

The Gandhi Way



Painting of Gandhi in 1931 by Clare Leighton

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GF Annual International Peace Award 2018

Unfortunately it has not so far been possible to fix a date for the Award which suits the recipients and it will now need to be in 2019.

GF Friends will be notified.

Gandhi Ashram Experience 2019

Saturday 27 July - Sat 3 August 2019

Thinking about change: Thoughts are the seeds of action

at St Christopher School, Letchworth

To request an application form:

email gandhisummerngathering@gmail.com or William@Gandhifoundation.org

or 33 The Crescent, Wimbledon, London SW19 8AW

Gandhi 150

A poetry themed Multifaith Celebration is being planned for 2019 – poetry inspired by Gandhi and multifaith harmony and recitals of poetry by people like Tagore and Rumi.

Readers are invited to send Mark Hoda their poems or make suggestions about appropriate poetry to feature. A Gandhi poem competition may also be organised with the finalists and winner featured at the multifaith event. Mark would appreciate offers of help to organise this. markhoda@hotmail.com

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Waste – A Gandhian Issue

George Paxton

At the conference on Gandhi held last year in University College London (report in GW133) I noticed that one of the speakers, Dr Subodh Kerkar, was reported as saying that Gandhi would have been concerned with litter. Although unable to attend the conference myself this caught my eye as dealing with litter where I live is something that I have devoted a good amount of time to in recent years.

Gandhi is well known for his concern for cleanliness and he spent a considerable amount of time dealing with dirt, rubbish and waste, for example in the vicinity of his ashrams. He often spoke out about filthy conditions he found on his travels: on the many train journeys travelling third class; rubbish and dirt at temples; at gatherings of the Indian National Congress where he inspected the sanitary arrangements and often found them badly wanting; on board ship to Burma travelling as a deck passenger – on this occasion he reported the disgraceful conditions to the ship owners and they had improved on his return journey. It was not just that conditions were often unhealthy and could lead to the spread of disease but that the habits showed no respect for other people or the environment.

In modern India a major campaign was launched by the Government on Gandhi's birthday in 2014 called the Clean India Mission or Swachh Bharat. Its logo is a stylised set of Gandhi's spectacles and the campaign officially finishes next 2 October on Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary. Many aspects of public cleanliness are being tackled but one of the most ambitious is providing 90 million toilets in rural areas to substantially reduce open defecation in a country notorious for this habit.

Litter and rubbish

In Britain we do not have the same issues as India but disposal of rubbish is proving a difficult problem as wastage increases in a society where the buying habit is looked upon as a necessity for the economy as well as enjoyable for the individual. I live in a densely populated area of tenements with many shops and eating places and large numbers of people passing through to use the many amenities. More than a decade ago a group of residents decided to do a small survey of local residents to find out what they liked about the area and what they didn't like. It emerged that top of the positive features was the diverse social, ethnic and religious population. The top negative feature was litter and rubbish. As a result a clean-up of the area was arranged with volunteers and help from the city council. The challenge was immense – the more one looked the more rubbish was found. I became involved and as many of the initial group soon left the area (we have a rapid turn-over of residents) I took on the task of future clean-ups which became twice per year. We normally only attracted around 20 volunteers to cover a

populated area of a few thousand. This was better than nothing but inadequate. After a few years a local trust received funding for some community projects and they took on the clean-ups but stepped them up to monthly. This has made a significant difference and along with other projects such as a community garden, a part-time cafe run by volunteers and recently a community hub as a meeting place, the appearance of the place has improved along with more activities for those who wish to get to know their neighbours.

This definitely does not mean that the problem of litter and rubbish has been solved because most people are either indifferent or complain but do nothing themselves towards tackling it. Also so ingrained are bad habits that one can have a thorough clean-up on Sunday afternoon and by the Monday morning new litter has appeared, and perhaps another mattress thrown out by an irresponsible landlord. With local council budgets failing to match the many needs it is difficult to see them being able to put more resources into cleansing services. Removing small litter is something that residents can do to help. Litter picking is also a lesson in human nature. One can be removing litter from the entrance to flats or clearing the neglected garden in front as a resident emerges and walks past as if you don't exist. A pleasant contrast are the people who cross the road to thank you for improving the area.

My own experience is that a significant amount of litter is drink cans and plastic drink bottles both of which can be recycled if picked up and put in recycling bins. It always astonishes me how some of these have not even been opened yet are thrown away or opened and only a small quantity drunk. No thought is given to the waste of energy, fuel and raw materials.

Recently that ubiquitous material – plastic – has been receiving attention of the media. Its various chemical forms make it so useful for many purposes, yet once created, and often used a single time, it becomes waste which does not readily degrade. Most of it is collected and buried in the ground but some escapes to become unsightly rubbish or worse still harms wildlife as The Blue Planet TV film showed. A recent report from WWF says that populations of more than 4000 species of mammals, reptiles, birds, fish and amphibians have declined by an average of 60% between 1970 and 2014 due to human activity.

