Sanskrit term 'Ahimsa'. He stated that in its positive form, 'Ahimsa' means 'The largest love, the greatest charity'. According to Gandhi the word 'Satya' comes from the word 'Sat' which means 'to exist'. So by the term 'Satya' Gandhi also means that which is not only existent but also true. Gandhi said that Truth and Non-Violence are the two sides of a same coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which the reverse? Ahimsa is the means; Truth is the end. Gandhi identifies Truth with God. According to many philosophers God is the highest reality. At the same time Gandhi says that there is nothing besides Truth. So both Truth and God stands for the highest reality or the ultimate reality. And hence the two can be identified. He said that there is no person in earth who can deny Truth. God can be denied because the atheist does not believe in God. But the atheist cannot deny the power of Truth. Hence God is identified with truth.

According to Gandhi, Truth and Non-Violence constitute the Kernel of Gandhi's philosophy. He said that Truth stands for 'reality'. By Truth, according to Gandhi, we do not mean the character of proposition which is either true or false. Gandhi sometimes described Truth as existence, consciousness and bliss (sat, cit, and ananda). At first Gandhi used to say God is Truth. But later on he converted Truth is God. Therefore, according to Gandhi Truth is God and 'Satyagraha' is 'agraha' of and thus, it means holding fast to truth. Gandhi explained the term 'Satyagraha' from various viewpoints. Satyagraha is not a weapon of the weak, the coward, the unarmed and the helpless. It is a weapon of the morally vigilant and the active. Satyagraha is not the traditional resistance of evil by evil. It is a resistance of evil by its opposite, i.e., by good. Satyagraha is essentially based on love. In fact, according to Gandhi, Satyagraha appears to be as a religious pursuit. It rests on a religious belief that there is one God behind everything and being, and as such the same God resides in every one of us. Gandhi also feels that a belief in rebirth is almost a pre-condition of Satyagraha. Satyagraha demands selfless and sincere pursuit of Truth without having any consideration of any advantage or gain, But, one will be able 'to walk on such a sharp 'razor's edge' only if he somehow believes that he will get the fruits of his good work, if not in this life,

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in subsequent life. Gandhi says, 'with the knowledge that the soul survives the body, he (The Satyagraha) is not impatient to see the triumph of in the present body.' Gandhi describes Satyagraha as a force against violence, tyranny and injustice. All these evils arise on account of a neglect of the 'Truth' that is all-pervasive and all-comprehending. Therefore Gandhi says that if we start resisting evil with evil, violence with violence, anger with anger, then we are only adding fuel to fire. The most effective force against these evils can be the one which would force them to evaporate, and that can be done only by Satyagraha. The aim of Satyagraha is not to embarrass the wrong-doer. Its intention is to bring about, what Gandhi calls, a 'change of heart'. In fact, Satyagraha is based on the pre-supposition that there are no 'enemies' or 'opponent', but that there are only wrong-doers. Satyagraha also demands extreme patience on the part of the Satyagrahi. A wrong-doer cannot see his wrong at once, he will take time to win over his anger and hatred. The Satyagrahi must wait patiently for the good sense of the wrong-doer to be aroused. Gandhi distinguishes Satyagraha from Passive Resistance. Firstly, Satyagraha is not a passive state; in fact it is more active than violence. Secondly in passive resistance, there is an element of force; it does not completely forbid the use of violence. In Satyagraha, on the other hand violence is completely forbidden even in the face of very adverse situation. Requirement of a Satyagrahi: According to Gandhi, a Satyagrahi must possess a number of qualities and characters. Some of the basic ones are given below.....

