

The Gandhi Way



The last Viceroy of India Louis Mountbatten and Edwina Mountbatten with Gandhi in the year of Independence 1947

(Photo: Wikimedia Commons)

Newsletter of the Gandhi Foundation

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The Gandhi Foundation Annual Lecture 2017

will be given by

Satish Kumar

Mahatma Gandhi for the 21st Century

Thursday 28 September

The Nehru Centre, 8 South Audley Street, London W1K 1HF

Doors open at 6pm for 6.30pm

Please register at William@gandhifoundation.org

The event is free but donations appreciated

Please note the change of date from previous notice

(See summary of theme of the Lecture on page 16)

AGM of the Gandhi Foundation 2017

Saturday 2 September at 2pm

Kingsley Hall, Powis Road, Bromley by Bow, London

Kingsley Hall Open House

Saturday 16 September, 12noon - 5pm

Tours of Gandhi's cell available

All welcome

2017 Gandhi Foundation

International Peace Award

will take place in mid to late October in London
after the choice of recipient has been made.

GF Friends will be notified and

details will also appear on our website www.gandhifoundation.org

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International UCL Gandhi Conference, April 28, 2017

Narinder Kapur 1, Caroline Selai 2

1 Visiting Professor of Neuropsychology (n.kapur@ucl.ac.uk)

2 Senior Lecturer in Clinical Neuroscience (c.selai@ucl.ac.uk)

University College London

The year 2015 saw the unveiling of a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Parliament Square and 2017 is being celebrated in Britain as the India-UK year of culture to mark 70 years of Indian Independence. These events provided an ideal opportunity to uphold and renew Gandhi's ideals for the promotion of his principles of nonviolence, tolerance and justice, and for a focus on the problems of the poor and needy in the world.

With these aims in mind, on Friday April 28, 2017, we held an international conference at University College London entitled – **Mahatma Gandhi in the 21st Century: Gandhian Themes and Values.**

The purpose of the conference was to raise awareness of Gandhian ideals, to encourage people in India and the UK to think about Gandhian issues and values, and to encourage innovation in producing solutions to problems such as poor healthcare, education access and violence in society. Topics that were covered included Gandhian perspectives on justice, education, nonviolence, and health, as well as a focus on village India and how innovations, such as frugal medical innovations, can be cheaply produced and help common conditions.



Dr. Veronica Bradley (seated) and Dr. Narinder Kapur

We were to enlist a key set of eminent speakers from the UK, India and the USA to speak on a range of topics related to Gandhian issues and ideals. Professor Marie Lall, UCL Institute of Education, started off the conference with an outline of some of the key collaborations that UCL has with India. In parallel with the conference, we held a major exhibition of Gandhi-related items. This included –

- ☒ Frugal innovation devices in healthcare, to parallel the talk given by Professors Prabhu and Bhargava. This included devices jointly developed by the All India Medical Institute in Delhi and Stanford University, as well as the Jaipur Limb.

- ☒ A set of 100 unique photographs provided by GandhiServe in Germany.

- ☒ Interactive displays where delegates explored issues related to – global citizenship, altruism and moral judgment.

- ☒ A virtual reality app built specifically around the Taj Mahal and Gandhi, where delegates could feel what it is like to be at the Taj Mahal and also ‘in the skin’ of Gandhi.

- ☒ A *Gandhi in Sight and Sound* powerpoint presentation that had speeches and video clips about Gandhi, including a Gandhi ‘Rap’ song by MC Yogi.



Gandhi Fellows, their families, Dr. Selai and a journalist from the Times of India

In the tradition of Mahatma Gandhi, and in order to have maximum participation in the conference, we did not charge for attendance. Since Gandhi was keen for his values and ideals to permeate throughout India, as well as countries such as the UK, we funded 5 fellowships to enable young Indian citizens to attend the conference. They were selected as part of an essay competition, with the essay including a focus on how Gandhi is relevant today, and how he can be made more relevant.

Around 100 delegates attended the event, including a journalist from the *Times of India*.

Summary of Talks

Professor Marie-Carine Lall, Professor of Education and South Asian Studies at UCL Institute of Education, and UCL's Vice-Vice-Provost for South Asia welcomed everyone to the event and gave a whistle-stop tour of some of the many research projects that UCL is undertaking with collaborators in India.

Professor Jaideep Prabhu, Cambridge UK illustrated his much-acclaimed perspectives on modern business: frugal innovation with inspiring examples of low-cost innovations that can be achieved (literally: cobbled together) with scarce resources.

In the area of health-care, **Dr Abhay Bang** gave a summary of his research, published in *The Lancet*, on reducing child mortality, on women's health and on tribal health. **Professor Costas Meghir** gave a fascinating overview of the NIH and World Bank funded research in Odisha (India), testing alternative forms of delivery (home visiting and group) for stimulation and nutritional interventions aiming at improved cognitive and health outcomes which proved to be cost-effective to implement whilst producing long-term sustainable improvements.

Professor Makarand Paranjape, Professor of English at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, gave us some Modern Gandhian perspectives on education, inviting us to reflect on, amongst other things, the difference between truly educating our students versus merely equipping them with the skills to pass exams and teaching to the test, comparing the inherent limitations of much teaching today to the possibilities of education without constraints.

Professor Lord Bhikhu Parekh, President of the Gandhi Foundation UK, rounded off the morning session with some views on modern Gandhian perspectives on nonviolence.

