

## CHAPTER V

### POSSIBILITY OF A NON-VIOLENT SOCIETY

Historically and culturally, India has been known as a land of non-violence. We have a vast storehouse of culture and ethnic kinship which has sustained our multi religious, multi-racial and multi linguistic society since times immemorial. The Saints, the Gurus, all the religious heads have always preached non-violence. We won our independence mainly through non-violent means. But it is an irony that as a society, comprising different castes, creeds and religions tied together by a singular cultural heritage, we have now arrived at the threshold of mistrust among each other.

While it is true that India was invaded by many foreign rulers in search of wealth, India was also a land where some of the bloodiest battles in the history of the world were fought. So violence is also a part of large history in Indian heritage. For example, Kalinga war of Asoka's period, so many bloodiest attacks on Indian culture for political purposes etc. has brought the country into an analytical focus with the interaction between religion and politics. This unholy alliance is, of course, related directly to the country's old colonial heritage in all facts of life, particularly in the realm of ideology. This analogy is closely linked with our social values.

'Violence' is as old as the world. In cosmogonies, mythologies and legends, it is presented as something linked with the beginning of the history, always attendant upon the deeds of the heroes and innovators. If we succeed in perceiving the reasons for its emergence and its present upsurge, then we will gain more insight into its true nature. Also, it might enable us to take an objective view of the violence that surrounds the society and to assess the threat it poses to our entire nation in order to seek appropriate and timely remedies. The phenomenon of violence, of late, seems to have gone deep rooted into our society and it is increasing fast with each passing day. We must realize, unless we restore and rebuild amity and national solidarity, it will not only impede the

growth of our national development but will also threaten the very existence of our society of image globally.

### **The present scenario of the world**

The present world is full of deadly explosive spots, dispersed on the various parts of the globe. Accordingly, man has desensitized himself and has become inexpressibly harsh to his own beings. One can experience utter chaos, disorder, violence and riots ending up in war. The values of life are getting unrelated to the day-to-day aspects of life and we are living in a world where on the one hand, there is accelerative progress in the fields of science and technology as is evident from space travel, nuclear energy, communications and so on, and on the other hand, there is the singular failure of human mind-brain equipment to psychologically grow, to blossom, to free itself from the exiting patterns of thinking, feeling and unassuming behaviour with our fellow beings.

Until the early phase of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a handful of colonial powers called the shots, lording it over millions in Asia, Africa and West Asia. However, the stability of the colonial order was shattered with the outbreak of World War-I. What followed was violence on an unprecedented scale: the Russian Revolution, World War-II, the Partition of India, the Chinese Revolution, The Korean War, the Vietnam War and the on-going Israel-Palestine Conflict. The result of all wars so far have been only destruction of mankind, humanity, property, civilization, resources and so many species of other animal kingdom. What gave people hope in the tumultuous 20<sup>th</sup> century was Gandhi's simple, logical and convincing message: 'it is possible to live in amity and peace'. "Despite and large-scale violence, the active pursuit of peace in that time made possible the marvels of technology and the comforts of civil society".<sup>i</sup>

Violence, revolt, discontentment and dissatisfaction- both in the East and the West, are basically due to the deep-rooted cause in the total way of life which man has been pursuing for several centuries. However, it is more important to investigate where the disorder lies, where man has taken a wrong turn, and how is it related to the total way of life, and ask ourselves how it can be removed and displaced from our psyche? A

person who feels concerned about life, both individual and collective, feels the urgency of exploring the basic causes of conditioning the human psyche. The answer to a problem is surrounded in the problem itself, so we have to understand the deep causes of the problem. When one can find the cause, one can end it too. A cause has an end. The causation of the problem can be ended, not through a readymade solution, but through understanding the problem itself. If we all seek together the causation, then the problem is almost solved.

We have discussed the very notion of non-violence previously in the introductory chapter; here we are trying to analyse violence as well as terrorism which are also an essential parts of our discussion.

### **Violence and Terrorism**

Terror and violence are topics that are deeply emotive, are widely written about, and have come to occupy a prominent place in the images and experiences that surround the everyday lives of the people in many parts of the world. Violence is everywhere today. It is implicit and lurks explicit in all kinds of aspects, configurations, dimensions and contexts. In its essentials, the situation is not new, since violence and fear of violence have probably been a part of human life as long as humans have existed. However, each historical period tends to bring with it a new opening of various themes surrounding this topic.

In the world today, “The major conflicts between the communist and the capital regimes, signalled as the Cold War, have been replaced by a ‘hot war’ of conflicts ideologically centring on the imputed actions of AL-Qaeda and the various sovereign states that see themselves in different ways as involves in ‘the war and terror’-which means ‘the struggle against terrorists’”.<sup>ii</sup> This hot war has witnessed fewer words and more actions: enactments of violence destruction and death that have often caught people by surprise, going beyond their earlier imaginations of how events would turn out. And they have subsequently given rise to seismic shifts of perceptions, policy and ideological responses, as governments and peoples attempt to encompass such events within not only

their imaginations but also their assessments of how to confront them in the present and if possible prevent their recurrence in the future.

