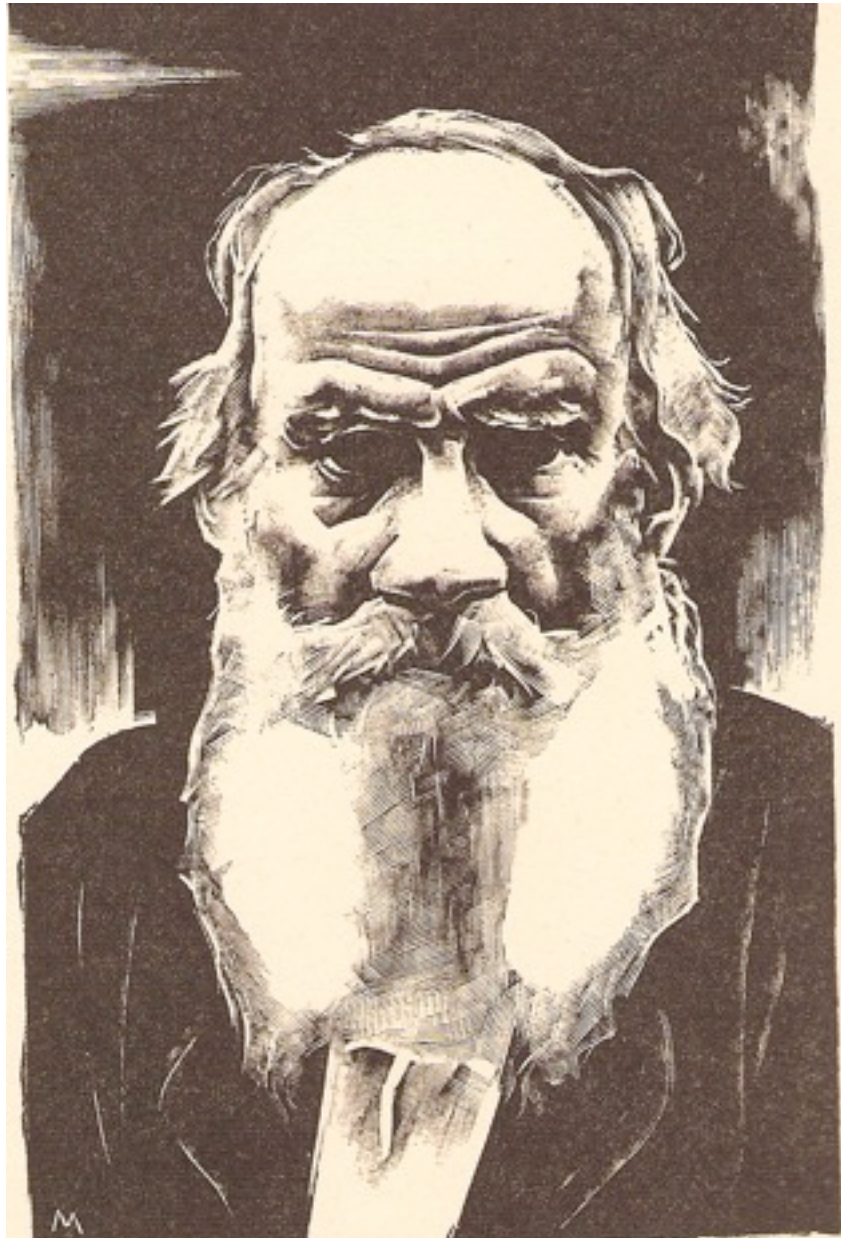


The Gandhi Way



Leo Tolstoy 1828-1910

Newsletter of the Gandhi Foundation

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The Gandhi Foundation AGM

Saturday 4 June 2016 at 2.30pm
in Kingsley Hall, Powis Road, Bromley-by-Bow, London E3 3HJ
followed by a video lecture by Professor Antony Copley on
What can India learn from Gandhi today ?

Gandhi Foundation Annual Lecture

on Saturday 1 October 2016, 11am-1pm
at St Martin-in-the-Fields Church, London
by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams

***Empathy, Ethics and Peacemaking:
reflections on preserving our humanity***

Register at william@gandhifoundation.org (more details in next issue)

Gandhi Foundation Summer Gathering 2016

Saturday 23 July - Saturday 30 July

Economics as if People Mattered

at St Christopher School, Barrington Road,
Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire SG6 3JZ

Further details and booking –

gandhisummertgathering@gmail.com or 01932 841135

or The Organisers, Summer Gathering, 2 Vale Court, Weybridge KT13 9NN

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Tolstoy: The Relentless Prophet

Geoffrey Carnall

Geoffrey Carnall, a lifelong peace campaigner as well as teacher and scholar of English literature, died last year (see *The Gandhi Way* 124 for an obituary). This piece appeared in *Reconciliation Quarterly* in December 1980. Tolstoy had a profound influence on Gandhi.

I first read Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You* in 1942, when I was 15 years old. I can still remember the exhilaration of hearing a voice of such immense and assured authority analysing the deadly processes that were to generate two world wars. At that time even tentative attempts to think outside the frame of reference dictated by wartime stresses seemed almost impossible (to an anxious teenager at least). Tolstoy was obviously familiar with the war mentality, and shrugged off with a splendid impatience that made one really believe in his prophecy of revulsion against the present state of things. The world might be stupefied, hypnotised, perverted, but deep down inside everyone was a consciousness of the truth, and at some point the truth would be acknowledged: "A time is coming, and will inevitably come, when all institutions based on violence will disappear because it has become obvious to everyone that they are useless, stupid, and even wrong." What was especially heartening was the assurance that the individual conscience did count, that in persisting in refusal to countenance murder one was preparing the way for a major shift in public opinion, the establishment of a new structure of life.

