博士論文

論文題目：The Two Truths of Nonviolence: A Study of Vietnamese, Tibetan, and Japanese Mahayana Buddhist Movements for Peace

（非暴力の二つの真理―ベトナム、チベット、日本の大乗仏教にもとづく平和運動を事例に―）

氏名：岡田　絵美（Emmi Okada）

Table of Contents

Introduction

Religion, Conflict, and Peace

> The question I always get…is 'Has all of this made you an optimist or a pessimist?' Or 'Are you an idealist or a realist?' Or 'Will there ever be peace?' I could of course say, look, the questions are wrong. Try substitute 'health' for 'peace' and you will see that there will never be health all over. But the task is to relieve unnecessary disease and suffering. And for that task a certain mental, even spiritual, doubleness is indispensable: the optimism/idealism of the heart, combined with the pessimism/realism of the brain. There is no contradiction. You know there will be new diseases in the life of the individual patient and for humanity; that does not mean you withdraw from the scene. There will be new conflicts. And yet you know it is meaningful to add to the theory and practice of how to deal nonviolently and creatively with conflict.[1] - Johan Galtung

The historical Buddha was once called upon to intervene in a conflict between the Sakya clan (his paternal relatives) and the Koliya clan (his maternal relatives). The dispute was over the use of water drawn from the River Rohini, and in mediating the conflict the Buddha pointed out to his relatives that they were about to fight over something far less valuable than human life. At a moment when both sides' passions and sense of injury were no doubt at its peak, the Buddha calmly provided an antidote to violence by offering a higher insight.[2]

The principle of nonviolence is one that is impossible to realize in absolute terms—for all life tramples on other life in some manner, even in innocuous ways like eating and walking—and yet this ideal urges the aspirant to reach higher, be more creative, and exercise more restraint when facing a situation of violence. This is not, of course, to say that Buddhists have been able to avoid war. As with other religions, there are more than a few examples where wars and violence have been carried out in the name of Buddhism. Still, the ideal exists and persists in the first precept of this religion.

The present study is about those nonviolent aspirants who have devoted their lives to reflect their religious teachings in their engagement with an imperfect world. It is about why they have chosen the path of nonviolence, how their convictions manifest in action, and what beliefs and symbols have empowered them to eschew violence. Importantly, it is about how these actors arrive at their 'truth' and conceive of their opponent through an understanding based in their faith. This thesis looks at three case studies from Vietnam, Japan, and the Tibetan exile community—all of which broadly

---

[1] Johan Galtung (1995) "On the Politics of Peace Action: Nonviolence and Creativity" in Glenn D. Paige, Lou Ann Ha'aheo Guanson, and George Simson (eds) *Hawai'i Journeys in Nonviolence: Autobiographical Reflections*. Honolulu, Hawai'i: Centre for Global Nonviolence Planning Project, Matsunaga Institute for Peace, University of Hawai'I, 130-131.

[2] Mahinda Deegalle (2003) "Is Violence Justified in the Theravāda Buddhism?" *The Ecumenical Review* 55(2): 122-131 at 129; Sarath N. Silva (2008) "Conflict Resolution: How the Lord Buddha's way offers an answer", *Sunday Times*: http://www.sundaytimes.lk/090510/news/sundaytimesnews_29.html (accessed 18 January 2017).

fall within the Mahayana Buddhist tradition; yet each emphasising different tenets and doctrines in evolving their nonviolent ethos.

In this chapter, I set the broad context for my study of nonviolence, beginning with a discussion of the usage of the term 'religion'. This is followed by a review of the role of religion in violent conflict and a discussion of the resources it offers for peace. The theoretical framework for the thesis will be discussed in Chapter 1.

Defining Religion

To begin with, it is incumbent on me to explain how the term 'religion' will be employed in this thesis. There are various ways in which religion has been conceived. Marx and Freud saw it as a compensatory psychological mechanism to escape the woes of the world,[3] while others have understood religion as a system to shape social relations including those related to class and economy (Weber[4]) or to unite and integrate a community (Durkheim[5]). Still others comprehend religion in terms that are consistent with the worshippers' interpretation of what is sacred following the approach of the phenomenologists of religion.[6]

In contemplating a definition of religion—or the feasibility of arriving at one—Wittgenstein's notion of 'family resemblance'[7] is useful. In his words, family resemblance is characterized by 'a complicated network of similarities [that are] overlapping and criss-crossing.'[8] He refers to the example of 'games' which include board games, card games, ball games, as well as singing and dancing games.[9] Despite the very different content of each from the other, 'each is similar in important respects to some others in the family, though not in all respects to any or in any respect to all. Instead of a set of defining characteristics there is a network of similarities…like the resemblances and differences in build, features, eye colour, gait, temperament and so on among the members of a natural family…There are no characteristics that every member must have; but nevertheless there are characteristics distributed sporadically and in varying degrees which together distinguish this from a different family.'[10] Others have called family resemblance notions 'cluster concepts,'[11] which are characterized by internal complexity and open connections to other concepts.[12]

---

[3] Karl Marx (1976) *Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Sigmund Freud (1957) *The Future of an Illusion* (trans. W.D. Robson-Scott). Garden City, N.Y. : Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co.

[4] Max Weber (1963) *The Sociology of Religion*. Boson: Beacon Press.

[5] Émile Durkheim (1926) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology*. London: G. Allen & Unwin.

[6] Gerardus Van der Leeuw (1963) *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. New York: Harper & Row; William Brede Kristensen (1971) *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion* (trans. John B. Carman). The Haugue: Martinus Nijhoff; Mircea Eliade (1987) *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* translated by Willard R. Trask. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

[7] Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953/2009) *Philosophical Investigations* (trans. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, para. 67. Note: John Hick similarly refers to Wittgenstein in entering into a discussion of the plurality of phenomenon under the designation of 'religion.' See John Hick (2004) *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 3-5.

[8] Wittgenstein, op.cit., para. 66.

[9] Ibid.

[10] John Hick (2004), op.cit., 4.

[11] William E. Connolly (1983) *The Terms of Political Discourse*. Oxford: Martin Robertson, 14.

[12] Ibid.

Similarly, with regard to religion, John Hick sees the different traditions, movements, and ideologies 'not as exemplifying a common essence, but as forming a complex continuum of resemblances and differences analogous to those found within a family.'[13] The overarching 'family resemblance' that Hick identifies in religion is a quality of profound importance that pervades these phenomena which is to be contrasted with matters we ascribe as important in an everyday sense.[14] Of course, within the domain of 'religion' conceived in this way are widely different forms of practice and belief. For example, it might be claimed that the worship of a 'higher unseen power' is widespread among the religion 'family' though this feature is absent from Theravada Buddhism; but the latter can still fall within the rubric of 'religion' as it 'shares many other prominent characteristics of the family, such as claiming to teach the true nature and meaning of life and to show the way to final liberation from suffering.'[15] The merit of understanding religion as a cluster concept is that we can lay to rest the impossible task of coming up with a single, air-tight definition of religion to capture all religious phenomena, and instead identify 'religion' based on family resemblances to locate a particular system of belief and practice within a 'complex, ramified network of related phenomena.'[16]

Whilst I hesitate to adopt a sealed definition of religion, I should nevertheless acknowledge that this thesis largely adopts a social science approach to grasping religion, rather than a theological or philosophical one—although references are made to the theories of these disciplines. Mitchell offers a useful guide for referring to religion by the rule of 'once removed.'[17] That is, to begin analysing the 'religious' by deciding 'whether the institutions, practices and ideas one is analysing are connected to recognizably religious institutions, practices and ideas in a stricter spiritual sense.'[18] Even though an individual's religious beliefs may be ambiguous, beliefs are often still a factor in influencing social relationships, and this approach has the merit of enabling an examination—under the rubric of religion—of social practices associated with those beliefs, the status of which may otherwise be difficult to determine. By this rule, 'attending religious services for social reasons could be classed as religious behaviour because individuals will come into contact with spiritual messages when they participate. When an individual who was socialized into a religious tradition but now does not practice and is unsure of their beliefs, refuses to marry someone of another religion because of their differing beliefs, this might also be classed as a religious act.'[19] Thus in speaking of 'religious violence' in this thesis, I do not mean to suggest that there is anything inherently religious about such acts; but rather that these acts have been carried out in reference to religious symbols or ideas, and/or in association with religious institutions.

Religion, Conflict, and Violence

A number of religious elements can feed into violent conflict. To name a few, these include religion's tendency to focus on the absolute, its claims to exclusive validity,

[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 4-5.
[15] Ibid., 5.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Claire Mitchell (2006) "The Religious Content of Ethnic Identities" *Sociology* 40(6): 1135-1152 at 1135-1136.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid.

overzealous proselytization, internal fragmentation, inflammatory exhortations of religious leaders, and strong convictions of the followers which can increase the willingness to wield aggression.[20] Mark Juergensmeyer, who examines a range of terrorist groups in different religious traditions, also identifies the nature of religious imagination as a factor which gives rise to violence. He explains how this imagination can lead to an absolutism whereby the enemy cannot be transformed but only destroyed in a cosmic war that is being fought.[21] Such cosmic struggles often give meaning to experiences of alienation and marginalization that result from 'economic destitution, social oppression, political corruption, and a desperate need for the hope of rising above the limitations of modern life'[22] and they also provide a sense of exhilaration, empowerment, as well as ideological clarity and collective belonging to the militants involved.[23] Further, violence frequently empowers religion by dramatising an assertion of power and claiming public space in societies that take a secular social ethos for granted.[24]

Although there is much talk of the 'resurgence of religion' in the post-Cold War era, in developing countries where the majority of the population are religious and religion has always played a prominent role in society, it may be misleading to speak of a 'return' to religion.[25] Religion was mobilized in the anti-colonial struggles in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East following the first and second world wars; in the Christian democracy and liberation theology that spread in Latin America in the 1960s; in the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran; and in the rise of the right-wing Hindu nationalist party BJP in the 1990s. Religious political movements in developing countries may simply *seem* more common now due to their increased visibility via global communication networks[26] but political religion in the developing world is not a contemporary phenomenon: it is rather a continuation of 'a series of historical responses to attempts by the State to reduce religion's political influence.'[27]

The recent wave of religious movements around the world is generally seen as deriving from disillusionment with secularism; with the secular state in particular, for its inability to provide adequate democratic participation and basic economic welfare to its populace, but also with secular materialism and the sense of alienation that it engenders.[28] The September 11 attacks; the rise of Islamist groups such as Al Qaida, the Taliban, Jemaah Islamiah, and ISIS; the recent hostage crises and shootings in Australia, France, Copenhagen and elsewhere, have all made headlines and attracted attention to the religious motivations of the groups or individuals involved. Although

---

[20] A-M. Holstein (2006) quoted in Jeffrey Haynes (2010) "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-building: The role of religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia" in Hayes J (Ed) *Religion and Politics: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*. London: Routledge: 221-243 at 222.
[21] Mark Juergensmeyer (2000) *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. Berkeley: University of California Press at 217 & 242.
[22] Ibid., 242.
[23] Ibid.,
[24] Ibid., 224-229, 242-243.
[25] Jeffrey Haynes (1998) *Religion in Global Politics*. London: Longman, 16.
[26] Donald E. Smith (1990) "Limits of Religious Resurgence" in Emile Shaliyeh (ed.) *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 34.
[27] Haynes (1998), op.cit., 16.
[28] Emile Shaliyeh (1990) "Religious resurgence and political modernisation, in Emile Shaliyeh (ed.) *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World.* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 15; Scott Thomas (2000). "Religious resurgence, postmodernism and world politics", in John Esposito & Michael Watson (eds.) *Religion and Global Order*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, pp38-9.

contemporary media coverage in the West has tended to focus on Islamist extremism in its reportage on political religion, the Arab Spring demonstrates that Islam can also be a revolutionary force mobilized in the struggles for democracy, economic upliftment, and human rights.

When considering conflicts and violent acts with a religious dimension, commentators typically differ on the weight they attribute to the underlying political, economic, and social factors on the one hand, and to the religious impetus of the militants on the other. It would be easy to explain away religious violence by claiming that these are actually political and economic conflicts dressed in religious garbs. Whilst acknowledging the importance of non-religious causes of conflict,[29] it is necessary not to turn a blind eye to their religious inspiration, which can provide an internal logic and rationale for the actors beyond what would be expected in secular conflicts. As Juergensmeyer says, where heaven's rewards are promised and the battle is waged in divine time, the religious militant may not be too preoccupied with gains on the worldly plane in his or her life-time, and it is in fact this spiritualization of violence which gives terrorism its remarkable power.[30]

The cosmic dimensions aside, religion also plays a significant role in moulding social identities, and its salience in conflicts should not be underestimated. Religious labels are social markers used by groups to distinguish one another and they can serve as shorthand for cultural and ethno-national differences.[31] As Mitchell points out, '[s]imply because an individual identifies with a religious grouping, it does not necessarily follow that there is anything particularly religious about their sense of self, conception of group membership or understanding of the world. It is recognition of this disjuncture that has caused commentators to conclude that many religious identities are actually ethnic in nature and have little actual religious content.'[32] Religion often feeds into an ethnic identity and it is thus difficult to draw a clear line between religious and ethno-cultural identities; but the causal relationship between the two cannot be presumed to be unidirectional (from religious to ethno-cultural).[33] For example, a person may use a church primarily as a community centre to meet business contacts, but in another week, that same person might find unexpected meaning in the religious service, and at a later stage in life, turn to the church's spiritual messages in times of personal crisis.[34] Thus, even when religious affiliation functions as a social category, the significance of the religious dimension vis-à-vis the ethno-cultural identification remains fluid and changeable.

Samuel Huntington was another thinker who highlighted the pivotal role of religion in constructing social identities. In his 'clash of civilizations' thesis he argued that the post-Cold War global order would be one characterized by clashes between world civilizations, four of which he described in distinctly religious terms—Islamic, Confucian, Hindu and Slav-Orthodox civilizations.[35] What Huntington called

---

[29] Michael Mousseau (2002/03) "Market Civilisation and Its Clash with Terror," *International Security* Winter: 2-19; John Gray (1998) "Global Utopias and Clashing Civilisations: Misunderstanding the Present," *International Affairs* 74(1) January: 149-163 at 150-151.
[30] Juergensmeyer (2000), op.cit., 217.
[31] Mitchell, op.cit., 1135-1136.
[32] Ibid., 1135.
[33] Ibid., 1135-1139.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Huntington does not admit the Buddhist culture as a 'world civilisation' due to the fact that Buddhism was variously adapted and assimilated into the indigenous cultures where spread. See Samuel Huntington (1996) *The Clash of Civilisations and the Making of the World Order*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 47.

'civilization' is a melange of ethnicity and religion, and he maintained that the differences based on such identities would manifest in disagreements over human rights, immigration, trade, environment, and gradually escalate to more serious conflicts.[36] Contrary to the dominant secularization thesis of the 1950s and 60s, which predicted that religion will become increasingly relegated to the private sphere,[37] Huntington perceived that religion, together with ethnicity, would figure as a visible public force in post-Cold War international politics. He thus underlined the disintegrative effects of globalization,[38] viewing the greater interaction between peoples around the world as serving to heighten their sense of civilisational consciousness since 'people define their identity by what they are not.'[39]

Huntington had cogently argued that secular Western liberalism does not command universal assent,[40] and yet the problem with his paradigm is that if a state formulates policies according to the idea of clashing civilisations, such policies are likely to produce a 'dangerous self-fulfilling prophesy,' creating enemies who might otherwise be neutral or friendly.[41] The inherent cultural determinism of his thesis also obscures other important economic and political dynamics present in religious conflicts and results in a particularist position where commonalities between cultures are unwarrantedly minimised. This type of cultural essentialism leads to an 'us'/'them' characterisation that diminishes the things we share as human beings.[42]

The so-called religious conflicts may thus be spurred by the imagination of a cosmic struggle, or identity politics based on religion as a social marker, or by the intermingling of religious affiliation with more this-worldly political, economic, and social demands. Although the impetus of religion in violent conflicts cannot be denied, religious agency can equally take strong expression in movements of nonviolence and peace. Those who understand the potency of religion also know that as much as religion can be a cause of violence, it has the potential to be its cure.[43] Much of the rise of contemporary religious violence is a reaction against a secular society's attempt to dilute and confine the place of religion in public life. Yet if religion could 'enter the public arena in an undogmatic and unobtrusive way,'[44] then it could also be given the chance to draw on its manifold resources to energize a movement for progressive social improvement.

Religions can legitimate the status quo and provide structures for stasis but they can also be a revolutionary force, and nurture actors who struggle for social change. Appleby calls both the religiously inspired peacemakers as well as the violent extremists, 'militants'—for both share a fervent commitment to social engagement; and he locates the difference between them not in the use of physical violence itself but in the militant's attitude toward violence and his or her understanding of its role in

---

[36] Samuel Huntington (1993) "The Clash of Civilisations?" *Foreign Affairs*, Summer: 22-49.
[37] Peter L. Berger (1999) *Desecularisation of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington D.C.: Ethics Public Policy.
[38] For a contrasting perspective which highlights the integrative dynamic of globalization, see Mousseau, op.cit., 7 & 17; Francis Fukuyama (1992) *The End of History and the Last Man*. New York: The Free Press; Francis Fukuyama (1989) "The End of History?" *National Interest* 16(Summer): 3-18.
[39] Huntington (1996), op.cit., 67.
[40] Gray, op.cit., 156.
[41] Stephen M. Walt (1997) "Building up New Bogeymen" *Foreign Policy* 106, Spring: 189.
[42] Edward Said (1978) *Orientalism*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp12-4.
[43] Mark Juergensmeyer (2008) *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al Qaida*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 266; Juergensmeyer (2000), op.cit., xii and 243; R. Scott Appleby (2000) The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 7.
[44] Juergensmeyer (2000), op.cit., 240.

conflict: 'The religious peacemaker is committed primarily to the cessation of violence and the resolution of conflict: reconciliation or peaceful coexistence with the enemy is the ultimate goal. By contrast the extremist is committed primarily to victory over the enemy, whether by gradual means or by the direct and frequent use of violence.'[45] The fundamental difference between the extremist and the peacemaker then lies in the militant's view of the opponent, and how they relate to that religious, ethnic, or political 'other.'

Peace Resources in Religion

For peacemakers, religious traditions offer a treasure-house of resources. Firstly, as approximately two-thirds of the global population identifies with a religion, religious organizations often constitute the biggest civil society actor in a country.[46] Religious actors can also draw on its transnational networks to engage in peace activities abroad or in the countries of their co-religionists. Religious organizations and leaders are often called upon to exercise moral leadership by the local community, and thus have an enormous influence in many conflict-affected countries, especially where the state has sunken to dysfunction or disrepute. Finally, in the major world religions, one finds extensive teachings on peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation.[47] Even where a just war tradition is found within a given religion, religious teachings can often temper the excesses of war by giving guidance on the proper conduct of war including protection of the vulnerable.[48]

The potential of these peace resources have been recognised even by secular institutions and efforts to harness this potential have arisen in recent decades. For example, in 2000 the United Nations held a Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, attended by over a thousand leading religious and spiritual figures, with the aim of promoting interfaith cooperation to help resolve violent conflicts in the world. The summit resulted in the creation of the World Council of Religious Leaders in 2002, which seeks to support the work of the United Nations (U.N.) and other international organizations in the quest for peace by acting in an advisory capacity.[49]

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) has also sought to tap into religion's potential and began a Religion and Peacemaking Programme (RPP) in 2000, which offers peacebuilding skills training to religious actors with the aim of fostering

---

[45] Appleby, op.cit., 13.

[46] Andrea Bartoli (2005) "Conflict Prevention: the Role of Religion is the Role of its Actors" *New Routes* 10(3): 3-7 at 3; Chadwick F. Alger (2002) "Religion as a Peace Tool" *Ethnopolitics* 1(4): 94-109.

[47] Bartoli, ibid., 213-219; Alger, ibid., 216.

[48] See for example, Vesselin Popovski, Gregory M. Reichberg, and Nicholas Turner (Eds) (2009) *World Religions and the Norms of War*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

[49] The World Council of Religious Leaders (2002) "About the World Council" The World Council of Religious Leaders Website: http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.org/wc_about.html (accessed 12 February 2015). Initiatives in which the council has been involved include a partnership with the U.N. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to bring religious and spiritual voices to combat intolerance and racism; the Religious Leaders Initiative of the World Economic Forum in 2001; the religious component of the World Youth Summit in 2006; facilitation of international interfaith dialogue in Iran; and the establishment of an International Congress on the Preservation of Religious Diversity in India to address tensions between Christian and Hindu communities.

peaceful inter- and intra-faith cooperation.[50] The RPP was created out of a recognition that there is need to mobilize religious resources to counter violence in places where religion is a driving force behind the conflict.[51] The programme began with a number of survey meetings to highlight the peacebuilding activities of several faith communities, and also focused on promoting interfaith dialogue in divided societies such as the Balkans, Nigeria, Israel-Palestine, and Sudan.[52] Recent RPP projects focus on countries like Pakistan, Iraq, Myanmar, and Nigeria, and on issues concerning women, conflict and peace.[53]

An organization created on the initiative of religious believers is Religions for Peace, the world's largest multi-faith coalition for the advancement of peace and interfaith cooperation. The organization was created in 1970 (though its origins date back to the 1960s), and since October 1970, it has organized the World Conference of Religions for Peace (WCRP) on a regular basis to promote interfaith peace work.[54] Religions for Peace is today a U.N. accredited organization which undertakes work on interfaith dialogue in 92 countries. A major part of the organization's global work is the creation of inter-religious councils (IRCs), which exist in such places as Sierra Leone, Liberia, Kenya, Cambodia, Israel, Bosnia, and Kosovo, to name a few.

Peace action by religious actors can take various forms. They may be in the mode of negotiation and mediation, such as the work of Sant' Egidio, a Catholic organization which had played a pivotal role in Mozambique from 1989 to 1992 in bringing an end to the country's civil war by mediating between the government and the insurgents of the Mozambican National Resistance.[55] The diplomatic effort of the Pope from 1978 to 1984 in mediating the territorial conflict between Argentina and Chile over several islands is another example of religious peacemaking.[56] Religious peace activities may take the form of education and training, peacebuilding programmes and post-conflict development. For example, the Dhammayietra (meaning 'pilgrimage of Truth') peace marches in Cambodia led by Buddhist patriarch Maha Ghosananda had helped to build popular confidence prior to the 1993 elections and to overcome the fear of Khmer Rouge violence, so that in the end 90 percent of the Cambodian electorate participated in the polling.[57] Although the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Cambodia created the immediate conditions for the elections, it is said that the broad popular participation was, to a great extent, due to the success of the Dhammayietra.[58]

---

[50] United States Institute of Peace (2016) "Religion and Peacebuilding, GLAS: Center for Governance, Law and Society" United States Institute of Peace website: http://www.usip.org/centers/religion-and-peacebuilding-center (accessed 11 February 2015).

[51] Susan Hayward (2012) *Religion and Peacebuilding: Reflections on Current Challenges and Future Prospects* [Special Report 313]. Washington: United States Institute of Peace.

[52] Ibid., p6.

[53] See Religion and Peacebuilding Center (2016), op.cit.

[54] Religions for Peace (2016) "History" Religions for Peace website: http://www.religionsforpeace.org/vision-history/history (accessed 14 February 2015).

[55] David Smock (2002) "Divine Intervention: Regional Reconciliation through Faith" *Harvard International Review* 25(4), Winter: 46–50 at 48. Sant' Egidio was also referred to in the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations (known as the Brahimi Report) as a successful example of peacemaking by NGOs.

[56] Luc Reychler (1997) "Religion and Conflict" *The International Journal of Peace Studies* 2(1): 19-38 at 30.

[57] Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith (2004) *Religion and Peacebuilding*. New York: State University of New York Press, 6-7.

[58] Ibid, 7.

Religious believers have also been active in advocacy, civil disobedience, and social reform efforts. The nonviolent struggle of Mahatma Gandhi which drew on numerous Hindu symbols; the Khudai Khidmatgar ("Servants of God") movement of the Pashtun Muslims under Abdul Ghaffar Khan; the Liberation Theology developed in Latin America in the 1950s; and the black civil rights movement in the US led by Baptist minister Martin Luther King Jr. are just a few examples where religiously inspired actors have sought to overcome social injustice and build peace. Further, spiritual guidance to bring about forgiveness, reconciliation and healing can play a central role in achieving restorative justice in a post-conflict society, as demonstrated by the involvement of religious actors in the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions of countries like South Africa and Sierra Leone.[59]

Conclusion

As the above examples indicate, there are numerous ways in which religion can contribute to peace and positive social transformation. The focus of this thesis is on one such aspect—nonviolence. It is my belief that a study of the sources of nonviolence and peace in religion has implications for public policy. As Appleby says, when faced with a choice between violence and nonviolent resistance, 'ordinary believers are not always sufficiently grounded in the teachings and practices of their own tradition to counter arguments based on scriptures and doctrines carefully chosen for their seeming endorsement of violence or ambivalence about its use.'[60] For this reason, religious extremists are often able to prey on the young and untutored to recruit them into their fold. Conversely, religious peacemakers and nonviolent actors are conspicuously under-supported in material terms compared to violent extremists: 'while the religious extremist is often integrated into a well-organized movement, armed to the teeth, expertly trained, lavishly funded, ideologically disciplined, and involved in a kind of "ecumenical" collaboration with other violence-prone organizations, the religious peacemaker is, with some promising and notable exceptions, relatively isolated, underfunded, unskilled in the techniques of conflict transformation, and overlooked.'[61] Although there have been some international efforts to promote the peace potential of religion, these efforts need to be stepped up, better organized, and adequately funded. Religious actors are effective when they remain as religious actors.[62] What is perhaps required of researchers today is to offer insights to policy-makers to sufficiently recognize religion's potential for peace and nonviolence. It is to this end that this study hopes to contribute.

---

[59] H. Russell Botman (2004) "Truth and Reconciliation: The South Africa Case" in Harold Coward, H. and Gordon S. Smith (Eds). *Religion and Peacebuilding*. New York: State University of New York Press, 243-260; J. Peter Pham (2004) "Lazarus Rising: Civil Society and Sierra Leone's Return from the Grave" *The International Journal of Not-For-Profit Law* 7(1): http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol7iss1/art_2.htm (accessed 18 February 2015).
[60] Appleby, op.cit., 17
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid., 16.

Chapter 1

Theoretical Framework and Methodology

In this chapter, I set out the theoretical framework in which my case studies of the three Mahayana Buddhist nonviolent movements will be situated. First, I examine the past and recent literature on nonviolence, which provides the conceptual tools for analysing the political dynamics of nonviolent action. Within this literature, I indicate where I hope to make a theoretical contribution. For a full appreciation of the Buddhist nonviolent movements, however, it is necessary to go beyond a purely political science perspective. In the following section, therefore, I review three types of literature on the theory of 'two truths', an ideological dynamic which I contend lies at the heart of religiously inspired nonviolence. The theory of two truths is referred to explicitly by the Tibetan Buddhists but the concept usefully aids the analysis of the other two case studies as well. In the final section, I look at conceptualisations of the 'other' drawing mainly on the work of religious pluralism. The question of how an actor perceives the 'other', which includes the 'opponent', has an important bearing on the way the nonviolent actor approaches conflict. The conceptual tools discussed in this chapter will form a theoretical point of reference to which I will continue to return during the thesis.

Nonviolence Theory

While the concept of nonviolence is an old one, as an academic focus, studies on nonviolence expanded after Gandhi's remarkable movement in India which led the country to independence from the British Empire without resort to violence.[1] There is a significant body of literature on the subject of nonviolence—often, though not exclusively, within the discipline of Peace and Conflict Studies—and in this thesis, I refer to this scholarship as 'nonviolence theory'. The first academic commentary on nonviolence was possibly that of Case (1923)[2] though it was Richard Gregg's *The Power of Nonviolence* (1934)[3] which introduced Gandhi's method to the Western world in a scholarly sense and demonstrated that nonviolence was not only an ethical or religious principle but also a 'self-conscious method of social action with its own logic and strategy.'[4] Gregg's book was among the top texts that influenced the thinking of Martin Luther King Jr.[5] The period from the 1930s to 1950s saw works

[1] Sharon Erickson Nepstad & Lester R. Kurtz (Eds) (2012) "Introduction" in *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: xi-xxvii, xiv; Lester R. Kurtz (2008) "Gandhi and his legacies" in *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*. Amsterdam: Elsevier: 837-851.
[2] Clarence Marshall Case (1923) *Nonviolent Coercion: A Study in Methods of Social Pressure*. New York: Century.
[3] Richard Gregg (1934) *The Power of Nonviolence.* London: James Clark & Co.
[4] Joseph Kip Kosek (2005) "Richard Gregg, Mohandas Gandhi, and the Strategy of Nonviolence" *The Journal of American History* 91(4): 1318-1348 at 1320.
[5] Ibid, 1318.

emerge on the political, psychological, and moral questions raised by Gandhian nonviolence. Lipsitz and Kritzer note that while one group of scholars concentrated on the example of the Indian independence movement, another focused on finding alternatives to the 'specter of nuclear war created by the bombing of Hiroshima.'[6] From the late 1950s, there was also debate about using nonviolence for purposes of national defense,[7] what commentators at the time called 'civilian defense', for which feasibility studies were commissioned by the governments of Denmark and Sweden in the 1970s.[8] Since then, there has emerged a range of literature which seeks to explain nonviolence, its dynamics in action, and factors that lead to its success. In this section, I briefly review some of the key ideas and theories in this extant scholarship to situate my research.

It is instructive to consider at the outset how nonviolence has been conceived in this literature and the contestations over the concept. Excepting the case of euthanasia, there seems to be a basic consensus in the scholarship that nonviolence entails at the very least, an avoidance of inflicting physical harm on others. The contestation over the meaning of nonviolence takes place primarily between those who espouse nonviolence as a *policy*, and those who embrace it as their *creed*.[9] The schism has been an enduring one; it was expressed by Gandhi in his distinction between 'nonviolence of the weak' and 'nonviolence of the strong (or brave)'[10] and received scholarly discussion in terms of 'pragmatic' and 'conscientious' nonviolence in Stiehm's 1968 article, 'Nonviolence is Two'.[11] A lucid depiction of these types is captured in Burrowes' explanation of pragmatic and principled approaches to nonviolence;[12] the distinction of which appeared in the works of various others prior to his.[13] At the risk of formulaic simplification, Burrowes offers a useful checklist in elucidating the two (see Table 1).

---

[6] See Lewis Lipsitz & Herbert M. Kritzer (1975) "Unconventional Approaches to Conflict Resolution: Erikson and Sharp on Nonviolence" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 19(4): 713-733 at 714.

[7] See Stephen King-Hall (1958) *Defence in the Nuclear Age*. London: Gollancz; Gene Sharp (1959) "Britain considers her weapons: a record of debate" *Gandhi Marg* 3: 104-126; Herbert M. Kritzer (1974) "Nonviolent National Defense: Concepts and Implications" *Peace Research Reviews* 5(2): 1-57; Adam Roberts (1967) *The Strategy of Civilian Defence*. London: Faber & Faber; Gene Sharp (1971) *Exploring Nonviolent Alternatives*. Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher; Robert J. Burrowes (1996) *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

[8] Anders Boserup & Andrew Mack (1974) *War Without Weapons: Nonviolence in National Defence*. London: Frances Pinter.

[9] The policy/creed distinction can be found in the works of: Ralph Crow, Philip Grant and Saad I. Ibrahim (eds). (1990) *Arab Nonviolent Political Struggle in the Middle East*, London: Lynn Rienner, viii; Raghavan Iyer (1973) *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 192-199.

[10] For Gandhi, those who employ nonviolence as a policy adopt 'nonviolence of the weak' or 'passive resistance', whereas 'nonviolence of the strong' belongs to those who espouse nonviolence as their creed. Thus, when the Hindu-Muslim hostility broke out before Independence, Gandhi proclaimed that he had failed to spread 'non-violence of the strong' to India: "I have admitted my mistake. I thought our struggle was based on nonviolence, whereas in reality, it was no more than passive resistance which essentially is a weapon of the weak. It leads naturally to armed resistance whenever possible". Mohandas K. Gandhi (1948) *Nonviolence in Peace and War* Vol. 2*,* Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publishing, 276.

[11] Judith Stiehm (1968). "Nonviolence is Two" *Sociological Inquiry* 38, Winter, 23-30.

[12] Burrowes, op.cit., 98-101. Note that his diagrammatical model of the range of nonviolent action also contains a second measure pertaining to the activeness of nonviolence. This is encapsulated in the reformist-revolutionary axis which lies perpendicular to the pragmatic-principled axis. However, for my purposes, it suffices that I elaborate only on the latter.

[13] Boserup & Mack, op.cit., 11-16; Gene Sharp (1992) 'To the Editor' *Civilian-Based Defense* 8, October, 13-15.

Exponents of pragmatic nonviolence perceive nonviolent methods as most effective for their purpose at a given time and context. They hold a negative view of the opponent who is seen as holding essentially incompatible interests to themselves, and they aim to defeat their opponent by inflicting suffering on them even if by nonviolent methods. Since they are prepared to use violence to pursue their end if nonviolence no longer proves the most effective means,[14] they conceive means and ends as resting in separate ethical spheres.[15] Votaries of 'principled nonviolence,' on the other hand, consider nonviolent methods as ethically best, see means and end as indivisible and accept suffering caused by the opponent rather than resort to inflicting suffering; that is, they highlight the value for self-sacrifice. In emphasising an existence of an essential unity between themselves and their opponent, these actionists assert the need for maintaining feelings of goodwill or love towards their opponent and approach conflict as a shared problem. Nonviolence is often viewed as a way of life by these actionists.[16] Of course it must be noted that, in actuality, the division between the two is less stark, and Burrowes is at pains to point out that such categories are 'broadly descriptive rather than definitive.'[17]

Table 1 Pragmatic and Principled Approaches[18]

Criterion	Pragmatic Nonviolence	Principled Nonviolence
Nature of commitment	Most effective	Ethically best
Means and ends	Separate	Indivisible
Approach to conflict	Incompatible interests	Shared problem
Approach to opponent	Inflict suffering	Accept suffering
Nonviolence as a way of life?	No	Probably

GANDHIAN NONVIOLENCE

Based on the schema above, Gandhi's creed would fall into principled nonviolence. In fact, Gandhi infused much more meaning into nonviolence (s. *ahiṃsā*) than the simple abstention from causing material harm to others. According to him:

> In spite of the negative particle 'non'…*Ahimsa* is no negative force…*Ahimsa* means 'love' in the Pauline sense, and yet something more than the 'love' defined by St Paul…*Ahimsa* includes the whole creation and not only human. Besides, love in the English language has other connotations too, and so I was compelled to use the negative word.[19]

[14] Even while engaging in a nonviolent campaign, pragmatic activists are at times willing to use unethical tactics such as deception, secrecy or sabotage, despite their belief in the righteousness of their cause. see Burrowes, op cit., 113

[15] The theory of the discontinuity of means and ends finds its origin in the work of Pareto. For a discussion on the evolution of Pareto's theory in the context of nonviolence theory, see Birendranath N. Ganguli (1973) *Gandhi's Social Philosophy.* Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 398-415.

[16] Burrowes, op. cit., 100, 106-112. Also see Gene Sharp (1960) *Gandhi Wields the Weapon of Moral Power: Three Case Histories*, Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan, pxiii, p4.

[17] He claims, therefore, that 'individuals or campaigns might adopt a particular approach but utilize some characteristics normally associated with another approach. Burrowes, ibid, 100.

[18] This table is replicated from Burrowes' work. Ibid.

[19] Quoted in an article entitled 'With Our Negro Guests' in C. B. Dalal (ed.), *Gandhi: 1915-48, A detailed Chronology*, 1st ed, New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation in collaboration with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1971, excerpted in Mary King (1999) *Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr;*

Elsewhere, he stated, '[i]n its positive form, Ahimsa means the largest love, the greatest charity. If I am a follower of Ahimsa, I must love my enemy.'[20] Still elsewhere he claimed: '[b]elief in nonviolence is based on the assumption that human nature in its essence is one and therefore unfailingly responds to the advances of love.'[21] Gandhi's centralisation of love in conceiving nonviolence – a centralisation which is espoused by other scholars and activists in various forms of modification[22]— is also an assertion that nonviolence must be seen in its discursive and moral embodiment, not only in its material manifestation.

For him, both violence and nonviolence must be scrutinised at the level of thought. His concept of *himsa* (violence) has a much wider meaning than simply an infliction of physical injury. As Naess states, it is closer to meaning something like 'not avoiding injury…in thought, word or deed'[23] and hence by this standard, he who flees in cowardice is guilty of 'mental violence' as well.[24] In fact an often-quoted line from Gandhi is that 'where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence I would advise violence.'[25] For Gandhi, nonviolence also starts at the level of thought, and it is to find expression in the ideational elements of love, compassion and goodwill.

Gandhi termed his nonviolent method 'satyagraha' which is usually translated as 'truth-force' or 'soul-force'. 'Satyagraha' is a compound term that joins the Sanskrit words *satya* (truth) with *agraha* (insistence or determined pursuit), and literally it means 'holding onto truth'.[26] This is a method which involved civil disobedience, noncooperation, boycotts, strikes, hartals (closure of shops and offices in protest), and occasionally hunger strikes, but above all, it is a method by which the practitioner insists upon the 'truth' as she or he understands it after deep introspection and reflection.

This method is marked by a number of characteristics. First, Gandhi insisted on the indivisibility of means and ends in that there was to be an 'inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree.'[27] Therefore, if peace was the goal, the means to that end also had to be peaceful, however active; that is, a genuine resolution to conflict could not be achieved through violence or unjust means. Second, discipline and self-suffering play a critical role Gandhian nonviolence in that it is these qualities that demonstrate the sincerity and deep

---

The Power of Nonviolent Action. Paris: UNESCO Publishing; Leroy H. Pelton (1974) *The Psychology of Nonviolence.* New York: Pergamon Press, 220.

[20] Arne Naess (1974) *Gandhi and Group Conflict: An Exploration of Satyagraha.* Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 50.

[21] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1948) *Nonviolence in Peace and War*, Vol. 1, Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publishing, 175.

[22] See Gregg, op.cit., 49-50; Case, op.cit., 138f; T.K.N. Unnithan and Yogendra Singh (1973) *Traditions of Nonviolence.* New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann, 11. Joan Bondurant (1988) *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 28. Gene Sharp (1959) "Types of Principled Nonviolence", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3, March, 44-61; Pam McAllister (1999) "You Can't Kill the Spirit: Women and Nonviolent Action", Stephen Zunes, Lester. R. Kurthz & Sarah Beth Asher (eds.), *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective*, Oxford: Blackwell, 19. Pitirim Sorokin (1954) *The Ways and Power of Love: Types, Factors, and Techniques of Moral Transformation.* Boston: Beacon Press, 58-60.

[23] Naess (1974), op. cit., 45-46.

[24] Ibid, 46.

[25] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1961) *Nonviolent Resistance.* New York: Schocken Books, 132.

[26] See Ajay Shanker Rai (2000) *Gandhian Satyagraha: An Analytical and Critical Approach* (Gandhian Studies and Peace Research Series No. 14). New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 36.

[27] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1909/1999) "Hind Swaraj" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 10. New Delhi: Government of India: 245-315 at 287.

conviction of the actionists.[28] Gandhi's fasts and vows, his silence, and his prayer meetings were noted for their familiar resemblance to *tapas/tapasya*, the austere discipline of devout Hindu ascetics.[29] In the course of carrying out satyagraha, he would call on his followers to be ready even for the highest sacrifice: '[j]ust as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training of nonviolence…The votary of nonviolence must cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type…'[30]

This insistence on self-suffering served several purposes in his nonviolent campaigns. On the one hand, Gandhi believed that suffering 'pierces the heart'[31] and that to truly convert one's political opponents, it was not enough to simply appeal to their head through rational arguments.[32] On the other hand, self-suffering was also a way to guard against the mistakes of the *satyagrahi*.[33] If the cause or the 'truth' insisted by the actionists turns out to be unjust or erroneous, then only the persons wielding the nonviolent method suffers, and they do not make others suffer for their mistakes.[34] By placing the burden of acting squarely on the *satyagrahis*, therefore, the Gandhian method embeds a fundamental safeguard against the fallibility of human judgement.

Third, Gandhi considered what he called a 'constructive programme' to be an essential complement to his satyagraha movement, and it may be regarded as the 'flipside' of a movement of civil disobedience and noncooperation.[35] This was a programme that demanded an exercise of active goodwill to the socially marginalized on the part of *satyagrahis*, with the aim of asserting a positive alternative to the injustice resisted by the nonviolent movement. Gandhi's constructive programme entailed modes of 'self-rule' which began at the village level, and included such elements as the promotion of *kadhi* (home-spun cloth), establishment of cottage industries, elimination of untouchability, service to farmers, tribal groups, people with leprosy, as well as social improvement campaigns for heath, sanitation, education, and the prohibition of alcohol.[36] Thus, the constructive programme reflected Gandhi's social ideals in its effort to abolish all forms of structural injustice and discrimination, promote manual labour and self-sufficiency, and improve basic social services.

---

[28] As Gregg states, 'to be willing to suffer and die for a cause is an incontestable proof of sincere belief and perhaps in most cases the only incontestable proof.' Gregg, op. cit., 47.

[29] see Joshi Subhadra (ed.) (1967) *RSS: A Danger to Democracy.* Sampradayikta Virodhi Committee, New Delhi, p18.

[30] Gandhi (1948) Vol 1, op.cit., 335. Also quoted in Bondurant (1988) op.cit., 27. He also says: "Suffering injury to one's person…is of the essence of nonviolence…It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for Satyagraha, but because I know that it results in the long run in the least loss of life, and what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives and morally enriches the world for their sacrifice." See Gandhi, M.K. (1944) *Nonviolence in Peace and War*, 2nd ed., Ahmedabad: Nivajivan, 49.

[31] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1939/1999) "Requisite Qualifications" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 75. New Delhi: Government of India: 195-196 at 196. Elsewhere he said that "Real suffering bravely borne melts even a heart of stone. Such is the potency of suffering, or tapas. And there lies the key to Satyagraha." Mohandas K. Gandhi (1925/1999) "Satyagraha in South Africa" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 34. New Delhi: Government of India:1-277 at 18.

[32] Karuna Mantena (2012) "Another Realism: The Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence" *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 455-470 at 463.

[33] Practitioner of *satyagraha*.

[34] Gandhi (1909/1999), op.cit., 293.

[35] Mentena, op.cit., 465.

[36] Ibid; Mohandas K. Gandhi (1941/1999) "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 81. New Delhi: Government of India: 355-374

CREATIVITY AND POSITIVE NONVIOLENCE

The constructive element of satyagraha points to the importance of creativity in nonviolence. Gandhian scholar Joan Bondurant draws a distinction between 'symbolic violence' and 'creative conflict'. She says that much of what passes for nonviolent action is in fact 'symbolic violence', which has an objective that is destructive or reflects an unconscious wish to destroy one's enemies.[37] On the other hand 'creative conflict', which characterizes satyagraha, is marked by a constructive approach to conflict, neatly summed up by two axioms: 'one ought to act in a group struggle in such a way that long-run hostility will be reduced to a minimum' and 'one ought to act in such a way that his opponent is allowed or encouraged to grow.'[38] Creative conflict or satyagraha thus aims at transforming the relationship between the nonviolent actionists and their opponents[39] in a manner which not only effects a change in policy, but also 'assures the restructuring of the situation which lead to conflict. This calls for modification of attitudes and requires fulfilment of the significant needs of all parties originally in conflict.'[40] These principled nonviolent actors adhere to a method of introspection whereby there is a self-questioning of one's justification in asking an opponent to heed one's demands, and any undertakings or counter-suggestions of the opponent are to be given full consideration.[41] Actionists are expected to be ever willing to change their position, depending on the 'truth' they reach as a result of self-inquiry. I illustrate the approach and aims of creative conflict, including its attitudinal dynamics, in the diagram below (Figure 1).

Johan Galtung, often considered the 'father of peace studies' also places great weight on creativity in conflict resolution.[42] Galtung speaks of both negative and positive nonviolence: while the negative conception may be simply abstention from causing violence (which is defined to include biological incapacitation, reduction of action-space, negative influence, and interference with free will),[43] the positive conception gives more content than mere abstention and points to a desired change. He states that nonviolent action in the Western tradition tends to be negative nonviolence in that generally:

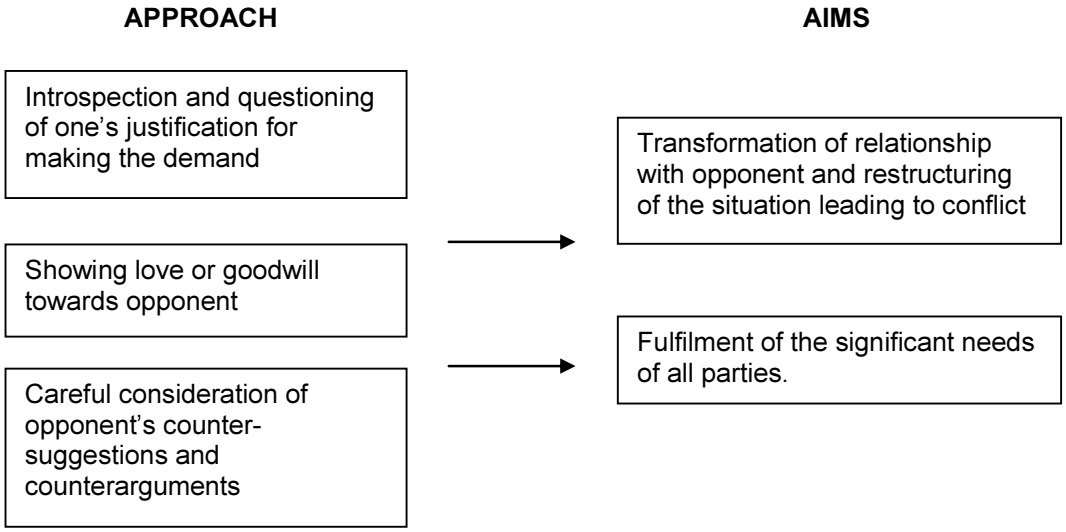
> (1) most nonviolent actions have been engaged in by people as deeply biased in favour of negative influence as the society around them,
> (2) they have refrained from violence for the simple reason that they have not had access to its tools, namely arms,
> (3) the distance between the NVA [nonviolent action] group and its antagonists has been considerable, partly as rank distance in the society (between classes or ethnic groups), partly due to polarization in conflict (as during a fight of liberation), and this has impeded the development of more positive techniques.[44]

---

[37] Joan Bondurant (1971) *Conflict: Violence and Nonviolence.* Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, 126-128.
[38] These axioms are paraphrased by Bondurant from the works of Naess and Erikson. Ibid, 122. See also Arne Naess (1958) "A Systematization of Gandhian Ethics of Conflict Resolution", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, II, n2, June; Erik Erikson (1964) *Insight and Responsibility.* Chapter 6, New York: W.W. Norton.
[39] In the words of Gandhi, nonviolent change "is a program of transformation of relationships, ending in a peaceful transfer of power." See Gandhi (1948) Vol. 2, op.cit., 8.
[40] Bondurant, op.cit., 123.
[41] Ibid., 122-30.
[42] Galtung (1995), op.cit., 129-133
[43] Johan Galtung (1965) "On the Meaning of Nonviolence" *Journal of Peace Research* 2(3): 228-257 at 235
[44] Ibid., 243.

Galtung claims that because of the structural similarity of negative nonviolence to violence, the probability that violence is used once the nonviolent group has access to arms will be high.[45] Violence has the function of announcing where negative actions of the opponent are located, as do nonviolent actions such as picketing, vigilance, strikes, boycotts, noncooperation, and self-suffering.[46] Yet, according to him, what is missing is a way of pointing out to the opponent where the positive actions are located. Thus, for example, 'one might not only destroy mines, harbors and other facilities so that an invader could not make use of them, but facilitate his participation in other activities considered desirable, such as common enterprises, coproduction, etc, and seeking contact with the adversary.'[47] Positive nonviolence is more difficult than negative nonviolence—as it is always easier to assert what the opponent should not do than to say what should be done—but the merit of the positive approach is its potential 'structuring effect' to change the relations between the nonviolent actionist and opponent for the better.[48]

FIGURE I Approach and Aims of Bondurant's Creative Conflict[49]



The creative approaches described by Bondurant and Galtung echo Gandhi's constructive programme in emphasising the exercise of active goodwill or a willingness to coexist with the opponent, and in aiming for the transformation of conflict and structures of violence through engagement in a positive alternative to the object of resistance. Creative conflict also highlights the value of self-reflexivity in that the nonviolent actors are called upon to introspect on the justification for their own demand and seriously consider the counter-suggestions of the opponent. What is

[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid., 244 & 246.
[47] Ibid., 245.
[48] Ibid., 244, 250-253,
[49] This diagram is my pictorial illustration of the main characteristics of creative conflict as outlined by Bondurant. See Ibid, 122-30. Her approach is very much based on the Gandhian ideal that nonviolent change "is a program of transformation of relationships, ending in a peaceful transfer of power." See Gandhi (1948) Vol 2, op.cit., 8.

at stake here is an inquiry about the 'truth' of the situation as understood from the respective perspectives of the nonviolent actor and the opponent. Thus, nonviolence understood in this way, is 'a force containing within itself seeds of progressive self-restraint,'[50] for the onus and consequences of action (including the assertion of mistaken truths) are turned inward and borne by the nonviolent actor.[51] Below, I return to the subject of 'truth' as a theme which lies at the heart of nonviolent action.

THE WORK OF GENE SHARP

Sharp is perhaps the most influential scholar in the studies of nonviolence. As the author of the near-definitive work of three volumes entitled *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*[52] which documents historical cases of nonviolence from around the world and lists 198 nonviolent techniques, he is often considered 'the patron theorist of nonviolent action around the world.'[53] His writings have had far-reaching practical influence: they are frequently used in various training workshops on nonviolent action around the world and his iconic handbook *From Dictatorship to Democracy* 'has been translated into so many languages and downloaded from the internet that it almost provides a trail of recent nonviolent insurgencies.'[54] If Gandhi provides the archetype for 'principled nonviolence', Sharp represents 'pragmatic nonviolence'—the differences between the two thinkers exemplifying the conceptual divide.

According to Sharp, methods of nonviolent action include: (1) protest (producing awareness of the existence of dissent), (2) noncooperation (causing difficulties to the opponent in maintaining the normal efficiency and operation of the system), and (3) intervention (challenging the opponent more directly, such as through sit-ins, fasts, strikes, nonviolent obstructions, invasion, and parallel government).[55] He explains that in wielding these methods, there are three mechanisms by which change can be achieved: by *nonviolent conversion* of the opponent to the position embraced by the nonviolent actor; by *nonviolent accommodation*, where the opponent, though not converted, decides to accept the demands of the actionists in a situation where the opponent still has a choice; and by *nonviolent coercion*, where the resistance to the opponent becomes so widespread that the opponent is no longer able to control it through repression and the system becomes paralysed.[56]

The insistence by Gandhi that satyagraha must be based on conversion rather than coercion has been contested, since in cases of the most direct and energetic nonviolent resistance, the effect on the opponent is frequently observed to be coercive. As Mantena says, 'Despite Gandhi's careful calibrations of the fine line between coercion and conversion, they often appeared to his critics to be little more than sophistries, and the charge that nonviolence necessarily works through moral coercion has continued to shadow it.'[57] Gandhi's 'careful calibrations' of course spring from his moral preoccupation—something that does not constrain Sharp's more scholarly account.

---

[50] Gandhi (1925/1999), op.cit., 174.
[51] Mantena, op.cit., 463.
[52] Gene Sharp (1973) *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers.
[53] Brian Martin (1989) "Gene Sharp's Theory of Power" *Journal of Peace Research* 26(2): 213-222 at 219-20.
[54] Nepstad & Kurtz, op.cit., xvi.
[55] Sharp (1973), op.cit., Vol 1; Sharp (1971), op.cit., 32-33.
[56] Sharp (1971), op.cit., 33-34.
[57] Mantena, op.cit., 467. See also Bondurant who also saw *satyagraha* as constituting at times nonviolent coercion. Bondurant (1958), op.cit., 9-11.

Another difference between Gandhi and Sharp concerns the role of love in nonviolent action. Whereas principled theorists like Gandhi hold that practising love towards one's opponent is an essential part of the nonviolent creed, pragmatic theorists like Sharp contend that 'love' towards one's enemy is not, and should not be, a primary requirement of nonviolence but is at best, a 'secondary refinement' to the nonviolent tactic.[58] Sharp concedes that refusing to hate, or demonstrating goodwill to the opponent group may lead to greater chances of success; yet he maintains it is possible for hostility, ill will and hatred to coexist with the use of nonviolent means.[59] He comments that Martin Luther King's extreme emphasis on love may have turned some people away from nonviolent means, and concludes that actionists should not 'blur the distinction between their beliefs and the nonviolent technique.'[60] Thus, in Sharp's conception, the instrumental use of nonviolence is to be separated from its moral attributes.

A key process that operates in some types of nonviolent action is what Sharp calls 'political jiu-jitsu'.[61] This is a term espoused by nonviolence theorists to denote the idea that 'violence itself helps to overthrow its user.'[62] The concept has its origins in the Japanese martial arts of jiu-jitsu[63] whereby, in pulling when the opponent pushes and pushing when the opponent pulls, the opponent's force is used against him- or herself. It was Gregg who first coined the term 'moral jiu-jitsu' to denote the moral or psychological effects on the repressor when s/he is met with nonviolent resistance and self-suffering upon the use of violence:

> The nonviolence and good will of the victim act in the same way that the lack of physical opposition by the user of physical jiu-jitsu does, causing the attacker to lose his moral balance…He plunges forward...into a new world of values. He feels insecure because of the novelty of the situation and his ignorance of how to handle it. He loses his poise and self-confidence.[64]

Sharp, however, refined this term to 'political jiu-jitsu' to describe a broader process whereby opponents lose political balance not necessarily through their own moral faltering, but through the alienating effects of their violence on uncommitted third parties, the opponents' usual supporters and the general grievance group.[65]

It must be noted that political jiu-jitsu does not operate in all nonviolent struggles. The opponents may yield to the actionists' demand or stop using violent repression as a result of various nonviolent methods, including campaigns of protest and persuasion, social, economic and political non-cooperation as well as nonviolent intervention like sit-ins, hunger-strikes and the building of alternative institutions.[66] Therefore, political jiu-jitsu comes into operation *only when the opponent's response to the actionists'*

---

[58] Sharp (1973), op.cit., 635.
[59] Ibid., 633-634.
[60] Ibid., 635.
[61] Ibid.,657-697. This process has been called by other names such as "backfire" or the "paradox of repression". See David Hess & Brian Martin (2006) "Repression, backfire, and the theory of transformative events." *Mobilization* 11(1): 249-267; Lee Smithey and Lester R. Kurtz (1999) "'We have bare hands': Nonviolent social movements in the Soviet block. In S. Zunes, L. Kurtz & S. Asher (eds) *Nonviolent Social Movements: A geographic perspective*. Malden, MA: Blackwell: 96-124.
[62] Gregg, ibid, 45.
[63] Note that the correct romanised spelling of this Japanese word is 'ju-jitsu'. However, in conforming to its extensive usage in nonviolence scholarship, I retain the slightly mistaken spelling.
[64] Gregg, op. cit., 44.
[65] Sharp (1973), op. cit., 658. Brian Martin (2001) "Political Jiu-jitsu against Indonesian Repression: Studying Lower Profile Nonviolent Resistance", *Pacifica Review* 14(2), June: 143-156 at 145-146.
[66] Sharp (1973), op.cit., 117-435.

demands is one of violent repression and when the nonviolent actionists, '[b]y combining nonviolent discipline with solidarity and persistence in struggle…cause the violence of the opponent's repression to be exposed in the worst possible light.'[67]

Central to political jiu-jitsu is the role of self-suffering in appealing to people's morals and emotions.[68] As noted above, self-suffering demonstrates the sincerity and conviction of the nonviolent actionists. For some, however, self-suffering is not only a passive consequence, but an active method for converting opponents, the opponents' usual supporters, the third parties or the general grievance group. As Ackerman and Duvall state: 'by deliberately committing acts that trigger the use of force, a movement can expose and dramatise the will to violence that underpins oppression, severing the regime from its popular support.'[69] Thus, in respect to some Gandhian methods, Bondurant says that the insistence on self-suffering can have 'an element of expediency in it' whereby 'the resort to self-sacrifice and voluntary submission to injury is a positive policy and is not merely a matter of last resort.'[70] A somewhat less sympathetic comment is advanced by Zanden in reference to the Civil Rights movement led by Martin Luther King: '[a]t times it appears that some members of the movement engaged in subtle provocations, in a masochistic-like fashion, whereby they expect to bring about pain and degradation; they offer their "cheek" with the prospect of receiving a slap.'[71]

Sharp, perhaps more than any other scholar, has helped elucidate the political techniques and dynamics of nonviolence through extensive research into historical cases. Yet, a major criticism of Sharp's theory is that he overemphasizes the agency of nonviolent actors and underestimates the hold of structural forces in determining the outcome of nonviolent action.[72] This propensity was seen in the earliest theories of nonviolence such as the works of Case and Gregg, which focused on the psychological, emotional and moral effects of nonviolent action on the opponents.[73] Sharp's explanation of nonviolent action relies on the consent theory of power[74] which holds that elites are dependent on the cooperation and consent of the people they dominate.[75] Since elite control relies on the people's obedience, the key to successful nonviolent action is said to be the withdrawal of consent, accompanied by a collective commitment to action and a coherent strategy.[76]

---

[67] Ibid, p.657.

[68] Gregg., op. cit., pp43-44, 47; Sharp, op. cit., p709.

[69] Peter Ackerman and Jack Duvall (2000) *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict*, New York: Palgrave, pp499-500.

[70] Joan Bondurant (1971) *Conflict: Violence and Nonviolence*, Chicago: Aldine-Atherton, p27. Sharp also concedes that certain forms of Gandhian techniques seek suffering by provocative acts of physical nonviolent intervention. See Sharp, op. cit., p711.

[71] James W. Zanden (1963) "The Nonviolent Resistance Movement Against Segregation" in Paul A. Hare and Herbert H. Blumberg (eds). *Nonviolent Direct Action: American Cases: Social-Psychological Analyses.* Washington: Corpus Books, 356.

[72] Nepstad & Kurtz, op.cit., xvi-xvii.

[73] See Case, op.cit., 147-196; Gregg, op.cit., 49.

[74] Its theoretical origins can be traced back to the sixteenth century to the work of Etienne de La Boetie. Whilst La Boetie himself identifies the importance of social structures, many subsequent scholars have failed to follow in this direction. See La Boetie, E. (1975). *The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*. Trans. H. Kurtz, Reprint, Montreal: Black Rose Books pp77-8. .

[75] Burrowes, op.cit., 90. Gandhi himself seems to have adhered to a type of consent theory. He claimed that power resides in the people themselves, and that if cooperation is withdrawn from a government, it will come to a standstill. See Mohandas K. Gandhi (1958b) *The Hindu*, 19 August 1920, in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 18, New Delhi: Government of India, Publications Divisions, 172.

[76] Sharp (1973), op.cit., 27-28, 47-48.

This account is premised on a ruler-subject conception of power relations where power is viewed as something that flows between agents, and 'structure', despite Sharp's passing reference to it, is largely left out of the equation. Or rather, structure is subordinated to agency as it is assumed that inducing a shift in the opponents' attitude will lead to changes in policies and institutions. Yet, in conceptualising power thus, Sharp forgets that 'certain types of social interaction are so regular and entrenched that they [can] take on a dynamic of their own.' [77] Structures are not simply the sum of their agents. To speak of 'structure' is to speak of a pattern of relationships that cannot always be subordinated to agency, and Sharp's failure to recognise this constitutes a major lacuna in his analysis.

RECENT TRENDS IN NONVIOLENCE LITERATURE

One of the recent trends in nonviolence literature concerns how to bring in insights from structuralist theory to analyse the interactions between nonviolent movement and regimes. Over the last couple of decades, commentators have sought to elucidate the nature of social relations as mediated by patriarchal, capitalist, racial, and other structures drawing on Marxism, Feminism, and the theories of Gramsci and Foucault,[78] with an understanding that such social relations in turn shape people's capacities to effect change.[79] Although Sharp's work focuses on the various strategies for nonviolent actionists, it has tended to overlook or underestimate the counterstrategies of regimes and rulers.[80] More recent scholarship, however, has explored the strategic interactions between regimes and nonviolent movements, giving due attention to regime responses. Regime countermoves are often more sophisticated than simply arresting and imprisoning activists or violently repressing protesters.[81] Nepstad has found that regime responses can include efforts to divide resistance movements internally, keep their own supporters or troops loyal (such as by offering economic benefits), and nullify the actions of third parties such as sanctions imposed by the international community.[82] Other regime tactics might include granting reforms but only slowly, cooptation, and blackmail.[83]

The dialectical interplay of structure and agency obviously needs to be properly appreciated for nonviolent actionists to develop effective and nuanced strategies[84]. To

---

[77] Martin (1989), op.cit., 217.