As with the global Cold War period, these efforts are accompanied by new written commentaries, dramas, poetry, art, television programmes, and film-making, which are all a part of the collective and individual constructions of a political life that now takes into account what was formerly unimaginable but rapidly becomes almost a part of everyday experience. The development of imaginaries of this kind takes place on both sides of any given conflicts, often with nearly identical but politically opposed rhetoric supporting them. Without such frameworks of thoughts and emotions the conflict would not proceed in the same way or at the same level. Media sources, by their very immediacy, we might say, can greatly intensify and magnify the perceptions involved of events; but they do so not only by presenting visual images (which are nonetheless devoid of other sensations such as heat, dust, cold, intense smells), but by appealing to, and conforming with, basic scenarios in people's mind, connected to cosmic schemes of 'good versus evil' and 'the lessons of history'.

We can perceive the violence that is in the minds of the human being in the form of violent event (such as different types of terrorist attacks, some spontaneous attacks by individual etc.) in different parts of the world.

### **Some major violent events or terrorist attacks**

Now it has been estimated that more than fourteen thousands and five hundreds wars, which claimed the lives of about four billions people, have been fought on earth in five thousand years since the dawn of civilization. Armed conflicts have taken up to 21 million lives since the World War-II. War appears to be natural to man and the aggressors justify war as a means of ending of wars; "peace through wars" is what they talk about. Wars continue in spite of the efforts of League of Nations and the United Nations and, man has the dubious credit of being the biggest killer of his species even his own kith and kins. World War-II as any other major war left its heart rendering impact on the society. It was fought on a colossal scale. The enormity of losses can be judged from the fact that

the Soviet Union alone had lost about 20 million lives in the War while six million Jews were killed in Hitler's gas chambers alone. In July, 1945, America exploded the first nuclear weapon in the history of mankind and in August it dropped two bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Japanese cities). Disappointed Japan surrendered forth with and that gave America an imminent edge and deprived the Russians of all but a token share in the post-war settlement in the Far East. The war ended with an act, which contained the central elements in the Cold War: the advent of nuclear weapons and beginning of Soviet-American rivalry. And this created terror and fear in the minds of the people all over the world. The net result was the panic and constant fear in the whole atmosphere. So it is very important to dwell upon this issue of arm-race.

Science and technology are originally meant for the total progress of humanity. They are to be used to improve the quality of life of mankind. Unfortunately, these are being used to annihilate the weak. When two countries are equally good in their Military Power they never go for testing their strength because of the sheer fear. If some countries are found to be weak, the powerful ones try to attack them. This is what exactly super-powers and its allied countries doing today. If we recall the gulf war (Iraq vs. US and allies), we will realize that what US and its gang has done was totally reprehensible. Instead of going for a ground battle (using Naval support and air covering), they had bombarded the cities and have caused severe harm to the common people. The innocent people including women and babies were killed. Women and children are usually the victims of war, communal riots or any disturbances of this sort. The wars have become a fight between common people and soldiers rather than soldiers and soldiers. Indiscriminate kinds of wars have made the life of humanity miserable.

The history of terrorism is a history of well-known and historically significant individuals, entities and incidents associated whether rightly or wrongly with terrorism. Scholars agree that terrorism is a disputed term and very few of those labelled terrorists describe themselves as such. It is common for opponents in a violent conflict to describe the other as terrorists.

There are so many terrorists attacks happen in India. We are providing a list below of some of the important understandings of terrorist attacks in India.

### **Some major terrorist attacks in India**

March 12, 1993: A series of 13 explosions in Mumbai, then called Bombay, resulted in 257 deaths and over 700 injuries. The blasts were orchestrated by the organized crime syndicate called the D-Company.

Feb. 14, 1998: Coimbatore bombings: 46 deaths, 200 wounded as a result of 13 bomb attacks in 11 places.

Bomb-squad personnel inspect the site of an explosion outside Delhi's high court in May this year.

Oct. 1, 2001: Militants attack Jammu & Kashmir Assembly complex in Srinagar, killing about 35. The Muslim extremist group Jaish-e-Mohammed was allegedly involved.

Dec. 13, 2001: Attack on the Indian Parliament complex in New Delhi led to the killing of a dozen people and 18 injured. Pakistan-based terror groups were blamed for the attack.

Sept. 24, 2002: Akshardham temple in Gujarat: The first major hostage taking since Sept. 11 in the U.S.; 31 people were killed and another 79 wounded.

May 14, 2002: Militants attack on an Army camp near Jammu, killing more than 30 people.

March 13, 2003: A bomb attack on a commuter train in Mumbai killed 11.

Aug. 25, 2003: Twin car bombings in Mumbai killed at least 52 people and injured 150. Indian officials blamed a Pakistan-based terror outfit.

Aug. 15, 2004: An explosion in the northeastern state of Assam killed 16 people, mostly school children.

July 5, 2005: Militants attack the Ram Janmabhoomi complex, the site of the destroyed Babri Mosque at Ajudhya in Uttar Pradesh.

Oct. 29, 2005: Three powerful serial blasts rocked the busy shopping areas of south Delhi, two days before the Hindu festival of Diwali, killing 59 and injuring 200. A Pakistan-based terrorist outfit, the Islamic Inquilab Mahaz (believed to have links with Lashkar-e-Taiba) claimed responsibility.