It was true that Tolstoy's too-hopeful list of the signs of the withering away of the war-making state put into question the immediate political relevance of his argument. If in 1893 (when *The Kingdom of God is Within You* was first published) it looked to him as though a public opinion against violence in all its forms was growing, the experience of the twentieth century was discouraging, to put it mildly. But the centre of his argument lies elsewhere. People might be 'coming to themselves' in increasing numbers or they might not: what Tolstoy testified to most vividly was the possibility of paying attention to an awareness which society conspired to deny. He attached great importance to the fact that human beings have to stupefy themselves, "to drown the voice of conscience in themselves". The first step towards a better world is simply to face the pain of not being drugged, hypnotised, hypocritical – to live, as George Elliot put it, without opium. An internal effort of consciousness is needed, which, even if it does not lead immediately to heroic results, shows the right way ahead. "It is always in your power to stop lying." The link with Gandhi's preoccupation with truth is evident, and Gandhi's political writings are in some ways the most fruitful

commentary on Tolstoy's doctrine that we have. But there is quite a crucial difference in temper between Tolstoy and Gandhi. The tormented intensity of Tolstoy's exposure of the shifts and palterings with which people deceive themselves contrasts dramatically with Gandhi's patient self-scrutiny. Because Gandhi was more at ease with himself, he was the better able to bear the sense of powerlessness which comes inevitably to those who set themselves at odds with the existing order of society and with received wisdom. Tolstoy can state with great energy the conviction that consequences

must be left to God, that it is not for us to know the times and the seasons. But he eventually did find it important to believe that the world was approaching with ever-increasing rapidity towards an epoch when gallows, guns and cannon



would fall into disuse. When in his late essay 'Thou shalt kill no one' he feels constrained to admit that the rejection of the sixth commandment, that crucial symptom of moral and mental depravity in our perverted civilised world, was almost universal, he adds that "this terrible decadence is a sign of that last stage of perversion which is sure to result in an awakening". Sure? One can hardly be that at a time when we collectively seem quite unable to halt an arms race of inconceivable frightfulness. Tolstoy was deeply attracted by Hans Andersen's story of the emperor's new clothes, and of the little boy's naive remark that the emperor didn't actually have any clothes on at all. The attraction lay partly in the suggestion of the breaking of a spell, an instantaneous illumination. The man who has been hypnotised can be roused quickly, but one might change the metaphor and see society as infected by the disease of militarism: then the infection might prove incurable, or need at least a long and difficult convalescence. To be as attached as Tolstoy was to images of stupefaction and hypnosis as explanations of our present state is to be hideously trapped in the spell when it refuses to be broken. One is thrown back to some of the most unnerving moments in *War and Peace*, as when Pierre witnesses the execution of five prisoners by men to whom the action

was abhorrent. Who, then, was responsible ? “They are all suffering as I am. Who then is it ? Who ?” It is pointless to vent one’s anger on such as Napoleon, giving orders that he is expected to give, actually as much under constraint as a horse walking on a treadmill, submissively fulfilling the cruel, sad, gloomy and inhuman role to which he is accustomed. The role is everything, the human consciousness is paralysed. It is inconceivable that Napoleon shall not give the orders, or the soldiers not acquiesce in the order to shoot. The very vehemence with which Tolstoy insists that his contemporaries are indeed awakening from the stupor that enslaves them betrays the pain of the fear that they are not doing so.

And yet is Tolstoy’s belief in the possibility of a great benign transformation of the human race utopian only in the sense that he wants, as a moralist to see it taking place in some clear-cut and unmistakably recognisable way ? The right deed is rarely done until it has to be done for the wrong reason, and if the human race does avoid total catastrophe it will do so confusedly and in a muddle of contradictions. Tolstoy is sensitive to such complexities in his great novels but the power of his peace tracts is bound up with the absoluteness of his scorn for the charades of peace conferences and the disingenuous rhetoric of potentates and politicians. If we are not to despair, we have to differ from him here. The world being what it is, there will be no transformation without the charades and the rhetoric; but there will be no transformation without the relentless Tolstoyan vision either. In part this is the kind of relentlessness that informs the work of a contemporary activist like Helen Caldicott, with her scorn for politicians ‘desensitised to reality’, her zest in confronting a system that condones, legalises, and builds death-producing industries and insanely destructive weapons. But the Tolstoyan relentlessness works also at a deeper, uneasier level. Reading him can be an intensely uncomfortable exercise, creating an almost intolerable self-questioning about the way in which one acquiesces in social arrangements that depend on the exploitation of others, and hence on violence. Sometimes, as in what he says about the role of women in *What Then Must We Do ?*, one can feel that he is bemused by traditional attitudes. Or one can slight his challenge by the way of the conventional Soviet wisdom, inspired by Lenin, that he expresses the ideas and sentiments of the Russian peasants of his time, shaking the pillars of the temple that fell in 1917, and becoming irrelevant thereafter. It is true that he is often evidently addressing a readership that hardly exists now – people whose wealth was spent in the sight of numerous domestic servants. But much of what he says is painfully applicable to a world in which extreme of poverty and wealth persist and increase. We are ready enough to concede this with our heads, but we can hardly bear to feel it on our pulses. We should like to ignore our personal responsibility, if we could; Tolstoy will not let us, if he can.

(Painting from Wikimedia)

Gandhi: The Sanctity of Life and the Ethics of Diet

Judith Wilkins

On Saturday 30th January, The Gandhi Foundation held their annual multifaith celebration at Kingsley Hall in association with The Animal Interfaith Alliance. Mark Hoda, Chair of The Gandhi Foundation and Rev Feargus O'Connor, Chair of The Animal Interfaith Alliance, introduced the event.

Before introducing the speakers, Graham Davey of *The Gandhi Foundation* provided an outline of Gandhi's commitment to nonviolence, his vegetarianism and frustrated veganism, and his positive compassion for all living creatures. As a Hindu, influenced by Jains, Gandhi had respect for all living things; all touched by the Divine, all equals with human beings in God's eyes. Gandhi was outspoken against vivisection and Rev O'Connor suggested that the two organisations could join in support of the Dr Hadwen Trust and their work replacing animal experiments.

Ketan Varia (Jain) of *The Animal Interfaith Alliance* spoke of ensouled nature and the need to limit our diet to plant life – most urgently today but based historically on the Jain belief that the greater number of senses an organism possesses, the greater our responsibility to shield it from unnecessary suffering – and the need to educate without coercion on these matters.