A wasteful economy

To return to Gandhi, he was well known for his thrift – the backs of envelopes were used for writing on and pencils were used until they were so small they could not be held by the fingers; for much of his life he ate only five items of food per day; his clothes and footwear were minimal. It was not always so and he started student life in London by dressing as he believed a gentleman should. Initially too he travelled first class by train but later he travelled third class which was in Indian trains extremely unpleasant. These habits began when as a student studying law in London he realised his money would not go far with his current style of life for while his family were not

poor – he would never have been able to come to London if they were – but on the other hand they were not wealthy either and so he cut back on everything he could and this included taking to walking rather than using public transport. Thus began a way of living which became more and more spartan as he matured. His outlook changed too as his awareness grew of the terrible poverty of the majority of Indians and he came to regard possessing or using more than he needed as a form of theft.

While there was little awareness during Gandhi's lifetime of the impact of industrial development on the environment Gandhi's simple low impact lifestyle fits in well with sustainability which the human race needs to develop just to survive on this planet in the long term.

Modern economic activity which depends on continual expansion and the encouragement of consumerism is the opposite of sustainability. While very few of us could approach Gandhi's frugality there is a great deal that can be done by the majority population in developed countries. There are wasteful practices everywhere. Some clothes are so cheap (how much are the workers getting?) that shoppers can come out with bagfuls and if they decide they don't like some of them – so what ! Food and drink is bought and much discarded uneaten. If things break down it is often as cheap to dispose of them and buy new rather than repair, even if somewhere can be found that repairs the items. A few weeks ago neighbours moving out threw out six heavy winter jackets in good condition (too heavy or too much trouble to take when returning to China); unfortunately they left them out in the open and that night we had torrential rain so that I could not take them to a charity shop and they would thus end up in landfill. The now old advice of Reduce (first), Reuse, Recycle still makes sense. Of course new technology and more efficient industrial practices are needed too and businesses can be 'encouraged' to make the effort to change.

A not unrelated issue is poverty, absolute or relative. Gandhi detested poverty, that is poverty that is imposed on people and not a choice. However he had the rather unrealistic belief that the rich should only take enough for necessities while holding in trust the wealth they had for the good of all. Today we see enormous and increasing wealth in the hands of a relative few. We hear of million pound salaries and million pound bonuses in this country while many more citizens are unable to pay their rent, electricity or have enough income for food. The rich squander their resources on luxury yachts, multiple houses, private aeroplanes etc thus using up limited resources of raw materials and energy.

Such is the power of greed – I would say it often amounts to an addiction – that it is necessary to construct a different economic system founded on a philosophy of the good of all. Political intervention at national and international levels would be necessary to change direction. This would include a limitation on the size of corporations; the spreading of decision making among all workers; maximum and minimum wages to be set; a sharing of power in international trade so that fair trade replaces 'free' trade,

and no doubt much else besides. Scientific research and new technology is something that our human society is good at so it has an important role to play also, eg in recovering raw materials from waste.

An unusual use for waste has been devised by Dr Kerkar who was mentioned at the beginning. A medical doctor turned artist and Director of the Goa Art Gallery used 150,000 coloured plastic bottles collected by 3,000 school children to construct a 'Carpet of Joy'. The idea originated with Israeli artist Uri de Beer who made a floating bridge for peace on the Dead Sea.



Water Harvest – making every drop count

Community-led rainwater harvesting, enabling people to unlock their potential, break free from poverty and change their lives for good

WaterHarvest was founded in 1987 by Dr Nicholas and Professor Mary Grey, in response to terrible drought conditions they witnessed that year on a visit to Rajasthan, NW India. Our first work was deepening 100 wells in Dudu Block, near Jaipur. Today, 31 years later, we're still working in Rajasthan in the most remote areas, and our work has evolved to focus on rainwater harvesting. Water-harvesting offers a low-cost, environmentally friendly strategy for people whose lives and future opportunities are crushed, simply by lack of water.

The charity's primary aim is to provide urgently needed safer drinking water. To do this we combine our technical expertise gained over many years, with local traditional knowledge, to capture and store the annual monsoon rain *where it is needed*. Simple technologies such as roof rainwater harvesting systems, underground water tanks with a catchment and land treatment are highly effective and offer a sustainable and viable solution for people living with water scarcity.

Our work relieves poverty, improves health and livelihoods and sets women and girls free from daily water procurement.



A lifetime of drudgery

Although we've recently started work in Gujarat, our main focus remains Rajasthan. In the Thar Desert (which is known locally as 'Marwar', meaning 'land of death'), persistent water scarcity and poor food availability have caused deep rooted poverty. Women and girls spend a third of their time fetching water, usually from unsafe sources, which is head-loaded home. The burden causes untold anxiety and distress. Water-borne disease is widespread. Large-scale government water pipeline schemes 'have failed to supply a single drop' (*our Field Report*) – they simply do not reach the scattered villages where we work. People depend on the annual monsoon rains which are becoming increasingly unreliable; drought occurs four years in ten.