March 7, 2006: A series of bombings in the holy city of Varanasi killed at least 28 and injured 101. Indian police put the blame on some Pakistan-based terror outfits.

July 11, 2006: Seven bomb blasts occurred at various places on the Mumbai Suburban Railway, killing 200. Investigations revealed that terror outfits with a base in Pakistan were behind the blasts.

Sept. 8, 2006: At least 37 people were killed and 125 were injured in a series of bomb blasts in the vicinity of a mosque in Malegaon, Maharashtra. The blasts were followed by an explosion and most of the people killed were Muslim pilgrims. The students Islamic Movement of India was responsible.

May 18, 2007: A bombing during Friday prayers at Mecca Masjid, Hyderabad, killed 13 people. Four were killed by Indian police in the rioting that followed.

May 26, 2007: Six people killed and 30 injured in a bomb blast in India's northeastern city of Guwahati.

June 10, 2007: Gunmen killed 11 people in separate incidents of firing in Manipur's border town of Moreh.

Aug. 25, 2007: Forty-two people killed and 50 injured in twin explosions at a crowded park and a popular eatery in Hyderabad by Harkat-ul-Jehad-i-Islami (HuJI) activist.

May 13, 2008: A series of six explosions tore through Jaipur, a popular tourist destination in the Rajasthan state in western India, killing 63 people and injuring more than 150.

July 25, 2008: Seven blasts in quick succession across the south Indian tech city of Bangalore killed one and injured more than 150 people.

July 26, 2008: Serial blasts in the western Indian city of Ahmadabad killed 45 people and injured more than 150. A group calling itself Indian Mujahedeen claimed responsibility.

Sept. 13, 2008: Five bomb blasts in New Delhi's popular shopping centers left 21 people dead and more than 100 injured. The Indian Mujahedeen claimed responsibility.

Sept. 27, 2008: A blast in a New Delhi flower market left one dead.

Oct. 30, 2008: Thirteen bomb blasts in India's northeastern state of Assam and three other towns left at least 61 people dead more than 300 injured.

Nov 26-29, 2008: Terror attacks in Mumbai killed 168 Indians and foreigners.

April 6, 2009: A car bomb blast in Guwahati killed six people.

Feb 13, 2010: A blast in German Bakery in Pune city of Maharashtra killed 13 people and injured more than 50.

Sept., 2010: Low-intensity blast at Jama Masjid in Delhi sets car alight.

Dec 7, 2010: A bomb explosion on the banks of River Ganga in the temple town of Varanasi in northern Uttar Pradesh state that killed a girl and injured about 20 people, including some foreigners.

May, 2011: Bomb partially explodes outside lawyers' canteen of High Court in Delhi. No casualties.

July 13, 2011: Three bomb blasts in Mumbai; 21 people killed and more than 100 injured

Sept. 7, 2011: Bomb at High Court in Delhi.

The terrorist attack and violent activities is one of the few instances that destroy the good life. Now the question is, is it a day dreaming to think of a non-violent society in such a violent background? Answer to this question is to some extent continued is our discussion in previous chapters. Human being has to shed violence for the sake of their



survival, but as we have travelled thousands of years from the beginning of the society, we have forgotten that violence would put our existence at stake.

We have already discussed in our previous chapters the thought of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and others, and found that unity, fellow-feeling; friendship and above all, non-violence are the ways to form a good society. Non-violence is the demand of a society to be formed. From the Vedic period to the period of Jaina and Buddha, non-violence was the guiding principle that was practiced and closely related to the everyday life of the people of India. The Indian religious traditions have given utmost importance to the principle 'do not harm' and '*Shanti*'. Buddhism and Jainism have been the greatest challenge in this regard. Both these religious tenets uphold the principle of non-violence. Hinduism also in its later period, tried to accommodate this principle. The whole Christian message is of love, peace and compassion (Mathew5:38-44). In modern times, Gandhi's principle of non-violence is the soul force that has influenced so many societies and countries. His concept of non-violence is our inspiration and weapon to fight against violence.

### **History of Violence**

Violence is a problem that we, as humans, have to deal with in our everyday life. Today, it seems that we deal with it in just about every aspect of our lives. From children's cartoons to the nightly news, we can witness its power and harm. A highly debated argument for the causes of violence is that the source of violence is our homes as well as our government. Whatever may be the sources of violence, we cannot avoid personal responsibilities in this regard. We are given the choice to decide how we each want to live our lives; but before we decide, we must look at the ethical issues that surround our choices. Everybody have their concept of good life and try to achieve that. Violence is one of the few instances that destroy good life. It is defined as an act taken against another being with the intent to do harm. We often consider violence in terms of the physical aggression, yet violence can surface in a variety of ways even including self-defence. Violence is a result of conflicting interests or irresolvable differences. In most