Rev. Nagase (Buddhist) of *Battersea Peace Pagoda* spoke of the Buddha's compassion for all beings. He mentioned serious environmental concerns over Japan's nuclear industry and weapons in general, before chanting a prayer that helped bring the proceedings to a place of profound contemplation.

Rev. Martin Henig (Christian Anglican) observed that the Christian tradition has always drawn heavily on the Old Testament, referring the audience to Psalm 104 and its strong vision of animals' importance to the God of compassion and love.

Sheikh Rashad Ali (Muslim) seconded the importance of non-coercion. He spoke of the Islamic tradition's deep concern with matters of welfare, quoting the Hadith and stating that the creation taken as a whole is in fact 'the family of God', each creature spiritually connected. From his perspective, adequate legal protection is what animals most sorely lack today.

Jewish vegan campaigner, Jonathan Fitter, finished with a powerful 2012 text provided by *The Jewish Vegetarian Society*, demonstrating the Torah's mandate of veganism. He went on to say that 5% of Israel's population are now vegan and that even Israel's military are observing meat-free Mondays.

The event was well attended and delicious vegan food was served in the Three Bees Cafe. Attenders also enjoyed a tour of Gandhi's cell, which he occupied when in London in the 1930s.

Judith Wilkins is a member of The Jewish Vegetarian Society, Quaker Concern for Animals and The Animal Interfaith Alliance

I believe in the fundamental Truth of all great religions of the world. I believe they are all God-given and I believe they were necessary for the people to whom these religions were revealed. And I believe that if only we could all of us read the scriptures of the different faiths from the standpoint of the followers of these faiths, we should find that they were at the bottom all one and were all helpful to one another. M. K. Gandhi

It ill becomes us to invoke in our daily prayers the blessings of God, the Compassionate, if we in turn will not practice elementary compassion towards our fellow creatures. M. K. Gandhi



Anne Finch of UK charity *Greyhounds in Need* and Rev Nagase of the Battersea Park Peace Pagoda at the Interfaith Celebration in Kingsley Hall

Speech by the Rev Feargus O'Connor:

It is indeed an honour to represent the Animal Interfaith Alliance and World Congress of Faiths at this interfaith service honouring Mahatma Gandhi and his life mission of nonviolence to all living beings.

The World Congress of Faiths unites people of goodwill of all religious beliefs in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect to struggle together to create a peaceful world where all the great religions live in harmony and work for the common good. The Animal Interfaith Alliance is dedicated to extending our love and compassion to all fellow living creatures and living in peace with them. That mission is truly in the spirit of Gandhi himself and we honour him for all he did for that universal ethic of ahimsa.

In that Gandhian spirit I wish to honour today not only Gandhi himself but also Dr Albert Schweitzer, whose ethic of Reverence for Life prompts us to love and respect all our fellow creatures to “recompense them for the great misery that [human beings] inflict upon them”.

In his Nobel Peace Prize address Schweitzer asserted that “compassion, in which all ethics must take root, can attain its full breadth and depth only if it embraces all living creatures”. So he proclaimed the moral necessity of a “boundless ethics” of universal compassion.

“Until we extend the circle of our compassion to all living beings we shall not ourselves find peace.”

If it is true, as William Blake declared, that “all that lives is holy” what nobler act can there be than saving lives ?

Violence against any fellow creature is surely a violation of that ethic of ahimsa inspiring us to act for the welfare and happiness of all ? Because all of us here passionately believe that in our innermost hearts how appropriate it is for us to participate in this service honouring Gandhi’s ethic of ahimsa and extending it to all fellow beings.

I hope this augurs well for our future cooperation in working for what some have called that Peaceable Kingdom envisioned by the Prophet Isaiah:

The wolf lies with the lamb.
The panther lies down with the kid.
Calf and lion cub feed together with a little boy to lead them.
The cow and the bear make friends.
Their young lie down together.
The lion eats straw like the ox.
The infant plays over the cobra’s hole.
Into the viper’s lair the young child puts his hand.
They do no hurt, no harm, on all my holy mountain.

I end with a concrete proposal on which I hope the Gandhi Foundation and the Animal Interfaith Alliance might cooperate to honour the Gandhian ethic of ahimsa and save human and animal lives.

“Vivisection is the blackest of all the black crimes that [humankind] is at present committing against God and His fair creation. It ill becomes us to invoke in our daily prayers the blessings of God, the Compassionate, if we in turn will not practise elementary compassion towards our fellow creatures.”

“I abhor vivisection with my whole soul”, he declared, and he deplored “scientific discoveries stained with innocent blood”.

To honour Gandhi’s ethic of universal compassion I am therefore proposing that the Gandhi Foundation might consider joining the Animal Interfaith Alliance in taking action to live that ethic by launching a special appeal for the Universal Kinship Fund of the Dr Hadwen Trust for Humane Research. I hope we shall do this together to witness to Gandhi’s values in the world by doing what he would most have wanted: save human and non-human lives.

Lifestyle Movement

2016 Conference and AGM

August 26-28, 2016

Bamford Quaker Community, Water Lane,
Bamford, Hope Valley, Derbyshire S33 0DA

Theme: Water on the Planet

Cost: £75 per person for the weekend

For more information contact **Graham Davey**,

Tel: 0117 909 3491; E-mail: graham.davey@blueyonder.co.uk

Presentations and discussions will focus on the availability of **fresh** water, and how the water cycle is affected by climate change and the rising sea level.

We may also consider how water is used in industrial countries, including domestic and commercial wastage, how and why we should use less water, flood prevention, the environmental and financial cost of bottled water, and the significance of water to energy conservation.

Concerning developing countries, we shall consider how clean water should be supplied and financed, particularly where communities are scattered. We shall look at the potential of hydroelectric schemes to provide cheap electricity and irrigation while not adversely affecting wildlife.