1. A Satyagrahi must be basically honest and sincere.
2. A Satyagrahi must not have any mental reservations, he must be open-minded.
3. A Satyagrahi must be a disciplined soldier. Truth alone should be his master and conscience his guide. He should be loving, but firm.
4. This means that a Satyagrahi must be completely fearless. He must not fear anything worldly—even death.
5. Fearlessness leads to another virtue, sacrifice. A Satyagrahi must be prepared for the greatest possible sacrifice.
6. Suffering and Sacrifice have to be undergone in an attitude of simplicity and humanity.
7. Gandhi asserts that a Satyagrahi is required to practise truthfulness and non-violence not only in his action, but also in thought and speech.
8. A Satyagrahi must be firm in his dealings and behaviour.
9. There must be conformity between the thought and action of a satyagrahi.
10. Gandhi also recommends that the Satyagrahi must learn to put on restraints upon his own self. Gandhi feels that a true Satyagrahi who has been able to fulfil the requirement mentioned above can work wonder. He alone can face the might of an army or even of an empire. Ahimsa or Non-Violence: Ahimsa or Non-Violence is the central concept of Gandhi's philosophy. According to Gandhi, Ahimsa or Non-Violence has a positive meaning also. In positive sense Non-Violence means 'love'. It means love towards all living creatures. The concept of non-violence is extended not only means to human love but love towards all sentient creatures of the world. That means one should not love only human being but every living being in the world.

When a person claims to be non-violent, he is expected not to be angry with one who has injured him. He will not wish him harm; he will wish him well. He will not swear at him, and he will not cause him any physical hurt. He will put up with all the injury to which he is subjected by the wrong-doer. Thus Non-Violence is complete innocence. Complete Non-Violence is complete absence of ill-will against all that lives. Therefore, it embraces even sub-human life not excluding noxious insects or beats. Non-Violence is, therefore, in its active form goodwill towards all life. It is pure love. When the idea of Non-Violence in Gandhi's philosophy is analysed then a number of characteristics features stand out. In his book 'Social and Political Thought' of Gandhi J. Bandyopadhyaya stated the following characteristics features of Gandhian Non-Violence.

1. Non-Violence is not the same as non-killing.
2. Non-Violence is not non-resistance born out of cowardice.
3. Non-Violence implies several positive values. These values include love, active, resistance to injustice, courage in the face of violence, non-possession, truthfulness and brahmacharya.
4. Non-Violence implies bread-labour, which Gandhi derived from Ruskin and Tolstoy and ultimately from the Bible. Gandhi defined it as the 'Divine Law that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands.'
5. Non-Violence is a higher value than life. Gandhi regarded Non-Violence to be an ultimate value on three grounds. First, it is universally applicable. Secondly, it enhances all other values without detracting from any. Thirdly, it is unlimited in its application. Gandhi believed that Non-violence in its absolute form is not realisable in practice. But relative Non-Violence can be realised in practice. Gandhi stated that Just as the perfect straight line as understood by Euclid cannot be drawn. Similarly perfect Non-Violence cannot be attained. But limited Non-Violence can be attained. Gandhi stated that the Divine Spark is present within man and we must constantly endeavour to keep alive that Divine Spark. Gandhi therefore regarded Non-Violence to be the law of our species. But at the same time Gandhi recognised the point that the practice of total Non-Violence in our life is not possible. Gandhi wrote, 'Man cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward violence.' This violence is directed against life. According to Gandhi Non-Violence is a perfect state. It is a goal towards which all mankind moves naturally though unconsciously. He says, 'If we can manage to apply Non-Violence successfully at home, it will in its pure form become an irresistible power in the service of the state. Non-Violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. Non-Violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. The Gandhian concept of Non-Violence is dharma in action, and truth translated. It is not a static code of morality ready for adoption. It evolves and is in essence 'creativity morality', in the language of Bergson. Non-Violence is a dynamic and creative

