

Resurrecting Gandhi:
A New Method
of Conflict Resolution
for South Africa and Beyond



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Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to South African political life is at once symbolic and tangible. Symbolically, his refusal to submit to oppressive regimes and his prescriptions for "right-living"¹ demonstrated him to be a free-thinker committed to the upholding of fundamental moral truths. His practical contribution stemmed from melding his moral ideas into a workable praxis, and may be found in his mass action campaigns against discriminatory laws. These included campaigns against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906,² which required all Asian men and women to carry passes and register for fingerprints in the Transvaal, and the successful protest of a 1913 court invalidation of Indian marriages.³ His efforts in South Africa and India also clearly had an effect on the formation of contemporary South African society. For example, President Nelson Mandela modeled his ideas in the African National Congress Youth League on Gandhi's mass action campaigns⁴ and ANC leader Albert Luthuli was an ardent follower of Gandhi's insights into non-violence.⁵

South Africa has emerged from the darkness of apartheid as a pioneer in the field of conflict resolution, but Gandhi appears to have been left behind.⁶ Scholars consider him a mere "precursor" to conflict resolution theory⁷ and have relegated his Indian successes to the specific sociohistorical context of Hinduism combined with a moral colonizer.⁸ Even Mandela's later assessment of Gandhi's principles is instructive:

In India, Gandhi had been dealing with a foreign power that was more realistic and far-sighted. That was not the case with the Afrikaners in South Africa. Non-violent passive resistance is effective as long as your opposition adheres to the same rules as you do. But if peaceful protest is met with violence, its efficacy is at an end.⁹

¹ Joan Bondurant, Conquest of Violence: A Penetrating Analysis of Techniques of Non-Violent Action, (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, rev.ed. 1965) 7.

² M.K. Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Press, 1968 ed.) 131-151. See also Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, 8.

³ Lyle Tatum, South Africa: Challenge and Hope (Toronto: America Friends Service Committee, 1987 ed.) 54-55.

⁴ Nelson Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom (Randburg, South Africa: Macdonald Purnell Ltd., 1994) 107.

⁵ Tatum, South Africa: Challenge and Hope, 56.

⁶ Thomas Weber, "Gandhian Philosophy, Conflict Resolution Theory and Practical Approaches to Negotiation," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 38, no.4 (2001) 493.

⁷ See, for example, H. Miall, et al., in which Gandhi's methods are placed under the category "Precursors" and receive two sentences of discussion, followed by an abstract nod to the teachings of the Buddha. Hugh Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham, and Tom Woodhouse, Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999) 41.

⁸ Tatum, South Africa: Challenge and Hope, 164.

⁹ Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom, 146-47.

His words suggest that non-violence works only in particular circumstances and depends heavily upon the actions of the opponent; the non-violent approach was more of a “strategy” that should be utilized alongside other effective, violently coercive tools when necessary.¹⁰ Critics have also pointed to the failure of non-violent resistance by Jews in Nazi Germany and occupied Poland as further evidence of its limited utility.¹¹ But Gandhi would likely argue that Mandela had misunderstood his contributions and that any conflicts, no matter how vicious the enemy, are capable of being resolved through his methods.¹² This paper is *not* a biography of Gandhi’s life in South Africa or a history of his particular struggles.¹³

Instead, the first portion of this paper seeks to resurrect Gandhi’s contributions to the field of conflict resolution and argues that his ideas contain viable, practicable currency in contemporary conflicts. The second portion of this paper pertains to a Gandhian analysis of a contemporary solution to a challenging conflict. The 1991 National Peace Accord (NPA) provided a framework for the peaceful resolution of the negotiated settlement in South Africa, and represented a pluralist and ambitious effort to engage civil society in maintaining a peaceful transition to majority rule. Several of the devices used to further the aims of the Accord – particularly the use of local peace committees – show remarkable resemblance to Gandhi’s own suggestions about how to implement a harmonious society. This second, albeit shorter, section of the paper argues that a Gandhian analysis of the NPA demonstrates that his ideas of satyagraha, particularly his use of parallel structures, are alive and well.

Part I. Gandhi’s Contributions to Conflict Resolution Theory

This portion of the paper will attempt to establish Gandhi’s concept of satyagraha as being a viable contribution to conflict resolution theory. Satyagraha is at once a principled philosophy and a systematic methodology of conflict resolution. While better

¹⁰ Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom, 147.

¹¹ Juergensmeyer and Bondurant seem to argue *for* Gandhi’s methods by reasoning that nonviolent resistance could not have made things *worse* for the Jews, who were exterminated. They seem to differ in that Juergensmeyer argues the resistance should have come from non-Jews, while Bondurant suggests that the Jews could have rallied international attention and, eventually, international intervention. See Mark Juergensmeyer, Gandhi’s Way: A Handbook of Conflict Resolution (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002 edition) 106 (the genocide was “the failure of others to speak out against the Nazis before they became such a virulent force”). But *Cf.* Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, 227 (“they would have mobilized world opinion behind them much more rapidly”).

¹² For an interesting discussion of Mandela’s evolving views of non-violence as a tool among others, see David Hardiman, Gandhi in His Time and Ours (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 2001) 279.

¹³ Several useful works have been written that cover this period. Foremost are Gandhi’s own autobiographical writings, including his seminal Satyagraha in South Africa.

known for its use in mass action campaigns, Gandhi envisioned satyagraha as permeating domestic and intrapersonal spheres, making it a pragmatic tool for use in conflict resolution in all aspects of life.¹⁴ We will first examine the underlying principles of satyagraha and then proceed to identify its methodology as a practical tool of conflict resolution. Identifying specific links to South African politics is not the goal of this section, but they will be provided when relevant.

A. The Principles of Satyagraha

While Gandhi helped to shape modern South Africa during his twenty year residence there,¹⁵ he was in turn clearly shaped by it. His concept of *satyagraha* was named and developed during the campaign against the Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance of 1906.¹⁶ He first called his movement “passive resistance”, but found the name construed by Europeans as congruent with weakness, and held a contest in his periodical *Indian Opinion* for a better one.¹⁷ The resulting “satyagraha” is an amalgam of two Gujarati words meaning “truth” (*satya*) and “agraha” (taking, seizing),¹⁸ which themselves contain Sanskrit roots, meaning, roughly, “truth force”¹⁹ or “soul force.”²⁰

As its Sanskrit roots imply, satyagraha rests upon the principle that truth is both the cause of and solution to conflict. Multiple perceptions about a problem can cloud judgment and perpetuate intransigence. This stems from the fact that competing views each contain a grain of truth and are merely insights into a deeper, absolute truth.²¹ Since it is impossible to know the absolute truth in any given conflict without attaining *Moksha*,²² an opponent’s viewpoint must be taken seriously.²³ This does not mean avoiding confrontation out of respect for the viability of an opponent’s relative truth. Rather, satyagraha encourages direct engagement so as to shake up both versions of the truth and reveal a deeper one in a dialectical process.²⁴

¹⁴ M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993 edition) 318-320.