Gandhi course at SOAS There is a one year undergraduate module on *Gandhi and Gandhism* at SOAS, University of London. More information at <https://www.soas.ac.uk/courseunits/154800103.html>

Gandhi Connect: Plea to save historic Patna Collectorate

Kunal Dutt

The more than 200-year-old historic Patna Collectorate sitting picturesquely on the banks of Ganga is teetering on the brink of oblivion.

The Bihar government has proposed to raze the iconic buildings to the ground to make way for a high-rise complex. And, if the demolition goes as planned, very soon Patna would lose not just a great architectural heritage but also an uncanny connection with Mahatma Gandhi thanks to the Oscar-winning biopic on him.

Endowed with high ceilings and hanging skylights, the Collectorate, alongside equally iconic Patna College and the remnants of opium godown in Gulzarbagh, comprise the last surviving signatures of Dutch history of Patna.

After assuming the reins from the Dutch in 1820s, the British made worthy addition to its architectural landscape like the District Board Patna building erected in 1938, famed for its iconic Meeting Hall with its inside walls having flat Corinthian columns and floral motif.

Facing the wrecking ball, the Collectorate has joined the ever-swelling list of endangered built heritage in this historic Indian city which over the last several years has seen many of its veritable landmarks losing the battle to the onslaught of modernity.

But, the Collectorate buildings stand not just as a signpost of history but also as an unwitting symbol of Gandhi's legacy whose life was almost faithfully retraced by Sir Richard Attenborough in his ground-breaking film.

Parts of the film's meticulously researched script were set in Champaran, the place which made the man the Mahatma, and Attenborough came down to Patna in early 1980s for his shoot in Motihari. But, due to lack of time and communication links across the Ganga, he recreated Motihari in Patna. The Dutch-era Record Room was dressed up as Motihari Jail and the District Magistrate's Office and its corridor were used for the famous court room scenes set in 1917.

That court room episode was a turning point in his life which catapulted him into a people's hero and the trigger point that gave birth to his Satyagraha movement that ultimately brought the country to freedom.

Staff members of Collectorate still fondly recall the day the film crew came and how chants of "Gandhiji" rent the air.

In February, I was in Patna and met Devendra Kumar, an employee of the District Board Patna, who was nine years old when the film was being shot. He told me, "I saw the British director and his team when they were shooting here. The District Magistrate office was also used for the court and corridor scene. I don't understand this demolition move. The government should preserve these buildings and use them to attract tourists."

Attenborough's film with Ben Kingsley's powerful performance as Gandhi made such an impact among the Indians, he became for the rest of his life 'Gandhi' for them. Thus this film's shooting at the Collectorate inseparably linked the Mahatma's legacy with people of Patna and Bihar. And, therefore dismantling it also amounts to obliterating those great memories which should instead be capitalised for promoting a Gandhi tourism circuit in the state.



Collectorate building as shown in the Attenborough film



District Board Meeting Hall Patna

It is ironic that the proposed demolition has coincided with the Bihar government's ongoing centenary celebrations of Gandhi's first arrival in Patna (and Bihar) in 1917 which would culminate on April 10, 2017.

The occasion could not have been more than perfect to flag the Collectorate on the Gandhi circuit map in the Bihar tourism sector, and restore and showcase the architectural legacy – a double bonanza, heritage tourism coupled with 'Gandhi Darshan'. We therefore appeal to the government to see them as an opportunity and not a liability as most old buildings are seen as.

And, the Gandhi connection to this built heritage was one of the compelling reasons to start our social media campaign – Save Historic Patna Collectorate – and after knowing the Oscar-winning film's link to it many more people are supporting us.

The story of Patna's loss of heritage is heart-breaking and the absence of local preservation laws for buildings protected neither centrally nor under the state, exposes them to the wrecking ball. What is even more ironic is that Patna Collectorate has been listed a heritage building in Bihar government's 2008 publication by Art and Culture Department – *Patna: A Monumental History*, but the listing is mere ornamental until it gets notified.

Ten years after the 'Gandhi' crew came down to shoot in Patna, one of the city's most beloved landmarks, the colonial-era Dak Bungalow was razed to make way for a high-rise commercial complex, though the place and street and intersection abutting it are still called as Dak Bungalow Road and Dak Bungalow Chouraha, testifying to the endurance of its legend.

British legends Jim Corbett and E M Forster are said to have lived there during their Patna sojourn.

In 2010, the historic Bankipore Central Jail where most of the freedom fighters were lodged during the struggle for Independence made way for a Buddha recreational park, attracting widespread criticism from several quarters. One of the watch towers and two flanks of portions of walls were later preserved as a reminder of the erased past.

A few years later, six British-era heritage bungalows were destroyed to make way for a world-class museum. Later, three bungalows around Gandhi Madan including those of Civil Surgeon's and District and Session Judge's were dismantled for the international convention centre. The list just goes on.

As the clock ticks, we sincerely hope the government will see wisdom in our reason that restoration and not demolition is the answer to the condition of Collectorate, to which the legend of Gandhi has been inseparably tied.

Kunal Dutt, who was born in Patna, is a Delhi-based journalist and a heritage lover.

You can show your support for the campaign by liking this page –

<https://www.facebook.com/SavePatnaCollectorate/>

The Anglo American Reaction to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) : An Indian Interpretation

Vasant Kumar Bawa, Hyderabad India

Today Western Europe is facing an unprecedented crisis, due to the mass migration into Europe by refugees from Arab States like Iraq, Syria, Libya, Lebanon and even as far east as Afghanistan. What are the reasons for mass migration from Muslim countries of Eastern Europe, North Africa and West Asia ? Is there really a threat from the ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) or the ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and Levant) as others would have it ?

Religious Identities in Europe Today – the Anglo American View

In order to understand the present situation it is necessary to look at the conflict relating to the origins of the so called Islamic state of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). It has to be remembered that the foreign policy of the Western powers has undergone a major change since the attacks on the Twin Towers undertaken by Islamic terrorists on September 2001. This attack triggered off what has been described as the War on Terror. Since then, the traditional international laws of war and peace have almost given way to a new approach to the world order which seems to have become the accepted wisdom in the western world. It is also influencing countries like India, which had, till recently, attempted to maintain an equidistance from the official views of the Western powers and Russia earlier called the Soviet Union.