concept centred on truth. Truth, the supreme Gandhian value, is the consummation of all that is spiritual in man. He regards violence as an evil in itself. He does not consider it to be neutral. According to Gandhi 'Ahimsa or Non-Violence' is the means; Truth is the end. They are so intertwined that it is impossible to separate them. They are the two sides of a coin. Ahimsa or Non-Violence should practice in the mental level. It means barring no ill-will against others. So, Ahimsa or Non-Violence is non injury to others not only in the physical sense but of in the mental sense also. Hence the concept truth and non-violence according to Gandhi has a very wide application. Gandhi is of opinion that 'Killing or Injury to life can be an act of violence only under certain conditions. These conditions are anger, pride, hatred, selfish consideration, bad intention and similar other consideration. Any injury to life done under these motives is 'himsa'. Thus, the negative meaning of Ahimsa is 'non killing or non injury,' but this presupposes that a non-violent act is free from hatred, anger, malice and the like. For example, when an animal which is going to die is suffering from intense pain in that case we may kill him to end his suffering or there may be cases when a woman has to safe dignity or owner against the criminal. In that case she can use violence in order to safe herself. So there are certain exceptions according to Gandhi to the law of violence. But for Gandhi, the positive aspects of Ahimsa are much more basic than its negative characters. Ahimsa is not merely refraining from causing injures to creature; it stands for certain positive attitude towards other living beings that one must cultivate. In its positive sense Gandhi said that Ahimsa represents one of the basic and essential qualities of mankind. That does not mean that violence does not have any place in life. In fact, even in preserving one's existence one has to commit himsa of one kind or the other, and yet Ahimsa is considered to be the law of our species. In fact Ahimsa is nothing but Love. Love is a kind of feeling of oneness. In an act of love one identifies himself with the object of his love, and this cannot be possible unless there is an effort to free mind from every such disposition that prevents the spontaneous outflow of love. Therefore, Ahimsa demands a sincere effort to free mind from feelings like anger, malice, hatred, revenge, jealousy etc., because these create obstacle in the way of Love. According to Gandhi, love is the energy that cleanses one's inner life and uplifts him, and as such, love comprehends such noble feelings as benevolence, compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, generosity, kindness, sympathy etc. Gandhi believed that without the practice of Non-Violence Truth cannot be realised. Gandhi employed a curious argument to establish this point. Gandhi stated that God and Truth are identical. At the same time Gandhi accepted a pantheistic conception of God. He argued that God pervades all beings. All beings are united by God and the act of unification is made possible through love or Non-Violence. So Non-Violence is ultimately the cementing bond of the Universe that has its origin in God or Truth.

Daniel M. Mayton II On a cold night over a hundred years ago in Maritzburg, South Africa, Mohandas K. Gandhi was thrown off a train when he refused to move from his first-

class seat. Gandhi's presence in that seat offended a white passenger because it was not appropriate for a "coloured person" to travel first class. This discrimination was a defining moment in Gandhi's life as it led him to develop the resolve needed to remove the injustice of color prejudice that was pervasive in South Africa at that time (Gandhi, 1957/1927). Over the next five decades Gandhi became a peacebuilder. He developed and tested methods that produced political change and reduced social injustices. Gandhi's teachings and actions had a profound effect on those around him, his country, and, in many respects, the world. In this chapter, I will outline the philosophy of Gandhi and the actions he used and advocated to establish social justice.

The goal and principles guiding Gandhi's actions

Gandhi's overarching goal throughout his life was sarvodaya which translates to "the welfare of all" (Bose, 1987, p. 23) or "uplift of all" (Bondurant, 1965, p. 6). To achieve this goal, three main principles guided his writings and actions. The Indian terms describing these principles are satya (truth), ahimsa (nonviolence), and tapasya (Selfsuffering) (Bondurant, 1965; Gandhi, 1951; Pelton, 1974). Satya or Truth Satyagraha, as discussed and used by Gandhi, can be understood on at least two levels. First, it refers to the process of developing an understanding of any situation and the points of view of all individuals who are involved with it. Satyagraha, which can be translated to mean "Soul Force," serves in this regard as a process to vindicate the truth. In trying to understand the validity of each viewpoint, Gandhi was well aware of his limitations and those of any human being trying to establish absolute truth. Given these limitations, he believed we can never be sure if we, as one side of a conflict, are correct in our position or if our adversaries, on the other side of a conflict, have truth on their side. There of 3 this chapter, I will describe the characteristics of a Satyagraha movement from this perspective, and then I will provide a concrete example, the Salt Satya-graha campaign of 1930 to 1931. However, to fully understand the Satyagraha method, a close look at two other principles in Gandhi's philosophy is essential. Ahimsa or Nonviolence An integral part of Gandhi's philosophy and life's work is the notion of ahimsa, which literally means "non-injury" or "nonviolence." For Gandhi, ahimsa was the belief in the sacredness of life and the refusal to do harm to living things (Bose, 1987; Nakhre, 1982), an interpretation that was based on the deep-rooted Hindu tradition of not doing harm. Ahimsa was vital to Gandhi's peacebuilding efforts for several reasons. First, ahimsa means not harming others either in thought or deed. Second, Gandhi viewed ahimsa as also having a more dynamic and positive state which is love (Gandhi, 1951). Pelton (1974) describes this love as active goodwill and it also bears similarity to the Rogerian concept of unconditional positive regard. This love serves as the means to get to the ends of truth. Third, a means which uses nonviolence to reveal truth has advantages to Gandhi because only relative truth can be attained for certain. Given this human limitation, the nonviolent means to realize one's goal guarantees that individuals will not hurt any adversary in a conflict who might be closer to the absolute truth than they themselves are. Excluding the use of violence is best, because humans are not capable of knowing the absolute truth and therefore are not competent to punish (Nakhre, 1982). Throughout his