[78] Kate McGuinness (1993) "Gene Sharp's theory of power: A feminist critique of consent" *Journal of Peace Research* 30(1): 101-115; Iain Atak (2006) "Nonviolent Political Action and the Limits of Consent" *Theoria* 111 (Dec): 87-107; Martin (1989), op.cit.

[79] Vera Chouinard (1997) "Structure and Agency: Contested concepts in human geography*", Canadian Geographer* 41(4) Winter: 363–377 at 368-3771.

[80] Nepstad & Kurtz, op.cit., xvi; Sharon Erikson Nepstad (2011) *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil resistance in the late 20th century*. New York: Oxford University Press.

[81] Nepstad & Kurtz, op.cit., xix; Jennifer Earl (2003) "Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a theory of movement repression" *Sociological Theory* 21(1): 44-68.

[82] Ibid.; Nepstad (2011), op.cit.

[83] Gregory M. Maney (2012) "The Paradox of Reform: The Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland" in Nepstad S. E. & L. R. Kurtz (eds) *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: 3-26; Olena Nikolayenko (2012) "Tactical Interactions between Youth Movements and Incumbent Governments in Postcommunist States" in Nepstad S. E. & L. R. Kurtz (eds) *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: 27-62; John A. Gould & Edward Moe (2012) "Beyond Rational Choice: Ideational assault and the strategic use of frames in nonviolent civil resistance" in Nepstad S. E. & L. R. Kurtz (eds) *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: 123-154.

[84] For theories which explore the dialectical relationship between structure and agency, see: Anthony Giddens (1999) "Elements of the Theory of Structuration", in Elliott, A. (ed.), *Contemporary Social*

this end, the discursive structures of language, culture, knowledge and ideology also need to be understood in order to fully grasp the dynamics of social change. For example, as Foucault points out, the production of knowledge is intimately bound up with power,[85] and knowledge structures (such as government funding for research, media coverage of selected topics, or curricula of the education system[86]) clearly hold sway over people's chosen courses of action. Culture and religion too are important discursive structures,[87] and their relationship to nonviolent action and agency is an area requiring further research.

Some recent research has focused on the determinants of strategic choice in the selection of the type of resistance, whether conventional warfare or nonviolent campaigns,[88] while other studies have sought to examine the factors that lead to the success of nonviolent movements. With regard to the latter, recent works point to the importance of tactical innovation, levels of participation, nonviolent discipline and resilience, and methods of concentration/dispersion in a given movement as being key factors leading to success.[89] The insights from social movement and collection action scholarship are also beginning to be referred to in analyses of nonviolence.[90]

Finally, a number of recent studies offer a statistical analysis of nonviolence. For example, based on a dataset representing 168 ethnic groups across 87 states from 1945 to 2000, Shaykhutdinov found that the peaceful tactics employed by groups seeking greater self-rule was the single strongest predictor of the formation of autonomy arrangements.[91] Stephan and Chenoweth, who systematically studied the strategic effectiveness of 323 nonviolent and violent resistance campaigns from 1900 to 2006, found that major nonviolent campaigns have achieved success 53 percent of the time as compared with 26 percent of the time for violent resistance.[92] They attribute the greater success of nonviolent methods to the enhanced domestic and international legitimacy achieved through nonviolence, and the broad-based participation this method allows. As Nepstad and Kurtz point out, the bar for participation is higher for violence compared to nonviolence: whereas violent campaigns are physically exacting; exclude the very young, elderly, and infirm; and

---

Theory, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers; Colin Hay (2002) "Beyond Structure and Agency: Context versus Conduct", *in Political Analysis: Contemporary Controversies*, London: Palgrave; Margaret S. Archer (1995) *Realist Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Bob Jessop (2001). "Institutional (Re)Turns and the Strategic-Relational Approach" *Environment and Planning A* 33(7) July: 1213-1235.

[85] see Michel Foucault (1980) *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*, translated and edited by Colin Gordon, New York : Harvester Wheatsheaf, p102.

[86] Martin (1989), op.cit., 218.

[87] See Archer (1995) who points out the overlap and interplay between structure and culture. Archer, op.cit., 180.

[88] Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham (2013) "Understanding Strategic Choice: The determinants of civil war and nonviolent campaign in self-determination disputes" *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 291-304.

[89] Nepstad & Kurtz, op.cit., xvii-xix; Nikolayenko, op.cit.; Kurt Schock (2005) *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press; Erica Chenoweth & Maria J. Stephan (2011) *Why Civil Resistance Works: The logic of nonviolent conflict.* New York: Columbia University Press.

[90] See Gould & Moe, op.cit.

[91] Renat Shaykhutdinov (2010) "Give Peace a Chance: Nonviolent protest and the creation of territorial autonomy arrangements" *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 179-191.

[92] Maria J. Stephan & Erica Chenoweth (2008) "Why Civil Resistance Works: The logic of nonviolent conflict" *International Security* 33(1) Summer: 7-44.

create more psychological barriers to engagement; nonviolence does not necessarily make the same demands on participants nor is it accompanied by the same obstacles.[93]

In explaining the greater effectiveness of nonviolence over violence, Stephan and Chenoweth also refer to the process of political jiu-jitsu, which they call 'backfire',[94] and conclude the following: 'Our findings challenge the conventional wisdom that violent resistance against conventionally superior adversaries is the most effective way for resistance groups to achieve policy goals. Instead we assert that nonviolent resistance is a forceful alternative to political violence that can pose effective challenges to democratic and nondemocratic opponents, and at times can do so more effectively than violent resistance.'[95] Statistical studies such as theirs certainly help to dislodge the myth that nonviolence is slow or ineffective, and open up scholarly space to consider the factors, strategies, and structures that would help to further refine nonviolent action.

SITUATING THE PRESENT STUDY

Having reviewed the key theories and trends in nonviolence literature, a few words on how the present study fits into this body of scholarship is in order. As is evident from the discussion above, much of the preoccupation of this literature is ascertaining or explaining the effectiveness of nonviolent action and how to enhance its impact. This thesis, however, is not so much concerned with demonstrating the success of nonviolent action, as it is in establishing the ideological elements within religious traditions that lead movements to embrace nonviolence in the first place.

Although the central concern of this study is different from much of the other works on nonviolent action and civil resistance, it is nevertheless hoped that my research will contribute to nonviolence scholarship in several respects. First, the Buddhist movements chosen as case studies all adopt nonviolence as a creed, and therefore, a close examination of these movements will help understand principled nonviolence in operation. Second, by focusing the analytical lens on religious ideology, the present study aims to elucidate the influence of a powerful discursive structure that constrains and enables social action. By 'religious ideology' I mean a system of thought wherein religious ideas and practices are (re)configured to serve a religious institution's engagement with political actors or developments. Third, since some of the movements examined involve acts of extreme sacrifice, such as self-immolation, my study serves to further an understanding of the operation of political jiu-jitsu (wherein self-suffering occupies a critical role) as well as to test the conceptual ambits of nonviolence. By raising some challenging questions that pertain to the very integrity of this concept, this study hopes to contribute towards a more nuanced understanding nonviolence.

Understanding Truth

As part of my theoretical framework, in this section I discuss relevant conceptualizations of 'truth' (Gandhian, Buddhist, pluralist) by way of laying the

[93] Nepstad & Kurtz, xviii.
[94] They state that "whereas governments easily justify violent counterattacks against armed insurgents, regime violence against nonviolent movements is more likely to backfire against the regime" Stephan & Chenoweth (2008), op.cit., 9.
[95] Ibid.

conceptual basis to analyse the religious ideology of my case studies. In doing so, I partially draw on the discussions on religious pluralism since this body of scholarship shares in common two key concerns with nonviolence theory: (1) conceptualisation of 'truth' and (2) perceptions of the 'other'.[96] Despite the fact that much of the literature on religious pluralism is authored by Christian theologians, many of the insights have striking resonance with Gandhian thought. This more theological and philosophical scholarship offers insights and concepts instructive for the analysis of the ideological dimension of nonviolence.

TWO TRUTHS IN GANDHIAN AND BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES

Gandhian Truth

As noted above, at the core of the method of satyagraha is an active pursuit of 'truth' (s. *satya*). For Gandhi though, truth was not monolithic and needed to be unveiled through sincere striving, persistence, and experimentation. Gandhi understood truth in two forms: absolute and relative. As his famous words 'Truth is God' and 'God is Truth' indicate, Gandhi understood absolute truth as God, an eternal principle and divine consciousness.[97] The ultimate goal for him was to know God and attain *moksha* ('liberation'),[98] which was understood as merging with the one divine consciousness: 'In this ocean of life, we are little drops. My doctrine means that I must identify myself with life…that I must share the majesty of life in the presence of God. The sum-total of this life is God.'[99] Although Gandhi professes to follow Advaita Vedanta, Gier regards him as leaning more towards the neo-Vedanta school of Hindu tradition since Gandhi's conception of ultimate reality tends to be immanent and pantheistic, compared to Advaita Vedanta's transcendent reality without qualities (s. *nirguna Bhraman*).[100]

Absolute truth or God cannot be grasped by the human mind, and Gandhi therefore declared that: 'as long as I have not realised this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold by the relative truth as I have conceived it. That relative truth must, meanwhile, be my beacon, my shield and buckler.'[101] A well-known parable he would tell to depict relative truth was the story of seven blind men who grabbed different parts of an elephant and described what they touched: 'they were all true [about the elephant] from their points of view, and yet each appeared to be untrue from the points of view of the rest. The truth was beyond all seven'.[102] As Godrej notes, the relative truths are not necessarily false but can be true in a limited way that falls short of a complete understanding.[103] Since human capacity to know truth is limited and

---

[96] I am not the first to notice the parallel themes in Gandhi's thought and religious pluralism. See Sharada Sugirtharajah (2012) "Gandhi and Hick on Religious Pluralism: Some resonances" *International Journal of Gandhi Studies* 1: 3-41; Nicholas F. Gier (2014) "Gandhi, Deep Religious Pluralism, and Multiculturalism" *Philosophy East & West* 64(2): 319-339.
[97] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1993) *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press, xxvii; Raghavan Iyer Ed. (1986) The *Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 162-170.
[98] Iyer, ibid., 155-158.
[99] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1959) *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Vol 54. New Delhi: Government of India Publications, 38.
[100] Gier (2014), op.cit., 325-366.
[101] Gandhi (1993), op.cit., xxvii.
[102] Iyer, op.cit., 160.
[103] Farah Godrej (2006) "Nonviolence and Gandhi's Truth: A Method for Moral and Political Arbitration" *The Review of Politics* 68: 287-317 at 290.

fallible, it is also subject to revision or correction.[104] It was in this sense that Gandhi engaged in his 'experiments with truth' where he sought truth through diligent search and observance, likening himself to a scientist who 'never claims any finality about his conclusions, but keeps an open mind regarding them.'[105] This disposition was what gave satyagraha its self-reflexivity and willingness to carefully consider the opponent's arguments—in short, an awareness of one's own incomplete grasp of truth. It is also what provides the *raison d'être* for nonviolence: violence is unjustified because 'man is not capable of knowing the absolute truth and therefore not competent to punish.'[106]

The Madhyamaka of Mahayana Buddhism

An exposition of two truths is also found in Mahayana Buddhism's Madhyamaka school established by Nāgārjuna around the second or third century. 'Madhyamaka' means 'middle way' and it denotes a position where both negation and affirmation (including the binaries of non-existence/existence, asceticism/hedonism) are transcended to reach correct understanding. One of the mythical attributions to Nāgārjuna is that he discovered the Wisdom Sutras (s. *Prajñāpāramitā*),[107] which collate around 40 texts including the Heart Sutra[108] and the Diamond Sutra.[109] Nāgārjuna's great contribution to Buddhist thought was the systematization of the teachings of the Wisdom Sutras in his *Mādhyamikakārikā* (Middle Treatise).

The doctrine of two truths in the Madhyamaka makes a distinction between 'conventional truth' (s. *samvṛiti-satya* or *vyavahāra-satya*) and 'ultimate truth' (s. *paramartha-satya*). Conventional truth is the domain of empirical reality or how human beings ordinarily see the phenomenal world, whereas ultimate truth is what is independent of convention or the truth that is realized by 'a fully enlightened being who does not mistake what is really conventional for something that belongs to the very nature of things.'[110]

Examining the Sanskrit etymology of the two truths helps to understand the nuances of these terms better. The words used by Nāgārjuna for 'conventional truth' are *samvṛiti-satya* and *vyavahāra-satya*, but of the two, the former is more frequently used. Nāgārjuna's commentator Candrakīrti explains that *samvṛiti* is an ambiguous term which has several meanings: (1) 'ordinary' or 'everyday' (2) 'by agreement'[111] (3) 'nominal', and (4) 'concealing', 'hiding', 'obscuring', or 'occluding'.[112] As Garfield points out, the Madhyamaka tradition makes creative use of this ambiguity to say that what such truths conceal is the fact that they are merely conventional, that is; as being 'true' in an ordinary, everyday understanding; or as a truth that is reached by agreement between people or which is entirely nominal in the sense of deriving from the ontology induced by language and conceptual thought.[113] The other word,

---

[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid., 291; Gandhi (1993), op.cit., xxvii.
[106] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1934) *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*. 4th Ed. Madras: Natesan, 506; Godrej, ibid., 294.
[107] According to historians, the Wisdom Sutras were written around the first century.
[108] Mahaprajnaparamita-hridaya sutra
[109] Vajracchedika sutra
[110] Jay L. Garfield (2002) *Empty Words: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 90-91
[111] This meaning is also captured in the English translation "convention."
[112] Garfield, op.cit., 90.
[113] Ibid., 61, 90-91.

vyavahāra is much more simply defined and translated as 'transactional' or 'linguistically determined'.[114] Despite the connotation of 'concealing' and 'hiding' in the first term, it should be noted that conventional truth is also 'truth' not a false reality: as O'Brien notes, Nāgārjuna had advanced a doctrine of two truths, not 'one truth and one lie'.[115]

Conventional truth is contrasted with ultimate truth, *paramartha-satya*, which literally means 'truth of the highest meaning'.[116] In Madhyamaka, the ultimate truth is emptiness (s. *śūnyatā*), which develops an older Buddhist notion of *anātman* ('no-self' or 'no-soul') that claims there is no permanent, individual existence of self.[117] The doctrine of emptiness asserts that nothing has intrinsic and autonomous existence in itself because all phenomena have dependent-origination, sometimes described as 'dependent co-arising'.[118] This means all things originate due to conditions created by other things; that all phenomena are interdependent.[119] Because nothing really exists discretely or has intrinsic substance or essence, everything is 'empty'. Emptiness is thus not non-existence but rather interdependent existence.[120]

There is some tendency in the West to interpret Nāgārjuna through a Kantian lens to find cognates of his two truths in the noumenon/phenomenon distinction.[121] But this comparison is somewhat superficial since Nāgārjuna goes a lot further than simply identifying two truths.[122] When he says that *everything* is 'empty' he also means emptiness itself. The 'emptiness of emptiness' is one of the key claims of *Mādhyamikakārikā* and it is what leads to his conclusion that ultimate reality is only conventionally real, that is, the ultimate is only known through its dialectic with the conventional.[123] It is in this vein that the words of the sutras, 'To realize that there is no difference between the conventional and the ultimate is to enter the Dharma-door of nonduality' (Vimalakirtinirdesa-sutra) or 'Form is empty; emptiness is form; form is not different from emptiness; emptiness is not different from form' (Heart Sutra) are understood.[124] The recognition of the 'dependent origination' of the conventional and the ultimate is also what brings forth Nāgārjuna's famous paradox: the claim that there is no difference between *nirvāna*[125] and *saṃsāra*.[126]

The theory of two truths has inspired the nonviolence of Gandhi as well as the Tibetan Buddhists in exile, and even in respect of the Japanese and Vietnamese Buddhist case studies, themes of interdependence and non-duality are evident. Note, however, that the two truths doctrine has also been employed to justify violence, as

---

[114] Ibid., 60.
[115] Barbara O'Brien (2015) "Madhyamika: School of the Middle Way" http://buddhism.about.com/od/mahayanabuddhism/a/madhyamika.htm (accessed 2 September 2015)
[116] Garfield, op.cit., 91.
[117] O'Brien (2015), op.cit.
[118] Other related terms have also been used such as 'interconnectedness' and 'interbeing.'
[119] Joanna Rogers Macy (1979) "Dependent Co-arising: The distinctiveness of Buddhist Ethics" *The Journal of Religious Ethics* Spring 7(1): 38-52.
[120] Garfield, op.cit., 91.
[121] Theodor Stcherbatsky (1968) The *Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. T. R. V. Murti (1955) *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System*. London: Allen and Unwyn.
[122] Garfield, op.cit., 92.
[123] Ibid.; Malcolm David Eckel (1999) "The Concept of the Ultimate in Madhyamaka Thought: In Memory of Frederick Streng" in Sallie B. King and Paul O. Ingram (eds) *The Sound of Liberating Truth: Buddhist-Christian Dialogues*. London: Routledge: 84-100: 93 & 99.
[124] Garfield, op.cit., 92.
[125] The transcendent state free from the bonds of karma in which there is no suffering, desire or ego.
[126] The cycle of death and rebirth to which life in the material world is bound.

exemplified by the Japanese Buddhists' interpretation of the doctrine to legitimise imperialism and militarism in the first half of the twentieth century.[127] As will be seen in the next chapter, notions of no-self, emptiness and nonduality played a significant role in relativising both killing and dying in the contexts of Japan's wars. One cannot assume, therefore, that the theory of two truths in and of itself leads to nonviolence; much depends on the interpretation of the doctrine and how the *relationship* between the two truths is perceived and applied in practice.

A philosopher who has sought to provide some guidance with respect to the relationship between the two truths is the sixth century founder of T'ien-t'ai (j. *Tendai*) thought, Chih-i, who advanced the theory of 'three truths' or 'three-fold truth'. As Swanson maintains, Chih-i's theory does not invalidate the two truths doctrine but rather seeks to understand it by offering a way of transcending the 'false dichotomy' between emptiness and conventional existence, hedonism and asceticism, sacred and profane, and *saṃsāra* and *nirvāna*.[128] Chih-i's theory might also be taken as a Chinese attempt to ground the Indian metaphysics in the realities of this world in order to derive a 'middle way' between the two truths that could be readily put into practice.[129] The three truths in Chih-i's formulation are: emptiness or ultimate reality, conventional reality, and the Middle—all of which form aspects of a single integrated or inter-penetrating reality.[130] The Middle denotes the reality of non-duality, which avoids the two extremes of conventional and ultimate reality.[131] Given that a one-sided view based on emptiness alone could lead to a nihilism where the linguistically- and conceptually-mediated world is rendered meaningless,[132] the concept of the Middle serves to check such nihilistic impulses by understanding reality as 'simultaneously empty and conventionally existent'—a view which constitutes the Middle Path.[133]

Although the theory of the three-fold truth is likely to have indirectly shaped the beliefs of Nipponzan Myōhōji through Tendai's influence on Nichiren,[134] this thesis will refer to the 'two truths' in an effort to keep the terminology consistent with Gandhian and Tibetan usages. The insights offered by the concept of the 'Middle', however, are noteworthy especially when looking at how the two truths relate to one another in the perspectives of the Buddhists in my case studies.

---

[127] See Nihon Shūkyo-sha Heiwa Kyōgikai 日本宗教者平和協議会(1994) *Shūkyo-sha no sensō sekinin; Zange, Kokuhaku Shiryo-shu* 宗教者の戦争責任—懺悔・告白資料集. Fukuoka, Kita-kyūshū: Shiraishi shoten, 39; Shigaraki, Takamaro 信楽 峻麿 (1989) "Senji kyōgaku ni okeru shinzoku nitairon 戦時教学における真俗二諦論", *Nihon no shūkyō to bunka: Reizō Hiramatsu sensei koki kinenshū* 日本の宗教と文化：平松令三先生古稀記念論集. Dōhōsha publishing, 977-997.

[128] Paul L. Swanson (1995) Foundations of T'Ien-T'Ai Philosophy: The Flowering of the Two Truths Theory in Chinese Buddhism. Asian Humanities Press, 3-4, 8 & 156.

[129] Ryōdo Shioiri 塩入良道 (1957) "Santai shisō no kichō to shiteno ke 三諦思想の基調としての仮" *Indogaku Bukyō-gaku Kenkyū* 印度学仏教学研究 10: 110-119 at 111-113 & 119

[130] Swanson, op.cit., 6 & 12.

[131] Ibid, 153.

[132] See Takaaki Watanabe 渡辺隆明 (2013) "Santai ni okeru De-biddoson tetsugaku no ichizuke 三諦におけるディヴィドソン哲学の位置づけ" *Shūkyō Kenkyū* 宗教研究 86(4): 231-232; John P. Keenan (1989) *The Meaning of Christ: A Mahāyāna Theology*. Maryhill, New York, 141, 195 & 206.

[133] Swanson, op.cit., 144 & 153.

[134] Though the term 'three truths' hardly appears in the doctrinal teachings of Nipponzan Myōhōji.

INSIGHTS FROM RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

A preoccupation with understanding truth can also be seen in other theories and some of the insights from the scholarship on religious pluralism make for illuminating reference for the present study for several reasons. First, in the context of competing truth-claims, they provide an academic approach to the notion of two truths. In a way, religious pluralism might be seen as a 'scholarly cousin' of the two truths theory found in Gandhian and Mahayana Buddhist perspectives and a brief look at this scholarship serves to forecast the analytical questions in stall. Second, often nonviolent movements deal with opponents who subscribe to a different ideology or religion but there is nevertheless usually a strong spirit of interfaith cooperation associated with nonviolence. Understanding some of the premises of religious pluralism assists in examining aspects of inter-religious relations in my case studies. Third, religious pluralists tend to be concerned with the problem of coexistence with the 'other' which is a parallel concern for the scholars and actors of nonviolence: the difference perhaps lying in the fact that whereas for these pluralists the 'other' tends to be the 'religious' other, for nonviolent actionists the 'opponent' is usually the 'political' other (though religious difference may also characterise the latter). Considering the manner in which pluralists deal with the question of coexistence and diversity through their conceptualization of truth is thus useful to consider.

Two Truths in Religious Pluralism

Taking a look at how religious pluralists deal with the problem of truth makes for interesting comparison with the approaches of Gandhi and Mahayana Buddhism. John Hick draws on Kant to suggest that there are two versions of 'truth', or what he calls 'the Real': 'the real in itself' (noumenon) and 'the real as humanly experienced' (phenomenon).[135] The Real is a generic term adopted by Hick to refer to a transcendent reality without any properties, which in its original form, cannot be directly perceived or accurately depicted.[136] According to him, the term has resonance among different religions, for the idea of the Real is familiar to Christianity (God as the 'sole self-existent reality'), Islam (*al haqq*), the Hindu tradition (*sat* or *satya*), Mahayana Buddhism (*Dharmakaya*, *sunyata*, *tattva*), and Chinese thought (*zhen*).[137] The way in which Hick strips the noumenal of all properties including moral qualities brings his concept perhaps closest to *nirguna Brahman* (Brahman without qualities) in Advaita Vedanta or the concept of *sunyata* (emptiness) in Mahayana Buddhism.[138] In fact some scholars charge Hick of having a bias towards Hindu and Buddhist schools of thought,[139] and it is possibly this doctrinal affinity which makes religious pluralism an easy point of reference and comparison for the present study.

Hick's religious pluralism is built on the basis that all experiencing is 'experiencing-as'—an insight borrowed from Wittgenstein who claimed that every

---

[135] John Hick (1989) *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*. London: Macmillan, 241-245.

[136] John Hick (2000) "Ineffability" *Religious Studies* 36(1): 35-46 at 37.

[137] Hick (1989), op.cit., 11; John Hick (1999) *The Fifth Dimension: An Exploration of the Spiritual Realm*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 9.

[138] Gier (2014), op.cit., 320 and 322; Hick (1989), op.cit., 292. Note that Hick himself acknowledges that *sunyata* is identical to 'the Real' as he defines it and to Kant's noumenon. See Hick (1999), op.cit., 95.

[139] See for example Gier (2014), op.cit., 320 and 322.

seeing is 'seeing-as'[140] since we never perceive things directly and purely but always through our conceptual schemas, whether cultural, religious, or historical.[141] Hence 'God is tripartite' is phenomenologically true of the Real as experienced by Christians, while 'God is unitary' is true of the Real as experienced by Muslims.[142] Hick uses the metaphor of refracted light for the Real as filtered through the prism of human perception to produce various colours—the 'rainbow' of faiths.[143] It is the imperfections of human perception that cause the refraction; but the refraction is also what brings about the diversity of the world's religions. In Hick's paradigm, the correctness of religion is evaluated beyond the phenomenal truth as experienced by its followers 'by means of the touchstone of salvation: the fundamental ethical transformation from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness.'[144]

The religious pluralism of John Hick has been variously critiqued.[145] With respect to the conception of truth ('the Real'), his application of Kant—and whether Kant would have allowed such usage of the noumenon/phenomenon distinction—is a matter of some contention; though in the final analysis Hick's assertions stand on their own and are not dependent on the soundness of his interpretation of Kant.[146] Another common criticism of Hick is that while he may preserve the various phenomenological truths of different religions, this is achieved at the cost of ultimacy in a given tradition.[147] In response to such concerns, theologians such as Karuvelil S.J. have sought to evolve an existential theology which avoids the pitfalls of superiority of one religion over another but which nevertheless preserves the uniqueness and concern for ultimacy in a given religion.[148]

Some scholars have tried to advance modified theories of religious pluralism, recognizing that it is too simplistic to see vastly different and apparently contradicting religious claims are talking about the same noumenal Reality.[149] One such endeavour is by Davis who points to the nature of religious language and to how the inability of

---

[140] Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) *Philosophical Investigation*. Trans. G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 193-210.

[141] John Hick (1985) *Problems of Religious Pluralism*. London: St. Martin's, 21-22, 40-44.

[142] Samuel Ruhmkorff (2013) "The Incompatibility Problem and Religious Pluralism Beyond Hick" *Philosophy Compass* 8(5): 510-522 at 513.

[143] John Hick (2005) *A Christian Theology of Religions: A Rainbow of Faiths*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press.

[144] Ruhmkorff, op.cit., 514.

[145] See for example, Mark S. Heim (1995) *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis; Raimundo Panikkar (1981) *Unknown Christ of Hinduism*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis; Rose Drew (2003) "Reconsidering the Possibility of Pluralism" *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 40: 245-266; John Cobb (2005) "Some Whiteheadian Assumptions about Religion and Pluralism" in David Ray Griffin (ed) *Deep Religious Pluralism*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press: 223-232; David Ray Griffin (2005) "John Cobb's Whiteheadian Complementary Pluralism" in David Ray Griffin (ed) *Deep Religious Pluralism*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press: 39-66.

[146] See Seyed Hassan Hosseini (2010) "Religious Pluralism and Pluralistic Religion: John Hick's Epistemological Foundation of Religious Pluralism and an Explanation of Islamic Epistemology toward Diversity of Unique Religion" *The Pluralist* 5(1): 94-109 at 97, 101-102; Gier (2014), op.cit., 323.

[147] Ruhmkorff, op.cit., 513-514.

[148] George V. Karuvelil, S.J. (2012) "Absolutism to Ultimacy: Rhetoric and Reality of Religious 'Pluralism'" *Theological Studies* 73: 55-81.

[149] See David Ray Griffin (ed) (2005). *Deep Religious Pluralism*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press; Victoria Harrison (2006) "Internal Realism and the Problem of Religious Diversity" *Philosophia* 34: 287-301; Victoria Harrison (2008) "Internal Realism, Religious Pluralism, and Ontology" *Philosophia* 36: 97-110; Mark S. Heim (1994) "Salvations: A More Pluralistic Hypothesis" *Modern Theology* 10: 341-360; Peter Byrne (1995) *Prolegomena to Religious Pluralism: Reference and Realism in Religion.* New York: St. Martin's.

the Real to be captured in literal language means that often metaphors or negative claims[150] are used instead.[151] He states that the appearance of contradictions between religions can be deceptive, for the limitations of human thought and the nature of metaphorical language in referring to transcendence rules out a primitive exclusion of one religion or other as untrue.[152] By this route, Davis arrives at a more moderate religious pluralism that avoids the claims about inter-religious congruence at the ultimate level seen in Hick's theory.

Knitter is another theologian who takes a more circumscribed approach to religious pluralism. He overcomes the problem of incompatible truth-claims by employing a pragmatic notion of truth where religious language is taken to be symbolic and performative, and where 'salvation' is to be found in achieving 'eco-human wellbeing'.[153] In addition, he personally explores the practice of multiple religious belonging by pronouncing the Bodhisattva Vows, which could be taken by some as being incompatible with his Catholicism.[154] By emphasizing the value of individual spiritual exploration and commitment, Knitter finds a deeply personal answer to the problem of incompatibility that upholds a lived experience of religious pluralism.[155]

Perception of the 'Other'

At this point, I should like to return to the words of Appleby cited earlier, which suggested that the biggest difference between the religious extremist and the peacemaker lies not in the use of violence per se but in the attitude towards the opponent. Our perceptions of the 'other' are intertwined with conceptions of 'truth', and for this reason, how truth is understood and asserted is pivotal to an explanation of nonviolence. Perceptions of the 'other' are also dependent on views about oneself, and therefore the nature of a resistance movement is importantly influenced by the politics of 'self-making'.[156] This was certainly the case with Gandhi's nonviolence with its emphasis on the 'self' from self-rule to self-reflection. Conversely, violence and destructive forces are frequently released with respect to the 'self' or identity politics.[157]

According to Erikson, Gandhi's satyagraha centred on action that 'maximizes mutuality and minimizes the violence caused by unilateral coercion or threat.'[158] Mutuality is brought about because the demands of the opponents are 'absorbed by love rather than negated by violent moralism.'[159] The only test of truth for Gandhi was action based on a refusal to do harm or to violate another's essence,[160] and this

---

[150] Such as negative theology or the dialectic of *neti neti* ("neither this, nor that") in the Hindu tradition.
[151] See Andrew Davis (2010) "Defining Religious Pluralism for Religious Education" *Ethics and Education* 5(3): 189-202 at 195-197; Gier (2014), op.cit., 322-323.
[152] Davis, ibid., 197-199.
[153] Paul Knitter (1995) *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility*. Maryknoll, MY: Orbis; Ruhmkorff, op.cit., 518.
[154] Paul Knitter (2009) *Without Buddha I Could Not Be a Christian*. New York: Oneworld, 214-216;
[155] Ruhmkorff, op.cit., 519.
[156] Gangeya Mukherji (2009) "Exploring Non-violence: A Seminar Report" Economic & Political Weekly 44(26): 23-25 at 24-25.
[157] Joan V. Bondurant and Margaret W. Fisher (1971) "Gandhi: A Psychoanalytic View" *The American Historical Review* 76(4): 1104-1115 at 1112
[158] Erik Erikson (1969) *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 247.
[159] Ibid., 249.
[160] Ibid., 412.

compassionate disposition gives rise to what Erikson calls the nonviolent actionists' 'inclusive identities' where self-other boundaries are permeable.[161] As discussed, the mutuality in satyagraha, as an approach to conflict, manifests in the actionist's careful consideration of the opponent's counterarguments in a spirit of humility about one's limited capacity to understand the complete truth.

Despite the obvious differences between nonviolence and religious pluralism, an examination of the theories of the latter is illuminating because it provides an account of the possible ways one's 'truth' influences attitudes towards the other. Aside from its comparative value, the literature on the 'other' in religious pluralism is relevant to the present study because dealing with the other is an inescapable and critical part of any nonviolent movement—whether the *political other*, in the form of a repressive state; or the *religious other*, in the context of engaging with people from different religious traditions or Buddhist schools. Theories of religious pluralism thus provide conceptual tools to study the different modes of self-assertion towards other groups and individuals.

One such conceptual tool is the prevailing tripartite typology of Alan Race composed of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism.[162] Race's typology has been extensively challenged,[163] and yet over the years the typology has continued to be defended and maintained.[164] I will not delve into this debate but will briefly refer to some of the points emerging from it in my review of the typology below.

In this typology, the first kind of religious self-assertion towards the other is *exclusivism*. This describes a view where truth/salvation is to be found only in one's own religion, and where other religions are considered to be false.[165] Exclusivists need not necessarily be 'closed-minded' in holding thus, and they can admit to things in their religion which are incorrect or things in other religions which are correct.[166] Nevertheless, exclusivists would say that their God or 'truth' is the 'only source of transcendent transformation'[167]or what Hick calls 'salvation'.

Inclusivism, on the other hand, is a position where other religions are seen to contain some element of truth, but that the fullness of truth is found in one's own religion.[168] In the Christian context, this leads to the belief that 'Christ is the most complete of the religious choices on offer regarding transcendent transformation.'[169] By this view, other religions are to be tolerated until the fuller truth of Christ can be received. Although the salvific potential of non-Christian religions is acknowledged,

---

[161] See also Mukherji, op.cit., 25.

[162] Alan Race (1983) *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions*. Maryknoll, MY: Orbis Books.

[163] See Joseph A. Di Noia (1992) *The Diversity of Religions: A Christian Perspective*. Washington, DC: Catholic Univeristy of American Press; Shubert Ogden (1992) *Is There Only One True Religion or Are There Many?* Dallas: Southern Methodist UP. Gavin D'Costa (1996) "Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions." *Religious Studies* 32: 223-232

[164] Perry Schmidt-Leukel (2005) "Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism: the Tripolar Typology—Clarified and Reaffirmed" in Paul F. Knitter (Ed) *The Myth of Religious Superiority: A Multifaith Exploration*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press: 13-27; Alan Race and Paul M. Hedges (2008) *Christian Approaches to Other Faiths*. London: SCM Press; Alan Race (2013) *Making Sense of Religious Pluralism: Shaping Theology of Religion for our Times*. London: SPCK (E-book).

[165] Karuvelil, S.J., op.cit., 57.

[166] Ruhmkorff, op.cit., 510-511.

[167] Race (2013), op.cit., at Location 415. For example, in Christian exclusivism, 'any knowledge of God through non-Christian means is either impossible or so distorted that it convicts us of willful depraved idolatry…There can be no breaching of the absoluteness of Jesus Christ' (Location 515).

[168] Karuvelil, S.J., op.cit., 57.

[169] Race (2013), op.cit., Location 415.

its effectiveness is considered less than through Christianity.[170] Karl Rahner's concept of the 'anonymous Christian'[171] is often referred to as an illustration of the inclusivist position and its propensity for religious 'imperialism'. This concept describes non-Christians who are saved by the grace of God through Christ even though they may never have heard of Christ. Both exclusivism and inclusivism are forms of absolutism, which deems one's own religion as the final and superior standard of truth.[172]

Pluralism is the non-absolutist alternative where one's own religion is seen as 'one of a possible number of sources of transcendent transformation' and thus where different religions are recognized to exist in a 'rough parity'.[173] Race explains the rationale for this parity from a Christian perspective:

> [The various] [r]eligions are the outworkings of the religious experience that resides at the heart of tradition. Christianity exists as a vehicle for reproducing or re-enacting in many cultural forms the core experience of knowing God as 'boundless love', stemming initially from Jesus of Nazareth and the response to him. The rationality of this ever-changing tradition is born of trusting this experience, a trust which has 'proved' itself over a long period. *The same will be true of other world traditions and it is this which brings them into 'rough parity'*.[174]

One of the popular images used to describe the pluralist position is none other than a group of blind men touching different parts of an elephant[175]—the same story that Gandhi alluded to in depicting relative truth. The appropriateness of this analogy for religious pluralism has been questioned, however, because it relies on someone knowing that the blind men are actually touching the same elephant, and there can be no such confirmation without an 'external agent to the scene' which in real life would not be possible since everyone is circumscribed by his or her partial perspective.[176] An analogy with more traction is possibly offered by Ruether who likens a religious tradition to a framed window through which one's view of reality is limited by the frame of the window itself.[177] Ruether's explanation of this image has a striking resemblance to Gandhi's understanding of relative truth: 'True universality lies in accepting one's own finiteness, one's own particularity and, in so doing, not making that particularity the only true faith, but allowing other particularities to stand side by side with yours as having equal integrity. Each is limited and particular and yet each is, in its own way, an adequate way of experiencing the whole for a particular people at a particular time.'[178]

In the end, however, nonviolence and religious pluralism diverge in that whereas the latter may content itself in having religious particularities stand side by side in equal integrity engaged in interfaith dialogue, for nonviolent actionists, the relative truth of the opponent often impinges much more acutely on their daily life, and there

---

[170] Ibid., Locations 579 and 614

[171] Karl Rahner (1978) *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. New York: Seabury Press.

[172] See Karuvelil, S.J., op.cit., 57; John Hick (1987) "The Non-Absoluteness of Christianity" in John Hick and Paul Knitter (eds) *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

[173] Race (2013), op.cit., Location 415 & 624.

[174] Ibid., Location 710 (my emphasis).

[175] Ibid., Location 734.

[176] Ibid., Location 738-740.

[177] Ibid., Locations 750-755; Rosemary Radford Ruether (1987) "Feminism and Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Particularism and Universalism in the Search for Religious Truth" in John Hick and Paul Knitter (eds) *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*: 137-142.

[178] Ruether, ibid.

is a compelling political need to transform the relationship (of conflict) with the other, whether through conversion, accommodation, or by a more creative solution. In other respects though, interaction with the religious other in a pluralist paradigm can be more existentially critical than in dealing with a political opponent, for sincere dialogue with the religious other has potential to shape and shift one's deeply held spiritual beliefs.

In fact, according to Race, Hick's pluralist position would entail both critical thinking and openness to mutual transformation: 'In dialogue religions should be open to being changed, as a result of receiving insights from others, through a process of integration and transformation. On the whole, pluralists will expect to discover "complementarities" between traditions as a means of bringing different religious experiences and conceptualities into relationship.'[179] A willingness to be transformed through interfaith dialogue was also seen in Gandhi, who said that he had 'broadened [his] Hinduism by loving other religions as [his] own'.[180] For Gandhi, religion was something to be cherished and deeply respected as a phenomenon of the human world existing at the level of relative truth. He rejected the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy and prioritized humility over assertions of definitive religious knowledge.[181]

The biggest challenge to religious pluralism comes from a school of thought known as *particularism*.[182] Particularists consider religions as *sui generis* and 'incommensurate' or incapable of being compared with one another.[183] Against Hick's employment of the term 'salvation' to describe the ethical transformation attainable through different religions, particularist theologians claim that 'salvation is a Christian term and other traditions have different terminologies and conceptualities [such as *moksha* in Hinduism or *nirvāna* in Buddhism] which cannot be equated with Christian salvation. This need not entail, however that other religions are valueless; rather, simply that we are not in a position to know how other religions correspond to God's hope for the world.'[184] Particularists therefore refuse to engage in a 'theology of religions' and though they do not expect conversions to Christianity, they hold onto the Christian confession that 'salvation is through Christ alone'.[185]

Some critiques of religious pluralism are 'soft' expressions of the uniqueness of one's faith and need for ultimacy. For example, Karuvelil S.J. points to the existentialist nature of theology where religion is a matter of 'ultimate concern',[186] and suggests that the source of absolutism in religion comes precisely from its existentialist character.[187] He argues that issues of theological ultimacy, religious uniqueness, and claims to superiority should not be conflated; and instead, advocates for an 'enlightened inclusivism':

---

[179] Race (2013), op.cit., Location 725; see also Perry Schmidt-Leukel (2009) *Transformation and Integration: How Inter-faith Encounter Changes Christianity*. London: SCM Press

[180] Gier (2014), op.cit., 329. Note, however, that in several passages, Gandhi seems to be hierarchically inclusivist by displaying a bias towards Hinduism. For example: "What of substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in Hinduism. And what is not contained in it is insubstantial or unnecessary." Quoted in Gier (2014), op.cit., 325; see Mohandas K. Gandhi (1958a) *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 28, New Delhi: Government of India, Publications Divisions, 194

[181] Gier, ibid., 329.

[182] See for example Heim (1995), op.cit.

[183] Race (2013)., op.cit., Location 773-808; see also Karuvelil, S.J., op.cit., 56.

[184] Ibid., Location 780; see also Location 793.

[185] Ibid., Locations 803 & 816.

[186] Paul Tillich (1953) *Systematic Theology* Vol 3. London: Nisbet: 14-15

[187] Karuvelil S.J., op.cit., 72-73

> Seen in terms of the existential imperative, the so-called inclusivism is a kind of enlightened ignorance or mysterious enlightenment. It is enlightened because in as much as it knows the efficacy (or truth) of one's path. But it knows not only the efficacy of one's path but also that the nature of the religious reality (God, nirvana) is so good that no one is to be deprived of it. It even sees in the lives of some who do not follow my path, fruits similar to what I would normally expect to find in those who do follow my path. This leads to puzzlement, which is then overcome by postulating that the same divine reality is active in ways unknown to me or, perhaps, even to them. In this sense inclusivism is a profession of the mysterious ways of the divine. This way of understanding inclusivism explains why Vallabhāchārya sees the presence of Kṛṣṅa in the Vēdas and the Vēdānta, in the Gīta and the Purānas; this explains why Karl Rahner finds anonymous Christians in other religions.[188]

Since, according to pluralists, the original problem with absolutism was its claim to superiority, Karuvelil S.J. favours use of the term 'ultimacy' over 'absolutism' to avoid the unwanted connotation of superiority while recognizing the need for an 'existential home'.[189]

Notice how Particularist theologians like Karuvelil S.J. see the 'ultimate' in religion itself, whereas Hick or Gandhi would see religion as still occupying the phenomenological or relative plane. For religious pluralists as well as adherents of the Madhyamaka school of Mahayana Buddhism, the ultimate is beyond the reach of the human mind and hence all 'truth' grasped by the mind is taken with a humble grain of salt. Yet, recognizing the limitation of the human mind does not lead to an abdication of reason. While particularists suggest that religious 'revelation' trumps rationality (thus elevating religion above critical thinking), pluralists—and indeed Gandhi with his 'scientific' experiments—would say that human beings must utilize their critical faculties fully to discern what is to be upheld in religion. As Race explains: '[n]ot all beliefs and practices of the religions are acceptable. Deciding between good and bad, true and false religions is now a matter of cross-cultural and cross-religious dialogue, as well as engaging with critical thinking in the light of what we know of the world through knowledge which is gained from many disciplines.'[190]

It is the critical engagement and the readiness to dialogue on the part of religious pluralists which render them open to the possibility of mutual transformation and to discovering the complementarities between religions. Indeed, as Race points out, Christian love and Buddhist compassion may not be the same but both can spur charitable actions and struggles for social justice and peace.[191] Many of the central teachings of religions are not incommensurable. Race also asserts that although particularist theologians tend to rely on an interpretation of Christianity from the classical period, there is no reason for this interpretation to be a fixed point of reference for all time.[192] Religions are capable of adapting and absorbing influences from new data, knowledge, encounters and exchanges; and in Race's view, pluralism best responds to this new awareness.[193] Despite the many nuanced arguments employed by particularists, in the end he views their position as being 'born of a kind of anxiety which knows that Exclusivist-Inclusivist dynamic is insufficient in the face

[188] Ibid., 76-77.
[189] Ibid., 76.
[190] Race (2013), op.cit., Location 724
[191] Ibid., Location 852
[192] Ibid., Locations 865-878.
[193] Ibid., Location 903.

of new data, yet cannot entertain the thought of surrendering Christian Absolutism': pluralists on the other hand, he says, are ready to take that next step.[194]

As far as the present study of nonviolence is concerned, there is no need for me to resolve the differences between pluralists and particularists, for my aim is not to achieve theological coherence but to locate insights in the scholarship on religious pluralism to assist my analysis of Buddhist nonviolence. An overview of the pluralist/particularist debate, however, is helpful in bringing to the fore some of the key issues regarding the assertion of one's own truth and relations with others based on that truth. The foregoing discussion will also inform my analysis of the interfaith relations of the Buddhist nonviolent movements.

Research Methods and Fieldwork

The three case studies taken up in this thesis involve slightly different methods of research. The first of the case studies, the Vietnamese Buddhist movement in the 1960s, is a historical case study. Due to the stringent censorship policies of the Communist government in Vietnam regarding anything related to political Buddhism, there is a dearth of material available in English on the Vietnamese Buddhist movement during the 1960s.[195] I therefore had have a number of Vietnamese documents translated into English, especially the letters of the Vietnamese self-immolators, which I have obtained through email attachments from a student of the Buddhist Academy in Ho Chi Minh City.[196] Most of these translations have been rendered with the generous assistance of Mr. Tam Dao, a co-founder of the Sydney Centre for Studying Cao Dai-ism[197] and a librarian at the University of Sydney. I have also benefited greatly from my discussions with former Vietnamese peace activists, Pham Van Minh and Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, which deepened my understanding of the Vietnamese Buddhists' nonviolent movement. Since this historical case study did not involve fieldwork, I have tried to 'hear' the perspectives of the Vietnamese Buddhists by focusing on various forms of writings ranging from personal and official letters and statements, to pamphlets, articles, autobiographies, to the more figurative forms of poetry and drama.

---

[194] Ibid., Location 912-913

[195] The few books and articles on this subject include: Pham Van Minh (2002) *Vietnamese Engaged Buddhism: The Struggle Movement of 1963-1966.* C.A., USA: Van Nghe; Robert Topmiller (2002) *Lotus Unleashed*, Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press; George M. Kahin (1986) *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf; Frances Fitzgerald (1972) *Fire in the Lake: The Vietnamese and the Americans in Vietnam.* Toronto: Little, Brown & Company; Sallie B. King (2000) "They Who Burned Themselves for Peace: Quaker and Buddhist Self-immolators during the Vietnam War" *Buddhist-Christian Studies* Annual 127: 1-15; Sallie B. King (1996). "Thich Nhat Hanh and the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam: Nondualism in Action" in Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King (eds). *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhism Liberation Movement in Asia*, Albany: State University of New York Press.
This dearth of material is also noted in the preface of Robert Topmiller's Master's thesis. See Robert Topmiler (1994) "The 1963 Buddhist Crisis in South Vietnam", Master's Thesis, Central Washington University, iii.

[196] This student tried to send me a book containing the necessary primary material but was not able to get pass the censorship regulations of the Vietnamese postal system—a testament to the continuing discrimination against Buddhism by the Communist authorities. He therefore painstakingly sent me scanned images of the requisite pages containing the letters and poems of the self-immolators.

[197] Cao Dai is a distinct Vietnamese religion which combines various spiritual traditions of the world, particularly those of Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism.

The case studies on the Tibetan and Japanese Buddhist movements are an examination of current, ongoing movements, and both involved field research to gather data from the participants of the nonviolent movement and related actors. My first fieldwork on the Tibetan Buddhist movement in exile was conducted over three weeks from late February to mid March in 2005 in Dharamsala, the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile in the state of Himachal Pradesh, India. I decided against studying the resistance in Tibet mainly due to the political difficulties of conducting field research in a place which is under a system of surveillance by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the ethical issues of putting research participants at risk given the sensitive nature of the subject. In India, however, I found a freer political environment where exile Tibetans were eager to talk about their views on nonviolence and the national struggle. Indeed, many of the institutions and civil society organisations in exile were established for the very purpose of advocating for the Tibetan cause. My challenge, therefore, was not finding research participants who would be willing to talk to me but to see through the official rhetoric to find answers to the substantive questions of my research.

In 2005, apart from interviewing members of the Tibetan exile government—known as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)—I also conducted interviews with three well-established Tibetan civil society organizations, Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), Tibetan Women's Association (TWA), and the Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet (known as 'Gu Chu Sum'). To the TYC and Gu Chu Sum, I also distributed questionnaires on nonviolence.[198] In all, I conducted 17 interviews with Tibetans in 2005—all in English except for two which involved the assistance of an interpreter. My questionnaire on Tibetan views on nonviolence was distributed to members of the TYC (at the Central Executive Committee and the regional TYC chapter at Sarah a few hours away from Dharamsala), Gu Chu Sum, monks, and college students. The questionnaire was in both English and Tibetan and in total, I received 110 responses. During my time in Dharamsala in 2005 I also participated in a number of events in exile, including the commemorative peace march and demonstration for the Tibetan National Uprising Day on 10 March, as well as the first couple of days of the 10-day peace march that began on the Tibetan Women's Uprising Day on 12 March.

My second fieldtrip to the Tibetan community in India took place from late June to late September 2012. This was a much longer fieldtrip of three months, which was spent mainly in Dharamsala but also included a two week stay in Bir, a Tibetan settlement several hours away. During my field research in 2012 (which also involved fieldwork for another research project on the subject of Tibetan secularism) I conducted 53 semi-structured interviews, 21 informal interviews, 4 focus group discussions and spoke to numerous others in a conversational capacity (what I refer to in my thesis as 'personal communications').

My fieldwork in 2012 also involved participant observation of numerous events, including the Dalai Lama's birthday celebrations (6 July 2012), the Democracy Day proceedings (2 September 2012), the first two days of the TYC Working Committee meeting in Bir (8-9 August 2012), and occasions to honour the sacrifices of the self-immolators in Tibet such as puja ceremonies and candlelit vigils (10 & 17 July, 2, 28, 31 August 2012). A list of the events I attended during my 2012 fieldwork can be found at Appendix 12. During my three months in the field, the count of Tibetan self-

[198] My visit coincided with a busy time for TWA members when many of the Central Executive Members in Dharamsala were away from the office. I therefore did not have the opportunity to distribute the questionnaires to TWA.

immolations increased from 43 to 52 and every time a self-immolation occurred, shock waves were sent through the exile community. These acts are carried out to protest the Chinese government's policies concerning religious freedom, language[199] and the forced resettlement of Tibetan nomads.[200] The self-immolations created an atmosphere of urgency and disquiet that shaped the research environment in which I operated. The three months in 2012 deepened my knowledge of the exile community and led me to further insights on the Tibetan Buddhists' nonviolence.

The case study on the Japanese Buddhist nonviolent movement focused on a small Nichiren Buddhist sect called Nipponzan Myōhōji (日本山妙法寺). My fieldwork on Nipponzan was very different in nature to my field research on the exile Tibetan community. The number of interviews conducted was significantly less (6 monks) and out of the 50 questionnaires distributed, I only received 11 back (a response rate of 22%). However, I spent much more time engaged in participant observation. This suited the character of Nipponzan where there was a general culture that disapproved of monks 'talking too much' and stating their views at length.[201] Rather, Nipponzan monks were encouraged to focus on their religious practice and faithfully follow in the footsteps of their founder, Nichidatsu Fujii.

The most valuable participant observation took place with respect to the 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk (24 June - 9 August 2006, of which I participated during 2-8 July and 2-9 August), the 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk (16-30 October 2006, of which I participated during the first week of the walk), and the 2008 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk (14 June - 9 August, of which I participated during 27 July - 9 August). Walking together with the Nipponzan monks proved to be a highly fruitful and informative method of participant observation. During this time, I spent entire days with Nipponzan monks and lay followers, walking, eating, cooking, cleaning, and staying in the same accommodation facilities.[202] In the time I spent on these peace walks, I was able to build close relations with Nipponzan monks and their supporters, which led to insights into their ideology and activism that would not have been possible through other means, including interviews.

Apart from the peace walks, I also went to Sado Island from 8 to 11 September 2006 to help prepare for and attend an event commemorating the 25th anniversary of the construction of the Sado Peace Pagoda on 10 September 2006. Other Nipponzan events which I attended include: the 2006 Peace Walk to commemorate the end of World War Two (15 August 2006), the 23rd anniversary of the passing of Gyōryōin Nisshin (23 September 2006), Buddhist memorial services for the *higan*[203] week (24 September 2006), interfaith prayers and demonstration in front of the Japanese Diet to call for the end to the deployment of Japanese self-defense forces to Iraq (27 September 2006), 137th birthday anniversary celebration of Mahatma Gandhi (2 October 2006), Buddhist memorial services for *eshiki* (13 October 2006).[204]

---

[199] In particular, the replacement of Tibetan by Chinese as a medium of education in schools in Eastern Tibet.

[200] Semi-structured interview with interview with Dicki Chhoyang, Minister for Information and International Relations, 26 July 2012

[201] Semi-structured interivew with M-shōnin, 13 September 2006

[202] Accommodation during the peace walk often consisted of spreading mats and sleeping bags on the floor of public places like town halls, churches, or at times, Nipponzan dōjōs and the houses of lay followers.

[203] This marks the autumn equinox.

[204] This commemorates the death of Nichiren.

Issues Related to Language and Anonymity

A word is in order on issues related to language and orthography. The conventional usage of the term 'nonviolence' denotes to abstention from causing physical harm to others, while 'violence' refers to an act that causes physical harm. However, as will be seen, from a religious perspective, these terms are not always understood as descriptors of action, but also of thoughts and deeds. The Buddhists ascribe uppermost importance to the intention behind an act in deciding whether to call it 'nonviolent' or 'violent'. This layer of complexity added by a religious understanding can at times risk terminological confusion. In this thesis, I shall mainly use the terms 'violence' and 'nonviolence' in the conventional sense to denote the presence or absence of physical harm. When these terms are used in an unconventional sense I will make a point of adding an explanation to avoid confusion.

In the course of this thesis, I refer to the religious traditions of a number of different cultures and the words often used by the Buddhists in their own language are added in parentheses. In these instances, the following letters will be added before the foreign word in parenthesis to denote which language it is in: s (Sanskrit), p (Pali), v (Vietnamese), t (Tibetan), th (Thai), ch (Chinese) and j (Japanese). Note that the diacritics over Vietnamese words have been omitted given that most English scholarship on Vietnam does so, and it would be impossible to reinstate the diacritics of quoted material unless one is fluent in Vietnamese. The names of Vietnamese and Tibetans are written in full, with surnames preceding first names to avoid confusion, as is the scholarly convention. Most of the material used for my study on Nipponzan was in Japanese and when I quote from this material, the English rendition is my translation, which I note in parentheses in the footnote. Any errors in translation are mine alone.

Finally, given the sensitive nature of some of the issues canvassed in this thesis, I have taken care to ensure the anonymity of my research participants by initializing their name. The exception is those who occupy an official position where speaking on behalf of their cause is a responsibility they have willingly taken up—such as the Tibetan exile government officials and leaders of civil society. In these cases, I indicate their name in full in my references. Full names are also revealed when this information is made publicly available such as on websites, in public speeches, or on flyers distributed during peace activism.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to advance the theoretical framework of my thesis and explained the research methods that were employed with respect to my case studies. The theories on nonviolence and the 'two truths' offer key insights on how a particular nonviolent actor may perceive and interact with the 'other'. As stated already, the intent of this study is not to establish the factors that lead to the success of nonviolent action, nor is it to explain the problem of inter-doctrinal incompatibility or resolve the particularist/pluralist debate found in the literature on religious pluralism. Rather, it seeks to answer one central question: what is it about the groups in my case studies that led them to espouse nonviolence and disavow violence? The focus of the case studies is thus the ideological elements that shape the practices of Buddhist nonviolence. In ascertaining the features and dynamics of nonviolence in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, the theories above provide a helpful point of reference

and terminological clarity for my analysis. However, the question of why certain actors choose nonviolence over violence also necessitates an understanding of violence, and in the next chapter I specifically look at the issue of violence in the Buddhist context. In Chapter 2, I also discuss theories of nationalism and a typology of religions based on their relationship with different fractions within society, since these theories thematically fit better into this chapter than the present one.

Chapter 2

Violence, State Power and Sacrifice in the Buddhist Tradition

Introduction

Perhaps the key to unlocking the conundrum of nonviolence lies in understanding its key lexical constituent, 'violence'. The doctrine of *ahiṃsā* (in the sense of 'non-injury'), which shares currency among several Indian traditions, including Buddhism, was most probably first articulated by the Jain teacher Vardhamāna Mahāvira in the sixth century BCE and is upheld in the Jain credo as the 'highest dharma'.[1] The term *ahiṃsā* is composed of the prefix *a-* (non-) and *hiṃsā* (violence), indicating that it is a concept defined in opposition to the phenomenon of violence. The idea of 'nonviolence' thus suggests that a conscious choice is made to take a stance and a 'side' in the conventional world, despite all the teachings on non-duality in Indian philosophy.

In the previous chapter, I quoted Gandhi in his explanation of why he chose the negative term *ahiṃsā* over the positive notion of 'love': to denote a love that was encompassing beyond the human world and to avoid the other (more trivial) connotations of the word 'love'.[2] Yet, I suspect that this ancient Indian concept was indeed defined in the negative for good reason and its replacement by its alleged positive expression—'love' or 'compassion'—would in fact serve to efface a central significance of the concept. In this chapter, I propose to look at Buddhism's relationship to violence, and as ancillary phenomena, to state power and sacrifice, in the hope of arriving at insights leading to a fuller appreciation of the case studies and a firmer grasp of nonviolence in the Buddhist tradition. This chapter also serves to aid an understanding of certain actions which tend to occur in the context of a nonviolent movement, such as asceticism and self-immolation.

Buddhism's Ambivalence Towards Violence in Society

Despite Buddhism's reputation as a pacifistic religion, examples of wars and violence in the histories of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions are not difficult to locate. The militancy and religious nationalism of the monks who joined the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) in Sri Lanka; the militarization of the monks and monasteries in the south of Thailand against the Muslims population; the Chinese

---

[1] 'Dharma' here meaning 'duty' or 'religion'. See Martin T. Adam & Wayne Codling (2008) "Buddhist Perspectives on Terrorism" in Bryan Rennie and Philip L. Tite (Eds) *Religion, Terror and Violence: Religious Studies Perspectives*. London: Routledge: 177-194 at 178. Also see Henk W. Bodewitz (1999) "Hindu Ahiṁsā and its Roots" in Jan E. M. Houben & Karel R. Van Kooij (Ed) *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-Violence, and the Rationalization of Violence in South Asian Cultural History*. Leiden: Brill: 17-44

[2] Mary King, op.cit., 220. Bodewitz maintains that linkage between *ahiṃsā* and love is a tendency in modern Hindu authors rather than the original usage of the term *ahiṃsā*. See Bodewitz, ibid, 18.

millenarian Buddhist revolts of the sixth and seventh centuries; the history of sectarian violence among the Tibetan Buddhist sects; the active support leant by Japanese Buddhist schools to imperialism and militarism before and during the Second World War; and the more recent Buddhist violence in Myanmar, are just a few examples where Buddhists in different contexts and traditions have participated, ideologically or otherwise, in violence and warfare, employing elements of their faith.[3] The abundance of such examples may come as a surprise given the prohibition against killing is the first precept of Buddhism. Below, I take a closer look at the first precept and Buddhist attitudes on the issue of advising lay followers on war and violence.

THE FIRST PRECEPT

The proscription against killing can be found in the first of the Five Precepts (p. *pañca śilā*) as well as of the Ten Grand Precepts of the Brahma Net Sutra (*Brahmajāla*) in Mahayana Buddhism. To give an indication of the rigour and reach of this precept, it is instructive to quote the latter variant in full:

> A disciple of the Buddha shall not himself kill, encourage others to kill, kill by expedient means, praise killing, rejoice at witnessing killing, or kill through incantation or deviant mantras. He must not create the causes, conditions methods or karma of killing, and shall not intentionally kill any living creature. As a Buddha's disciple, he ought to nurture a mind of compassion and filial piety, always devising expedient means to rescue and protect all beings. If instead he fails to restrain himself and kill sentient beings without mercy, he commits a Pārājika (major) offence.[4]

At the minimum, Buddhists are traditionally asked to uphold the content of the Five Precepts, and typically more precepts appear in the ordination vows of the members of the monastic community (sangha). According to the Vinaya (Buddhist monastic regulations) killing carries the sanction of excommunication and expulsion from the sangha,[5] and if a monk participated in war, even in defense, disrobing was mandatory.[6] Other injunctions also forbid monks from interacting closely with military-related matters. For example, the 'bodhisattva precepts' of the Brahma Net Sutra proscribe monks and lay from storing implements that could be used for killing,

---

[3] Stephen C. Berkwitz (2006) "Buddhism in Sri Lanka: Practice, Protest, and Preservation" in Stephen C. Berkwitz (Ed) *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives*. California: ABC CLIO, 54-55; Paul Demiéville (2010) "Buddhism and War" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 17-57 at 24-30; Daniel W. Kent (2010) "Onward Buddhist Soldiers: Preaching to the Sri Lankan Army" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 157-177; Brian Daizen Victoria (2006) *Zen At War*. Second Ed. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Alan Strathern. (2013) "Why are Buddhist monks attacking Muslims?" BBC, 1 May 2013: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22356306 (accessed 10 December 2016).

[3] Kent, ibid, 167-168 & 173.

[4] Minh Thanh (trans.) (2000) "The Brahma Net Sutra" New York: Sutra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada: https://web.archive.org/web/20110611151922/http://www.ymba.org/bns/bnstext.htm#N_9_ (accessed 15 January 2017)

[5] See James A. Benn (2007a) "Introduction" in James Benn & Jinhua Chen (Eds) *Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-Sacrifice*. Hualien, Taiwan: Tzu Chi University Press: 1-11 at 1; Demiéville, op.cit., 18.