When the ISIS began in Iraq, it was a small insurgent group, the same year 2006, that President Saddam Hussain was removed by the United States and Britain in the Gulf War. We will put forth the view of the British Prime Minister and follow it by a more balanced view.

A few months ago, the British Prime Minister David Cameron argued that the use of the term 'Islamic State' should be discontinued, since it gives the impression that the state receives the support of a majority of Muslims which is not actually the case. As a student of Indian history and of world affairs, I support his argument. Many Indian Muslim scholars and politicians have denounced the concept of Islamic State and have declared that it is not in keeping to the principles of Islam as understood by Indian Muslims.

“When people say ‘it’s because of the involvement in the Iraq War that people are attacking the West,’ we should remind them: 9/11 – the biggest loss of life of British citizens in a terrorist attack – happened before the Iraq War.”

Cameron says: “When they say that these are wronged Muslims getting revenge on their Western wrongdoers, let’s remind them: from Kosovo to Somalia, countries

like Britain have stepped in to save Muslim people from massacres – it's groups like ISIL, Al Qaeda and Boko Haram that are the ones murdering Muslims.

“We believe in respecting different faiths but also expecting those faiths to support the British way of life. These are British values which are underpinned by distinct British institutions. Our freedom comes from our Parliamentary democracy. The rule of law exists because of our independent judiciary. This is the home that we are building together.

“Whether you are Muslim, Hindu, Jewish, Christian or Sikh, whether you were born here or born abroad, we can all feel part of this country – and we must now all come together and stand up for our values with confidence and pride.”

An Indian Academic's Interpretation of the Anglo American View

It is difficult for anyone familiar with the history of British India to forget that Winston Churchill, who as a young officer spent two years in the British Army in India, spoke resentfully about M K Gandhi as a “seditious Middle Temple lawyer now posing as a fakir” who was “striding half-naked up the steps of the viceregal palace to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor”.

It is true that Churchill changed his mind to some extent after he lost power in the British elections of 1945. As Leader of the Opposition, he acquiesced in the transfer of power to India, and agreed to India and Pakistan becoming full members of the Commonwealth of Nations and the dropping of the word British to describe the Commonwealth. However, we have to place the stand of David Cameron in perspective. The British value of tolerance and co-existence, of which he is justifiably proud, owes something to the contribution of the Indian freedom movement. Many Indian Leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Jinnah and Patel, had studied in England and were influenced by the liberal values of Western civilization. These values had an impact on the leaders of the Labour Party, including Clement Attlee, who was Prime Minister at the time of the transfer of power. He showed rare courage in moving the acceptance of India as the Commonwealth of Nations. Although Churchill had once referred to him as “a sheep in sheep's clothing”, Attlee will probably receive a higher place than Churchill in the period after the Second World War.

The question which occurs to me as a former Fulbright Scholar from India who specialized in the study of International Relations and International Organization in 1950s at Georgetown and Tulane Universities in the United States is the following : Why do we read only about NATO and the European Community (the Council of Europe) as actors, and why are the papers and news channels full of talk about direct actions by individual countries like the United States, Russia, Germany, France and Saudi Arabia?

The United Nations emerged out of the war time experience of the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China which were the victorious allies during the Second World War. The UN Charter was drawn up at the San Francisco conference in 1945 at which India was represented although it became independent only in 1947. We learned from newspapers that the UN Security Council has been in

session from September 2015 onwards, in accordance with the regular practice since its commencement. However, except for a few statements from the Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, the Indian Press has almost no reports about this but it does not seem to have dared to take up the matter of threats to world peace. Under Chapter VIII of the Charter, regional organizations like the Arab League, the European Union and the Warsaw Pact, could have taken the initiative to tackle the situation. However, this has not happened.

Let us look at the views of a leading American scholar who is also known to have contributed substantially to the formation of US foreign policy.

Professor Samuel P Huntington of Harvard University, formerly Director of Security Planning to President Carter, and former president of the American Political Science Association, wrote as follows in *The Clash of civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (Penguin Books 1996):

‘A world in which core states play a leading or dominating role is a spheres-of-influence world.’ It is thus futile for UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Galli to declare as he did in 1994 that ‘no more than one third of the UN peacekeeping force should be provided by the dominant regional power’. He asserts that ‘the United Nations is no alternative to regional power, and regional power becomes responsible and legitimate when exercised by core states in relation to other members of their civilization.’

Huntington vigorously defends the expansion of NATO to the countries of Europe which are dominated by the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church but is determined to exclude countries following the Russian Orthodox traditions. He thus argues that Poland and the Baltic States form part of Western Christian tradition. However he concedes that ‘the Orthodox Countries of the former Soviet Union are Central to the development of a coherent Russian bloc in Eurasian and world affairs’.

From these comments it is clear that the American Establishment – both Academic and Governmental – moved away from international organizations to power as a basis of world affairs. It looks like revival of the cold war in an even more crude and blatant form.

The US and its allies brought down Presidents Saddam Hussain and Gaddafi. Evidently the intervention by President Putin of Russia has not been welcomed by Britain and the US, which were anxious to bring down President Assad in Syria, as had been done in Iraq and Libya.

Secretary General of the United Nations Ban Ki Moon stated during a recent visit to Africa 26 February 2016:

“I have travelled to Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan. What I have seen underscores the need for the international community to do much more – far, far much more – to prevent and end conflict; uphold international norms and accountability; reduce displacement; and invest to enhance resilience and leave no one behind. These are all major themes of the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul on May 23rd and 24th.

“I have urged world leaders to reduce, at least by 50 per cent, displaced persons, by 2030. I urge leaders from the region and around the globe to come in full force to re-imagine how the world deals with the crises and act on a true Agenda for Humanity.”