instances, both parties to the conflict feel that they are right and that their actions are justified. However, there are other cases in which there is a clear aggressor and victim. Nevertheless, violence is a very complicated and difficult issue. By its very nature, violence is an act against life. Life can be said to be good in itself, all the other good are presupposed by life. Thus, life is not instrumental and its value is intrinsic. Violence is instrumental. It is a means to an end. There is no intrinsically goodness in violence. Violent acts are not good for the sake of violence itself. A single question that arises out of the argument of violence and nonviolence is whether violence ever justifiable or acceptable. The two main types of arguments that arise are the self-defence paradigm and pacifism. The self-defence paradigm accepts violence as a means to protect one's life, or the life of others. This argument interprets life as being intrinsically good and for instrumental purposes, but accepts lethal results as an unintended consequence of defence. Pacifism argues that violence is never acceptable. Because violence is an instrumental act, it undermines and disrespects human life as a cherished entity. The whole purpose of pacifism is to change the fact that violence is inevitable. It is a movement that teaches humans how to deal with the situations that inevitably end in violence. It is a way to defend life from aggressive threats. The pacifist may never risk killing his opponent, regardless of the consequences. At all times, they must be respectful and compassionate of life. If, we don't start demonstrating nonviolent, peaceful acts, what are they going to imitate? We are presenting self-defence as an excuse. It is justifiable but only if you don't intend to kill the other person. This can be a very risky situation. When defending yourself or someone else, you are allowed violence as long as you didn't mean to kill the aggressor. But what happens when you can't decipher the aggressor? Nothing should be taken away from the self-defence philosophy. It is understandable and ethical. It would be hard not to defend yourself from an attacker, or to help a loved one. But, it just seems to me that in today's world, we must reevaluate our morals. Self-defence takes the idea that life is intrinsically good and should never be violated. It adds that life should never be violated but in certain cases. It seems like a double standard. Pacifism is a movement to take a stand against violence. It is giving

violent situations a chance of reversal. However, the choice of pacifism is a lifelong commitment. One cannot be a part time pacifist or a selective supporter of just wars. That is, one cannot condemn violence, but when violent becomes a personal situation, find an excuse. All wars must be unjust, not just some. Pacifism is a strong moral stand. It is dedication to preserving human life, no matter the situation. A pacifist would have to take a stand which would not allow him to violently defend himself or others in any situation. Pacifism is described as the “higher calling” because it witnesses the grandness and beauty of being alive. Though the self-defence paradigm is a wonderful argument, I think it contains a few discrepancies. There should be no excuse for harming another human being. Just because someone else started it, doesn’t make it right. But, in my opinion there will be some space for self-defence to protect of our life.

Some people claim that non-violence is a method adopted by the weaker people. This is far from truth. Adopting the weapon on non-violence needs lot of courage, both mental and physical. Only those who are mentally and physically strong can withstand the pressure that is released through physical attacks on non-violent agitators. The normal human reaction, when one is attacked is to pay back in the same coin. To restrain oneself from normal human reaction, one needs a lot of moral and physical courage.

Even the trade unions in our country often resort to non-violent methods like strikes as they are convinced that these peaceful and non-violent methods have greater impact on the managements. That many trade unions are able to use this weapon of non-violence successfully testifies to the effectiveness of this weapon.

Every religion too preaches peace or non-violence as the acceptable way of life. Violence has no place in any of the religions as it can only result in destruction. Nelson Mandela too proved the efficacy of non-violence in his struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Violence cannot be countered through violence. Certainly the proverb which says that a diamond cuts a diamond does not apply as far as violence is concerned. Violence can be checked only when it is countered through non-violence. He who lives

by the gun will die by the gun. As pen is mightier than the sword, only non-violence or peaceful methods can keep violence in check.

The twentieth century has been called the bloodiest century in human history, marked by the loss of more than 100 million lives in war. Besides its bloody legacy, a story that is less often told about the twentieth century is the success of nonviolent people power movements. The twentieth was the first century in human history in which many large-scale nonviolent movements successfully toppled oppressive regimes, often in the face of overwhelming military power. Even as we have transitioned into the twenty-first century, violent human encounters in Afghanistan, Iraq, Darfur, Congo, and other places capture our attention and eclipse the many and varied nonviolent social movements that are taking place around the world. One purpose of this thesis is to heighten awareness of nonviolent movements that continue to take place as the twenty-first century unfolds.

The UNESCO constitution, written in 1945, states, “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.”<sup>iii</sup> This is an appeal for peace psychology. It is a call to understand the values, philosophies, and competencies needed to build and maintain intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, and international peace. Peace psychology involves the information, attitudes, values, and behavioural competencies needed to resolve conflicts without violence and to build and maintain mutually beneficial, harmonious relationships. The ultimate goal of peace psychology is for individuals to be able to maintain peace among aspects of themselves (intrapersonal peace), individuals (interpersonal peace), groups (intergroup peace), and countries, societies, and cultures (international peace).