Dr Terry Beitzel, Director of the Mahatma Gandhi Centre for Global Nonviolence, Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal on Responsibility, and Associate Professor, Department of Justice Studies at James Madison University shared some modern Gandhian perspectives on justice and non-violent conflict resolution.

Dr Vinit Haksar, an Honorary fellow, School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences, Edinburgh University and Fellow of The Royal Society of Edinburgh presented on Satyagraha and the conquest of evil.

Dr Subodh Kerkar, Founder and Director of the Museum of Goa, India, an artist whose installations are heavily imbued with his social and political ideologies, and for whom Gandhi has been a persistent theme for a number of years, talked of his fascination with Gandhi memorabilia, his projects with Gandhi holograms and said that he believed that if Gandhi were alive today one thing he would be concerned with is litter.

Dr John Challadurai, currently Dean of the Gandhi Research Foundation, Jalgaon, Maharashtra, who was unfortunately unable to get to the conference in London, joined us via skype to explain his 'Dialogue of Life' approach for achieving peace between potentially antagonistic communities.

John Rowley closed the conference with a brief history of the establishment of the UK Gandhi Foundation including the many lectures, peace awards and multi-faith events organised throughout its history.



Members of the audience – Brian Parker, Jane Sill and Bhikkhu Nagase

Why is Gandhi relevant in the 21st century and how can he be made more relevant?

Kanchan Shankar

[This essay is by one of the five sponsored Gandhi Fellows attending the Conference from India.]

“I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and Non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could” – Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's experiments with truth and nonviolence were one of most successful events in the laboratory of history. Like every other laboratory, colonisation of a sub-continental sized country reduced the stature of its men and women to sacrificial animals that knew nothing but misery, poverty, disease and death. In his fierce quest for socialism, Karl Marx once said: "No great movement has ever been inaugurated without bloodshed!" What worth are historical laboratories without bloodshed ! But here was a Mahatma, 'the venerable' humanologist who brought about a bloodless revolution with the article of faith called Nonviolence.

The first class 'whites only' compartment gave the young Gandhi a first-hand experience of discrimination and humiliation in a deeply divided South Africa. Gandhi's Satyagraha in this crucible called South Africa sparked off an entire lifetime of political activism. He is a man of many successful 'firsts'. His firsts showcase his steely strength of conviction to the global leaders of today that "A right cause never fails". In an era of protectionism and isolationism, Gandhi's first successful experiment of Civil Disobedience against Registration and Discrimination in South Africa cautions the global leadership of today that a revolution which freed an entire nation to rewrite their history started with 'Bans and Registrations of sorts'. He said "I do not want my house to be walled in and my windows stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any".

Gandhi's bloodless revolution (Ahimsa) intrigued the world by striking the oppressor's heart and mind with the 'just weapon' of Nonviolence as Martin Luther King puts it, to unjust laws instead of 'an eye for an eye'. His exemplary political successes based on Ahimsa, through persuasive teaching, could open the eyes of the blindfolded fascist religious groups that plague the Middle Eastern nations with merciless slaughter. One might start to wonder if this is unjustifiably optimistic until one hears the calming voice of Gandhi saying "truth and untruth often co-exist, good and evil are found together" glorifying the Vedantic philosophy of *Asatoma sadgamaya*.

“Chain me but you will never imprison my mind” resonates with every movement over the centuries that have transformed human lives. These words of Gandhi serve as a reminder for the many military juntas led strife-ridden countries like Libya, Yemen, Myanmar, Turkey and Syria that their political demise will be timed by the awakening of the many imprisoned weary minds. Gandhi also adroitly forewarns of revolutionary mob-violence that “if we are not evolving violence out of non-violence, it is quite clear we must hastily retrace our steps and re-establish an atmosphere of peace”. Gandhi used the Chauri Chaura tragedy as an ‘index finger’ to avoid humanitarian crises and that a “peaceful transition to the throne of Liberty” will be possible only through nonviolence.

“Gandhi’s greatness lay in doing what everyone could do but doesn’t” (Louis Fischer, Gandhi’s biographer). Gandhi’s eternal relevance to generations of the present and future lies in his deep connection and identification with the common man wearing the “same corruptible flesh”. His simplicity and humility lies in his confession of errors and retracing of steps that inspire an earnest seeker of truth to “sweep away dirt with a broom” which may be likened to Christ’s faithful striving to confession and compassionate pardon. A 24-day 240-mile journey, the Salt Satyagraha, led by the Mahatma against a certain Salt Tax, “the most iniquitous of all from the poor man’s standpoint” gained worldwide attention giving impetus to the Indian Independence movement and marked the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Gandhi’s relevance to the present and the future transcends the famous line: “Great men were mere products of their social environment” by being a formative influence on Martin Luther King. In the words of King: “If humanity is to progress, Gandhi is inescapable”. The Gandhian idea of the ‘Beloved Community’ would go on to become the central goal of King’s spiritual campaign and thus the nonviolent Civil Rights Movement of America was born. Although both great lives were ended with a bullet, the greatest loss is in lack of application of the magnificence of their lives to our times. Gandhi’s Satyagraha not only inspired the formation of the African National Congress but also helped it launch the first mass movement against Apartheid. Nelson Mandela, often dubbed ‘the Gandhi of South Africa’ called Gandhi his ‘political guru’.