From the above statement we can gauge some of the reasons why the European continent is in crisis. When the United Nations Charter was approved at San Francisco in 1945 and came into force, it was expected to keep the peace of the world. The UN Security Council failed to bridge the gap between the permanent members who were divided by not only ideological differences, but also by questions of power. The UN charter was deliberately framed in order to decentralize the problems of world peace. Unfortunately the regional bodies which were expected to operate in Eastern Europe, West Asia, Africa and even South Asia have failed to fulfill their purpose and appear to have limited their role to economic development, excluding other more pressing problems such as the breakdown of law and order and social justice. It has been a matter of deep regret to many of us in India to find that the principles of peace and universal brotherhood embodied in the United Nations Charter have been given way in recent years to a very different set of ideas derived from the so-called War Against Terror and that the United Nations seems to have taken a back seat in the settlement of disputes for the maintenance of global peace.

With the imminent selection of a new Secretary General of the United Nations there is some hope for change.

Learning Through Peace

A national conference, 'Learning Through Peace' is being held on Friday 24 June at the Friends House, opposite Euston station, London. It is all about how to make primary schools into peace generating engines ! It is for primary school leaders, teachers, school governors, parents and others.

Award-winning peaceful primary schools will share their experiences. People coming will learn how to equip pupils with the ability to access inner peace; the skills to make peaceful relationships and handle conflict constructively and the understanding and skills to become peacemakers themselves.

The Right Hon The Lord Blunkett said: 'I am very pleased to support the 'Learning Through Peace' conference. We all need to learn how to find inner peace and how to build peaceful schools and communities. This conference brings hope and vision to our troubled world. It warms my heart to learn of such excellent initiatives'.

To download the conference flier and booking form go to: www.peacefulschools.org.uk



The Summer Gathering 2016

We shall be returning to St Christopher School, Letchworth Garden City for our Summer Gathering this year. Letchworth is an interesting town being the first garden city, created with the aim of providing a healthy and beautiful alternative to the crowded slums of the industrial cities. Early in the 20th Century it was built through the efforts of followers of social reformer, Ebenezer Howard, plus Quakers and members of the Arts and Crafts Movement. As an example of enlightened town planning, it has influenced developments in many other towns in the UK and abroad. The theme for the Summer School is, 'Economics as if People Mattered' and the history of Letchworth has relevance in that the plan envisaged significant food production within the town and the freehold of the land was owned by the community with all profits from rents being ploughed back for the benefit of residents. You can see the world's first traffic roundabout in Letchworth and there is an excellent museum where one can learn about the history of the town.

The Summer Gathering will take place as a self-contained community in the sixth-form block of St Christopher School, an independent school for day and boarding pupils run on Quaker and Gandhian lines. The programme of the Summer Gathering is a satisfying balance of learning and recreational activities that aims to cater for the needs of everyone who comes. In the spirit of a Gandhian ashram, we share in the work of keeping the accommodation clean and in meal preparation. There is plenty of free time but also opportunities for yoga and a range of craft work. The whole community comes together at 9.00am every morning for a short period of meditation and then we share information, and deal with any problems. The main learning session usually starts with a prepared presentation by a member of the Gathering on some aspect of the theme. That is followed by discussion and questions with, we hope, everybody participating from their own knowledge and experience.

The theme for this year is, 'Economics as if People Mattered'. Drawing on the thinking of Gandhi, Schumacher and others we shall try to develop a vision of a society which promotes the happiness and welfare of all its members without the current problems of inequality, pollution, crime and fear of terrorism. This will involve looking at what is meant by 'the economy' and how it is measured, finding the best relationship between the public and private sectors, investigating the role of trade, assessing the value of devolving government, challenging the capitalist models for the ownership of industry and money creation and, no doubt, many more topics that will be raised in discussion.

Unlike a Gandhian ashram, we eat well and see meals as a time to enjoy making new friends. All the food is vegetarian or vegan and provided in generous quantities. Families are welcomed and special activities are run for the children during the morning sessions.

To apply to come to the Gathering, send an e-mail to gandhisummertgathering@gmail.com asking for an application form or contact the organisers on 01932 841135.

Graham Davey

Book Review

Debating India : Essays on Indian Political Discourse Bhikhu Parekh
Oxford University Press 2015 xix+374 Rs 1640

Only a mind so deeply versed in his own culture could have written so wise a book. No reader will fail to come away without a greater insight into the Indian story. Parekh has a disarming capacity both to be unsparingly critical of modern India's polity yet always finds in himself a generous conclusion. It is revealing to compare the far more enthusiastic response of a W H Morris-Jones from an earlier generation of political scientists of modern India with Parekh's more acerbic analysis. But then Parekh is assessing an India which has moved on so dramatically through Shining India from that of the generation of the founding fathers of the Republic. Dispassionately, he judges the giants of modern India, Tagore, Ambedkar, Jawaharlal Nehru, with Gandhi running as a thread throughout. There are engaging essays on the nature of India's public discourse, national symbols, the workings of Indian democracy, secularism, dealing with jihadism, even the nature of Indian friendship.

The relationship between Tagore and Gandhi was always bound to be fractious, rivals as they were to being India's most distinguished contemporary. And whatever he owed to Yeats on being awarded the Nobel prize in literature, Tagore must have felt he had the edge. Though we now know it was not he but Dr Pranjivan Mehta, a far more intimate Indian friend of Gandhi, who first described him as a Mahatma, Tagore could not fail to be moved by Gandhi's defence of Indian rights in South Africa. Gandhi was sufficiently impressed by Tagore's views on education to send his sons to Santiniketan on his return to India in 1915. But they came at the world from such different directions. If *moksha* meant self-dissolution they interpreted this very differently, Tagore an "opening up the self to and suffusing it with the richness of the world", Gandhi "reducing oneself to zero, purifying oneself of all that was base, shedding ties and attachments to the world, and aiming at emancipation from or extinction of the bondage of the flesh." (p.64) Tagore hated the non-cooperation campaign, though at the price of his "moral loneliness", seeing it as a rejection of the West, hating the burning of foreign cloth. Gandhi denied that he rejected the West, felt his was the way to emancipate Indians from a sense of inferiority, and that "healthy nationalism was a necessary step to internationalism." (p.75) They fell out again over Gandhi's belief that the Bihar earthquake was God's punishment for untouchability. Here Parekh expresses his own moral judgement, that connecting the natural and moral worlds in this way has no foundation: "one can argue with equal, even greater cogency that we live in a pluriverse, made up of different and in some cases autonomous orders of being and levels of

reality.” (p.85) But Tagore’s belief of God’s only working himself out in the world through its beauty but not its ugliness is no more ‘scientific’ and ‘rational’. Yet there can be little doubt that Tagore with a quite different feel for the human condition, its sexual anguish, our all too human frailties, comes out the better from this comparison.