[6] Lambert Schmithousen (1999) "Aspects of the Buddhist Attitude Towards War" in Jan E. M. Houben & Karel R. Van Kooij (Ed) *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-Violence, and the Rationalization of Violence in South Asian Cultural History*. Leiden: Brill: 45-63 at 47

such as knives, clubs, spears, and axes.[7] Buddhists were not to aid communication between armies, nor to be spectators at battles with 'ill-will in their minds', and above all, they were forbidden to participate in armed rebellions against the state.[8]

In reality, however, discrepancies and tensions exist between the norms and practices of Buddhism.[9] Although there is a clear doctrinal exhortation to separate the monastic and the military, in Thailand, we see a conflation of the soldier and the monk in the phenomenon of the 'military monk', described by Jerryson as a member of a covert military unit of armed fully-ordained monks who are particularly entrusted with the mission of guarding the monasteries in the three southern-most provinces of Thailand (an area which has witnessed terror attacks by Thai Malay Muslims in recent decades).[10] The phenomenon of the 'military monk' is by no means unique to contemporary Thailand: it has surfaced at various points in Buddhist history, such as in the warrior-monks of feudal Japan (j. *sōhei*), the armed rebellions of the Maitreya messianic cults against the Wei, Tang and Sui dynasties, and the JVP monks in Sri Lanka who came to prominence in the 1980s for their rationalization of violence 'to protect the dharma'.[11]

ADVISING THE LAY ON WAR AND VIOLENCE

When it comes to Buddhist teachings on how the sangha should advise lay followers on the issues of violence and war, the canonical texts convey a certain ambivalence, though a number of sources attest to a strict application of the prohibition against killing. In the *Abhidharmakośabhāsya*, for example, it is stated that the mere fact of being conscripted renders a soldier guilty of killing by association unless he vows not to kill anybody, even to save his own life.[12] The same text also cautions that it is bad karma to kill even if done in self-defence or to defend friends.[13] There are other stories and legends too that demonstrate a stringent pacifist position where self-defense is surrendered to preserve the first precept.[14]

The story of Yodhājīva in the Pali canon of *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, however, captures the hesitant attitude of Buddhists in advising the lay on war and violence. Yodhājīva, a soldier, asks the Buddha whether it is true that warriors who die on the battleground are reborn in heaven in 'the company of devas slain in battle.'[15] To this the Buddha refuses to answer, saying 'Enough, headman, put that aside. Don't ask me that.' Yodhājīva asks the question a second time and is again met with the same answer. Upon his asking a third time, the Buddha finally responds as follows:

---

[7] Benn (2007a), op.cit., 2; Demiéville, op.cit., 21.

[8] Ibid. Note that the Vinaya also proscribes monks from witnessing battles. See also Schmithousen, op.cit., 47.

[9] See Bernard Faure (2010) "Afterthoughts" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 211-225 at 212.

[10] Michael Jerryson (2010a) "Militarizing Buddhism: Violence in Southern Thailand" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 179-209.

[11] Ibid, 190-191; see also Demiéville, op.cit., 17-30.

[12] See Schmithousen, op.cit., 48-49; Demiéville,op.cit., 18.

[13] Schmithousen, op.cit., 49

[14] For example, the *Dhammapadatthakathā* legend about the Buddha's kinsmen, the Sakyas, accepting to be massacred than to violate the first precept when facing the military offensive of King Vidūdabha; or the Jātaka story about King Mahāsīlavant who refused to defend himself by military force when he was subjected to an attack. Ibid, 49 & 51.

[15] "Yodhājīva sutta" in *Saṃyutta Nikāya*: http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn42/sn42.003.than.html (accessed 15 January 2017)

> Apparently, headman, I haven't been able to get past you…So I will simply answer you. When a warrior strives and exerts himself in battle, his mind is already seized, debased, and misdirected by the thought: 'May these beings be struck down or slaughtered or annihilated or destroyed. May they not exist.' If others then strike him down and slay him while he is thus striving and exerting himself in battle, then with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the hell called the realm of those slain in battle. But if he holds such a view as this: 'When a warrior strives and exerts himself in battle, if others then strike him down and slay him while he is striving and exerting himself in battle, then with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the company of devas slain in battle,' that is his wrong view. Now there are two destinations for a person with wrong view, I tell you: either hell or the animal womb.[16]

Here, the Buddha clearly states that the act of killing others in battle carries dismal karmic consequences, whether resulting in rebirth in hell or as an animal. At the same time, the Buddha betrays hesitation in telling the soldier thus, perhaps in a recognition that there is not much that can be done about the accumulation of negative karma accrued in the course of one's vocational duties. As Kent's study deftly indicates, modern-day Sri Lankan monks face a similar dilemma when ministering to soldiers, as they must tread a fine line so as not to encourage soldiers to kill—something a monk must not do—and yet simultaneously preaching in a way so that the soldiers do not lose confidence in battle and endanger themselves and their unit.[17]

Other Buddhist texts are more circumspect on advising lay followers on war and killing. The *Majjhima Nikāya* admonishes that killing by the lay should not be 'cruel' (p. *ludda*), 'bloody' (p. *lohitapāni*), and 'merciless and habitual' (p. *pānātipatī hoti*; *hatapahate niviṭṭho*) but contains no injunction against killing *per se*.[18] In fact, as A. Bareau observes, the Buddha seems to have been remarkably reserved in expressing judgment on war and those who engage in it (displayed also in the story of Yodhājīva), perhaps out of a view that interfering in politics was futile and even detrimental for the sangha.[19] According to Schmithousen;

> If our texts have faithfully transmitted the attitude of the Buddha in this regard, he did not expressly apply, or perhaps even deliberately avoided applying, his ethical principles to the issue of war (likewise for death penalty or corporal punishment) on the political level…He may well have realized that in the political situation of his day—with a number of competing polities, some of them quite aggressive and eager for expansion—complete abstention from military force, even for defense, would have been tantamount to self-abandonment and hence hardly acceptable to a ruler.[20]

Buddhist texts have prevaricated on a strict application of the first precept in public and social life, and in this regard Schmithousen speaks of a 'compartmentalization of values' in the form of an 'unrelated coexistence' of private nonviolence on the one hand, and public violence (including warfare and punishment) as the duty of kings and soldiers on the other.[21] An example of such compartmentalization can be found in the Vinaya where military commanders and generals practice strict vegetarianism to observe the first precept, even to the extent of straining drinking water to filter out small insects.[22] In one of the stories, the contradiction is explicitly reflected on and explained by way of contrasting the innocent animals to the human enemies who have

---

[16] Ibid. A paraphrasing of this story can be seen in Kent, op.cit., 157-158
[17] Kent (2010), op.cit., 167-168, 173.
[18] Schmithousen, op.cit., 47.
[19] The view of A. Bareau (original article in French) are paraphrased to in ibid, 49 & 51.
[20] Schmithousen, op.cit., 51 (my emphasis).
[21] Ibid, 48.
[22] Ibid, 53. Here, Schmithousen refers to *Vinayapiṭaka* and *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*.

revolted against the king (whom the warrior must serve).[23] Here, the warrior is 'conceived as observing the Buddhist norms wherever they do not conflict with his specific duties'.[24]

Nevertheless, Schmithousen points out that 'at least in the case of gross military atrocities, a strict partitioning or compartmentalization of the contradictory value system of politics and Buddhist ethics was difficult and almost schizoid. Hence the need for *compensation*.'[25] The main method of 'compensation' is said to be in 'making merit' by supporting the sangha, building pagodas and the like, and by engaging in religious practice.[26] Emperor Asoka, who, having effected a brutal and bloody conquest to build his empire, repented the horrors of war and converted to Buddhism provides a prime example. Asoka's support to the Buddhist community and efforts to rule his country as nonviolently as possible with a strong emphasis on social and animal welfare (as indicated by the inscriptions of the Asoka edicts) were also endeavours to compensate for past violence.

Susumu Shimazono (島園進) makes a similar point regarding Buddhism's compensatory function in the course of discussing the work of Hajime Nakamura (中村元):

> Buddhism both 'denies' and 'compensates' for the violence latent in a state. Thus, Buddhism functions to both recompense and tacitly approve the loathsome character of state violence. To 'deny' and 'approve' may seem like a contradiction in terms but the distribution of these two approaches varies widely. If the element of 'denial' is stronger, it can lead to nonviolent resistance, whereas if the element of 'approval' is stronger, then it will lead to the legitimation of gross violence. Therefore, what kind of 'denial' and 'approval' is at work is a question that must be addressed carefully looking at individual cases. By doing so, the ideologies and discourses which urge resistance and those which help propel gross violence will become evident.[27]

It is perhaps this dual propensity to deny as well as affirm state violence that has caused Buddhism to lack a 'clear socio-political position', the formulation of which may have 'enabled Buddhist thinkers to participate more actively in creating societies based on what they considered relevant Buddhist principles.'[28] In the next section, I examine more closely the Buddhist community's relationship with state power in an effort to trace the broader contours of Buddhist approaches to violence.

The Sangha's Relationship with the State

From the foregoing discussion, it should be evident that there is no 'consistent platform from which the Buddha propound[ed] on state violence.'[29] In this section, I focus more closely on the question of Buddhism's approach to state power in order to glean its implications for the Buddhist ethic of nonviolence. The first part of the

---

[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid (his emphasis)
[26] Ibid, 53-54.
[27] Susumu Shimazono 島園進 (2013) *Nihon Bukkyō no Shakai Rinri: "Shōbō" rinen kara kangaeru* 日本仏教の社会倫理—「正法」理念から考える. Tokyo: Iwanami Gendaizensho, 79 (my translation).
[28] Michael Zimmermann (2006) "Only a Fool Becomes a King: Buddhist Stances on Punishment" in Michael Zimmermann (Ed) *Buddhism and Violence*. Rupandehi, Nepal: Lumbini International Research Institute: 213-242 at 239.
[29] Michael Jerryson (2010b) "Introduction" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 3-16 at 12

section looks at different doctrinal stances of Buddhism towards punishment as an instance of a state's monology on violence in society. The second part considers the historical relationship between the sangha and the state, as well as factors for the evolution of this relationship, with a focus on issues of violence and nonviolence.

THREE BUDDHIST VIEWS ON PUNISHMENT

As with war, Buddhist canons display a mixed attitude towards punishment. Both war and punishment are intrinsic to a state's prerogative to monopolize violence. Even though a state's 'right' to engage in warfare or punish offenders may be recognized by the sangha, it is instructive to consider what Buddhist texts actually say about the karmic consequences of such actions. Before delving into this discussion, however, the Buddhist ideal of kingship in the notion of a *cakravartin* is relevant to consider.

A *cakravartin* (literally meaning 'wheel-turning king') is a universal Buddhist monarch who conquers the four corners of the earth without shedding blood and thereafter rules justly without recourse to force, encouraging his subjects to live by the Five Precepts.[30] It is noteworthy that the *cakravartin* conquers the whole earth with *his army*, and yet all other rulers submit *without fighting*.[31] Further, since all the subjects observe the precepts, there are no crimes and therefore no need for punishment, nor war since there are no more external enemies.[32] This utopian image of a Buddhist sovereign, which may have been inspired by the example of Asoka, offers few practical guidelines on the duties of a king, including that on punishment.[33] From a less utopian viewpoint, however, Zimmermann's study of texts from an early period of Buddhism reveals at least three distinct perspectives on punishment.

The first mainly comes from Pali canons depicting the 'righteous king' (s. *dharmarāja*) which is a king of less far-reaching reign than a *cakravartin*. Ten 'royal virtues' (p. *rājadhamma*) of such a king are indicated, including 'nonviolence'. Yet, it appears the texts do not acknowledge any contradiction between the virtue of nonviolence and the acts of punishment and warfare. The depiction of a righteous king appears to be based in part on the brahmanical rules of governance from ancient Indian statecraft, which describe punishing offenders as the unmistakable duty of a king, [34] the neglect of which would ensue in chaos and the vulnerable being exploited by the powerful.[35]

The king's 'righteousness' here is demonstrated by the proper administration of punishment, which is carried out with heedfulness, impartiality, and calm judgement.[36] The idea of a 'righteous king' may be influenced to some extent by the ideal of a *cakravartin*, given that the righteous king who holds the ten royal virtues is described, in the *Bhikkāparampara Jātaka*, as not needing to issue punishment since his court of justice will be empty.[37] It is explained that the outstanding virtues of the king will result in the moral perfection of his subjects and hence there would not be

---

[30] Zimmermann, op.cit., 217; Schmithousen, op.cit., 55
[31] Schmithousen, ibid, 55
[32] Ibid. Note, however, that the kings of Ceylon and Southeast Asia, who took inspiration from the model of a *cakravartin* demonstrated no scruples about the use of bloody force in their military conquests. Ibid, 56.
[33] Zimmermann, op.cit., 217
[34] Ibid, 224. For such an assumption, see for example, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* and *Sumaṅgala Jātaka*.
[35] Ibid, 215. For instance, one of the most authoritative brahmanical writings, the *Manusmṛiti* states that without punishment, 'the stronger would grill the weak like fish on a spit'. See ibid, 215.
[36] Ibid, 225 & 227.
[37] Ibid, 225.

need for punishment[38]—a depiction similar to the rule of a *cakravartin*. The karmic consequences of punishing and infringing the principle of nonviolence are unaddressed in this perspective,[39] and instead there is a tendency to resort to the utopian to sidestep the issue.

The second Buddhist stance on punishment is described by Zimmermann as 'ethical fundamentalism'.[40] This position judges punishment uncompromisingly as an unwholesome act that violates the precept on nonviolence and 'offers no room for reconciliation of the issue.'[41] Such a stringent approach can be seen in a number of Buddhist writings including the *Jātaka*, which relates the story of Prince Temīya, who, appalled by the violence entailed in punishment that his father must order, and horrified by its karmic consequences, opts to become an ascetic.[42] The Madhyamaka philosopher Candrakīrti appears to be another proponent of this uncompromising position. He challenges the relatively established view in ancient Indian statecraft that a king's use of violence in carrying out his proper duties as a ruler would not have unwholesome effects for his rebirth.[43] Candrakīrti states that since a king punishes 'without empathy', he cannot but produce negative karma:

> It is just as if in order to perform a buffalo sacrifice somebody would kill [the animal] and many would eat [its meat], and this evil (*pāpa*), however, would only appertain to the killer; in the same way, for the sake of the kingdom, the king performs [protective] acts of evil and many enjoy the wealth [resulting from it], but the evil he performed, which has terrible fruits [leading] to bad existences (*durgati*), pertains alone to the king.[44]

Candrakīrti assumes that a king punishes 'without empathy', a point he reiterates several times; however he does not address the question of whether violent punishment that is accompanied by empathy and compassion would bear different karmic fruits.[45] In any case, it is clear that Candrakīrti himself, like Prince Temīya, would have avoided becoming a king, an attitude which is displays when he quips that only a 'fool' would 'gain a kingdom'.[46]

The third Buddhist view described by Zimmermann is that of 'compassionate punishment', found chiefly in Mahayana sources, whereby, to the qualities of heedfulness, proper consideration and impartiality, characterising the punishment of a righteous king, 'compassion' is added as a key ingredient.[47] A number of texts advocate this position. In *Ratnavālī*, Nāgārjuna advises the ruler to look upon evildoers as he would his own children whom he would punish with compassion with a view to their rehabilitation.[48] Nāgārjuna also admonishes the king to treat prisoners with compassion, to take good care of their physical needs, and recommends banishment for grave criminal offences instead of resorting torture or capital punishment. Note that *Ratnavālī* does not make light of the difficulties a king might face, and states in the last verse of the royal policy chapter that if the king finds it too

---

[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid, 236.
[40] Ibid, 218.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., 218-219; Schmithousen, op.cit., 51.
[43] Zimmermann, op.cit., 220.
[44] From Candrakīrti's *Bodhisattva-yogācāra-catuḥśataka-ṭīkā* quoted in ibid.
[45] Zimmermann, op.cit. 222.
[46] From the Tibetan translation of Candrakīrti's *Bodhisattva-yogācāra-catuḥśataka-ṭīkā* quoted and discussed in ibid, 221.
[47] Ibid, 227.
[48] Ibid, 228.

difficult to rule under the contradicting demands of the dharma and the temporal world, then the king should renounce the world and seek liberation as a monk.[49]

The *Bodhisattavabhūmi* (which forms part of the *Yogācārabhūmi*) maintains that a bodhisattva—whether lay or monk—can make use of harsh words, criticism, and forms of punishment for the sake of the spiritual benefit of sentient beings, and in so doing he attains merit rather than negative karma.[50] In fact, only in specific circumstances would neglecting to punish *not* be an offence on the part of one who assumes the duty to punish. The bodhisattva who punishes, however, must do so with altruistic intentions, demonstrating calmness, care and friendship.[51] Again, the most drastic form of punishment specified here is irreversible banishment.[52] The same canon also allows for such a king to wage defensive wars as a last resort.[53]

The idea of compassionate punishment is further explored in the chapter on royal ethics in the *Satyaka-parivarta*,[54] which rejects capital punishment and all kinds of mutilation, and underlines the aim of rehabilitating the offender.[55] The state of mind of a ruler who punishes compassionately is explained as follows:

> It is as if a father, [who,] when [he] wants to cure a dishonourable son, after [he] has brought about a mental state of friendliness and compassion, treats [his son] harshly with [all] other kinds of harming [punishments] except killing [him], injuring [his] senses, or cutting parts [of his body]. But thereby no mental state of malignity or causing harm arises.[56]

Laying importance on the 'intention' of the ruler who punishes is thus a way of reconciling the exigencies of the state with Buddhist ethics. The *Satyaka-parivarta* also applies a similar logic to warfare: the king is said to acquire merit even though allows his soldiers to be injured and killed in war given that he does so with compassion and determination in dealing with a war that he could not avoid.[57] Zimmermann cautions us, however, that 'we cannot assume that Indian Mahayanists are speaking with a single voice and would generally accept that the ideal of non-violence could become supplanted by a compassion that would somehow spare the ruler from unwholesome karmic effects.'[58] The tendency of compassion to enter into the equation when the principle of nonviolence can no longer be defended is one that appears repeatedly in Buddhist justifications of violence.

SYMBIOSIS BETWEEN THE SANGHA AND THE STATE

The contradictory Buddhist views seen above with respect to state violence (warfare and punishment) are in fact a direct reflection of the very ambivalence with which the sangha originally approached relations with the state. Buddhism's relationship with the state has a long history. The Buddha himself was born a prince, and after his enlightenment he secured royal support for the growing sangha in return for religious

---

[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid, 229.
[51] Ibid, 230.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Schmithousen, op.cit., 54.
[54] The full name of the sutra is *Bodhisattva-gocaropāya-viṣaya-vikurvaṇa-nirdeśa-sūtra* (Sutra which expounds supernational manifestations [that are part of] the realm of stratagems in the Bodhisattva's range of action).
[55] Zimmermann, op.cit., 231.
[56] Quoted in ibid, 232.
[57] Ibid, 237.
[58] Ibid, 237-238.

advice.[59] The Buddha nevertheless set an example of keeping an 'arm's-length' relationship with the political authorities, and the monastic rules during his time clearly discouraged the involvement of monks with political power.[60] Thus, the early sangha's relationship with the state tended to be characterised by the elements of *distance* and *dependence*. Despite this early orientation, as Dargyay points out, in many countries the opposite became the trend, and the 'sangha became intricately interwoven with the state authorities.'[61] Sometimes this trend manifested in monks occupying ministerial positions, at other times kings and emperors became monks or monks ruled as kings.[62]

It is of central significance that the historical Buddha hailed from royal heritage and decided to renounce his worldly position. In the *Sutta-Nipata*, it is said that the Buddha was in fact asked to reign as a king by Sela, but to this request he simply responded: 'I am a king…supreme king of the Teaching of Truth; I turn the wheel by pure-means…'[63] That is to say, the Buddha asserts his sovereign authority in a spiritual, not temporal sense.[64] According to Shimazono, the Buddha's renunciation of the world (j. *shukke* 出家) and his espousal of nonviolence are fundamentally linked, for underlying the monastic precepts is the norm of nonviolence.[65] This is not only because the first precept forbids killing but also because the other monastic precepts, such as those on celibacy or renunciation of wealth, in fact helps the spiritual aspirant eschew violence. For example, if one has a family one is like to wish to protect them even by force if circumstances call for it.[66] The Buddha's renunciation of his wife and son was thus a means by which to escape the cycle of violence,[67] as was surrendering his kingship.[68] Bodewitz makes a similar point that, in its early formulation in India, *ahiṃsā* was primarily a prescript for ascetics and monks, and 'by extension a weakened version was prescribed for laymen.'[69]

The adoption of the precepts and the creation of the sangha was a way to strive towards enlightenment away from the suffering and violence of the world.[70] This is what initially encouraged the sangha to keep the state at arms'-length.[71] Yet,

---

[59] Derek F. Maher (2007) "The Dalai Lamas and State Power" *Religion Compass* 1(2): 260–278 at 260.
[60] Eva K. Dargyay (1991) "Sangha and State in Imperial Tibet" In Ernst Steinkellner and Uray Géza. *Tibetan History and Language : Studies Dedicated to Uray Géza on His Seventieth Birthday*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien: 111-127 at 112.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] H. Saddhatissa (trans.) (1994) *The Sutta-Nipata: A New Translation from the Pali Canon*. London: Routledge Curzon, 65.
[64] See Shimazono, op.cit., 40-41
[65] The point calls to mind the exhortation of Zen master Sōseki Musō (1275-1351) to his fellow monks to protect themselves by renouncing possessions rather than by carrying arms. See Schmithousen, op.cit., 63.
[66] Shimazono points to Gandhi's vow of celibacy (s. *bramacharya*) as an integral part of the latter's nonviolence. Shimazono, op.cit., 47.
[67] Ibid, 46-47.
[68] Ibid, 40-41, 77.
[69] Bodewitz, op.cit., 40-41.
[70] The Buddha's decision to leave worldly life is usually explained as stemming from an acute awareness of the world's suffering. Shimazono observes that the causes of suffering include not only impermanence but also violence. Ibid, 40.
[71] ibid, 66 & 78. Jerryson suggests that the early sangha was structurally influenced by the *gaṇa-sangha*s (network of regional oligarchies) in North India, of which the Buddha would have had intimate knowledge from his training in statecraft. Jerryson observes that the monks of the early Buddhist sangha acted like foreign diplomats who were immune to state laws. See Jerryson (2010b), op.cit., 10.

Nakamura indicates that early Buddhism also had a vision for social change, to be achieved both independently from the state as well as by influencing the state.[72] The reign of Asoka intensified Buddhism's dependency on state power, as it was during this time that spread of Buddhism across vast territories was coupled with imperial conquest. Shimazono states that this was a period when the impetus for universalism and violence inherent in state consolidation became tied to the symbiosis latent in the sangha's relationship with the state.[73] The symbiotic relationship of the state and sangha under Asoka's reign extends beyond the original relationship of patronage established by the Buddha. It is during this time that something resembling a Buddhist 'social ethics' emerges as the sangha changes its approach from maintaining a distance to proactively providing political guidance to the state to based on Buddhist teachings.[74]

One of the legacies of Asoka is that where Buddhism has received official support from the government, it has tended function as a provider of moral or political *legitimacy* to the state.[75] Faure observes that from the start Buddhism was seen in China, Japan, Tibet and Southeast Asia as an 'instrument of power'.[76] In East Asia, it is said that one of the reasons for the acceptance of Buddhism by the state was the efficacious methods it offered for defeating military opponents such as those outlined in the Sutra on Benevolent Kings (c. *Jen-wang-ching*; j. *Ninnō-kyō* 仁王経).[77] This sutra maintains that, in order to defend the kingdom from 'internal and external enemies', kings and armies can resort to warfare without accruing negative karma if done for the purpose of protecting the kingdom.[78] It also states that one can escape the karmic consequences arising from acts of killing by recitation of the sutra.[79]

A key tension in Buddhism's approach to the state is that while the doctrinal teachings may have much guidance to offer an incumbent ruler, it is conspicuously silent on how a ruler assumes power in the first place.[80] As Demiéville remarks, the situation is reminiscent of the French proverb, 'If a man steals money, he's condemned. If he steals a nation, he's crowned'.[81] Although Asoka later repented the brutal violence during his conquests, his example of coming to power remains, and it should come as no surprise that the kings in Ceylon and Southeast Asia, taking the *cakravartin* ideal as their model or declaring themselves bodhisattvas, had no scruples in using bloody force to conquer their neighbours.[82] Nor is this type of 'foundational violence' of a state unique to a bygone Buddhist world: as Asad asserts, the modern liberal state wherein 'violence founds the law as it founds the political community'[83] is no less implicated.

---

[72] Discussed Shimazono, ibid, 66-67.
[73] Ibid, 74-76.
[74] Ibid, 76-78. However, Shimazono points out that in reality, the difference between the two approaches to state-sangha relationship may not be as stark as it first seems, given that both require the state to protect the sangha and to rule according to the correct teachings of the dharma (at 78).
[75] Jerryson (2010b), op.cit., 8-9.
[76] Faure, op.cit., 217.
[77] Benn (2007a), op.cit., 3.
[78] Victoria (2013), op.cit., 201.
[79] Ibid.
[80] This point has been observed by several commentators including: Stanley J. Tambiah (1976) *World Conqueror and World Renouncer; A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 522; Kent, op.cit., 162; Shimazono, op.cit., 77.
[81] Demiéville, op.cit., 18.
[82] Schmithousen, op.cit., 56.
[83] Talal Asad (2007) *On Suicide Bombing*. New York: Columbia University Press, 59

The provision of moral legitimacy to the state raises moral questions about Buddhism's self-positioning vis-à-vis political power, especially if the conduct of the state is unpraiseworthy. One such concern is heard from Alan Strathern: 'However any religion starts out, sooner or later it enters into a Faustian pact with state power. Buddhist monks looked to kings, the ultimate wielders of violence for the support, patronage and order that only they could provide. The result can seem ironic. If you have a strong sense of overriding moral superiority of your worldviews, then the need to protect and advance it can seem the most important duty of all.'[84] Strathern's last sentence refers to the commonly heard argument of 'defending one's religion'—a justification examined in the next section which takes a closer look at how Buddhists have legitimised violence employing the resources of their tradition.

Doctrinal Enablers of Violence and War

Certain Buddhist ideas, imagery, and beliefs are more amenable to be used for ideological justifications of violence and war. Brian Daizen Victoria, who has done much work in this field, calls such resources 'violence-enabling mechanisms'.[85] While acknowledging that the wrathful imagery and myths found in Buddhism can also be used powerfully in violent exhortations,[86] in this section I confine my discussion to the common *doctrinal* enablers that have justified infringements of the first precept.

DEFENSE OF THE DHARMA

One of the peremptory arguments found in Buddhism to legitimate violence is the 'defense of the dharma' from its enemies, though it is 'equally true that the use of violence in defense of one's faith is the most universal reason cited for violence in *all* of the world's major faiths.'[87] Tessa Bartholomeusz argues that in Sri Lanka there is a general understanding by the sangha that the prohibition against killing can be overridden by the obligation to protect the Buddhist religion—a view she calls a prima facie 'just-war' theory.[88] Many Sri Lankan monks and soldiers in fact draw inspiration from a story in the *Mahāvaṁsa* where the Sinhalese king (King Duṭṭhagāmanī) brutally defeats the army led by his Tamil counterpart (King Elara) who, incidentally, is known to be a righteous king.[89] The former grieved and repented the slaughtering millions (similarly to Asoka), upon which he is consoled by a group of eight monks who tell him that the killing of 'unbelievers' carries no more weight than the killing of beasts and that the bloodshed had actually only amounted to an equivalent of killing one-and-a-half human beings, for among the slain one had taken the three refuges and the other had taken the five precepts.[90] Deegalle assesses the

[84] Strathern, op.cit.
[85] Brian Daizen Victoria (2013) "Violence-enabling Mechanisms in Buddhism" *Journal of Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 5: 170-211 at 174
[86] For a discussion of violent imagery and myths, see Faure, op.cit., 215-216; Schmithousen, op.cit., 56 & 58; Victoria, ibid, 190-199.
[87] Victoria, ibid, 201. see also Demiéville, op.cit., 38.
[88] Tessa J. Bartholomeusz (2002) *In Defense of Dharma: Just-War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka*. London: Routledge Curzon. See also Faure, op.cit., 213.
[89] See Mahinda Deegalle (2003) "Is Violence Justified in the Theravāda Buddhism?" *The Ecumenical Review* 55(2): 122-131 at 125-126.
[90] Ibid. Also see Schmithousen, op.cit., 57.

monks' advice as 'problematic' and as an aberration among the Theravada doctrines which otherwise provide 'no direct validation of violence, verbal or physical, [within its] canonical scriptures.'[91]

Yet, many Sinhalese Buddhists interpret this *Mahāvaṁsa* story as describing a war against the Tamils *for the sake of the Buddhist religion*—though, as Schmithousen points out, there is no indication that the Tamil king suppressed Buddhism.[92] For example, the Sri Lankan monk Venerable Vimaladhajja preached in 2005: 'Duṭugämuṇu [Duṭṭhagāmanī], the lord of men, fought a great war. He killed people in order to save the religion. He united the pure Sri Lanka and received comfort from that in the end [of *saṃsāra*].'[93] The relationship between religion and nationalism evident here is a subject that I return to later in this chapter. For now, it suffices to underline that the argument of 'defending the dharma' frequently serves as a powerful justification for both violence and 'othering'.

This argument has been used in a number of different contexts.[94] The ultraconservative monks in Thailand in the 1970s described the Communists as anti-religion and anti-nation 'because whoever destroys the nation, the religion, or the monarchy, such bestial types are *not complete persons*. Thus we must intend not to kill people but to kill the Devi [Māra]; this is the duty of all Thai.'[95] The Tibetan Buddhists used a similar rhetoric regarding the Chinese Communists, as exemplified by the words of a Tibetan guerrilla fighter below:

> My father would tell us the Communist Chinese were the enemies of our religion so we never felt it was a sin to kill them. In fact, we'd try to kill as many as we could. When we killed an animal, a prayer would come to our lips; but when we killed a Chinese, no prayer came to our lips.[96]

Typically what we find in these examples is an endeavour to strip the enemy of human attributes by demonising the enemy as an embodiment of evil (Māra) or by equating the enemy to an animal or less. The use of Māra (the demon who is said to have assaulted the Buddha while he mediated under the bodhi tree) is a common strategy of extreme 'othering' used by Buddhists. Examples of such othering can be found in sixth-century China (in the Buddhists' anti-government rebellions framed as a struggle between the Buddha and Māra); Japan (equation of Russia as 'Māra' during the Russo-Japanese War); Sri Lanka (personifying the LTTE terrorists as 'Māra'), and in Thailand (referred to above).[97]

An apologist may argue that there is a difference between Buddhist teachings and the practices, and that whereas the latter is subject to human error, the former preserves the true spirit of the religion.[98] Yet, such an claim is also open to

---

[91] Deegalle, ibid, 123. Note, however, that Bartholomeusz also points out that the Cakkavatti Sihanada Sutta also refers to a righteous king committed to the dharma who surrounds himself with a four-fold army, presumably for the purpose of protecting Buddhism. See Victoria (2013), op.cit., 203.
[92] Schmithousen, op.cit., 57.
[93] Kent, op.cit., 169.
[94] Note that an interest inversion of the 'defense of the dharma' argument can be found in Tibet's historical relations with Mongolia, such as when the Fifth Dalai Lama declared that Gushri Khan is 'entitled' to use violence as the latter acts as a bodhisattva protecting the dharma. Here, violence is justified because of *who* Gushri Khan is claimed to be: 'It is no longer the act but the agent that matters.' See Faure, op.cit., 214.
[95] Words of Phra Kittiwuttho quoted in Jerryson (2010b), op.cit., 189 (my emphasis).
[96] Quoted in Victoria (2013), op.cit., 188.
[97] Ibid, 203-206.
[98] For the distinction between Buddhist doctrine and praxis in the context of analysing violence, see Jerryson (2010a), op.cit., 182 & 184.

questioning given that Buddhists texts can provide a doctrinal bases for killing in order to protect the dharma, or worse, to sanction religious fundamentalism. One such text is the *Mahāparinivāna Sūtra*, which speaks of the Buddha putting several heretical Brahmins to death in his previous life to prevent them for slandering the dharma.[99] The reasons for such killing are explained, firstly, as motivated out of pity and compassion to save them from their karmic consequences, and secondly, to defend the dharma. Again, the killing of those who discard the teachings of Mahayana (s. *icchantika*s) and who propagate unwholesome doctrines is considered to be of less significance here than the killing of an animal.[100] The same sutra explicitly declares in another passage that the five precepts do not need to be observed if protection of the dharma is in question.[101] Although such canonical texts could theoretically provide a basis for religious exclusivism and chauvinism, fortunately history attests that 'religious wars for the sake of spreading the Buddhist religion by force to non-Buddhist regions seem to have occurred very rarely, if at all.'[102]

READINESS TO DIE AND KILL

Certain Buddhist doctrines have aided Buddhist followers' readiness to die and kill in the context of war and even terrorism. Victoria (2013) reviews many such doctrines but chief among them are those on karma and rebirth, compassion, and nonduality (based on notions of *anātman* and emptiness).

Karma and Rebirth

Notions of rebirth and karma often figure conspicuously in the exhortations to soldiers to face their death calmly on the battlefield. The prospect of rebirth in paradise (equivalents of which can be found in Christianity and Islam[103]) is a relatively common argument in exhorting followers to embrace death. The following words of Jōdo-shin sect scholar Ōsuga Shūdō during the Sino-Japanese War provides an illustration:

> Reciting the name of Amida Buddha makes it possible to march onto the battlefield firm in the belief that death will bring rebirth in paradise. Being prepared for death, one can fight strenuously knowing that it is a just fight, a fight employing the compassionate mind of the Buddha, the fight of a loyal subject. Truly, what could be more fortunate than knowing that, should you die, a welcome awaits in the Pure Land.[104]

The logic of karma can further serve to urge acceptance of the death of loved ones who died in battle. As one Jōdo-shin sect military chaplain explained: 'Everything depends on karma…If it is their karmic destiny, bullets will not strike them, and they will not die. Conversely should it be their karmic destiny, even if they are not in the military, they may still die from gunfire.'[105] However, as Victoria remarks, this

---

[99] See Demiéville, op.cit., 40-41; Victoria (2013), op.cit., 201-202. The *Ratnavālī* also appears provide a privileged place for Buddhism over other religions in a state. See Shimazono, op.cit., 90-91.
[100] Schmithousen, op.cit., 58.
[101] Demiéville, op.cit., 41.
[102] Schmithousen, op.cit., 63.
[103] See Brian A. Victoria (2007) "Holy War: Towards a Holistic Understanding" *Journal of Religion, Conflict, and Peace* 1(1): http://religionconflictpeace.org/volume-1-issue-1-fall-2007/holy-war-toward-holistic-understanding (accessed 6 April 2014).
[104] Quoted in Victoria (2013), op.cit., 185-186.
[105] Ibid, 181-182.

emphasis on karma puts the carnage of war above the responsibility of political and military leaders,[106] and does not facilitate critical efforts to rise above military action.

Karma is a preeminent concern for Sri Lankan soldiers, as demonstrated by Kent's field study, and it is closely associated with intentionality.[107] According to a commonly cited formulation in Sri Lanka of the act of intentional killing found in Pali texts, five conditions must be fulfilled for negative karma to be created: (1) there must be a living creature; (2) one must know that the creature is living; (3) one must intend to kill the creature; (4) one must perform the necessary action; (5) the creature must die.[108] Some Sri Lankan monks and soldiers dispute the conclusion that negative karma occurs when firing at the enemy by calling into question the third condition on intentionality. One monk, for example, told Kent, 'Soldiers don't take guns with the intention of killing. More than killing, they take them with the principal intention of saving the country, the race, and the religion.'[109] By redirecting the intentions of the soldiers to a more altruistic end, this view absolves them of negative karma. It should be added, however, that other monks in Sri Lanka do admit to the negative karmic consequences of firing a weapon.[110]

Karma and rebirth were doctrines also employed by the Aum Shinrikyō movement in Japan to justify their 1995 poison-gas attack in the Tokyo subway and a lesser known attack in Nagano prefecture in 1994. The cult was rather eclectic, integrating Buddhist, Hindu (especially Śaiva) and Christian elements into its belief system but the immediate ideological resources employed to legitimate violence seem to have been drawn from Buddhism.[111] Manabu Watanabe explains that the cult believed that a more advanced spiritual practitioner can take away the negative karma of a lesser advanced practitioner as well as transmit positive karma.[112] The movement developed the idea of 'karma-dropping' (j. *karuma-otoshi* カルマ落とし) whereby suffering, especially those *caused* by a spiritual adept, was thought to help remove one's negative karma. This strain of thinking together with a notion found in Vajrayana sources of 'taking the lives of "less spiritually advanced" beings so as to help them to a better rebirth' culminated in the movement's idea of salvific murder which they called *poa* (ポア).[113] 'Poa' was envisaged as an act of sending those humans likely to go to hell to a higher spiritual plane by causing a timely death, and was understood to be an act of 'compassion'.[114] This is a case where the Buddhist

---

[106] Victoria (2007), op.cit.
[107] Kent, op.cit., 159.
[108] Ibid, 164.
[109] Quoted at Ibid. Also see ibid, 169.
[110] Ibid, 163-164.
[111] Schmithousen, op.cit., 61.
[112] Manabu Watanabe 渡邉学(1998) "Kuro-nka to Poa クローン化とポア" *Journal of the Nanzan Academic Society* 67: 251-267 at 258-259.
[113] Ibid, 264; Schmithousen, op.cit., 61. Also see for a discussion of relevant Vajrayana notions, Jens Schlieter (2006) "Compassionate Killing or Conflict Resolution? The Murder of King Langdarma according to Tibetan Buddhist Sources" in Michael Zimmermann (Ed) *Buddhism and Violence*. Rupandehi, Nepal: Lumbini International Research Institute: 131-157 at 147-149.
[114] Watanabe, ibid, 263 & 265. Also Schmithousen, ibid, 61. With regard to the difference between Christian and Buddhist violence, Watanabe points out that Buddhists tend justify killing as an act of compassion towards the person being killed, whereas Christians usually see the person who must be killed as 'evil'. See Manabu Watanabe 渡邉学(2008) "*Ai, jihi, zō'o no tadanaka no shūkyō bōryoku* 愛、慈悲、憎悪の只中の宗教暴力—マー・ユルゲンスマイヤー教授への応答" in Susumu Shimazono, Gerrie ter Harr & Yoshio Tsuruoka (Eds) *Shūkyō—Sōkoku to Heiwa <Kokusai Shūkyō-gaku Shūkyō-shi kaigi Tōkyō Taikai (IAHR 2005) no Tōgi>*宗教—相克と平和＜国際宗教学宗教史会議東京大会 (IAHR2005) の討議>. Tokyo: Akiyama shoten: 44-59 at 55

doctrines of karma, rebirth, and even compassion were used to justify killing not in the context of state-sanctioned violence but in an acts of terror *against* the state and society.

Compassion

'Compassion' has featured in a number of examples cited above, including the idea of 'compassionate punishment'. The notion of 'compassionate killing' is one that is found chiefly in Mahayana and Vajrayana traditions, while in Theravada 'compassionate killing' is a misnomer.[115] In the Mahayana tradition, this idea is often expounded through the following story in the Skilful Means Sutra (*Upayākauśalya Sūtra*). In one of the Buddha's former lives when he was a ship's captain, he discovers a homicidal thief onboard who had hidden himself among the ship's 499 passengers, and who was intent on killing and robbing everyone. After seven days of contemplation, the captain ('Captain Great Compassionate') decides to kill the robber not only to save the ship's passengers (the doctrine of killing one to save many[116]) but also to save the thief from the enormous karmic consequences that would follow if his plan was implemented.[117] Fully aware of the eons he will need to spend in hell for this act, and 'with great compassion', the captain kills the robber, who is reborn in a heavenly sphere.[118] The sutra states that the action of Captain Great Compassionate does not derive in negative karma since it was carried out with pure intentions, and is to be regarded rather as an instance of a 'skilful means' (s. *upāya*). With reference to a similar story in the *Bodhisattvabhumi*, Sallie B. King highlights the importance of the bodhisattva embracing the thought, 'If I kill this being I will be reborn in hell, but I am willing to suffer it.'[119] It is by virtue of having embraced this thought that the bodhisattva is freed from negative karma. In other words, 'the very act of accepting negative karma cancels the negative karma.'[120]

In the Vajrayana tradition, there is a similar idea that 'an evil person, if killed without hatred, can be "liberated (t. *drölwa*)" from future bad karma that otherwise would have forced him to experience unlimited suffering in lower rebirths.'[121] The most famous example of 'liberation killing' in Tibetan Buddhist history would be the killing of King Lang Darma by the Buddhist monk Palgyi Dorje, who is said to have assassinated the former 'out of compassion' and to protect Buddhism which had allegedly declined under Lang Darma's tyrannical rule. While recent research questions the historicity of Lang Darma's characterisation and the interpretation of 'liberation killing',[122] it is clear that the Vajrayana tradition provides for the doctrinal linking of 'compassion' and 'killing'. In both Vajrayana and Mahayana traditions, there is much emphasis on the mental state of the one who is killed compassionately,

---

[115] Schlieter, op.cit., 145. Also see Demiéville, op.cit, 20. It is probably for this reason that the element of intentionality is emphasised in the 5-criteria formulation for the accrual of negative karma from killing. Given that 'compassionate killing' is not a doctrine that can be invoked in Theravada, an argument based on intentionality is the only way a soldier may hope to escape the karmic consequences of a military vocation. Cf. From a Christian perspective, Jackson claims that love and violence are not necessarily incompatible. See Timothy P. Jackson (2003) *The Priority of Love: Christian Charity and Social Justice*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 111

[116] See Demiéville, op.cit., 41.

[117] Victoria (2013), op.cit., 186-187; Schlieter, op.cit., 145-146.

[118] Schlieter, ibid, 146.

[119] Sallie B. King (2000), op.cit., at 141.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Schlieter, ibid, 132-133.

[122] Ibid, 134 & 148-149; Faure, op.cit, 212.

for death during a negative state of mind is thought to have negative consequences for the after life.[123]

The rhetoric of 'compassion' also figured prominently in Buddhist justifications of Japanese militarism. During the Russo-Japanese War, the idea that the Japanese army is composed of 'tens of thousands of bodhisattvas, ever ready to make the ultimate sacrifice' emerged, and some Buddhists like Zen master Nantembō taught that there was in fact 'no bodhisattva practice superior to the compassionate taking of life.'[124] Further, in a book called *The Buddhist View of War* (*Bukkyō no Sensō Kan*), which sets out the doctrinal relationship between Buddhism and war from the perspective of two Sōtō Zen sect scholars, the Japanese Emperor is portrayed as a *cakravartin*, a 'Golden Wheel-Turning Sacred King' (j. *konrin-jōō* 金輪聖王), who uses force not out of hatred or anger, but out of compassion similar to that of a parent striking children to 'perfect their children's character and bring them happiness.'[125] The book ends with the assertion that the Sino-Japanese War was being fought to end future wars for the mutual betterment of both parties:

> [I]n an age when the situation is such that it is impossible for humanity to stop wars, there is no choice but to wage compassionate wars which give life to both oneself and one's enemy. Through a compassionate war, the warring nations are able to improve themselves, and war is able to exterminate itself.[126]

Despite its doctrinal basis, 'compassionate killing' is an uncomfortable idea. The oxymoron is rendered even more absurd when speaking of 'compassionate torture'—a rhetoric used in Mongolia[127]—which, as Faure comments, calls to mind 'the worst casuistry of twentieth-and twenty-first-century history'.[128] Indeed, such formulations and sophism risk emptying the very idea of compassion of all meaning. A similar propensity can also be seen with respect to arguments based on non-duality.

Anātman and Emptiness

The concept of *anātman* (no-self) is also an often-invoked Buddhist doctrine for the exhortation of killing and dying. In fact, Nāgārjuna, the Madhyamaka philosopher on emptiness, hinted at such conceptual linkage when he wrote:

> [S]ince the living being [sattva] does not exist, neither does the sin of murder. And since the sin of murder does not exist, there is no longer any reason to forbid it…In killing then, given that the five aggregates are characteristically empty, similar to the visions of dreams or reflections in a mirror, one commits no wrongdoing.[129]

---

[123] See Schlieter, ibid, 141; Schmithousen, op.cit., 59. The 14th Dalai Lama's also emphasises the importance of the state of mind in which a person commits suicide. See Delhey, op.cit., 54. While 'compassionate killing' does not have a doctrinal basis in Theravada Buddhism, the mental state when dying on the battlefield is considered to impact one's rebirth. See Kent, op.cit., 171.
[124] Victoria (2006), op.cit., 30 & 37.
[125] Quoted in ibid, 87-88.
[126] Quoted in ibid, 91.
[127] See Stephen Jenkins (2010) "Making Merit through Warfare According to the *Ārya-Bodhisattva-gocara-upāyaviṣaya-vikurvaṇa-nirdeśa Sūtra*" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 59-75
[128] Faure, op.cit., 212.
[129] Words of Nāgārjuna from *Mahāprañāpāramitopadeśa* quoted in Demiéville, op.cit., 20. Also see Xue Yu (2005) *Buddhism, War, and Nationalism*. London: Routledge, 6. The 'five aggregates' referred to here are physical form, sensations, perceptions, thoughts and consciousness.

These ideas of *anātman* and emptiness play a key role in the development of Japan's Bushidō (the samurai's code of ethics) particularly through the influence of Zen.[130] The seventeenth-century Rinzai Zen master Takuan illustrates this development, echoing the reasoning of Nāgārjuna:

> The uplifted sword has no will of its own, it is all of emptiness. It is like a flash of lightning. The man who is about to be struck down is also emptiness, and so is the one who wields the sword. None of them are possessed of a mind that has any substantiality. As each of them is of emptiness and has no mind, the striking man is not a man, the sword in his hand is not a sword, and the 'I' who is about to be struck down is like the splitting of the spring breeze in a flash of lightening.[131]

It was thus not a far stretch for Japanese Buddhists to apply these ideas in the promotion of fearlessness and self-sacrifice during the wars waged by Japan in the first half of the twentieth century. The concept of no-self could enabled one to deny one's own death so that, as the Zen master D. T. Suzuki wrote, 'death...loses its string altogether'.[132] 'Extinguishing the self' helped one to better serve the public good (encapsulated by the Japanese notion of *messhi hōkō*) as well as one's sovereign;[133] the sacrifice of physical existence for the sake of the emperor having no more import than 'discarding worn-out sandals.'[134] D.T. Suzuki's Zen master, Shaku Sōen, a military chaplain attached to the First Army Division during the Russo-Japanese War, considered that the Japanese soldiers' readiness to die, based on the abandoning of what Buddhism calls the 'small self' was one of the contributing factors for Japan's victory in that war.[135] Nor was this interpretation of 'no-self' confined to monks: there was clearly a filtering of such Buddhist notions among military personnel, as demonstrated by Army Major Okubo ('The soldier must become one with his superior…he must become the order he receives. That is to say *his self must disappear*') and Lieutenant-Colonel Sugimoto Gorō ('Through my practice of Zen I am able to get rid of my ego…Zen becomes, as it is, the true spirit of the imperial military').[136]

The notion of emptiness, which develops from the doctrine of *anātman*, thus collapses the very significance of death, for how can there be 'killing' and 'dying' if all is empty of essence?[137] In fact, this logic of emptiness nullifies *all* concepts, distinctions, and phenomena—not only death—of meaning. As Zen master Shaku Sōen stated, from this perspective, there are no more distinctions between friend and foe, war and peace, *saṃsāra* and *nirvāna*, or passion and enlightenment.[138] It is the logic which gives birth to various Buddhist paradoxes as 'passions are no different from awakening' (j. *bonnō soku bodai* 煩悩即菩提), 'Mara and the Buddha are one and the same' (j. *mabutsu ichinyo* 魔仏一如), 'the law of the kingdom and the law of the Buddha are the same' (j. *obō soku buppo* 王法即仏法); or as employed under

---

[130] For a discussion of Zen's influence on Bushido, see Victoria (2006), op.cit., 95-129.
[131] Brian Victoria (2006) *Zen War Stories*. London: Routledge Curzon, 26. See also Victoria (2013), op.cit., 193.
[132] Quoted in Victoria (2013), op.cit., 195.
[133] Words of Sōtō Zen master Yasutani Haku'un quoted in Victoria (2013), op.cit., 194.
[134] Words of Jōdo-shin sect priest Inoue Enryō quoted in Victoria (2006), op.cit., 19.
[135] Quoted in Victoria (2006), op.cit., 59-60.
[136] Quoted in Victoria (2013), op.cit., 193-194.
[137] For a similar discussion, see Demiéville, op.cit., 20 and Faure, op.cit., 213.
[138] Quoted in Victoria (2006), op.cit., 27. An example of the collapsing of the distinction between 'war' and 'peace' can be witnessed in the words of Arai Sekizen, administrative head of Sōto Zen sect who said in 1925: "Buddhism does not absolutely oppose war… Japan is a lover of peace, so even if she goes into war, it is always a war of peace." Quoted in Victoria (2006), ibid, 62.

modern imperial Japan, 'discrimination is equality' (j. *sabetsu soku byōdo* 差別即平等) and 'un-freedom is freedom' (j. *fujiyū soku jiyū* 不自由即自由).[139] It is then as a matter of course that this logic extends to the precept on non-killing itself as Zen master Sawaki Kōdō does:

> The Lotus Sutra stated that "the Three Worlds [of desire, form, and formlessness] are my existence and all sentient beings therein are my children." From this point of view, everything, including friend and foe, are my children. Superior officers are my existence as are their subordinates. The same can be said of both Japan and the world. *Given this, it is just to punish those who disturb the public order.* Whether one kills or does not kill, the precept forbidding killing [is preserved]. It is the precept forbidding killing that wields the sword. It is this precept that throws the bomb.'[140]

What is remarkable about the words above is the way in which the interplay of conventional and ultimate truths is constructed. While there is a constant emptying of meaning with respect to the distinctions of friend/foe and non-killing/killing, only the statement about the need to preserve public order is construed on the basis of conventional truth alone. The inconsistency indeed gives away the fundamental problem of this logic: that, in effect, it strips all of agency and individual will to determine one's own truth *except* for the wielder of the logic, who serves the interests of the power-holder (in this case, the imperial state). Further, as Faure points out, 'playing with this kind of nondualism leads to the perception that evil is intrinsic to our real nature and that enlightenment is, again, the manifestation of that evil reality within us.'[141] The relativisation of values[142] brought about by the logic of non-duality in fact renders absurd the very need for religion as a custodian of teachings urging human betterment.

Self-Sacrifice in the Buddhist Tradition

The preceding section reviewed the doctrinal enablers facilitating an acceptance of death in the context of war. However, given that self-sacrifice, especially in the form of self-immolation, features in all of my case studies, it is important to give specific attention to the Buddhist discourse on sacrifice.

There is good evidence that killing oneself is treated as a different moral category in Buddhism to the killing of others. In the Vinaya, suicide is not considered as serious as murder, as it is only a wrong action (s. *duskṛta*) or a serious misdeed (s. *sthūlātyaya*), and unlike murder, does not constitute a ground for excommunication (s. *pārājika*) or cause for purification (s. *pāyantika*).[143] To take the example of the Theravada variant of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, which contains several passages commenting on suicide, it is clear that the monastic rules do not forbid suicide, although instigating

---

[139] See Faure, op.cit., 220 & 223; Fumihiko Sueki & Shinobu Tsujimura 末木文美彦と辻村志のぶ (2011) "Sensō to Bukkyō 戦争と仏教" in Fumihiko Sueki 末木文美彦(Ed) *Shin Ajia Bukkyō-shi Vol. 14 Nihon IV: Kindai Kokka to Bukkyō* 新アジア仏教史 14 日本 IV: 近代国家と仏教: 218-249 at 226.
[140] Victoria (2006), op.cit., 35-36 (my italics).
[141] Faure, op.cit.,
[142] Schmithousen, op.cit., 60. Schmithousen says that the originally, the purport of the teaching on emptiness was probably quite different: "Realizing that in reality there is neither good conduct nor misconduct, neither keeping nor breaking of the precepts, was, e.g., intended to prevent a Bodhisattva from becoming proud of his own good conduct and from despising others on account of their misconduct, or to relieve a person (like King Ajātaśatru who had murdered his father) from fruitless remorse and to exhort him to energetic effort for his spiritual advance." (at 60)
[143] Demiéville, op.cit., 19.

others to commit suicide is equated with murder and is thus a *pārājika* offence.[144] The ordinary monk is, of course, 'no less formally counselled against suicide, for it prevents him from continuing the cultivation of pure conduct (*brahmacaryā*), in other words good karma (*kuśala-karman*), and therefore from his salvation.'[145]

However, in both Theravada and Mahayana traditions, there are celebrated stories of monks who willingly embraced their death, either because they were ready for *nirvāna* 'having done what there was to do' (s. *krta-krṭya*) with no more need to accumulate redemptive karma, or they were bodhisattvas who were sacrificing themselves for the sake of others.[146] The historical Buddha himself is said to have willingly embrace his death, fully aware of the consequences of accepting the ill-prepared pork and in fact announcing his death three months before passing away.[147] The altruistic tales in the *Jātaka* typically involve sacrificing one's body for the good of others; such as the hare who wished to burn his own body to feed a Brahmin with his own meat or King Padmaka who transforms himself into a *rohita* fish to be consumed by his people as medicine to save them from an epidemic.[148]

There are different connotations to the Buddhist notion of 'self-sacrifice', which include perfection (s. *pāramitā*), giving (s. *dāna*) and renouncement (s. *parityāga*) as well as the concepts of worship or offering (s. *pūjā*; ch. *gongyang*; j. *kuyō* 供養) and personal indebtedness (s. *pratikāra*, ch. *en*; j. *on* 恩).[149] In Nipponzan Myōhōji (the Nichiren Buddhist order I discuss in Chapter 5), the word used for 'self-sacrifice' is *kuyō* (offering). Durt maintains that the Buddhist conception of self-sacrifice converges two notions of ancient origin: the first being the concept of 'vicarious suffering' (ch. *daishou ku*; j. *daijuku* 代受苦)—that is, voluntary suffering for the sake of others and one of the practices of the bodhisattva—and the second being the notion of personal indebtedness that one owes others, especially the Buddha, the king, one's parents and so on.[150]

The self-sacrifice of a bodhisattva has a 'particular flavour' in that it is typically done to save sentient beings—often involving an exchange of the fate of the bodhisattva for the fate of another.[151] The other characteristic of the bodhisattva's self-sacrifice, which is expressed in the Lotus Sutra, is the wish to pay homage (s. *pūjā*) to the Buddha—though this seems to be a later idea.[152] It is this latter notion of

---

[144] Martin Delhey (2006) "Views on Suicide in Buddhism: Some Remarks" in Michael Zimmermann (Ed) *Buddhism and Violence*. Rupandehi, Nepal: Lumbini International Research Institute: 25-63 at 29 & 31. Note that while suicide is excluded from punishment in the Theravada and Sārvastivāda *vināya*s, the Mahīśāsakas does add such a rule against suicide, though even there suicide is not equated with killing others. Ibid, 31.
[145] Demiéville, op.cit., 19.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Jerryson (2010b), op.cit., 7; Delhey, op.cit., 36.
[148] Hubert Durt (2007) "Peace and Self-Sacrifice in Buddhism" in James Benn & Jinhua Chen (Eds) *Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-Sacrifice*. Hualien, Taiwan: Tzu Chi University Press: 35-49 at 36 & 39-40
[149] Ibid, 38 & 44.
[150] Ibid, 38-39. Also see Benn (2007a), op.cit., 6. Note that the notion of repaying one's indebtedness to one's country (j. *hōkoku*) through sacrificing one's self can be seen recurringly in Japan. For example, in 14th-century Japan, the loyalist military leader Masashige Kusunoki famously vowed "[May I] be reborn seven times to repay my dept of gratitude owed [my] country" (j. *nanashō hōkoku*) which became an inspiration for the *kamikaze* pilots during World War Two. See Victoria (2013), op.cit., 183.
[151] Durt, op.cit., 44-45.
[152] Ibid, 45.

sacrifice that appears to have motivated the self-immolations of Buddhist monks in China.[153]

As Benn points out, 'self-immolation' in its strictest sense means 'self-sacrifice', (deriving from the Latin word *molare*, which means 'to make a sacrifice of grain') rather than 'suicide by fire', though this is mostly what the term refer to nowadays.[154] A number of Chinese terms are used interchangeably to denote self-immolation: *wangshen* (j. *bōshin* 亡身) meaning to 'lose or abandon the body', *yishen* (j. *ishin* 遺身) meaning 'to let go of, abandon, or be oblivious to the body', and *sheshen* (j. *shashin* 捨身) 'to relinquish or abandon the body'.[155] As a more direct designation for the act of burning oneself, the term *shaoshen* (j. *shōshin* 焼身) is employed.[156]

The most famous self-immolation of the twentieth-century is probably that of the Vietnamese monk Quang Duc, who immolated himself in 1963 to protest against the policies and religious persecution of the US-backed regime in South Vietnam and his sacrifice is often characterised as sacrifice for peace.[157] However, in China, where self-immolation has had a long history, this act assumes a great variety of forms and meanings. It has assumed forms other than burning oneself by fire, including acts such as 'feeding one's body to insects, slicing off one's flesh, burning one's fingers or arms, burning incense on the skin—not all of which necessarily result in death—and starvation, slicing, drowning, leaping from cliffs or trees, feeding one's body to wild animals, [and] self-mummification.'[158] From the late fourth century to twentieth century, several hundred monastic and lay Buddhists in China are said to have immolated themselves for different reasons.[159] Various beliefs seemed to have accompanied the devotional offering of the body. For example, it was said that the sacrifice can destroy karmic hindrances[160] or that it creates 'an enormous fund of merit' which the entire district could share, such as plentiful harvest,[161] or that it constitutes a 'high form of annihilation of individual desire'[162] or that the immolator can look forward to rebirth in Sukhāvatī (the Pure Land of Happiness).[163] The self-immolations of monks Hongxiu, Quanhuo, and Daozhou in ninth-century China have

---

[153] Note that historical information on self-immolation in the context of Indian Buddhism appears to be lacking. See ibid, 44. See also Delhey, op.cit., 47.

[154] James A. Benn (2007b) "Self-Immolation in the Context of War and Other Natural Disasters" in James Benn & Jinhua Chen (Eds) *Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-Sacrifice*. Hualien, Taiwan: Tzu Chi University Press: 51-83 at 57.

[155] Ibid, 57-58.

[156] Ibid, 58.

[157] Ibid, 52-57.

[158] Ibid, 58. Also see Jerrold Schecter (1967) *The New Face of Buddha: Buddhism and Political Power in Southeast Asia*. London Tokyo: John Weatherhill, 168-169. In sixth century China, monks used to burn rosaries onto their chests while some burned their fingers completely off their hands. Others prepared for their self-immolation a couple of years in advance by eating waxy and fatty foods so that they would burn better. Schecter illustrates the strain of Buddhist thought which upholds physical manifestation of self-negation by reference to a Chinese monk who slit open his body and hung his intestines on a tree. He also alludes to a story in the Zen canons where the Second Patriarch cut off his arm to show how serious he was in his search for Dharma. Similar cases of self-immolation can be witnessed in Pure Land Buddhism in China and Japan. See Delhey, op.cit., 49-50.

[159] Benn (2007b), op.cit., 59-77

[160] See translation of *Surangama Sutra* by Wai-tao in Dwight Goddard (Ed) (1938) *A Buddhist Bible*. 2nd ed. Thetford, Vermont: Swight Goddard, 266-267.

[161] Holmes Welch (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900-1950*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 326.

[162] Schecter, op.cit., 168-9.

[163] Walpola Rahula (1978) *Zen and the Taming of the Bull: Towards the Definition of Buddhist Thought*. London: Gordon Fraser, 113.

been characterised as acts of loyalty to the Tang state, carried out with the view that the Buddha-dharma was 'not inherently separable from the rule of the Tang state: defending one meant preserving the other.'[164] Benn observes that the closest historical cases to the self-immolation of Quang Duc (discussed in Chapter 3) were probably those committed by Chinese Buddhist monks to counter religious persecution by the state as those in the sixth and seventh century.[165] However, others remark that Quang Duc's self-immolation may have been inspired more by Gandhi who had effectively used his fasts-unto-death as a method of exerting political pressure.[166]

The question arises whether such acts of self-immolation, and indeed self-mortification, do not contravene the doctrine of nonviolence. It might be asked, does the principle of *ahiṃsā* not encompass a view of the sanctity of life?[167] Are acts of injuring and killing the self not a kind of self-violence? As commentators have noted, however, the doctrine of *ahiṃsā* has developed in such a way that 'often only the killing of *others* has been condemned outright.'[168] This stance is reflected in the fact that the Vinaya rules do not prohibit the killing of one's self, and finds further substantiation in Nāgārjuna's view that suicide does not entail a sin of killing because it does not destroy the life of another.[169] Moreover, as Delhey points out, there is also the question of whether life truly has preeminent intrinsic value—'Are there superior values, which can make it preferable to choose death?'[170] So often the discussions on nonviolence proceed on absolutist formulations without recognising that there might be a 'hierarchy of values'[171] which the religious adherent is negotiating. Indeed, the self-sacrifice of the bodhisattva resonates widely in the Buddhist world precisely because something of value—life—is being offered in exchange for something else that is ascribed more value by the bodhisattva.