Man the individual in Gandhi’s eyes was *the measure* and central to his thought and philosophy. In the overall development of every individual lies the concept of Sarvodaya – the rise and wellbeing of all. Sarvodaya, an egalitarian socio-political and economic order is a significant doctrine in a largely unequal world. A 2015 report by the Oxfam International *Wealth: Having it all and Wanting More* shows that the richest 1% hold close to 50% of global wealth and the remaining 45-48% is held by the rest of the richest of the world’s population. The International Monetary Fund has enough

evidence to show that extreme inequality is not just a moral wrong but also undermines economic growth and threatens private sector's bottom line. Gandhi's visualisation that "the development of the country lies in the development of the rural masses" and his stress on decentralisation and cottage industries should serve as directives in governance of both developed and developing countries that are tackling inequality as a top priority, keeping in mind Gandhi's analogy that "Economic Equality is the master key to non-violent independence".

This concept of Sarvodaya was founded on the concept of sustainability that "One must care about the world that one cannot see" devaluing the materialistic system of 'multiplication of wants'. Gandhi's famous exhortation that mother Earth provides for every man's need but not for every man's greed implies that environmental sustainability involves both intra-generational and intergenerational equity. Much before the climate change debate began, Gandhi taught the world 'trusteeship' in using natural resources wisely to ensure that we bequeath to future generations a healthy planet. Developing nations of today that are now striving to fulfil this Right to Grow of their teeming millions must analyse Gandhian Economics to understand that reconciliation of economics and environment is definitely possible.

While the twenty-first century has come a full circle from globalisation, absorption and diversity to protectionism, isolationism and disruption, it has also been marked by violence, extremism, inequity, poverty and disparity. And oftentimes, while we debate about his relevance in today's world we are suddenly struck by an astounding need for the Mahatma for he stood for openness, connectedness, pluralism and synergy – even with adversaries. As the noted historian, Ramachandra Guha said in his address to the United Nations General Assembly it is imperative that "Gandhi was and remains a genuinely trans-national figure. He was trans-national in the range of his influences and in the reach of his thought".

The Business Plan for Peace: Making Possible a World Without War

A lecture by Scilla Elworthy, followed by discussion.

Presented by The Martin Ryle Trust and Conway Hall Ethical Society.

Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, London WC1R 4RL

Monday 2 October

Doors and bar open: 7 pm

Lecture and discussion: 7.45 - 9.45 pm

£12/£7. Tickets via Eventbrite.

Wheelchair accessible. More information: conwayhall.org.uk

Since the last issue Britain has experienced four terror attacks, as well as the tragic Grenfell tower fire. In response to one of these terrible events Shaheen Westcombe was moved to write these words.

LOVE CONQUERS ALL

We feel devastated
Have a broken heart
For the innocent many
Who sadly had to part

Islam teaches equality
Fairness and peace
Love all mankind
Hatred must cease

An evening of enjoyment
In tragedy did end
How can the offenders
Their actions defend?

We weep again and again
Together the Mancunians mourn
This sad tragedy has
The lives of many torn

In the name of faith
They think they are right
Creating divisions in the world
Engaged in a fight

Love conquers all
We share our pain
The world determined
This should not happen again

By
Shaheen Westcombe
25th May 2017



Reflections on Peace-Making Now

Brian Cooper

The following was the concluding statement at an interfaith event in Edinburgh on 4 July 2017. Brian Cooper is a retired Baptist minister and is Interfaith Secretary of Uniting for Peace.

We get drawn into inter-faith, and peace concern and activism, for many different reasons. It may be our own faith community takes these concerns seriously – and we feel impelled to be involved. Or perhaps our faith community is not so concerned, but we think it should be, and decide to do something about it. We come to deep concern for peace for many reasons and from many sources of motivation: faith commitment; humanitarian concern; some political or philosophical stance; moral revulsion against war and conflict; desire to help create a better world for our children. It may be the inspiration of a Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Dalai Lama, Oscar Romero or another modern-era apostle of nonviolence. It

may be the inspiration of a faith-founder: Jesus, Buddha, Mahommed, Baha'u'llah and others, the Man of Compassionate Love.

Such motivations and inspirations drive us to seek and work for common goals: co-operation and harmony of different faiths, harmony in our local communities and our nation, an end to strife on the global scene and the building of a lasting peace, with justice, for all humanity. The United Nations' founding aim to free succeeding generations from the scourge of war sums it up. All are lofty aims, but not at all easy to achieve, but unless we are part of the striving to achieve them, we leave society and the world to all the negative forces that cause disharmony and conflict. We cannot be neutral.

The Pain of Britain and the World

A friend in Oxford recently said to me "all my friends are in despair" about the situation in the UK and the wider world. I certainly understand that – but as a Christian, believing in the Risen Christ, I cannot surrender to despair. Yet these are certainly dark times in the UK. When the Westminster Bridge terrorist incident happened, I thought to myself,, "Oh no ! Just what I feared might happen has actually happened". Then Manchester happened. I found myself weeping uncontrollably at the TV news report, as I thought of all those young girls having their lives torn away, and of the terrorist himself, ending his own life and those of his victims because of a perverted version of a great religion, when he could have devoted himself to doing good. I thought of my Muslim friends, feeling sadness and outrage at the misuse of their religion and anxious over a backlash. Then London Bridge happened, and I wondered "Is Britain now being targetted by some Jihadist master-mind ?" Then the Islamophobia terror attack at Finsbury Park, London. I said to myself "Britain is now a wounded country". If one add in the Grenfell Tower horror, political instability and economic worries, it is no wonder that anxiety is widespread, as it certainly is. This is not a time of peace, of God's shalom, in our country. Yet, we must always remember that for people in Baghdad, Kabul, and similar places car bombs and far greater suffering are a daily occurrence. Our pain is part of the greater pain of the wider world today.