life, Gandhi insisted that the means to get to any goal must be carefully selected or the attainment of the goal might be short-lived or ultimately subverted. For instance, he wanted to obtain India's independence using nonviolent means while others advocated violent rebellion. Gandhi believed the leaders who would emerge if India followed the violent path to independence would be just as tyrannical as the British leadership which they would replace. Therefore, the end result of independence would have very little impact on the common citizen of India and would not be as desirable as the leadership which would emerge if the principle of ahimsa was followed in the struggle for independence. Tapasya or Self-Suffering Tapasya translates to "self-suffering" and is the third major principle in Gandhi's belief system. Gandhi viewed self-suffering as a viable maneuver to confront the violence that is often leveled at those who work to remove social injustices. The willingness to endure suffering instead of retaliating for a violent act with a violent act breaks the cycle of violence. While those fighting social injustices might suffer more than those who work to maintain the status quo, Gandhi believed that in the long run the world as a whole will witness less total violence. The ability to engage in self-suffering requires considerable courage and self-control. In fact, Gandhi describes the self-discipline required of someone who follows his principles as being akin to those of a military soldier. Like soldiers, individuals who practice tapasya require extensive training to establish the needed discipline when violence is leveled at them. Gandhi's Value System Human values are transsituat 5 keach, 1973, 1979). Schwartz (1994) has identified ten value types which have implications for understanding political orientation and political action. Closely examining the goals and principles which Gandhi considered important can shed some light on his actions. Based on the goals and principles of Gandhi, outlined above, his values seem to fall into three of the value types identified by Schwartz (1994). The notion of the welfare of all (Sarvodaya) and the concern about truth and wisdom (Satya) directly corresponds to the two selftranscendent value types of universalism and benevolence. The emphasis placed on selfdiscipline corresponds to the value type of conformity as defined by Schwartz. This is consistent with the research of Mayton, Diessner, and Granby (1996), who found that individuals with predispositions to nonviolent behavior placed more emphasis on universalism, benevolence, and conformity values than individuals more predisposed to violence.

Gandhi's use of Satyagraha to obtain political goals

Satyagraha as a Peacebuilding Strategy Satyagraha is a method whereby grievances could successfully challenge an established political order. Bondurant (1965) has outlined the steps of a typical Satyagraha movement, which is an activity of civil disobedience designed to confront unjust laws and policies. It would start with an effort to resolve the conflict through established channels and accepted protocol. Should these methods prove ineffective, systematic planning for the group to take direct action would begin. Following an active propaganda campaign involving demonstrations, parades, etc., a final strong appeal or ultimatum to one's opponent would be made which would explain the steps that will be undertaken if no agreement can be reached. Depending on the nature of the grievances and the 6 specific situation, the subsequent actions taken may involve