¹⁵ Gandhi lived in South Africa from roughly 1893 to 1915. See Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, *passim*.

¹⁶ Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, fn2.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 8. See also Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, 318-319.

¹⁸ There are numerous translations of the term satyagraha, and Hardiman’s is perhaps the most exhaustive. See Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours*, 51-52.

¹⁹ Juergensmeyer, *Gandhi’s Way*, 3.

²⁰ Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 153.

²¹ Juergensmeyer, *Gandhi’s Way*, 3.

²² Moksha may roughly be translated as *nirvana* or salvation. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, xxvi.

²³ Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, xxvii.

²⁴ Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, 192-196.

The search for truth also precludes the superficial resolution of disputes – what Galtung called a “negative peace”²⁵ – because they will fester beneath the surface to rise up again in potentially more destructive form.²⁶ Accommodation and unsavory compromises are therefore not the goals of satyagraha.²⁷ Equally important is the fact that a satyagrahi²⁸ abhors violence because of its ability to devolve into a cycle, and because the underlying truths will be obfuscated by the use of physical force. Satyagraha, as Gandhi explained, “is an absolutely non-violent weapon.”²⁹ The goal is to arrive at a win-win solution that will honor the truths perceived by each party and to *transform* their basic perceptions.^{30, 31}

There are several other important principles that may be found in the philosophy of satyagraha that serve as a bedrock for satyagraha-as-method-of-action. These have been interpreted by scholars in different ways. Bondurant, who engaged in the first Western authoritative assessment of satyagraha in the 1950s, agreed that truth and non-violence were foundational: “the discovery of truth, or the resolution of conflict arising out of differences of opinion as to what is truth, must be prosecuted through non-violent action.”³²

Gandhi did not leave the term “non-violence” open to vacuous interpretation. “Satyagraha and brute force,” he wrote, “being each a negation of the other, can never go together.”³³ Non-violence was directly tied to the concept of *ahimsa*, roughly defined as “action based on the refusal to do harm”.³⁴ *Ahimsa* is a weapon of the strong and powerful that is utilized by someone capable of inflicting physical damage. In this sense it is a positive mindset that projects love by way of doing good to the transgressor.³⁵ The courage required to engage in conflict must be supplemented by the strength demanded by the practice of non-violence.³⁶

²⁵ Miall, et al. write that Johan Galtung’s distinction between negative and positive peace is that “the former [is] characterized by the absence of direct violence”, while the “latter by... overcoming... structural and cultural violence as well”. H. Miall, et al., Contemporary Conflict Resolution, 43.

²⁶ Juergensmeyer, Gandhi’s Way, 6.

²⁷ Juergensmeyer, at 6. Gandhi does not preclude all compromises, however. He explains that “all my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of Satyagraha.” Gandhi, An Autobiography, 148.

²⁸ “Satyagrahi” is a person who practices satyagraha.

²⁹ Gandhi, An Autobiography, 380.

³⁰ Juergensmeyer, Gandhi’s Way, 8.

³¹ Weber, “Gandhian Philosophy,” 505.

³² Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, 30.

³³ Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa, 156.

³⁴ Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, 23.

³⁵ Bondurant, quoting Gandhi, Conquest of Violence, 24 and 112.

³⁶ Gandhi found that believing in Satyagraha as a weapon of the strong had the double effect of strengthening those involved and the campaign. Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa, 156.

A final underlying principle observed by Bondurant in satyagraha may be seen as a response to the Machiavellian assertion³⁷ that the end achieved can justify the means utilized to achieve the end. The assassination of a despotic dictator, for example, might create the possibility for peaceful rule. Gandhi rejected such solutions, arguing that the means leave an indelible imprint upon the end. As Jawaharlal Nehru, first leader of India and Gandhi's friend, explained:

Gandhi was never tired of talking about means and ends and of laying stress on the importance of means. That is the essential difference, I think, between his approach and the normal approach which thinks in terms of ends only, and because means are forgotten, the ends aimed at escape one. It is not realised that the ends must inevitably come out of the means and are governed by those means.³⁸

A struggle waged through violence will result in a peace brimming with violence; the techniques of violence will not disappear even if peace is secured, and we will once again return to Galtung's notion of a "negative peace". For this reason, nonviolence and *ahimsa* are the preferred methods of conflict.³⁹

Other scholarly interpretations add to Bondurant's insights into satyagraha principles. Galtung, writing two decades later, identified a few basic norms. These include acting positively towards the conflict and refusing to cooperate with manifest evil.⁴⁰ Juergensmeyer seems to agree with these suggestions, but observes another aspect of satyagraha that creates problems of implementation: coercion. He notes that Gandhi did not permit coercion in his non-violent technique, whether "physical, verbal, or emotional" or even the mere intent to coerce.⁴¹ According to Gandhi, the "Satyagrahi's object is to convert, not to coerce, the wrong doer".⁴² This concept is directly related to the means-ends principle and the abhorrence of "negative peace." A coerced opponent might be boxed into accepting a half-rate solution that did not address important concerns. Even if the coercive pressure is applied non-violently – for example, by blackmail – there will be bitterness that will be imprinted upon the resolution. Another

³⁷ Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince. In this work, Machiavelli discusses the principles required of assertive leadership and presents his coercive approach to politics.

³⁸ Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, xviii.

³⁹ Bondurant further argues that this fundamental importance of an emphasis on means can explain the success of twentieth century political movements: "[w]hatever may be said by way of explaining the achievement differential in terms of the time and place of appeal, the fact remains that Nietzschean, Fascistic theory glorified the means, whereas [Thomas] Carlyle contented himself with suggestions as to the role and efforts of great men." Ibid, 13.

⁴⁰ Weber, "Gandhian Philosophy," 494.

⁴¹ Juergensmeyer, Gandhi's Way, 28.