Why this rising violence now ?

The answers are complex: extremist political-theological narratives – especially those of Ayatollah Khomeini and Osama bin Laden – rising global inequality, great poverty from North Africa and the Middle East to Afghanistan, the burning sense of injustice among millions in the Global South, Shia-Sunni sectarian conflict, great power rivalries, seething resentment against powerful elites (felt in the UK too) and deep reaction against Western interventionism. This latter is not only about Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya, but going back to late 19th/early 20th century onwards, as the West manipulated and exploited the Middle East countries and far beyond for economic gain and imperial power. Revenge is certainly part of terrorist agenda – revenge by hurting those wholly innocent.

The challenge

Pain, turbulence, revenge – all are in evidence today. We can easily be overwhelmed and feel helpless and powerless. The challenge to all of us in the inter-faith and peace movements is not to succumb to despair and helplessness, but to become part of the healing – of our communities and of our world. We cannot undertake the great political actions, but by a myriad of small actions we can create a mosaic of peace and healing, we can help transform our world. What those actions are is up to you – but, in the strength of our various faiths, we can make a difference.

The main speakers at the Edinburgh event were Dr Farshid Ramdaram, a surgeon born in Iran, who spoke on Zoroastrianism's vision of harmony; Dr Georgiana Cameron-Gaidushek who spoke on the Celtic spiritual tradition of interconnectedness of nature and humanity; and Dr Aurangzeb Haneef on the nonviolent tradition in Islam with particular reference to Abdul Ghaffar Khan, one of Gandhi's closest colleagues.

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## United Nations Nuclear Weapons Ban

The most important peace agreement for a long time came on 7 July 2017 when the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted at the United Nations in New York by 122 nations. It will become part of international law when 50 states have ratified it by putting it into their own national legal system through their parliamentary process.

Lamentably all nine nuclear weapons possessing states are opposed to giving up their most powerful weapons of mass destruction. The British Government has not even engaged in the negotiating process yet claims that it is in favour of multi-lateral disarmament ! There was however a delegation of seven from Scotland including Bill Kidd MSP who had a letter of support from the First Minister.

President of the sessions, Elayne Whyte Gomez of Costa Rica, said:  
*We have managed to sow the first seeds of a world free of nuclear weapons. We are saying to our children that it is possible to inherit a world free from nuclear weapons.*

It is now up to the populations of the nine states to use this decision to move their governments to engage in the process to rid the world of these most dangerous human inventions. No human creation is perfect and yet governments have taken the risk of tolerating the existence of such weapons and their delivery systems for decades. The media also have a responsibility, which by and large they have ignored, of drawing attention to the horrors of



nuclear war and the likelihood of devastation by accident or deliberation. Defenders of nuclear weapons delude themselves if they believe that the effectiveness of deterrence will last forever.

The Treaty can be read at [www.un.org/disarmament/ptnw](http://www.un.org/disarmament/ptnw)

Nuclear weapons were invented – and used – towards the end of Gandhi's life and here are some of the words that he spoke then:

*So far as I can see, the atomic bomb has deadened the finest feelings that has sustained humanity for ages. There used to be the so-called laws of war, which made it tolerable. Now we know the naked truth. War knows no law except that of might.*

*The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied arms, but it resulted for the time being in destroying Japan. What has happened to the soul of the destroying nation is too early to see.*

*Forces of nature act in a mysterious manner. We can but solve the mystery by deducing the unknown result from the known results of similar events. Slaveholders cannot hold slaves without putting themselves or their deputy in the cage holding the slave. Let no one run away with the idea that I wish to put in a defence of Japan's misdeed in pursuance of Japan's unworthy ambition. The difference was one only of degree. I assume that Japan's greed was more unworthy. But the greater unworthiness conferred no right on the less worthy of destroying without mercy men, women and children of Japan in a particular area.*

*The moral to be legitimately drawn from the supreme tragedy of the bomb is that it will not be destroyed by counter-bombs, even as violence cannot be by counter-violence. Humanity has to get out of violence only through nonviolence.*

CWMG Vol.84, 1/7/46

*I hold that those who invented the atomic bomb have committed the gravest sin in the world of science. The only weapon that can save the world is nonviolence. Considering the trend of the world, I might appear a fool to everyone. But I do not feel sorry for it. I rather consider it a great blessing that God did not make me capable of inventing the atomic bomb.*

CWMG Vol.97, 25/4/47

On 30 January 1948, Gandhi's last day, photographer Margaret Bourke-White asked Gandhi: "Would you advise America to give up the manufacture of atomic bombs?"

*Most certainly. As things are, the war has ended disastrously and the victors are vanquished by jealousy and lust for power. Already a third war is being canvassed. Nonviolence is a mightier weapon by far than the atom bomb.*

CWMG Vol.90, 30/1/48

## One of Gandhi's favourite Bhajans

This bhajan or devotional song was sung at the GF Multifaith Celebration in January 2016. This translation and commentary is by Mrs Lakshmi Venkatesh.

***Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram***

***Patit Pavan Sita Ram***

***Bhaj Pyare Tu Sita Ram***

***Ishvar Allah tero naam***

***Sabko Sanmati De Bhagvan***

This is a very popular devotional song sung in India. It was one of the favourites of Mahatma Gandhi and chanted regularly in his prayer meetings.

The song starts with the praise of Raja Ram (Lord Ram). Lord Ram is an incarnation of Vishnu. Lord Ram is an embodiment of Dharma (Right duty, righteousness) and Virtue. *Raghupati Raghav* means one who has attained all spiritual knowledge, who is strong and firm in righteousness, who is radiant like the thousand suns and who has spiritual discrimination and dispassion for worldly things. Such is the character of King Ram.

*Patit Pavan* means the uplifter of those who have fallen from the path of righteousness and virtue. So, we call upon Mother Sita (the divine consort of Ram) and Raja Ram. Mother Sita is the daughter of Earth. She signifies selfless love and purity. Mother Earth gives us everything she has without asking anything in return. Mother earth is always pure and everything we get comes from that purity.

*Bhaj Pyare Tu Sita Ram* means – O beloved Lord Ram and Mother Sita we praise you for what you are and what you signify.

*Ishvar Allah Tero naam* means – The divine is called by different names, some call you *Ishwar* while some address you as *Allah*, but you are the one and only Brahman, infinite Divinity that pervades the universe, within us all and we are all within you.

*Sabko Sanmati De Bhagvan* means – Bless everyone with this very wisdom that we are all the product of the same matter and consciousness, and that all of us strive towards the path of righteousness and virtue.

# The Costa Rica Lesson

*John Andrews*

I recently returned from a holiday in Costa Rica, a country I'd wanted to visit for some years. I bought two T-shirts there. One has an image of an automatic rifle with a flower sticking out its barrel and the words "NO ARMY" written across it in the colour of blood. The other T-shirt has an image of an artillery piece, with the words "No army since 1948" on it.

Just after Costa Rica had its revolution in 1948, one of the first things its new visionary leader Jose Figueres Ferrer did was scrap its army. Contrary to what one might think, this immediately increased Costa Rica's security, rather than weakening it, and it's the only country in an otherwise war-torn part of the world to have had sustained peace and prosperity ever since.

Ferrer's action suggests that he realised that, counterintuitively, armies are more of a threat to freedom and national security than providers of it. Costa Rica has a lightly armed police force which is quite enough for its security needs. Scrapping their army has allowed Costa Rica to spend billions of dollars providing standards of health, education and pensions for all its citizens that are unknown in that part of the world. It provides almost carbon-neutral energy supplies, and protects and preserves huge swathes of its natural environment from the wanton destruction of property developers. Much of this is paid for with the money it doesn't spend on keeping an army. Switzerland also has no standing army, yet has remained secure for almost two hundred years – even when completely surrounded by war, twice.

The world doesn't need armies – especially today. They're a curse, not a blessing. The primary use of armies has always been to loot and plunder others – and it's still their primary use today. It can be argued that through most of our history armies have sometimes provided security. But in 1948 the continued need for armies was dispensed with by the creation of the United Nations. The UN scrapped the need for armies by creating an international law instead, a law that states that it's illegal for any country to be the first to attack another. Costa Rica immediately recognised the significance of that and scrapped its army. The fact that the UN has been singularly unsuccessful in policing this law is not the fault of the UN. It's the fault of the biggest military machine on the planet which simply refuses to obey or support the law whenever it wants to ignore it. Why? Because war is big business. It makes lots and lots of money for super-rich Americans – no matter the cost in human suffering and environmental catastrophe.

Like Costa Rica, Britain hasn't needed an army since 1948. Imagine the good that could have been done if the trillions of pounds that have been wasted since then on our armed forces and their affiliates (such as pointless spying

organisations) had been used instead on health services and education, public housing and transport, renewable green energy systems. Instead of being seen as the allies of international war criminals we could instead have been true champions and ambassadors of global peace – as Costa Rica is. All we have to do is insist our government and others, such as the US government, obey the law. It's not too much to ask.

*John Andrews is a writer and political activist based in England. The article appeared in TRANSCEND Media Service in Week 18 2017. Transcend is an online weekly news and opinion service – for free but they need donations.*

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### **Gandhi at the Bloomsbury Festival 2017**

Professor Narinder Kapur of University College London has arranged a Gandhi event as part of the above week-long Festival. The exhibit will be on Saturday 21 October on the main campus on Gower Street.

Provisional plans are that we will have interactive iPad quizzes on Gandhi, moral judgments, altruism and global citizenship. We will have a Virtual Reality app which we have developed and which shows the Taj Mahal and Gandhi. We will have a multimedia display about Gandhi's life; and we will have a display of books about Gandhi.