I should like to conclude this section by making a few observations about the nature of asceticism in the context of nonviolence. To varying degrees, asceticism features in all of my case studies, and it was certainly a prominent characteristic in Gandhi's nonviolent practice. Yet, I suspect that Faure is right when he says that monastic discipline, which aims to 'form an obedient body and mind', is a kind of 'muted violence against oneself.'[172] Even when such ascetic practices do not take the more extreme forms of self-mortification described above—practices, incidentally, that the Middle Way taught by the Buddha would discourage—the renunciation of married life, wealth and sensory pleasures is nevertheless a form of self-denial, and arguably, an 'interiorised form of violence'.[173]

In my view, it is not by accident that the staunchest exponents of nonviolence have been the most willing to take violence upon themselves. When the Jains combine a strict adherence to *ahiṃsā* with a positive attitude to asceticism, including voluntary

---

[164] Benn (2007b), op.cit., 78. Benn also points out that in imperial China, 'any desire for peace was essentially expressed as loyalty to the ruling dynasty. There was no other model for peace.' Ibid, 57.
[165] Ibid, 58.
[166] Delhey, op.cit., 51-52.
[167] Such a view can be seen in Damien Keown (2001) *Buddhism and Bioethics*. London: MacMillan, 44-45 and Damien Keown and John Keown (1995) "Killing, Karma and Caring: Euthanasia in Buddhism and Christianity" *Journal of Medical Ethics* 21: 265-269.
[168] Delhey, op.cit., 57 (my emphasis).
[169] Demiéville, op.cit., 19.
[170] Delhey, op.cit., 26.
[171] Ibid, 28.
[172] Faure, op.cit., 219.
[173] Ibid.

fasting unto death,[174] when Gandhi extolled the 'art of dying' as the necessary learning for a true votary of nonviolence,[175] they point to *the very dynamic which inheres in nonviolence and constitutes it. Ahiṃsā*, I believe, was consciously framed as a negative concept—in an acknowledgement of the violence that abounds in this world and to urge an enlightened counter-response bringing to bear the best of spiritual insight. It is a notion which understands that the pursuit of justice alone—in a desire for equality between the two sides in conflict—would only amount to pitting one (conventional) truth against another and to a cycle of revenge, harming both in the end. Yet, the violence of the situation must go somewhere, and the votary of nonviolence redirects it upon one's self, dramatising and dissipating it. It is perhaps for this reason that the Buddha had separated the sangha and the state, renouncing his prerogatives in the latter. If the state, however benevolent, was the wielder and monopoliser of violence in a society, then the sangha would embody its necessary counterforce and counterpart. That the adoption of monastic precepts centring on nonviolence towards others, is at the same time the source of violence towards the self, demonstrates the very nature of, and paradoxical operation latent in, *ahiṃsā*. Apart from its lexical constitution ('non*violence*'), operationally, nonviolence *contains* violence in two senses: *containing* a situation of violence that can lead to more violence, and *containing* violence within itself in an interiorised form. Nonviolence thus needs violence to take expression, for it is one side of the same coin.

Buddhism and Nationalism

Frequently there is a conflation of assertions or exhortations to protect the dharma on the one hand, and to defend one's country on the other. This coupling can be seen in the interpretation of King Duṭṭhagāmanī's conduct in the *Mahāvaṁsa* story cited above as actions to 'save' the Buddhist religion and unite a 'pure Sri Lanka'.[176] In Rahula's words, this 'religious-patriotism' was so overpowering that both monks and lay considered that 'even killing people in order to liberate the religion and the country was not a heinous crime.'[177] Soldiers in Sri Lanka believe they are fighting for their *raṭa*, *jāgiya*, and *āgama* (country, nation, and religion).[178]

We witness a similar formulation in Thailand where King Vajiravudh (1910-1925) declared three ideological canons (th. *lak thai*) for his country in 1911: nation (th. *chāt*), religion (th. *sāsanā*), and monarchy (th. *phramahākasat*), which are strikingly similar to England's 'God, King and Country'.[179] In the same speech, King Vajiravudh used 'religion' as a synonym for Thai Buddhism, and it is perhaps a simple extension of this reasoning that, in a country where political legitimacy and the sangha are intimately connected, an 'attack on Buddhist monks is symbolically [viewed as] an attack on the moral integrity of the nation.'[180]

In modern Japan nationalism too, a parallel phenomenon appeared in the conflation of Buddhism and imperialism, wherein the sangha was characterised as

[174] Delhey, op.cit., 57.
[175] Gandhi (1948), Vol 1, op.cit., 335
[176] These words come from the sermons of Venerable Vimaladhajja quoted in Kent, op.cit., 169.
[177] Walpola Rahula (1974) *What the Buddha Taught*. 2nd Ed. New York: Grove Press, 66
[178] Ibid, 158 & 164.
[179] Jerryson (2010a), op.cit., 181. For a similar point, see also Victoria (2013), op.cit., 207.
[180] Ibid, 181-182 & 189.

being synonymous with the state.[181] By way of illustration, the principles of the Association for the Practice of Imperial-Way Buddhism (j. *Kōdō Bukkyō Gyōdō Kai* 皇道仏教行道会) established by the Nichiren sect stated:

> Imperial-way Buddhism utilizes the exquisite truth of the Lotus Sutra to reveal the majestic essence of the national polity. Exalting the true spirit of Mahayana Buddhism is a teaching which reverently supports the emperor's work. This is what the great founder of our sect, Saint Nichiren, meant when he referred to the divine unity of Sovereign and Buddha…That is to say, imperial-way Buddhism is the condensed expression of the divine unity of Sovereign and Buddha…put into contemporary language. For this reason *the principle image of adoration in imperial-way Buddhism is not Buddha Shakyamuni who appeared in India, but his majesty, the emperor, whose lineage extends over ten thousand generations*.[182]

Historically, Buddhists considered the dharma as always superior to temporal power (at least in a spiritual sense) even when kings came to be sanctified as bodhisattvas.[183] Yet, in Imperial-Way Buddhism there is a drastic reconfiguring of the state-sangha relationship to the extent that the emperor replaces the Buddha as the object of veneration. Here, Buddhism is instrumentalised by nationalism[184] and the historical symbiosis between the sangha of the state is supplanted by *subservience* of the former to the latter.

What accounts for this coalescence of Buddhism and nationalism? To this question, I shall posit three working hypotheses. First, that the historical symbiotic relationship between the state and sangha, where the state provides patronage in return for spiritual advice from the sangha, included a structural dynamic of dependence that made it particularly easy for the state to wield its influence to secure moral legitimacy from the sangha, which, in turn, tended to culminate in an intermingling of Buddhism and nationalism—what might be called 'religious nationalism'. The US Army Buddhist chaplain, Somya Malasri (a former Thai monk) aptly captured this impetus when he said, 'You can sacrifice yourself to protect your country because *if there's no country, there's no freedom and you cannot practice your religion*.'[185] Buddhism depends on a secure and ordered state to flourish.

Second, as nations are 'meaning-making entities of grand and transcendent sorts, creating an aura of sacredness about their central doings',[186] there is a natural affinity with the sacredness of religion which facilitates their blending. Furthermore, as Strenski notes, the religious notion of 'giving up' resembles the civic 'giving of'.[187] The discourse of sacrifice, which features in both religion and nationalism, provides a strong reason for the tethering of the two in any political project demanding selflessness from the people. Victoria asserts that it is the element of sacrifice

---

[181] See for example, the discussion of Imperial-Way Buddhism (Kōdō Bukkyō 皇道仏教) in Victoria (2006), op.cit., 79-94.
[182] Quoted in ibid, 84-85 (my emphasis).
[183] See Shimazono, op.cit., 81.
[184] See Schmithousen, op.cit., 57.
[185] Quoted in Victoria (2013), op.cit., 206 (my italics).
[186] Ivan Strenski (1997) *Contesting Sacrifice: Religion, Nationalism and Social Thought in France*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 10. He also points out that people do not sacrifice themselves for "administrative units", such as the European Union, but for "religious absolutes or nations" like Islam, Christianity, Bosnia and Ireland. Anthony Smith also discusses the "sacred foundations of nations". See Smith, *Nationalism*, op. cit., 143.
[187] Strenski, op.cit., 2. Anderson also contends that the readiness of individuals to sacrifice themselves for patriotic reasons can be understood in terms of the religious nature of the nation-state. See Anderson, op.cit., 7.

(especially the readiness to die for the cause) that constitutes 'the bridge' to uniting the particularist orientation of tribal/racial/ethnic cultures (the lifeblood of a 'nation') and the universalism of 'Axial religions'[188] which focus on the spiritual salvation of the individual.[189]

Third, in the construction of non-Western nationalism, especially in those cases where popular support must be shored up against a colonial presence, religion offers a range of ideological resources to the nation to draw upon—not least of which are the two mentioned above—moral legitimacy and sacred authority demanding sacrifice—and for this reason too, religion is often hurled into the project of non-Western nationalism. Religion is also a way in which non-Western nations were able to from a distinct identity from the colonial powers, their sense of sovereignty often first emerging in the 'spiritual' domain.[190]

Below I look at two theories which I will later revisit in my analysis of the case studies. One is the theory of nationalism by Partha Chatterjee in the field of post-colonialism and subaltern studies, which is instructive for conceiving nationalism's relationship with religion. The other is a theory on religious typology by Bruce Lincoln that distinguishes between religions based on their relationship to different fractions in society. In this chapter, I will simply outline the theories with a view to returning to them later.

THEORIES OF NATIONALISM AND RELIGIOUS TYPOLOGY

Partha Chatterjee's book *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* is a response to Benedict Anderson's theory of nationalism, which asserts that the 'imagined communities' of the nation that emerged from the experiences of Western[191] modernity provide the 'modular forms' of nationalism for all subsequent communities in Asia and Africa.[192] Objecting to this characterisation that the only thing left for the peoples of Asia or Africa to do in their national projects is to pick and choose from the available 'modular forms' of Western nationalism,[193] Chatterjee argues that the most creative and forceful projects of nationalism in Africa and Asia are in fact characterised not by their correspondence to Western models but by their *difference*.[194] In his view, before the anti-colonial movements in these regions manifested in political struggles for power, they were first movements to construct a

---

[188] This is a term he borrows from Karl Jasper who refers to an "Axial Age," the extraordinary epoch when various "higher" forms of religion, such as Buddhism, Christianity and Confucianism, developed in different civilisations. See Karl Jasper (1953) *The Origin and Goal of History* (English translation by Michael Bullock). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Charles Taylor argues that the notion of human flourishing (prosperity, health, long life, fertility) that characterised early religions came to be radically questioned by the Axial religions and ascetic renunciations became ways in which to pursue the revised human good. By extolling individual devotion, the Axial transformations also spelt a "hiatus" in the religious life of the whole larger society, and ultimately rendered the belief in the transcendent as one option among many. See Charles Taylor (2007) *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, Mass; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 152-154.

[189] Victoria (2007), op.cit.f

[190] Partha Chatterjee (1993) *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 4-6.

[191] The "West" here is understood to include in the main, Western Europe, the United States, and Russia.

[192] Benedict Anderson (2003) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 46, 81.

[193] Chatterjee, op.cit., 4-5.

[194] Ibid, 6.

'domain of sovereignty' within colonial society. These anti-colonial nationalisms emerged by separating social institutions and practices into those belonging to the 'material domain' and 'spiritual domain' and by declaring the latter to be 'its sovereign territory and refus[ing] to allow the colonial power to intervene in that domain.' [195] Whereas the 'material domain' is the outer sphere that includes economics, statecraft, science and technology (that is, areas where the West has proven its superiority), the 'spiritual domain' bears 'the "essential" marks of cultural identity', such as religion, language and art.[196] The colonial state is excluded from the inner domain but that does not mean that the 'spiritual domain' remains unchanged either. In fact, Chatterjee asserts that it is in this domain that the most powerful and creative project of nationalism occurs—to create a 'modern' yet non-Western nation.

Chatterjee's theory, however, does not differentiate between the types of religions that feature in the construction of nationalism to shed light on how religions mingle with political power. Here, the typology offered by Bruce Lincoln goes some way in filling this lacuna. This typology, as Lincoln admits, is a 'crude' one featuring broad 'ideal types',[197] and yet it nonetheless serves to highlight key characteristics that differentiate certain religious from others vis-à-vis their positioning to the state and thus how they combine with specific modes of political action.

Lincoln places the countless theories of religion over the last century and a half into two broad categories: 'materialist' and 'romantic'. [198] The former has endeavoured to 'show the multiple ways in which religious discourses, institutions, and practices…serve the maintenance of society in a positive fashion', whereas the latter has argued that 'religion serves only the interests of certain privileged strata, preserving their wealth, power, and position, while actively inhibiting any threats to them.'[199] Despite their differences, however, Lincoln sees both categories of theories as fulfilling the same function of 'providing solace for the suffering and stability for society', simply differing on the value accorded to this function.[200] However, these formulations fail to provide an explanatory model to account for those religions which in fact constitute a rallying point for opposition against the established ideology or values, what Vittorio Lanternari calls 'religions of the oppressed.'[201] Romantic and materialist theories are not so much inaccurate as inadequate, for they are insufficiently dialectic in their analysis of such religious counter-currents.[202] Lincoln thus fashions his own typology comprising *religions of the status quo*, *religions of resistance* and *religions of revolution* with the aim of assessing 'how different religious forms attend the needs of different fractions within society at different moments in their struggle.'[203]

Religions of the status quo are those religions which serve the dominant fraction in society to propound a set of fundamental values and principles that further the interests of the powerful, most often accompanied by 'a legitimation of the dominant fraction's right to hold wealth, power, and prestige; an endowment of the social order with a sacral aura, mythic charter, or other transcendent justification; and a

---

[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Bruce Lincoln (2006) *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11* (e-book). 2nd Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Location 1105 & 1227.
[198] Ibid, Location 1019.
[199] Ibid, Locations 1019-1028.
[200] Ibid, Location 1028.
[201] Ibid, Location 1033.
[202] Locations 1039-1044.
[203] Ibid, Location 1044.

valorization of suffering within this world, concomitant with the extended promise of nonmaterial compensations for such suffering.'[204] Lincoln refers to Confucianism as an example *par excellence* of 'religions of the status quo'.[205]

Against the ideological hegemony which the religion of the status quo strive to assert, *religions of resistance* emerge, bearing religious ideologies different to that of the religion of the status quo.[206] There is a rich variety of religions of resistance but as a class, they are best characterised by 'their refusal to accept the religion of the status quo in part or in toto. And however innocuous the doctrines or activities of such groups may seem, this refusal constitutes a threat to the interests of the dominant fraction'.[207] It is noteworthy that among the examples cited as the religions of resistance in China and India, Lincoln mentions the Buddhists alongside Taoists and Jains.[208] Despite their diversity, religions of resistance share a common feature of resisting the religion of the status quo, and they espouse a set of values that qualitatively differ from the latter. For example, Lincoln refers to the example of the Taoist ideal of *wu-wei* (non-action or harmonious acceptance of the natural Way) which 'stands in marked and self-conscious contrast to the Confucian attempt to regulate all social dealings.'[209] The values espoused by religions of resistance can also lead to behaviour considered as 'deviant' (including asceticism) from that encouraged by the established value system.[210]

Religions of resistance share more similarities to *religions of revolution* than those of the status quo, but they differ from religions of revolution in one crucial respect: whereas religions of resistance define themselves in opposition to the ideological domination of the religion of the status quo, religions of revolution define themselves 'in opposition to the dominant social fraction itself, not its religious arm alone, promoting direct action against the dominant fraction's material control of society.'[211] According to Lincoln, three things must transpire for a religion of resistance to transform itself into a religion of revolution:

1. Objective conditions within society (e.g., fiscal, economic, political, medical, nutritional, military, etc.) must worsen.
2. The religion of resistance must successfully articulate a new theory of political legitimacy, which denies the right of the dominant fraction to occupy its privileged position and the right of the religion of the status quo to dictate normative values.
3. The religion of resistance must overcome its insularity and begin to recruit actively, incorporating new adherents from segments of society previously absent from its membership.[212]

Of the three, Lincoln notes that the first is undoubtedly the most important since '[r]evolutions never result from religious factors alone.'[213] Ironically, victory and defeat alike sound the death knell of a religion of revolution; and if victorious, the religion of revolution will assume its place as the new 'religion of the status quo'

[204] Ibid, Locations 1049-1054
[205] Ibid, Location 1059-1075.
[206] Ibid, Location 1100. Note that Lincoln's employment of the term 'religious ideology' here appears to be similar to my usage.
[207] Ibid, Location 1110.
[208] Ibid, Locations 1110-1115.
[209] Ibid, Location 1115.
[210] Ibid, Location 1125.
[211] Ibid, Location 1140.
[212] Ibid, Locations 1145-1149.
[213] Ibid, Location 1149.

retaining only the superficial trappings of its revolutionary appearance.[214] The defeated religion of the status quo also assumes a new form as a religion of resistance, albeit a special form that Lincoln terms *religion of the counterrevolution*, marked by 'profound nostalgia, condemnation of the new order as usurpers, and—in its early years, at least—active attempts to restore the dominant fraction with which it fell.'[215]

While this typology will be applied to my case studies in the chapters to follow, in the context of the discussion of this chapter, I should like to return to Lincoln's characterisation of Buddhism as a 'religion of resistance' in India and China. While this certainly could not be a correct depiction of Buddhism under Asoka's rule during the Mauryan Empire in India, it does lead us to an important insight that Buddhism, in its early formations in India and China, was in fact marked by *resistance* to the established religious ideology (such as Buddhism's refutation of the caste-system, the idea of a soul or *ātman*, and extreme forms of asceticism found in Hinduism). This is a point that is often lost in the commentary on state-sangha relations and Buddhism's relationship to kingship, which tends to portray Buddhism more as a 'religion of the status quo', but one that nevertheless holds much potential for rethinking Buddhism's role in social change.

Conclusion

In speaking of Buddhism's potential as a religion of resistance, I am referring to its capacity to challenge and correct the dominant values and practices of a society, and to offer enlightened alternatives that appeal to the better side of human nature. The sangha has that potential to provide a moral yardstick to the state and to hold it accountable to higher ethical standards, but we witness that it has frequently compromised with prevailing political exigencies instead,[216] as evident from the many examples cited above where Buddhism became an instrument of political power. It is high time that the question is asked, 'whether being a Buddhist does not require a confrontation with the violence that lurks at the heart of reality (and of each individual), rather than eluding the question by taking the high metaphysical and moral ground.'[217] The significance of my case studies is that each of them is a nonviolent movement of resistance that admonishes the state to aspire to principles and conduct more attuned with the Buddha's teachings. When Buddhists have so often served the interests of the powerholders at the expense of the central tenets of their faith, these are precious examples indeed.

Not resorting to the high metaphysical and moral ground when confronted with the problem of violence means that caution and good judgement must be exercised when deciphering the application of such Buddhist teachings as emptiness and nonduality. The theory of two truths, which inspired Gandhi's nonviolence and the interfaith efforts of Christian pluralists, is equally open to misuse, as exemplified by the numerous (mis)interpretations of the two truths doctrine in Buddhism to justify Japan's militarism in the twentieth century.[218] What should be borne in mind when approaching the question of nonviolence is that *ahiṃsā* is a principle that takes a

[214] Ibid, Locations 1212-1222.
[215] Ibid, Locations 1222-1223.
[216] For example, as Faure notes, Western followers of the 14th Dalai Lama 'rightly might have felt disappointed when he (admittedly caught between a rock and a hard place) abstained from condemning the U.S. invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.' Faure, op.cit., 215.
[217] Ibid, 223.
[218] See Nihon Shūkyo-sha Heiwa Kyōgikai, op.cit., 39; Shigaraki, op.cit., 977-997.

stance in the conventional world. The prefix 'non-' self-evidently indicates that the concept denotes one 'side' of dualistic phenomena; just as 'good' and 'love' are one side of a pair of opposites. Yet, what religion would counsel its followers that it makes no difference whether they engage in 'good' or 'evil'? Even when one appreciates the insights of the Buddhist metaphysics of ultimate truth (emptiness/nonduality), it would seem that one must still persevere on a spiritual path grounded in conventional truth—upholding good and right conduct, kindness, purity, nonviolence, and so on—to fully realize that ultimate truth. The raft is not the shore, as the Zen adage points out,[219] but unless one reaches the shore, letting go of the raft too early only results in drowning.

Taking a nonviolent stance and persevering on the path of conventional truth is not to fall into the delusion that violence or evil can be eliminated from the world, nor is it to minimise the complexities involved in approaching the phenomenon of violence. To borrow Galtung's simile,[220] just as the value of the work of a physician remains undiminished by the fact that diseases will never be eradicated, the value of nonviolence lies in its continued practice and the example it sets in an otherwise violent world. Nor does a nonviolent stance mean resorting to an absolutist dualism in an abdication of critical reasoning for the sake of clarity. Gandhi admitted that violence in the sense of the destruction of life is unavoidable in the world, in which there are likely to be circumstances where the best course of action is in fact to kill—yet he also stated that it is impossible to define the conditions of such unavoidability and that one should attempt the 'least harm possible' on a case-by-case basis.[221] The need for critical assessment of each new situation against the ethical standards of religion will remain.

At the same time, as Adam and Codling observe, '[t]here seems to be a deep intuition within the Buddhist tradition that the nature of full awakening precludes the possibility of taking life, even with the best, most loving of intentions.'[222] Gandhi also deemed that a genuinely realised yogi could not kill a human being,[223] and it is telling that the examples of 'compassionate killing' in the Buddhist tradition are always ones carried out by bodhisattvas rather than buddhas.[224] The practice of *ahiṃsā* is intrinsically rooted in an understanding that 'a feeling of sympathy and gentleness towards living beings forms a necessary part of the path that leads to liberation',[225] and perhaps for this reason, the Jains regard it as the 'highest dharma'. The following chapters trace the ideals and endeavours, challenges and tribulations of Buddhists in the Mahayana world who have sought to uphold this dharma, often at the cost of their lives, to relay an age-old message of continual relevance.

---

[219] This adage is usually understood as meaning, religion (raft) should not to be confused with the ultimate destination of enlightenment (the shore). In the context of the doctrine of Two Truths, the 'raft' or religion here belongs to the sphere of conventional truth, while the 'shore' points to ultimate truth.

[220] Galtung (1995), op.cit., 130-131.

[221] Mohandas K. Gandhi (1950) *Hindu Dharma*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 194-232. These views are discussed in Adam & Codling, op.cit., 184.

[222] Adam & Codling, ibid, 185.

[223] Ibid; Gandhi (1950), op.cit., 194-195.

[224] Adam & Codling, ibid, 185.

[225] Ibid, 180.

Chapter 3

Sacrificing for Love: the Vietnamese Buddhists in the 1960s

Introduction

As the first of my case studies and a clear example of a 'religion of resistance' I will examine the nonviolent movement of the Vietnamese Buddhists in the 1960s. The Buddhists of South Vietnam presented a formidable anti-war opposition to the United States and the pro-American governments in South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. In this chapter, I begin by tracing the political context of the Vietnamese Buddhist movement. I then offer a historical overview of state-sangha relations in Vietnam before discussing the nonviolent actions and ethos of the Vietnamese Buddhists. In the final section, I examine the self-immolation acts that took place in the context of their nonviolent struggle. Self-immolation poses a tricky question for nonviolence theorists and practitioners, and in this chapter I tease out the philosophical dilemmas raised by self-immolation in analysing its relationship to nonviolence. It should be noted that the Vietnamese movement also involved Theravada Buddhists. However, given the dominant influence of the Zen and Pure Land schools in Vietnam and the fact that the Mahayana Buddhists constituted the great majority in the United Buddhist Church, I examine the Vietnamese Buddhist movement as a case study of the Mahayana tradition.

An Overview of the Struggle in South Vietnam

THE BUDDHISTS OF SOUTH VIETNAM

It is commonly stated that over 80% of the South Vietnamese population in the 1960s were nominal Buddhists, while Catholics constituted 10-13%.[1] However, within this 80% several distinctions must be made. Firstly, there is a distinction between the more politically active Buddhists (both the faithful and lay) represented by the United Buddhist Church (UBC) and the nominal Buddhists who were not so active. Out of the 14 million Buddhists, two million constituted the active corps of the UBC (including monks, nuns and lay Buddhists).[2] Another eight million were regular participants in pagoda services and still another four million regarded themselves

[1] See Senator Gravel Ed. (1971) *The Pentagon Papers Vol.2.* Boston: Beacon Press, 226; Pham Van Minh (2002), op.cit., 181.

[2] James H. Forest (1978) *The Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam: Fifteen Years for Reconciliation.* Alkmaar, The Netherlands: International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 5. Note however that Topmiller estimates the number of Buddhists in South Vietnam to be 16 million and the members of the UBC about one million. See Topmiller (2002), op.cit., viii.

culturally as Buddhist (the nominal Buddhists).[3] There are also several different types of Buddhist groups in Vietnam. Not only is there a general difference between the Mahayana and Theravada schools,[4] there are also the popular indigenous sects of Hoa Hao, Cao Dai[5] and Binh Xuyen.[6] When I speak of 'the Buddhists' in this chapter, unless I am discussing the history of Buddhism in Vietnam, I generally refer to the active Buddhist members who were associated with the UBC in campaigning for religious freedom and peace, rather than the nominal Buddhists of lesser involvement.

As the repression of the Government of South Vietnam (GVN) exacerbated, the Buddhist campaign developed into a mass popular movement involving not only the Buddhist faithful but also nominal and non-Buddhists, such as students, professionals, academics, public servants and even some Catholics.[7] This mass campaign led by Buddhist monks and nuns loosely came to be called 'the Struggle Movement'.[8] To distinguish the Buddhists from the greater mass movement, I shall use the descriptions, 'the Buddhist movement' and 'the Struggle Movement' which denote intertwining, though analytically separate groups that engaged in a unified protest against GVN. While the Buddhist movement always expressed an anti-war sentiment, there is a slight difference in focus between the protests of 1963 and those of the later 1960s; the former centered on a call for religious freedom, whereas the latter emphasised the need for democracy and peace.

THE BUDDHIST CRISIS OF 1963

The Vietnamese Buddhists first came to international attention in 1963 in their struggle against Ngo Dinh Diem, the pro-Catholic and pro-US President of South Vietnam. Various actions taken by the Diem government had alienated the majority of the South Vietnamese people by this time, including the policies of strong Catholic favouritism, suppression of the village-based sects of Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and Binh Xuyen, and oppressive anti-communist campaigns.

Diem's key constituency was the North Catholic refugees who moved to the South after the signing of the Geneva Accords. Partly due to Lansdale's propaganda efforts,[9] over half of the northern Catholic population (approximately one million people) resettled in the south, doubling the southern Catholics in number.[10] Diem favoured

---

[3] Ibid, 6. The 1961 Asia Foundation survey estimated that probably only around 40% of the populace actively practice Buddhism. Cited in Topmiller (2002), op.cit., viii.

[4] Forest, op. cit., 5.

[5] Note that although the Cao Dai sect is often seen by Westerners as an offshoot of Buddhism, they in fact regard themselves as a culmination of various religions (the dominant influences being Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism). Their sense of religious uniqueness and fierce anti-communism prevented them from joining the UBC, who always maintained as their policy, a willingness to negotiate with the NLF. Topmiller, ibid, 7, n16.

[6] As a result of Diem's repression of these groups, nearly two thousand defeated Binh Xuyen, Hoa Hao and Cao Dai fighters joined the underground Vietminh forces. See Stanley Karnow (1983). *Vietnam: A History.* New York: Penguin, 223.

[7] Cao Ngoc Phuong (Chân Không) (1993) *Learning True Love: How I Learned and Practiced Social Change in Vietnam*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 104; Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 301.

[8] Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid, 337.

[9] His slogans like, "the Virgin Mary has gone South" and intimation that Americans would drop atomic bombs in the North are said to have contributed to the exodus. See Kahin, op.cit., 77; Karnow, ibid, 222. Though, Lansdale himself asserts that, "People just don't pull up their roots and transplant themselves because of slogans. They honestly fear what might happen to them…So the initiative was very much theirs- and we mainly made the transportation possible." cited in Karnow, ibid, 222.

[10] Pham, op.cit., 153.

these northern Catholic refugees, in part because he was Catholic himself, but also because 'the strength of their anti-Vietminh political orientation [that] set them apart from the other religious groups, including the Buddhist majority…commended them for inclusion in any anti-communist Vietnamese regime.' [11] The southern Catholics, on the other hand, were moderate and showed detachment from his regime.[12] Diem granted the north Catholics refugees government and military appointments as well as special property rights.[13] Ngo Dinh Nhu, Diem's brother, described as 'the principal regime's theoretician and manager'[14] founded the Can Lao Party, a political group based on the leftwing Catholic philosophy of Personalism, which soon became central to all levels of the administration.

Various actions taken by the Diem government alienated the populace with the exception of his Catholic loyalists and a few rich landlords.[15] The village-based religious sects of Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and Binh Xuyen[16] were brutally suppressed by the new regime, and the peasants came to resent the government's oppressive measures such as the anti-communist campaign which included beatings and arrests without trial, the relocation programs moving peasants to *agrovilles* and later to strategic hamlets,[17] and Diem's demand that they pay for the land given to them by the Vietminh after victory against the French. Disaffection soon spread beyond the peasants to doctors, lawyers, teachers and other professionals who were disturbed by the rigid GVN policies and lack of genuine democracy, especially Diem's nepotistic rule in which he placed his family members in the highest positions as well as his channelling of the bulk of US-aid (US$500 million per year) into his own property, the military and police machinery, leaving little for economic development.[18] The undemocratic manner in which the 1959 elections were conducted further amplified disenchantment.[19] As for the Buddhists, they were most unhappy about the GVN's persecution of the non-Catholics;[20] the efforts of Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc (Diem's brother) to make Catholicism the state religion; and Diem's refusal to repeal Decree no. 10, a French statute which imposed on Buddhism a 'private' status and the restrictions of 'clubs and associations', which put Diem's government out of touch with 80% of the people who identified themselves with Buddhism.[21] These grievances came to a head with the 'flag incident', sparking off what came to be known as the 'Buddhist Crisis'.[22]

---

[11] Kahin, op.cit., 77.
[12] Pham, op.cit., 162.
[13] Note that the Catholic Church became the largest landowner in the country. See Karnow, op.cit., p.278; Kahin, op.cit., 101.
[14] Pham, op.cit., 154.
[15] Karnow, op.cit., 230.
[16] Nearly two thousand defeated Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and Binh Xuyen members joined the underground Communist forces and later emerged as Vietcong guerrillas. See Karnow, op.cit., p223.
[17] These relocation programs invited tremendous disenchantment from the peasants, as they disrupted their traditional pattern of life, uprooting them from their native villages and ancestral graves. See Karnow ibid, 231.
[18] Ibid, 235.
[19] Ibid, 234-5.
[20] During the strategic hamlets program, the Unified Buddhist Church (UBC) compiled a dossier on the Buddhists who were persecuted by Diem's officials and a letter of protest, signed by Thich Tinh Khiet, the patriarch of UBC, was sent to the government. See Pham, op.cit., 158.
[21] Daniel Hallin (1989). *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 43. See also Pham, op.cit., 163-4.
[22] Fitzgerald points out that although the nominal Buddhists of the countryside had suffered from Catholic persecution since 1954, "the bonzes of the city pagodas never felt the same pressures," and that in Hue, Ngo Dinh Can, another brother of Diem, was said to have often visited Thich Tri Quang-

These grievances came to a head with the Flag Incident on 7 May 1963, when, on the eve of Buddha's 2527th Birthday, the Buddhists received a President's directive forbidding the flying of the Buddhist flag.[23] Outraged, the Buddhists defied the directive and flew their flag, and the next day, they held a previously scheduled procession for Vesak (Buddha's birthday) in Hue, which soon turned into a mass demonstration for religious equality and freedom.[24] The government subsequently opened fire and in the ensuing melee, 14 people were injured and nine killed, including some children crushed under tanks.[25] On the following day, 10,000 people demonstrated in Hue to protest the killings. As *The Pentagon Papers* say, this was 'the first of the long series of protest activities with which the Buddhists were to pressure the regime in the next four months.'[26] It was the start of the Buddhist Crisis.

FIVE-POINT MANIFESTO AND PRINCIPLES OF THE MOVEMENT

On 10 May 1963, the Buddhist leaders publicly proclaimed the commencement of a campaign for religious freedom and social justice. Tinh Khiet, the Supreme Patriarch sent a five-point manifesto to the GVN on 15 May that demanded:

> 1) the revocation of the directive forbidding the flying of the Buddhist flags
> 2) legal equality with the Catholic Church
> 3) that the 'terrorist campaign' against the Buddhists be ended
> 4) the freedom to practice the Buddhist faith
> 5) indemnification for the victims of the May 8 incident and punishment for those responsible.[27]

Apart from the manifesto, Pham Van Minh notes that the Buddhist movement was marked by two other salient principles.[28] One was that the Buddhists did not wish to engage in a religious war with the Catholics. He says that it was not Diem's religion that troubled the Buddhists, but rather, his failure to work for 'peace and national development'. Nhat Hanh also states that 'there are 84,000 dharma gates in Buddhism, and Catholicism was seen as just another gate leading to liberation.'[29] He explains:

> We have no enemies, particularly the Catholics. We are fighting for religious equality within the framework of social justice…This is not a fight between one religion against another. Living in the second half of the 20th Century, we believe that everyone has the

---

the most prominent leader of the Buddhist movement. According to Fitzgerald, "…it was only when Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc…tried to prove his zeal as a defender of the faith that the government issued edicts that impinged upon the Buddhists' religious freedom." Fitzgerald, op.cit., 130-131.

[23] The archaic law prohibiting the display of religious flags was not enforced the previous week when the Catholics had flown their Papal flag at the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Archbishop Thuc. See Hallin, op. cit., 43; *The Pentagon Papers*, ibid, 226; Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 186. This account is generally uncontroversial. However, a different version of the story appears in a rare pro-Diem book by Bouscaren which claims that the Catholics only flew the national flag and *not* the Papal flag in deference to the law that no religious flag be flown. Bouscaren contends that although the Catholics adhered to the law, "the bonzes wanted special treatment and they made such a noise about [the flag] that the Provincial Government of Hue…yielded to their demands…" See Anthony T. Bouscaren (1965) *The Last of the Mandarins: Diem of Vietnam.* Pittsburgh, Penna: Duquesne University Press, 90-91.

[24] Forest, op. cit., 5; *The Pentagon Papers*, op. cit., 226.

[25] *The Pentagon Papers,* ibid.

[26] Ibid, 226.

[27] Jerrold Schecter (1967) *The New Face of Buddha: Buddhism and Political Power in Southeast Asia.* London: Victor Gollancz, 239.

[28] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 189-90.

[29] Quoted in ibid, 183.

> right to worship according to their faith; whoever believes that his or her religion is the only truth is mistaken according to the Buddha.[30]

The other principle was a commitment to Gandhian nonviolence as a form of protest. While at certain times, elements of the Struggle Movement were not able to maintain this principle, the Buddhist leadership consistently advocated nonviolence:

> [W]e want…to apply Buddhist principles in our struggle. Therefore, we will use sacrifice as our ultimate weapon. What we try to do is to transform people's hearts and minds, not just change policies. From now on, we publicly declare that every monk and layperson will emulate Gandhi's non-violent actions to the end and will act within legal means as much as possible. [31]

The statement is significant for its public espousal of the nonviolent approach. Just to what extent the Buddhists were prepared to use sacrifice as their 'ultimate weapon' was to be demonstrated in the latter half of 1963.

QUANG DUC'S SELF-IMMOLATION

After the Flag Incident, the Buddhists decided to move their protest to Saigon because of all the foreign reporters and diplomats that were gathered there.[32] The presence of the international media was critical since the Buddhists could hardly rely on the GVN-controlled press to further their cause. The reportage of the journalists tended to reflect animosity towards Diem's regime and the Buddhists were 'shrewd about cultivating cordial relations' with international reporters, carrying signs in English for American television and tipping reporters in advance of the self-immolation.[33] As Hallin notes, 'it was during this period especially that the media were charged with shaping events rather than reporting them.'[34]

Throughout the rest of May, the Buddhists consigned themselves to peaceful demonstrations and hunger strikes. Browne notes that despite the Buddhists' efforts, by June it was obvious that these protests were having little impact on the general populace, and that the foreign media had largely lost interest; even the Saigon police, aware that beating or arresting monks would result in negative publicity settled for milder measures to disperse people, generally leaving the monks alone.[35] Just when the public interest in the Buddhist movement seemed to wane, however, Quang Duc's self-immolation 'shocked the world and electrified South Vietnam.'[36]

On the afternoon of 11 June 1963, a procession made its way down Phan Dinh Phung Street in Saigon, headed by an automobile of monks and nuns. At the intersection of Phan Dinh Phung and Le Van Duyet, they formed a circle around the car and began a mournful intonation of the sutras. Quang Duc, a 73-year-old Buddhist monk stepped out from the car and seated himself on the asphalt in the middle of the circle. He sat silently in a lotus position as two monks lifted a five gallon can of petrol and poured it over him, soaking him from head to toe. Quang Duc then opened a box

---

[30] Quoted in ibid, 189

[31] Quoc Tue (1987) *Cong cuoc tranh- dau cua Phat-Giao Viet-Nam tu Phat-dan den cach-mang* (*The Vietnamese Buddhist Movement of 1963)*. Bagneux, France: Chua Khanh Anh, cited and translated by Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid, 191.

[32] Hallin, op. cit., 43.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Malcolm Browne (1993) *Muddy Boots and Red Socks: A Reporter's Life*. New York: Random House, 9.

[36] *The Pentagon Papers,* op. cit., 227

of matches and struck one, upon which he was immediately engulfed by flames. He remained calmly fixed in a meditation posture, not moving a muscle or uttering a sound, until he burned to death.[37]

Quang Duc's immolation was one that had been carefully planned out: prior to the self-immolation, foreign journalists had been secretly tipped off that a 'great event' was about to take place[38] and petrol had been mixed with diesel fuel so as to prolong the effect of burning.[39] Two monks had volunteered for the act, but Quang Duc's seniority prevailed, as it was deemed he would better withstand the pain of burning with his advanced meditation powers.[40]

To the Americans and the Europeans generally, it seemed an 'extreme, bizarre act of faith,' [41] although, according to Schecter, even those who 'did not understand the religious symbolism of Quang Duc's action…sensed that a deep-rooted malaise had overtaken Vietnam and that the Buddhist majority in the country had attempted to organise and symbolise its protests against the discrimination by the Ngo Dinh Diem government.'[42] The symbolism of the act for Vietnamese people shall be examined later, though for the time being, it is necessary to comprehend the enormous impact of Quang Duc's self-immolation on international public opinion. Nolting, the US ambassador at the time, said the photo of the self-immolation on the front page 'shocked the world' and turned American public opinion 'firmly against President Diem.'[43] Various others maintained that the media coverage of the self-immolation 'finally made Vietnam a matter of top priority'[44] and that it marked a turning point in the American news reportage, largely to disfavour Diem.[45] Thus, although Diem was overthrown in a military coup, it is widely perceived that the 'Buddhist Crisis' had in fact precipitated the demise of Diem.[46]

---

[37] For an account of the incident by a witnessing journalist, see Schecter, op.cit., 166. For Tri Quang's description of the self-immolation, see "Excerpt from Tri Quang's unpublished memoirs" (Appendix 3)

[38] Pham Van Minh (2002), op.cit., 197.

[39] Malcolm W. Browne (1993) *Muddy boots and red socks: A Reporter's life*. New York: Times Books, 9. Note that although Quang Duc's immolation involved a degree of group preparation, Tri Quang attests to the fact that the heads of the Buddhist clergy never gave their final consent to Quang Duc's self-immolation (Appendix 3) and it seems like only those Buddhists close to Quang Duc were actively involved in the planning of his sacrifice. All the other self-immolations were relatively spontaneous and were unanticipated by the UBC. See Nhat Hanh (1969) "Love in Action: The Nonviolent Struggle for Peace in Vietnam" (Conference Paper for the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation), Paris: Published by the Overseas Vietnamese Buddhist Association, 12.

[40] Apparently this decision was made by Quang Duc and his fellow Buddhists in Saigon only when it was clear that the stand-off with President Diem had reached a deadlock. See Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 197 and 392.

[41] Schecter, op. cit., 167.

[42] Ibid, 167-8.

[43] Frederick Nolting (1988) *From Trust to Tragedy: The Political Memoirs of Fredrick Nolting, Kennedy's Ambassador to Diem's Vietnam.* New York: Praeger, 112.

[44] Lisa Skow and George Dionisopoulos (1997) "A Struggle to Contextualize Photographic Images: American Print Media and the 'Burning Monk'", *Communication Quarterly*, Fall 45(4), 393; also Browne, op. cit., 9. The Buddhists certainly aided the journalists in this process, for example, by handing reporters copies of Quang Duc's biography which included his "respectful" plea to Diem to show "charity and compassion" to all religions. See Karnow, op. cit., 281.

[45] Arthur Schlesinger (1965) *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 987; Hallin, op. cit., 43-8.

[46] *The Pentagon Papers* say that the Buddhist Crisis "started a chain of events that ultimately led to the overthrow of the Diem regime…No one then foresaw that it would generate a national opposition capable of rallying virtually all non-communist dissidence in South Vietnam. More importantly, no one then appreciated the degree of alienation of Vietnam's people from their government, nor the extent of the political decay within the regime…" *The Pentagon Papers*, op.cit., 225.

PAGODA RAIDS, MORE SELF-IMMOLATIONS AND DIEM'S DEMISE

Following Quang Duc's self-immolation, the Buddhist leaders skilfully channelled the rising tide of popular support into rallies, prayer meetings, hunger strikes and demonstrations. The Americans also intensified their pressure on Diem to come to an agreement with the Buddhists[47] but the GVN continued to respond with increasing repression. More self-immolations took place on the 4th, 13th, and 15th of August and the protest reached a climax when Tieu Dieu, an old monk at 'the heart of the Buddhist movement', immolated himself on 16 August 1963.[48]

Ngo Dinh Nhu, Diem's brother, who could not tolerate the escalation of their protest any longer, decided to eliminate the resistance once and for all in an operation called Campaign Deluge. On 21 August, Nhu staged a general assault on the Buddhist pagodas in Saigon, Hue and other coastal cities, employing the regime's private shock troops and combat police. The raids resulted in the arrest of over 1,400 monks and nuns, and many casualties and missing people.[49]

Public responses to the pagoda raids were 'clear-cut and fierce'.[50] Many high-ranking Vietnamese resigned from their official posts, and since so many Buddhist leaders were in prison, university students and even high school students took up the struggle, staging boycotts, rallies and demonstrations.[51] The US press and administration vehemently denounced the attacks the next day, and a debate ensued as to whether the culpability lay with Nhu or the army. Nhu had taken measures to avert responsibility, including getting a martial law decree issued beforehand to implicate the army and dressing some combat police in paratroops uniforms.[52] His efforts to shift the blame exacerbated the already existing rift between the GVN and insurgent elements in the army, and plans began to be formed for a military coup against Diem's regime.[53] On 5 October 1963, a young monk immolated himself in the central market in Saigon, and on 27 October another sacrificed himself at the main Cathedral, in time to be witnessed by the arriving UN delegation investigating the Buddhist persecution.[54] A few days later, on 1 November, Diem was overthrown in a military coup tacitly approved by the US. Amidst the mass celebrations of the South Vietnamese people, the Americans did not mask their relief either. As Karnow records: 'Elated and unrepentant, [Ambassador] Lodge invited the insurgent generals

---

[47] Due to US pressure, on June 16, a joint GVN-Buddhist communiqué was released. Nothing came of this agreement, however, and the anxiety of the US administration regarding the Buddhist Crisis merely increased. A CIA agent noted that since the Flag Incident, there was a "renewed restiveness and growing disaffection in official civilian and military circles over Diem's handling of the dispute." See Karnow, op. cit., 228.

[48] See Thien Hoa (1970) *50 Nam Can Hung Phat Giao Viet Nam (50 years of Vietnamese Buddhism).* Vietnam: Vien Hoa Dao, 104-109; Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 203. Where there are disparities in dates, I have prioritized the dates given in Thien Hoa (1970).

[49] For example, at Xa Loi pagoda, a major stronghold of the Buddhist movement, about thirty monks were wounded or injured and several were subsequently listed as missing. *The Pentagon Papers*, op. cit., 232

[50] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 205.

[51] Resignations were announced by the Foreign Minister and Madame Nhu's own father who had occupied an ambassadorial post in Washington, as well as other members of the embassy. More resignations came from the staff of the University of Hue and the University of Saigon. Ibid, 177-8.

[52] *The Pentagon Papers*, op. cit., 232-33.

[53] Note that the army predated the Diem regime and therefore was not a creation of the GVN. In this regard, the army maintained a certain amount of independence from the government. From 1957-1962 there were at least three attempts on Diem's life. See Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 177 & 211.

[54] Ibid, 179.

to his office to congratulate them on their victory, which was his triumph as well. A few days later, he cabled Kennedy: "The prospects now are for a shorter war"'.[55]

THE UNITED BUDDHIST CHURCH (UBC)

By the end of 1963 the Buddhists prepared to form a national organization for themselves and in January 1963, the United Buddhist Church was established—a body which merged eleven sects of Vietnamese Buddhism under one congregation, including those from the Mahayana and Theravada schools.[56] Mahayana Buddhists dominated the social and political functions of the organisation, but Theravada leaders were also well represented.[57] On a doctrinal level, each tradition was encouraged to preserve their distinct practices.[58] The UBC, however, did not represent the Chinese, Hinayana,[59] and Hoa Hao Buddhists, as well as some Southern Buddhists[60] and sects of Theravada Buddhism.[61] The first paragraph of their constitution declares that the social mission of the UBC is 'to achieve peace, the essence of Buddha's doctrine, and…the better service of the nation and of humanity.'[62] The Institute for the Propagation of the Faith (henceforth, 'the Institute')[63] was the most active and politically significant office within the UBC.[64]

Three of the most important leaders of the UBC were Tri Quang,[65] Thien Minh[66] and Tam Chau[67] who each played a prominent role in leading the Struggle Movement. Over time, a personal rivalry developed between Tri Quang and Tam Chau, which eventually led to the latter siding with General Ky in 1966.[68] Then there was Nhat Hanh, the well-known Buddhist scholar, poet and leader, who was especially well-regarded by the youths, and who campaigned extensively for peace abroad as an

---

[55] See Karnow, op. cit., 311.
[56] Forest, op.cit., 6; Topmiller (2002), op.cit., 6-7.
[57] See Kahin, op. cit., 487 n4.
[58] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 215.
[59] Note that in the religious context of Vietnam, a distinction is made between Hinayana and Theravada Buddhism. See Topmiller (2002), op.cit., 7 and 155 n16.
[60] These include the Khmer Theravada Buddhists and non-UBC Southern Buddhists.
[61] Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 6-7.
[62] Cited in Forest, op. cit., 6.
[63] The name of this Institute is "Vien Hoa Dao" in Vietnamese.
[64] Kahin, op. cit., 294 & 487 n4. An explicit justification for the Buddhists' engagement with the political and social world appears in the opening speech of Tam Chau, the first chairman of the UBC: "The experiences of recent months have shown us that social events can deeply influence the religious life, because Buddhists are at the same time the citizens of the country…In other words, the Buddhists have to participate in social and cultural activities". Quoted in Kahin, 184.
[65] The *Time* magazine in 1964 called him "a frail hot eyed monk…[who] has managed to confuse everyone about his political loyalties" (quoted in Topmiller (2002), op.cit., 8). Many Americans suspected him of being Communist, but there was never any evidence of this. Topmiller describes him as a "an enigmatic figure who projected an aura of intensity with his stern bearing and obscure pronouncements, he remained the best known Buddhist monk to Americans in Saigon". Topmiller, ibid, 8.
[66] He was the mastermind behind many of the demonstrations and a close ally of Tri Quang. Thien Minh was the head of the Youth Commission of the UBC. See Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 192-3.
[67] The first chairman of the UBC and a fervent anti-Communist. He was a refugee from the North and actively worked with anti-communist groups. Within the UBC, Tam Chau stressed moderation in opposing the GVN. Ibid, p168; Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 8.
[68] Topmiller, ibid, 6.

'overseas representative of the Unified Buddhist Church'.[69] Yet, while he closely associated with the leaders of the UBC,[70] his outlook tended to be much more liberal and progressive, and there existed some deep differences in views between Nhat Hanh and the more conservative leaders.[71] It was Nhat Hanh who was the leading proponent of the 'Third Force'[72] concept which declared that those of the Struggle Movement were neither anti-NLF nor anti-US, but simply pro-peace.[73]

THE BUDDHIST MOVEMENT IN THE LATER 1960s

After 1963, South Vietnamese politics followed a turbulent course of coups, mass uprisings and military confrontations. The Struggle Movement which emerged in the latter half of 1963 continued to expand, and the world could no longer rest ignorant of the fact that the Buddhists in South Vietnam constituted a formidable political force that was 'able to stage massive street demonstrations at will, shoring up and bringing down governments.' [74] Nevertheless, despite tremendous popular support for the Struggle Movement, their demands for peace and democracy were never achieved during the 1960s, and the movement's failure to this end must be understood in light of the ruthless American policy to pursue their Cold War agenda in Vietnam.

From the end of 1963 until the summer of 1965 when power devolved to a pro-US and pro-war government, a series of coups and expulsions took place, deposing General Duong Van Minh, Premier Tran Van Huong, General Nguyen Khanh and Dr. Phan Huy Quat respectively. In the cases of Minh and Quat, their ousters were overseen by the Americans who disapproved of their neutralist orientations and their willingness to heed the Buddhists' demands for peace and democracy. The overthrow of Minh ended any real opportunity to stop the war through political negotiations. A political settlement had seemed a real possibility, especially as two days after Diem's overthrow, NLF officials called on the leaders of the South Vietnamese armed forces to consider a negotiated solution.[75] President Johnson clearly instructed Lodge that the latter's post in Vietnam was 'precisely for the purpose of knocking down the idea of neutralisation wherever it rears its ugly head', and he went on to say, 'on this point I

---

[69] Forest, op.cit., 6. Nhat Hanh played a crucial role in setting up Van Hanh University, and was the director of the School of Youth for Social Service (SYSS). He was also the founder of the Tiep Hien (Inter-being) Order. See Sallie B. King (2000), op.cit., 321-335.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit, 257-262. Nevertheless, despite the differences in orientation, it was clear that the UBC needed, and even relied upon, Nhat Hanh's intellectual contribution. On the relationship between Nhat Hanh and the UBC leaders, see also Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op. cit., 48 and 70.

[72] As Hassler points out, however, it may be slightly misleading to speak of a Third Force, for, the Buddhists never insisted on a three-sided war. It was really a "third solution" that the Buddhists wished for; a solution that saw the cessation of war and the building of a democratic government based on neutralism. See Alfred Hassler (1970) *Saigon, USA.* New York: Richard W. Baron Press, 149.

[73] Nhat Hanh introduces this idea most comprehensively in his pamphlet-book, *Vietnam: The Lotus in the Sea of Fire.* Although the book was intended for an American audience, its most spectacular success was in South Vietnam itself, where a smuggled-in version was printed illegally. More than 100,000 copies were sold in a country where a 3000 sale constitutes a best-seller. See Nhat Hanh (1967) *Vietnam: The Lotus in the Sea of Fire.* London: SCM, 94-103; Hassler (1970), ibid, 146-70.

[74] King (1996), op.cit., 326.

[75] The overthrow of Minh ended any opportunity to stop the war through political negotiations. A political settlement had seemed a real possibility, especially as two days after Diem's overthrow, NLF officials called on the leaders of the South Vietnamese armed forces to consider a negotiated solution. See Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 220.

think that nothing is more important than to stop neutralist talk wherever we can by whatever means we can.'[76]

Premier Huong, who the Americans favoured for his Hawkish stance, was removed from office by Khanh in January 1965, and in February, Khanh was ousted by a bloodless military coup encouraged by the US.[77] Apart from his action to remove Huong, the Americans were displeased with Khanh for his reluctance to pursue an aggressive policy against North Vietnam resulting from his compromises with the Buddhists.[78] Khanh's alliance with the Institute leaders, however, was purely tactical, for he was also careful to balance the Buddhists' power by sponsoring certain Catholic groups to wage counter-demonstrations every time the Buddhists took to the streets.[79] In the end however, both the Buddhists and the Catholics developed animosity towards Khanh's Machiavellian tactics.

BUDDHIST-CATHOLIC RELATIONS IN 1964

A word must be said about the Buddhist-Catholic relations during Khanh's rule especially as there were a few violent instances which, although minor in terms of the overall scale of violent conflict in Vietnam during this time, is significant for my purposes in examining the role of nonviolence in the Buddhist movement. Khanh's dual-sponsoring of the Buddhists and the Catholics led to some bloody confrontations between the two groups, particularly amongst the lay students who joined leaderless mobs in frustration.[80] In the anarchic situation that followed Khanh's imposition of martial law, the tensions between the groups reached a peak.[81] On 24 August 1964, fighting broke out in Danang between the Catholic and Buddhist students and the next day, 10,000 Buddhists stumbled across a Catholic village, whereupon a bloody clash ensued and virtually the entire village burned down.[82] In Danang, rioting continued in

---

[76] Quoted in Kahin, op. cit., 208. Also the cablegram from Johnson to Lodge on 20 March 1964 containing these words is published in Neil Sheehan, Henrick Smith, E. W. Kenworthy and Fox Butterfield (1971) *The Pentagon Papers As Published by the "The New York Times"*. New York: Bantam Books, 285.

[77] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 322-327.

[78] Khanh, who well understood the political power of the Buddhists, sought to mollify them by repealing Decree No.10 so as to grant them equal legal status as the Catholic Church. He then invited two lay Buddhist politicians to join his government and set up a court to try the alleged murderers of the Flag Incident. Further, he provided the resources to ensure that the Vesak of 1964 was one of the grandest celebrations ever. Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 306.

[79] The Catholics now felt that the Buddhists were enjoying government favouritism, and on 7 June 1964, 35,000 Catholics demonstrated in Saigon. See Peter Grose (1964a) "Catholics Rally in Saigon, Charging Bias by Regime" *New York Times.* 8 June 1964, p1 quoted in ibid, 270. To balance the power of the Catholics in government, namely, the Dai Viet party, Khanh promoted certain young colonels, who became a powerful group called the "Young Turks", and among them were Nguyen Cao Ky, Nguyen Van Thieu and Nguyen Chanh Thi who later replaced him. Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid, 307

[80] See New York Times (1964a) "Saigon Students Score Army Rule", *New York Times.* 22 August: 2; Peter Grose (1964b) "Khanh Responds to Young Critics", *New York Times.* 23 August 1964: 3; Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid, 306-7; New York Times (1964b) "Ministry Office Sacked", *New York Times*, 24 August: 3; Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 20.

[81] Khanh used the Gulf of Tonkin Incident in August 1964 as his reason for imposing martial law, though most see it as a blatant attempt to expand his powers, for he took this opportunity also to declare himself president, promulgating a new constitution called the Vung Tau Charter which suspended civil liberties. Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 18-9.

[82] Ibid, 19; Peter Grose (1964d) "Violence Widespread" *New York Times,* 25 August 1964, 10; Peter Grose (1964d) "Riots Continuing" *New York Times*, 26 August 1964, p1; Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 317-318.

the streets for two days and the violence soon spread to Saigon.[83] The joint calls of the UBC and the Catholic Diocese to remain calm were to no avail.[84]

I had the opportunity to speak to Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, a most 'feared' and 'radical'[85] lay Buddhist leader of the Buddhist Socialist Bloc, who, apart from directly assisting two Buddhists privately prepare for their self-immolations, had also been involved in the above incident where the Catholic village burned down. His wife, Linh, who I also had the pleasure of meeting, is a Catholic from that same village who witnessed the entire incident. They both attest to the fact that the violence that day had not been planned by either side, and that events unfortunately escalated to the point of chaos and destruction against their will.[86] It should be emphasised that the UBC consistently maintained a policy of nonviolence,[87] and despite these few incidents, overall, the Buddhist movement largely kept to this principle.

MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE AIMS OF THE BUDDHISTS AND THE USA

Since the ultimate objective of the Buddhists was peace, and that of the US, war, it was clear that from the very beginning, the aims of the two parties were mutually exclusive.[88] The nature of the Buddhists' aims is outlined by Kahin, who spoke directly to the Institute leaders:

> The *ultimate objective* remained as an end to the fighting and a negotiated political settlement with the National Liberation Front. But to avoid a confrontation with the American power, their leaders recognised that they could not openly declare this. They emphasised instead the *intermediate aim* of elections, a step awkward for the US mission to oppose, which if reasonably honest, would ensure…replacement [of the military government] by a Saigon regime in tune with these Buddhist aims.[89]

Thus whilst the Buddhists wished for peace *and* democracy, they came to emphasise the latter in hope that free elections and a constitutional government would lead to the former,[90] reflecting the people's ardent wish for peace. In the end, however, they were even denied this intermediate aim because the US foresaw that, in the words of Ambassador Lodge, 'if any elected assembly sits in Saigon, it will be on the phone negotiating with Hanoi within one week.'[91]

Topmiller notes a fundamental divergence in the ideologies of the USA and the Buddhists. He points out that Washington, in their Cold War dichotomous worldview, 'simply could not understand how groups like the Buddhists could even consider talking to the Communists, much less joining them in a coalition government. Buddhist efforts to seek an accommodation with the NLF seemed tantamount to

---

[83] Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] This is his self-description and not mine! Semi-structured interview with Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, 18 September 2003.
[86] Ibid. Note that Nhuan and Linh were not married at the time of the incident, and thus were in a position to draw their conclusions separately about the occurrences of this day.
[87] Personal communication with Pham Van Minh, 18 September 2003.
[88] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 321; Topmiller (2002), op. cit., p11. McGeorge Bundy himself recognised that a government acceptable to the US would be unacceptable to the Institute leaders. Kahin, op. cit., 252.
[89] Kahin, op. cit., 414 (my italics).
[90] See also Pham Van Minh (2001) *Socio-Political Philosophy of Vietnamese Buddhism: A Case Study of the Buddhist Movement of 1963 and 1966*. Master's Thesis, School of Social Ecology and Lifelong Learning, University of Western Sydney, 253 & 356.
[91] Ambassador Lodge, quoted by Emmet John Hughes in *Newsweek*, 30 May 1966, cited in ibid, 421.

treason to U.S. officials.'[92] The Buddhists, on the other hand, who adhered to the notion of non-attachment, including freedom from dogma, and who refuted duality in understanding the nature of the universe, could not subscribe to such a dichotomous world view splitting the world into two camps.[93] Moreover, the Buddhists were repulsed by American capitalism and lost all faith in the Americans' democratic rhetoric when they continued to witness the USA backing autocratic and military governments, ignoring their calls for free and fair elections.[94] These profound disagreements and mistrust persisted to make any accommodation between the Buddhists and the Americans virtually impossible during the Vietnam War.

SHOWDOWN IN 1966

In March 1966, mass rallies in Danang, Hue and Saigon called for the military government under General Ky to step down and allow free elections. Soon the GVN lost control of the northern part of South Vietnam as the generals in that region refused to use military force against the Struggle Movement,[95] and on 2 April, Johnson was advised that in Hue and Danang, 'the police, civil servants and large elements of the local First Division are in total sympathy with the "struggle" group [and that] anti-American themes have been increasing'.[96] With US urging and planning, a Saigon military expedition, headed by General Ky himself, was dispatched to Danang to crush the opposition.[97] Due to the enormous local military and civilian support, however, this first expedition failed, and Ky was forced to back down. For a time, Ky's humiliating retreat seemed to have increased the power of the Institute leaders. In fact for the rest of April, Ky prepared for his second attack.

To buy time, Ky sought to win the temporary support of the Buddhists by promising them elections for a constitutional assembly to be held within three to five months, the resignation of the military government immediately after elections, and he even agreed in writing that the participants of the demonstrations would not be punished.[98] Lodge also gave his personal assurances to Tri Quang that the GVN-Buddhist agreement would be backed by the US.[99] On the basis of these promises, Tri Quang travelled throughout the northern provinces, appealing to the residents to call

[92] Topmiller (2002), op.cit., 11
[93] Ibid, 13-14. The exception, as Topmiller points out, is the Hoa Hao Buddhists who were fervently anti-communist due to the fact that their founder was executed by the Communists. The Hoa Hao opposed the UBC's effort to negotiate with the NLF and fought the Communists until the dissolution of South Vietnam in 1975. Ibid, 15.
[94] Ibid, 13; Forest, op.cit., 6-11
[95] King (1996), op.cit., 333.
[96] Memorandum for President Johnson from Dean Rusk, "Political Situation in South Vietnam", 2 April 1966, cited in Kahin, op. cit., 421.
[97] King (1996), op.cit., 333.
[98] Ibid; Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 345.
[99] Kahin, op. cit., 425.

off anti-government agitation.[100] It was also during this time that Ky managed to divide the Buddhist leadership by gaining the support of Tam Chau.[101]

Then on 15 May, Ky launched his second attack on Danang with American military backing, completely taking the Buddhists by surprise. Tri Quang petitioned President Johnson and Lodge to honour their end of the promise numerous times, but no US assistance was forthcoming.[102] This time the local army insurgents were out-manoeuvred and out-equipped, and after about a week of heavy fighting, most of the Struggle Movement's strongholds—namely, the pagodas which housed the Buddhists, the army rebels and other civilian dissidents—were captured.[103] Ky then moved to crush the uprisings in Saigon and then Hue and its surrounding areas.