⁴² Weber, "Gandhian Philosophy," 495, citing Gandhi in *Harijan*, 25 March 1939.

example might be achieving check-mate in a game of chess: no physical blows would be exchanged but it is unlikely the opponent will feel honored in the loss. Juergensmeyer views coercion as problematic because it appears incongruent with Gandhi's use of noncooperation tactics and "fasts unto death" when his opponents were not acceding to his demands. Similarly, nonviolence would have less "bite" and would be akin to passive resistance without some coercive power. He spends much of his work "Gandhi's Way" discussing these concerns.⁴³

Other scholars do not seem to find coercion so troubling and simply concede that it exists in satyagraha. Gandhi himself admitted that "it is not to be denied that fasts can be really coercive," but he explained further that his fasts were taken in love, and that these fasts could be "legitimately or illegitimately used."⁴⁴ Bondurant simply concedes that

the method [of satyagraha] does contain a positive element of coercion. Non-cooperation, boycott, strike – all of these tools which may be used in satyagraha involve an element of compulsion which may effect a change on the part of an opponent which initially was contrary to his will – and he may suffer from the indirect results of these actions.⁴⁵

The cumulative noncooperation efforts of boycotts and strikes may change the will of an opponent and force his hand, but this does not invalidate satyagraha in its entirety. Klitgaard also has observed that Gandhian satyagrahis may have been coercive or even violent, and that they were persuasive because they were *perceived* as nonviolent.⁴⁶

But there is a solution to the coercive aspect of satyagraha. Like all conflicts, understanding coercion depends upon one's point of view. Rather than thinking of the satyagraha as being coercive, it is better to look at its ability to *induce* the opponent to convert and recognize the more viable version of truth.⁴⁷ Coercion may occur but this carrot-and-stick approach is the preferred method. It may not be possible to delineate a clear line about the appropriateness of coercion, but favoring incentives over blackmail seems a workable approach.

One reason for the differences between the scholarly treatment of coercion is the sheer size of Gandhi's writings and speeches. He wrote only four full length works yet

⁴³ Juergensmeyer eventually distinguishes between "detentive" and "destructive" coercion, finding one brief and the other inexcusable. See Juergensmeyer, *Gandhi's Way*, 29-31 and 151-155.

⁴⁴ Gandhi, M.K. Gandhi, *Non-Violent Resistance* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Press, 1974 edition), 316 and 320.

⁴⁵ Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, 9.

⁴⁶ Weber, "Gandhian Philosophy," 498.

⁴⁷ Weber, "Gandhian Philosophy," 498.

the authoritative Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi contains over ninety (!) volumes.⁴⁸ His writings are marked by inconsistencies because he was an articulate, if occasionally verbose, public figure who immersed himself in the immediate issues that surrounded him.⁴⁹ It follows that a critical assessment of his ideas fails to provide a unified theory about coercion or other aspects of satyagraha: Gandhi himself may not have been able to articulate one. But the principles of the search for truth, for non-violence and *ahimsa*, for honesty, for favoring incentives over coercion, for honorable, win-win solutions, and for transformation may be seen as a consistent thread in satyagraha.

B. Satyagraha as a Method of Action

Beyond its useful moral guiding principles, satyagraha offers a practical method of waging conflict. Gandhi was not a theorist, but a man of action who engaged in conflict where he found it relevant to his own search for truth.⁵⁰ These conflicts could directly affect him or be taken on behalf of other peoples. In South Africa, his major campaigns against trade permits and marriage laws were at least in part taken in response to his own suffering. He identified his ejection from a Pretoria-bound train in the Transvaal, for example, as a major factor in his activism on behalf of the Indian community.⁵¹ His role in India, on the other hand, was more as a *seeker* of conflict and, through the lens of satyagraha, truth. A typical instance of his search was his journey to the foothills of the Himalaya in Champaran to aid impoverished farmers in their plight against Indigo planters.⁵² Before his trip to the region he was completely unknown by the peasants because, in his words, “they were all ignorant.”⁵³ He proceeded to wage an effective satyagraha campaign nonetheless.

As mentioned above, Gandhi adjusted his concept of satyagraha to fit particular conflicts and immediate problems, making his descriptions of the satyagraha method fluctuate somewhat wildly. This flexibility is a significant reason why it has not persisted as a serious contribution to conflict resolution theory.⁵⁴ He also failed to write an accessible step-by-step manual of satyagraha methodology. It remains possible,

⁴⁸ Bondurant, Conquest of Violence, 7.

⁴⁹ Bondurant writes that “Gandhi was a political actionist and a practical philosopher” but “not a theorist.” Ibid., 7.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ See Gandhi, An Autobiography, 109-116.

⁵² Ibid., 404-40.

⁵³ Ibid., 411.

⁵⁴ At the same time, the general nature of conflict resolution theory – take, for example, Burton’s “needs” theories - suggests that flexibility is a positive attribute of any lasting idea. See Miall, et al, and their discussion of Burton, Contemporary Conflict Resolution, 47.

however, to propose a unified methodology following the insights of different Gandhi scholars. The lists range from five to ten basic steps, and each will be presented in turn, then the differing or redundant steps eliminated so as to boil satyagraha methods down to its essentials.

Thomas Weber and the Principled Satyagraha Method

Weber has identified ten different goals required in waging a successful satyagraha campaign. In list form, the steps required of one wanting to engage conflict on Gandhian terms are:

- (1) Violence will be “invited” if the opponent is “humiliated or provoked”;
- (2) The satyagrahi must make “clear to him or herself the essential elements of the case and the purpose of the conflict”;
- (3) opponents must be “provided with a full understanding of one’s case and conduct”;
- (4) identify “essential interests” in common and “establish cooperation” from them;
- (5) do not judge opponents “harder than the self”;
- (6) trust opponents;
- (7) “unwillingness to compromise on non-essentials decreases the likelihood of converting the opponent”;
- (8) “personal sincerity” helps in conversion;
- (9) sacrifices help convince of sincerity; and
- (10) one should not take advantage of an opponent’s weak moments.⁵⁵

These steps are themselves the synthesis of earlier scholarly contributions, including those of Naess,⁵⁶ and Weber supports them with references to Gandhi’s own words, which will not be repeated here. Besides the prohibition against provocation (step one), which is linked to the *principle* of non-violence of satyagraha, a few of these considerations deserve mention.