Parekh is especially shrewd in his appraisal of Ambedkar. We diminish him by categorising him as a Dalit leader: he was far more of a national and international figure. Indisputably the framing of the Indian constitution owes more to this highly qualified constitutional lawyer than anyone else. Yet Ambedkar was himself chary of hero-worship: “Bhakti or hero worship is a sure road to degradation and eventual dictatorship.” (Quoted p.97) It was he who had the principle of fraternity added to the Preamble to the Constitution, the only way forward to an equal society. His was a vision of a westernised State bureaucracy fashioning a just society. Parekh again sees Ambedkar lessened if we narrowly focus on his differences with Gandhi. We are now more aware of how Gandhi was out of his depth with a member of the Scheduled castes far more highly educated than himself. Normally their leadership was pretty deferential to the Congress. Sadly, Ambedkar is quoted as taking hope from Gandhi’s assassination: ‘it will release people from bondage to a superman, it will make them think for themselves.’ (quoted p. 124) And Parekh believes Ambedkar’s attitude to Gandhi ‘lacked balance and objectivity’. He feels Gandhi was closer to the Dalits than Ambedkar himself and ‘they trusted Gandhi and gave him their loyalty to a much greater degree than to him.’ (Parekh p.123) His faith in a westernised elite as the means for change is seen as misplaced and the idea of a separate electorate contradictory with his ideal of fraternity. Was the mass conversion of his Mahar community to Buddhism not in some sense Gandhian ?

Parekh sees Jawaharlal Nehru’s prime-ministership in two halves, a misguided one as a modernist, a more positive one as a critical modernist. Down to the late 50s Nehru, in his drive for industrialisation, neglected agriculture, seeing in India’s villages and the antiquated outlook of the peasantry the source of India’s degeneration. But his socialism, Parekh assesses, lacked any real drive for “equality or even equity”, (p.143) Nehru was no true democrat, Cabinet meetings were run like tutorials and Parliament played but a small role. The Congress party became “little more than a family-owned recruiting ground for careerists and sycophants”. (p.166) Even Nehru’s foreign policy is seen as driven by a search for international approval and so merely perpetuated India’s sense of colonial inferiority. But then it all changed. Nehru belatedly grasped the importance of agriculture, the need for the small scale, small farms, local irrigation schemes, local power stations. This was linked with his reaching out to the people through Panchayat Raj, locally elected bodies. He turned his attention to primary and secondary education. All this is “a shift from uncritical to critical modernism”.

(p.175) Even so, Parekh emphasises his break from Gandhi: “he courageously stood up to Gandhi not often politically but almost always ideologically and committed India to the path of modernisation, a no mean achievement”. (p. 176)

There are some very original and imaginative chapters on Gandhi. We learn how deeply Einstein admired Gandhi. But Einstein doubted the efficacy of Gandhian nonviolence against the Nazis and Bonhoeffer likewise, accepting the need to assassinate Hitler. So Parekh inspects the limitations of satyagraha. Intriguingly, he believes, certainly in the early stage of Nazi rule, nonviolence would have worked: “it would be wrong to rule out the possibility of effective non-violent resistance altogether”. (p.261) And so could non-violence work against al-Qaeda and Isis ? There is a brilliant imagined conversation between Osama bin Laden and Gandhi. Parekh makes the shrewd point of the Islamists: “in denying their humanity we risk losing our own”. (p.271) He believes dialogue is possible. The Arab spring revealed a readiness for change in Islamic societies and one bin Laden would himself have had to acknowledge. And a sympathetic western approach would break through bin Laden’s Manichean world view. If a readiness for dialogue is defensible I’m not so sure passive non-resistance against either the Nazis or Isis would be no more than suicide. Parekh, however, has the arresting insight that at its root violence is driven by a fear of death. Gandhi had no fear of death, and indeed saw death “as an act of self-expression”. (p.266)

Beyond personalities Parekh explores a range of issues. Initially he describes the nature of traditional public discourse, contrasting vada, a deliberation entered into with an open mind and pure heart, and vijigisu, where no holds are barred and you seek to smash your opponent. Over time Parekh sees a merging between Advaita Vedantism and Islamic Sufism, “opening up a cross cultural universality that helped unite the multi-religious Indian society”. (p.16) Would all this survive the new kind of debate opened up by the challenge from the west, above all by the missionaries ? I am surprised Parekh sees Dayananda Saraswati as a great reformer. But will a public discourse that is “suspicious of all claims to absolute and final truth” (p.33) survive Hindutva ?

Who knows about the choice of India’s national symbols ? Here Parekh is unusually informative. It is Ashoka’s charka not Gandhi’s that is on the national flag. Do the colours represent green for Muslims, saffron for Hindus, white for the other communities ? In the end this colour code was abandoned in favour of the colours representing certain spiritual values, “cultivating systematic ambiguity”. (p.45) It was a close run thing for the choice of national anthem between Jana Gana Mana and Vande Mataram. The former won but the latter was to enjoy equal status. India might have been named Barat.

There is a caustic account of the workings of Indian democracy. Had Ambedkar had his way India would have been more a republic than a democracy. Family dominates elections, Parekh interprets, so much so it is almost “like a caste”. Neither Congress nor the BJP have any national vision. The BJP might have become the equivalent to a Christian Democratic party but instead “became a culturally shallow politically intolerant and narrowly Hindu party.” (p.195) Congress had the making of a Social Democratic party but fell into the trap of being merely dynastic. Indian elections have become even more presidential than under Nehru and Mrs Gandhi. Parekh is of course assessing the way India has been transformed, or indeed malformed, by Shining India. Horrendous inequalities have opened up, two-fifths of Indians now exist in poverty, at best seeking survival, opening up a gap with the successful two-fifths, threatening “to undermine the moral consensus that has sustained Indian democracy so far”. Wealth and political power are seen as replacing caste as the basis of “a new hierarchy”: “the quest for domination trumps the need to address common problems in a cooperative spirit”.