In the Sambhar Salt Lakes area the limited water has dangerously high levels of salinity and fluoride. Drinking it daily has irreversible health consequences including dental and skeletal fluorosis, recurrent malnutrition and diarrhoea which causes stunting in children – 38% of children in India suffer from stunting. Contaminated water is the biggest cause of India's high child mortality.

Certain regions of India, particularly the arid zones of Rajasthan, have serious fluoride problems, which has become a serious health hazard in many villages. WHO

The people with whom we work are from the historically discriminated Tribal and Dalit communities who form an impoverished underclass. Devoid of education, abysmally low skills-base and zero credit rating, they are ill-equipped to deal with the challenges they face. Women especially suffer.

Millions of Dalits in India still face discrimination, especially the women and girls. Ban Ki-moon 2016

32.9% (1.4 million) of all children who die before their fifth birthday are in India. These children die as a result of poverty and water related illness.

UN MDG Report 2014

What we are doing to address this need

To address the most urgent need for safer drinking water we are building water tanks and installing household roof rainwater harvesting systems. This year we plan to build 190, which will *directly benefit* 1,330 people by providing a source of drinking water at home. The roof systems cost £280 each; the tanks £450. In the last 31 years we've built 1,695 water tanks, resulting in safer water at home for 11,900 people. This includes 7,200 children who are growing up with better health, and the increased chance of an education, especially for girls.

Providing more and safer water is just the first step. Our work aims to build community capacity and increase peoples' resilience. Our training and education programmes include water management to use water wisely (water saving irrigation systems), revolving funds, improved and organic farming methods, gender equity, livelihood skills, cooperatives, and hygiene and sanitation.

As a result of our work farmers are growing double the crops using half the water, and doubling their income. Debt and distress migration have reduced. We raise peoples' awareness of their rights to government services and funding, offering help with form-filling to access employment and disability benefits, pensions etc.

Our work strengthens communities and brings stability to people and the environment.

All our projects are implemented by dedicated local Indian partners, and monitored by our own India Liaison office, headed by our Director Om Sharma who has been with us for 18 years. Although we're not overtly faith-based, Gandhian principles underpin and guide all we do: our primary aim is to work alongside people – together we 'sit on one carpet'.

Only by counting the uncounted can we reach the unreached. MDG 2015

The future depends on what you do today. M K Gandhi

Our current programme

In 2018 we have nine projects in 90 villages with 45,956 people. Last year's audited income was £290,480, of which 82% was spent on charitable activities. We rely heavily on individual donations and regular standing order donors, and are fortunate to have many loyal supporters who have visited the projects and seen for themselves the impact of our work. We leverage an additional 91% from local and government funding in India, so every £1 we get is worth £1.91 to us.

2017 was our 30 year anniversary, and we celebrated working in 1,562 villages and providing a sustainable water supply for 1.6 million people.

The need for work such as ours

Global awareness is growing for the need for sustainable solutions to the issues surrounding water scarcity. Increasingly, water related disputes are upsetting the harmony of regions. India faces a growing water crisis with demand outstripping supply: 15% of aquifers are in a critical condition and this is set to rise to 60% by 2030. Harnessing enough funds will enable us to continue our vital work to maximize the provision of water at home through low-cost, sustainable water-harvesting. The availability of enough water – or lack of it – impacts on every aspect of life.

We would be immensely grateful if you would consider helping us with a donation, however small. You can do this on-line via our website www.water-harvest.org or by sending a cheque payable to 'WaterHarvest' to me, Julia Seal, WaterHarvest, Basepoint, 1 Winnall Valley Road, Winchester SO23 0LD. If you would like further information please don't hesitate to ring us – we're a small team – on 01962 832 692 or email me jseal@water-harvest.org.

The United Nations – it's more use than you think

Alison Williams

I was inspired to write this article by George Paxton's review of Hans Rosling's *Factfulness* in the Autumn 2018 issue. Just as that book presents a convincing case for things in general being "better than you think", I think the same can be said for the huge and complex United Nations System; that is, the Organisation itself as well as the Specialised Agencies and all manner of Programmes, High-level Panels and other governmental add-ons. There are thousands of international non-governmental organisations with access to the United Nations as well, contributing expertise on the research front, at conferences and in the field.

For a start, I acknowledge that all is not perfect in the UN's world, either on the governmental side or the non-governmental. The media make sure that failures and scandals are all well-publicised.

It's designed and run by human beings, what else can we reasonably expect ?

The positive side of our nature is clear in the aspirations of the UN Charter, the body of international law and the outcome documents of many years of summits, especially those since 1992. I said "aspirations"; they are also pledges and commitments by governments of all political persuasions and national interests. Those that come to mind may be the Preamble to the UN Charter ("We, the peoples of the United Nations, determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war..." (1945); the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Responsibility to Protect (2005) or the Paris Agreement (2015).