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/culture/news/bloomsbury-festival-hub-ucl>

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### **Mahatma Gandhi for the 21st Century – GF Annual Lecture 2017**

Capitalism in Western Europe and America and Communism in Eastern Europe and China have failed to solve the problems of poverty, pollution, waste, wars, religious conflict and many other human and environmental problems of our time. The philosophy and ideals promoted by Mahatma Gandhi embedded in the principles of nonviolence, economic equality, sustainability, spirituality, arts and crafts and decentralised politics and local economics offer a genuine way out of current human predicament. Free market orthodoxy on the one hand and state control on the other deprive the majority of people from a decent, fulfilling and equitable life. The Gandhian ideal is the antidote to such a capitalist and communist model.

In his lecture Satish Kumar will illuminate the relevance of Mahatma Gandhi in the 21st Century.



# Jai Jagat 2020

Jai Jagat means ‘victory of the world’ and the 2020 event is a campaign of Ekta Parishad, an organisation for social and land reform in India using nonviolent methods. EP was started by Rajagopal from Kerala and it has a large membership of around 200,000 with a large proportion of women. The most public part of its campaigning has been marches, or *padayatra*, in different parts of India.

This new international campaign will culminate in a Global Peace Walk starting from New Delhi and ending in September 2020 in Geneva where a People’s Action Forum lasting 2 weeks will take place.

*‘The Forum agenda will focus on the impact of international financial institutions’ policies on marginalised communities, with the goal of defining a new path for human development – one that is compatible with the well-being of all and taking into account the UN Sustainable Development Goals.’*

To celebrate Gandhi’s 150th birth centenary, the March will enroll 150 marchers from many countries and diverse backgrounds, each person walking for a minimum of one month. Like previous marches it will aim to involve large numbers of people, particularly young people and women. More than 20 organisations around the world have so far joined in support of Jai Jagat 2020.

More information is available from [info@jaijagat2020.org](mailto:info@jaijagat2020.org)



A section of one of the marches organised by Ekta Parishad

## News in Brief

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Last year the United Nations received a report of an Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on Harmony with Nature. This emphasised the importance of going beyond anthropocentrism to establish an ***Earth-centred relationship with the Earth***. This should underpin the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The International Criminal Court, located at the Hague, has also announced that it is expanding its remit to environmental damage. It will consider crimes such as “destruction of the environment”, “exploitation of natural resources” and “illegal dispossession” of land. It is thus moving in the direction of Ecocide Law. (The Gaia Foundation)

For the first time in India the High Court of the state of Uttarkhand has recognised a ***non-human entity – the Ganges and Yamuna rivers – as “legal and living entities*** having the status of a legal person with all corresponding rights, duties and liabilities.” The previous week the Whanganui Iwi river in New Zealand was the first in the world to be granted the same legal rights as a person. In the Indian case government officials will take the role of “legal parents” which will hopefully lead to more effective treatment of the very serious pollution of the rivers.

Britain's largest ever **aircraft carrier** has been launched. At a cost of £3 billion one wonders if it is really necessary (even in military terms) since the navy has been without an aircraft for the last decade could they not therefore continue to do without one ? Instead Britain is to have a second one for another £3 billion. Rather than adding to our security do they not appear provocative to other countries ?



Anti-militarism demonstration in Glasgow on Armed Forces Day 24 June 2017  
Jane Thomas (R), G Paxton (3rd L), D Rogers (5th L) from GF; Jay Sutherland (2nd R) organiser

## **The Gandhi Summer Gathering 2017 – First Impressions**

*Norman Smith*

This was my first attendance and I was interested to see what kind of people would be turning up. I came to know of the annual gathering due to my meeting a few people who had attended in the past – Jane Sill, Marjorie Sykes, Ruku and Julian Brotherton.

What I found was of course a very friendly greeting from those people who welcomed me. It was held in St. Christopher's school in Letchworth and the accommodation was a very old comfortable house/building. I soon discovered that many of the attendees knew each other well as they had been doing this year after year. It is a nice mix of younger, middle aged and older persons all of whom had something useful and fun to contribute.

I had decided to camp out in a tent. It was a rainy day on arrival and I was offered accommodation inside which was nice. However, I really like sleeping on the ground next to mother earth with the wind in the trees, bird song, fresh outdoor air and quiet rain falling. Closer to nature. I don't get this opportunity often enough.

Card games and another table game were in play before dinner and afterwards on the first day. We got the agenda for the week and explanation of what to expect in the first joint meeting after dinner. It seems to be quite an interesting mix of talks about nonviolence in the mornings and creative joint play time in the afternoons. Lots of time to do your own thing as well. Walks to Letchworth if desired etc.

One of the things we do which I appreciate very much is the sharing of a few minutes of silent time every day together. At the beginning of the day and at the end of the day. It gives us all a chance to join in mutual partaking of our life together.

We stayed in a school which has an interesting history and so one of the group did some research and shared it with the rest of us which was wonderful.

One afternoon I participated in a photograph and microscope workshop opportunity to explore and experience new things.

Of course one of the most important sharing we do is in the communal kitchen. Food is definitely something we all have an interest in and therefore cooking and all the related activities brings the group together. A joint endeavour enjoyed by all.

I met someone who had no family background of nonviolence or pacifism but as a young person decided on his own one day that there was no purpose served in continuing to fight in the playground. The logical extension of this was of course a road that led to natural interest in Gandhi and other people who also believed in a nonviolent life force. What an intellectual discovery



and one which then of course set him apart from all his class mates which surprisingly did not bother him. What an odd fellow !

We had several stimulating and interesting talks about persons who were influenced by Gandhi's ideas as well as by his living presence. These were people in India, Europe, North and South America many of whom I had never heard about previously.