Foremost are the affirmative actions required of the satyagrahi irrespective of an opponent’s behavior. There is a strong emphasis upon communication with the opponent in a sincere manner. Engaging the opponent forthrightly and with full disclosure, without withholding information, is suggested. Filtering through one’s cause to identify “essential elements” (step two) will help in communicating a consistently sincere message (steps three, eight, and nine) that can lead to the identification of mutually

⁵⁵ Weber, “Gandhian Philosophy,” 505-506.

⁵⁶ Weber cites Arne Naess’ 1974 essay, “Gandhi and Group Conflict: An Exploration of Satyagraha”, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, as providing insight.

accepted truths (step four).⁵⁷ Honest communication also has the practical benefit in the satyagraha campaign of ensuring that its members' actions remain consistent.

Some of the steps suggest more *reactive* than affirmative behavior, and require action by the opponent before they come into play. Steps 5 and 10 fit into this category: not judging the opponent harder than oneself (step 5) and not taking advantage of an exposed weakness (step 10). Non-judgment of an opponent implies an action on the opponent's part and is in this way reactive, while refraining from exploiting an exposed weakness is also responsive to the exposure by the opponent of the weakness.⁵⁸ These steps are also *proscriptive* in that they do *not* allow judgment and they do *not* permit exploiting weakness. Step 6, or trusting the opponent, is at once affirmative and reactive, in that the satyagrahi must trust the opponent before engagement and even *after* the opponent has acted in a mistrustful manner. This sense of optimism, of trusting, must pervade the satyagraha when possible.

Taken in full, Weber's analysis offers specific measures that must be taken during a satyagraha campaign. He offers both affirmative efforts required by the satyagrahi and provides instruction as to how to react to an opponent. Communication, sincerity, and trust are emphasized along with an ongoing search for "essential elements" of truth. However, Weber's approach has some drawbacks. The ten methods do not follow sequentially and would be easy to confuse with principles. Sincerity and trust, for example, seem to be principles that could resonate beneath any satyagraha campaign. This muddles the goal of providing satyagrahis with practical tools available in the conflict. We must turn, then, to other suggestions to find a more workable praxis of satyagraha.

Bondurant and the Aggressive Satyagraha Campaign

Bondurant offers a much more practicable analysis of how to utilize satyagraha during conflict. She suggests nine steps, again in list form:

- (1) negotiation and arbitration;
- (2) preparation of the group for direct action;
- (3) agitation;
- (4) issuing of an ultimatum;

⁵⁷ Gandhi strongly emphasized sticking to essential truths: "In a pure fight the fighters would never go beyond the objective fixed when the fight began even if they received an accession to their strength in the course of fighting, and on the other hand they could not give up their objective if they found their strength dwindling away." Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, 370.

⁵⁸ Non-exploitation of weakness does seem to leave room for alerting the opponent to one's knowledge of the weakness and thereby gaining trust.

- (5) economic boycott and forms of strike;
- (6) non-cooperation;
- (7) civil disobedience;
- (8) usurping of the functions of government; and
- (9) creating a parallel government.⁵⁹

Unlike Weber's analysis, Bondurant's vision of a satyagraha campaign can be seen as following a sequential order. Ideally, the campaign would be stopped as high up on the list as possible. A meaningful negotiation could resolve a dispute and reveal an agreeable, honorable version of truth for both parties. Should negotiations or arbitration – the latter of which Gandhi would generally frown upon anyway⁶⁰ - prove intractable, the satyagrahi can proceed to the other steps in order to convert the opponent into recognizing the preferred truth.

Culled as her suggestions are from Gandhi's actual satyagraha campaigns, it is not surprising that several of them imply an institutional opponent. The last five steps (economic boycotts, non-cooperation, civil disobedience, usurping the functions of government, and creating a parallel government) would be of little benefit to interpersonal disputes. These acts also seem to require a stable institution capable of responding as a unit, while at the same time they paradoxically destabilize the institutional structure. In other words, you need a government to transform a government. Should an institution exist – and they so often do – these last five steps are useful, disrupting the structures of the institution in a non-violent manner. (The last two steps of usurping the functions of government and creating a parallel government coincide with Juergensmeyer's suggestions and will be discussed later.)

It is also important to recognize that Bondurant's analysis may permit significant levels of coercive nonviolence. Issuing an ultimatum and the usurpation of the functions of government seem to be intrinsically coercive. Ultimatum is defined as “a final demand... the rejection of which by another could cause a breakdown in relations, war, or an end of cooperation”⁶¹. Acceptance of the terms would be a voluntary choice, but one measured against the disruption caused by *not* accepting the terms. Common experience also points to the fact that ultimatums are very dangerous when given to a proud or obstinate opponent.⁶² The usurpation of the functions of government is also an obviously coercive element, not even possessing the aspect of choice involved with an ultimatum.

⁵⁹ Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, 40-41.

⁶⁰ Juergensmeyer, *Gandhi's Way*, 13.

⁶¹ Reader's Digest Oxford Complete Wordfinder (London: Reader's Digest Assoc., 1993), “ultimatum”.

⁶² One is reminded of Richard Wright's depiction of the cornered rat in *Native Son*, which leaps upon attacker Bigger Thomas with teeth bared.

For these reasons, Bondurant's suggestions about how to wage a satyagraha campaign possess a much more aggressive orientation than Weber's. Her approach contains a coercive element that Weber ignores. At the same time, her method seems capable of rallying larger numbers than Weber's, whose advice is geared at the principled stance one should utilize with an opponent. One way of synthesizing their differing approaches may be by subsuming Weber's steps as subparts of Bondurant's step one: negotiation. Weber's steps imply an ongoing negotiation and emphasize communication, respect, and sincerity during this process. Since negotiation underlies Bondurant's vision of a satyagraha campaign, she would likely welcome these day-to-day suggestions, while adhering to the practical strategy of alerting an opponent to the preferred version of truth in a mass action campaign.

Mark Juergensmeyer and Parallel Structure

Juergensmeyer echoes many of the actions identified by the other scholars as congruent with a satyagraha campaign. His schematic for "Steps in Waging a Large Campaign" are nearly identical to those of Bondurant:

- (1) Negotiation;
- (2) Mobilization;
- (3) Demonstration;
- (4) Noncooperation; and
- (5) Creation of a parallel entity.⁶³

His categories are probably so similar to Bondurant's because he relies heavily upon her work.⁶⁴ He collapses the categories of preparation, agitation, and ultimatum into "mobilization" (step 2), renames "economic boycott and strikes" as "demonstration" (step 3), and subsumes civil disobedience and the usurpation of government structures into steps 4 and 5, "noncooperation" and "creation of a parallel entity", respectively. He does make a few notable additions. These include the necessity of continuing negotiation throughout the satyagraha and intensifying one's actions at the conclusion of each "cycle" of five steps.