The protest in Saigon had turned decidedly anti-American with slogans like "Kill the Americans" and "Yankee Go Home" in circulation. On 1 June, a GVN-sponsored attack was made on Thien Minh when a hand grenade was thrown into his car, seriously wounding him. Although demonstrations were held every night until the end of June, with Thien Minh incapacitated, Tri Quang in Hue and Tam Chau openly siding with Ky, the Struggle Movement in Saigon was left without any effective leadership and soon began to falter.[104] In Hue, students staged an indefinite hunger strike in front of the American consulate demanding a response from President Johnson, and when nothing was forthcoming, they voted to burn down the USIS library, resulting in the loss of 10,000 books. When no response came after Tri Quang's third appeal to President Johnson, a hundred monks and nuns began hunger strike and presented the Consular-General with a letter written in blood asking the President to stop supporting Ky.[105]

A 'powerfully evocative form of protest'[106] emerged in Hue and other invaded cities, when Tri Quang, in a final desperate move to stop the advancing tanks, called on his followers to move their family altars onto the street. Family altars, a place of worship that enshrined one's ancestors, were 'heavy with the gravity of Vietnamese culture and history', and were, in Forest's view, 'as potent a symbol as the self-immolations.'[107] The family altars certainly caused confusion among the troops. The regular army units were unable to run over the altars and Ky had to send airborne and Marine units to break the movement. Even these units were hesitant to destroy the

---

[100] Kahin says that "Tri Quang's willingness to put his own prestige and future on the line in calling for this compromise can only be appreciated in terms of the assurances he believed he had received from Lodge." Nor was he alone in this understanding, for one of the most respected Catholic newspapers in Saigon remarked that, Lodge had "pledged on his honour to Venerable Tri Quang that the US would never allow a suppression of the Buddhists in central Vietnam to take place, if the Buddhists agreed to put an end to their struggle after 14 April, 1966." Ibid, 426.

[101] The precise reason for Tam Chau's support of Ky is unknown, though it is commonly noted that he was a most fervent anti-communist. Further, Pham Van Minh says that although until the last minute, Tam Chau had agreed with most of the Buddhist demands and had been a vocal advocate for peace, there was one major point of difference between Tam Chau, Tri Quang and the rest of the Institute leaders: the fate of Ky's government. Within the Institute, Tam Chau was known to have refused to demand that Ky step down immediately, claiming it had been a long time since there had been a Premier who was a Northerner (Tam Chau himself was from the North). See Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 349.

[102] Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid, 352-3.

[103] Ibid, 310; Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 123-4.

[104] Pham Van Minh (2002), ibid, 355.

[105] Ibid, 354. Apple Jr, R.W. (1966) "Ky Orders Hue Mayors to quell Dissident Forces" *New York Times.* 3 June 1966, 2.

[106] Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 131-132.

[107] Both quotes attributed to Forest, op. cit., 7. Also see Schecter, op.cit., 239.

altars, though in the end, the soldiers 'politely and reverentially moved the altars to the sides of the road, paving the way for the subjugation of Hue.' [108]

In the final days of the 1966 Struggle Movement, the Buddhists once again resorted to their most drastic form of protest—self immolation—which started in Hue on 29 May 1966 by Nu Thanh Quang, a nun who had been refused permission to immolate herself three times.[109] In a letter to President Johnson, she wrote that she was burning herself 'to raise the tragic voice of my people' and in protest against the 'irresponsible attitude' of the US administration, which approved 'the massacre of our monks, nuns and Buddhist followers.' [110] Hers was the first of the twelve self-immolations that were performed in 1966 and in spite of Tam Chau's appeal to stop, and President Johnson's comment that the sacrifices were 'unnecessary', [111] the immolations continued.[112] However, as long as Ky retained US backing, 'even self-immolations could not defeat the power of the United States and the GVN.'[113] On 22 June, the city of Quang Tri, the last stronghold of the Struggle Movement, fell to the government.

ASSESSMENT OF THE BUDDHIST MOVEMENT

The 1966 movement was the last major challenge that the Buddhists posed to the GVN and the US. Certainly, protest continued, such as the demonstrations against the rigged elections of 1966 and 1967 or the massive Peace Campaign in 1970, and it is said that Nhat Chi Mai's self-immolation, the first of the six sacrifices in 1967, was like a moment of 'rebirth'[114] for the dispirited movement. However, as Sallie King says, after 1966 the Struggle Movement 'never regained momentum sufficient to bring down a government or change the course of war.'[115]

The question remains as to what impact the Buddhists had on the course of Vietnamese history. In their official statements, the Americans rarely acknowledge the existence of a 'Third Force' in Vietnam.[116] Yet, as Vo Van Ai[117] says, this force 'brought down Ngo Dinh Diem in 1963. It deposed General Khanh. And in 1966 it would have overthrown Marshal Ky if the Americans had not intervened with their military strength. It was not the [National Liberation] Front that did those things, fighting in the jungles…'[118]

---

[108] Topmiller (2002), op. cit., p132.
[109] Schecter, op. cit., p233.
[110] Quoted in ibid. This short excerpt from Thanh Quang in Schecter's book is the only recorded utterance I have been able to find of the 1966 immolators and Miss. Huong Yen, my Buddhist friend in Vietnam, was not able to locate any primary documents of the writings of the immolators in 1966.
[111] Quoted in Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., pp394-5.
[112] Fitzgerald, op.cit., 386. Also see Charles Mohr (1966) "4 Buddhists Die as Suicides Rise in Anti-Ky Drive", *New York Times.* 30 May 1966, 1; New York Times (1966) "Buddhist Protest Being Intensified: Suicide Toll at 5", *New York Times.* 31 May, 1.
[113] Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 136.
[114] Forest, op. cit., 8.
[115] King (1996), op. cit., 334. King says that the two main reasons were: 1) the Thieu-Ky regime in Saigon stayed in step with American expectations; and 2) the Buddhist movement was fiercely suppressed by the Saigon from the May 1966 crackdown until the end of the war. She illustrates this point by referring to UBC obtained documents in 1968 showing that of the 1,870 prisoners in Chi Hoa Prison in Saigon, 1,665 were listed on the daily census as "Buddhists", and fifty as "Communists". Also for the last point, see Forest, op. cit., 9.
[116] Though see Hassler (1970) for a rare statement from the White House acknowledging the presence of a "Third Force" in a letter to Alfred Hassler. Hassler (1970), op.cit., 227
[117] The Secretary-General of the Overseas Vietnamese Buddhist Association.
[118] Quoted in Hassler (1970), op. cit., 118. Also see Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 358.

Of course, various factors like the role of the media, the subversive elements in the army, the animosity between the Catholics and General Khanh and the grievances of the populace all helped to overthrow successive oppressive governments. The role played by the Buddhists among these, however, was of considerable importance. As for the self-immolations, obviously the acts produced greater results in 1963—when it alerted the whole world to the plight of the South Vietnamese people, leading to the overthrow of Diem—than in the later 1960s, when it failed to move the US to stop supporting Ky.[119] Yet, even after 1963, the struggle, suffering and sacrifice of the South Vietnamese people is thought to have influenced the actions of individuals in the US administration, such as McNamara and McGeorge Bundy, who both resigned in 1966 and Johnson who did not nominate himself for a second term in 1968.[120] The greatest impact of the Buddhists' nonviolent movement, however, was undoubtedly on the local people themselves, who were inspired and moved to continue their struggle for peace.

Brief History of State-Sangha Relations in Vietnam

The term 'engaged Buddhism', which enjoys broad currency in Buddhist circles today,[121] is widely attributed to Nhat Hanh who first used the term in English in the 1960s.[122] However, Nhat Hanh suggests that this is an older concept which can be traced back to the Buddhist reform movement in Vietnam in the 1930s, where the notion of *nhan gian Phat Giao* or 'engaged Buddhism' was frequently discussed among Buddhist thinkers.[123] Today the term is employed to denote a Buddhist practice that is actively engaged in working towards social improvement and justice in contrast to a Buddhism where the practitioners completely withdraw from worldly involvement. Below, it will be seen that Vietnamese Buddhists have had a long tradition of engaging in social and political affairs, which paved the way for the Buddhists' modern struggle in the 1960s and the enmeshment of national and religious discourses conspicuous therein.

---

[119] According to Thien Hoa, there were 31 self-immolations during 1963 and 1970. See Thien Hoa, op.cit., 104-109.

[120] Personal communication with Pham Van Minh, 18 September 2003. Of course, numerous other factors probably influenced these actions also, including the increasing popular discontent and rising peace movements in the US.

[121] Such as Sulak Sivaraksa (1988) *A Socially Engaged Buddhism*. Bangkok: Thai Inter-Religious Commission for Development; Fred Eppsteiner (1988) *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism*. Berkeley, California: Parallax Press. See also Kenneth Kraft (1992) *Inner Peace, World Peace: Essays on Buddhism and Nonviolence*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 11-30. Organisations which use the term include the Buddhist Peace Fellowship and the International Network of Engaged Buddhists.

[122] See also Kenneth Kraft (1992) *Inner Peace, World Peace: Essays on Buddhism and Nonviolence*. Albany: State University of New York Press: 11-30 at 18; Christopher S. Queen (1996) "Introduction: The Shapes and Sources of Engaged Buddhism" in Christopher S. Queen and Sallie B. King (Eds) *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhist Liberation Movements in Asi*a. New York: Albany State University Press, 34 n6.

[123] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 52

THE ROLE OF BUDDHISM IN VIETNAM IN THE PRE-MODERN PERIOD

Buddhism came to Vietnam in the first century of the Common Era by sea from India and over land from China via merchants.[124] While Vietnam accommodates various Mahayana and Theravada strands of Buddhism, the dominant school is Zen (v. *Thien*), which is followed by the majority of Buddhist monks.[125] At the popular level, however, the Vietnamese people tend to practise Pure Land Buddhism mixed with Zen, Taoist, Confucian, and animistic elements—the flexible disposition of Mahayana Buddhism allowing for an easy synthesis.[126] To suit the predilection of the masses, the majority of Vietnamese Zen Masters also synthesized Zen and Pure Land doctrines in their teachings except for those at pure Zen monasteries, and it is said that 'almost every pagoda in Vietnam practises this combination of Zen and Pure-Land doctrine.'[127]

Vietnam has a long history of cooperative state-sangha relations. Under the Dinh and Le dynasties (968-980, 980-1009), the rulers heavily depended on monk advisors for their nation-building efforts, where educated monks—the country's main intellectuals and literati—contributed their knowledge to the development of Vietnam's architecture, economics, culture, politics, and ethics.[128] Under the Ly and Tran dynasties (1010-1225, 1225-1400) too, Buddhism continued to exert an important influence over the governance of the country. It is said that the Ly dynasty which began with the accession of Ly Thai To to the throne, ushered in a 'golden age' for Vietnam where the nation made impressive advances culturally, politically, and militarily.[129] Ly Thai To was a disciple of the Zen patriarch Van Hanh, and he received considerable assistance from the patriarch and other Zen monks in consolidating the nation, which included achieving spectacular military victories against the Chinese invaders to the North and pacifying the Cham rebels in the South.[130] As Pham Van Minh points out, 'In response to the need to protect independence from an ever expansionist China, Vietnamese Buddhism was already an engaged-Buddhism which reflected the desire to pursuit [sic] spiritual achievement as well as to respond to the survival need of the Vietnamese people. Like *Bodhisattvas* these Vietnamese monks never ran away from their compatriots' sufferings.'[131]

Buddhism flourished under Ly Thai To and his successors: over 300 pagodas were built during their reign and numerous monks were ordained.[132] The Ly kings also established the basis of a welfare state. Ly Thanh Ton (the third emperor of the Ly dynasty) lowered taxes for the peasants when natural disasters occurred and ordered warm clothing and food to be distributed to prisoners, and their sentences reduced, during a particularly cold winter in 1055.[133] Other enlightened policies were pursued too, such as calling on government functionaries to take an oath against corruption or creating an Ombudsman's office for the common people to lodge complaints if they were unjustly treated.[134] Despite his military victories, Ly Thanh Ton forbade his

---

[124] ibid, 12
[125] Ibid, 12. Topmiller (2002), op.cit., 10.
[126] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 20-21.
[127] Ibid, 15.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid, 15-16; Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 102.
[130] Pham Van Minh (2001), ibid, 102-103; Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 15-16;
[131] Pham Van Minh (2001), ibid, 102.
[132] Ibid, 103.
[133] Ibid, 104.
[134] Ibid.

troops to loot Cham property and ordered the release of prisoners of war, including the Cham King, Nung Tri Cao.[135]

The Tran kings were also deeply drawn to Buddhism: both Tran Thai Tong and his grandson Tran Nhan Tong, at one point during their lives, had fled the palace to seek the path of Buddhahood, heading to Mount Yen Tu where Truc Lam—an imperial counsellor and a great monk—resided.[136] Yet these Tran kings were respectively persuaded to return to the world. Tran Thai Tong was advised by Truc Lam thus: 'As a rule, the monarch has to accept the people's will as his own. Now that the people want you to return to the throne, how can you refuse them? However, when you come back to the court, you would do well not to forget the study of the scriptures.'[137] Much like the Ly kings before them, the Tran kings also reigned compassionately, with an emaphsis on the general wellbeing of their countrymen. The imperial court had medicine distributed to the sick and instituted a policy where the poor could come to the government office to collect coins and rice.[138] When natural disasters occurred, the wealthy were asked to contribute to charity. Tran kings are also esteemed for successfully defending Vietnam against the Mongols in the thirteenth century.[139]

Tran Thai Tong and Tran Nhan Tong remained dedicated to their Buddhist practice throughout their lives. The former became an ardent lay Zen practitioner who authored several works on Buddhism, including the famous Zen manual called *Instructions on Emptiness*, while the latter went on to become ordained and is widely regarded as the first patriarch of the indigenous Vietnamese Zen school, Truc Lam Yen Tu.[140] Their combination of worldly success and spiritual zest is often likened to King Asoka, though Pham Van Minh notes that there is no recorded evidence indicating that the Tran kings knew about or emulated the celebrated Indian monarch.[141]

Confucianism entered the political milieu of Vietnam as a philosophy to govern the kingdom during the eleventh century during the Ly dynasty. The variant that was introduced in Vietnam was an academic kind that focused on competitive examinations for the selection of mandarins.[142] For some time, Confucianism and Buddhism coexisted harmoniously—a natural development given that the first teachers at the early Confucian institutes were Zen monks who had knowledge of Confucianism through their proficiency in Chinese.[143] However, in time the Confucians began to show a competitive attitude towards the Buddhists, consolidating their position at the imperial court and monopolizing political power.[144] It is said that when the Buddhist counsellors became aware of this disposition, they simply ceased to visit the court and retreated to monastic life since they did not desire to cling to worldly power.[145] For a time, therefore, Buddhism ceded its influence over national politics to Confucianism, but in the nineteenth century with the introduction of a

---

[135] Ibid.
[136] Ibid, 106-108; Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 17.
[137] Quoted in Nhat Hanh (1967), ibid, 18.
[138] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 110.
[139] Ibid, 106.
[140] Ibid, 109.
[141] Ibid, 106 & 108.
[142] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 17.
[143] Ibid, 16.
[144] Ibid, 19; Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 106.
[145] Nhat Hanh (1967), ibid, 19; Pham Van Minh (2001), ibid, 105.

Western education and examination systems under French colonialism, the role of Confucianism in Vietnamese society gradually faded into obscurity.[146]

VIETNAMESE BUDDHISM AND NATIONALISM IN THE MODERN ERA

With the decline of Confucianism, Buddhism filled the ideological vacuum to 'give the country a stable moral and intellectual centre apart from the state and the official religion'[147] and became the main ideological carrier of Vietnamese nationalism that could serve as an effective rallying point against the French colonialists. As Pham Van Minh states, 'Buddhism which always has a deep symbiotic relationship with the cultures in which it is found…imparted a sense of identity. It provided a distinctive countervailing force against the infiltration of Western culture, particularly from Christian religions.'[148] Catholic missions were widely considered in Vietnam to have been forerunners of Western imperialists, and attempts were made especially under Emperor Minh-Mang to restrict their missionary activities.[149] After the French conquest of Vietnam, the colonial authorities further confirmed the close association between Catholic missions and imperialism by granting Catholicism full freedom to propagate its faith and offering protection and privileges to those who converted to Catholicism, which, in many cases led to mass conversions.[150] The Catholic missionaries' disdainful attitudes towards the traditions of Vietnam, including Buddhism, Confucianism, and the practice of ancestor worship, further alienated the majority of the populace.[151] The attitude of the majority of Vietnamese people towards Catholicism is explained by Nhat Hanh below:

> The people of Vietnam have a history of over three thousand years and have often fought valiantly to defend their independence from invasion from the north. Their sense of national independence is strong and their patriotism has been a great advantage against invading forces, having many times helped defeat the Chinese and Mongol armies. So the popular belief that Christianity is the religion of the Westerners and was introduced by them to facilitate their conquest of Vietnam is a political fact of great importance, even though this belief may be based on suspicions alone.[152]

Vietnamese Catholics tended to live as a separate enclave from the rest of society as if 'there was only one country that they related to, that of God, represented by the Roman Catholic Church.'[153] As Nguyen Van Trung, himself a well-known Vietnamese Catholic intellectual, wrote:

> The Roman Catholic Church in Vietnam has become a distinct community, isolated and closed to the other communities in the nation because, when a Vietnamese becomes a convert, he not only has to abandon his traditional religion and ancestor worship to accept the Catholic faith, but also to relinquish his native cultural heritage, with which he may assert his Vietnamese identity, all in order to accept a new way of thinking and living and

---

[146] Nhat Hanh (1967), ibid, 19-23. Many Confucian notions have been 'assimilated by Buddhism and combined with their parallels in the latter's philosophy', such as the merging of the Confucian notion of 'kindness' into the Buddhist notion of 'compassion' or 'loving-kindness'. Ibid, 23.
[147] Fitzgerald, op.cit., 130-131. See also Marjorie Hope & James Young (1977) "The Third Way: Thich Nhat Hanh and Cao Ngoc Phuong" *The Struggle for Humanity: Agents of Nonviolent Change in a Violent World*, New York: Orbis Books, 197-198.
[148] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 113.
[149] Ibid, 124.
[150] Ibid; 125-130; Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 29, 34, 37.
[151] Ibid, 26-29.
[152] Nhat Hanh (1967), ibid, 29.
[153] Pham Vanh Minh (2001), op.cit., 128.

> a new set of alien customs. In the end, the Catholics have had to live as foreigners amid their countrymen.[154]

After French conquest of Vietnam from 1868-1884,[155] the Buddhists made an energetic effort to reform and modernize their religion.[156] By the end of the sixteenth century, Buddhism in Vietnam had declined in influence to become known as a 'religion of the dead' as monks engaged mainly in funeral rites and superstitious ritual.[157] Buddhism had survived predominantly in its popular form, losing its appeal to the nation's intelligentsia. Yet, in the late nineteenth century, Buddhism, which had hitherto withdrawn from political involvement once again displayed its 'socially engaged' character, when often together with the Confucian leaders ousted from the administration, they engaged in anti-colonial uprisings against the French. One such notable resistance was directed by Vo Tru[158] in 1989 who led a mass insurrection in Binh Dinh and Phu Yen provinces with the Kinh majority and the highland minority, which the French called the 'Monk Rebellion'.[159] During this time, many temples in Binh Dinh and Phu Yen provinces were used as bases for resistance activity.

In terms of philosophical renewal, the Buddhist revival began in the 1930s, largely influenced by the Chinese activist monk Thai Hu who inspired Vietnamese monks to adopt new knowledge and fresh interpretations of Buddhist texts as well as to re-evaluate their relevance and vitality.[160] The French authorized the creation of numerous Buddhist associations throughout Vietnam, even going so far as to lend official sponsorship in order to be able to control the reform movement.[161] During this time numerous Buddhist organizations sprung up including the Cochinchina Buddhist Study Society, the Luong-Xuyen Buddhist Study Society, the Annam Buddhist Study Society, and the Vietnam Buddhist Association, each of which had its own publication and charter.[162] Although the founders of these societies often had close connections with the colonial authorities, gradually these associations 'succeeded in infusing real life into the Buddhist [revival] movement, throughout the country.'[163] Two of the prominent leaders of the UBC, Thien Minh and Tri Quang, had trained at the Annam Buddhist Study Society.[164]

The year 1940 saw the establishment of the Buddhist youth movement (*Thanh-nien Phat-Hoc Duc-Duc*), which provided its members with Buddhist instruction, ran a dynamic periodical called *Vien-Am*, and formed a nation-wide Buddhist youth organization called the 'Buddhist Youth Family'.[165] This movement succeeded in recasting Buddhist teachings in a new light that appealed to young Western-educated

---

[154] Ngyuen Van Trung, *Nhan Dinh I*. Nam-Son, Saigon quoted in Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 33.
[155] France annexed South Vietnam in 1868 naming it 'Cochinchina' and the North in 1885 calling it 'Tonkin'.
[156] A similar effort was made by Confucianism in the 19th century. The last generation of Vietnamese Confucians began an anti-colonial struggle against the French which included a nonviolent mass protest in 1908 led by Phan Chu Trinh. These movements of organized resistance had an enormous influence on the next generation of Buddhist reformers. See Pham Vanh Minh (2001), op.cit., 136-137.
[157] Ibid, 133.
[158] He is also known as Vo Van Tru, Nguyen Tru, and Vo Than.
[159] Tai Thu Nguyen and Hoang Thi Tho (Eds) (2008) *The History of Buddhism in Vietnam*. Washington: The Council for Research and Values in Philosophy, 265; also see Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit, 138-139.
[160] Tai Thu Nguyen and Hoang Thi Tho (Eds), ibid, 270
[161] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 50-51; Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit, 142-143
[162] Nhat Hanh (1967), ibid, 51.
[163] Ibid.
[164] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit, 145.
[165] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 52.

intellectuals. The Buddhist Youth Family became one of the most well-organized youth associations in Vietnam and by 1962 there were 1,000 units consisting of 70,000 youth under this organization.[166] Under this movement, as well as other groups, a number of Buddhist schools (from primary to higher level instruction) were opened.[167]

After the August Revolution in 1945 where the Viet Minh assumed power under Ho Chi Minh, young Buddhists channelled further energy into modernizing Buddhism in order to make an intellectual contribution to a society aspiring for revolutionary change.[168] A number of later initiatives tried to fuse Buddhist doctrines with nationalism and humanism, as reflected in the orientation of the periodical *Gia-Ngo* (Enlightenment) and that of the Vietnam All-Vietnam Buddhist Association. The latter body was created following a national congress in May 1951 held in Hue and aimed to unify Buddhist associations in the country.[169] The association's official periodical *Vietnamese Buddhism* (*Phat-Giao Vietnam*) published an editorial containing the following passage, in which the entwinement of Buddhism and nationalism that was to characterize the Buddhist movement a decade later can be seen:

> Vietnamese Buddhism is not merely a religious belief that limits itself, everywhere and at all times, to its mission as a faith. On the contrary, everywhere it spreads, Buddhism adapts itself to the customs, cultural climate and human elements of the land, influencing the local population's way of life. This is also true of Vietnam, where Buddhism has blended with and assimilated our national characteristics and has made common cause with the people in building an independent national culture. According to the glorious history of our people, the Vietnamese have always desired to create their independent culture in order to resist the oppressive threat from the north. In this great and noble task of creating a national culture Vietnamese Buddhism played an important part. This is proved by the great achievements of Buddhism under the dynasties of Dinh, Le, Ly and Tran. The truth is that Vietnamese Buddhism is a national religion. In the mind and heart of the Vietnamese people there is already the seed of Buddhism. *For nearly two thousand years, the destiny of the nation and Buddhism have been intertwined.* Let us join hands in cultivating Buddhism in order to bring peace and happiness to our nation.[170]

From the 1930s to 1950s, a conscious linkage was forged between Buddhism and modern nationalism. Yet as seen in the allusion to the Dinh, Le, Ly, and Tran dynasties in the passage above, the idea of Buddhism as a vanguard of the Vietnamese nation had existed from long before. Buddhism's social engagement therefore is not a radical departure from the past but the culmination of an orientation that was witnessed over many centuries in Vietnam.

Buddhism emerged in Vietnam as the cultural and spiritual force of resistance against the French, especially after the influence of Confucianism waned in the administrative system. In accordance with Chatterjee's theory, the 'spiritual domain' became a powerful source of modern nationalism in Vietnam, providing the majority

---

[166] Ibid, 53.
[167] Ibid. Minh Chau, who was to become the first Chancellor of Van Hanh University established by Nhat Hanh, was a member of the Buddhist Youth Family. See Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit, 145.
[168] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 53. This aspiration was reflected in a publication for young Buddhists entitled *Giai Thoat* (Liberation). Ibid.
[169] Ibid, 54.
[170] Editorial in *Vietnamese Buddhism* quoted in Ibid, 54-55 (my italics).

an identity that distinguished them from the colonial powers.[171] As Fitzgerald observes:

> In peacetime, [Buddhism] offered the Vietnamese an internal life—a soul, a personal identity—outside the conventions of society. In times of tyranny and splitting apart, it indicated a morality that lay beyond loyalty to existing authorities. The Buddhist 'brotherhood' was an alternative form of community that provided a basis for opposition to an oppressive regime.[172]

Thus, when the UBC organised their resistance against Diem's regime in 1963, the Buddhists were affirming this time-honoured and 'particular function that Buddhism had always served in Vietnam'.[173] The enmeshment of national and religious identities is evident from some of the war poetry to emerge from Vietnam. Below are the opening lines of the poem 'Igniting the Fire of Compassion' by Vu Hoang Chuong, who bases his theme on Quang Duc's immolation in 1963:

> Our people can never lose
> Our Dharma[174] will ever be bright.
> Passing through many upheavals
> We are oppressed, slandered and betrayed.
> But the mountains and the rivers are still there.
> And the temples still tower above...
> Please return to us, the birthday of the Buddha
> And let end soon this national catastrophe…
> Buddhists from the other side of murdering
> With a heart of courage, daring to forget their life
> returning with vast love.[175]

The interlacing of the 'dharma' (Buddhist teachings) with the 'people', and the temples with the country's landscape (mountains and rivers), aptly demonstrates the entwinement of nationalist and religious discourses within which the Vietnamese resistance in the 1960s was situated.

As evident from the discussion above, even before the French, the Vietnamese have had a proud history of nationalistic struggles against the Mongols in the thirteenth century and against the Chinese who dominated them for almost a thousand years before the year 939.[176] In the eyes of the majority, therefore, the Americans were only the latest of foreign invaders in their long history of national resistance.[177]

---

[171] Partha Chatterjee (1993) *The Nation and Its Fragments, Colonial and Postcolonial Histories.* New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p6. Haynes also affirms that religion can be an integral part of cultural defense, crucial to one's personal sense of identity as well as to the formation of "a strong collective ethos against outside attack." See Haynes (1998), op.cit., 15.

[172] Fitzgerald, ibid, 132.

[173] Ibid, 131. It is perhaps no accident that the first place of eruption for the Buddhist revolt was Hue, the 'ancient imperial capital and still the cultural and spiritual centre of Vietnam'. See Hope and Yong, op. cit., 187.

[174] Although 'Dharma' can mean a variety of things, the Vietnamese Buddhists employed the word to refer to the teachings or the 'way' of Buddhism.

[175] Vu Hoang Phuong's poem "Igniting the Fire of Compassion" about Quang Duc's self-immolation (see Appendix 2). In his other famous poem, "Compassionate Fire" (also in Appendix 2) there is an extensive glorification of the Buddhist faith which displays the sense of cultural pride that accompanied the meaning of Quang Duc's self-immolation.

[176] Hassler (1970), op. cit., 107-9; Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 12-48; John T. McAlister (1969) *Vietnam: The Origins of Revolution.* New York: Allen Lane The Penguin Press, 17-29, 83-102.

[177] This history of national resistance is frequently played upon in the exhortations of the NLF which refer to the US as 'imperialists'. For example: 'The only obstacle to stabilisation and ending of bloodshed in South Vietnam is US imperialism.' See National Liberation Front (1964) "Statement of

When one bears in mind this long history and Buddhism's role therein, Quang Duc's statement, '…as the eldest son of the Buddha, I cannot sit quietly and let Buddhism disappear. Therefore, I joyfully volunteer to immolate my transitory physical body…to preserve Buddhism'[178] must be appreciated as having significance beyond the immediate preservation of his religion to meaning the guarding of a tradition that speaks to the very core of Vietnamese national identity. In 1963, the state of religious oppression was commonly called 'national catastrophe' and this same description appears in the letters of various other immolators like Duc Phong and Tieu Dieu as well as in the letter of Mai Tuyet An, who attempted to cut off her hand in a similar spirit of sacrifice as the immolators.[179] For these and other Buddhists, the protection of the 'True Teachings' was their 'duty'[180] and their sacrifice was made for their 'spiritual flag'[181] and 'in the name of the True Dharma'.[182]

Nonviolence of the Vietnamese Buddhist Movement

The United Buddhist Church (UBC) was a body which merged 11 sects of Vietnamese Buddhism under one congregation and therefore at the doctrinal level, the ideology the UBC asserted for nonviolent activism tended to be of a general Buddhist nature not specific to any one school so as to find common resonance among the different sects. It should be noted that while the Buddhist movement in Vietnam abstained from harming others, it did not make such a point of calling their struggle 'nonviolent' and in fact seldom used the word within Vietnam.[183] The term tended to be used more when the Buddhists campaigned abroad to seek international support for their cause. The UBC may have also reasoned that refraining from openly condemning violence left open the channel for negotiation with those who took up armed resistance like the NLF.[184] Nevertheless the Buddhist movement was, in an objective political sense, nonviolent in practice and principle. In this section I shall examine the methods adopted by the Buddhists, and the ideology which motivated their activism. Since self-immolation occupies a unique place both in the movement and in theorizing nonviolence, I shall discuss its significance in the next section.

NONVIOLENT PROTEST AND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

Looking back on the Struggle Movement during the 1960s, Nhat Hanh remarks, 'You cannot prefabricate techniques of nonviolent action and put them into a book for people to use. That would be naïve. If you are alert and creative, you will know what to do and what not to do. The basic requisite is that you have the essence, the substance of nonviolence and compassion in yourself. Then everything you do will be

---

the South Vietnam Liberation National Front, February 3, 1964", in Hai Thu, *Coup after Coup in Saigon.* Hanoi: Foreign Publishing House, 93

[178] Letter of Quang Duc before his self-immolation dated 1 May 1963 (Appendix 1).

[179] See Letters of Thich Duc Phong before his self-immolation dated 2 August 1963 (Appendix 6); Letters of Thich Tieu-Dieu before his self-immolation dated 15 August 1963 (Appendix 7); and Letter of Letter of Mai Tuyet An before sacrificing her arm (Appendix 8).

[180] See Appendix 6, Appendix 7; Letters of Thanh Tue before his self-immolation dated 13 August 1963 (Appendix10); Letter of Thien Lai (Appendix 11).

[181] Appendix 6.

[182] Letter of Thich Nguyen Huong before his self-immolation dated 4 August 1963 (Appendix 5).

[183] See Nhat Hanh (1974) "Listening to the Poplar Tree" *Fellowship*, January 1974, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 3.

[184] See ibid.

in the direction of nonviolence.'[185] He enumerates various methods that were used in Buddhist campaign—many of which arose spontaneously in the particular socio-cultural context of their resistance.

The Buddhists' campaigns involved some of the staple tactics of nonviolence, such as petitions, rallies, assemblies, and demonstrations which attracted a large numbers. For example, in May 1965, one anti-war demonstration drew 500,000 people where '[i]n the streets of Saigon, as far as the eye could see, was an ocean of people with banners demanding "a constitutional government" in which the war cabinet would be replaced with a "peace cabinet."'[186] It was said that Tri Quang alone could mobilize 2,000 protesters on the streets in half an hour.[187] The Buddhist movement also included actions which required greater personal sacrifice such as fasting, a method used by Gandhi and a religious practice of self-purification. Sometimes the fasts were carried out by an individual, other times collectively by thousands but usually the Buddhists fasted 'as a prayer to purify [their] hearts, consolidate [their] will, and arouse awareness and compassion in others.'[188] Hunger strikes were a key method used in 1963 as well as in 1966 when a hundred monks and nuns went on a fast. Tri Quang famously fasted for 100 days after the Struggle Movement was brutally suppressed in June 1966 calling for those detained during the crackdown to be released. This fast started as an indefinite hunger strike but Tri Quang was ordered to stop mid way by the Supreme Patriarch of the UBC.[189]

As discussed above, during the showdown in 1966, thousands of family altars—the most precious object in Vietnamese homes—were placed onto the streets in the way of tanks and troops under the direction of Tri Quang.[190] It represented an innovative method of nonviolent protest where the spiritual tradition of Vietnam was pitted against the regime's military might.[191] Topmiller says that in placing a family altar in the way of an approaching tank, 'one symbolically placed one's ancestors, the embodiment of the family before the tank. In other words, one risked everything.'[192] Nhat Hanh describes this protest as 'an act of love' where the Vietnamese used 'their most potent spiritual force to directly confront the violence.'

The campaign for peace in South Vietnam also involved various means of nonviolent non-cooperation, such as boycotts, labour strikes, and resignations. Business owners turned in their licenses, draftees refused to fight, and university professors and government employees resigned.[193] A prominent resignation which took place under the Diem regime was that of Foreign Minister Vu Van Mau who quit his post in 1963 and shaved his head to protest the government's repression.[194] The Buddhists and other activists of the Struggle Movement braved imprisonment *en masse*: approximately 5,000 Buddhist monks, nuns, lay leaders and students were arrested after the 1966 uprising in Hue and Danang alone, and in 1968 it is said that at

---

[185] Nhat Hanh (1993) *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change.* Berkeley: Parallax, 45.
[186] Forest, op.cit., 6.
[187] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 356.
[188] Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 41.
[189] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 350; Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 86.
[190] Forest, op.cit., 7; Ibid, 346.
[191] Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 40-41.
[192] Topmiller (2002), op. cit., 131-132. Nhat Hanh describes this protest as 'an act of love' where the Vietnamese used 'their most potent spiritual force to directly confront the violence.' See Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 40-41.
[193] Nhat Hanh (1993), ibid, 46.
[194] Ibid.

least 20,000 non-NLF political prisoners were detained in South Vietnam.[195] In June 1966, 3,000 students who possessed weapons decided to lay down their arms instead of joining the guerrillas and opted to go to prison. Pham Van Minh comments that this 'new breed of young intelligentsia was not timid in their reactions to social injustice…They lined up to go to jail as if they were going to picnics!'[196] By 1966, the Buddhist movement had turned well and truly into a people's movement, supported practically by all the residents of Hue, Danang, and Saigon, including many Catholics and those who were supposed to be on the side of the regime such as the local police force, soldiers and even commander generals.[197] It was in recognition of the immense popular support for the 'Third Force' that General Khanh and later Quat showed willingness to negotiate with the Buddhist leaders—though any such move was inevitably interceded by the USA.

PEACE ACTIVITIES OF NHAT HANH AND THE SYSS

The Struggle Movement harnessed anti-war literature and the arts in its protests and produced numerous peace publications, most of which were printed and distributed through an underground press and network. Nhat Hanh together with Thanh Tue and Tu Man founded the La Boi Press, which was to become one of the main underground publishing houses during the war.[198] Pham Van Minh says that Nhat Hanh was 'undoubtedly the leader of anti-war artists who both overtly and covertly challenged government censorship simply [by] ignoring the publishing regulations.'[199] Nhat Hanh authored numerous anti-war works of poetry and prose, including *Let Us Pray so the White Dove Will be with Us* and *Vietnam: Lotus in the Sea of Fire*, *Don't Forget Those Who Suffer*, *Dialogue: the Key to Peace in Vietnam*, which sold thousands, even hundreds of thousands of copies.[200] Other popular works of anti-war literature were *Look Back at Your Homeland* and *Only Death Allows You to Speak Out*.[201] Nhat Hanh's poetry inspired famous Vietnamese musicians such as Trinh Cong Son and Pham Duy to compose anti-war music,[202] and in a number of songs his words were used in the song's lyrics, such as 'Our Enemy is Not Man' which was heard playing on every street corner:[203]

> Our enemy is not man.
> If we kill men, with whom shall we live?
> Our enemy wears the colors of an ideology.
> Our enemy wears the label of liberty.
> Our enemy carries a fancy appearance.
> Our enemy carries a big basket full of words.[204]

Other poems by Nhat Hanh poignantly captured the suffering of the people in the villages, where the ravages wrought by war and natural disasters were most

[195] This was a figure mentioned by Nhat Hanh in his address to an audience at Montana University in 1968. See Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 355.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid, 356.
[198] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 72-73.
[199] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 249.
[200] Ibid, 251 & 261; Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 41; Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 73.
[201] Nhat Hanh (1993), ibid.
[202] Pham Van Minh (2001), ibid, 251.
[203] ibid, 250-251.
[204] Quoted in ibid.

conspicuous. Below is an excerpt from a poem he wrote after working with victims of flood and war in a 1964 relief operation in Quang Nam province:

> During the month after the flood,
> the young man received only two pounds of rice
> from the emergency aid.
> Tonight he is eating areca tops and rotten corn.
> and he is one of so many children,
> jaundiced, with bloated faces.
>
> He had dysentery for a week
> with no medicine
> and no hope.
>
> The flood carried off
> his father,
> his mother,
> and his brother.
> This innocent child's brow
> wears no mourning band.
>
> But from the scorched and gutted fields,
> a sickly ray of sun
> comes to envelop my soul
> in its ghoulish sheet.
>
> …
> The villager looks me over.
> Agonized yet fearless,
> he answers,
> 'I hate both sides.
> I follow neither.
> I only want to go
> where they will let me live.'
> Oh life! What misery! [205]

Poems such as this conveyed the reality of village life to the cities, informing the city-dwellers of the unspeakable suffering that swept across the country. Anti-war art and literature served as powerful methods to urge yet more people to join in the struggle for peace.[206]

Aside from his contributions to anti-war literature, Nhat Hanh played a pivotal role in other important areas of the Buddhist movement, one of which was an effort to build institutions of 'engaged Buddhism' where Buddhism could be made relevant and responsive to the needs of the country. This effort took expression in his projects to establish Van Hanh University and the School of Youth for Social Service (SYSS). When Nhat Hanh returned home in December 1963 from his graduate studies in the USA to assist the Buddhist movement, foremost in his mind was to help build a higher learning institute of Buddhist studies 'to train the country's leaders to practice the tolerant open-minded spirit taught by the Buddha and sorely needed by the nation' and to develop a 'center for training social workers help bring about nonviolent social change based on the Buddha's teachings.' [207] Much like Gandhi's constructive programme, Nhat Hanh saw social work and rural development as ways by which Buddhists could find sources of personal and social transformation beyond traditional

[205] Nhat Hanh (1999) "Experience" in *Call Me By My True Names: The Collected Poems of Thich Nhat Hanh*. Berkeley, California: Parallax, 10-14
[206] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 247.
[207] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 48-49.

ideas of charity.[208] Upon presenting both ideas to the UBC, initially Nhat Hanh only received permission to establish the Buddhist higher learning institute and the UBC cited limited funding prospects as reason for refusing to support the centre for social workers.[209]

Nhat Hanh almost single-handedly established the Buddhist institute of higher learning, later renamed Van Hanh University, by raising funds from a network of friends and acquaintances and by enlisting student volunteers for the project.[210] With all the support received, the programme was underway in just 14 months under two faculties: one in Buddhist studies and the other in Humanities.[211] It was the first Buddhist university in Vietnam to be organized according to Western lines,[212] and soon became the most prestigious private university in the country.[213] Nhat Hanh invited well-known Buddhist scholars to teach as well as take up posts in the university administration, assigning himself only 'a humble position in the publication section', which according to Pham Van Minh, was 'most suitable for such a creative and thoughtful person.'[214] However, it appears that a rivalry developed between Minh Chau—who had been invited to be Vice Chancellor—and Nhat Hanh. When Nhat Hanh went on a peace tour in 1966 Minh Chau declared him to be *persona non grata* at the campus, stating in a press release that Nhat Hanh had 'no responsibilities whatsoever in connection with this university.'[215] Under the direction of Minh Chau, who became Chancellor, Van Hanh University developed into a neutral institute of higher learning detached from social engagement.[216] Pham Van Minh remarks, 'It was no longer a grassroots learning centre as Nhat Hanh originally desired it to be.'[217]

Even though Nhat Hanh did not initially receive permission to establish the centre for training social workers, this initiative began unofficially through student groups called Village of Love (*Lang Tinh Thuong*) which were led by young progressive monks.[218] The membership of these groups consisted of several hundred university students, who began to show some positive results in rural development in areas of agriculture, economics, education, and public health.[219] A year after they started, the UBC gave official recognition to the initiative, which was renamed the School of Youth for Social Service (SYSS) and placed institutionally under Van Hanh University in September 1965.[220] Nhat Hanh described the aim of the SYSS as follows:

> The desire of the Buddhists to reconstruct their country from the grass-roots up is materializing through the establishment in Saigon of a community development school whose aims are to train rural development cadres and to mobilize the latent resources of Buddhism to carry out the task of developing the rural areas. This is the self-appointed

[208] Ibid, 50.
[209] Ibid.
[210] Ibid, 51; Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 228.
[211] Pham Van Minh (2001), ibid, 228; Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 57; Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), ibid, 51.
[212] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 57.
[213] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 228
[214] Ibid. Also see Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 51.
[215] Pham Van Minh (2001), ibid, 349.
[216] Ibid, 351. It appears that one of the main reasons why Minh Chau wished to sever ties with Nhat Hanh was that the former had developed close ties with the Asia Foundation, which provided significant funding to the university. Nhat Hanh's peace activities in Vietnam and abroad were thought strain the relations with the Asia Foundations. Ibid, 229-230.
[217] Ibid, 351.
[218] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969) *Voice from the Burning House*. New York: Fellowship Publications, 4.
[219] Ibid.
[220] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 51.

> task of the School of Youth for Social Service of Van Hanh University. This institution aims to train young people who are willing to work for the improvement and development of the rural areas. It maintains that democracy has its chance only in fairly developed societies. In the case of Vietnam, industrialization depends largely on rural development. The programmes of the school are not mere relief operations but are aimed at radically rebuilding the rural communities. For a long time there has existed a very wide gap between the Vietnamese rural population and the intellectuals…One of the objectives of the School of Youth for Social Service is to raise up a new generation of youth who can mix with the villagers, befriend them and use their rural development skills to guide the villagers in co-operative community development projects.[221]

In this description, Nhat Hanh's ideals for engaged Buddhism are laid bare: it is a Buddhism that would energize a grassroots movement for social improvement that simultaneously provides a source of inner spiritual development for the actors involved as much as it would assist in the outer development of impoverished villages. To ensure its character as a grassroots movement, one of the principles of the SYSS was that they would only work with contributions from the people.[222] By the time the SYSS was formally inaugurated in September 1965, they had already secured financial support from 2,000 families in monthly contributions.[223]

The SYSS began their activities with momentum and enthusiasm. True to their ideals, the student activists built strong relations with rural communities, gaining the villagers' trust through sincere and continuous efforts. Cao Ngoc Phuong recounts her early experiences working in the villages:

> Although the villages are just a few kilometres from Saigon, life there seemed centuries behind. Every week people died from preventable diseases. There were no toilets, no knowledge of science or hygiene, and the defecation of the sick quickly spread bacteria to others. Our goal was to train young people to help peasants establish schools and medical centers, improve sanitation, and develop agriculture and horticulture...We had met already with the official in Saigon responsible for that district, and he had told us that it would not be possible for the government to build a schoolhouse for just seventy-seven children; the minimum number needed to receive government funding was 200. So we held a meeting with the villagers and began by saying, 'You cannot read or write. Your children are also illiterate, and now your grandchildren have no school. We must do something about it. The government will not build you a school, so let us build one together.' To our great happiness, they agreed. One old man donated 2,000 palm leaves for the roof, another gave some bamboo thicket, and many others offered their labor. In a few weeks, we completed the first school in Thao Diên Village![224]

The SYSS was headed by a young 24-year-old monk called Thanh Van, but Cao Ngoc Phuong (Chan Khong), an energetic and resourceful female lecturer in Botany and a trusted associate of Nhat Hanh, assumed responsibility in most areas of the school's activity and was regarded as a kind of 'commander-in-chief'.[225] She was also the President of the Student Union at Van Hanh University.

The members of the SYSS endured numerous ordeals in the course of their work. The SYSS students paid a high cost for their peace work. For example, when Phu Loc hamlet, where the students were working, was hit by grenades, the second attack wounded 12 female students.[226] In Thu Duc, eight students were kidnapped and never

[221] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 58-59.
[222] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969), op.cit., 4.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 53.
[225] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 72; Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969), op.cit., 5.
[226] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969), ibid, 5.

to be heard from again.[227] Four students were killed in Binh Phuoc province, and a further two were killed when a hand grenade that was thrown into one of the SYSS dormitories.[228] Further, SYSS's rural development work was often stalled or undermined due to ravages of war. For example, their efforts to build schools or clinics were swiftly undone by bombs and grenades, and the defoliants used by the Americans frequently ruined the peasants' crops leaving them with nothing.[229] By 1966, after working for two years in war-torn villages, the SYSS came to the conclusion that their most immediate task had to be in working for peace and seeking relief for the war victims.[230]

In March 1966, Minh Chau, now Chancellor of the university, issued a statement to dissolve the student union and the university's legal association with the SYSS, even sending copies of the statement to the police.[231] His professed reason was that Cao Ngoc Phuong was a communist and that he needed to keep the university an apolitical institution. Foremost in his mind was no doubt maintaining his close relationship with the Asia Foundation (then a cultural arm of the CIA) which provided significant funding to the university, and it appears he was concerned that Nhat Hanh's peace activities abroad as well as the work of the SYSS would risk Asia Foundation's patronage.[232] As Cao Ngoc Phuong reflects:

> Thây Minh Chau often said that we should not mix up education with political work. But how could we educate young people to respect life while ignoring the killing of human beings? How could we teach the non-fear of Avalokitesvara in the Lotus Sutra if we ourselves were too afraid to use the word 'peace'? I told my fellow students that there were two kinds of politics: partisan politics to gain power and fame for ourselves, and the politics of reconciliation to bring peace and happiness to the country. We should avoid the former, but how could we ignore the poor soldiers who had been drafted into the army to kill or be killed? Even at the risk of arrest or torture, we had to work for peace…In my meditations, I came to understand that Thây Minh Chau's motivation was fear of losing the university, and I was able to accept him.[233]

Her words suggests a fundamental dilemma that confronts socially engaged religious practitioners who wish to act upon their social conscience while avoid being coopted into partisan or power politics. It is a fine line that the Buddhist activists like Cao Ngoc Phuong and Nhat Hanh carefully defined and defended.

By spring of 1966, Nhat Hanh understood the real nature of the war in Vietnam and decided to accept invitations to go on speaking tours in the USA 'where he felt that so many roots of war were.'[234] In Washington, on 1 June 1966, Nhat Hanh presented a five-point peace proposal at a press conference:

1. A cessation of the bombing to the north and south.
2. Limitation of all military operations by U.S. and South Vietnamese forces to defensive actions: in effect, a cease-fire if the Vietcong respond in kind.
3. A convincing demonstration of the U.S. intention to withdraw its forces from Vietnam over a specified period of months, with withdrawal actually beginning to take place as a sign of sincerity.

---

[227] Ibid.
[228] Pham Van Minh, op.cit., 352.
[229] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969), ibid, 5.
[230] Ibid.
[231] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 89.
[232] Pham Van Minh, op.cit., 229-230.
[233] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 89. Cao Ngoc Phuong also explains that by 1966, the word 'peace' had become equated with communism (73).
[234] Ibid, 87.

4. A clear statement by the U.S. of its desire to help the Vietnamese people to have a government truly responsive to Vietnamese aspirations, and concrete U.S. actions to implement this statement, such as a refusal to support one group over another.
5. A generous effort to help rebuild, in light of the destruction that has been wreaked upon Vietnam, such aid to be completely free of ideological and political strings and therefore not viewed as an affront to Vietnamese independence.[235]

Nhat Hanh's trip to America, which was initially planned as a three-week trip, extended to three months, and he travelled across the USA as well as to Western Europe where almost every country invited him to share the experiences of the Vietnamese people.[236] In the US, Nhat Hanh was interviewed numerous times by television, radio and the press. He met with a range of prominent leaders from the religious community and the world of literature and arts, as well as high officials from the United Nations and the US Congress.[237] Nhat Hanh met with Martin Luther King Jr., Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, as well as Pope Paul VI in Rome. King, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, nominated Nhat Hanh for the same award in 1966.[238] Despite the positive reception Nhat Hanh received abroad, he was not granted an audience with President Johnson, who asked William Bundy to meet him instead; and as it happened, Bundy designated a lesser official to meet Nhat Hanh on his behalf.[239] Despite Nhat Hanh's proposal for peace, two weeks later the US government provided tanks, ammunition and logistical support to Ky's troops for the suppression of the Struggle Movement in Danang and Hue.[240]

When formal peace negotiations began in Paris in June 1969, the UBC established the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation, appointing Nhat Hanh to head the delegation.[241] The delegation was only able to achieve a fragment of their goals: namely the release of Thien Minh, a prominent member of the UBC.[242] Nevertheless, the Paris Peace Accords, which were signed in January 1973, ended direct American military intervention and led to the withdrawal of the USA from the Vietnamese conflict. It also led to a temporary cease-fire between North and South Vietnam but the accord's provisions were routinely flouted by both sides, and ultimately North Vietnam expanded its military control. Two years after the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, Saigon fell to the North and Vietnam was re-unified under a Communist government.

CULTIVATING EMOTIONS FOR NONVIOLENCE

In recent decades, scholars have come to recognize the importance of emotions in social movements and collective action. Social movements are motivated not only by cognitive understandings and moral visions but are fuelled by emotions.[243] Sometimes individuals joining a movement may already harbour certain types of sentiments; yet

---

[235] Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 55.
[236] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 254.
[237] Ibid.
[238] Gustav Niebuhr (1999) "A Monk in Exile Dreams of Return to Vietnam" *The New York Times*, 16 October 1999: http://www.nytimes.com/1999/10/16/us/a-monk-in-exile-dreams-of-return-to-vietnam.html?pagewanted=all (accessed 5 January 2015)
[239] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 254-255.
[240] Ibid, 262.
[241] For a list of the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation's demands, see Forest, op.cit., 9.
[242] Ibid, 10. Note that after the Paris Peace Accords were signed Nhat Hanh was denied permission to return to Vietnam and went into exile in France.
[243] James M. Jasper (1998). "The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions in and around Social Movements", *Sociological Forum*, 13(3), 397-398.

very often emotions are formed or reinforced through collective action itself.[244] This was certainly true of the Vietnamese Buddhist movement, which sought to bring the attitudes of its members in line with the principle of nonviolence. In the terminology of Hochschild, these efforts of the Buddhists might be described as advanced forms of 'emotion work', the act of 'trying to change in degree or quality an emotion or feeling.'[245]

Nurturing and reinforcing the right types of emotion in a resistance movement have long occupied practitioners of nonviolence. As discussed already, Gandhi equated nonviolence with altruistic love, asserting that satyagrahis must show love towards their opponent. Richard Gregg, who studied the Indian satyagraha, argues that, because of the way in which violence uses emotional energy, nonviolence is far more efficient:

> Anger, hatred, and fear make an enormous drain upon our energy. Hatred eats up our energies and our imagination…A victory by violence means humiliation for the conquered. He has had to admit the winner's superiority for the moment, but he vows vengeance…Retaliation provokes counter-retaliation. The original evil or damage is vastly multiplied and absorbs an enormous amount of time and energy diverted from useful occupations. This wider and slower-acting effect of revenge and resentment is usually overlooked or minimized by apologists for war and physical force…Rarely does a peace settlement bring full satisfaction, forgiveness and solution of the entire original conflict, so that both parties feel thoroughly happy and ready to go ahead without suspicion or resentment. Anger is thus inefficient in both methods and results. The peaceful resister has to expand much energy, but he applies it more intelligently than does the violent man. He selects the really important forces in the environment and seeks to alter them.[246]

Nhat Hanh similarly asserted that anger, hatred and fear are not suitable sources of emotions for nonviolent action, which in his view must be nurtured by more constructive energies:

> The usual way to generate force is to create anger, desire and fear in people. Hatred, desire and fear are sources of energy. But a non-violent struggle cannot use these dangerous sources of energy for they destroy both those people taking part in the struggle and the aims of the struggle itself. They are destructive forces because they are blind forces. Nonviolent struggle must be nurtured by love and compassion. Love and compassion spring from the awareness of existing sufferings. Love is a force, but not a blind force, because love is altruistic.[247]

It is evident that certain sentiments such as love, compassion, and forgiveness are more fitting for a nonviolent movement, and yet these feelings did not always come easily for the Vietnamese Buddhist activists. The placement of power in a situation of oppression naturally gives rise to emotions like fear, resentment and hatred;[248] and indeed these emotions might well have been overwhelming if not for the extensive 'emotion work' the Buddhists undertook in the form of meditation, introspection, and

---

[244] Ibid, 397.

[245] Arlie Hochschild (1979) "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules, and Social Structure", *American Journal of Sociology* 85, 561. Hochschild identifies two broad types of emotion work: evocation and suppression. It would probably be more accurate, however, to say that the Buddhists sought to 'manage' hate rather than 'suppress it'.

[246] See Richard Gregg (1960) "Utilizing Emotional Energy", *The Power of Nonviolence*. London: James Clark & Co, 60-63;

[247] Nhat Hanh (1969), op. cit., 7.

[248] See Theodore Kemper (2001) "A Structural Approach to Social Movement Emotions" in Jeff Goodwin, James Jasper and Francesca Polletta (eds) *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 58-73.

mindfulness. For example, Pham Van Minh refers to an incident where a young monk was spat upon his head by a GI during a peaceful street demonstration.[249] Since one's head is considered a sacred part of the body in Vietnamese culture, this monk was furious and contemplated abandoning his nonviolent principles to join the NLF so that he could avenge his humiliation. It is said that only after a long discussion with Nhat Hanh was this monk persuaded not to disrobe and let his anger go.[250]

The members of the SYSS also engaged in extensive emotion work to overcome their feelings of anger and hatred. Cao Ngoc Phuong recalls the time when she worked in Tra Loc village:

> Tra Loc, a newly developed village in Quang Tri, for instance was bombed, and the SYSS workers who lived there reported that there was an extremely high level of hatred, suspicion, and fear among the people. So they decided to remain in the village and help the peasants rebuild each house, sharing their difficulties and concerns. In this way, they regained the trust and faith of the local people, and then they also helped them rebuild a day-care center, a school, a medical center, and an agricultural cooperative. Then the bombs came again, destroying all their efforts. Fear, hatred, and despair were widespread. After several weeks, our friends gathered their courage and helped the villagers rebuild their houses, schools, and medical center again. Then another bombing reduced all their loving efforts to ash. After the fourth bombardment, it was hard for them to maintain their serenity. *Everyone felt like picking up a gun and fighting. But by practicing meditation, looking deeply, they could see that using guns would only make things worse, so they did the work of rebuilding yet again in order to demonstrate their support, love, and care for those who suffered so intensely.*[251]

As discussed above, two SYSS students were killed in a grenade attack on their dormitories, which was clearly a tragedy that could evoke strong emotions of anger and hate among the SYSS members.[252] Yet on this occasion too, the SYSS showed an incredible restraint and their eulogy for the two students who were killed was as follows:

> We cannot hate you, you who have thrown grenades and killed our friends, because we know that men are not our enemies. Our only enemies are the misunderstanding, hatred, jealousy and ignorance that lead to such acts of violence….Social change must start in our hearts with the will to transform our own egotism, greed, and lust into understanding, love, commitment and sharing responsibility...[253]

The notion that one's true enemies are human failings rather than the humans themselves (similar to Gandhi's principle of separating the actor from the act) takes full expression in many of Nhat Hanh's poems,[254] as well as in his play, 'The Path of Return Continues the Journey' written in 1967.[255] The play tells a story of the afterlife journeys of Nhat Chi Mai and other real-life characters who were killed that year. Throughout the dialogue there is an emphasis on love and forgiveness,[256] though

---

[249] Pham Van Minh, op.cit., 243.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op. cit., 88 (my italics).
[252] Pham Van Minh, op.cit., 241.
[253] Cited in Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op. cit., 93. This eulogy was written in 1967.
[254] See Nhat Hanh (1968) *The Cry for Vietnam*. California: Unicorn Press; Nhat Hanh (1972) *Viet Nam Poems*. Nhat Hanh and Helen Coutant (trans). Santa Barbara: Unicorn. See in particular, his poems "Resolution", "Condemnation" and "Recommendation".
[255] Nhat Hanh (1993) "The Path of Return Continues the Journey" printed in *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change*, op. cit.
[256] Illustrated in such lines as: "We dead do not think at all about vengeance. We just feel compassion for the living, even for those who killed us" or "We died for tolerance and love, not for more hate and

perhaps the most striking feature of the play is the degree to which empathy and understanding is displayed towards their killers:

> Hy: I had the feeling they were not experienced at the business of killing. They had to kill us, but I could feel their reluctance.
> Tho: They obviously had orders from someone…On the way to the river, we had to jump over two ditches…Dinh fell and they helped him up...While we were walking, they talked to us in a very friendly way.
> Lanh: The men who abducted the three of us behaved the same way. They were very gentle. They let us stop and rest a couple of times…When Tho crawled under barbed wire and cut himself, one man touched his forehead and asked about it, as a brother would. Another even patted me on the shoulder.
> Hy: And then they killed us.
> Mai: What a pity! Men are such pitiful creatures![257]

Of course, in reality, one cannot say how these same characters would have felt towards their killers or how their killers had acted towards them. Yet, the play serves as an influential vehicle to propound the sentiments necessary for nonviolent discipline and encourage fellow Buddhists to undertake emotion work to develop understanding towards their repressors.

While some Buddhists admitted that they found it difficult to practice love towards their repressors,[258] the letters of the self-immolators generally show a refusal to engage in vilification and dehumanisation of their adversaries even in the most trying of circumstances.[259] It was commonly known amongst the Buddhists that the Supreme Patriarch of the UBC, Tinh Khiet, used to say when he was killed he wanted the Buddhists to pray for his killers.[260] The Buddhists certainly made extraordinary efforts to develop an understanding for their repressors based on principles of love and compassion. Arguably, it is in this regard that the achievements of the Vietnamese nonviolent struggle should be appraised beyond the movement's political outcomes:

> Despite the results…I cannot say that our struggle was a failure…the success of a nonviolent struggle can be measured only in terms of the love and nonviolence attained, not whether a political victory was achieved. In our struggle in Vietnam, we did our best to remain true to our principles. We never lost sight that the essence of our struggle was love itself, and that was a real contribution to humanity.[261]

---

destruction" or "They [fellow Buddhists] have refused and will always refuse to choose the road of violence." Ibid, pp17-22.

[257] Ibid, 19-20.

[258] For example, Cao Ngoc Phuong confessed that "sometimes I find it very difficult not to hate" (quoted in Hope and Young, op. cit., p213), and the immolator Duc Phong admitted that he found in himself, "a hidden spite…towards those who commit misdeeds and cruelty to the tradition and morals of the Vietnamese." (Appendix 6). In her letter to the US government, Nhat Chi Mai wrote: "Do you realise that most of us Vietnamese feel in the bottom of our heart this hatred towards those Americans who have brought the suffering of the war on our country?" quoted in Hassler (1970), op.cit., 203. Also see the letters and poems of Nhat Chi Mai dated May 1967 (Appendix 4). These statements display obvious difficulties of practising the ideal of loving one's enemy.

[259] For example, Thanh Quang, the first immolator in 1966, asked the American president, the Congress and people of the USA to "prove their clear-sightedness and understanding and be our ally forever." (Quoted in Schecter, op. cit., p233). Quang Duc in 1963 similarly requested President Diem to be "kind and tolerant towards his people and enforce the policies of religious equality, so that he may maintain lasting stability in the country." (Appendix 1).

[260] Semi-structured interview with Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, 18 September 2003. In stark contrast, apparently Diem would say that when he is killed, he wants his men to take revenge upon his killers.

[261] Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 47.

These words of Nhat Hanh capture the fundamental difference between a purely political movement and one that is motivated by the ideals of religion. Ultimately, the value of social action for the Buddhist activists lay not solely in the external results, but in the actualization of spiritual teachings which cannot be evaluated by more secular measures.