boycotts, strikes, and other forms of noncooperation such as nonpayment of taxes. Those who take part in the movement are called satyagrahi. The Salt Satyagraha The Salt Satyagraha was a national movement throughout India that began early in 1930 and lasted for over a year (Bondurant, 1965). Its immediate goal was the removal of the salt tax which exploited the peasants and symbolized the unjust nature of British rule. The Salt Act made it a crime to possess salt not purchased by the British salt monopoly (Fischer, 1954). Following the initial planning of the specific actions, Gandhi sent a letter to the Viceroy describing the grievances regarding the Salt Act and indicating the specific nature of the plan for civil disobedience. When this ultimatum was ignored, Gandhi and other satyagrahis began their historic march to the sea. Careful planning and the training of the satyagrahis in self-restraint and crowd control made this a peaceful event. The march took over three weeks and was widely covered in the press, making the injustice of British rule known throughout the world. Shortly after arriving at the beach, Gandhi purposely broke the law outlined in the Salt Act by making salt. With his act he opened the door for others to engage in the same type of civil disobedience. Estimates of the number of Indians jailed for breaking the Salt Act exceed sixty thousand (Fischer, 1954). As the salt tax was still in place, additional levels of civil disobedience were planned and executed. In a second letter to the Viceroy, Gandhi explained how the satyagrahis would demand possession of the Dharsana salt works. While this letter led to Gandhi's arrest, the march on the salt 7 works still took place. Over two thousand satyagrahis took part in the nonviolent raid on the salt works. The leaders of the Salt Satyagraha admonished the satyagrahis to not resist nor raise a hand even to ward off the inevitable blows from the police. Webb Miller, a journalist for United Press, witnessed the raid and reported In complete silence the Gandhi men drew up and halted a hundred yards from the stockade. A picked column advanced from the crowd, waded the ditches, and approached the barbed-wire stockade. Suddenly, at a word of command, scores of native policemen rushed upon the advancing marchers and rained blows upon their heads with their steel-shod lathis. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. They went down like ten-pins. From where I stood I heard the sickening whack of the clubs on unprotected skulls. The waiting crowd of marchers groaned and sucked in their breath in sympathetic pain at every blow. Those struck down fell sprawling, unconscious or writhing with fractured pain or broken shoulders...Although everyone knew that within a few minutes he would be beaten down, perhaps killed, I could detect no sign of wavering or fear. They marched steadily, with heads up, without the encouragement of music or cheering or any possibility that they might escape injury or death...There was no fight, no struggle, the marchers simply walked forward until struck down (as quoted by Fischer, 1954, p. 101). The raids and the carnage continued for days with stretcher bearers carrying bleeding men to the first aid station. While the raids on the salt works ended with the approaching monsoons, civil disobedience 8 continued in the form of boycotts and intentional acts that broke unjust laws and ordinances (Bondurant, 1965). Eventually, the salt regulations were modified in ways which removed much of the injustice forced on the poor. The impact of the thousands of localized campaigns which

were part of the Salt Satyagraha had been successful in following the guidelines for a Satyagraha and were effective in reaching the immediate goal.

Psychological explanations for the success of Satyagraha

Gandhi implemented Satyagraha successfully in many contexts (Gandhi, 1951, 1957/ 1927). In his “experiments with truth” Gandhi field-tested and applied numerous psychological constructs in very effective ways. How can we explain the success of this method Gandhi called a Satyagraha? The next sections of this chapter will draw on research and theory in social psychology in an attempt to explain the positive outcomes of Satyagraha. Attribution Theory from Gandhi’s point of view the goal of Satyagraha was to awaken the conscience of the opponent (Nakhre, 1982). Social psychologists have observed that people make attributions or try to determine the causes of their own and other people’s behavior all the time (e.g. Brehm, Kassin, & Fein, 1999). According to attribution theory, when we try to understand why others are behaving the way they are, we often focus on the situation. However, when their behavior is vastly different from what we would expect of people in their situation, then our tendency is to attribute their behavior to their disposition. We learn a lot about people’s disposition when their behavior deviates markedly from our expectation (Jones & Davis, 1965). Ordinarily, we would expect the 9 satyagrahis to respond violently to the violence of the British. Because the satyagrahis’ nonviolent behavior deviates from the norm or what we would expect of people in their situation, we are likely to attribute their nonviolence to the disposition of Gandhi and his fellow Indians. Not only were the peaceful satyagrahis viewed favorably according to world opinion, but there were additional psychological dynamics that could have influenced the British to focus on the unjust nature of the Salt Acts. Social psychologists have identified a set of biases and errors that people make in looking for causes of behavior. The self-serving bias involves the tendency of people to take less credit for failures than they do for their successes. When the satyagrahis provoked the British to enforce the unjust law and to engage in violent action, self-serving attributional biases would predict the British would continue to view themselves favorably by attributing their violent actions to external situational factors. Therefore, instead of denigrating themselves for inflicting pain on the Indians who had positive dispositional characteristics, they would attribute their violent behavior to the external situation and focus on the law that required them to commit acts which were unjust. With each additional aspect of the Salt Satyagraha as well as subsequent acts of civil disobedience, which were nonviolent, the self-attributions of being on the moral high ground gave way to the focus on the socially unjust policies created by the British. Fischer (1954) characterized the effects of the Salt Satyagraha in a manner consistent with this attributional interpretation when he said “it made the British aware that they were subjugating India” (p. 102). Attitude Change Variables Gandhi succeeded in getting 10 persuasive communication. In particular, three factors that are found in models of persuasive communication are noteworthy. First, Gandhi’s charismatic leadership clearly worked in his favor. Gandhi spent considerable time traveling around India observing and listening to the concerns of the common citizen. Subsequently, he was able to address issues of significance in succinct ways that could