For centuries, peace was primarily discussed in the teachings of religious leaders such as Lao Tzu, Jesus Christ, Buddha, the Dalai Lama, and Bahá’u’lláh, who taught that people were supposed to promote peace in their lives and in the world as a whole. Compassion, empathy, and nonviolence were presented as some of the ways in which to do so. In the middle ages, the discussion of peace expanded beyond religion into education (the Czech educator Comenius believed that peace depended on universally

shared knowledge) and philosophy (Immanuel Kant believed that peace was achieved through legal and judicial systems). Late in the nineteenth century, William James wrote an article opposing imperialism and the “war fever” with which it was associated. Perhaps the most famous advocate of nonviolence in the twentieth century was Mahatma Gandhi, who used it as a means for ending oppression. The first academic peace studies program was established in 1948 at Manchester College in Indiana. Peace psychology gained momentum during the Cold War, when activists worked to prevent nuclear war in organizations such as the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE), which was founded in 1957. In the 1950s, Martin Luther King advocated nonviolence in the United States Civil Rights Movement as the only moral and practical method for oppressed people to gain their freedom.

**Is Violence necessary, or is it avoidable?** Some of the modern psychologists hold that violence, pugnacity or urge to destroy and kill is a natural instinct common to both animals and men, and not without some useful purpose to serve, as no other instinct is. Every one of us has a natural tendency to be aggressive, little tyrant sometimes, in our life. Who has not seen mothers, fathers, teachers and even lovers consciously or unconsciously playing the part of a tyrant to their daughters, sons, pupils and the loved ones at times? Even the greatest men well-known for their learning and culture, have sometimes been seen to have become actuated with violence towards those who happened to, or were imagined to stand between them and the object of their strongest desires. Even the Buddha, the Christ and Gandhi have not escaped the wrath of those who became jealous of their greatness.

The impulse of violence, psychologists contend further, is not only natural but also necessary. Most of the animals, birds, insects and primitive races would have been extinct, had they followed the creed of non-violence.

**Personal Consideration:** There are several grounds on which non-violence can be justified and proved better and more fruitful than violence. First, we take the personal ground or practical consideration. From the point of view of one’s own personal health

and happiness, it is not difficult to decide that one should follow the path of love and sympathy rather than that of hatred and violence. For no man, community or race can be sure of being equally strong and powerful for all times to live successfully by violence. It is a truism that he who lives by sword perishes by sword. A cruel man, community or race is bound to be treated cruelly when he or it becomes weak in course of time and others come into power. That is why in ancient Aryan times, certain rules of decent behaviour towards the weaker and the vanquished were prescribed. It is also true that cruel persons live a miserable life and die a miserable death. A tyrant lives a life of perpetual danger. Aggressive individuals and communities live in perpetual fear of other individuals and communities. The gains and victories of violence, although quickly achieved, are short lived and are maintained at heavy cost. From the purely selfish point of view even, therefore, the path of violence is not secure and desirable.

**Social Consideration:** Man is not, however, a purely selfish and lonely creature. He is also a being of society, a citizen of State or community. The ultimate and real society of man is humanity as a whole. The limits of religion, race or colour are artificial limits, which always tend to disappear when man lives a truly human life. All these limits are baneful. Human society flourishes better on love, sympathy and co-operation than on acts of violence which upset its balance. Acts of violence are diseases of humanity. Cruel and selfish individuals or communities who trample over the natural rights of others are like poisonous germs in the body. A happy and healthy social life demands that all its members should live with others amicably, and should help and protect each other. In the interest of law and social order, all those who preach, propagate and organize violence, in thought, word or deed, should be regarded as criminals, irrespective of the position they hold, and be prosecuted and put in jail. In this age, when science has brought humanity in closer contact than ever before, and when scientific discoveries and inventions have greatly increased the powers of man to do both good and evil. There is a great and imperative need to organize humanity on rational, just and equitable principles and to develop a keen social and humanitarian consciousness in every human child. We must

abolish imperialism, colonialism, in short, all ‘isms’ that are the forms of violence, the desire to exploit the weak races and communities. There will be war in the world as long there is any empire on the earth, as long as any community, race or country exploits the resources of others, as long as every human child is not to think and feel, and act according to the view that all humanity is like a family and human beings are brothers and sisters.

Compassion, love and altruism are not just religious qualities. As human beings, and even as animals, we need compassion and affection to develop, sustain ourselves and survive. “Even before we were born, when we were still in the womb, our mother’s calmness was very much related to ours. Then, during the first few weeks after birth, a very crucial period for our development, even such simple things as our mother’s touch were very important in developing our brain. For the next few years, without the kindness or affection of our parent or some other adult, we could not have survived. Now, as adults, we still need someone we can trust, someone from whom we can receive affection; and when we become old, we will again be heavily dependent on others to care for us”.<sup>iv</sup> This is the human way of life.