It's all too easy to see the Peace & Security side of the UN's work as one long history of frustration and failure. There are good stories to tell even there but for reasons we're all familiar with Peacemaking, Peacebuilding and Peacekeeping do not show the UN to its best advantage.

Its work on Development shows the System in a better light though it too, no argument, has its disappointing side. In 2000 all the UN members agreed at the General Assembly to accept 8 Millennium Development Goals/MDGs with targets to reach by 2015. Some impressive progress was made; you can find the reports online. In September 2015, 193 member states agreed to a longer set of goals with an elaborate addition of supplementary targets: the Sustainable Development Goals/SDGs with a 2030 deadline.

The main "lesson learned" from the MDG experience was that while progress could be demonstrated on a national or overall population basis, there were large numbers of people whose lives were not improved at all. So the SDGs are designed above all to "leave no one behind".

There are 17 SDGs, the 16th of which is of particular interest as introducing a new and challenging feature; not only dealing with development and environment *per se* but with a clearly political element. It is to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels".

All the world's nations, large and small, rich and poor, with better and worse governments have agreed to that goal by consensus. In 2005 they likewise agreed to a Responsibility to Protect their people. Those commitments, written down and publicised, are a start. How well publicised they are is something "we the peoples" can act on. And those of us in countries where freedom of speech doesn't land you in jail or worse surely have a responsibility to take what action we can.

To be motivated to do so, we need to believe it's worth the trouble. Like Hans Rosling, we need to be not optimists but *possibilists*.

Alison Williams is a long time Friend of the GF with a particular interest in The UN.

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## Connections

Recently I got around to reading an early biography of Gandhi which I have long been aware of as it is often listed in bibliographies. It was published in 1949, the year after his assassination. Simply titled *Mahatma Gandhi* it is unusual in that it has three authors. The three British men knew him personally and are: Henry Polak, who was a close friend and colleague from the South African years, H N Brailsford a left-wing journalist of note who knew him from his middle years on, and Lord Pethick-Lawrence who was Secretary of State for India 1945-7 and led a Cabinet delegation to India in 1947. The book also has a Foreword by Sarojini Naidu, close colleague of Gandhi who was at the time of writing, Governor of the United Provinces in independent India.

All contributions are worth reading but what caught my eye was a reproduction (black & white) of a painting of Gandhi by **Clare Leighton**. I vaguely remembered the name of the woman who became noted for her woodcuts rather than paintings, nor had I known of any connection to Gandhi. This painting is on the front cover of *The Gandhi Way*.

This set me searching the internet for more about Clare Leighton (1898-1989). Two pertinent facts stood out. One is that she had a close relationship with **H N Brailsford** which is likely to be the reason for the appearance of her painting in this book which Brailsford partly wrote.



A woodcut by Clare Leighton

Henry Noel Brailsford (1873-1958) is described as the most prolific British journalist of left-wing persuasion in the first half of the 20th century. His first marriage was unhappy and they separated but his wife would not divorce. He met Clare in 1928 and they lived together for nearly a decade but in 1939 she left to settle in the USA. By then she had built a reputation as an artist and writer particularly in woodcuts illustrating her books which praised the virtues of the countryside and the people who worked the land.

Clare Leighton was also the sister of Roland Leighton, the fiancé of **Vera Brittain**, whose most promising life was cut short at 20. This was told in Brittain's *Testament of Youth*, one of the most outstanding memoirs of the First World War. Initially both Vera and Roland looked on the war as exciting and noble but it was not long before Roland became bitterly disillusioned by the reality of it. Not only did Vera lose the man she loved but also her brother and her two closest male friends were killed. In middle age and beyond Vera Brittain became known as an ardent pacifist but it was not until the mid-1930s that she finally took that position, previously having been a believer in collective security and the League of Nations.

Apart from being an admirer of Gandhi Vera gave regular donations to Kingsley Hall during the Second World War as the community centre gave shelter to local people who had lost their homes to the bombing. Kingsley Hall was where Gandhi stayed in 1931 when he came to London for the Second Round Table Conference. Vera's husband, Professor **George Catlin**, who although not a pacifist like his wife, also admired Gandhi and wrote *In the Path of Mahatma Gandhi*.

A number of photographic and painted portraits of Gandhi seem to have been made while visiting London in 1931 and this one by Clare Leighton was painted at that time. The only record of this portrait I have been able to find is in an exhibition of her work in Boston Public Library in 1978. The exhibition title was *Clare Leighton: American Sheaves, English Seed Corn* in which the oil painting is listed along with a charcoal drawing, *Gandhi Sleeping*.