Juergensmeyer's ten "basic rules" may also be harmonized with the spirit of Weber's methodology.⁶⁵ We will not discuss them all here because of their similarity. But notable differences are the necessity of knowing when to exit if an intractable

⁶³ Juergensmeyer, *Gandhi's Way*, 57.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 54, 67, and 136.

⁶⁵ Juergensmeyer, *Gandhi's Way*, 63-64.

stalemate has been reached (step 10), the necessity of flexibility (step 6), and that of temperate escalation (step 7). These basic rules are more akin to Weber's principles than Bondurant's political method of satyagraha but are no less instructive.

Juergensmeyer is unique, however, in his heavy emphasis on parallel structures. The distillation of different truths will reveal essential interests in common. Working with the agreed upon truths should lead to a mutually beneficial, win-win solution in which both sides feel honored. But what should one do if the opponent has been alerted to these mutual truths and refuses to reach a solution? Juergensmeyer's suggestion about parallel structure comes into play when these mutual truths have been identified. He recommends acting as if the truths *are* agreed upon and functioning in a way to honor them. In a dispute over a garden along a property boundary, for instance, one could find that the truth is both sides would like it to look pretty and produce vegetables.⁶⁶ The "parallel structure" solution suggests creating this garden and presenting it as a vision of truth to the opponent. This concept is recognizable at the governmental level as well. For example, in the face of a non-inclusive apartheid government, the African National Congress developed its own democratic decision-making structure. This structure for the most part mirrored the version of truth it was seeking and some of its principles, notably those in the pluralist "Freedom Charter", were later incorporated into South Africa's final constitution.⁶⁷

A final point is that the notion of parallel structure combines seamlessly with Gandhi's principle of means. As we mentioned earlier, Gandhi rejected the notion that the ends justified the means, because the means would inevitably be incorporated into the ends. He favored *ahimsa* and non-violence methods instead. The link between means and parallel structure is that the parallel structure should be very close and compatible with the end goal. The creation of that structure must preclude any methods that one would not desire in the ends. Juergensmeyer offers the example of Gandhi's promotion of the traditional Indian spinning wheel to replace British textiles.⁶⁸ Not only was this creating the parallel structure of a cottage industry, it was in fact the end goal desired.⁶⁹

Towards a Unified Theory of the Satyagraha Method

A unified theory of satyagraha would be invaluable to those confronting conflict. But the difficulty of dividing the satyagraha method from its principles stands as a

⁶⁶ Juergensmeyer uses the example of quarreling neighbors in the first ten chapters of his work.

⁶⁷ See Mandela, Long Walk to Freedom, 158-164.

⁶⁸ For a more detailed treatment of the spinning wheel and *khadi* cotton cloth, see also Hardiman, at 79.

⁶⁹ Juergensmeyer, Gandhi's Way, 39.

formidable hurdle. Satyagraha is original because it actively shifts conflicts *towards* principles.⁷⁰ The pervasiveness of conflict in life requires the method to allow the waging of conflict in a positive and moral manner.⁷¹ The paramount principles of truth, non-violence, and transformation, for example, must resonate behind each step in any unified methodology.⁷² The methodology also must be practical. This means it must prove useful against both gentle and vicious opponents to have any currency.

With these ideas in mind, here is a proposed satyagraha method, with the scholarly inspiration for each step identified in parentheses:

- (1) *experiment***: the method must be flexible and adjust to differing conditions. Thinking of the process as experimental will increase likelihood of success; (Juergensmeyer)
- (2) *engage***: avoiding the conflict will merely allow it to rear its head at an unexpected and undesirable time; (Juergensmeyer)
- (3) *negotiate***: resolving a conflict requires direct contact with the opponent and negotiation; this step will continue until the conflict is resolved and attaches to all later steps (Bondurant and Juergensmeyer);
 - (a) *identify essential truths***: it is vital to know what one desires in the resolution and not to abandon them for an unhappy compromise (Weber and Juergensmeyer);
 - (b) *communicate essential truths honestly and sincerely***: communicating essential interests will permit consistency of action within the group (Weber);
 - (c) *trust the opponent and do not exploit weaknesses***: mistrust and exploitation will sour any agreement (Weber);
- (4) *get the opponent's attention***: the importance of these steps is alerting the opponent to your version of the truth with an end goal of *transformation* (Weber and Bondurant);
 - (a) *agitation***: make it difficult for opponent to avoid your vision of truth;
 - 1. *civil disobedience*;
 - 2. *noncooperation*;⁷³
 - (b) *provide incentives***: avoid coercion where possible and *induce* the opponent to witness truth in a non-violent and honest way (Klitjaard);
- (5) *create a parallel structure*** and (Juergensmeyer and Bondurant);
- (6) *quit when the opponent will not listen or watch and restart the cycle*** (Juergensmeyer).

The benefits of most of these steps have already been described. The numbering and lettering system, however, requires some explanation. The method advances sequentially from lowest number (step 1) to the highest (step 6). Numbered steps are considered vital, while their subparts give substance to the particular step but may be

⁷⁰ Mark Juergensmeyer, "Shoring Up the Saint: Some Suggestions for Improving Satyagraha," in Gandhi's Significance For Today, ed. Hick and Lamont Hempel (London: MacMillan Press, 1989) 38.

⁷¹ Juergensmeyer, "Shoring Up the Saint," 38.

⁷² Gandhi also considered the strictest self-discipline – including non-possession, self-sacrifice, and the denial of sensual pleasures – to be instrumental in the practice of the satyagraha method. For various reasons, these methods of self-discipline will not be discussed here and are not included in the proposed method. They are useful in their emphasis on self-discipline, but it is unlikely that the typical person engaged in conflict will practice chastity or non-possession. This was not even the case for most of Gandhi's satyagrahis. My contention is debatable, however. See M.K. Gandhi, Non-Violent Resistance (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Press, 1974 edition) 42-49.