Now the question arises is what the purpose of life is? The Buddhist monk Dalai Lama believes that satisfaction, joy and happiness are the ultimate purposes of life and the basic sources of happiness are a good heart, compassion and love. If we have these mental attitudes, even we are surrounded by hostility, we will feel little disturbance. On the other hand, if we lack compassion and our mental state is filled with anger and hatred, no matter what the situation is, we will not have peace. Without compassion we feel insecure and eventually we will feel fear and a lack of self-confidence. If we are unstable and influenced by negative thoughts, our intelligence will be used wrongly. Looking at human history over the last few thousand years, we can see that the greatest tragedies have been caused by human hatred, fear and suspicious. Dalai Lama has rightly pointed out that “The question of real, lasting world peace concerns human beings, so basic human feelings are also at its roots. Through inner peace, genuine world peace can be

achieved. In this the importance of individual responsibility is quite clear; an atmosphere of peace must be created within ourselves, then gradually expanded to include our families, our communities, and ultimately the whole planet”.<sup>v</sup>

**Moral Consideration:** Personal integrity and social solidarity are not the only objects of human life. There is, in each heart, a moral demand, a command of the conscience, an insistent urge to do the duty without any consideration of the consequences. Bhartrihari, a great Sanskrit poet, has given a beautiful expression to this moral urge. “A brave and religious man,” he says, “will never deviate from the right path, no matter the worldly-wise people praise or deprecate him, no matter whether thereby he loses or gains wealth, no matter whether it involves immediate destruction or a long life.” Now violence is something which can never be a universal moral principle. In a world order and world government based on moral principles of truth, justice, honesty, equality and fellowship, there will be little need of taking recourse to violence. Moral life alone, whether individual or social, is happy. The present miserable state of humanity indicates that it is not living according to moral principles which can be accepted by all human beings. Violence cannot be universalized and universally approved. Hence, it can, never be a moral principle. Even those who believe in violence and act on their belief will not accept it as a right attitude if others stronger and crueler than themselves were to have it towards them. Non-violence, on the other hand, is morally approved or universally acceptable.

Kant’s moral theory is the paradigm example of universality of moral rules. Kant’s ethical theory is called a deontological or non-consequential or duty-based ethical theory. According to Kant an action is right if it follows from duty; that is, an action should be done not because of its consequences but because it is the right thing to do. “The principle that one follows must be universalizable; in other words, it should be possible to argue that everyone right to act the same way in a similar situation.”<sup>vi</sup> For example, the rules that promises should not be broken by anyone, that no one should kill others, and that should no one cheat should be followed by everyone always. There are certain moral



rights that everyone possesses. Kant uses the example of making a false promise to make his point. In a particular situation, making a false promise might suits one's purpose, yet one cannot make the principle of making a false promise into a universal law, because then the concept of promising would have no meaning.

Morality is understood by Kant as 'practical reason' as he believed that the exercise of reason is very important in man's sense of right or wrong. Universal law of reason and universal law of morality are one and the same of his perspective. The categorical moral imperative is enforced by the universal law. He does not approve any exceptions in rule. The ethics is made more unconditional and abstract by Kant. The 'ought' is significant in Kantian ethical approach. Kantian ethics is also very legalistic and not concrete. The rules are important but rules for the sake of rules or duty for the sake of duty is not adequate.

**Religious Consideration:** There is still a deeper layer of our being than moral consciousness. And that is the region of faith, of intuition, or of a sense of something beyond and above our finite existence. Those who are fortunate to have access to this mysterious innermost chamber of their being, the cave of their heart, the very centre of their existence, and those who by their aspiration and effort have been able to extend their normal consciousness to the level of their being, are religious in the real and true sense of the term. Once we have a dip into that mysterious ocean of Divinity, on the surface of which we all live without our knowledge of the fact, we are changed men. We begin to see life in its fuller significance, in its wider relations, and with its much greater possibilities. Then we begin to understand that service, surrender and sacrifice really lead to immortality, perfection and eternal happiness; and that violence, exploitation and selfishness lead to repeated death, ignorance and misery. Then we begin to understand that every selfish act, every cruel deed and every effort to exploit others is a step in the direction opposite to spiritual perfection which is the real goal of life. One who injures harms or kills another for his own benefit or for the benefit of his own party, community, or country really harms, injures or kills himself, his party, his community or country from

the spiritual point of view. Hence, all religious teachers, who had a right vision of life and all scriptures based on that vision have denounced violence and advised the cultivation of non-violence.

### **Non-violence as a Defence against Violence**

A very vital question, which is in fact the very crux of the problem, arises here. Can non-violence be an effective method of defence against the violent force of an aggressor? How, in other words, a man or a community sworn to non-violence, is to defend himself or itself against a violent aggressor without taking recourse to violence? This question is very difficult to answer and no ethical thinker has answered it more satisfactorily than Mahatma Gandhi. He formulated a technique of non-violent self-defence against a violent aggressor which was not known to earlier thinkers. They either advised the victim to take to violence in self-defence or to invoke the help of God in case the victim was too weak to offer violent defence. Thanks to the practical experiments and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, we now have a very effective method of non-violent defence against violent aggression. It consists in resistance and non-co-operation, both of which should be strictly non-violent. Every individual, community or race should try to protect his or its natural and minimum rights and should never surrender them to a violent aggressor. These rights should be defended bravely and at the risk of life. Death should be preferred to yielding, but no recourse should be taken to violence against the aggressor. On the other hand, the victim should give expression to the noblest side of himself in relation to the aggressor, so that the noble but dormant nature of the aggressor may be aroused into action. There is nothing more contagious than nobleness and nothing more effective against an enemy than a sincere love for him. The most ferocious person is likely to become the kindest in case his other side is slightly aroused. The victim of an aggressor should avoid feeding his anger by returning violence with violence. On the other hand, he should try to arouse his finer and nobler instincts, by himself behaving in an extremely noble and rational way.