BRIDGING THE RELIGIOUS DIVIDE

To a great extent the nationalism of the Vietnamese Buddhists was renewed by the experience of colonialism under the French, who had shown disdain to the traditions of Vietnam and actively promoted conversions to Catholicism. Yet the Buddhist movement also made efforts to clarify that they did not wish to enter into a religious war with the Catholics. For example, Nhat Chi Mai, who immolated herself in May 1967, sought to bridge religious divides through her sacrifice by praying for 'the human race…to inherit Buddha's Compassion, Jesus' Love and the legacy of man's humaneness.'[262] She placed a statue of the Virgin Mary in front of her alongside a statue of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Quan Yin)[263] when she set herself on fire.[264] Responding to Nhat Chi Mai's prayer for interfaith cooperation, Tri Quang and others at the Buddhist Institute, who were previously sceptical about working with the Catholics, sought more opportunities to do so from then on, and Father Nguyen Ngoc Lan, a progressive Catholic, was asked to write the preface to Mai's letters.[265] Members of the Buddhist movement and the SYSS also turned Christian holidays such as Christmas into a day of peace activism. On Christmas Day of 1968, a silent torchlight service 'dedicated to Mary, Mother of Peace' drew 800 participants, of which over 100 students were arrested.[266]

Such references to Christian symbols and traditions by the Buddhists demonstrated not only their tolerant religious stance but also their desire to uphold Vietnamese unity above all. In a strategic sense, such appeals also allowed the Buddhists to gain the support of a wider audience—including the Catholics in Vietnam and Christians in the West. In the vocabulary of social movement scholars, these interfaith references may be understood as efforts to align the interpretive 'frames'[267] of the Buddhist and Christian populations. Despite the tendency of the Catholic population to live in isolation from the rest of Vietnamese society, Nhat

---

[262] See Appendix 4.

[263] Kwan Yin, which is the Chinese appellation for Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (the name in Sanskrit), is known as a goddess of compassion.

[264] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1988) "Days and Months" in Fred Eppsteiner (ed.) *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism*. Berkeley: Parallax, 155-169; Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 103.

[265] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), ibid, 104.

[266] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969), op.cit., 5.

[267] "Frame alignment" is a term coined by Snow et al to mean the linking of the individual's and social movement's interpretive frameworks. The concept of the "frame" is borrowed from Goffman, and elaborated upon by Snow and Benford to denote "an interpretive schemata that simplifies and condenses the 'world out there' by selectively punctuating and encoding objects, situations, events, experiences and sequences of actions within one's present or past environments." See David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Jr., Steven K. Worden, Robert D. Benford (1986) "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilisation and Movement Participation", *American Sociological Review* 51, August, 467; David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford (1992) "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest", in Aldon D. Morris and Carol M. Mueller (eds.) *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 137. Also see Erving Goffman (1974) *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organisational Experience.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Hanh pointed out to his fellow compatriots that there were progressive and patriotic Catholics who sought to adapt their faith to the socio-cultural milieu of Vietnam and who proved that Catholics were equally ready as the others to fight against foreign domination and domestic dictatorship.[268] He asserted that their example alone 'can dissipate the mistaken impression of many Vietnamese to the effect that Vietnamese Roman Catholics live and depend on foreign political influence and do not stand in the ranks of the nation.'[269] When Nhat Hanh met Pope Paul VI in July 1966, he appealed to the Pope to call on Vietnamese Catholics to work with those of other faiths to oppose war and to 'give to the progressive Catholics the kind of support that they need as they follow out their legitimate mission in searching for peace.'[270]

Nhat Hanh, who served as a spokesman for the Buddhist movement abroad, took up the challenge of communicating the Vietnamese cause across cultural and political divides. Many in the West saw the self-immolations as 'suicide' and failed to see the acts as part of the nonviolent struggle in Vietnam. In order to explain the meaning of Vietnamese self-immolations to people in the West, Nhat Hanh compared the act to the crucifixion of Christ.[271] In his conversation with Daniel Berrigan, he remarked 'I would say that Jesus knew the things that were to happen to Him…Why did He allow Himself to be caught in that situation—to be judged, to be crucified, to die? I think he did so because of others.'[272] Berrigan, an American Catholic, appears to be in agreement:

> So He says, 'No one takes My life from me, but I give My life freely.' … Jesus' death, I think, in a very deep sense can be called self-immolation. I mean that He went consciously to death, choosing that death for the sake of others, reasonably and thoughtfully.[273]

Just as Gandhi reached out to the Muslim population in India during his movement, the Vietnamese Buddhists too sought to bridge religious and discursive worlds by refusing to give into inter-religious enmity and seeking common ground instead. Nhat Hanh and other Vietnamese Buddhists found a sympathetic reception among many Christians in the West. The American Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), an organization composed of many Christian pacifists, had in fact provided considerable support to Nhat Hanh during his speaking tours in the United States.[274] In the USA, there were even three cases of self-immolation committed by American Christians in opposition to the Vietnam War. These were carried out by Alice Herz, Norman Morrison, Roger LaPorte—the former two were Quakers and the latter, a Catholic.

---

[268] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 39.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 41.
[271] Nhat Hanh (1969), op.cit., 12.
[272] See Daniel Berrigan and Nhat Hanh (1975) *The Raft is Not the Shore: Conversations Toward a Buddhist-Christian Awareness*. Boston: Beacon Press, 65.
[273] Ibid, 66-67. Hebblethwaite also draws parallels between the Bodhisattva ideal and the identification of Christ with "the Suffering Servant"- the God-incarnate, who, entering into human suffering, took it upon himself to die on the cross, demonstrating his "costly reconciling love." See Brian Hebblethwaite (1976) *Evil, Suffering and Religion.* London: Sheldon Press, 39. There are, of course, many interpretations of Christ's crucifixion, but the meaning closest to that grasped by Nhat Hanh and Berrigan seems to be the idea that "Christ came to be crucified to evoke in man's heart the sentiment of compassion…[for] it is the suffering that evokes the humanity of the human heart." Abelard paraphrased by Joseph Campbell in Joseph Campbell (1988) *The Power of Myth.* New York: Doubleday, 140.
[274] Forest, op.cit., 7.

All of them explicitly or indirectly referred to the Buddhists' self-immolations in Vietnam as their inspiration.[275]

The Meaning of Self-Immolation

The self-immolations, which were a key part of the Buddhist movement, are acts which present a dilemma for theorists and practitioners of nonviolence. This is because much of the literature on nonviolence not only provides descriptive illustrations and analyses of nonviolent action but is also imbued with a prescriptive, normative project to encourage such action. Theories on nonviolence are often studied by activists and presented at countless training sessions around the world. There is thus a strong alloy of 'what is' and 'what should be' within this body of literature, and self-immolation, does not sit well with this normative grain in nonviolence theory.

Self-immolation clearly presents complex problems for scholars and advocates of nonviolence. It raises a variety of questions such as whether self-immolation should be distinguished from 'suicide', whether it can be described as a 'nonviolent' act, and to what extent it sits comfortably within the ambit of 'nonviolence'. From a conventional viewpoint, any action that does not cause physical harm to others is 'nonviolent'. However, the appraisal of extreme acts of self-sacrifice is more complex from a religious perspective, which takes account of the intentionality of the actor. Below, I discuss the issues raised by self-immolation, examine the symbolism of this act, and analyse its moral status and implications for nonviolence theory.

QUESTIONS RAISED BY SELF-IMMOLATION

Quang Duc's self-immolation and the 30 or so self-immolations that followed his from 1963 to 1970 were controversial and opinions abound as to the nature of the act.[276] At one pole of the spectrum is the view that the self-immolations were violent and desperate acts of tactical suicide. The US administration generally maintained this view;[277] while Ngo Dinh Nhu, the brother of the South Vietnamese President, went further to denounce the self-immolations as reflecting a 'conspiracy of premeditated murder'.[278] His wife, Madame Nhu asserted that the Buddhist agitation was an 'ignoble form of treason' which 'applied the most odious of Communist tactics while betraying the most sacred principles of Buddhism'.[279]

On the other end is the view that the self-immolations were nonviolent sacrifice performed out of care and love and in hope of appealing to compassionate sentiments within human beings, and hence consistent with Buddhist ethics. This interpretation is generally upheld by the Vietnamese Buddhists themselves and their supporters within Vietnam and abroad. For example, Tri Quang asserted that 'burning oneself to death

---

[275] Michael Biggs (2005) "Dying Without Killing: Self-Immolations 1963-2002" in Diego Gambetta (Ed) *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 173-208 at 181; King (2000), op.cit., 127-150.

[276] See Thien Hoa (1970), op.cit., 104-109. While 31 self-immolations are reported in total from 1963-1970 in Thien Hoa's work, there is a possibility that some self-immolations may have gone unreported. Note that most of the self-immolations that followed Quang Duc's sacrifice appears not to have been institutionally endorsed like the self-immolation of Quang Duc. See Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 43; Biggs (2005), op.cit., 179-180.

[277] Skow and Dionisopoulos, op.cit., 414; Karnow, op.cit., 285; *The Pentagon Papers Vol.2,* op.cit., 227 & 230.

[278] Pham, op. cit., 200

[279] Schecter, op. cit., 196-7.

is the noblest form of struggle which symbolises the spirit of nonviolence of Buddhism…[for] the Vietnamese Buddhists have no other means to protest…than by sacrificing their lives.'[280] Nhat Hanh also defended the purity of intention behind the self-immolation acts in a letter addressed to Martin Luther King:

> To express will by burning oneself…is not to commit an act of destruction but to perform an act of construction, i.e. to suffer and to die for the sake of one's people. This is not suicide. Suicide is an act of self-destruction, having as causes the following: (1) lack of courage to live and to cope with difficulties; (2) defeat by life and loss of all hope; (3) desires for non-existence (*abhaya*). This self-destruction is considered by Buddhism as one of the most serious crimes. The monk who burns himself has lost neither courage nor hope; nor does he desire non-existence. On the contrary…the monk believes he is practicing the doctrine of highest compassion by sacrificing himself in order to call attention of, and to seek help from, the people of the world.[281]

Thus, by characterising the Buddhist sacrifices as manifestations of love or compassion, it is argued that the self-immolations were in fact an expression of nonviolence, rather than violence, and hence compatible with Buddhist beliefs.

To an observer uninstructed in Vietnamese Buddhism, self-immolation may seem, prima facie, a form of suicide, which some may describe as an act of 'violence' towards the self. However, the general acceptance of Gandhian fasts-unto-death as a legitimate nonviolent method poses a tricky question for a theorist of nonviolence: where then should the demarcating line between 'violence' and 'nonviolence' be drawn? Clearly, neither the self-induced nature of the sacrifice, nor its anticipated fatality, can be said to be a sufficient determinant. The difference is but a matter of degree and any conclusion as to where the line should be drawn would be inescapably discretionary. In a slightly different vein, the issue of euthanasia also illustrates this difficulty, as Gandhi's conclusion below reveals:

> Nonviolence sometimes calls upon one to put *an end to the life* of a living being. For instance, a calf in the Ashram dairy was lame and had developed terrible sores; it could not eat and breathed with difficulty. After three days' argument with myself and my co-workers I had poison injected into its body and thus put an end to its life. That action was non-violent, because it was wholly unselfish inasmuch as the sole purpose was to achieve the calf's relief from pain.[282]

The violence/nonviolence dilemma regarding the Vietnamese Buddhists' self-immolations thus touches on an important chord of tension within nonviolence theory. The tension pertains to the very conceptual integrity of nonviolence. I shall return to this question later in the chapter, but first, the symbolic meaning and impact of the self-immolations in Vietnam will be considered.

SELF-IMMOLATION AS A SYMBOLIC ACT

Self-immolation is a symbolic act. According to Ricoeur, symbols, whether word or image, are first signs, and a sign becomes a symbol when its 'direct, primary literal meaning designates, in addition, another meaning which is indirect, secondary and

---

[280]Quoted in Schecter, op. cit., 234; Robert Topmiller (1999) "Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc", in Quang Duc Buddhist Webiste: Nguyen Tang, http://www.quangduc.net/English/vnbuddhism/013quangduc.html, Melbourne, Australia, accessed 17 May 2003.

[281] Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 118.

[282] Quoted in Naess, op. cit., 47.

figurative and which can only be apprehended through the first.'[283] Although there is no consensus as to a single definition of the symbol, it is usually noted that symbols are vague, open and multi-referent.[284] Eco contends that symbols are appreciated for their 'fruitful ineffectiveness to express a "final" meaning, so that with symbols…one indicates what is always *beyond* one's reach.'[285] Critical to the symbol is the process of interpretation; to be symbols the 'hidden meanings of signs must be uncovered and interpretation is the work that does this deciphering.'[286] It is the gap between the symbolic act and its meaning which gives rise to the varied interpretations and controversy surrounding the self-immolations.

Symbols are subject to different interpretations but this is not to say that they do not give rise to shared meanings. They do: in fact, it is their capacity to generate shared meanings that render them potent. Hence, integral to the symbolic structure is a degree of predictability governing the relationship between meaning and empirical object. According to Kane, what determines this predictability and 'screens and reduces' the possible meanings of the symbols is *discourse.*[287] Thus, discourse does not indicate merely speech and writing but rather, an all-pervasive articulated totality, wherein speech and writing are 'but internal components of discursive totalities.'[288] The meaning of the self-immolations for most Vietnamese was embedded in the dominant religious and nationalist discourses of the time. The conflicting interpretations of these acts, such as those between Western and Vietnamese observers, arose from a clash of discursive worlds.

Collective action scholars argue that 'moral shocks' are critical to the emergence of social movements. According to Jasper, these shocks occur 'when an unexpected piece of information or event raises such a sense of outrage in a person that s/he becomes inclined to political action.'[289] They do not arise only from external grievances, and movement organisers themselves endeavour to generate these shocks

---

[283] Paul Ricoeur (1974) *The Conflict of Interpretations.* Evanston: Northwest University Press, 12.

[284] Umberto Eco (1984) *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 130; James M. Jasper (1997) The *Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 160; Paul Ricoeur (1976) *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning.* Texas: Christian University Press, 45-47.

[285] Eco, ibid (his italics).

[286] Anne Kane (1997) "Theorising Meaning Construction in Social Movements: Symbolic Structures and Interpretation during the Irish Land War, 1879-1882", *Sociological Theory*, 15: 3, Nov, 257.

[287] Ibid, 257. The ambiguities surrounding the term "discourse" has often been noted. It is helpful to consider the three usages identified by van Dijk: 1) "Discourse" as referring to specific types of social domains of language use, such as when we say "medical discourse" or "political discourse"; 2) More concretely, "discourse" as referring to a single particular conversation or news report as in "a discourse on the front page…"; 3) More abstractly, discourse as referring to ideas or ideologies which are not limited to language use of communicative interaction, such as when we speak of the "discourse of liberalism." In my thesis, I combine the first and third usages. While I primarily speak of "religious" and "nationalist" discourses, I use these terms to denote not only the language use of the Vietnamese Buddhists but also their ideas and worldviews. See Teun A. van Dijk (1997) "The Study of Discourse", *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Approach.* London: SAGE Publications, 3-4.

[288] Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (1987) "Post-Marxism without Apologies," *New Left Review* 166, Nov/Dec: 79-106 at 82. It should be stressed that to claim there is no extra-discursive point of reference is not to deny an object's *existence* outside discourse, but rather, to say that no object can be articulated or made meaningful outside discourse (p85). Also see James Martin (2002) "The Political Logic of Discourse: a Neo-Gramscian view" *History of European Ideas* 28, 23.

[289] Jasper (1998), op.cit., 409. See also James M. Jasper and Jane D. Poulsen (1995) "Recruiting Strangers and Friends: Moral Shocks and Social Networks in Animal Rights and Anti-nuclear Protests" *Social Problems* 42: 493-512.

through rhetorical appeals.[290] Moral shocks involve both emotional and moral dynamics since strong emotions arise from 'perceived infractions of moral rules' which in turn motivate protest.[291]

Most effective moral shocks are those embodied in, and summed up by, powerful 'condensation symbols', which, according to Edward Sapir, strike deep roots in the unconscious and 'diffuse its emotional quality to types of behaviour or situations apparently far removed from the original meaning of the symbol'.[292] Self-immolation constituted precisely such a condensation symbol which gave Vietnamese people the necessary moral shock to rise to action. It was the religious tradition of Vietnam which provided the discursive structure that enabled and shaped the symbolic meaning of self-immolation.

The religious significance of self-immolation

Commenting on the 'intense emotional reaction' the self-immolations elicited, Fitzgerald says that it was 'as if the bonzes had touched a chord so profound that it lay beyond explanation.'[293] The first step to understanding this reaction, however, lies in uncovering the symbolism of the acts. As mentioned above, the relationship between meaning and the empirical act in the case of self-immolation was one that was mediated by the dominant religious discourse of Vietnam. In his unpublished memoirs, Tri Quang, the foremost leader of the Buddhist movement, writes:

> Self-immolation...could be used as a means to actualise the Bodhisattvas' Vows and is only allowed in two circumstances: when the Dharma is at risk of being destroyed and when self-immolation is an expression of compassion for the wretched.[294]

The self-immolations of the Vietnamese Buddhists, according to Tri Quang, are thus symbolically expressive of (1) the wish to protect Buddhism and (2) the practice of compassion towards the suffering. If one traces the history of self-immolation, however, there is also a third symbolic meaning: that of devotional offering to the Buddha carried out in a spirit of abnegation and renunciation. The chief Mahayana text which motivated devotional self-immolation was the Lotus Sutra.[295] The sutra contains a story of Medicine-King Bodhisattva (s. *Bhaisajyaraja*), who in one of his previous lives, having eaten incense and sweet-scented substances and drunken scented oil for 12 years, wrapped himself in divine clothes, bathed in perfumed oil,

---

[290] Jasper (1997), op.cit., 161. As Calhoune says, "[m]ovements produce emotions…[and] do not simply reflect emotional orientations brought to them by members." See Craig Calhoun (2001) "Putting Emotions in Their Place", in Jeff Goodwin, James Jasper and Francesca Polletta (eds.) *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 55.

[291] Jasper (1997), ibid, 110, 128-9.

[292] Quoted in ibid, 160. Also see Edward Sapir (1935) "Symbolism", *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* 14: 492-495. Sapir contrasts "condensation symbols" with "referential symbols" which have relatively straightforward meanings.

[293] Fitzgerald, op.cit., 131.

[294] Excerpt from Tri Quang's unpublished book translated by Pham Van Minh (Appendix 3).

[295] This sutra was written in the first century A.C.E. and otherwise known as Saddharma-pundarika-sutra. See Walpola Rahula (1978) *Zen and the Taming of the Bull: Towards the Definition of Buddhist Thought*, London: Gordon Fraser, 112. Yet, even before this, the commentary on the *Buddha-vamsa,* a Theravada Pali text also relates that the Bodhisattva Mangala paid homage to a monument of the Buddha by wrapping his body in cloth soaked in oil, setting fire to it and walking round the monument through the night without a hair burnt on his entire body. It is generally believed to be meritorious to light a lamp before a statue of the Buddha or a religious monument, and taking this idea further "a person in excess in devotion…might think it much more meritorious to light a part, or the whole, of his body as an offering" (111).

and set fire to himself as an offering to the Buddha and the Lotus Sutra. His body, according to the text, burned continuously for 12,000 years.[296] In India, where the text was written, Bhaisajyaraja's story in the Lotus Sutra was considered either to be theoretical speculation or allegory, but in China the section seems to have been taken literally, and, as mentioned in Chapter 2, it inspired a host of self-immolations from the late fourth century until the twentieth century.[297]

The record of self-immolation in Vietnam before Quang Duc is somewhat obscure: while Fitzgerald states that prior to 1963, self-immolation 'had no precedent in Vietnamese history'[298] Rahula says the first self-immolation in Vietnam occurred in the middle of the fifth century[299] and Thien An refers to a the monk named Trung Dinh, who burned himself in the eighteenth century to 'honour the Buddha-Dharma' when he realised his earthly life was a 'hindrance' to him after reaching enlightenment.[300] Although Trung Dinh's immolation would seem to be in line with the practice of devotional sacrifice, the self-immolations after 1963 clearly fell much more in the first and second categories outlined by Tri Quang above.[301]

An early demonstration of the first meaning of self-immolation took place in 1948, when a Chinese monk named Kuo-shun burned himself to protest the treatment of Buddhism by the Communists.[302] Interestingly, it was discovered that only his heart remained intact after his immolation and the case sets a mysterious precedent for Quang Duc who is also reported to have left his heart behind as a relic.[303] As for the second symbolic meaning, there is a tale in the *Jātaka* (which is even older than the Lotus Sutra) about a bodhisattva who, out of compassion, offers himself as food for a hungry tigress with seven cubs.[304] The tale is one that is often alluded to by Buddhists

---

[296] Ibid. Also see Erik Zurcher (1959) *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China.* Leiden: E. J. Brill, 282; Pham Van Minh (2002), op.cit., 394. In the same sutra, it says that if a person expecting Enlightenment burns a finger or a toe or some other part of the body as an offering before a monument of Buddha, it is more meritorious than offering a kingdom, wives and children or the whole world filled with seven kinds of jewels. It then concludes that to learn at least one verse of the Lotus Sutra is much more meritorious than all such gifts and offerings. In Rahula's view, "[t]his may be considered…an illustration to show that the realisation of Truth is far superior to any form of external offering." Rahula, ibid, p112. Note that there is some disparity in the years that the Medicine King Bodhisattva was said to have eaten and drank scented substances and burned. Cf. Moriz Winternitz (1983) *A History of Indian Literature: Buddhist literature and Jaina literature.* V. Srinivasa Sarma (trans), Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 291; Senchu Murano (trans) (1991) *The Lotus Sutra: The Sutra of the Lotus Flower of the Wonderful Dharma*. Daniel B. Montgomery (rev). Tokyo: Nichiren shū Shimbun, 301-304.

[297] Welch (1967), op.cit., 325-8; Rahula, op. cit., 112

[298] Fitzgerald, op. cit., 133.

[299] Rahula, op. cit., p110.

[300] Thien An (1975) *Buddhism and Zen in Vietnam in Relation to the Development of Buddhism in Asia.* Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 172-4. Trung Dinh, who arranged a ceremonial immolation for himself with the aid of a prince, left one finger unburned as a relic for the surrounding crowd, setting a Vietnamese precedent of leaving a relic behind after self-immolation (173).

[301] However, aspects of the third meaning are discernible in the letters of the self-immolators from 1963, in their references to notions of offering and abnegation, as well as in their belief that their sacrifices constitute a "virtuous deed" or a "meritorious act". See Appendices 1 and 8. There is no double a degree of overlap between the three meanings. For example, if one has devotion to the Buddha, then one would naturally want to protect Buddhism and if one follows the teachings of the Buddha closely and with devotion, then one would also be inclined to sacrifice oneself to alleviate the suffering of others.

[302] Welch, op. cit., 327.

[303] Ibid.

[304] For the full story, see John W. Bowker (1970) *Problems of Suffering in Religions of the World.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 263.

in their explanations of self-immolation in Vietnam,[305] and it serves to show that sacrificing oneself out of compassion is very much part of an established Buddhist discourse.

Burning patches on one's body was already an established practice in the ordination ceremony of the Mahayana tradition. As Nhat Hanh explains:

> During the ordination ceremony in some Buddhist traditions, the ordainee burns one or more very small spots on his body with moxa incense as he takes the 250 vows of a monk, promising to live a life devoted to helping living beings. If he were to say this while sitting comfortably in an armchair, it would not be the same. When uttered while kneeling before the community of elders and experiencing this kind of pain, his words express the full seriousness of his heart and mind.[306]

Thus, self-immolation also assumes some of the meaning of this Buddhist practice: the unspeakable pain experienced during the act is also intended to communicate 'tremendous determination, courage, and sincerity.'[307]

Self-immolation as a symbol of protest and remonstration brings about a powerful moral shock as it directly implicates those seeking to suppress Buddhism. The second meaning, which pertains to compassion for the suffering, also directs attention to the action of the repressors, for it raises questions about the *reasons why* the people might be suffering in the first place. The unspeakable pain of self-immolation serves to dramatise the pain of the Vietnamese populace, and as such a condensation symbol, it produces the outrage—as well as the inspiration—necessary to spur action.

Contention over interpretating the self-immolations

At the crux of the debate concerning the Vietnamese Buddhists' self-immolations in the 1960s is what those acts meant. Thus, we see various names ascribed to the self-immolations acts, ranging from 'the highest sacrifice' to 'an act of love', to 'suicide' to 'odious communist tactics.'[308] Madam Nhu's unsavoury description of the acts as 'barbeques'[309] or her husband's portrayal of them as 'premeditated murder',[310] are other descriptions that sought to portray the acts negatively. An interesting, though pejorative, spin on the word 'sacrifice' appears in Bouscaren's book when he speaks of the self-immolations as 'human sacrifices' of the bonzes.[311] Of course, there were

---

[305] The story was alluded to in the Personal communication with Pham Van Minh, 18 September 2003, and also between Dr. Malcolm Pearce and the author, 25 September 2003.

[306] Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 44.

[307] Ibid. Also see Nhat Hanh (1967), op.cit., 118; Queen (1996), op.cit., 1-2. Tri Quang also says, "Sometimes burning part of the body is used as a way to measure one's inner strength, to see if one can endure it" (Appendix 3).

[308] Madam Nhu quoted in Schecter, op. cit., 196-7.

[309] *The Pentagon Papers*, op. cit., 228.

[310] Pham Van Minh (2002), op.cit., 200

[311] Anthony T. Bouscaren (1965) *The Last of the Mandarins: Diem of Vietnam.* Pittsburgh, Penna: Duquesne University Press, 92. According to this rather pro-Diem (and anti-Buddhist) account, Quang Duc and other monks were drugged and murdered against their will. Considering that Bouscaren's only source of evidence is a statement from Diem's brother, Archbishop Ngo Dinh Thuc, his account can hardly be deemed reliable. For the statement of Archbishop Thuc, see National Review (1963) "What's Really Going on in Vietnam", *National Review*, 5 November: 389. In my informal interview with Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, who had personally assisted two fellow Buddhists in preparing for their immolation, he told me that there was no truth in such rumours. Semi-structured interview with Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, 18 September 2003. The bulk of American scholarship, including the widely quoted *Pentagon Papers* and Karnow's *Vietnam: A* History, also attest to the voluntary nature of the Buddhists' self-immolations and Malcolm Browne, who witnessed the entire immolation said that Quang Duc did not appear drugged, nor was he helped from the car. See Schecter, op. cit., 167 n1.

also those who, though sympathetic to the overall cause of the Buddhists, could not accept the self-immolations as they believed the acts to be 'sacrilegious' or 'sinful'. For example, Fitzgerald notes that 'Even those reporters who favoured the Buddhist cause could not help feeling that the performance was somehow crass and sacrilegious.' [312] Alfred Hassler, who extensively supported Nhat Hanh in his campaign tour in the United States also commented:

> [O]f course, for a Westerner brought up as a Christian, the whole idea of suicide was repulsive. Suicide is cowardly, an unwillingness to fight on; suicide is sin. I no longer consciously believed either of those things, but presumably they were still deep in my subconscious. I had seen the photographs of Thich[313] Quang Duc…and I recognised *something*, a quality of courage and concentration that I could never hope to attain, in this willingness to sacrifice oneself for one's people, but still—suicide![314]

These interpretations of the self-immolations are products of varying discourses through which different observers negotiated the meaning of the acts.

From the Buddhists' perspective, the 'name' given to the self-immolations was an important issue and one that they constantly tried to clarify to foreigners: 'It was not suicide…It was sacrifice' are the words of a Vietnamese Catholic, whose religion considers suicide a sin.[315] This assertion has been echoed by many others, including Tri Quang.[316] According to one young monk, while '[s]uicide is the resignation of hope in life…the immolations were affirmations of hope and an effort to save life.'[317] Nhat Hanh elaborates:

> Every action for peace requires someone to exhibit the courage to challenge violence and inspire love. Love and sacrifice always set up a chain reaction of love and sacrifice…The Western press called [Quang Duc's immolation] suicide, but it was not really suicide… What the monks…intended [was] only to move the hearts of the oppressors and call the world's attention to the suffering of our people…What is important is not to die, but to express courage, determination, and sincerity- not to destroy but to create.[318]

Note that the difference between destruction and construction, or resignation and affirmation of hope, is grounded in intentionality and interpretation, whereas if considered only in terms of material appearance, it would be hard to distinguish between the two.

Cao Ngoc Phuong also states that a Western cultural understanding may render it difficult to grasp the true nature of the self-immolations, which were, in her view, sacrifice borne out of love than of violent intention:

> I know that in the West it is hard to understand why Vietnamese burned themselves. It looked like a violent act. Please try to be in the heart and mind of the person performing such an act of great love and sacrifice. To move the hearts of the hardest men and women, you have to give a gift of great value – even your own life.[319]

---

[312] See Fitzgerald, op.cit., 133.
[313] Hassler points out that the word *Thich* has been widely but erroneously interpreted as meaning 'Venerable' or 'Reverend'. In fact, *Thich* represents the family name of Lord Buddha which the Vietnamese monks and nuns adopt after being ordained. See Alfred Hassler (1967) "Afterword", *Vietnam: Lotus in the Sea of Fire,* London: SCM, 108.
[314] See Hassler (1970), op.cit., 102.
[315] Quoted in Hope & Young, op.cit., 189.
[316] See Appendix 3.
[317] An unnamed young monk interviewed by Hope and Young, op. cit., 190.
[318] Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 43-45.
[319] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 39-40.

In this way, 'sacrifice' was linked to 'love', and since love or compassion is integral to the Buddhists' constellation of nonviolence, the sacrifice of self-immolation is also portrayed to be congruent with nonviolence. This understanding, however, was rooted in the discursive tradition of Vietnam, and so, to the Western press operating from a tradition that deems the taking of one's own life sinful, self-immolation could only appear, in most cases, as an act of suicide.[320]

Although it is relatively clear as to what the self-immolators *sacrificed* (i.e. their life), the object of their *love* is much more ambiguous. Various writings and utterances of the Vietnamese people indicate that there were at least three overlapping, though analytically distinguishable ways in which the term 'love' was employed in conjunction with 'sacrifice': (1) love for the people (and by abstraction, the nation or country) and the nation's cultural and religious heritage; (2) a wish to inspire love in others; and (3) an understanding for the repressors based on the principle of love. I examine each of these usages below.

Love for the people and tradition

What the Buddhists lamented most in Vietnam was the suffering of the common people and the divisions cutting across Vietnamese society—whether between the North and South, the Buddhists and the Catholics, or the South Vietnamese government and the general populace. In this state of fierce antagonism and suffering, 'love' emerged as a signifier in the Buddhist discourse to address the impaired unity of the Vietnamese people. Indeed, the invocation of love and compassion distinguished the Buddhist worldview from the purely political ideologies of the communists and US-GVN.[321] As the Patriarch of the UBC stated, 'If they have any conscience and love for the country and for the people, both governments of North and South Vietnam should not prolong this killing anymore.'[322]

The following are words of a lullaby sung throughout the country, which capture the people's yearning for a sense of national wholeness:

> My hand is holding a plate of salt and ginger
> Ginger is hot, salt is strong, they embrace each other.
> North and South share the same sorrow
> We love each other,
> Why have we abandoned our love?[323]

---

[320] The difficulty of bridging discursive worlds is apparent in a story related by Nhat Hanh: "One day I was asked by a Christian while we were in a bus, 'Why do you monks burn yourselves to death? It is an awful thing.' I tried to explain to him what Thich Quang Duc wanted when he set himself on fire. But the gentleman did not want to listen. He said, 'I can't understand a religion that allows its members to burn themselves.' I could have told him that I did not believe that Christianity could allow its followers to go and burn other people either. Thousands of women and children have been burned by napalm that was dropped from the sky. But what is the purpose of such a discussion? The only thing that counts is the ability to understand the pain of a brother…This brother is made of real flesh and skin and feeling. We cannot recognise our brother through an ideology or a political label. People have been shooting at labels and by so doing they have shot many of their brothers and sisters." See Nhat Hanh. (1974) op.cit., 8.

[321] See for example, the Manifesto of the NLF which speaks of 'unity' but not of 'love'. See Viet Nam National Front for Liberation (1968) *Documents*. (Unknown place of publication): Giai Phong Publishing House, 11-18. Also excerpted in George Katsiaficas (Ed.) (1992) *Vietnam Documents: American and Vietnamese Wiews on the War.* New York: M.E. Sharp, 43-47.

[322] New Year Greeting of the Tinh Khiet, Supreme Patriarch of the UBC in 1969 excerpted in Hassler (1970), op.cit., 224.

[323] Cited in Nhat Hanh (1993), op. cit, 42.

The 'love' which they sing of here is nationalistic, grounded in a wish for their country's unity. The song reflects the pain felt by the Vietnamese in seeing division, hatred and fratricide[324] afflicting their country.

Love for the people and country is also expressed in the writings of the self-immolators, as seen in the poems of Nhat Chi Mai, a 32-year old Buddhist student who immolated herself in May 1967. The following lines are the opening of a poem entitled 'Letter of the Heart':

> My fellowmen, listen to me
> Because I love my people
> Because I love my country
> I want to be a light
> even a dim one
> in this dark night[325]

And in another poem 'The Last words of one who loves Vietnam' she implores,

> O Vietnam, Vietnam
> Please listen
> to the last words
> of one
> who loves Vietnam!
>
> I am on the side
> of my forefathers
> of Revolution
> of the young generation
> of all those who suffer:
> orphans, widows,
> the injured
> the exiled.
>
> I am for the fatherland:
> I cry because of the shedding of blood
> of both innocents and wicked. [326]

Whilst Mai's love for her 'fatherland' and her siding with her 'forefathers' and the 'Revolution' are nationalistic invocations, her sympathy for the 'wicked' reflects the Buddhist teachings of compassion that Mai would have learnt during her training at the Order of Interbeing (*Tiep Hien* Order) under Nhat Hanh and the SYSS.[327]

Taking action to relieve suffering, moreover, is a basic tenet of Buddhism and integral to the Four Noble Truths, which uncover the nature of suffering—its origin, cessation and how one can take right action (including nonviolence) to refrain from causing suffering.[328] In Mahayana Buddhism, the notion of suffering and compassion go hand-in-hand and this is nowhere more apparent than in the ideal of the 'bodhisattva', which refers to a saintly being who, out of compassion, refrains from entering the final state of *nirvāna* to help the suffering humanity.[329] For these reasons,

---

[324] For example, the UBC's "Peace Above All" campaign called for "an early end to this fratricidal war". See Forest, op.cit., 6.
[325] See Appendix 4; also excerpted in Hassler (1970), op.cit., 199.
[326] Ibid.
[327] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 78-79.
[328] Nhat Hanh (1998b) *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy and Liberation*, Berkeley: Parallax Press, 10-11; Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 40-56.
[329] Bowker, op.cit., 259-60.

inaction was never an option for the Vietnamese Buddhists.[330] The wish to liberate humans from their suffering also appears prominently in the letter of Duc Phong, a young monk who immolated himself in 1963 which stated, 'I beg you mum and dad, don't be anguished by the loss of my body. Think about this and accept my loss—otherwise it will mean you accept the people's hardship and their sea of suffering.'[331]

Suffering abounded in Vietnam during the 1960s and the war poetry of this period poignantly expresses the people's pain, anguish and weariness at having witnessed death and destruction for more than a century.[332] Related to the people's suffering, and perhaps more deeply disturbing for many, was the erosion of the country's traditional values caused by the prolonged war and American presence.[333] The Buddhist Socialist Bloc calls this erosion, 'cultural bastardization' and 'cultural enslavement'.[334] As Topmiller's explains:

> Vietnamese intellectuals particularly resented the way the American onslaught against traditional Vietnamese values had degraded the cultural fabric of the nation. To them, the role of Vietnamese women became especially charged and created enormous bitterness. Greed, increased consumerism, prostitution and the disrespect shown to married women by American soldiers resulted from the US presence in Vietnam and heightened feelings of shame over their occupation by a foreign power…the spectacle of Vietnamese digging through American garbage dumps for food left an indelible impression.[335]

---

[330] As Tri Quang says: 'Can we, the Buddhists, who had a tradition of buying live birds and fish then releasing them, sit down and do nothing when we know that thousands of people are going to die? As Buddhists, we must act.' Quoted in Pham Van Minh (2002), op.cit., 359. It also seems to have been the first precept that moved Nhat Chi Mai to immolate herself. Cao Ngoc Phuong says that Nhat Chi Mai seemed to make her decision to sacrifice herself after a group recital of the precepts and that Mai was particularly overwhelmed when reciting: "Do not kill. Do not let others kill. Find whatever means possible to protect life and build peace." See Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 101.

[331] See Appendix 6.

[332] See for example, Phung Khac Khon (1975) "On War" in Nguyen Ngoc Bich (ed). *A Thousand Years of Vietnamese Poetry.* Nguyen Ngoc Bich with Burton Raffel and W. S. Merwin (trans). New York: Alfred. A. Knopf Inc; Tran Da Tu (1996) "Gifts as Tokens of Love" in Huynh Sanh Thong (ed.) *An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems: From the Eleventh through the Twentieth Centuries*, New Haven: Yale University Press; Tran Huien An (1996) "My Mother's Son" in Huynh Sanh Thong (ed.) *An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems: From the Eleventh through the Twentieth Centuries.* New Haven: Yale University Press; Tran Duc Uyen (1996) "A Letter to My Future Child" in Huynh Sanh Thong (ed). *An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems: From the Eleventh through the Twentieth Centuries.* New Haven: Yale University Press; Nhat Hanh (1968), op.cit.; Nhat Hanh (1972), op.cit.

[333] As Nhat Hanh points out, 'the war not only destroys human lives; it also destroys our human values.' See Nhat Hanh (1966) "A Monk at Town Hall", *Fellowship*, July, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 5.

[334] See "Buddhist Sociality Policy Statement" excerpted in Hassler (1970), op.cit., 209-214 at 214. The Buddhist Socialise Bloc is a coalition consisting of Vietnamese Buddhist groups, non-Buddhist religious groups, and secular groups, which are willing to accept the guidance of the UBC. Both Mr. Pham Van Minh and Mr. Hoang Nguyen Nhuan belonged to this group.

[335] Topmiller (2002), op.cit., 45. During his speaking tour in the US, Nhat Hanh similarly related stories of how young women turned to prostitution in order to buy rice for their families, how orphaned children scavenged from garbage heaps, and how corrupt officials lived in luxury while refugees were starving to death. See Hassler (1970), op.cit., 11-12; Hope & Young, op.cit., 195. Cao Ngoc Phuong also reiterates the concern felt regarding the erosion of traditional values. She says that the educated middle class are afraid "not so much of losing their homes as of betraying their cultural and moral values. From friends who fled from North Vietnam, they hear that the Communists are devoid of feeling; they hear, for example, that sons condemn their own parents simply because they are capitalists…." See Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969) "Voice from the Burning House" (pamphlet submitted for the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation to Paris), New York: International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 3.

The exptressions of love for one's people and tradition was thus simultaneously nationalistc—that is, highly conscious of Vietnam's subjugation by a foreign presence—as well as religious, for it impelled the Buddhists to act to relieve the people's suffering as a bodhisattva would.

Inspiring love and other emotions

The emotional impact of the self-immolations was not an unanticipated outcome, but one that was very much within the purview of the immolators.[336] A point often made in their letters was that they were offering their body as a 'torch' to 'waken love among men'[337] or for the government to 'open their hearts to compassion'[338] or, as Tieu Dieu puts it, 'to light my heart, your heart, all the hearts of the Vietnamese Buddhists, and especially of those who intend to oppress Buddhism'.[339] Others said that the acts were done to 'awaken and light the conscience of those who betray the Dharma and the people.'[340]

Although it is impossible to tell whether the self-immolations in fact managed to appeal to the moral conscience of the repressors, the acts clearly called forth a powerful response from the general populace.[341] Many Vietnamese responded with active support for the Buddhists' struggle and in the few months after Quang Duc's immolation, thousands of students, hundreds of South Vietnamese army veterans and even women and small children, began to demonstrate peacefully.[342] Soldiers and peasants wore patches of saffron—the colour of the monks' ceremonial robes—to indicate their support for the Buddhists. Professors at the universities of Saigon and Hue resigned in protest.[343]

In her autobiography, Cao Ngoc Phuong recalls her own reaction and of those around her upon learning of Quang Duc's self-immolation:

> At that moment, a deep vow sprang forth in me: I too would do something for the respect of human rights in as beautiful and gentle a way as Thây Quang Duc. After the sacrifice of Thây Quang Duc, the inspiration was so great in the country that we could not count all the demonstrations and acts of resistance taking place in every town and province…When I looked deeply…I could see his love and deep commitment to human rights born again in me and in thousands of Vietnamese and others all around the world. We received the fire of love and commitment to act from his great sacrifice.[344]

---

[336] For example, Nhat Chi Mai, one of the self-immolators in 1967, initially thought about disembowelling herself in a group of ten, explaining to a friend that fasting and self-immolation "no longer wake people up." See Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 97.

[337] Nhat Chi Mai, see Appendix 4; Hassler (1970), op.cit., 199-200. See also Berrigan and Nhat Hanh, op.cit., 66.

[338] Nguyen Huong, see Appendix 5.

[339] Tieu Dieu, see Appendix 7.

[340] Thien Lai, see Appendix 11.

[341] The most immediate reactions to Quang Duc's sacrifice is described by Schecter, a witnessing journalist present at the scene of the self-immolation: "Hundreds who had gathered in curiosity now wailed in anguish or dropped to their knees, their hands clasped in prayer. A small boy shrieked in terror at the sight of the flames and the burning monk, then cried and whimpered in fear. The few Americans in the crowd were stunned. 'Oh my God, oh my God,' muttered David Halberstam, a correspondent for *The New York Times*. The police, who at first tried to push through the circle of monks were stunned and gave up their efforts." See Schecter, op.cit., 167.

[342] Hope & Young, op.cit., 188.

[343] Ibid.

[344] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op.cit., 38-40. Note, 'Thây' is a friendly term of address for a monk or a teacher. Nhat Hanh makes a similar comment about his inspiration from Quang Duc's immolation: "Maybe my important work with the SYSS [School of Youth for Social Service] will be destroyed. But

Of course, self-immolation did not always inspire love in people. For example, Pham Van Minh told me that upon learning of Nhat Chi Mai's self-immolation, he 'felt angry' and that this anger made him more determined to continue his work for peace in Vietnam.[345] Others responded to the self-immolations with admiration, sadness and 'hope…that something good may come from it.'[346]

The profound emotional impact of Nhat Chi Mai's self-immolation even outside the Buddhist community is recounted by her friend:

> The printer who had refused to print our peace books ... came up to me, sobbing, and said that in the future he would help us in any way we needed. Even government officials and military men came and offered to help our work for peace. It was only then that I realized that my words of advice to Mai against sacrificing ourselves…were wrong. Her sacrifice had indeed moved the hearts of many people and caused the peace movement to swell like waves in a storm. Even friends who had become guerrillas in the jungle sent back news and asked, "How can we help realize Mai's wish for peace and reconciliation?"[347]

Mai's act moved countless people and on the day after her sacrifice, newspapers carried blank spaces where the news of her act had been censored.[348] Her funeral procession, which was joined by students, teachers, merchants, and even politicians and Catholic priests, stretched for five kilometres and soon turned into a peace march.[349]

Nhat Hanh speaks of the 'chain reaction' of inspiration that could be witnessed during the Vietnamese struggle:

> When your heart is touched, you naturally stand up and challenge every kind of danger in order to oppose violence. We all have witnessed the tragic and heroic scenes of love: a monk sitting calmly before an advancing tank; women and children raising their bare hands against barbed wire, clubs and grenades; students and youngsters confronting military police, who appear as monsters behind their masks and bayonets; fragile girls moving forward through clouds of tear gas and even poisoned gas; hunger strikes held silently and patiently. Only love and sacrifice can engender love and sacrifice. The chain reaction of love is the essential nature of the struggle.[350]

The profound emotional impact and 'moral shock' that self-immolation called forth could not be appreciated without regard to the discursive and symbolic power of the Buddhists' sacrifice. Indeed, self-immolation, as a practice embedded in the Buddhist tradition, was also an act that carried the weight of Vietnam's national identity and religious tradition—for many, the self-immolations of the Buddhists were as acts of a Bodhisattva,[351] who sought to relieve the people's suffering in exchange for their lives.

I cannot be afraid. I have the example of the Venerable Quang Duc and the others of my colleagues who have burned themselves to death to protest what happens in our country. My sacrifice is small." See Nhat Hanh (1966) "Statement of the Venerable Nhat Hanh", *Fellowship*, July, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, 4.

[345] Personal communication with Pham Van Minh, 18 September 2003.

[346] Personal communication with Thomas Nguyen, 18 September 2003. Thomas Nguyen was still quite young at the time of the self-immolations.

[347] Cao Ngoc Phuong (1993), op. cit., 103.

[348] Ibid, 105.

[349] Ibid.

[350] Nhat Hanh (1969), op.cit., 7 (emphasis in original). Also see Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 40.

[351] See Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 240; Thien Hoa (1987) *Fifty Years of Vietnamese Buddhist Revival*. California: International Institute of Buddhist Studies, 193-195.

Love as a moral principle

As discussed above, love and compassion on the part of the immolator is very much part of the symbolic meaning of self-immolation. According to Kemper, love is both an *emotion* and a *relationship,*[352] and he distinguishes between *authentic giving* and *normative giving*—the former accompanied by correlative emotions, while the latter is not but arises from the internalisation of norms and moral principles.[353] What governs the latter is the moral *principle* of love or compassion.[354] The feeling of love for one's opponent did not always come naturally or easily to the Buddhists, and in many cases, they had to 'work' on their emotions to align them to their moral ideals.

The term for 'loving-kindness' (s. *maitrī*) in the Buddhist ethical system has its roots in Sanskrit word *mitrá* which means 'friend.'[355] In Buddhism, love primarily means 'the intention and capacity to offer joy and happiness as if to a friend.'[356] The inclusive and expansive character of this love is comparable to the Christian concept of *agape*,[357] and is to be contrasted with exclusive forms of love such as *eros* or conjugal love.[358] As for compassion, although I consider it a form of love, it is important to recognise the particular attributes implied in this term. Compassion or *karunā* in the Buddhist ethical system means 'the intention and capacity to relieve and transform suffering and lighten sorrows'.[359] Compassion, which generates a strong identification with the sufferer,[360] is intimately linked to the Buddhist understanding of the interconnectedness.[361] Nhat Hanh calls this interconnectedness 'interbeing'.

---

[352] Theodore D. Kemper (1989) "Love and Like and Love and *Love*", in David D. Franks and E. Doyle McCarthy, *The Sociology of Emotions: Original Essays and Research Papers*. London: JAI Press, 262. Similarly, Lawrence Blum remarks: "compassion is not a simple feeling-state, but a complex emotional attitude towards another". See Lawrence Blum (1980) "Compassion" in Amelie O. Rorty (ed.), *Explaining Emotions.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 509.

[353] Kemper, op. cit., 262-263.

[354] For example, it is said that the monk who commits self-immolation "believes he is practicing the *doctrine* of highest compassion by sacrificing himself" for the sake of others. Nhat Hanh (1967), op. cit., 118 (my italics). Note that love and compassion are the first two aspects of the Four Immeasurable Minds in Buddhism which comprises of love (*maitri*), compassion (*karuna*), joy (*mudita*) and equanimity (*upkesha*). See Nhat Hanh (1998b), op.cit., 157-63.

[355] Nhat Hanh (1998b), ibid, 159. *Maitri* is sometimes translated as "loving kindness" due to perceived irreligious connotations of "love". Nhat Hanh, however, says he prefers the name "love" explaining that "[w]ords sometimes get sick and we have to heal them." (159).

[356] Ibid.

[357] The concept has been described by Martin Luther King as the "love of God operating in the human heart." Martin L. King (1958) *Stride towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story.* New York: Harper & Row, 104. The political potential of *agape* was demonstrated by King's extensive mobilisation of it in his sermons and exhortations during the Black Civil Rights campaign. *Agape* is an expansive other-regarding love, "elevated by an overwhelming sense of equal regard derived from a spiritual belief in love of the Supreme Being for all humanity." Stephen G. Post (2000) "The Traditions of Agape" in Stephen G. Post, Lynn G. Underwood, Jeffrey P. Scholoss, and William B. Hurlbut (eds.) *Altruism and Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy and Religion in Dialogue.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 56.

[358] For the difference between *agape* and *eros*, see Joseph Campbell (1990) *The Flight of the Wild Gander.* New York: Harper Perennial, 209.

[359] Ibid, 160. Nhat Hanh explains that compassion is accompanied by a deep concern: "You know the other person is suffering, so you sit close to her, you look and listen deeply to her to be able to touch her pain. You are in deep communication, deep communion with her, and that alone brings some relief." (160).

[360] Bowker, op. cit, 260.

[361] The connection between suffering and compassion is also evident in the first precept of the Buddhist vow: "Aware of the suffering caused by destruction of life, I vow to cultivate compassion and learn ways to protect the lives of people, animals, plants, and minerals. I am determined not to kill, not to let

The notion suggests that one should not only identify with, and be compassionate towards, the victims of society (as in the Bodhisattva ideal) but also practice love towards one's adversaries and oppressors because in a spiritual sense, they too are interconnected with oneself.[362] On this spiritual plane, both the oppressed and the oppressor are connected, and the efforts of the Buddhists to foster an understanding for their repressor must be understood in light of the moral ethics that follow from such a worldview.

APPRAISING THE MORAL STATUS OF SELF-IMMOLATION

The question remains whether or not self-immolation is nonviolent, and it continues to be a controversial one even among Buddhists. The dilemma stems in part from a tendency to equate 'nonviolence' with 'good' and 'violence' with 'bad'. Yet some acts are beyond such ethical designation. As Nhat Hanh says, 'We do not intend to say that self-immolation is good, or that it is bad. It is neither good nor bad. When you say something is good, you say that you should do that. But nobody can urge another to do such a thing.'[363] Self-immolation thus embodies a problem that is difficult to capture using the conventional ethical language of society.

As noted above, self-immolation does not sit well with the prescriptive character of institutional policies. It is noteworthy that with the exception of Quang Duc's self-immolation, whenever Buddhists asked permission to self-immolate[364] the UBC refused and tried to prevent it.[365] Commentators such as Sallie B. King opine that religious institutions have an obligation to repudiate such acts of extreme self-sacrifice as self-immolation:

> Humans may be moved to act by something far greater than the human. But religious institutions are human institutions. As such, they are morally obliged to give guidance to all the people…If something more than human—whether God or the inconceivable mind of a bodhisattva—insists upon self-sacrifice, a human institution cannot stop it. But to prevent those with merely human motivation from sacrificing themselves, I feel that the Buddhist order should consider publicly repudiating something that their deepest commitments may embrace.[366]

Among Theravada and Tibetan Buddhists, who do not have an established tradition of self-immolation, stark differences in opinion exist as to whether the Vietnamese Buddhists' self-immolations were morally right or wrong, in accordance with, or in breach of, the first precept. Below are statements made by Theravada and Tibetan monks in response to a question about the nature of self-immolations in Vietnam in an interview conducted by King in 1997.[367]

Theravada monks from Southeast Asia

1. "Burning oneself is not what the Buddha taught. It just spreads the fire. It makes matters worse by spreading the conflict out more. It is a one-sided act. To practice

---

others be killed, and not to condone any act of killing in the world, and in my way of life." Cited in Pham (2002), op. cit., 70

[362] See Nhat Hanh (1998a) *Interbeing: Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism*, 3rd Ed, Berkeley: Parallax Press; Nhat Hanh (1988) *The Heart of Understanding: Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra*, Berkeley: Parallax Press.

[363] Daniel Berrigan and Nhat Hanh, op.cit., 62. Cf. King (2000), op.cit., 142-143.

[364] Biggs (2005), op.cit., 179-180.

[365] See Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 43.

[366] King (2000), op.cit., 148.

[367] Ibid, 144-145.

Dhamma is to find the cause, to understand it, to meditate on it, and then to bring the sides together. One should not be partial."

2. "The Buddhist monks [self-immolators] could not support the war. They wanted to stop it. But it is not good to kill yourself—it is the same as killing anyone."

Views of an American-born Theravada monk

3. "The goodness of self-immolation depends on the intention and mental state and understanding of the situation. It's an extreme act but a country in civil war is also an extreme situation. The self-immolators saw that peaceful actions were not working. I respect these people incredibly. We should ask: could I sit in the lotus posture for two minutes while my body burned? I haven't thought it through, but I am willing to accept it as a valid choice. People make sacrifices. This is well accepted. What people can't accept is the violent sacrifice. But what do you do? Most people just watch out for themselves. It is hard for the parents that that child [Nhat Chi Mai] died; but it is also a source of pride for them that she died for a good cause."
   [In response to the question: what about the problems of imitation?] "Fools will imitate anything in a foolish way. We should take that into some consideration but not let ourselves be overly limited by fools. In Thailand, about 1991, there was also an imitator, done badly, running around burning—he evoked pity, but didn't help his cause. The tactics of Gandhi, the teachings of Jesus and Buddha are abused. It can't be helped. Any useful tool can be misused. It must be done with dignity, peace; that is the precaution against foolish imitators. I am against it done foolishly or repeatedly. It is not just a political tactic. It is an act of faith in humanity."

A Tibetan monk and scholar residing in the West

4. "The bodhisattva has a responsibility to other beings. Even killing, lying and so forth may be alright if done for good. [He summarizes the tale of Bodhisattvabhumi, a bodhisattva who killed a man to prevent him from killing hundreds of people]. His motivation is compassion for the hundreds of people and especially his wish to prevent the man who is planning to kill from getting bad karma for his deed. Such an act requires full love and compassion, an understanding of śūnyatā and bodhisaitta. Only those with these qualifications can be said to truly be all right to do it. A bodhisattva can take poison, mix it with herbs and make medicine. It is possible that Thich Quang Duc was in this condition, but we don't know."

The first two statements from the Theravada monks in Southeast Asia clearly indicate that self-immolation is a negative act, not to be undertaken by Buddhists, whereas the American-born Theravada monk and the Tibetan monk drew attention to the importance of intention as well as the moral calibre of the person performing the self-immolation.

It is probably true that self-immolation is not a morally perfect act, since it brings pain and sorrow to family and friends.[368] The self-immolators themselves appear to be aware of this, when in their letters they ask their family 'not to be sad' and the sangha to 'forgive' them for their act.[369] Thien Lai acknowledged in his letter: 'I know that by [sacrificing my body] I am causing worry to the Most Venerable and the Buddhist faithful of the United Buddhist Church. But in the campaign for peace and in requesting the basic rights of religious freedom for Buddhism, I think each citizen has a duty to contribute to this struggle. Doing my part, I wish to offer my physical body to show my love to the people and country of Vietnam and to express my sincerity in helping to preserve the Dharma.'[370] Mai Tuyet An, an 18-year old girl, who in a similar spirit of sacrifice tried to cut off her arm with an axe, also seemed to

[368] Ibid, 140.
[369] Appendices 6 and 10.
[370] Appendix 11.

acknowledge the slightly morally problematic nature of her act when she writes: 'May the Enlightened One and the venerables, monks and nuns and the Buddhist faithful kindly forgive me as I let my blood flow in front of Buddha's statue.'[371] However, in the same letter she says, 'I hope to make this small but meritorious contribution to protect the righteous Dharma of the Buddha.' These statements attest to the moral ambiguity of such sacrifice.

Yet, as alluded to above, Buddhist scholars have also argued time and again that in their ethical system, what determines the karmic and moral nature of an act is not so much the act itself as the intention and motivation behind the act.[372] Therefore it makes all the difference whether one burns oneself out of affirmation or resignation of hope, even though externally, the act appears the same.[373] So potent is intentionality in Buddhism that it can even extend to circumstances of 'compassionate killing' as discussed in Chapter 2.

In purely material terms, there is probably no such thing as complete nonviolence. Buddhists point out that whilst one may practice vegetarianism, every time a cup of water is boiled, as many as sixty thousand micro-organisms are destroyed.[374] In the context of the struggle in Vietnam, observers may remark that Diem's coup was not entirely nonviolent because in the end the army assassinated him; or that the way in which the Buddhists gave shelter to the army rebels in their temples in 1966 compromised their nonviolent stand.[375] It should be remembered, though, that many Buddhists freely admit that absolute material nonviolence is not possible and Nhat Hanh has been at pains to point out that nonviolence is not a dogma.[376] Whilst nonviolence tends to be thought of in absolute terms, Nhat Hanh explains that '[t]he 'problem is not one of absolutes, but of the extent to which we can follow the principle of nonviolence.'[377] The point seems to be, given that self-immolation is performed in an effort to end suffering and further violence, the intention from which the action springs is more nonviolent than violent. As one Vietnamese lay Buddhist put it: 'life is the most precious thing. But to sacrifice life to awaken the conscience of the masses and counter barbarism and dictatorship is an example of great magnanimity'.[378]

Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 2, a thorough examination of the tradition of *ahiṃsā* reveals that, a nonviolent stance towards others is frequently accompanied by a tendency to interiorise violence in oneself—whether in the form of monastic

---

[371] Appendix 8. For a Poem by Yeu Thien Khich lamenting Mai Tuyet An's sacrifice, see Appendix 9.

[372] King (2000), op. cit., 140-141; Berrigan and Nhat Hanh, op.cit., 80-81; Semi-structured interview with Hoang Nguyen Nhuan, 18 September 2003.

[373] Note that this emphasis on intentionality is by no means just a religious preoccupation; it has a role, for example, in common law concepts such as *mens rea* (the intention to commit, or to create an apprehension of, an unlawful act) which is a significant determining factor in judging a crime.

[374] Pham Van Minh (2002), op. cit., 70.

[375] However, Pearce says that although the giving of shelter to soldiers may be deemed problematic from a 'cold, rational, logical perspective', from the standpoint of compassion, which urges one to open one's door to anyone in need, it was very much in line with Buddhist teachings. Semi-structured interview with Malcolm Pearce, 25 September 2003.

[376] See King (1996), op.cit., 343; Nhat Hanh (1989) *Being Peace.* Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 89; Nhat Hanh (1993), op.cit., 39. Nhat Hanh also states that if a belief becomes dogmatic, a practicing Buddhist could not accept it.

[377] Nhat Hanh (1969), op. cit., 8. Nhat Hanh also implies that absolute ideational nonviolence is rare: "absolute nonviolence is absolute love. It is the absolute sacrifice of saints. We don't have to be saints. We only have to follow them" (8).

[378] Tam Dat quoted in Nam Thanh (1964) *Cuoc Tranh Dau Lich Su: Cua Phat Giao Viet Nam, (The Historic Struggle of the Buddhists).* (No place of printing mentioned) Vien Hoa Dao Publishing, 57.

asceticism or acts of self-sacrifice to relieve the people's suffering. This propensity also makes it difficult to speak of nonviolence and violence as an absolute dichotomy. Ideologically though, in Vietnam love, nonviolence and self-sacrifice clearly belonged to the same moral and discursive universe. The extensive 'emotion work' which the Buddhists underwent was performed out of an awareness of the inseparability between love and nonviolence: their refusal to hate is logically and morally connected to their refusal to kill. Self-immolation entered into the equation, however, when all other methods and expressions of love-nonviolence failed to produce results against the enormous violence they faced in the US-backed dictatorship and war.

IMPLICATIONS FOR NONVIOLENCE THEORY

In late 1975, the year of the communists' victory, there was a collective self-immolation of 12 monks and nuns in Can Tho.[379] In 1996 a self-immolation occurred in Ba Dinh Square unreported by the media,[380] and in 2001, a Buddhist Youth Counsellor immolated himself to 'protest the Vietnamese Communist Party's oppression of the United Buddhist Church of Vietnam for the last 26 years'.[381] Self-immolation in Vietnam still continues today and the persecution of Buddhism (with the exception of the state-sponsored Buddhist Church) has not ended under the Communist regime. Human rights violations such as, torture, death [382] and imprisonment—including house arrest of the most senior leaders[383] have continued since 1975.[384]A study of self-immolation and its meaning therefore is still relevant to Vietnamese politics today.

Biggs notes that after Quang Duc set himself on fire in 1963, self-immolation 'entered the global repertoire of protest.'[385] Apart from Vietnam, waves of self-immolations have occurred around the world, the most prominent being India, South Korea, and Tibet. The latter will be examined in the next chapter. This form of protest also played a critical role in the Arab Spring, where Mohamed Bouazizi's self-immolation in December 2010 acted as a catalyst for the 2011 Tunisian revolution and triggered a string of other self-immolations across the Middle East and North Africa. Given the increasing use of self-immolation as a method of protest worldwide, it is worthwhile considering the implications of self-immolation for nonviolence theory.

In the *Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Gene Sharp mentions the 1963 coup against Diem as a classic example of political jiu-jitsu at work.[386] However, when it comes to

---

[379] Sakyamuni Buddhist Centre (1995) *Identification of the Many Serious Damaging Errors Committed by the Communist Party of Vietnam in its Dealings with the People of the Buddhist Church of Vietnam*. Lyneham, Australia: Sakyamuni Buddhist Centre; Forest, op.cit., 14.

[380] Mandy Thomas (2001) "Public Spaces/Public Disgraces: Crowds and the State in Contemporary Vietnam" *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Oct, 16(2), 9 n306.

[381] These words are from the Ho Tan Anh's letter before his self-immolation. Ho Tan Anh (2001) Letter of Ho Tan Anh. Excerpted in *Vietnam Democracy*: *A Monthly Publication of the Free Vietnam Alliance*, September 2001, X(9): 1-8.

[382] For example, in 1978, Thien Minh, one of the foremost leaders of the Buddhist movement in the 1960s mysteriously died at the police headquarters where he was held in custody. Many Vietnamese believe that he was poisoned.