⁷³ Gandhi called civil disobedience "the active expression of non-violence." Gandhi, Non-Violent Resistance, 57.

optional. For example, it is necessary to get the opponent's attention (step 4) but it may not be necessary to engage in noncooperation (a)(1) to accomplish this end. The one exception is the necessity of identifying essential truths in the process of negotiation (step 3(a), in bold), which is not optional. The final step requires the recommencement of the satyagraha experiment.

We can now proceed to describe the details of the method. Firstly, it is important to understand that each conflict is in flux and, generally, concerned with change. Approaching the conflict as an experiment will permit a flexible, rational mindset and prevent stalemates. Second, conflict will seek us out even if we spend life avoiding it; voluntarily engaging in conflict with an eye on discovering truths will aid this. The third step is arguably the most vital because no conflict can be finally resolved without reaching it: engaging the opponent requires negotiation. Weber's insights into the peaceful and sincere way of conducting dialogue provide the subparts. Negotiation should continue throughout the satyagraha experiment, and will attach to all other steps from then on.

Fourth, while agitation and civil disobedience are workable methods, the underlying goal of these actions is to focus one's opponent's attention on the truth / essential interest one is advocating. That is why the particular aspects of agitation are considered subparts. Of particular note is that methods of agitation can be tempered by providing non-coercive incentives for an opponent. Providing incentives will help avoid the danger of coercion imprinting itself upon the "ends" of an agreeable solution.

Creating a parallel structure is an extremely powerful tool that can alert one's opponent to an unrecognized truth. But *thinking about* creating a parallel structure – even if it is not possible to create one in practice – is also an excellent method of forcing one to innovate "outside the box", a pivotal aspect of the experiment. This makes it suitable as its own step. Finally, quitting in the face of absolute intransigence is appropriate as long as the process of satyagraha is not abandoned. Instead, the cycle should begin anew. Gandhi was clear on avoiding time restraints. "Satyagrahis should not impose a time limit upon their Satyagraha," he wrote, because "[w]hether it lasted one year or many... the struggle itself was victory."⁷⁴

A useful method must be effective against both agreeable and vicious opponents. The proposed method should permit this. For example, an agreeable opponent should respond fully in step 3 to negotiation and its subparts of communicating sincerely and honestly. A vicious opponent, however, will be shaken up by the proposed methods of

⁷⁴ Gandhi, Satyagraha in South Africa, 317.

getting his or her attention. These include agitation at an interpersonal level and forms of noncooperation and civil disobedience if the parties are larger in scale. Finally, part six provides a needed “out” to the satyagraha campaign. An intransigent opponent may not respond at all to negotiation. Beginning the cycle anew with the patience to design a new experiment can extricate one from untruthful conflict.

Conclusion for the Satyagraha Method

Satyagraha is a principled political theory that emerged from a creative individual who engaged in “experiments” throughout his life.⁷⁵ Gandhi’s success in his various campaigns should be celebrated, but they are as flawed and human as the man himself.⁷⁶ Satyagraha was conceived in South Africa during Gandhi’s formation as a political leader. The proposed method, drawn from scholarly writings on the topic, attempts to make his ideas workable in a contemporary South African context. However, an analysis of recent events in the nation’s history suggests that satyagraha may be at work in more powerful ways than expected.

Part II. Gandhi and the National Peace Accord

This section discusses the presence of Gandhian methods of satyagraha in the South African National Peace Accord of 1991. It argues that the Gandhian emphasis on the creation of parallel structure in the face of conflict may be readily seen in the establishment of the Peace Committees in both India and South Africa. Parallel structures, as we have seen, can transform an opponent into recognizing a viable version of truth and encourage original problem-solving. In each nation, these parallel structures led, at least in part, to national legislation that incorporated their ideals.

A. Gandhi’s Parallel Structures

Gandhi implemented parallel structure during his lifetime in several ways. His campaigns against British textiles, as Juergensmeyer noted, were furthered by the creation of a parallel cottage industry based upon an indigenous spinning wheel. He also recused himself from modern living through the development of his *ashrams*,

⁷⁵ Gandhi, An Autobiography, xxvi.

⁷⁶ See, for example, Gandhi’s explanation of his “Domestic Satyagraha”, in which he boasts of his coercion of his wife Kasturbai to refrain from taking salt to cure her frequent hemorrhages. See Gandhi, An Autobiography, 322-328.

communities marked by a drive for self-sufficiency and spiritual awakening. Two of these communities, the Phoenix Settlement (1903) and the Tolstoy Farm (1910), were located in the Natal and the Transvaal, respectively. The Tolstoy Farm in particular was instrumental in preparing potential satyagrahis for their disobedience campaigns and the rigors of prison life.⁷⁷

The parallel structures most relevant to this paper, however, were trumpeted during Gandhi's campaign for locally governed village committees and, later, for peace committees as partition from Pakistan approached. Disenchanted with British rule, Gandhi envisioned a series of self-sufficient communities called *panchayats* that would form a democratic collective.⁷⁸ These self-governing republics, based on an ancient model, would foster face-to-face relationships and promote tolerance, while at the same time eliminating the power disparities inherent in large systems of control.⁷⁹ Gandhi proposed that the structure be based on an "oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual."⁸⁰ The system worked as a kind of representative democracy: the adults of each *panchayat* would elect five persons; *panchayats* could be linked and the two five-member councils would elect a "first grade leader" to represent them; fifty first grade leaders would elect one "second grade" leader; finally, second grade leaders would elect one "chief."⁸¹ The outer rings of second grade leaders and the chief would not wield enough power to control the inner circle but would provide the individuals within with strength.⁸² Leaders would be marked by their moral as well as political representation.⁸³

Villages organized on the *panchayat* model also contained conflict resolution methods. The elected five person council or an individual leader could resolve disputes.⁸⁴ The villages held civil and criminal jurisdiction over disagreements, with

⁷⁷ "The work on the Farm was certainly harder than in jail," Gandhi wrote. *Gandhi Satyagraha in South Africa*, at 324. See also David Arnold's discussion on this point. David Arnold, *Ghandi* (London: Pearson Education Ltd., 2001) 62.

⁷⁸ Economically, *panchayat* villages strived to grow their own food and cotton, with excess land allocated for cash crops. Kurvilla Pandikattu, "Global Village vs. Gandhian Villages: A Viable Vision," in *Gandhi: The Meaning of Mahatma for the Millenium*, ed. Kuruvilla Pandikattu (Washington, D.C.: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2001) 186.