There are two types of non-violence, namely, practical and spiritual. Practical

violence examines non-violence as it has been used throughout history to respond to conflict and how it can respond to conflict of today. On the other hand, when people associate non-violence with spirituality, they often bring to mind the moral principles common to the great world religions- teaching such as golden rule, “love your neighbour as yourself”, or “pray for you your enemies” etc.

The question- 'How was violence born in man?', if seen in the above light turns out to be basically faulty. It (the question) is the result of a wrong understanding. When our, as well as society's entire life style is based on practical nonviolence, on the slightest pretext violence can flare up anywhere- in the family, between communities, castes and sects. Those researching into nonviolence, not fully grasped this truth. That is why they keep asking the question: 'How was violence born in man?' For a proper understanding of the whole matter, they have to first understand the concept of spiritual nonviolence. Merely living together on the basis of practical nonviolence is no guarantee of true and lasting violence.

There are many factors responsible for violence. The point to be noted here is that the violence prevalent in society cannot be put to an end without developing spiritual nonviolence and basing our life style on it. Let us then discuss what is meant by spiritual nonviolence. It is based on the unity and equality of all souls - souls of all sentient. Once we know that every living being is subject to pain and pleasure in the same manner as we and that therefore we must never inflict any pain on them, never oppress and exploit them, never rob them of their rights, we are on our way to realizing the meaning of spiritual nonviolence. And it is only this nonviolence that can prevent the arson, loot, rioting and killings going on in society.

For nonviolence to succeed as a method for social change, there are certain conditions that must be met. The first is the creation of a cooperative relationship among relevant parties. As long as parties compete, they will be motivated to seek to dominate other parties and ensure that no other party can dominate them. Nonviolence is most effective when it highlights the positive interdependence existing among the parties and

the need for joint efforts to achieve mutual benefits. Its success depends on a basic shift from negative interdependence among goals (i.e., competition) to positive interdependence among goals (i.e., cooperation). It is only within a cooperative context that nonviolence can achieve a lasting peace. The second is the initiation of integrative (as opposed to distributive) negotiations. Integrative agreements maximize mutual benefits.

A third condition is the use of a procedure of decision making that creates a synthesis or integration of the different preferences of the involved parties. Decisions must be made in a way that takes everyone's perspectives and conclusions into account. Constructive controversy is an example of such a decision making procedure.

Nonviolence is more complex than it seems. Nonviolence is not the absence of violence but is an action that uses power and influence to reach a goal without direct injury to the persons working against that goal achievement. Nonviolence is sometimes a principled action based upon an underlying belief system that desires to understand the truth within a conflict, believes in the non-cooperation with evil, considers violence as something to be avoided, and shows a willingness to accept the burden of suffering to break the cycle of violence. The ultimate intent of principled nonviolence is to confront injustice in order to increase social justice without using direct violence. However, nonviolence may be used as a practical approach to achieve ones goals without a principled belief system to support it.

This pragmatic nonviolence considers nonviolent behaviour to be an effective method to resolve conflict and uses it to confront a conflict situation without using direct violence but does not maintain a belief system held by those who practice principled nonviolence. Despite a surprising lack of attention and reporting in the news, as well as academic outlets, nonviolence has been used widely and oftentimes successfully over the last two millennia. As it has been mentioned earlier, even during the twentieth century, described by many as one of the bloodiest centuries in terms of military and civilian

casualties of war, many nonviolent movements impacted history by positive means to positive ends.

If we are not moved by love and compassion, the world would be doomed by the terrors of war, strife and riots. The brotherhood of mankind has to be accepted by all in order to overcome the enmity. ‘Shalom’ should be the catchword and not war. While war is destructive ‘*Shanti*’ is creative. Upholding ‘*Shanti*’ is the need of the time.

### **Concluding Remarks**

To discuss the very notion of non-violence in the light of the possibility of a non-violent society, I would like to focus on human nature, because human nature is being a part of my present dissertation. Humans, as animals, are naturally violent, but have developed methods of reasoning and control to curb violent impulses because it's more socially expedient in the long term.

One big issue here is recognizing that we are shaped by two distinct kinds of evolution – biological and cultural. Certainly, biology provides necessary data for understanding ourselves, but it, as it were, gives insights only into the raw potential we have, not into what we actually do. Our actual behaviour is a combination of biology and culture, with the latter playing by far the major role. We do have a very crucial element of human nature that plays a major role in destructive violence. But the basic instinct is survival and not violence. Human beings have realised that violence against each other cannot save them from the perils of nature. And thus, they have discovered the weapon of togetherness.

The basic argument I would like to make concerning violence and human nature is that we are evolved to be cooperative more than competitive, affiliating more than antagonistic, peaceable more than violent. To foster cooperation and affiliation, we are born with natures that expect nurture and love. And during the many, many years of our evolution, this human nature was selected for – and it remains our nature today. The proof for this is the fact we survived.

But violence is not eradicated from society. Rather, it seems that it is becoming more and more violent. Violence does not come always to us in the form of war. Our present day society is suffering from political violence, religious violence, domestic violence and violence in many other forms. Not only that human survival is in question, it is also a question of a life worthy to be lived.