[383] For example, both Tri Quang and Quang Do continue to be under house arrest. See Tim Larimer (1999) "I Wish I Were Free to Fly Out of My Window", *Time International* 153(2), 18 January, 19.

[384] For the range of human rights violations since 1975, see Forest, op.cit., 20-30.

[385] Biggs (2005), op.cit., 181.

[386] See Gene Sharp (1973), op.cit., 158, 279, 293-4 & 363.

self-immolation Sharp tip-toes around the subject and excludes it from his analysis of nonviolent action.[387] Sharp makes numerous references to the rallies, press campaigns, processions and strikes by the Buddhists, citing these as examples of effective nonviolent methods.[388] Diem's loss of support from his generals and the Americans as well as the heightened dissent of the South Vietnamese populace are explained primarily in terms of the government's repression and the use of nonviolent methods by the Buddhists.[389] Yet, excluding the impact of self-immolation from the process of political jiu-jitsu as operated against Diem clearly overlooks an enormously significant factor that contributed to Diem's demise. Sharp's avoidance of the subject of self-immolation and the unease which self-immolation causes nonviolence theorists must be understood in light of the prescriptive and normative tendency in the literature on nonviolence. Nevertheless, self-immolation as a political protest has a number of implications for understanding the dynamics of nonviolence which are instructive to consider.

The first broad implication pertains to an understanding of self-suffering and political jiu-jitsu—specifically the way in which self-immolation has symbolic power to galvanize sympathizers into action by eliciting a strong emotional response. Nonviolence theorists to date have not explained *how* or *in what circumstances* the nonviolent actionists' sacrifice and self-suffering generates the support which leads to the operation of political jiu-jitsu. Gregg notes that '[t]he sight of a person voluntarily undergoing suffering for a belief or an ideal moves the assailant and beholders alike and tends to change their hearts and make them feel a kinship with the sufferer.'[390] However, psychological studies have shown that the sight of suffering alone can fail to bring a 'change of heart' and may even elicit a negative reaction towards the sufferer,[391] though there is also indication that if people have a prior positive attitude towards the sufferer, or believe the 'cause' to be a worthwhile one, they are more likely to have a higher regard for the act of self-suffering.[392]

What also determines the effectiveness of self-suffering is its discursive resonance. As discussed above, the symbol of self-immolation was very much embedded in the religious context of Vietnam so as to resonate with the sentiments of the people. This is similar to the way Gandhi's fasts, vows, and prayer meetings during his nonviolent campaign resembled Hindu ascetic practices (s. *tapas*/*tapasya*).[393] Understanding the

---

[387] For example, he mentions methods like the use of symbolic lights but avoids naming self-immolation as a technique. Further, he includes destruction of one's own *property* as a legitimate method of nonviolent action but seems to exclude the destruction of one's own *person* from nonviolent methods. Ibid, 140-142.

[388] Ibid, 158, 279, 293-4, 363.

[389] Ibid, 660-662.

[390] Richard Gregg (1966) *The Power of Nonviolence*, 2nd rev. ed., New York: Schocken Books, 53

[391] For example, Pelton refers to a study on the 'martyr condition' conducted by Lerner where observers were shown a tape of a victim receiving electronic shocks, after been told that the victim was participating solely for the altruistic motive of helping other students receive lab credits. This study showed that often the observers often developed a negative view of the victims. Lerner does note that possibly, the impression was created that rather than being altruistically motivated, the victim was being "overly submissive to authority or overly concerned about gaining others' approval." See Pelton, op.cit., 135 and Melvin J. Lerner (1970) "The Desire for Justice and Reactions to Victims" in Jacqueline Macaulay and Leonard Berkowitz (eds.) *Altruism and Helping Behaviour*, New York: Academic Press.

[392] Pelton, ibid, 139.

[393] Gandhi would say that: "Real suffering bravely borne melts even a heart of stone. Such is the potency of suffering or *tapas*. And there lies the key to Satyagraha." See Mohandas K. Gandhi (1954) *Satyagraha in South Africa*, California: Academic Reprints, 17

religious and discursive context in which self-suffering is situated is thus critical for a full appreciation of nonviolence, particularly as concerning the operation of political jiu-jitsu.

There is of course an important difference between the conventional process of political jiu-jitsu and that involving self-immolation; namely that in the conventional process, the nonviolent actionist uses the opponents' violent force against them by directly suffering at the hands of the opponent, whereas in the case of self-immolation (or fasting), suffering is self-initiated. Nevertheless, it might be said that self-immolation uses the opponents' repression *indirectly* against them, for the act dramatizes and symbolically condenses the wider suffering wrought by a repressive or violent opponent.[394] Despite the difference in the *directness* of deflecting violent force, self-initiated suffering can produce the same effects as conventional self-suffering in the process of political jiu-jitsu.[395]

As discussed in Chapter 1, one of the points of contention between principled and pragmatic theorists of nonviolence is that, whereas the former maintains that demonstrating love toward the opponent is an essential part of nonviolence, pragmatists like Sharp contend that 'love' towards one's enemy is not, and should not be, a primary requirement of nonviolence but is at best a 'secondary refinement' to nonviolent tactics.[396] Sharp concedes that refusing to hate, or demonstrating goodwill to the opponent group may lead to greater chances of success; yet he insists it is possible for hostility, ill will and hatred to coexist with the use of nonviolent means, commenting that Martin Luther King's extreme emphasis on the principle of 'love' may have turned some people away from nonviolent means.[397] He concludes that actionists should not 'blur the distinction between their beliefs and the nonviolent technique.'[398]

While pragmatic theorists of nonviolence assert that the nonviolent belief and technique should and can be separated, the self-immolations in Vietnam which took place in the context of a nonviolent struggle demonstrate that, at least where self-suffering and sacrifice are involved, *the belief is part of the technique*.[399] If not for the symbolic power of self-immolation and its discursive resonance which played upon religious notions of compassion and love, the act of extreme sacrifice alone could not have produced the outpouring of support that it did. I add the qualification, 'at least where self-sacrifice is involved' because nonviolent action also involves lower-scale struggles where a petition or a general strike can produce the desired political result without relying heavily on discursive structure to inform the nonviolent technique. However, when a conflict escalates to a point where individuals undergo personal

---

[394] A helpful clarification with regard to the word 'suffering' is made by Rush Rhees who distinguishes between "suffering bodily pain" and "suffering injustice". Hence, what the Buddhists could not bear witnessing was the latter and they were willing to undergo bodily pain if it meant helping to end the suffering caused by injustice. See Dewi Z. Phillips (assisted by Mario Von der Ruhr) Ed. (1997) *Rush Rhees on Religion and Philosophy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 301-303.

[395] Note that it is the difference in directness and voluntariness that leads to the more common use of the term "self-sacrifice" to describe the self-immolations over "self-suffering". For, "suffering" carries the impression that one is being *subjected* to the suffering by an external force, whereas "sacrifice" connotes voluntariness.

[396] Sharp (1973), op. cit., 635.

[397] Ibid, 633-635.

[398] Ibid, 635.

[399] Note that Sallie King, who makes a similar distinction to the one I have made, when in the context of discussing self-immolation, she points out that "the material and the spiritual cannot be separated in any action." See King (2000), op.cit., 147.

sacrifice, the impact of such sacrifice cannot be understood separately from the belief which motivates the action.

The second implication for nonviolence theory is that, self-immolation—as an extreme form of self-sacrifice that raises challenging questions for nonviolence theory—helps to clarify the operational dynamics and internal structure of nonviolent action; what I will call *the constitutive operation of nonviolence*. As discussed in the previous chapter, *operationally* nonviolence needs violence to take expression. This dynamic is in fact suggested by the nature of political jiu-jitsu itself, where nonviolence is most visibly and sincerely demonstrated when the nonviolent actor meets the violence of the repressor and undergoes self-suffering. That such an actor should willingly takes upon him- or herself the violence of the other in this process points to the understanding that, *by its very constitution,* nonviolence contains violence within itself. The nonviolent actionist in the process of political jiu-jitsu does not deflect violence outward but interiorises it. From this perspective, extreme self-sacrifice does not amount to a contradiction of nonviolence—rather, it is part of its contingent structure. Recognising this constitutive operation of nonviolence goes a long way in answering the dilemmas that nonviolence theorists face with respect to extreme self-sacrifice and problematises the very attempt to locate a clear demarcating line between nonviolence and violence.

Conclusion

The concerted action of the Vietnamese Buddhists in calling for democracy and opposing war during the 1960s presents an illuinating case of a 'religion of resistance' where the imperative of defending Buddhism and the assertion of a modern nationalism coalesced in their nonviolent struggle for peace and democracy. The religious impetus of the Buddhists not only led to the avoidance of violence against the United States and GVN but also to novel uses of religious symbols in political protest, namely the usage of family alters and self-immolation. It also led to efforts to undertake 'emotion work' to cultivate the emotions of love and forgiveness towards the opponents as well as to bridge the social divide between the Buddhists and Catholics. All these aspects of the Buddhist movement were marked by a distinct religious ethos, one that intertwined with a nationalistic outlook to characterise the Buddhists' social action.

In the pre-modern history of Vietnam, there exists a state-sangha relationship that seems to reflect a positive and symbiotic division of labor in a rather similar fashion to Asoka's reign—the monks served a advisors to the Vietnamese monarchs, while the kings pursued enlightened policies based on the dharma. The kings also exercised their prerogatives over violence, and in the Ly and Tran dynasties they achieve notable military victories against the Chinese, the Cham and the Mongols. Vietnamese Buddhism, during the pre-modern period clearly enjoyed its status as a 'religion of the status quo'—and yet under colonialism it transforms into a 'religion of resistance' and indeed became a spiritual 'domain of sovereignty' from which Vietnamese nationalism articulated itself.

I have discussed the Vietnamese self-immolations at length as they raise critical questions for elucidating the constitutive operation of nonviolence. Gandhi noted that '*ahimsa* is the most efficacious in front of the greatest *himsa*. Its quality is really

tested only in such cases.'[400] I would venture to add that the greater the *hiṃsā*, the greater the *ahiṃsā* needed to counter it, which, in turn requires greater self-sacrifice (interiorisation of violence) by the nonviolent actor. The momentous self-sacrifice of the Vietnamese Buddhists were not anomalous or contradictory to nonviolence but intrinsic to it. Against the overwhelming violence they faced in the 1960s, the Vietnamese Buddhists chose the path of nonviolence and defended it with their lives.

[400] Gandhi (1948), Vol. 1, op.cit., 205.

Chapter 4

Struggling for Freedom: the Tibetan Buddhists in Exile

Introduction

The Buddhists' engagement in the Tibetan liberation movement is another example of a 'religion of resistance'. In this movement, Tibetan spiritual leaders like the 14th Dalai Lama draw on Buddhist teachings to formulate a nonviolent ethic for their struggle for freedom and to develop the political, cultural, and religious institutions in exile. The exile community has been preoccupied with a number of priorities alongside their policy towards the People's Republic of China (PRC), such as how to maintain internal Tibetan unity, how to preserve their spiritual traditions away from their homeland, and how to achieve political modernity befitting of a progressive nation in the 21st century. Together, these considerations have shaped the nonviolent movement of the Tibetans in exile.

In this chapter, I begin by providing an overview of the history of the Tibetan struggle. This is followed by a discussion of nonviolence as asserted and interpreted by the Dalai Lama, the exile government, and Samdhong Rinpoche. The latter is a high-ranking monk who served as the first elected Prime Minister in exile and who is a well-known Gandhian intellectual. These actors, however, represent the position of the exile establishment. In the final section, I look at counter perspectives from the Tibetan civil society on the goal and method of the Tibetan struggle.

The focus of this chapter is on the nonviolent movement of the Tibetans in exile, but insofar as events in Tibet bear upon the exile movement, such as the self-immolations in Tibet, I also discuss those developments. It should be noted that Tibetan Buddhism contains elements of Sravakayana (early Buddhism), Mahayana, and Vajrayana. However, I take up the Tibetan movement here as a case study of Mahayana Buddhism since the doctrines of this tradition tend to be highlighted in their nonviolent ideology. The Mahayana tradition, with its emphasis on the salvation of all sentient beings, provides a particularly rich source of nonviolent inspiration for socially engaged Buddhists.

Historical Background of the Tibetan Struggle

The history of the Tibetan liberation struggle can be divided broadly into two periods: the period of violent resistance from the mid-1950s to mid-1970s, and the nonviolent resistance which began in the late 1980s and continues till today. Since the nature of the struggle inside Tibet bears important influence upon the character of the movement in exile, in this section I review the past and present campaigns of resistance inside Tibet by way of offering a background of the exile movement.

THE OCCUPATION OF TIBET

The PRC was established on 1 October 1949 with the victory of the Communists over the Kuomingtang. After consolidating their victory, the Communists began to focus their attention on the peripheral regions, and in early October 1950 the People's Liberation Army (PLA) entered Chamdo, the capital of East Tibet, whereupon the Battle of Chamdo ensued. The Tibetan armed forces which totalled 8,000 proved to be no match for the 40,000-strong PLA, and before long, Chamdo fell to the Chinese.[1]

In April 1951, the Tibet government in Lhasa sent a five-member delegation to Beijing which was involved in the establishment of the so-called '17 Point Agreement' on 23 May 1951. The status of this delegation is a point of much contention between the Chinese and Tibetan sides. According to a Chinese White Paper, this delegation had been entrusted with plenipotentiary powers but the CTA maintains that the delegation was not authorized to conclude agreements and was requested to revert to the Lhasa government for all matters of importance.[2] The CTA, however, describes the 17 Point Agreement as an agreement signed by the Tibetan delegation without consultation with the Lhasa government and under duress from the Chinese authorities.[3] The Tibetans also claim that, in order to make the agreement look authentic, the Chinese authorities had forged Tibet's official seal to affix on the agreement.[4]

This agreement provided for the legalization of Chinese occupation of Tibet and transferred all diplomatic powers of Tibet to the PRC. However, with regard to internal matters, Tibet was given autonomous powers, in that the Chinese government was required to respect the position and authority of Tibetan leaders such as the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama and to listen to their views. The agreement also provided that the Tibetan religion and tradition be respected.[5]

The Dalai Lama and the Lhasa government were left with little choice but to acquiesce to this disadvantageous arrangement but they planned to negotiate an amended agreement in the future. However, on 9 September 1951, further moves by the Chinese authorities to consolidate its rule over Tibet were taken when 3,000 PLA soldiers marched into Lhasa, followed by 20,000 PLA soldiers into Tibet.[6] By consolidating their occupation, the Chinese authorities were able to assume a position in which they were able to refute the renegotiation of the 17 Point Agreement. As a result, the Dalai Lama lost all powers of leverage against China and was forced to consider exile. It was only in June 1959 when Dalai Lama regained his freedom of speech after escaping to India that he publicly refuted the 17 Point Agreement as

---

[1] Fiona McConnell (2016) *Rehearsing the State: The Political Practices of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile*. West Sussex: Wiley & Sons, 52

[2] Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tokyo (2016a) "Chūkyō-chibetto 17 kajō kyōtei ni tsuite 中共・チベット１７ヶ条協定について": http://www.tibethouse.jp/cta/beijing/19510523_17agreements.html (accessed 12 November 2015)

[3] Dalai Lama (1962) *My Land and My People: Memoirs of the Dalai Lama of Tibet*, New York: Potala Corporation, 87.

[4] Ibid, 88; See also Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa (1982) *Tibet: A Political History*. New Delhi: Paljor Publications, 417.

[5] Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) (1999) *Chibetto Nyūmon* チベット入門. Suwashi, Nagano: Choeisha, 77.

[6] Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tokyo (2016b) "Kyōsan chūgoku no chibetto shinnyū: chūgoku kyōsan-gun rasa ni tōchaku 共産中国のチベット侵入 - 中国共産党軍、ラサに到着 -": http://www.tibethouse.jp/about/mainland/history/19510909.html (accessed 5 February 2015)

something that was 'forced upon the Tibetan government people with the backing of military might.'[7]

However, there is also a view that claims that the 17 Point Agreement was first abandoned by the Chinese. This view points to the fact that the clause stipulating that Tibet's political structures will not be changed was violated in April 1956 when the Chinese authorities created a Preparatory Committee for Autonomous Region of Tibet to replace the traditional government of the Tibetans. The sole function of this committee was to approve the matters decided by the central government of the PRC and in reality the committee had no independent decision-making powers. The Tibetan representative of this committee was not in a position to make new proposals or to diverge from the decisions made by the PRC. The Dalai Lama describes the political situation of this period as follows: 'The Preparatory Committee was powerless. The Tibetan representative a mere puppet and the real power was held by the Chinese. In reality, the basic policies were all decided by the Tibetan Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, which did not include a Tibetan committee member.'[8]

With the arrival of the PLA in Lhasa, the repressive policies of the Chinese authorities against the Tibetans were instituted. With the deployment of large numbers of PLA soldiers to Tibet, the Lhasa government was forced to secure all the necessities for the maintenance of the PLA, such as land for military camps and food for the troops. As a result, food shortage and inflation occurred, and the hitherto stable Tibetan economy fell into crisis and Lhasa was on the verge of famine.[9] As a means of strengthening Chinese rule, 're-education' programmes involving the enactment of class struggle called 'thamzing' were held from place to place, which aimed to reverse the power relations between tenants and landowners, students and teachers, and even children and parents. Many of whom were deemed as 'enemies' in such class struggles met their death in the course of the re-education campaigns.[10]

VIOLENT RESISTANCE IN TIBET: MID-1950s TO MID-1970s

The guerrilla army for the liberation of Tibet that emerged in the 1950s was called Tensung Dhanglang Magar, which translates as 'National Volunteer Army for the Defense of Buddhism'.[11] Apart from the defense of the nation, as its name suggests, this volunteer corps held as one of its key aims, the defense of Tibetan Buddhism and the central figure of that religion, the Dalai Lama. Many of its members were from the Eastern Tibet regions of Kham and Amdo, which had a long history of resistance against the Chinese.

According to the guerrilla forces' leader Gonpo Tashi Andrugtsang, the formation of the *Tensung Dhanglang Magar* could be traced back to the revolt in eastern Tibet in 1952,[12] though Ardley suggests that the first time the name '*Tensung Dhanglang*

---

[7] DIIR (1999), op.cit., 78.
[8] Ibid, 84.
[9] Shakabpa (1982), op.cit., 418.
[10] Jane Ardley (2002) *The Tibetan Independence Movement: Political, religious, and Gandhian perspectives*. London: Routeledge Curzon, 8
[11] Ibid, 22; Jamyang Norbu (1994) "The Tibetan Resistance Movement and the Role of the C.I.A" in Robert Barnett and Shirin Akiner (eds.) *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, London: Hurst & Company: 186-196, 193
[12] Gompo Tashi Andrugtsang (1973) *Four Rivers, Six Ranges*, Dharamsala: Information and Publicity Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 7;

Magar' was used was in 1956 by a loose alliance of tribal rebels in Eastern Tibet.[13] In the initial revolt in 1952-1953, it is estimated that around 80,000 rebels took part, of which some were said to be deserters from Kuomingtang.[14] Certain sources estimate that by 1954, the rebels were 40,000 in membership, and by 1956, 10,000.[15] There are also reports which indicate that the guerrillas received some level of external support: it is said that the rebels in Amdo were given military assistance by the Kuomintang and that Kham guerrillas received military training in Taiwan in 1956.[16]

By 1956, Eastern Tibet had descended into open warfare. The guerrillas of Kham and Amdo enjoyed a measure of advantage in the beginning as they were used to the high altitude of the mountains and exploited their knowledge of the local terrain to launch attacks. Acts of butchery are reported on both sides. For example, the Goloks, who were tribesmen in Amdo, were said to have 'maimed 2,000 Chinese troops by cutting off their noses, and killed up to 8,000'[17] in 1956. On the Chinese side too, acts of savagery were committed as mentioned by the Dalai Lama's autobiography:

> It was not until I read the report published in 1959 by the International Commission of Jurists that I fully accepted what I had heard: crucifixion, vivisection, disembowelling and dismemberment of victims was commonplace. So too were beheading, burning, beating to death and burying alive, not to mention dragging people behind galloping horses until they died or hanging them upside down or throwing them bound hand and foot into icy water. And, in order to prevent them shouting out, 'Long live the Dalai Lama', on the way to execution, they tore out their tongues with meat hooks.[18]

The stream of refugees coming in from Kham and Amdo into Lhasa from 1956 to 1957 caused the revolt in Eastern Tibet to spread to the entire Tibetan region. The PLA suppressed the revolts with military means of increasing sophistication. One of the reasons why the monasteries were a target for Chinese destruction was that they believed the leaders of the guerrilla forces to be monks,[19] though Ardley points out that this was not the case. [20] Yet it was nevertheless true that there was a close and cooperative relationship between the guerrilla forces and the Tibetan Buddhist monasteries, since the latter tended to regard the guerrillas as their defender, and also because the monasteries often stored guns and ammunition for the monastic police (*dobdob*) which were shared with the forces.[21] It is against this background that the targeted destruction of Tibetan monasteries by the Chinese military should be understood.[22]

From 1957 onwards, the guerrilla forces began to operate from Lhoka, situated south of Lhasa. At Lhoka, the *Tensung Dhanglang Magar* unified and consolidated its forces. Although this volunteer army enjoyed wide support among the Tibetan populace, they were never able to receive the formal backing of the Lhasa

---

[13] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 29

[14] Dawa Norbu (2001) *China's Tibet Policy*, Surrey: Curzon, 18

[15] Ibid, 19; Anna-Louise Strong (1960) *When Serfs Stood Up in Tibet.* Peking: New World Press, 65; George Patterson (1960) *Tibet in Revolt*. London: Faber and Faber, 93

[16] Patterson, ibid, 93; Chris Mullin (1975) "Tibetan Conspiracy" *Far Eastern Economic Review* 133 (36), 31

[17] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 29; Patterson, ibid, 125–6.

[18] Dalai Lama (1990a) *Freedom in Exile: Autobiography of the Dalai Lama*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 124

[19] International Commission of Jurists (1959) *The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law.* Geneva: ICJ, 40-41. According to the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan monasteries destroyed by the PRC before 1958 exceeded 1,000. See Ardley (2002), op.cit., 30

[20] Ardley, ibid., 29

[21] Ibid, 16.

[22] International Commission of Jurists, op.cit., 40-41.

government.[23] The *Tensung Dhanglang Magar* requested the Dalai Lama and Lhasa many times for official support but due to Chinese pressure, the Tibetan government was in no position to respond positively to the request of the guerrillas. In fact, in 1959 the Dalai Lama had even asked the guerrillas to give up their weapons, though not without battling an inner dilemma, which can be observed from his memoirs:

> Part of me greatly admired the guerrilla fighters. They were brave people, men and women, and they were putting their lives and their children's lives at stake to try to save our religion and country in the only remaining way that they could see. When one heard of the terrible deeds of the Chinese in the east, it was a natural human reaction to seek revenge. And moreover, I knew they regarded themselves as fighting in loyalty to me as Dalai Lama: the Dalai Lama was the core of what they were trying to defend. Yet I was forced back to my old argument. I often thought again of my visit to the Rajghat, and wondered afresh what advice Mahatma Gandhi would have given me in the changing circumstances. Would he still have advised nonviolence? I could only believe he would. However great the violence used against us, it could never become right to use violence in reply. And on the practical side, I saw the atrocities in the east as a dreadful example of what the Chinese could do so easily all over Tibet if we fought them. I must, I thought, try yet again to persuade my people not to use arms, not to provoke the same or worse reprisals over the rest of our country. I asked the Cabinet to send a message to the Khampa leaders that these were my wishes.[24]

Yet, within a month of his statement to the Khampa rebels, the Lhasa Uprising would take place.

In 1959, just after the Tibetan Monlam (Great Prayer) festivities, the Dalai Lama had received an invitation from the Chinese authorities to see a dance troupe.[25] The day before the performance, the Dalai Lama was informed that he should 'dispense with the usual formality' and attend without the accompaniment of soldiers or only with a couple of unarmed body guards if absolutely necessary, and to conduct the whole affair in 'absolute secrecy'.[26] Determining that he could not refuse 'without causing a severe breach of diplomacy which might have very negative consequences'[27] the Dalai Lama agreed to participate. However, the people of Lhasa who feared for his life rose up in revolt, and on the morning of 10 March, the day of the scheduled performance, the Nobulinka Palace where the Dalai Lama resided was surrounded by 30,000 Tibetans. The enraged people of Lhasa who resolved to protect their leader, showed hostility to anyone who they suspected of collaborating with the Chinese.[28] Not a few were injured or even killed in this way. [29]

The uprising lasted for a number of days, during which the people of Lhasa did not move from the Nobulinka Palace. During this time, 'liberation committees' were spontaneously formed, and the people began organizing fresh demonstrations which the PLA quickly cracked down upon. Following days of consideration and several rounds of consultation with the Nechung oracle, the Dalai Lama decides to set out on a plan to escape to India.[30] A grave concern for him had been the intelligence received about the Chinese plans to shell Norbulinka and attack the unmoving crowd, and his leaving Nobulinka was also hoped to provide a reason to dispel the crowds.[31] In spite

[23] Dalai Lama (1990a), op.cit., 128.
[24] Dalai Lama (1962), op.cit., 160
[25] Dalai Lama (1990a), op.cit., 130
[26] Ibid., 132.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 36
[30] Ibid., 135-136
[31] Dalai Lama (1990a), op.cit., 135

of such hopes, however, the CTA notes that over 87,000 people lost their lives during the uprising.[32] After the Dalai Lama's exile to India becomes known to the Chinese authorities, the Lhasa government was dismantled and replaced by military government. The Dalai Lama's escape to India in 1959 caused an exodus of 80,000 Tibetan refugees who followed him not long after. Today, 10 March holds special patriotic significance among the Tibetan community and is commemorated yearly in exile as the 'Tibetan Uprising Day'.

With regard to the *Tensung Dhanglang Magar*, it is said that their biggest achievement was safeguarding the Dalai Lama's escape route from the Chinese.[33] After that, the guerrilla army did not count any major successes, but their resistance nevertheless continued till the mid-1970s. From 1959 to 1965, the CIA secretly trained a few hundred Tibetan soldiers at Camp Hale in Colorado. [34] However, since the sole aim of the CIA was to weaken the tide of Communism, and the purpose of the guerrilla army, the liberation of the fatherland; at some point the two diverged in their ultimate goal.[35] From 1960, the guerrillas' underground base was moved to Mustang in Nepal, and around 6,000 guerrillas are said to have operated from the Mustang base in the early 1960s.[36]

Given that the Tibetan fighters were overwhelmingly outnumbered by the PLA, it was not within their aim to defeat the PLA forces; instead they sought to disrupt Chinese military operations as much as they could. Yet, the remoteness of Mustang, factionalism within the army, and the cessation of CIA military support following the normalization of US-China relations in 1973, all contributed to the diminishing strength of the guerrilla army. It was not uncommon that the soldiers fighting over ten years would die of exhaustion or old age.[37] Further, Chinese pressure on Nepal resulted in the Nepalese military's attack on the Mustang base in 1974, further accelerating the decline of the guerrilla army.

NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE IN TIBET: LATE 1980s TO TODAY

Nonviolent resistance in Tibet has mainly taken place in two phases: the first in the late 1980s, and second, in the late 2000s. With regard to the former, the spread of nonviolent protest occurred after the fizzling out of the guerrilla forces in the mid-1970s and with the relaxation of China's religious repression in Tibet following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976.

The reason for this political loosening was to be found in the reflection of the Chinese leadership on the wreckage wrought during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), which brought about widespread destruction and death in Tibet as it did across the whole country.[38] After the passing of Mao Zedong, it became politically correct to admit to the errors of the Cultural Revolution, and there was a tendency to blame the

---

[32] Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) (2016) "History of the MWA" Middle Way Approach, Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://mwa.tibet.net/ (accessed 8 December 2015). Cf. Yan Hao (2000) "Tibetan Population in China: Myths and Facts Re-examined" *Asian Ethnicity* 1(1), March, 20 fn2.

[33] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 36; Mullin, op.cit., 30

[34] In 1962, approximately 170 guerrillas received military training by the CIA in Camp Hale. Mullin, op.cit., 30-33; Jamyang Norbu (1994), op.cit., 195-196.

[35] Jamyang Norbu (1994), op.cit., 196-195

[36] Michel Peissel (1972) *Cavaliers of Kham: The Secret War in Tibet.* London: Heinemann, 191.

[37] John F. Avedon (1997) *In Exile from the Land of Snows.* New York: HarperCollins, 125

[38] However, this was not specific to the destruction in Tibet but a much more generation reflection on the excesses of the large-scale devastation left behind by the Cultural Revolution in China.

'Gang of Four' for the worst excesses.[39] Yet, according to the Tibetan exile-government, in actual fact most of the destruction of Tibetan cultural heritage and monasteries had occurred before the Cultural Revolution: figures show that by 1962 97-99 percent of the Buddhist monasteries in Tibet were in ruin.[40]

Smith says that in 1980 the General Secretary of the Chinese Community Party (CCP) Hu Yaobang, visited Tibet and was shocked by the state of poverty he witnessed.[41] Subsequently China began to formulate policies for Tibet's cultural and economic revival. Basic Tibetan Buddhist practices such as prostrations and the offering of butter lamps were allowed but restrictions were still placed on religious teachings and a ban continued on the possession of the Dalai Lama's photograph.[42]

Nevertheless, the liberalization of the Tibetan economy and culture—albeit within limits—led to the revival of Tibetan nationalism. In particular, the regaining of a measure of religious freedom had direct implications for the revival of Tibetan nationalism, demonstrating the inextricable linkages between Tibetan Buddhism and national identity.[43] Historically, politics have been deeply intertwined with religion in Tibet and some commentators locate the very premise of the Tibetans' political resistance in their defence of religion and culture.[44]

The demonstrations that occurred from 1987 were on the whole nonviolent, despite some incidents of destruction of buildings and stone-throwing, and the occasional escalation of protest to violence. Certainly compared to the armed resistance of the 1950s to 1970s, the Tibetan struggle took at conscious turn towards nonviolence. The immediate reasons for the first round of protest in late September 1987 were the public executions of two Tibetans and the Chinese government's condemnation of the Dalai Lama's Five Point Peace Plan, which was presented as a way forward on negotiating the Tibet issue, as a 'splittist policy' to fracture the 'motherland'. To protest against the PRC's actions, over 20 Tibetan monks began a form of demonstration which appropriated religious ritual.[45] Their demonstration was based on the ritual of *korra*, which was a religious practice involving the clock-wise circumambulation around religious buildings. The monks walked around Jokhang monastery, waving prohibited Tibetan flags and chanting, instead of prayers, slogans which called for Tibet's independence and criticised the Chinese policies.[46] This new form of protest based on the *korra* became a model for demonstrations that were followed for the next five years.[47] It is reported that the monks behind these protests also articulated and adhered to three principles: first, to maintain nonviolent discipline

---

[39] The Gang of Four comprised four Chinese Communist Party (CCP) members, including and led by Mao Zedong's last wife Jiang Qing. It is said that they controlled the CCP towards the later stages of the Cultural Revolution, although it is unclear which decisions were made by Mao Zedong himself and which were the Gang of Four's own initiative.

[40] Liaison Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia (2016) "Chibetto no Rekishi チベットの歴史": http://www.tibethouse.jp/about/culture/history/ (accessed 17 January 2016)

[41] Warren W. Smith Jr. (2004) "China's Policy on Tibetan Autonomy" *East-West Center Washington Working Papers* No. 2, October, East-West Center, Washington, available at: http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/EWCWwp002.pdf (accessed 10 December 2015), 18.

[42] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 23

[43] Warren W. Smith Jr. (1996) *Tibetan Nationalism: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations*, Colarado: Westview Press, 577

[44] Ronald D. Schwartz (1994) *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising*, London: Hurst and Company, 1

[45] Smith (1996), op.cit., 602.

[46] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 24-5

[47] Schwartz, op.cit., 20.

even if threatened with death; second, to welcome participation from the general populace; and third, even if subjected to torture, to never reveal the name of the other participants.[48]

The protest in September 1987 was joined by 200 lay Tibetans, who were later beaten by the police and arrested. Four days later, on 1 October 1987, 60 monks and lay people demonstrated in a similar manner around Jokhang monastery as a show of solidarity to the arrested monks and to call for Tibet's independence. These protesters too were arrested, which prompted more Tibetans to assemble outside the police station to call for their release. In the end, the protest escalated and fire was set to the police station, causing the police to fire into the crowd, which resulted in ten casualties and seven deaths.[49]

On 5 March 1988, the last day of the Monlam Chenmo (Great Prayer) Ceremony, numerous monks protested against the arrest of university lecturer Yulo Dawa Tsering which took place after he discussed, with a foreign journalist, the state of Chinese oppression of Tibet. The monks called for Tibet's independence during their demonstration, which once again escalated to violence. The clash between the Tibetan protestors and Chinese police lasted for some time and it is alleged that a few dozen Tibetans were killed[50] and around a thousand arrested and tortured as a result.[51] These demonstrations in Lhasa led to the introduction of more heavy-handed measures by the Chinese authorities. The arrested demonstrators were forced to undergo 'political re-education' and the monasteries and nunneries again became a target for surveillance and attack.

Fresh demonstrations began in late 1988 to early 1989[52] when Tibetans protested against the harsh sentences given to those arrested during the 1988 riots. An additional aggrieving factor was the death of the Panchen Lama (the second highest spiritual authority of Tibet after the Dalai Lama) in late January 1989 under suspicious circumstances. Official Chinese figures reported about a dozen deaths over the two days from 5-6 March 1989 but according to a former Chinese journalist, there were 387 people killed, including 82 religious people, according to a report he saw from the Public Security Bureau.[53] As a result of the revolts, Martial Law was declared in March 1989 and foreigners were forced to leave Tibet. The protests also spread to Amdo, where the Tibetans, encouraged by the demonstrations in Lhasa, started a protest against birth control and population transfer policies of China.

20 years on, a new round of protests erupted on 10 March 2008, the 49th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising Day. These demonstrations occurred in the months before the Beijing Summer Olympics, and attracted a significant amount of media attention. In total, the demonstrations spread to over 90 locations, and although

---

[48] Mary Craig (1992) *Tears of Blood: A Cry for Tibet.* London: HarperCollins, 259

[49] Pierre-Antoine Donnet (1994) *Tibet: Survival in Question* (trans. Tica Broch). London: Zed Books, 14

[50] Tibetan sources claim that at least 30 Tibetans deaths were killed. See Student for a Free Tibet (2016) "Uprisings" Student for a Free Tibet: https://www.studentsforafreetibet.org/Plone/about-tibet/uprisings (accessed 12 January 2016).

[51] Smith, 1996, 607-608

[52] December 1988 and January 1989, and again in February (around the time the Monlam Chenmo and the Tibetan New Year) and March 1989 (in the lead up of the 30th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising of March 1959).

[53] The New York Times (1990) "Chinese Said to Kill 450 Tibetans in 1989", *New York Times*, 14 August 1990 http://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/14/world/chinese-said-to-kill-450-tibetans-in-1989.html (accessed 13 January 2016)

in most cases they began non-violently, some protests escalated to violence.[54] It was not until May 2008 that the Chinese authorities were able to contain these protests.[55] From the protesters' slogans and display of Tibetan flags, it is understood that their demands were freedom and independence.[56] These series of demonstrations, which were also led by Tibetan Buddhist monks, were in most cases nonviolent in nature, though with the participation of lay Tibetans, they sometimes turned into a violent riot. On a few occasions, Chinese shops were set on fire, resulting in the killings of both Chinese and Tibetans.

After February 2009, the protests in the Tibetan area inside the PRC have taken the form of self-immolations. The incidents of self-immolation drastically increased after 2011, and as at September 2015, over 140 cases of self-immolation have been counted.[57] This radical form of protest is a dramatization of the oppression and suffering of a people who have exhausted all other means of nonviolent resistance; it is a final expression of the will to struggle and an internalization of the violence the Tibetans have experienced over the decades short of redirecting that violence externally. I shall return to the subject of the Tibetan self-immolations later in this chapter.

Nonviolence of the Tibetan Exile Leadership

THE DALAI LAMA

Traditionally, the Dalai Lama was both the spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet. Ever since the Mongol leader Gushri Khan conferred on the Fifth Dalai Lama temporal authority over the whole of Tibet in 1642, the historical Dalai Lamas since then have held both temporal and spiritual authority.[58] Thus, the institution of the Dalai Lama 'collapses into one the two poles around which a Buddhist society is organised,' the sangha and the laity, the priest and the patron, and combined both in the person of the Dalai Lama.[59] Much of the 14th Dalai Lama's political reforms in the exile society aimed to extricate his temporal powers from his spiritual authority in an effort to achieve political modernity as well as a level of parity between the different Tibetan Buddhist sects by reducing the historical prerogatives of the Geluk sect. The Dalai

---

[54] Warren W. Smith Jr. (2010) *Tibet's Last Stand? The Tibetan Uprising of 2008 and China's Response*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2-4.
[55] Ibid, 11-39.
[56] Ibid, 3.
[57] International Campaign for Tibet (2015) "Self-Immolation by Tibetans": (http://www.savetibet.org/resources/fact-sheets/self-immolations-by-tibetans/ (accessed 21 September 2015)
[58] Smith (1996), op.cit., 107; David Seyfort Ruegg (2004) "Introductory Remaks on the Spiritual and Temporal Orders" in Christoph Cüppers Ed. (2000) *The Relationship Between Religion and State (chos Srid Zung'brel) in Traditional Tibet: Proceedings of a Seminar Held in Lumbini*. Nepal, March 2000. Vol. 1, Lumbini International Research Institute: 9-13 at 11.
[59] Georges Dreyfus (1995) "Law, State, and Political Ideology in Tibet." Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies 18 (1): 117–138 at 121; Dreyfus, G. (2002) "Tibetan Religious Nationalism: Western Fantasy or Empowering Vision?" In Klieger, P. C. (Ed). Tibet, Self, and the Tibetan Diaspora: Voices of Difference (PIATS 2000: Tibetan Studies: Proceedings of the Ninth Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies, Leiden 2000). Leiden: BRILL: 37-55 at 45 fn24.

Lama has also sought to achieve nonviolent solution on the issue of Tibet—though in this regard in endeavours have been fraught with difficulties.

Constructive Programme in Exile: Political Reform

As seen in Chapter 1, nonviolence is not only composed of 'negative' actions such as protests and noncooperation but also 'positive' actions which point towards an alternative to the opponent's action that embodies a solution to the conflict. For Gandhi, positive nonviolence was captured in the 'constructive programme',[60] which was essentially a village improvement movement to increase self-sufficiency and eradicate injustice. Similarly, the 14th Dalai Lama's establishment of a democratic government in exile is also a type of 'constructive programme' aimed for the self-development of the Tibetans.[61] At the same time, the creation of a 'government-in-exile' itself constitutes a powerful protest against China and an assertion of the political alternative sought by the Tibetans: a fair and representative government which ensures freedom, political inclusion, and respect for Tibetan religion and tradition. The democratic reforms, which have been pushed through by the Dalai Lama, are probably the aspects of the exile movement which has enjoyed the most success.

In India, the 14th Dalai Lama found fertile ground on which to build the institutions and processes of political modernity, for there was an intrinsic equalizing dynamic that operated in the shared experience of exile that served to flatten many of the old hierarchies.[62] After the Dalai Lama's escape to India in 1959 in the wake of the National Uprising in Tibet, there was an exile of some 80,000 Tibetan refugees who followed him to India. That same year in India he established the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA)—what was to become known as the Tibetan 'government-in-exile'—and the following year created a parliament which represented the three Tibetan provinces (Ü-Tsang, Kham and Amdo) and four major Tibetan Buddhist schools (Sakya, Nyingma, Kagyu, Geluk). The religious representation is a unique feature of the exile parliament and a means by which the concerns of the sizeable Tibetan monastic community are voiced in a political forum. The Tibetan indigenous religion of Bön was added to the parliamentary representation in 1977, and regional representatives from Europe and North America were included since the 1990s to reflect the changing demographics of the Tibetan diaspora.[63]

As Jamyang Norbu points out, in reality the 'democracy' derived in 1960 was more symbolic than substantive, for the parliament, though popularly elected, was only a 13-member assembly with no legislative function and had no role in influencing the selection of the ministers of the Dalai Lama's cabinet.[64] Nevertheless, the exile administration represented a clear break from the past. The most significant change was the abolition of the traditional dyarchy of equivalent ecclesiastical and

---

[60] Mohandas Gandhi (1997) *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings.* Anthony J. Parel Ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 179.

[61] Nonviolence International (2000) *Truth is Our Only Weapon.* Bangkok, Nonviolence International, 10; Ardley (2002), op.cit., 83.

[62] Stephanie Roemer (2008) *The Tibetan Government-in-exile: Politics at Large*. London ; New York: Routledge, 69 & 91-92.

[63] Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) (2012) *Democracy in Exile: Special Report 2012*. Dharamsala, India: TCHRD, 23 & 26

[64] Jamyang Norbu (1990) "Opening of the political eye: Tibet's long search for democracy." *Tibetan Review* November: 13-17 at 14.

secular offices and the hereditary prerogatives of the old Tibetan aristocracy.[65] The exile administration transitioned to a meritocracy and many appointments that were previously made by the Dalai Lama to the higher offices of the civil service are now based on 'achievement rather than ascription.'[66] The CTA claims its legitimacy on the basis of being the continuation of the Lhasa government[67] but in respect of its structure and character, the administration has been significantly transformed.

Buildings of the CTA as photographed by author in 2005

Left: Ministry of Finance, CTA.

Apart from building the institutions of a democratic government, the Dalai Lama also spurred a series of democratic reforms over a number of decades, which entailed extricating his political authority from his religious authority and devolving the former to democratically elected officials. These processes of democratization and devolution have taken place in three main stages over the decades. The major parliamentary restructuring in 1990-1991 represented the first significant devolution of his temporal powers. This ended the custom of the successive Dalai Lamas' appointment of cabinet members in favor of selection by the parliament. The Tibetan leader also renounced his authority to endorse the elected parliamentary deputies. The second stage of his devolution took shape in the introduction of prime ministerial elections in 2001 and includes his self-declared 'semi-retirement' in 2003. Until then, the members of the cabinet had elected one among themselves as the prime minister for a term of one year.[68] The new change meant that the people would directly elect the prime minister, who would then choose his cabinet ministers subject to approval by the parliament. In 2003 the Dalai Lama decided to devolve the majority of his substantive administrative responsibilities, and from this point on, he began to refer to himself as being in 'semi-retirement,' retaining only a handful of duties as the head-of-state.[69] This second stage of devolution involved a major transfer of responsibility

[65] Paul Christiaan Klieger (1991) *Tibetan Nationalism: the Role of Patronage in the Accomplishment of a National Identity*. Meerut, India: Archana Publications, 81.
[66] Ibid.
[67] CTA (2001a) *Introduction to the Central Tibetan Administration*. Dharamsala, India: Department of Information and International Relations, 1.
[68] Tibetan Bulletin (2001) "Governing in Exile: A Step in Democratic Direction." *Tibetan Bulletin* Sept-Oct: 5-7 at 5.
[69] These include the right to approve bills passed by the exile parliament, promulgate acts and ordinances, and dissolve the parliament.

from the Dalai Lama to the elected prime minister, the exile parliament and the CTA offices, including the power to appoint the justice commissioners, the heads of statutory bodies and the ambassadors of the foreign Tibet Offices.[70] It also took away the Dalai Lama's control over the civil service and his right to approve major government decisions.[71]

In the third stage, a decade after the inauguration of direct prime ministerial elections, the Dalai Lama decided to completely devolve his temporal powers in March 2011, signalling the culmination of his efforts to democratize the Tibetan polity. Despite protestations and proposals of alternatives, he refused to retain even a ceremonial role as head-of-state.[72] Today, the only mention of the Dalai Lama in the *Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile* is in Article 1, which recognizes him as the 'Protector and Symbol of Tibet and Tibetan People' and assigns to him purely advisory roles which are not binding on the elected leadership.[73]

It should be borne in mind that belying the reasonably orderly and stepwise progression of democratization in exile, with ten-year intervals between each major reform, the full devolution of the Dalai Lama's political powers in 2011 nevertheless marked a radical departure from traditional Tibetan politics: it ended a 369-year-old practice of vesting both spiritual and temporal authority in the Dalai Lama.[74] The democratization process also required a significant psychological shift for the Tibetans in exile. As Lhasang Tsering, a known commentator on the exile society, told me: 'His Holiness is the greatest strength of our people but I dare say he is also our greatest weakness. Because he's such a widely respected leader, Tibetans, it seems, are so dependent on His Holiness. We have lost our ability to think for ourselves.'[75] These sentiments are echoed by the Dalai Lama himself, who says, 'no matter how useful for Tibetan culture, in a way my presence as a leader will become an obstacle for a healthy democratic practice. It will become an obstacle to the development of individual opinions. Individual Tibetans automatically have less sense of responsibility while I am here.'[76]

The problem of over-dependency on the Dalai Lama and the lack of independent thinking by the governed has perhaps been the biggest challenge to the democratization efforts promoted by the Dalai Lama. As Edin notes, 'as soon as the Dalai Lama intends to give away some of his power, his people protest and work against him by using the democratic channels given to them… It can be argued that a leader that holds the unquestioned legitimacy of his people does not require the help of democratic process to obtain the right to govern. This poses a dilemma to democracy, as a normative concept (1992, 47).'

---

[70] Tibetan Review (2003) "Dalai Lama devolves his powers to elected leaders." *Tibetan Review* October: 13.

[71] Lobsang Sangay (2010) "Constitutional Analysis of the Secularization of the Tibetan Diaspora" in Leonard V. Kaplan and Charles L. Cohen (Eds). *Theology and the Soul of the Liberal State.* New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: 291-320 at 210

[72] Tibetan Review (2011a) "Dalai Lama turns down head-of-state role" *Tibetan Review* June: 6

[73] Tibetan Review (2011b) "Dalai Lama signs himself out of political power" *Tibetan Review* July: 10

[74] CTA (2011a) *Collected Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Devolution of Power to the Elected Leaders of Central Tibetan Administration*. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Information and International Relations, 19; Tibetan Review (2011b), ibid, 10.

[75] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lhasang Tsering, former President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 17 March 2005.

[76] Quoted in Helen R. Boyd (2004) *The Future of Tibet: the Government-in-exile Meets the Challenge of Democratization*. New York: Peter Lang, 33.

A classic example can be found in the resistance of the Constitution Redrafting Committee to the task they were charged with in the late 1980s, namely the redrafting of a new constitutional document (the 1991 Charter) that would reduce the Dalai Lama's powers of appointing parliamentary deputies. The petition of the committee to the Dalai Lama read:

> Your Holiness is the eye and heart of the Tibetan people. Your Holiness is the soul of the Tibetan nation and its spiritual and temporal polity. The Tibetan people, both in and outside Tibet, look to your Holiness with absolute reverence and hope. No leader of a democracy enjoys as much trust from the people as Your Holiness does. *From this perspective the existing system does reflect genuine democracy*. Therefore…kindly continue to take responsibility as our leader.[77]

The dilemma that is exemplified here is, in Weberian terms, one brought about by the contradiction between the Dalai Lama's legitimacy as derived from his traditional and charismatic authority on the one hand, and the basis for modern democratic legitimacy on the other, which emphasises procedural fairness and checks on political power.[78] The usage of the word 'democracy' in the petition above is an interesting sleight-of-hand that uses modern political terminology to vindicate the Dalai Lama's traditional-charismatic authority.

Even in the late 1970s the concept of voting remained arcane for many exiles as illustrated by the following description by the Chairman of the Seventh ATPD:

> A lot of people go into the election tent and just pray to His Holiness. 'I don't know any of these candidates, but please let me choose the right one to help the Dalai Lama and the people.' Then they close their eyes, put their finger down and ask the election officer, "Would you see whose name is here." When they hear it they reply, 'Oh it's so-and-so. I'll vote for him.'[79]

Commentators have remarked that some Tibetans treat democracy like a 'special ritual' that they participate in because the Dalai Lama has asked them to do so rather than to actually influence government policy.[80] Democracy is described by the Tibetans as a "gift" from the Dalai Lama[81] rather than their rightful prerogative and the Dalai Lama's gifting of democracy is often compared with the Buddha giving religious teachings.[82] The reality is that the position of the Dalai Lama is what has 'helped bring legitimacy to the democratic process rather than the other way around.'[83]

However, this situation appears to be changing with the complete devolution of the Dalai Lama's political authority in 2011. The 2011 prime ministerial elections, in

---

[77] Quoted in Roemer, op.cit., 96 (emphasis added)

[78] See Max Weber (1968) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Volumes 1-3. Guenther Roth and Ckus Wittich (Eds). Berkeley: University of California Press, 215-216, 241-242 & 1124.

[79] Lodi Gyari quoted in John F. Avedon (1997) *In Exile from the Land of Snows. London: Wisdom*, 108.

[80] Roemer, op.cit., 167; Fiona McConnell (2009) "Democracy-in-Exile: The 'Uniqueness' and Limitations of Exile Tibetan Democracy." *Sociological Bulletin* 58 (1): 271-310 at 279

[81] Pema Thinley (2000) "Editorial: Pitfalls of Gifted Democracy." *Tibetan Review* July: 3; Pema Thinley (2010) "Editorial: Time to unpack our gift of democracy." *Tibetan Review* September: 3

[82] McConnell, ibid, 278; Trine Brox (2012) "Unyoking the Political from the Religious: Secularisation and Democratisation in the Tibetan Community in Exile" in Bubandt, N, and M. van Beek (Eds). *Varieties of Secularism in Asia: Anthropological Explorations of Religion, Politics and the Spiritual*. Abingdon, Oxford; New York: Routledge: 55-74 at 58.

[83] Maria Edin (1992) "Transition to Democracy in Exile. A Study of the Tibetan Government's Strategy for Self-Determination." University of Uppsala, Department of Government Minor Field Study, 47. Also Lobsang Sangay (2010), op.cit., 308.

fact, witnessed unprecedented levels of democratic participation and enthusiasm. Given that these elections occurred in the same year as the Dalai Lama's devolution, they held a special significance for the exile community in that a large share of the Dalai Lama's political powers would flow to the newly elected prime minister. The increased political engagement of the exile community in the 2011 elections is evident from the number of registered and actual voters for the three prime ministerial elections since 2001 (see Table 2). There appears to be a commonly shared view that, had the electoral rules allowed Samdhong Rinpoche (the first elected prime minister in exile) to run for a third term, he would have enjoyed an easy victory.[84] However, because of the rule against a prime minister's incumbency for a third consecutive term and the absence of an inevitable favored candidate for the 2011 elections, there was widespread curiosity as to who would win the elections.

Table 2: Registered and Actual Voters at the Prime Ministerial Elections 2001-2011[85]

Year	Number of registered voters	Number of actual voters	Actual voters as a percentage of registered voters
2001	67,376	35,184	52%
2006	72,000	32,205	44%
2011	82,000	49,184	60%

This interest was also fanned by the new campaign style introduced to the exile community by the winning candidate, Lobsang Sangay. Until then, exile elections featured neither pre-election debate nor campaign visits and had 'been dominated by cultural values which promote humility and regard self-promotion negatively.'[86] However, the 2011 elections, which saw 17 rounds of pre-election debates, proved to be very different. 43-year-old Lobsang Sangay, who had been a Fulbright Fellow at Harvard Law School, had in fact taken a course on political campaigning at Harvard in preparation for the elections. He went on an unprecedented campaign trail, visiting Tibetan diaspora communities in thirty countries and in remote settlements of India.[87] After more than five decades, the Dalai Lama's 'constructive programme' in creating a democratic polity in exile seems to have come to fruition.

[84] Semi-structured interview with Ms. Tenzin Chokey, General Secretary of the Central Executive Committee, Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), 10 July 2012; semi-structured interview with a sweater seller (anonymous), 27 July 2012.
[85] These figures are compiled from Lobsang Sangay (2011) and figures received from the CTA Election Commissioner (Personal communication with Mr. Jampal Chosang, Election Commissioner, 29 August 2012).
[86] Fiona McConnell (2011) "Exile Tibetan Elections 2011, Briefing report for parliamentarians," Office of Tibet, London: 1-4 at 4.
[87] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Sangay, exile Prime Minister, 29 August 2012; Lobsang Sangay (2011) "Election of the Kalon Tripa (Prime Minister): A personal perspective." Talk at Fairbank Centre for Chinese Studies, 25 April 2011: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6QmQM_1nxM (accessed 10.1.2013).

Dalai Lama's Religious Policy: Secularism and Inter-sectarianism

Apart from building the institutions of democratic governance in exile, another important undertaking by the Dalai Lama for the Tibetan struggle has been to make a conscious effort to build harmonious relations between the different sects of Tibetan Buddhism. As noted above, one of the first moves in this direction was for the Tibetan leader to give parliamentary representation to the four major Buddhist sects (Sakya, Nyingma, Kagyu, Geluk), to which the Bön school was later added. This carried out under the stated goal of breaking with the Tibetan politics of the past where the Geluk sect had a dominant influence over the Lhasa government.

On the face of it, the Dalai Lama's religious policy towards the different Tibetan Buddhist sects may seem like it has little to do with the nonviolent movement of the Tibetans. However, when one considers that much of Tibetan history has been beset by sectarian strife and that inter-sectarian conflict is likely the foremost threat that could erode Tibetan national unity, the Dalai Lama's religious reforms must be appreciated as having a significance in the Tibetans' 'constructive programme' that equals, if not surpasses, his political reforms in exile. In short, these reforms have been carried out to strengthen the fabric of Tibetan society and the unity of their struggle.

The Dalai Lama's religious policy is based upon the notion of *rimé*, a term which carries associations of non-sectarianism, ecumenism, eclecticism and non-partiality.[88] Historically, *rimé* was a philosophical movement in nineteenth-century Eastern Tibet where its proponents promoted ecumenical relations between different Tibetan Buddhist sects in an effort to offset the political dominance of the Geluk sect in Lhasa.[89] In exile, however, the concept of *rimé* has been reformulated by the Dalai Lama to provide the ideological basis of two religious policies: secularism and inter-sectarianism.

As paradoxical as it may seem, coming from a foremost Tibetan lama clad in Buddhist robes, the Dalai Lama today is a vocal and ardent advocate of secularism. He explains his position in his recent English book *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World* (2012),[90] where he develops his case for a 'secular ethics' that upholds cherished human values common to, but not exclusively sourced in, individual religions. The Dalai Lama's project has not stopped at developing a universal 'secular ethics' but has extended to his promotion of 'secularism' within the exile government. The Tibetan neologism coined in exile to translate 'secularism' is *chöluk rimé*[91]; *chö luk* meaning 'religious system' and *ri mé* meaning 'non-discrimination'. The literal meaning of the Tibetan term for secularism therefore is 'non-discrimination among religions' or 'non-sectarianism'. Rather than a denial of religion, secularism in exile is, in fact, affirmative of religion and religious diversity, similar to the interpretation of

---

[88] Alexander P. Gardner (2006) "The twenty-five sites of Khams: religious geography, revelation and nonsectarianism in nineteenth-century Eastern Tibet." DPhil Thesis—University of Michigan (Asian Languages and Cultures: Buddhist Studies), 112; Lauran R. Hartley (1997) "A Socio-historical study of the Kingdom of sde-dge (Derge, Kham) in the late nineteenth century: *ris-med* views of alliance and authority." MA Thesis—Indiana University (Department of Central Eurasian Studies), 49.

[89] Georges Dreyfus (1999) "The Shuk-den Affair: Origins of a Controversy." [Originally printed in 1998 in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21(2)]. CTA, Dharamsala: Department of Information and International Relations, 30.

[90] Dalai Lama (2012) *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World*. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers India.

[91] This is the established rendition of the English word as translated in the widely-used Monlam dictionary as well as the term which is in currency in political circles in exile. See Karma Monlam (Ed.) (2000) *The New English-Tibetan Dictionary*. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Education.

secularism found in India, which has profoundly influenced the Tibetan community.[92] What the Dalai Lama aims to achieve through his project of secularism is thus to fashion a political doctrine which is respectful of Tibet's rich religious tradition and yet upholds a non-sectarian impartiality towards each Buddhist school so as to break with the traditional model of Tibetan politics where the Geluk sect held a privileged status.

While secularism is an ideology the Dalai Lama has promoted in the CTA, inter-sectarianism is an ethos he has cultivated within the monastic community.[93] In short, it is *rimé* in the form of ecumenical relations, and to an extent, eclecticism, that he has sought to revive in the contemporary Tibetan context. This direction perhaps came naturally to the Dalai Lama given he had been strongly influenced by several renowned *rimé* teachers, and following their example, he himself receives and gives the teachings of different schools.[94]

Rimé in the exile context has chiefly taken the form of promoting inter-sectarian learning and harmony between the monastic schools.[95] The Dalai Lama has supported the establishment of a number of *rimé* institutions around Dharamsala, such as Namgyal Monastery, the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, Jamyang Choling Institute, and Dolma Ling Nunnery, which tend to incorporate practices from different schools and engage in an inter-sectarian study of the Buddhist commentaries.[96] There is also a move to expand ecumenical learning to religions other than Buddhism. For example, one *geshe*[97] from Namgyal Monastery[98] informed me that he had participated in an interfaith exchange with a Catholic monastery in the USA where he resided for some months to learn about their faith and share his own.[99]

The Dalai Lama's religious policy, which has aspired to promote non-sectarianism in government and inter-sectarianism among the monastic community, has been largely successful but it has not been without its challenges. The greatest challenge has come from the followers of Shugen, a deity which was propitiated under the Geluk sect, ironically the same sect to which the Dalai Lama belongs. The history of

---

[92] See Rajeev Bhargava (2010) "The 'Secular Ideal' before Secularism: A Preliminary Sketch." In Linell E. Cady and Elizabeth S. Hurd (Eds). *Comparative Secularisms in a Global Age*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: 160-176; Rajeev Bhargava (2011) "Rehabilitating Secularism" in Craig J. Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (Eds). *Rethinking Secularism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 92-113. For the Dalai Lama's recognition of this influence, see Dalai Lama (2012), op.cit., 6-9.

[93] The Dalai Lama has explicitly stated that he believes secularism and interreligious harmony and exchanges to be the answers to religious conflict. See Dalai Lama (1999) *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for a New Millennium*. London: Abacus, 227-228.

[94] Ringu Tulku (1997) "The Rime Movement of Jamgon Kontrul the Great" in E. Steinkellener (Ed). *Proceedings of the 7th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies 1995*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie des Wissenschaften, 821

[95] CTA (2011c) *Report of the 11th General Meeting of the 4 Religious schools and Bön, 22-24 September 2011 at Surya Hotel, Dharamsala (Bod kyi chos brgyud chen po bzhi dang g.yung drung bon bcas kyi chos tshogs thengs buc gcig pa chos rig las khungs kyi go sgrig 'og bod rgyal lo 2138 phyi lo 2011 zla 9 tshes 22 nas 24 bar rda sa su rya mgron khang du bskyangs pa'I snyan tho bzhugs so)*. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Religion and Culture, 69.

[96] CTA (2011b) *Historical Account of the Tibetan Monasteries in Exile. (Btsan byol bod mi'i dgon sde khag gi lo rgyus)*. Vols 1-3. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Religion and Culture; Private audience with Seventeenth Karmapa, Karmapa Orgyen Trinley Dorje, 11 September 2012; Semi-structured interview with Administrator of Namgyal monastery (anonymous) 24 September 2012; Semi-structured interview with Nun from Dolma Ling Nunnery (anonymous) 27 September 2012.

[97] A learned monk who holds a doctorate in Buddhism.

[98] This monastery is known as the Dalai Lama's personal monastery.

[99] Personal communication from Geshe from Namgyal Monastery, 1 August 2012.

the Shugden affair is religiously complex and I do not intend to uncover the details of its origins, which has already been deftly attempted elsewhere.[100] What is noteworthy, however, is that at the heart of this controversy is a clash between the Dalai Lama's inter-sectarianism and Shugden follower's sectarian exclusivism. Dreyfus notes that Shugden is associated with the sectarian concern to keep the Geluk tradition pure, and his functions include the elimination of those who try to corrupt the tradition's purity often by violent means.[101]

The Dalai Lama personally abandoned his practice of Shugden in 1975[102] and in 1978 spoke out publicly for the first time on the risks of propitiating Shugden although he maintained that individuals are free to decide for themselves as a matter of private practice.[103] However, the situation escalated in the spring of 1996 when Nyingma deputies in the ATPD threatened to leave the parliament if Shugden practices continued[104] and it was at this point that the Dalai Lama publicly denounced Shugden as a harmful spirit for the Tibetan cause. In 1996-1997, executive and parliamentary statements by the exile administration followed, discouraging the Tibetans from Shugden worship and warning that such worship 'undermines the cause of Tibet [and] compromises the personal security of his Holiness the Dalai Lama.'[105] The CTA also claimed that Shugden activists now received sponsorship from Beijing for the latter's 'politically-motivated' purposes.[106]

If Tibetan 'secularism' is understood as a political ideology based on non-sectarianism, an argument might be made that the government is holding its ideological ground by restricting a practice that is decidedly anti-*rimé*. In other words, it might be postulated that being 'intolerant of the intolerant' is in accordance with a policy of tolerance. Yet it is a fine line between justified government regulation of a problematic religious practice, and what Ardley sees as the use of 'political authority to deal with what was and should have remained a purely religious issue.'[107] The reality is that unless they give up their practice, Shugden followers would find it difficult to participate normally in the life of the exile community.[108] The Dalai Lama's effort to create inter-sectarian harmony has generally been well-received, but the Shugden affair represents a case where his commitment to *rimé* has backfired to create a religious rift in the exile society.