be easily understood. Gandhi had a message of independence for India and the removal of social injustices, which were inspirational to nearly all Indians. A second source characteristic of the communication model of persuasion which helped Gandhi was his similarity with the common people of India. He dressed and lived in the manner of an Indian peasant which made him a positive role model. He was very knowledgeable about diverse religious beliefs present in India and abroad and used this knowledge to express his nonviolence in terms of Hindu, Moslem, and Christian doctrine. From the Bhagavad-Gita, to the Koran, to the “Sermon on the Mount” in the Bible, Gandhi was comfortable with many different audiences. His use of traditional terms to explain his procedures and concerns increased the support he received. Third, Gandhi engaged people in his thoughtful analysis of social injustice. Petty & Cacioppo (1986) have developed the elaboration likelihood model. This model proposes that the central route to persuasion, which engages the person being persuaded in serious thought to the relevant points, results in more long term attitude change than the peripheral route, which appeals to emotion and results in lower cognitive engagement. Gandhi’s efforts utilized the central route to persuasion in several ways. Because Satyagraha was so different from what people expected, the focus on the content of the message was enhanced and thus more serious thought was given to the message and a more enduring change was a result. Negotiation Methods Gandhi’s way of dealing with the British utilized behaviors which foreshadowed the method of principled negotiation discussed by Fisher, Ury, and Patton (1991). The notions of separating the people from the problem and focusing on interests and not positions, are mainstays of principled negotiation (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991). In separating the people from the problem, Gandhi was quick to remind his satyagrahis to distinguish the unjust laws from those who enforced them, and when harm did befall any of the British he was deeply troubled by it. Gandhi harbored no animosity toward any British individual and, on the contrary, his compassion for the hardship his actions had on the British were very genuine (Fischer, 1954). The outcome of the Salt Satyagraha serves as a good example of how Gandhi focused on interests of all parties instead of digging in and holding onto a position. While the initially stated objective was the repeal of the Salt Act, when the British agreed to modify the salt regulations so that much of the injustice forced on the poor ended, he modified his position and accepted their proposal as it satisfied the interests of this Satyagraha (Bondurant, 1965). Psychological Lessons from Gandhi From the time he was thrown off the train in South Africa until he fell from an assassin’s bullet in India, Gandhi acted to rid his country of social injustice. His peacebuilding efforts were strongly based on self-transcendent values combined with a commitment to principle which reflected a conservative value emphasis. The search for truth combined with tolerance and self discipline made him an ethical model who many wanted to emulate. He utilized good communication with his allies and his opponents at the interpersonal level as well as via the written word. Gandhi never lost sight of the fact that all were humans cut from the same cloth by God, and gave unconditional positive regard to all. He was an applied social scientist who used some very effective psychological principles to reach his goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion we can say that both Truth and Non-Violence are closely interrelated. They are the same sides of a same coin. A critical account of the Gandhian concept of Non-Violence shows that Gandhi was not aware of the deep rooted aggressive instinct in man. Contemporary psychologists have pointed out that this instinct plays a major role in the human mental life. Gandhi did not play sufficient attention to it. His account of Non-Violence seems to be more dependent on his readings of religious texts than on psycho-social considerations. This is a major critical point that may be raised against the Gandhian conception of Non-Violence. If Non-Violence is the expression of the life-instinct within man then violence is the expression of the death-instinct.

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