But the question is what should be the means achieving the goal of non-violent society? Can we establish a non-violent society on the basis of violence or on the basis of non-violence? Which one is possible and acceptable?

The former view, i.e. non-violent society is possible only on the basis of violent means is said to be supported by Karl Marx. A communist society is surely free from violence and supposed to be brought by violence means. But one thing I should mention here, what seems to me is that Marx was not very much eager for violence. He accepts violence only if other options are closed. Still questions remain as to whether violence means is just even if all the other options are closed. Moreover, if a communist society is to come through socialism under the leadership of proletariat, will it really be free from violence or come into existence at all? Because, thinkers have pointed out, dictatorship of any kind is necessarily violent.

The later view, i.e. non-violent society is possible or should be made possible only on through non-violent means is upheld by Gandhi. But there is also a problem. Gandhi accepts that hunger strike is one of the effective methods of a satyagraha (non-violent movement). But it has raised some major philosophical questions: in the case of hunger strike, we are going to get into trouble not only for ourselves but also for our opponents. Moreover, in doing so, we enforce of our opponents to accept of our demands. Both of the cases of self-suffering and enforcing opponent are forms of violence. One of the most influential contemporary thinkers Dr. Amartya Sen also agreed that hunger strike is one of the forms of violence.

When we examine where we are today, given the politics and technology of violence, we can only conclude that we live in a world with no wisdom. The time has come for humanity to renew its commitment, politically, economically, and culturally.

Gandhi said, “There is no hope for the aching world except through the narrow and straight path of non-violence.” If we want to reap the harvest of dialogical coexistence in the future, we will have to sow seeds of non-violence. Sixty eight years after Gandhi’s death, these words are still relevant.

A non-violent society cannot be built up if we don’t learn how to avoid violence. Violence can never be ceased by violence; rather violence may be ceased by non-violence alone. And as social being we are concerned about what rules, principles and obligations are beneficial for our society. Society is not some abstract entity; it is built up sustained by its members. As members of society, each of us has some responsibility towards our fellow members. Each member must be aware of the importance of non-violence. For the survival of human being we should try to abandon violence from every aspect of life i.e. social, cultural, economic, political as well as environmental. We should try hard at least once because a resolute beginning is as good as doing half the task. It’s true that it is easy to say something but may be difficult to perform it. But it is also true that failure prepares us for future success. Moreover, man will be cherishing hopes as long as he lives. Drops of water make an ocean.

Most of the people think that men are naturally violent by instinct. But human being should not be considered only as violent. They must be something more than that, otherwise man could not survive. Fellow-feeling, awareness of unity, love, chastity etc. are also essential parts of human nature. Even animals do not generally harm their own species. And man undoubtedly is something more than animal. Man is rational, moral, cultural and many other things. Thus, it would be wrong in asserting that non-violence is not in the nature of human being.

The important thing is that we should cultivate non-violence in mind; non-violence should be considered as a mind-set. In our day to day life, absolute non-violence

in practice is not possible. Some extent of violence towards lives is unavoidable. But we can avoid having a violent mind. A mind unwilling to do harm to nature, life and humanity will certainly bring a society where violence has minimum place.

In the second chapter of my dissertation I have tried to establish that non-violence is the demand of society. What I mean is that non-violence is the pre-condition for society to emerge. Even a group of few cannot be built upon violence. In the next, chapter, I have tried to find out the meaning of non-violence (or violence), and in doing so, I have considered Classical Indian context. What I found is that, most of the Indian schools of thought mean categorical non-violence by the term ahimsa. It has been accepted that a minimum violence is unavoidable in order to be in a body. Even Gandhi was aware of this fact that we have seen in the fourth chapter.

We are searching for a non-violent society. But our sense of non-violence is not categorical. Non-violence is impossible only when we demand absolute non-violence. Non-violence could not mean absolute non-violence. It is always possible to show that minimum violence is unavoidable. However, our ideal should be absolute non-violence, so that a society free from hatred and violence may be achieved. Non-violence is neither a religion nor just a tool. Absolute non-violence may not be possible, but we believe that a society based on the ideal of non-violence is possible where people should try to achieve non-violence in its highest possible level.

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<sup>i</sup> Daniel M. Mayton II, *Non-violence and Peace Psychology*, Springer, New York, 2009, p 1

<sup>ii</sup> A. Strathern, P. J. Stewart and N. L. Whitehead (editors), *Terror and Violence: Imaginations and the Unimaginable*, Orient Longman Private Ltd., Hyderabad, 2007, p 1

<sup>iii</sup> *Non-violence and Peace Psychology*, p v

<sup>iv</sup> Daniel Goleman (forwarded), *Worlds in Harmony*, Jaico Publishing House, Mumbai, 2010, p 3

<sup>v</sup> *Non-violence and Peace Psychology*, p.61, as it is found Dalai Lama, cited in *Kraft*, 1992, p 2

<sup>vi</sup> John K. Roth (edited), *Ethics* (Revised Edition Vol 3), Salem Press, inc. Pasadena, California, 2005, p 1530