*George Paxton*

## News

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***Naila and the Uprising*** is an impressive documentary film directed by Julia Bacha about the Palestinian women's nonviolent uprising around 1980. It tells the story particularly of Naila Ayesh of Gaza but features many women who participated in the women's movement around the first Intifada and up to the 1993 Oslo Accords (in which Israel recognised the PLO as representative of the Palestinian people). The women activists objected that in spite of their significant role in the nonviolent resistance they were excluded from future negotiations which were exclusively male.

Anti-nuclear activists around the world were celebrating the tremendous achievement that the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** (TPNW) is almost half way into force on this the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. Eleven countries signed and ratified on 26th September, which commemorates the day in 1983 when Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov of the Soviet Air Defence Forces overruled the



protocols and decided that the incoming nuclear weapons appearing on his warning screens were just a false alarm and so decided not to inform his superiors. This action has been credited with having prevented a nuclear war which would have wiped out human civilisation as we know it. (*Pressenza News* 3 Oct 2018)

President Trump has announced plans to withdraw the US from the **Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty** (INF) of 1987 agreed by Gorbachev and Reagan. The Treaty led to the elimination of short-range (500-1,000km) and intermediate-range (1000-5,500km) missiles other than those that were sea-launched. This is a destabilising development that could open the way for the return of cruise-type missiles to Europe. The US also wants to develop missiles in response to Chinese military expansion.

On 8 September 2018 **India's Supreme Court decriminalised homosexuality**. Peter Tatchell commented: "This historic legal ruling sets free from criminalisation almost one fifth of the world's LGBT+ people. It is the biggest, most impactful gay law reform in human history. I hope it will inspire and empower similar legal challenges in many of the 70 countries that still outlaw same-sex relations, 35 of which are members states of the Commonwealth.

"Ending the ban on homosexuality is just the start. There are still huge challenges to end the stigma, discrimination and hate crime that LGBTs suffer in India.

"Indian LGBTs now revert to the legal status of non-criminalisation that existed prior to the British colonisers imposing the homophobic section 377 of the criminal code in the 19th century."

### **'peacebuilding'**

International Alert are running a campaign to have the word 'peacebuilding' added to English dictionaries – none have it at present. To support this contact [communications@international-alert.org](mailto:communications@international-alert.org)

### **"The best thing we can do for the environment is eat a plant-based diet**

Will Gore [talks about](#) making small changes in our lives to protect the planet. One change which would really help is to adopt a plant-based vegetarian and vegan diet.

One of the biggest causes of global warming are the gasses released by animals raised for meat. Our planet is simply too small to sustain more than 80 billion animals raised for meat every year. To meet the insatiable demand for cereals colossal amounts of chemicals are used which is destroying fertile land both in developed countries and poorer ones which are exporting crops to feed animals rather than feeding their citizens. A huge amount of fresh water resources are being used up in the raising of these animals and the

waste produced by them is polluting our rivers and oceans and creating dead zones where all life forms cease to exist. Huge areas of forests including the Amazon have been cleared to meet the demand for beef in the US. Absence of forests means more floods and other forms of extreme climate occurrences.

A shift away from a meat-based diet to a plant-based vegetarian or vegan diet is paramount if we are to heal the planet and avoid a calamity. This is something every individual can do and become the change they want in the world.”  
*Nitin Mehta* (letter in The Independent)

Monica Lilley is a **vegan peace activist** who uses the social networking site Instagram: monicalilleyactivist She would be pleased to communicate with others using Instagram.

### **Edinburgh Peace Memorial**

Edinburgh has been noted for the erection of a number of statues in recent years, mostly of famous figures associated with the city, eg David Hume, James Clerk Maxwell. Now The Peace & Justice Centre has launched an appeal to erect a peace memorial in Princes Street Gardens which will take the form of a bronze tree to commemorate war resisters. The plan can be viewed here:

<https://vimeo.com/289289095?fbclid=IwAR12noBYxaAyKUR-BklJiVeVjpLIRiT8b1CyCZDSB8F2SJg0iK-9MgcyrEY>

### **A Universal Basic Income**

Ping Xu, a Taiwanese woman who arrived and lived well as a concert pianist in the United States ended up homeless after her husband suffered a serious illness. She lived in a car for two years before working as a translator for immigrants on medical and legal issues.

Her own experience allowed her to understand that the problems we face are global and therefore the answer has to be global: the creation of a worldwide movement for basic income, so that it can be truly universal, something she sees as feasible to achieve thanks to technological advances.

She is dedicated to trying to demonstrate to the Taiwanese government that a basic income is possible and affordable for the entire population and denounces the inhumane conditions of employment experienced by Asians. She proposes to generate a global movement for the defence of a basic income, starting in Asia, where the worst working conditions are experienced, according to Xu.

*(Pressenza International News Agency, Sept 2018)*

# Gandhi and Ruskin

A speech delivered by the Rev G Nagase on Hiroshima Day 2018 at Tavistock Square

## NAMUMYOHORENGEKYO

Next year – 2019 – will mark Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary. It will also mark John Ruskin's 200th birth anniversary. In 1904, in South Africa, Gandhiji read Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, and the book galvanized him. It changed his life. In *Unto This Last*, Ruskin clearly states: 'THERE IS NO WEALTH BUT LIFE'.