⁷⁹ Judith M. Brown, "The Vision of Non-Violence and the Reality," in *Gandhi and South Africa: Principles and Politics*, ed. Judith M. Brown and Martin Prozesky (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1996) 117.

⁸⁰ Margaret Chatterjee, "Reviewing the Gandhian Heritage," in *Gandhi and South Africa: Principles and Politics*, 104.

⁸¹ George, Joseph M., "A Gandian Prospective Paradigm for Culture," in *Gandhi: The Meaning of Mahatma for the Millenium*, 161-162.

⁸² Chatterjee, "Reviewing the Gandhian Heritage," 104.

⁸³ George, "A Gandhian Prospective Paradigm for Culture," 161-162.

⁸⁴ Pandikattu, "Global Village vs. Gandhian Villages," 189.

some restrictions imposed by the British.⁸⁵ Members of the village could thereby expect a more harmonious resolution.

An important aspect of the *panchayat* was its emphasis on democratic governance and face to face relationships. As a parallel structure, the *panchayat* permitted Indians to assert themselves in the face of colonial power and retain a basic sense of autonomy. Some of the economic proposals did not, in the end, prove viable, but the *panchayat* was later incorporated into national legislation in the independent government.⁸⁶

Besides the *panchayat*, Gandhi also favored other forms of parallel structures called peace committees. During the partition of India from Pakistan (1946), numerous conflicts erupted over the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of Indians. Gandhi disfavored the solution because of its inflammatory nature and sought to quell violence wherever possible. It was in this context that *ad hoc* peace committees were born. For example, following the flight of 60,000 Muslims to a shelterless fort in Delhi, Gandhi established peace committees to thwart Hindu and Sikh attacks.⁸⁷ Other peace committees, notably in Calcutta and Noakhali during the 1940s, were formed on necessity.⁸⁸ His earlier satyagraha campaigns in Champaran and Bardoli also found peace committees as instrumental, especially when the members were involved in the conflict.⁸⁹

Conclusion

The *panchayat* villages and peace committees, when taken together, represent parallel structures that embody the Gandhian ideals of inclusion and local resolution. Faced by ineffectual British colonial rule and, later, by the refusal of the Indian government to protect Muslims, Gandhi created parallel structures to foster peace.⁹⁰ These basic concepts, central to the notion of satyagraha, may be found in the South African context as well.

B. The Parallel Structure of the National Peace Accord

⁸⁵ George, "A Gandhian Prospective Paradigm for Culture," 162.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours*, 188.

⁸⁸ Chatterjee, "Reviewing the Gandhian Heritage," 100.

⁸⁹ Chatterjee, "Reviewing the Gandhian Heritage," 100.

⁹⁰ Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours*, 187.

South Africa was marked by escalating violence in the early 1990s. In 1990 alone, there were 3,699 fatalities, a 250 percent increase over the prior year.⁹¹ Efforts by both the African National Congress and National Party government had failed to concretize “talks about talks” into a meaningful public conference. President F.W. De Klerk’s unilateral call for a national negotiation conference in May 1991 fell on deaf ears at the ANC, whose members accused the Nats of double-dealing and duplicity.⁹² Earlier efforts by civil society groups to encourage negotiation had also failed.⁹³

The combination of progressive business forces and a concerned Church community created an intermediary capable of winning the trust on both sides. The ANC refused to attend De Klerk’s publicity conference, but was persuaded to attend a new peace conference in June that would better address their interests. The result of this multiparty conference was the National Peace Accord of 1991, an ambitious agreement that established a national conflict resolution mechanism. This paper will not discuss the rich history of the agreement or analyze the fascinating details of its implementation.⁹⁴ Instead, this section will examine the specific mechanism of the Local Peace Committees, and argues that the committees are fully congruent with Gandhian notions of conflict resolution and parallel structure.

The Peace Committees

The National Peace Accord (“Peace Accord”) created several functional conflict resolution mechanisms. The first was the establishment of the investigatory Commission of Inquiry Regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, also known as the Goldstone Commission.⁹⁵ The second mechanism, more relevant to Gandhi, was a complex network of local and regional dispute resolution committees.⁹⁶ The structure of these committees was somewhat hierarchical. The National Peace Committee oversaw the full implementation of the Peace Accord, while its six-member Secretariat

⁹¹ Nicole Ball, Managing Conflict: Lessons from the South African Peace Committees (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Development Council, 1997) 64.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 6.

⁹³ Peter Gastrow, Bargaining for Peace: South Africa and the National Peace Accord (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute for Peace, 1995) 18.

⁹⁴ The National Peace Accord is part of the complex and multifaceted process of the South African negotiated settlement. For a detailed history, see Peter Gastrow’s Bargaining for Peace: South Africa and the National Peace Accord, (Washington, U.S. Institute for Peace, 1995). For a long-term assessment, see Susan Collin Marks, Watching the Wind: Conflict Resolution During South Africa’s Transition to Democracy, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Institute for Peace, 2000).

⁹⁵ The Socio-Economic Reconstruction and Development Subcommittee was also created, but was ineffectual and hence left out. Ball, Managing Conflict, at 21.

⁹⁶ Ball, Managing Conflict, 8.

coordinated peace committees at the regional and local levels. Regional Peace Committees were comprised of representatives from broad sectors of society, including security forces, and helped establish the Local Peace Committees.

Local Peace Committees (LPCs) helped individual communities address violence and other concerns in an intimate level.⁹⁷ The Peace Accord charged them with, among other things, “creating trust and reconciliation between grassroots community leadership” and “settling disputes causing public violence or intimidation”.⁹⁸ A detailed method of achieving these various ends was not provided by the text, leaving room for innovation on the ground.⁹⁹ LPCs provided a grassroots forum and encouraged political pluralism, and were capable of securing small-scale successes.¹⁰⁰ Despite the hierarchical internal structure of the Peace Accord, they also broke down traditional barriers of class and color. Activists came face to face with policemen that tortured them and, in most communities, people of different races were required to work for mutual solutions.¹⁰¹ By the time of the national election of 1994, 260 committees had been formed.¹⁰²

The story of a Western Cape community demonstrates the success of the Local Peace Committees. Following the 1993 assassination of ANC leader Chris Hani by a right-wing Polish immigrant, the town of Plettenberg Bay was threatened by racial violence. Black workers organized marches and two factories were burnt to the ground during the excitement. Stay-at-home protests quickly followed. The Regional Peace Committee sent in fieldworkers and convened a meeting where it was determined that the marchers were equally upset about the factories and had no knowledge of its perpetrators. Discussions proceeded over a month, quelling tensions, and a Local Peace Committee was established. One year later, when another factory burnt down after the death of a local boy, the LPC diffused the tension within twenty-four hours.¹⁰³

Although all LPCs were not as successful as Plettenberg Bay’s, most seem to have been effective in fulfilling their mandate.¹⁰⁴ Not every region or community accepted them, and they proved incapable of resolving deeper, structural problems.¹⁰⁵ But they were remarkably plural mechanisms and fostered needed dialogue in tense

⁹⁷ Laurie Nathan, “The National Peace Accord,” *Track Two*, Vol.2, No.2 (May 1993) 5.