Overarching the far more critical economic and social crisis is a cultural one of Indian secularism. Communal breakdown of course tore the subcontinent apart in 1947 and the threat of further conflict has never gone away. The Constituent Assembly went for a uniquely Indian version of secularism, one which recognised the pervasive presence of religion in public life and legislated for the equal status of all religions. Nehru had favoured a French version in which though freedom of conscience was recognised but Church and State would be separated, leading in France’s case to state sponsored anti-clericalism and in today’s France a seeming lack of tolerance for religious minorities. Nehru would have preferred a more secular nature in the public sphere. But the majority Hindu community soon felt that the Muslim minority were being over-privileged, leaving them with a sense of cultural marginalisation and, as Parekh reads it, “resentment of secularism itself”. (p.147)

No one had struggled more than Gandhi to achieve communal harmony. Parekh is excellent in portraying the way he sought a conversation between religions. If Gandhi believed in a supreme intelligence in the universe, he rejected the very idea of any monolithic claim to the truth, even that a faith had a monopoly of its founder. Religions do not function in isolation, “rather they are driven by their inner *telos* to reach out to others as part of their unending religious search”. (p.306)

But today’s India is confronted by a quite different expression of belief in the Hindutva project. A little surprisingly, Parekh is none too alarmed at its recrudescence under the new Modi administration. This Hindutva mark two is softer than its original – remember the shocking vandalism of the mosque at Ayodhya in 1992 – with “a recalibration and rebalancing of its components”: “a strong Hindu cultural ethos within the limits of the Indian

constitution and relative distancing from the RSS". (p.226) Others would beg to differ. The murder of M Kalmurgi, a Kannada literary critic by a Hindu fanatic, is one pointer. Amit Chaudhuri, for one, sees a warping of the Hindu tradition of pluralism by a new Wahabi-style version of the faith.

As a delightful addition Parekh explores the Indian tradition of friendship. He does so in terms of the great Indian classics. I would have favoured a contemporary literary reference, to the friendship between Maan and Firoz in Vikram Seth's novel, *A Suitable Boy*.

Antony Copley

Honorary Professor of Modern European and Indian History, University of Kent, and Academic Adviser to the Gandhi Foundation. This review has appeared also in *Gandhi Marg* and *Asian Voice*.

Arms trade activists found Not Guilty

Every time the arms trade fair DSEI comes to London activists opposed to the trade try to close it down or at least disrupt its functioning. Last September eight of them were arrested and sent for trial. The trial recently concluded with all



being found Not Guilty with the judge ruling that **they acted to prevent a greater crime**, having accepted that arms sales were used for repression and human rights abuses. Evidence presented included that illegal weapons were repeatedly displayed at the fair; also that British weapons sold to Saudi Arabia were killing civilians in the Yemen and those sold to Turkey were killing Kurdish civilians. DSEI will

unfortunately be back in 2017.

More information is available from Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Unit 4, 5-7 Wells Terrace, London N4 3JU; www.caat.org.uk

Helen Steven 1942-2016

Helen Steven, jointly with Ellen Moxley, received the Gandhi Foundation's International Peace Award in 2004 for their peace work over decades, particularly their campaigning against nuclear weapons using nonviolent direct action. Helen died on 12 April 2016.

Brought up in a Church of Scotland household in Glasgow she became a teacher of history at a private girls' school after graduating from Glasgow

University. She followed her father's interest in mountain climbing and led the first female climbing exhibition to Greenland in 1970.

A life-changing decision came in 1972 when she went to Vietnam as part of a Quaker project to work in orphanages. As a consequence Helen became a member of the Society of Friends and devoted the rest of her life to working full time for peace. It was in Vietnam that she also met American volunteer Ellen Moxley which led to a partnership that was life-long. The couple adopted an orphaned Vietnamese girl, Marian, who returned with them to Scotland (Marian is now married and still living in Scotland).

In 1979 Helen became a peace and justice worker with the Iona Community which was founded by the famous pacifist clergyman George MacLeod. In 1985 Helen and Ellen opened Peace House at Braco in central Scotland, financed by the Iona Community and Quakers, where over a period of 12 years more than 10,000 people attended courses. In 1987 Helen was arrested at a demonstration at Faslane and, refusing to pay the fine, spent five days in Cornton Vale women's prison.



Helen (R) receiving the Peace statuette

One of the more unusual projects initiated by Helen was establishing contacts with military officers including organising a conference for the military in Iona Abbey to discuss the implications of nuclear strategy.

In 1999 she helped to establish the Scottish Centre for Nonviolence in Dunblane. After retirement in 2002 Helen and Ellen moved to the far north-west of Scotland where Helen continued to climb but also to involve herself in the local community, while still campaigning against nuclear weapons particularly with those women who had earlier formed a direct action affinity group which they called the Gareloch Horticulturalists.

In his Obituary in *The Herald* (22/4/16) Ron Ferguson, former Leader of the Iona Community, wrote: "Helen was, then, an engaging personality and an inspirational figure I marvelled at her ability to talk with all manner of people about serious issues. She could not have achieved all that she did without the support of her loving partner, Ellen. For me Helen and Ellen quietly modelled how a same-sex partnership between deeply spiritual people would be a powerful source of good in the world. Bless them."

GP

The Gandhi Foundation



The Foundation exists to spread knowledge and understanding of the life and work of Mohandas K Gandhi (1869-1948). Our most important aim is to demonstrate the continuing relevance of his insights and actions for all of us.

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The Gandhi Way

Articles, book reviews and letters of a specifically or broadly Gandhian nature will gladly be received by the Editor. Maximum length 2000 words.

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