In 1908, Mahatma Gandhi paraphrased *Unto This Last* into Gujarati, and entitled it *SARVODAYA*. *Sarvodaya* means 'equal rise or prosperity of all, without exception'. Gandhiji used the concept of *Sarvodaya* to envisage the establishment of a peaceful society through the nonviolence of the brave and the compassionate.

In 1897, the famous American sculptor Gutzon Borglum (1867–1941) visited John Ruskin at his home Brantwood, on the shores of Coniston Water in the Lake District. After Ruskin's passing in 1900, Borglum created a sculpture of Ruskin in 1903 which today sits at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York City.

John Ruskin was born in Brunswick Square at 54 Hunter Street, a mere 500 metres or so from here. In this progressive borough of Camden, Brunswick Square is **yet** to have a statue of Ruskin, and Hunter Street does not have a blue plaque marking his birth place.

In 1946, Mahatma Gandhi said:

"So far as I can see, the Atomic bomb has deadened the finest feeling that has sustained mankind 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.

... I assume that Japan's greed was more unworthy. But the greater unworthiness conferred no right on the less unworthy 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. Mankind has to get out of violence only through non-violence. Hatred can be overcome only by love."

A Chant for Peace: NAMUMYOHORENGEKYO.

With palms together in prayer,  
Nipponzan Myohoji London *Dojo*





*A drawing of Ruskin by Rev Nagase*

*Tavistock Square 6 Aug 2018*

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## Some Basic Gandhian Concepts

Ela Gandhi, daughter of Manilal and granddaughter of Mohandas, who lives in South Africa and founded the Gandhi Development Trust has sent a few interesting items in electronic form including a booklet on Kasturba. The extracts below are from one of these that she kindly sent to the GF. Ela continues to spread the ideas of her grandfather in South Africa including among young people.

Gandhi wrote before gender inclusive language was adopted.

### **Satya (Truth)**

Truth has no form. Therefore everyone will form such an idea or image of Truth as appeals to him, and there will be as many images of Truth as there are men. These will be true as long as they last. For they enable a man to



obtain everything he wants. *Diary of Mahadevbhai, p. 120 .*

Truth should be Truth in thought, Truth in speech, and Truth in action. To the man who has realised this Truth in its fullness, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily included in it. What is not included in it, is not truth and so not true knowledge. *Yeravda Mandir, p. 2.*

### **Ahimsa (Nonviolence)**

Ahimsa is not merely a negative state of harmlessness, but it is a positive state of love, of doing good even to the evil-doer. *Young India, August 25, 1920*

Ahimsa is a weapon of matchless potency. It is the summum bonum of life. It is an attribute of the brave, in fact, it is their all. It does not come within the reach of coward. It is no wooden or lifeless dogma, but a living and life giving force. *Young India, Sept 6, 1926.*

Ahimsa is not the way of the timid or cowardly. It is the way of the brave ready to face death. He who perishes sword in hand is no doubt brave; but he who faces death without raising his little finger and without flinching, is braver. *Young India, Oct. 11, 1928*

### **Asteya (Non-stealing)**

Non-stealing does not mean merely not to steal. To keep or take anything which one does not need is also stealing. And of course, stealing is fraught with violence. *Bapu-ke-Aashirvad, November 24, 1944.*

We are not always aware of our real needs, and most of us improperly multiply our wants and thus, unconsciously, make thieves of ourselves. One who follows the observance of Non-stealing will bring about a progressive reduction of his own wants. Much of the distressing poverty in this world has risen out of the breaches of the principle of Non-stealing. *Yeravda Mandir, p. 20.*

### **Brahmacharya (Self Discipline)**

Brahmacharya means control of all the organs of sense. He who attempts to control only one organ, and allows all the others free play is bound to find his effort futile. *Bapu's Letters to Mira. P.257.*

To hear suggestive stories with the ears, to see suggestive sights with the eyes, to taste stimulating food with the tongue, to touch exciting things with the hands, and at the same time to expect to control the only remaining organ, is like putting one's hands in the fire and expecting to escape being hurt. *Bapu's letters to Mira. P.257.*

### **Aparigraha (Non-possession)**

Non-possession means that we should not hoard anything that we do not need today. *Bapu-ke-Aashirvad, Nov. 25, 1944.*

The less you possess, the less you want, the better you are. And better for what ? Not for your enjoyment of this life but for enjoyment of personal service to your fellow beings; service to which you dedicate yourself, body, soul and mind. *Mahatma Vol. 3, p.155.*

When you dispossess yourself of everything you have, you really possess all the treasures of the world. In other words, you really get all that is in reality necessary for you, everything. If the food is necessary, food will come to you. *My Philosophy of Life, p. 138.*