Today is the last day of the gathering and it's going to be a sad farewell for me. I enjoyed the sharing of the community spirit, meeting new friends and experiences. Even though the group was small I sincerely hope that as long as the financial concerns are met by the participants every year this annual gathering continues to be a source of enjoyment and learning more about nonviolence.

*Norman Smith has been researching the life and writings of the Quaker-Gandhian Marjorie Sykes. [normanmsmith@btinternet.com](mailto:normanmsmith@btinternet.com)*

## **Countess Mountbatten of Burma 1924-2017**

Patricia, the daughter of the last Viceroy of India, Louis Mountbatten, and Edwina Mountbatten, died at the age of 93 on 13 June 2017. Patricia Mountbatten accompanied her parents to India as Independence approached and was out riding with her father when Gandhi was assassinated on 30 January 1948.

Patricia and her younger sister Pamela in the 1930s were sent to live in Malta and then Budapest but on the outbreak of war in 1939 they were sent to stay with the Vanderbilt family in New York. Patricia returned to Britain in 1943 when she reached the age of 18 and joined the Women's Royal Naval Service. In 1946 Patricia married John Knatchbull, Lord Brabourne, a film producer who among other well known films produced *A Passage to India*. The couple had eight children.

In 1979 she narrowly escaped death when on holiday in County Sligo on her father's old fishing boat when the IRA set off a bomb they had planted on board. Lord Louis died in the explosion as did Patricia's twin son Nicholas, her mother-in-law and a local 15 year old boy, Paul Maxwell. Her husband, her other son Timothy, and herself were severely injured. The attack was primarily to kill the 79 year old Earl Mountbatten as a leading member of the British establishment. She had to have 120 stitches put in her face and after they were removed she said she wept every day for more than half a year – but later she lightheartedly referred to “my IRA facelift”. Patricia inherited the Earldom.

Patricia supported many charities (around 50) including being Vice President of the British Red Cross and of the NSPCC; also the Burma Star Association as a tribute to her father. Among the smaller charities she was a Life Friend of the Gandhi Foundation.



**Questions put by Ian Sinclair to George Paxton on his book *Nonviolent Resistance to the Nazis*.** This can be found on [www.opendemocracy.net](http://www.opendemocracy.net) posted on 19 July.

*1 What was the scale of the nonviolent resistance to the Nazis in occupied Europe? What were some of the methods used?*

The extent of NVR used against the occupiers varied from country to country with the most active probably being Norway, Denmark, Belgium and The Netherlands. The attitude of the Nazis to Eastern Europe which they wanted to clear of its population in order to settle Germans meant that the resistance was different in nature.

The size of the different campaigns of resistance ranged from a single individual to large sections of the population. In the case of the Norwegian teachers opposition to Nazification of the schools it was around 10,000 teachers supported by about 100,000 parents. Some strikes elsewhere involved even more than this.

The methods used in the various campaigns were very diverse such as marches, wearing symbols of resistance, private and public letters of protest, refusing to be conscripted for work, resigning from professional bodies taken over by the Nazis, hiding Jews, helping Jews escape, listening to BBC radio broadcasts, producing underground newspapers, collecting funds for resistance, deliberate slow working and many more.

*2 You include a section with a number of case studies of nonviolent resistance to the Nazis. Do you have a favourite?*

It is difficult to choose one but for a small scale resistance, involving just dozens of individuals, the White Rose group in Germany is one of the most impressive. Set up mainly by students at the University of Munich and including a brother and sister, Hans and Sophie Scholl, the group produced leaflets attacking the immoral nature of the Nazi regime and also the likelihood of its failure. Leaflets were printed secretly then posted out to individuals and left in public places. Groups were also started in other German towns and leaflets were transported by a resister by train in a suitcase. But due to a careless act Hans and Sophie while distributing leaflets at their university were arrested, interrogated and quickly tried and executed. This was followed by other arrests, executions and imprisonments. While their resistance was a failure in that the revolt of students they hoped to trigger did not occur, knowledge of their courageous acts spread widely in Germany and indeed abroad.

A contrasting successful resistance was the rescue of Jews, mainly children, by the villagers of Chambon-sur-Lignon on a high plateau SW of Lyons in France. This village (and others in the region) became a hide-out for those escaping the Nazis and became a centre of safety particularly for children. The inspiration for this action came from the Protestant pastor and his wife, André and Magda Trocmé. André was an incomer from the NE of France and a pacifist and his actions were a product of his Christian belief which influenced also the nature of the resistance. Thus he did not deny that Jews were hidden in the village and surrounding farms but refused to tell the police *where* they were hidden. André survived the occupation, although imprisoned for a time, and several thousand Jews and others hidden there survived until liberation.

There are detailed studies of these two cases published but many more have not been studied in detail and indeed no doubt some actions have been lost to history.