⁹⁸ National Peace Accord (September 1991) §§7.4.8.2, 7.4.8.4.

⁹⁹ Susan Collin, “Western Cape,” *Track Two*, Vol.2, No.2 (May 1993) 14.

¹⁰⁰ Suzanne Nossel and Marion Shaer, “Building Peace: How the Peace Committees Can Heal, Engage and Empower South African Communities,” *Track Two*, Vol.2, No.2 (May 1993) 7.

¹⁰¹ Marks recalls a meeting where an activist encountered his former torturer in the Western Cape. Marks, *Watching the Wind*, 27.

¹⁰² Ball, *Managing Conflict*, 11.

¹⁰³ Marks, *Watching the Wind*, 28-29.

¹⁰⁴ Ball, *Managing Conflict*, 9.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

environments. One reason for their effectiveness may be that the Peace Accord, while stipulating the membership of the Regional Peace Committees, provided that LPCs be comprised of “representatives reflecting the needs of the relevant community.”¹⁰⁶ Their leadership was both involved in and representative of the communities in which they lived. Unfortunately, the short nature of the Peace Accord makes it difficult to answer such questions with certainty. After overseeing the April 1994 elections, the transitional Government of National Unity shut down the Peace Secretariat for budgetary concerns.¹⁰⁷

Finding Gandhi in the National Peace Accord

The above discussion of the Local Peace Committees, while cursory, provides a background to identifying Gandhian thought in contemporary South African politics. Several currents of satyagraha may be found in the Local Peace Committees. The dialectical nature of satyagraha¹⁰⁸ was central to their success. For the sake of clarity, here is a simplified version of the proposed satyagraha method we identified above:

- (1) *experiment*;**
- (2) *engage*;**
- (3) *negotiate*;**
 - (a) *identify essential truths*;**
 - (b) *communicate essential truths honestly and sincerely*;**
 - (c) *trust the opponent and do not exploit weaknesses*;**
- (4) *get the opponent’s attention*;**
 - (a) *agitation*:**
 1. *civil disobedience*;
 2. *noncooperation*;
 - (b) *provide incentives*;**
- (5) *create a parallel structure* and;**
- (6) *quit when the opponent will not listen or watch* and *restart the cycle*.**

The LPCs, while not actually satyagraha campaigns, facilitated the implementation of the satyagraha method. First, the Local Peace Committees were experimental in nature, as the Peace Accord marked “the first time that conflict resolution had been tried on this scale anywhere in the world.”¹⁰⁹ Second, it permitted parties to engage the conflict. By providing a neutral forum in which people could voice their concerns, opponents were permitted to confront rather than avoid the conflict. Third, the peace committees encouraged negotiation. Although not mentioned above, this included placing a strong

¹⁰⁶ National Peace Accord (September 1991) §7.4.7.

¹⁰⁷ Marks, *Watching the Wind*, at 12.

¹⁰⁸ Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, 192-196.

¹⁰⁹ Marks, *Watching the Wind*, 9.

emphasis on communication between the security forces and the different political parties through Joint Operations Communication Centres. Fourth, the LPCs helped opponents get each others attention. By communicating with the security forces and other political groups, LPC leaders alerted the community to proposed marches and protests.

The fifth step in the satyagraha method of action is arguably the most noticeable with respect to the LPCs. Gandhi trumpeted the use of a national republic comprised of individual village communities called *panchayats*. He also helped establish peace committees in response to developing conflagrations during the partition of India and Pakistan. The *panchayats* and peace committees were parallel structures created to replace an otherwise unconcerned state government.

The LPCs may also be seen as parallel structures, but in a different form. Both the National Party government and opposition political groups had failed to provide the necessary mechanisms for peace. Through the intervention of civil society – namely Church and business groups – a negotiating forum was established. This led to the development of the parallel structure of the National Peace Accord.¹¹⁰ This structure was pluralist in nature and embodied the cosmopolitan future that South Africa envisioned. New and more effective mechanisms provided the means to achieve the end of a lasting peace and a new nation. Satyagraha, whether acknowledged or not, had breathed fresh energy into a country marred by escalating cycles of violence.

Part III. Conclusion

Satyagraha is the carefully developed, principled method of a leader able to wield power in an unprecedented manner on a grand scale. Inspired by his life experiments and sources as diverse as the Bhagavad-Gita Vita, Tolstoy, and Jesus' Sermon on the Mount,¹¹¹ *satyagraha* mirrors Gandhi's own life. It is at once startlingly insightful and flawed. He himself was not able to put all aspects of method into practice, notoriously failing to implement it in his own home.¹¹² Yet it merits a lasting presence in the field of conflict resolution, especially in South Africa, its birthplace.

¹¹⁰ It is admitted that parallel structure is not a panacea. It could be abused by an opponent so as to avoid resolution of the conflict by creating another body on which to lay the blame without providing it with substance.

¹¹¹ Bharatan Kumarappa, Ed., in Gandhi, *Non-Violent Resistance*, iii.

¹¹² For an eye-opening account of Gandhi's treatment of his wife Kasturbai and son Harilal, see Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours*, 92-102.

It is hazardous, but fruitful, to speculate that the primary reason for satyagraha's strength as a method of conflict resolution may be its original emphasis on truth. Philosopher Michel Foucault's insights are telling here:

It's not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time.¹¹³

In other words, truth, when divorced from the complex regimes of power that color it, is power itself. Satyagraha actively promotes unearthing this power and dusting off its momentary, sociocultural spin. It acknowledges that the power of truth lurks within every conflict, no matter how large or small, and provides a method of searching for it that will both enlighten and transform.

¹¹³ Michel Foucault, Power / Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings (1972-1977), ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1995) 133.

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