### **Sharirshrama (Bread Labour)**

Earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow, says the Bible. Bread labour means that everyone is expected to perform sufficient body-labour in order to entitle him to his living. It is not, therefore, necessary to earn one's living by bread labour, taking living in its broader sense. But everyone must perform some useful body-labour. *Young India, Nov. 5, 1925.*

The economics of Bread Labour are the living way of life. It means that every man has to labour with his body for his food and clothing. If I can convince the people of the value and necessity of bread-labour, there never will be any want of bread and cloth. *Harijan, Sept. 7, 1947.*

The idea is that every healthy individual must labour enough for his food and his intellectual faculties must be exercised not in order to obtain a living or amass a fortune, but only in the service of mankind. If this principle is observed everywhere, all men would be equal, none would starve and the world would be saved from a sin. *Harijan, Aug 3, 1935.*

### **Sarvatra Bhayavarjana (Fearlessness)**

Fearlessness should connote absence of all kinds of fear – fear of death, fear of bodily injury, fear of hunger, fear of insults, fear of public disapprobation, fear of ghosts and evil spirits, fear of anyone's anger. Freedom from all these and other such fears constitute fearlessness. *Bapu-Ke Ashirwad Nov 26, 1944*

Fearlessness does not mean arrogance and aggressiveness. That in itself is a sign of fear. Fearlessness presupposes calmness and peace of mind. For that it is necessary to have a living faith in God. *Harijan Nov. 3, 1946.*

## **Gandhi and ‘The Great War’**

*George Paxton*

In reference to the large number of Indians who served in the British forces in the Great War it was stated recently on BBC TV that Gandhi supported the war as well as Indian independence. This is a partial truth.

Gandhi quite often took up positions which appear to be contradictory and this is certainly one of those occasions. A number of things made him inclined to support the British side in the war. Up to the age of about 50 he was very pro-British and although he saw defects in British colonial rule he thought it could be reformed. In addition he believed that Indians needed to be more assertive to achieve freedom and although he personally believed in nonviolence he also thought that Indians who did not follow him in this respect should be encouraged to take up arms in defence of the Empire and at the same time learn discipline. Thus he offered to form ambulance corps twice in South Africa, during the Anglo-Boer War and during a revolt by some Zulus. But these did not involve killing, indeed they involved saving lives.

When it came to the Great War he once more raised an ambulance corps while in London at the beginning of the War (he was on his way back to India after his South African period). However in 1918 the Viceroy persuaded him to help raise recruits to serve in the army. He tried to recruit Indians in Kheda district, an area he thought suitable as there had recently been a successful satyagraha there. In fact the potential recruits saw more clearly than he did the contradiction in the great advocate of nonviolent action trying to recruit for the armed forces and very few joined up.

Gandhi was a strong believer in bravery and this was a factor influencing his outlook on these occasions but there was another, namely, that he thought the British Government would look more kindly on appeals for Indian freedom if the Indians responded favourably to the call for help in a time of need. This rather dubious motive was a factor in all the occasions he responded to the call of the rulers. He also misjudged them as they did not respond favourably. It was the following year 1919 that he finally lost faith in the good will of the British.

Gandhi's constant appeal for nonviolent action during the independence campaigns is in sharp contrast to the appeal to join the armed forces during the Great War. It was a war that was conducted by mass slaughter on a scale that had not been seen before due to technological developments. Moreover it was not a war that would lead to a good outcome as the countries that participated were driven by unworthy motives .

My opinion is that Gandhi's decision at this time was the worst he made in his lifetime. However the rest of his life shows that he learned from the experience and he became more firmly attached to nonviolence as was seen in his very different approach in the Second World War in spite of there being a good motive in this case, namely the destruction of an evil ideology.

(A more detailed version of this, in paper or e-form, is available on request from the Editor.)



## First Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship award at McMaster University

*Treat others as you wish to be treated.*

It's a simple creed, but one that Ramnarine Sahadeo wishes more people would live by – which is why he's established in 2017 a scholarship in the name of famed Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi who used nonviolent civil disobedience to fight British rule and inspired civil rights and independence movements around the globe.

*Ramnarine Sahadeo* ([ramjihindu@rogers.com](mailto:ramjihindu@rogers.com))

Born on the tiny island of Leguan, Guyana, just nine months before Gandhi was assassinated, Ramnarine credits this tiny, self-sufficient, multicultural community for exposing him to the closest example of what a society would look like if it practiced the principles of Sarvodaya – *live in order to help others to live*. In his retirement, this lawyer is actively researching the life of Gandhi, writing, reading and speaking about those universal principles that can improve the life of every individual who can make a significant contribution to any country they call home.