*3 What struck me reading your book was how Nazi Germany was not all powerful in the countries they occupied, but was often forced to compromise and, occasionally, to back down because of nonviolent resistance. Can you talk about some of the successes those carrying out nonviolent resistance had?*

One of the most outstanding successes of resistance was the rescue of the Danish Jews. Denmark was treated relatively mildly by the Germans in part because the Danes were willing to supply Germany with agricultural produce. Their own government was allowed considerable independence for a while although the relationship soured eventually and the Germans took over. The local German administration was then ordered to round up the Jews for deportation to Germany. But at the German embassy was an attaché, Georg Duckwitz, who contacted a leading Danish politician to tell him when the round-up was to take place and he in turn informed the Chief Rabbi and he passed the word to the Jews while non-Jewish friends hid Jews and then transported them to the coast where boats were hired to take them to neutral Sweden. Although there were only about 8,000 Jews in Denmark almost all of them survived, even the few hundred who were captured and sent to Germany were not sent to the death camps as a promise had been given to SS General Werner Best, the German head of government in Denmark, that they would not be.

In the Netherlands an attempt to conscript former Dutch soldiers who had been disarmed by the Germans was met by the largest strike in the occupied countries. It began in mines and factories and spread until it involved half a million people who took to the streets. In response more than 100 people were executed but far fewer former soldiers enrolled than the Germans wanted.

In Belgium, students and staff at the University of Brussels protested at the employment of Nazi staff and then organised teaching underground.

In the Netherlands and Norway the Germans failed to bring the doctors' professional associations under their control due to non-cooperation by the doctors.

Opposition in Germany, particularly by Catholics, forced the stopping of the 'euthanasia' programme although many had been murdered before it was abandoned.

A recent study, *Hitler's Compromises* by Nathan Stoltzfus, shows that Hitler was very careful to keep the German population 'on side'. He was wary of dissent and compromised if it looked as if opposition to a policy was growing, eg the euthanasia programme and other Catholic opposition to attempted Nazification in the Catholic Church; also the effective opposition of German wives to the deportation of their Jewish husbands from Berlin.

NVR in Eastern Europe was different due to the more ruthless methods of the invader. In Poland in spite of the extreme repression the Nazis failed to destroy Polish culture due to the extensive development of underground organisations. School and university teaching continued in people's houses with degrees being awarded and research papers published; courts conducted trials; political parties operated with a parliament and government departments also; separate military and civilian resistance groups operated; money was obtained from the Polish Government-in-exile in London.

The hiding and rescuing of Jews was on a large scale throughout Europe with possibly as many as one million Jews being saved; this being done at great risk to the rescuers.

*4 Why do you think some campaigns were successful and others not?*

I think solidarity within the resisting group must be of great importance. The absolute numbers of resisters may not always be significant. For example, in Belgium insufficient solidarity and firmness by the higher civil servants and judges led to the Germans ultimately achieving their aims. Support from the general population was important elsewhere, eg funds to pay teachers on strike or working underground.

There were some quite important incidental factors such as nearness of mountains and forests for hiding and a border with a neutral country for escape.

The use of nonviolence itself is of great importance. A violent opposition will be resisted with maximum violence from the controlling power but nonviolent resistance will send different signals, eg we are less of a threat to you. This may give rise to a degree of sympathy among the security forces. The resisters have to be firm but not aggressive. The occupied population have the advantage of superior numbers if they choose to use their power.

*5 You contrast what you call Gandhian resistance with the pragmatic nonviolent action that people like Gene Sharp advocate. What are the main differences between the two?*

There isn't a great deal dividing Sharp and Gandhi. But most of the NVR used by resisters during the Nazi occupation was pragmatic in the sense that it was not usually underpinned by nonviolent theory; in fact it simply did not involve the use of weapons and so other writers prefer to call it civilian resistance.

Sharp developed NVR theory which was independent of religious belief, Gandhi's or others. In reality Gandhi's beliefs were very inclusive although he tended to use Hindu terms which Sharp wanted to avoid as he did not want to tie nonviolence to any particular culture. Both of their approaches are grounded in ethics. Sharp's academic work actually grew out of his interest in Gandhi's career but Sharp put more emphasis on the use of power in considering the possible mechanism of NVR; Gandhi hoped for conversion of the opponent.

*6 How do you respond to the argument that it was ultimately violent action that ended the Third Reich, not nonviolent resistance?*

People in general and governments in particular think of defence only in terms of military action. This is still true today as it was in the 1930s. Therefore for most of the occupied populations a nonviolent resistance was simply not in their minds, except for a small number of pacifists. However when their country was occupied and they did not have the means to resist in the conventional way the braver and more imaginative sometimes turned to non-military means.

Most people then expected their countries to be liberated by military means from outside but what we need to take into consideration is the cost of violent resistance which in WWII proved to be enormous in terms of deaths and destruction. And as Gandhi pointed out before WWII began the Allies would need to resort to the Nazis' foul methods in order to 'win'. When one remembers the blanket bombing of the German and Japanese cities which were largely occupied by civilians it is difficult to disagree.

The NVR used in the occupied countries was too small in scale to defeat the invaders but I believe the potential is there and with the knowledge we have today future conflicts could be handled by NVR.

# 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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**General inquiries to**  
**[contact@gandhifoundation.org](mailto:contact@gandhifoundation.org)**  
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Registered office: Kingsley Hall, Powis Road, Bromley-By-Bow, London E3 3HJ  
Charity Number 292629

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## The Gandhi Way

Articles, book reviews and letters of a specifically or broadly Gandhian nature will  
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**George Paxton, 2/1, 87 Barrington Drive, Glasgow G4 9ES**  
**Tel: 0141 339 6917; email: [gpaxton@phoncoop.coop](mailto:gpaxton@phoncoop.coop)**  
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