*Adrianna Michell* (in picture with Ram Sahadeo beside bust of Gandhi)

Daughter to two McMaster Graduates and born at McMaster Hospital, Adrianna is proud to call Hamilton and McMaster home. As the Faculty and



Peace Studies representative for Undergraduate Council and Manager at the Student Health Education Centre, Adrianna is actively involved on campus. Entering her 3rd year in Humanities studying English and Cultural Studies she is also working hard toward a combined honours with Peace Studies. Adrianna's interest in Peace Studies began after taking a first-year introductory course that explored the discipline of peace research, with focus on the concepts of peace, war, security, conflict, violence and nonviolence, and examined the roles of values and ideologies in the attainment of peace. Adrianna is grateful to have been selected as the inaugural recipient of the Mahatma Gandhi Scholarship. The fact that Ramnarine has invested in her education as a Peace Studies scholar by creating a scholarship is heartwarming and encouraging. *Live in order to help others live.*

Ramnarine has provided enough funds to finance the scholarship *for now* and is urging Gandhi admirers around the world to take this opportunity to promote Gandhi's life and message by make a gift to the scholarship. The hope is to continue the award in perpetuity and award a new student studying peace every year.

Readers who may be considering a donation to the fund should contact Deanna Tigani, 1280 Main St. West OJN 432, Hamilton, Ontario. Canada, L8S 4L8 or [tigani@mcmaster.ca](mailto:tigani@mcmaster.ca)

## Book Review

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### **Holy Rus: The Rebirth of Orthodoxy in the New Russia**

John Burgess Yale University Press 2017 pp256

The revival of the Orthodox Church in post-Soviet Russia ranks among the world's most remarkable and significant spiritual and cultural phenomena of late 20th-early 21st centuries. Devastated by Stalin's persecution, and but partially revived within limitations in the post-Stalin era, the Church began to blossom afresh with the 195 celebration of the Millennium of Russian Orthodox Christianity and Gorbachev's proclamation of total religious freedom. Since the early 1990s, Orthodoxy has become focus of a national spiritual resurgence (also involving Baptists, Pentecostalists, other Protestants, and Muslims) filling the psychic vacuum created by the collapse of Communism and the Soviet Union. Orthodoxy is a key element in Russians' renewed understanding of their spiritual cultural heritage and historic identity, and major feature of Putin's new narrative of patriotism, capitalism, religion, and moral conservatism, dominant for national renewal.

John Burgess of Pittsburg Theological Seminary visited Russia – from Moscow and other cities to the White Sea and Crimea – over ten years,

immersing himself in Orthodox life, the result being this book, the most comprehensive and significant study to date, Digging deeper than facts and figures he describes “a nation that long for Holy Rus, that elusive ideal of a people and place transformed by the holy ... The Orthodox Church is calling Russians to reclaim their heritage ... A religious vision of the future is touching millions of Russians”.

He gives a very impressive record of Orthodoxy’s post-1990 achievements: number of parishes has increased from 7,000 to 33,000; monasteries and convents from under 30 to 800, 80% of Russians self-identify as Orthodox (though church-going, except for major festivals, is much less); the Church runs a range of welfare institutions, including drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes, orphanages, hospices, centres for autistic children, feeding and housing Action for the poorest, and hospitals. A network of nursery, primary and secondary schools offer education in a faith environment; in state schools, parents can opt for Orthodox Christianity studies for their children. Radio and tv, extensive publishing, Sunday schools, youth work, chapels in public places– even an ‘evangelism train’ reaching Russia’s remoter areas – all advance Orthodoxy’s mission to bring more people into the churches, change ‘culturally Orthodox’ into active believers, rebuild Christian values and morality in a country conditioned by seven decades of atheism, and “ensure that wherever Russians go, they will encounter and learn to venerate Orthodox symbols”.

State financial support for major projects (eg rebuilding the great Moscow Cathedral of Christ the Saviour), Orthodox chaplains in the military, laws protecting believers’ rights all point to close Church-State relations. The Church’s *Social Concept* (2000) affirms the “symphonic model ... a high degree of Church-State co-operation for the sake of society’s greater good, while explicitly rejecting state control over the Church’s internal affairs”. (p41) President Vladimir Putin’s close support for the Church, while politically advantageous, is based on genuine personal faith: as a Soviet KGB officer he wore his Orthodox cross; he attends Holy Liturgy regularly, visits Orthodox holy shrines and made retreat at Mount Athos.

The author’s commendably wide-ranging narrative clearly establishes Orthodoxy as the largest, most significant – and popularly most trusted – Russian NGO. It is much criticised by Western-oriented liberals and secularists for its social and moral conservatism and closeness to Putin. For the Church, Western secular liberalism implants decadent values of consumerist materialism, egocentric individualism, and sexually immoral ‘genderism’. Orthodox Russia is now a reality. Whether the exalted vision of ‘Holy Russia’ will become so, only the future will reveal.

*Brian Cooper*

Brian is Interfaith Secretary of Uniting for Peace and he also edits the journal *Mainstream: Christian Understanding Across Europe*.



Gandhi's birthday commemorated on 2 October in Bellevue, Washington State, USA. It was organised by Twisha and Prem Prakash seen in lower picture with son Atreya.



# 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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