---

[100] See Dreyfus, op.cit.; Martin Mills (2003) "This turbulent priest: contesting religious rights and the state in the Tibetan Shugden controversy." In Wilson, R. and J Mitchell (Eds). *Human Rights in Global Perspective: Anthropological Studies of Rights, Claims and Entitlements*: 54-70. London: Routledge.

[101] Dreyfus, op.cit., 26-27.

[102] CTA (1998) *The Worship of Shugden: Documents related to a Tibetan controversy.* Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Religion and Culture, 8

[103] Mills, op.cit., 56

[104] Ibid, 63.

[105] quoted in Thomas Kauffmann (2011) "Put your compassion into action: the political and religious agendas of the Central Tibetan Administration in a world of transnational organisations". Thesis DPhil—University of Oxford, 193

[106] CTA (1998), op.cit., 41.

[107] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 175-176. Insofar as the actions of the CTA were concerned, it perhaps would have been better to regulate the *social manifestations* of the intolerance of Shugden worship, rather than issuing blanket statements on the undesirability of its practice.

[108] As the Minister for Religion himself pointed out, there effectively a 'social boycott' against Shugden worshippers in exile society today (Semi-structured interview with Pema Chhinjor, Minister for Religion and Culture, 1 August 2012). Even secular civil society organisations like TYC have prohibited Shugden followers to become members of their organisation (Semi-structured interview with Tenzin Chokey, General Secretary of the TYC Central Executive Committee, 10 July 2012).

Peace Diplomacy

A key aspect of the Dalai Lama's nonviolence over the past several decades has been his efforts to find a peaceful solution to the problem of Tibet at the international and diplomatic level. He has travelled to over 62 countries[109] to hold talks with presidents, prime ministers, members of royal households, as well as religious leaders of different faiths and famous scientists. As I was told in one of my interviews, the Dalai Lama is, today, a world-renowned spiritual leader, and not only a leader of the Tibetans.[110] Therefore, it is not uncommon for the Dalai Lama not to touch upon the Tibet problem whatsoever when he gives talks abroad, which tend to focus on universal messages of peace, compassion, nonviolence, disarmament, interfaith tolerance, and what he calls 'universal responsibility.'[111] Of course, an obvious reason for the Dalai Lama to avoid an overtly political speech is his concern for his host countries who allowed his visit in spite of Chinese pressures.

Although political advocacy for the Tibetan cause may not feature loudly in the Dalai Lama's world tours, in other settings he has sought to squarely address the Tibetan issue through proposals presented to the international community. In September 1987, against the backdrop of deteriorating conditions in Tibet, the Dalai Lama proposed a Five Point Peace Plan in his address to members of the United States Congress. The five components of this plan were as follows:

1. Transformation of the whole of Tibet into a zone of peace.
2. Abandonment of China's population transfer policy that threatens the very existence of the Tibetans as a people.
3. Respect for the Tibetan people's fundamental human rights and democratic freedoms.
4. Restoration and protection of Tibet's natural environment and the abandonment of China's use of Tibet for the production of nuclear weapons and dumping of nuclear waste.
5. Commencement of earnest negotiations on the future status of Tibet and of relations between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples.[112]

The Dalai Lama elaborates on the 'zone of peace' in the first point as being equal to a 'zone of Ahimsa' which he claims 'would be in keeping with Tibet's historical role as a peaceful and neutral Buddhist nation and buffer state separating the continent's great powers [China and India].'[113] His reference to the 'whole of Tibet' indicates that he intends this plan to apply to the three Tibetan provinces—Ü Tsang, Kham, and Amdo—rather than the area termed 'Tibet Autonomous Region' by the PRC which amounts to less than one half of the traditional Tibetan areas. The Dalai Lama explains that the establishment of a zone of Ahimsa would require the withdrawal Chinese troops and military installations from Tibet, which would in turn enable India to undertake a similar military withdrawal from the Himalayan regions, and constitute an essential first step in trust building between the Chinese and Tibetan peoples.[114] It

---

[109] See CTA (2016a) "His Holiness the Dalai Lama" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/about-tibet/his-holiness/ (accessed 25 January 2016)

[110] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Finance and Health Minister, CTA, 4 March 2005

[111] 'Universal responsibility' (t. *chi sem*) is a concept emphasized by the Dalai Lama which denotes a sense of responsibility deriving from an awareness that 'our every act has a universal dimension.' See Dalai Lama (1999), op.cit., 167-169

[112] See CTA (2016a), op.cit.

[113] Dalai Lama (1987) "Five Point Peace Plan: Address to the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus, 21 September 1987" Official Website of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet: http://www.dalailama.com/messages/tibet/five-point-peace-plan (accessed 16 January 2016)

[114] Ibid.

is apparent here that the Dalai Lama is consciously casting the problem of Tibet as an international issue bearing on the very stability of Asia, and not just as an ethnic issue between the Han Chinese and Tibetans.

As seen already, the Chinese authorities condemned the Five Point Peace Plan in 1987, but undeterred, Dalai Lama presented a fresh peace proposal in Strasbourg the following year at the European Parliament on 15 June 1988 which developed the last point of the Five Point Peace Plan on the commencement of negotiations on the status of Tibet. It was in this Strasbourg Proposal that the Tibetan leadership in exile first showed willingness to compromise on their demand for an independent Tibet:

> The whole of Tibet known as Cholka-Sum (U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo) should become a self-governing democratic political entity founded on law by agreement of the people for the common good and the protection of themselves and their environment, in association with the People's Republic of China. The Government of the People's Republic of China could remain responsible for Tibet's foreign policy. The Government of Tibet should, however, develop and maintain relations, through its own foreign affairs bureau, in the field of commerce, education, culture, religion, tourism, science, sports and other non-political activities. Tibet should join international organizations concerned with such activities.[115]

The Strasbourg Proposal thus suggested a form of autonomy for the Tibetans which would be in association with the PRC, entrusting to the Chinese government key functions of the state such as foreign policy and defense.[116] The position encapsulated in the Strasbourg Proposal later becomes known as the Middle Way Approach—'middle way' because it calls for a political arrangement which neither amounts to absolute separation from China (i.e. independence) nor one that acquiesces to the assimilationist policy of the PRC.[117] The type of self-government envisaged is described by the Dalai Lama and exile leaders as a 'genuine autonomy'. The qualifier 'genuine' is clearly meant to cast the proposed arrangement in contradistinction to the existing PRC rule in the 'Tibet Autonomous Region'. The current exile prime minister, Lobsang Sangay, also supports the Middle Way Approach.

In September 1988, Beijing announced its willingness to negotiate with the Dalai Lama, even stating the latter could choose the venue for the talk.[118] However, in the same communication, Beijing reiterated that it has never recognized the Tibetan exile government and that the Strasbourg Proposal cannot be a basis for negotiation since 'it has not at all relinquished the concept of the "independence of Tibet".'[119] The PRC also stipulated that no foreigners should be involved in the negotiations. The following month in October, Dharamsala nevertheless proceeded to announce the date and venue of the talks, including the names of the negotiating team which included a Dutch lawyer. In November, the PRC disapproved of the manner in which the

---

[115] Dalai Lama (1988) "Strasbourg Proposal 1988: Address to the Members of the European Parliament, Strasbourg, France, June 15, 1988" Official Website of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet: http://www.dalailama.com/messages/tibet/strasbourg-proposal-1988 (accessed 16 January 2016)

[116] See CTA (2016a), op.cit.

[117] What was emphasized by the exile government in respect of the Strasbourg Proposal that it met the requirement stipulated by Deng Xiaoping in 1979 when he told Gyalo Thondup (the Dalai Lama's special envoy) that any subject other than Tibet's independence could be discussed. See Warren W. Smith Jr. (2008) *China's Tibet?: Autonomy or Assimilation*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 270 n12.

[118] Tashi Rabgey & Tseten Wangchuk Sharlho (2005) "Sino-Tibetan Dialogue in the Post-Mao Era:Lessons and Prospects (Part 1)" *Phayul* 10 July 2005 (reproduced from an article prepared for the East-West Center Washington): http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=10172 (accessed 3 February 2015)

[119] Quoted in ibid.

Tibetans publicized the details of the talks and rejected all the members of the negotiating team.[120] The two sides appeared to reach a deadlock over what Dharamsala characterized as 'procedural issues.'[121]

The Strasbourg Proposal was celebrated by the international community as a peace proposal which showed a spirit of compromise, and it was evidently one of the factors leading to the Dalai Lama's Nobel Peace Prize in 1989.[122] Nevertheless, the Middle Way Approach received short shrift from the PRC and was also rejected by the section of Tibetan civil society in exile, such as the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC). Official statements from the PRC have framed the Middle Way Approach as a means for Tibetans to attain quasi-independence, an arrangement intended as an antecedent to secession.[123] Moreover, events around the presentation of the Strasbourg Proposal played a role in derailing the prospective negotiations between Dharamsala and China. These included the large-scale demonstrations in Lhasa from 1987 to 1989; the public censure of the Chinese authorities by the 10th Panchen Lama and his untimely death in 1989; the Tiananmen massacre in 1989; and the controversy surrounding the reincarnation of the 11th Panchen Lama and the disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, a six-year-old boy recognized by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama in 1995.[124] By 1999 all diplomatic channels between Dharamsala and PRC had closed.

These channels were reopened several years later, however, and from 2002 to 2010 the Dalai Lama sent envoys to China almost yearly to discuss Tibet-related issues, including the status of Tibet.[125] The first of these negotiations in 2002 was the first time in nine years that direct talks were held with China. Yet, the Chinese refuse to give official status to the delegation from Dharamsala and preferred to characterize their visit as being of a 'private' nature.[126] Commentators have remarked that the PRC appears to confine the problem of Tibet solely to the issue of the Dalai Lama's status, rather than Tibet's political future.[127] Despite nine rounds of talks between 2002 and 2010, no tangible progress has been seen to date.[128]

---

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] As the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to the Dalai Lama also took place soon after the Tiananmen Massacre, it has also been said that the award was in part intended as a criticism of China's undemocratic and repressive politics.

[123] Tibetan Review (2002) "Dalai Lama's envoys visit Beijing and Lhasa", *Tibetan Review*, October. 18.

[124] The Dalai Lama recognized the six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama on 14 May 1995. Three days later, the Gedhun Choekyi Nyima disappeared, allegedly abducted by the Chinese authorities. The PRC appointed Gyaincain Norbu as their own Panchen Lama but he is widely regarded as a 'fake Panchen Lama' among Tibetans. See Dorjee Tsetan (2015) "China's Worst Kept Secret: 5 Facts About the Abduction of Tibet's Panchen Lama" *Huffington Post* 19 May 2015: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dorjee-tseten/chinas-worst-kept-secret-_b_7308598.html (accessed 10 December 2015); CTA (2015a) "20 Years on—Tibet's Panchen Lama Still Missing Since Age Six", Feature Flash News, Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/2015/04/20-years-on-tibets-panchen-lama-still-missing-since-age-six/ (accessed 10 December 2015)

[125] CTA (2015c) "Renewed Contacts (2002-2010)" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/important-issues/sino-tibetan-dialogue/an-overview-of-sino-tibetan-dialogue/sino-tibetan-dialogue-renewed-contacts-2002/ (accessed 25 September 2015).

[126] Tibetan Review (2002), op.cit., 18.

[127] Ibid.

[128] See Smith Jr. (2010), op.cit., 166-185, 190-202 & 211-234.

The Nonviolent Philosophy of the Dalai Lama

The Dalai Lama, who is considered to be the embodiment of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara by Tibetans, is the single most influential figure in the Tibetan exile society. Given that he was also head of the exile government till 2011, his influence has profoundly shaped exile politics as well as religion. For this reason, the Dalai Lama's nonviolent philosophy has had practical ramifications for exile politics and Dharamsala's campaign for the cause of Tibet.

In Buddhism, the first of the Ten Virtuous Precepts is 'non-killing', which provides an obvious basis for a commitment to nonviolence. However, when one reads the writings of the Dalai Lama, it is evident that his nonviolent philosophy derives also from the Mahayana Buddhist doctrines on compassion, the bodhisattva practices, interdependence (or 'dependent arising'), and emptiness. '*Ahiṃsā* ' is understood by the Dalai Lama in a manner similar to Gandhi in that rather than just denoting an absence of violence, he says that nonviolence has a more active and positive meaning. According to the Dalai Lama, a more complete expression of nonviolence is 'compassion',[129] which is reminiscent of Gandhi's description of the positive expression of nonviolence as love in the 'Pauline sense.[130] The practice of compassion in Mahayana Buddhism is deeply connected to the actions of bodhisattvas, and this is also apparent in Tibetan Buddhism. For example, in the Tibetan Buddhist text entitled the *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva* composed by Ngulchu Gyalsas Thogmed Zangpo, the stanza on the 13th bodhisattva practice reads:

> Even if someone were to cut off one's head,
> Without any fault within oneself, it is
> The practice of Bodhisattvas to take on all that person's
> Negativities with the power of compassion.[131]

Bodhisattvas are expected to receive all with equal equanimity irrespective of their friendliness or hostility, and the above stanza indicates that a bodhisattva will be ready to take on even the most extreme act of negativity (cutting of one's head) out of a spirit of compassion.

This characteristic of bodhisattva's compassion is further elaborated in the description of the other practices. For example, the 14th and 15th stanza teaches that 'even if someone were to shout different types of insults' or to 'uncover one's most intimate faults and say harsh words' the practice of a bodhisattva is to 'speak of that person's good qualities with a loving mind' and to 'bow humbly to that person with the thought that he is a spiritual master.'[132] The 20th stanza reads:

> If outer enemies are destroyed while not restraining
> The enemy of one's own hatred, the outer enemies will increase.
> Therefore, it is the practice of Bodhisttvas to conquer
> Their own minds with the powerful army of love and compassion.[133]

---

[129] Dalai Lama (1995b) *Dialogues on Universal Responsibility and Education*, New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 5.
[130] See Mary King (1999) *Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr.; The Power of Nonviolent Action*, Paris: UNESCO Publishing; Pelton, L. H. (1974). *The Psychology of Nonviolence*, New York: Pergamon Press, 220.
[131] Dalai Lama (1995a) *Commentary on the Thirty Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*. Translated by Acharya Nyima Tsering and edited by Vyvyan Cayley and Mike Gilmore. New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 71.
[132] Ibid., 71.
[133] Ibid., 78-79.

In the Dalai Lama's commentary on this 20th bodhisattva practice, he refers to the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Bodhicharyavatara*), quoting from it the following words:

> Where would I possibly find enough leather
> With which to cover the surface of the earth?
> But (wearing) leather just on the soles of my shoes
> Is equivalent to covering the earth with it.[134]

The Dalai Lama says that the meaning of these words is: 'Unruly beings are as (unlimited) as space: They cannot possibly all be overcome. But if I overcome thoughts of anger alone, this will be equivalent to vanquishing all foes.'[135]

The teachings of the *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva* as explained by the Dalai Lama exhort compassion and humility in the face of injustice or humiliation, and emphasize that the true enemy of human beings is not an external foe but inner negativities (hatred and anger). These examples of bodhisattvas and the doctrine of compassion form an important body of Buddhist teachings in which the nonviolence of the exile Tibetans is premised.

It is one thing to encourage the development of compassion in emulation of the bodhisattva but it is quite another to have a means of dealing with one's own negative emotions such as anger and hatred, which are the emotions that frequently lead to violence. The Dalai Lama himself states that he does not harbour hatred towards the Chinese and has even managed to forgive Chinese authorities for the numerous acts of destruction and killing. He explains his attitude in the following way in his interview with Victor Chan, a Hong Kong-born Canadian:

> I analyze like this: if I develop bad feelings toward those who make me suffer, this will only destroy my own peace of mind. But if I forgive, my mind becomes calm. Now, concerning our struggle for freedom, if we do it without anger, without hatred, but with true forgiveness, we can carry that struggle even more effectively. Struggle with calm mind, with compassion. Through analytical meditation, I now have full conviction that destructive emotions like hatred is no use. Nowadays, anger, hatred, they don't come. But little irritation sometimes come.[136]

In this interview, Chan asks the Dalai Lama how he is able to show such compassion and consideration towards his opponents and whether he has some kind of special meditation technique to help him in this regard. To this, the Dalai Lama answered that he uses a mediation technique called 'giving and taking' which he explained as follows:

> I make visualization: send my positive emotions like happiness, affection to others. Then another visualization. I visualize receiving their sufferings, their negative emotions. I do this every day. I pay special attention to the Chinese—especially those doing terrible things to the Tibetans. So as I meditate, I breathe in all their poisons—hatred fear, cruelty. Then I breathe out. And I let all the good things come out, things like compassion, forgiveness. I take inside my body all these bad things. Then I replace poisons with fresh air. Giving and taking. I take care not to blame—I don't blame the Chinese, and I don't blame myself. This mediation [is] very effective, useful to reduce hatred, useful to cultivate forgiveness.[137]

---

[134] Ibid., 79.
[135] Ibid.
[136] Victor Chan (2004) *The Wisdom of Forgiveness: HH the Dalai Lama and Victor Chan*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 47.
[137] Ibid, 73.

On yet another occasion, the Dalai Lama stated as reasons why he could forgive the Chinese: first, that the opponent is also a fellow human being who has the right to avoid suffering and pursue happiness; and second, because of the reality of interdependence, Tibet's future and interests are deeply connected to those of China.[138]

The Dalai Lama also refers to the notion of reincarnation as a way of becoming aware of interrelatedness and developing compassion. He explains that in the course of our many lifetimes, numerous people have been our parents, friends and the like, and that one meditation he recommends for developing compassion and altruism is to recognize all sentient beings as one's mother and to become mindful of their kindness.[139] He elaborates on how such an attitude can transform feelings of hatred or hostility:

> In order to generate such an unusual attitude [as altruism], it is necessary to have great compassion, caring about the suffering of others and wanting to do something about it…You begin by noting that within our minds we have three main categories for others—friends, enemies, and neutral beings. We have three different attitudes towards them: desire, hatred, and a neglecting indifference. When these three attitudes are generated, it is impossible to generate an altruistic attitude; therefore, it is important to neutralize desire, hatred, and indifference. To do this, it helps to reflect on rebirth. Since our births are beginningless, there is no limit to their number; thus, it is not definite that those who are now our friends were always friends in the past and those who are now our enemies were always enemies in the past….When you contemplate in this manner, the one-pointed apprehension of some persons as friends and others as enemies and the consequent generation of desire and hatred will become weaker in strength…Gradually, a sense of equanimity will develop…When you have undergone this change, the next step is to consider that since everyone's births have been beginningless and thus limitless in number, every single person has been your best of friends, parent or whatever, over the course of lifetimes. Taking this realization as a basis, you can slowly develop an attitude considering all sentiment beings to be friends.[140]

The Dalai Lama further explains that 'enemies are very valuable' because 'from an enemy you can learn real tolerance and patience whereas from a religious teacher or your parents the strength of your tolerance cannot be tested.'[141] Since from an enemy we can learn inner strength, courage, and determination and even come 'closer to reality…[by] pealing off pretensions', enemies who have harmed us have actually 'extended great kindness'.[142] By cultivating such an attitude, the Dalai Lama says that we can develop compassion and altruism towards our enemies. This teaching, which highlights humility, forbearance, and even appreciation of those who harm us, calls to mind the disposition of a bodhisattva as described in the *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva*, such as the 13th, 14th, and 15th stanzas referred to above. The fact that such notions are not mere philosophical ideals but have practical value for the Dalai Lama's followers was confirmed during my field research, when one of the monks I met in Dharamsala told me that in his daily life when he feels irritation or anger at another's deed or words, he remembers the teaching of the Dalai Lama about seeing all as one's mother and tries to practice compassion towards that person.[143]

---

[138] Ibid., 109.
[139] Dalai Lama (1996) *Kindness, Clarity and Insight*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 33.
[140] Ibid, 34-35.
[141] Ibid., 36.
[142] Ibid.
[143] Personal communication with monk from Depung Loseling Monastery from Mundgod, India, 2 March 2005.

Underlying the Dalai Lama's emphasis on interdependence is the Buddhist notion of 'dependent-origination' (s. *pratītya-samutpāda*), also called 'dependent co-arising', which means that a thing arises because of another, or that its existence depends on another. It denotes a 'the nexus between phenomena' by virtue of the interdependence of all things, such as the way in which 'events depend on other events, composites depend upon their parts, and so on.'[144] By realising this, the Dalai Lama says that we are able to nurture compassion, for we come to see the interdependence between others and ourselves, and hence develop empathy and compassion for others.[145]

Interdependence is also an important subject of secular discourses, such as ecology, economics, and international politics.[146] As exemplified by the European Union, countries are increasingly dependent on one another and interconnected today. For this reason, the Dalai Lama points out that to wish for the demise of an enemy nation can in fact have disastrous consequences for one's own country.[147] Thus from this practical understanding of interdependence, since a neighbouring country's wellbeing is connected to that of one's own country, it is deemed that in struggling for the cause of Tibet, it is best to employ a constructive method such as compassion and nonviolence rather than a destructive means. The shift in the exile leadership's approach to the problem of Tibet in the Strasbourg Proposal from a position of demanding independence to calling instead for 'genuine autonomy' also demonstrates a keen awareness of the nature of political interdependence.[148]

Furthermore, Nāgārjuna derived the notion of emptiness from an understanding of interdependence and dependent-origination. As stated in Chapter 1, emptiness is not non-existence but interdependent existence, meaning that nothing exists discretely or independently from other phenomenon.[149] In terms of the doctrine of two truths, emptiness is the 'ultimate truth' whereas phenomenological reality is 'conventional truth'.[150] According to the Dalai Lama, from neither of the perspectives of the two truths does a true enemy exist. For example, he says that Saddam Hussein was not a 'bad' person from birth. From the viewpoint of conventional truth, Hussein's wicked deeds does not come from any inherent evil but came about helped by numerous conditions such as US policy, the acquisition of weapons, and the Western companies who enabled him the acquisition of weapons.[151] Moreover, from the viewpoint of ultimate truth also, Hussein cannot be said to be evil. Even if, in the eyes of the United States, Hussein may appear to be an individual and absolute existence, from the perspective of ultimate truth, there is no such individual and absolute existence, and what we consider as 'Saddam Hussein' is actually empty.[152]

By a similar reasoning, Dorji Damdul, one of the Dalai Lama's interpreters and the holder of a *geshe* degree (doctorate in Buddhism) told me in an interview in 2005 that he could not blame the individuals serving in the Chinese government, and 'thinking from a more holistic view' pointed out that if Hu Jintao (the Chinese premier at that time) were to say 'from tomorrow I'm going to declare Tibet as an

---

[144] Garfield, op.cit., 26.
[145] Chan, op.cit., p169.
[146] Ibid, 117.
[147] Ibid p118.
[148] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Sonam D. Dagpo, Secretary of the Department of International Relations, CTA, 1 March 2005
[149] Garfield, op.cit., 91.
[150] Ibid.; See Dalai Lama (1995c) *Opening the Mind and Generating a Good Heart.* New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, 9
[151] Chan, op.cit., 124.
[152] Ibid, 124-125.

independent nation' he will be immediately arrested.[153] The point being, that the problem of Tibet has its cause beyond the individuals working for the PRC in systemic and structural factors. Here too, an understanding of dependent-origination works to counsel against a hasty attribution of blame or ascription of evil. One might say that the notions of dependent-origination and emptiness constitute a kind of relativism, where there can never be an absolute or independent 'evil' or 'enemy'. It is in such notions that the foundation of Dalai Lama's nonviolent philosophy is found.

THE EXILE GOVERNMENT

Since the Dalai Lama was the head of the exile government until 2011, the delineation of the nonviolent action of the Dalai Lama and that of the CTA is somewhat superficial; nevertheless the discursive practices of the two differ significantly: whereas the former's point of reference tends to be religious philosophy, the latter is a quasi-legal and political body operating on democratic principles. Further, the demarcation between the Dalai Lama's sphere of action and that of the CTA has become more pronounced since the complete devolution of the Dalai Lama's political powers to the elected leadership in 2011. In this section, therefore, I have chosen to analytically distinguish the activities and ideology of the CTA, pointing out the connection to the Dalai Lama where necessary.

Preservation of Tibetan Religion and Culture

Complementing the Dalai Lama's constructive programme in exile has been efforts by the CTA to preserve Tibetan culture and heritage. Much of this falls under the responsibility of the Department of Religion and Culture, one of the seven departments of the CTA. Despite the institutional separation of religion and state, emphasized by the recent political reforms, the CTA has nevertheless channeled its energies into promoting the flourishing of Tibetan religion. As the Secretary of the Department of Religion and Culture told me in an interview, the purpose of his office is 'the preservation, promotion and dissemination of the teachings of Lord Buddha.'[154] In his view, it is necessary for the exile government to counter the destruction and oppression of the monasteries in Tibet by the Chinese authorities: 'If we don't save [Buddhism], we're doing a great injustice to our ancestors [who brought Buddhism to Tibet from India].' Nevertheless, the Secretary also highlighted that the exile administration strives to extend parity of treatment to the different religious sects, which is a significant departure from the past orientation of the Lhasa government in Tibet where the dominant Gelug school was explicitly favoured.

The effort to preserve Tibetan heritage is not just a cultural undertaking but has political import for the Tibetan struggle. In 2003 the CTA stated their struggle had a two-fold goal: 'to seek justice for our homeland and, to preserve our identity and language by practicing our culture and traditions.'[155] This statement suggests that, as far as the exile government is concerned, the preservation of Tibetan identity and language through the practice of tradition (including religion) ranks alongside in significance as the campaign for social justice in Tibet.

---

[153] Semi-structured interview with Geshe Dorji Damdul, Personal Translator of the Dalai Lama, 5 March 2005.
[154] Semi-structured interview with Mr. D.N Choedak, Religion Department Secretary, 12 July 2012.
[155] CTA (2003) *Tibetan Community in Exile. Integrated Development Plan-III. Investment & Implementation Guidelines 2003–2006*, Dharamsala: Planning Commission, 6

The importance given to the preservation of cultural heritage is perhaps best understood in historical context. As mentioned previously, in the years after 1959 there was wholesale wreckage of religious institutions and artifacts in Tibet, resulting in the destruction of more than 6000 Tibetan Buddhist monasteries (97-98% of all Tibetan monasteries) by 1962.[156] Although many of the monasteries have since been rebuilt, the history of destruction in Tibet has had an enormous psychological and sentimental impact on the exile community. During the 40 years of exile, the Tibetans in India have built over 200 monasteries, which accommodate around 20,000 monks and nuns.[157] Most of these monasteries built in India have been named after the monasteries in Tibet, and strong ties are retained between the 'mother' and 'child' institutions of the two countries.[158]

Apart from monasteries, the CTA has also overseen the establishment of Tibetan schools, the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA), the Nobulinka Institute (for the preservation of Tibetan art and culture), the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, the Tibetan Medical & Astrological Institute, and the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. Today the preservation and promotion of Tibetan heritage has almost become a sacred duty for the exile community. It is an endeavor that is deeply intertwined with the assertion of national identity as well as the remembrance of, and redress against, the large-scale devastation wrought by China's policies in Tibet.

Outreach and International Advocacy

The CTA has also channelled much energy into public relations campaigns to call attention of the international community to the political, economic, human rights, and environmental issues in Tibet. The Department of Information and International Relations works to strengthen the CTA's relations with foreign countries, and coordinates with the international media and issues-based NGOs such as Amnesty International and international women's organizations.[159] The department is also in charge of maintaining relations between the various Tibet Support Groups around the world[160] and oversees the 11 missions or 'Offices of Tibet' worldwide, which function as quasi-embassies for the CTA.[161]

A notable feature of the CTA's advocacy strategy is its conscious effort to reach out and engage with Chinese people—particularly overseas Chinese and scholars and political dissidents inside China. Ever since the Dalai Lama invited the activists of the Chinese Democracy Movement to Dharamsala, exchanges began between the two movements. Later, the CTA called upon the Tibetan exiles around the world to connect with the Chinese residents in their host countries. It is said that historically

---

[156] Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tokyo (2016) *Chibetto no rekishi* チベットの歴史): http://www.tibethouse.jp/history/index.html (accessed 3 February 2016)

[157] Anjali J. Dharan (2003) *Indo-Tibetan Political Relations: Past, Present and Future of Tibet*. Independent Research. Emory-IBD Tibetan Studies Program Dharamsala, India: http://abroad.emory.edu/_customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=5991 (accessed 4 May 2012), 27

[158] CTA (2011b), op.cit.

[159] Nonviolence International, op.cit., 34.

[160] Ibid.

[161] See CTA (2015b) "Department of Information and International Relations" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/information/ (accessed 28 September 2015); CTA (2016b) "Offices of Tibet" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/contact/offices-of-tibet/ (accessed 20 January 2016). Some of these offices are described as "Bueau" or "Liaison Office" for the Dalai Lama—and area where the Dalai Lama's withdrawal from the political structure of the CTA has not yet been reflected.

there exists a prejudiced view in China of the Tibetans as 'savage' and 'backward'—an image which the CTA hopes to dispel with greater levels of exchange with the Chinese community abroad.[162] One CTA minister elaborated on the rationale for such engagement:

> His Holiness the Dalai Lama always says that we should make friendship with the Chinese; we should interact with them as much as possible. And since our policy is to remain in China along with the Chinese people, it's time for us to generate a feeling of good will between the Chinese and Tibetan people. So we're trying to do that….If we get angry all the time, our future generation will not be a fruitful one. So from this perspective, it has become very important to the young generation to be friendly with the Chinese people; to learn to adjust with the Chinese people.[163]

The policy of positive engagement with the Chinese is something that has been encouraged by the Dalai Lama himself. For example, in April 2013, the Dalai Lama moderated a debate at Cambridge University between Tibetan and Chinese students on censorship in the PRC.[164] Victor Chan also noted that the Dalai Lama has 'always gone out of his way to connect with the Chinese, especially those from the mainland' and that he 'invests a great deal of himself in those encounters.'[165]

Constitutional Principles Underlying the Exile Government

Due to the fact that the Dalai Lama was head of the exile government until 2011, it may be unclear when the ideological position of the Dalai Lama ends and that of the CTA begins. Taking a look at the constitutional documents of the exile government, however, provides some indication of the distinct principles which underlie it. Despite the profoundly altered structure of the CTA compared to the Lhasa government, the constitutional documents of the former continue to uphold the age-old principle of 'the combination of religion and politics' (t. *chösi sungdrel*). The first of these documents created in exile was the *Draft Constitution for the Future Tibet* adopted in 1963, which was designed for implementation upon the exiles' return to Tibet with the approval of the majority of Tibetans. The document is forwarded with the following words of the Dalai Lama: 'This [Constitution] takes into consideration the doctrines enunciated by Lord Buddha, the spiritual and temporal heritage of Tibet and the ideas and ideals of the modern world.'[166] Article 2 further emphasised the principle of *chösi sungdrel* by declaring Tibet to be a 'unitary democratic State founded upon the principles laid down by the Lord Buddha.'

The Draft Constitution recognises the authority of international law, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and renounces war as a method of national struggle as part of its commitment to 'nonviolence and peace.' The document clearly reflects an effort to reconcile the principles of Buddhism with the ideals of political modernity, and it is an attempt to remake the system of *chösi sungdrel* within the

---

[162] Ibid.
[163] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Finance and Health Minister, CTA, 4 March 2005.
[164] See Dalai Lama (2013) "Meetings and Talk on 'Educating the Heart' in Cambridge, England" Official Website of His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet: http://www.dalailama.com/news/post/935-meetings-and-talk-on-educating-the-heart-in-cambridge-england (accessed 20 January 2016); Leslie Nguyen-Okwu (2016) "The Dalai Lama's Right-hand Woman" OZY 15 January 2016: http://www.ozy.com/rising-stars/the-dalai-lamas-right-hand-woman/65381 (accessed 20 January 2016)
[165] Ibid, 106.
[166] Tibet Justice Centre (2016b) "Constitution of Tibet (1963)": http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/tibet/tibet2.html (accessed 1 February 2016).

structure of a modern democratic government. The content of the document, however, was not debated nor was it adopted according to standard democratic process: rather it was 'ordained' by the Dalai Lama and primarily sanctioned by his institution and authority.[167] Since the document was intended for an independent Tibet, difficulties were encountered in trying to apply it to the exile context, although there was a 'general feeling that "we must implement it as far as possible within the constraints of the exiled situation."'[168]

The most unpopular clause in the Draft Constitution was Article 36, which provided for the possibility of the Dalai Lama's impeachment by two-thirds majority of the parliament. Resistance to this article was such that 'over 150 representatives gathered to demand the deletion of the article if the constitution was to be approved.'[169] The Dalai Lama, cognizant of the principle that there must be the possibility of removing the executive head in a democratic polity, tried to explain to his people that 'democracy is very much in keeping with Buddhist principles and, somewhat autocratically...insisted that the clause be left in.'[170]

Due to the ill-fit between the 1963 Draft Constitution and the situation of exile, in 1991 the *Charter for the Tibetans-in-Exile* was promulgated. This charter revised the Draft Constitution and was specifically designed for the exile context.[171] In a similar vein to its precursor, the document describes the exile-government as a democratic welfare state which aspires to 'preserve their ancient traditions of spiritual and temporal life, unique to the Tibetans, based on the principles of peace and non-violence.'[172] Given that the principle of nonviolence is enshrined in the Charter, the CTA's policy of nonviolence can be said to now have a legal basis.

Although the 1991 Charter includes the words *chösi sungdrel*, it is widely believed among CTA functionaries that in its structure and spirit, the Charter is in fact 'secular'.[173] This is because the draft Charter initially included the word 'secularism' under the specific direction of the Dalai Lama and was formulated on that basis.[174] When the draft came before the parliament, however, the term 'secularism' (t. *chöluk rime*, which literally means 'nondiscrimination between religions') was replaced by *chösi sungdrel* by majority vote. Yet, since the rest of the text and structure of the document remained unchanged, the purposive spirit of the Charter is said to reflect the

---

[167] Sangay (2010), op.cit., 305.
[168] Edin, op.cit., 31.
[169] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 43.
[170] Dalai Lama (1990a), op.cit., 170. Also see Pema Thinley (1996) "Democracy is an integral part of the Tibetan freedom struggle." *Tibetan Bulletin*, May-June: 11-13 at 12.
[171] The 1991 Charter and the Draft Constitution differed from each other in a couple of respects. Whereas there was specific reference to Buddhism in the Draft Constitution, the Charter does not define religion (t. *chö*). The 1991 Charter also differed from the Draft Constitution in the manner in which it was adopted. Unlike the 1963 Constitution, it was debated and adopted by the parliament and only 'assented' to by the Dalai Lama. See Lobsang Sangay (2010), op.cit., 308. The Charter also ensured greater checks and balances on the executive, and provided for the establishment of the Supreme Justice Commission (SJC), which was to function as the judicial arm of the exile-government. See CTA (2008) *Supreme Justice Commission* (brochure). Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Information and International Relations.
[172] Tibet Justice Centre (2016a) "Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile (1991)": http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/tibet/tibet6.html (accessed 1 February 2016)
[173] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Pema Chhinjor, Minister for Religion and Culture, 1 August 2012; Personal communication with Jampal Chosang, Election Commissione, 29 August 2012; Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Finance and Health Minister, 4 March 2005.
[174] Sangay (2010), op.cit., 297.

ideal of *chöluk rimé*.[175] According to Samdhong Rinpoche, the first elected exile prime minister, this means there cannot be any dominant influence by any particular religion on the state.[176]

As early as 1992 the Dalai Lama had considered dismantling the political prerogatives of the Dalai Lama in the future government of Tibet. In his *Guidelines on Future Tibet's Constitution* in 1992 he says: 'Personally, I have made up my mind that I will not play any role in the future government of Tibet, let alone seek the Dalai Lama's traditional political position it the government…Moreover if Tibet is to survive as an equal member of the modern international community, it should reflect the collective potential of all its citizens, and not rely on one individual.'[177] History testifies that his complete devolution would take place in exile instead. As a result, the 1963 Draft Constitution and the 1992 Guidelines are no longer valid as legal documents today.[178] In theory, *chösi sungdrel* continues to be upheld by the Charter even as amended in 2011 and the current Article 3 describes the nature of the Tibetan polity as one premised on the 'coexistence of religion and politics.' However, with the Dalai Lama's devolution of his political powers and greater institutional differentiation between religion and politics the scope of religion in *chösi sungdrel* is now increasingly circumscribed. Although Buddhism remains an important influence on the CTA as well as Tibetan society, the influence now tends to be more value-based[179] and ideological, rather than of an institutional nature.

Views of CTA Functionaries on Nonviolence

Nonviolence is not only a principle enshrined in the 1991 Charter and a doctrine advocated by the Dalai Lama but something which has been internalised in various ways by those working in the exile administration. Below I will introduce some views from CTA officials who shared their views on nonviolence with me during my field research in 2005. The nonviolent ideology of the Samdhong Rinpoche, the incumbent prime minister at the time of my interviews, will be discussed in the following section.

Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, one of the ministers of the CTA who I interviewed, demonstrated a strong inclination towards 'principled nonviolence' or what Gandhi called 'nonviolence of the brave'[180] which is marked by a commitment to nonviolence as an essential creed and not just because the method is expedient or opportune in a given situation ('nonviolence of the weak'). This minister observed: 'It's not that, understanding our own weaknesses and our own conditions, we try to excuse ourselves by claiming our sympathy to a nonviolent movement. We truly believe in this principle. We are committed to it; we cannot compromise with any other means

[175] Semi-structured (phone) interview with Samdhong Rinpoche, former exile Prime Minister, 26 January 2013
[176] Ibid.
[177] Dalai Lama (1998a) "Guidelines on Future Tibet's Constitution" in Shiromany, A. A. (Ed.). *The Political Philosophy of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama*. New Delhi: Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Center: 276-286 at 280.
[178] CTA (2011a), op.cit., 18; Bhuchung D. Sonam (2012) *Yak Horns: Notes on Contemporary Tibetan Writing, Music, Film and Politics*. Dharamsala, India: TibetWrites, 126.
[179] Semi-structured interview with Ms. Dolma Gyari, Vice President of Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, 4 March 2005.
[180] Gandhi (1948) Vol 2, op.cit., 276.

to achieve our goal.'[181] He elaborated on his views by referring to the importance of the Dalai Lama's leadership in the Tibetan struggle:

> …His Holiness made it clear several times that if people were to resort to violence, His Holiness will not lead the struggle movement. He'll resign from being the head of the freedom struggle. So he is one such symbol, not only a symbol; but in him there is the core identity of the Tibetan people. I think in his absence, in his not taking the responsibility for the struggle movement, we see a serious setback for the struggle movement, in years and years to come…His Holiness's very name indicates compassion, nonviolence, and peace. And these values are fortunately imbibed by thousands and thousands of Tibetan people and also supporters of His Holiness... So we don't want to jeopardize the strength that we have. Our strength is the nonviolent culture that we have, and we have to make sure this means should work in the near future.[182]

Yet, despite this profession of nonviolent commitment, Lobsang Zayul also told me that should the Tibetans' nonviolent struggle fail, 'potentially in hundreds and thousands of years of time, people will not have faith in the nonviolent movement' adding that he would also 'feel the same'.[183] Thus, although an intention was expressed to adhere to a nonviolent method of struggle 'for many years to come', a qualification was also made that a continued espousal of nonviolence lay in the actual results achieved by the movement in the form of regaining 'lost freedom'[184]; that is, in his view, the proof would be in the pudding.

Dolma Gyari, who was Vice President of the Tibetan People's Deputies (exile parliament) in 2005 and now Minister of Home, shared her views with me on the Tibetan understanding of nonviolence. She drew a distinction between the interpretation of 'nonviolence' in the West, which emphasises the absence of violent action, and the traditional Tibetan understanding of nonviolence, where violence (t. *tsewa*) or nonviolence (t. *tsewa-mepa*) can the take a non-physical form.[185] Thus, according to this understanding, to think ill of others or feel enmity all amounts to 'violence'.[186] When asked whether she feels frustration or anger towards the Chinese, she answered:

> Well, I've never really had the opportunity to see whether I can be nonviolent or not. But so far I have been very peaceful and nonviolent. Mentally we are more deemed to be peace-lovers. But at the same time, it is difficult to imagine oneself being able to stay very peaceful if you see a child exploited or a woman, a girl being raped; I don't know at what level my tolerance and my nonviolence would last. I admire Mahatma Gandhi to be able to give the other side of his cheek. But to be actually experiencing it and to be able to control one's emotions and to really practice is something really above an ordinary being. So far, I do not have any violent tendencies towards Chinese people… But then again, there are moments of weaknesses; we are all human beings.[187]

Dolma Gyari is clearly supportive of the CTA's adherence to a nonviolent policy, but her support is tempered with an awareness of the challenging nature of keeping nonviolent discipline if she were to witness suffering first hand. In contrast to Lobsang Nyandak Zayul who qualified his support for nonviolence by referring to the

---

[181] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Finance and Health Minister, CTA, 4 March 2005.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Semi-structured interview with Ms. Dolma Gyari, Vice President of Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, 4 March 2005.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.

possibility of failing to achieve liberation for the Tibetans in the long-run, Dolma Gyari alluded more to the inherent human weaknesses of the Tibetans who may not be able to live up to the ideals of the Dalai Lama and the example of Mahatma Gandhi. Both CTA officers showed an internalisation of the value of nonviolence and yet betrayed an awareness of the difficulty of eschewing violence under any condition.

A more pragmatic interpretation of nonviolence was displayed by Sonam Dagpo who was serving as Secretary of the Department of Information and International Relations in 2005. Among the 'advantages' of nonviolence he listed were the 'good will' created between two opposing groups when a compassionate and nonviolent approach is taken towards the conflict, the 'lasting' nature of the conflict resolution when achieved, and the fact that much human life can be spared.[188] He explained that nonviolence has relevance not only at the individual level but also for national policy, since 'once you resort to violence in resolving any issue, then that leads to hatred, violence, killing, more hatred—a cycle of violence like the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians.'[189] In his view, a long-term conflict resolution which envisages coexistence and an end to the cycle of violence would thus be one achieved through nonviolent means.

These above views show that the CTA's ideology of nonviolence has been received and interpreted by CTA officials in differing ways. All of these officials were laymen and yet their words displayed assimilation, to varying extents, of a spiritual understanding of nonviolence, which was evident from their emphasis on compassion and how nonviolence can take a 'non-physical form'. This can even be seen in the more pragmatic interpretation of nonviolence offered by Sonam Dagpo. Although Tibetan exile politics is now characterised by greater intuitional differentiation between religion and politics compared to the past, and their CTA's nonviolent commitment has a legal basis in the 1991 Charter, the principle of nonviolence cannot be extricated from the Buddhist philosophy which gave rise to it.

Ms. Dolma Gyari with author in March 2006

[188] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Sonam D. Dagpo, Secretary of the Department of International Relations, CTA, 1 March 2005
[189] Ibid.

SAMDHONG RINPOCHE

Samdhong Rinpoche (commonly referred to as 'Professor Samdhong Rinpoche' among the Tibetan diaspora) was the first elected Prime Minister in the Tibetan exile community when direct Kalon Tripa elections commenced in 2001. He is a *tulku* (reincarnated lama) who was enthroned as the reincarnation of the Fourth Samdhong Rinpoche at the Gelug monastery of Gaden Dechenling.[190] After coming into exile in 1959, Samdhong Rinpoche channelled his energies into the field of education and later became the Principal of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Varanasi.[191] He was the main architect of the 1991 Charter[192] and prior to his election as Prime Minister in 2001 he served as Speaker of the parliament.

Samdhong Rinpoche won the first ever direct Kalon Tripa elections in 2001 with an overwhelming majority of 84.54 percent of the ballot[193] and he was re-elected for a second term in 2006 with 90% of the vote.[194] Allegedly, in 2001 he desired to withdraw his name and abide by an earlier decision he had made to retire from political life, but what ultimately convinced him to remain in the elections was the large number of oral and written requests he received from the diaspora community and from Tibet telling him 'it would not be right to withdraw [his] name.'[195] In an interview with *Himal* magazine, he commented in 2002 that 'From the feedback from people who voted for me I gather they trust me not to disobey his Holiness. *Therefore they have not chosen me as a great democratic leader but have chosen me as a faithful follower of His Holiness*.'[196]

As these words suggest, Samdhong Rinpoche, an avowedly "faithful follower" of the Dalai Lama, and a high lama of the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism (the same sect as the Dalai Lama), represents a political leader whose legitimacy rests somewhere between the traditional-charismatic authority as embodied by the Dalai Lama and a modern democratic mandate as yielded by the prime-ministerial election process.[197] Samdhong Rinpoche's leadership thus occupies a space of political liminality, a stage of transition between the old and the new bases of legitimacy.

The first Kalon Tripa very much brought to bear his spiritual and philosophical inclinations on his approach to governance. Samdhong Rinpoche is known for being a stout Gandhian, and before his election he had in fact proposed to initiate a satyagraha campaign for the Tibetan struggle.[198] His Gandhian influence continued to be visible during his leadership in the exile-government, as in the three principles that guided his

---

[190] Samdhong Rinpoche and Donovan Roebert (2006) *Samdhong Rinpoche: Uncompromising Truth for a Compromised World: Tibetan Buddhism and Today's World*. Bloomington, Indiana: World Wisdom Books, xxi

[191] Barbara Crossette (2002) "Tibetan Monk Prepares Exiles for a Political Shift." *Tibetan Bulletin*, May-June (Reprinted from *The New York Times*, 21 July 2002): 28.

[192] CTA (2001b) "Samdhong Rinpoche takes Oath" 9 January 2001. Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/2001/01/09/samdhong-rinpoche-takes-oath/ (accessed 22 January 2013).

[193] Tibetan Bulletin (Sept-Oct 2001), op.cit., 6.

[194] Brox, op.cit., 61.

[195] Samdhong Rinpoche (2001) "Statement: New Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche Speaks." *Tibetan Bulletin* Sept-Oct: 25-28 at 25.

[196] Himal (2002) "Satyagraha in exile" *Himal* (September), Kathmandu, reprinted in *Tibetan Bulletin* 2002 Jul-Sept, 22 (my emphasis)

[197] Also see Kauffmann, op.cit., 149.

[198] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., *Selected Writings and Speeches on Buddhism and Tibetan Culture*. Varanasi, India: Alumni of Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies: 296-323.

administration: truth, nonviolence and genuine democracy.[199] Whereas Gandhi largely derived his inspiration for his satyagraha from the Hindu tradition,[200] Samdhong Rinpoche conceives of a satyagraha based on Buddhist teachings and referents.

Samdhong Rinpoche had in fact started formulating a framework for a Tibetan satyagraha movement in the mid-1990s, and planned to commence the movement in March 1996.[201] However, due to a number of intervening circumstances, including the planned referendum in 1997 and the election of Samdhong Rinpnoche as the first democratically chosen prime minister in exile, the plan for this satyagraha movement was put on hold. In my interview with Samdhong Rinpoche in 2013, he also explained that a key obstacle in launching a satyagraha campaign was the difficulty of finding satyagrahis who would carry it out:

> The ideal of satyagraha is always there but we are not able to find any satyagrahis—the persons who undertake the satyagraha. There are a lot of qualifications and a lot of training [needed], and at this moment no one among the Tibetan people is very much willing to go through such rigorous training. Even in Gandhi's time, he found it very difficult to recognise satyagrahis. So the idea is still there; anybody can pick it up but until now there is not much activeness in this.[202]

When I asked whether there were any plans presently to recruit people for a satyagraha movement, Samdhong Rinpoche told me: 'No I'm not making any campaign any more because considering my age and capacity, I cannot take such an ongoing long-time responsibility.'[203] He stated however that he has given his 'ideas in writing' and that together with the host of other literature on nonviolence such as the writings of Gandhi and Gene Sharp, 'anybody interested can pick it up.'[204]

As Samdhong Rinpoche indicated, currently there are no concerted efforts to launch a satyagraha campaign in exile as he envisioned it. Yet, since, indeed, the ideas have been formulated and released to the Tibetan public, the possibility that such a movement could arise in the future cannot be discounted. Samdhong Rinpoche, as the first elected prime minister of the CTA and an esteemed Tibetan monk, has been a tremendously influential moral and political leader in the exile community—perhaps second only to the Dalai Lama. Below I review the central features of his writings on satyagraha as an important ideological contribution to the discourse on nonviolence in exile.

The Moral and Religious Basis of a Tibetan Satyagraha

As seen in Chapter 1, 'satyagraha' is a term coined by Gandhi which compounds the words *satya* (truth) with *agraha* (insistence). In Tibetan, the word for satyagraha is *den-pai u-tsug*. With respect to the Buddhist theory of two truths, Samdhong Rinpoche states that satyagraha must be carried out with reference to relative (or conventional) truth, not absolute (or ultimate) truth: 'Absolute truth cannot be the

---

[199] Samdhong Rinpoche (2001) "Statement: New Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche Speaks." Tibetan Bulletin Sept-Oct: 25-28 at 26; Samdhong Rinpoche (2003) "Governing in Exile: Two Years of the 12th Kashag: Address by Kalon Tripa." *Tibetan Bulletin*. Sept-Oct: 10-14 at 10.

[200] Although the influences of thinkers such as Ruskin, Thoreau, and Tolstoy; and the principles of Christianity and Jainism on Gandhian thought have been openly recognized, it is evident that Gandhi's main ideological point of reference was Hindu philosophy.

[201] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., p365.

[202] Semi-structured (phone) interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, former Prime Minister of the CTA, 26 January 2013.

[203] Ibid.

[204] Ibid.

basis of satyagraha; at its level the aims and modes of satyagraha and the thought and behaviour of the satyagrahi himself (one who takes truthful non-violent action) cannot be comprehended. Therefore, the basis for satyagraha is relative or conventional truth.'[205] According to him the relative truth, to which the nonviolent actionist must adhere, entails upholding the 'eternal values and norms such as freedom, justice, equality and human dignity emanating from truth' and it must also be verifiable through 'common experience and logic'.[206]

Samdong Rinpoche explains that *agraha* entails a determination to attain a legitimate and reasonable goal coupled with a strong will to bear any amount of suffering, including death, without resorting to violence.[207] In his view, the struggles for enlightenment undergone by Gautama the Buddha represent the greatest satyagraha:

> I am particularly inspired by the satyagraha undertaken by Prince Siddhartha 2,500 years ago. He carefully examined the nature of suffering, the cause of that suffering, the possibility of the cessation of suffering and the appropriate method for achieving that cessation. His search culminated in sitting down under the bodhi tree determined to remain, come what may, until he found the cause of misery and the way for its cessation and had achieved enlightenment. He was willing to suffer any pain, even to perish, but he would not move from his seat until he had achieved his goal.
> This determination was the truest kind of satyagraha because Prince Siddhartha's resolve to achieve enlightenment did not come from negative emotions but from love of truth and compassion; his resolve arose not from selfish motives but from the desire to benefit all sentient beings. As he sat under the bodhi tree he was challenged by powerful forces of opposition epitomized by the evil one, Mara. Although Mara employed utmost terror and temptation, Siddhartha never wavered and his satyagraha continued without the slightest disturbance. When Mara challenged the truthfulness of his endeavour, Siddhartha touched the ground calmly; the earth testified in favour and the negative force of Mara disappeared. The following morning Siddhartha awoke as Buddha. I consider this to be the unparalleled example of satyagraha.[208]

The above represents a reinterpretation by Samdhong Rinpoche of Gandh's nonviolent method against a Buddhist context that would resonate more with the Tibetans. However, as Samdhong Rinpoche himself is at pains to note, nonviolent action in the usual sense means insistence on relative truth, whereas the Buddha's struggle would seem to be an adherence to ultimate truth, however relatively conceived before its attainment. There is a philosophical difference between the satyagraha as conceived by Gandhi and Samdhong Rinpoche since the Hindu tradition believes in a creator God and Buddhism is fundamentally non-theistic. For this reason, Samdhong Rinpoche points out that there is a slight difference in the way truth is conceived between the two traditions.[209] Yet he also adds that with respect to the basic principles of satyagraha and its application, his Tibetan version is not so different to the Gandhian method.[210]

In a similar vein to Gandhian thought, Samdhong Rinpoche's nonviolence is reveals a strong propensity towards self-reflexivity and self-criticism. According to Samdhong Rinpoche, the current tragedy of Tibet is the Tibetans' own responsibility

---

[205] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., 313.
[206] Ibid, 314
[207] Ibid.
[208] Ibid, 315
[209] Ibid, 319. Semi-structured interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the CTA, 9 March 2005.
[210] Semi-structured interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the CTA, 9 March 2005.

which stems from the degeneration of Tibetan society from around the seventeenth century. He says that around this time, the Tibetans started to become disinterested in the conduct of their government and even the management of monastic establishments began to be entrusted to people who were more power-hungry than spiritual.[211] This led to a vicious cycle of degeneration whereby the government ignored the needs of the people and the people no longer trusted their government.[212] Tibetans lost faith in the peaceful path of nonviolence and in the law of karma, exemplified by the many acts committed which were contrary to the spiritual tradition of Tibet, such as the involvement of monasteries in violent conduct.[213] Thus, in Samdhong Rinpoche's view, the unprecedented suffering experienced by the Tibetans today is the result of an accumulation of collective bad karma.[214]

From a political perspective too, Samdhong Rinpoche points out that the Tibetans lacked foresight and timely action. He enumerates the political failing of the Tibetans, which contributed to the ease with which China occupied Tibet:

> 1. [W]e were unable to change the political system in Tibet in accord with changing times;
> 2. we were unable to establish international relations that would clarify to the nations of the world the full extent of our independence;
> 3. we lost previous opportunities during 1013 to 1049, and instead remained aloof from the international community;
> 4. since the international political situation was not properly managed, the people's understanding and capacity for unity and patriotism remained limited;
> 5. our neighbors, such as India, wished to cooperate with us, but we were unable to instill in them the confidence that we were capable of governing and ruling ourselves.[215]

Since Tibetans brought about their present crisis by their own doing, Samdhong Rinpoche says that they must liberate themselves by their own hands—not by any other means.[216] It is to this end that he proposes his satyagraha campaign.

For Samdhong Rinpoche, the ultimate goal of the Tibetan's struggle is not Tibet's independence but the preservation of the 'spiritual culture' and tradition of Tibet. Whether independence or 'genuine autonomy', they are both but means by which to keep the integrity of Tibetan culture intact.[217] Samdhong Rinpoche explains his view with reference to 'universal responsibility (t. *chi sem*).' This is a principle the Dalai Lama emphasizes which denotes a sense of responsibility deriving from an awareness that 'our every act has a universal dimension' and that '[b]ecause of this, ethical discipline, wholesome conduct, and careful discernment are crucial ingredients for meaningful, happy life.'[218] Universal responsibility means an 'attitude of mind

---

[211] Ibid, 367
[212] Ibid.
[213] Ibid, 298
[214] Ibid. Note that Samdhong Rinpoche's attribution of the Tibetans' plight today to collective 'bad karma' is a view that has been contested by sections of the exile community. For example, Lhasang Tsering writes in a poem:

> Now I will not walk away,
> Leaving the Tibetans to suffer,
> And say it's just their bad karma,
> For that's not practicing true Dharma.

(see Lhasang Tsering (2003) *Tomorrow & Other Poems*. New Delhi: Rupa. Co., 6.)
[215] Ibid, 298-299
[216] Ibid, 299
[217] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., 318
[218] Dalai Lama (1999), op.cit., 167.

whereby, when we see an opportunity to benefit others, we will take it in preference to merely looking after our own narrow interests.'[219] In Samdhong Rinpoche's reasoning, the preservation of Tibetan spiritual culture is not just for the benefit of the Tibetans; it is part of the Tibetan people's universal responsibility to the whole world, since this culture serves to benefit humankind, and its loss is a loss for all of humanity.[220] In this way, the universal responsibility of the Tibetans towards humankind is explained as the preservation, mastery, practice, and dissemination of their unique spiritual civilization.[221]

Samdhong Rinpoche points out a number of differences between the context in which Gandhi operated and the context in which the Tibetans must struggle. Firstly, Gandhi's resistance movement took place in a democratic system where the rule of law was assured but the Tibetans must contend with a totalitarian administration without an independent judiciary.[222] Further, whereas India is located far from Great Britain separated by oceans and the British living in India were a minority among Indian population, Tibet is contiguous with China and due to the population transfer policies of the PRC, today the Tibetans have been reduced to a minority in their homeland.[223] In these respects, Samdhong Rinpoche indicates that the contexts of India and Tibet diverge significantly, and in the case of the latter, the chances of success through a satyagraha campaign seem small. Yet, he asserts that the value of satyagraha is not dependent on whether it brings about political success but rather in directly expressing disagreement and opposition to the Chinese regime: '[I]t is not sufficient for us to sit idly in India in our facilities, our air-conditioned rooms and to simply say that China is doing wrong. It is not sufficient. We should go to the Chinese people inside Tibet and tell them what they are doing is wrong, we do not agree and we will insist that they stop. That is our duty.'[224] He says that without doing so, the exile Tibetans remain but idle witnesses to the suffering of the Tibetans inside Tibet.[225]

There is open acknowledgement that should the Tibetans implement this satyagraha movement and enter the PRC, it is 99 per cent certain that the satyagrahis would face detention and possibly death.[226] He notes that some have commented that his plan is tantamount to suicide but responds by saying that it is much better to commit suicide than to not fulfil one's duty:[227]

> [I]n my Satyagraha, I do not care about the end results. Of course we wish for the freedom of people inside Tibet. This will either occur or not, as a result. But that is a different issue. I must perform my duty, and if, in the performance of that duty there is a result for the people inside Tibet that would be very good. Even if I cannot give any results to them, or to us—still I must perform the duty…[S]ome feel that our Satyagraha is nothing more than suicide. This view may be correct, but suicide would be preferable to remaining silent…[228]

---

[219] Ibid, 169.
[220] Semi-structured interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the CTA, 9 March 2005.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., 370.
[223] Ibid, 319.
[224] Ibid, 366.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid, 369.
[227] Ibid, 370
[228] Ibid, 369-370.

Elsewhere Samdhong Rinpoche asserts that accepting death in the performance of duty is in keeping with the principle of nonviolence and the demands of history shouldered by Tibetans in exile:

> [T]he fact remains that if the path of truth and non-violence is truly powerful, it must be capable of overcoming anything it faces. And if it is faced with lawless brutality, the path of non-violence will necessarily become even more potent…When we say that Buddha Shakyamuni overwhelmed billions of demonic forces with a single meditation on love, we are not recounting a simply story; instead, I feel that we are speaking of a rationally supported symbol of the power of truth and non-violence. Finally, even if participating in such a movement were to be tantamount to suicide, I have already remarked that we must die one way or the other. So rather than die having led an empty and meaningless life, it is far more meaningful and more in keeping with the demands of history to die while engaged in the spiritual practice of truth and non-violence for the sake of our nation and its spiritual traditions.[229]

Samdhong Rinpoche, like Gandhi, urges satyagrahis to be ready to accept death in the course of the satyagraha movement. His ideology represents nonviolence as a creed or 'principled nonviolence' but unlike the nonviolent creed of the Dalai Lama, it is more radical in the way it exhorts potential actionists to be ready to sacrifice their lives. Samdhong Rinpoche's ideology also differs from the Dalai Lama's in that there is an emphatic focus on relative truth and in operating from this level, while the Dalai Lama's approach to China that emphasizes compassion, interdependence, and 'emptiness' would seem to place more weight on ultimate truth. The latter's policies tend to be much less confrontational and less willing to see the loss of Tibetan lives.

What a Tibetan Satyagraha Would Look Like

As the very name of satyagraha implies, it is a mode of resistance based on insisting on 'truth'. The Dalai Lama notes: 'As far as power is concerned China has no reason to fear from Tibet but because they do not have truth [on their side] they are so sensitive about the Tibetan issue. And on our side…we have truth…Therefore, although we are physically very weak, we have more confidence.'[230] Given the incomparable military strength of the Tibetans to the Chinese, arguably the greatest weapon of the Tibetan struggle is their moral discourse of truth as employed in their international advocacy campaigns.

Samdhong Rinpoche enumerates 11 truths which the Tibetans are able to assert as the basis of their satyagraha:

1. It is true that Tibet is a spiritual land where the people earn their livelihoods in a spiritual and moral manner.
2. It is true that Tibet has enjoyed complete independence for the vast majority of the time since the earliest social formations until 1951.
3. It is true that the communist Chinese military invasion of 1949 and the subsequent forceful colonization of Tibet violates international law.
4. It is true that according to international law, the Seventeen Point Agreement that Tibetans were forced to sign under intense duress is not valid…
5. It is true that during the more than forty years since the Chinese invasion: the Tibetans have been deprived of their human rights; the religious and cultural traditions of Tibet have been devastated; Tibet's economy has been exploited; the Tibetan people have faced

[229] Ibid, 312

[230] Shiromany, A. A. Ed. (1996) *The Spirit of Tibet: Vision for Human Liberation (Selected speeches and writings of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama).* New Delhi: Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre in association with Vikas Publishing House, 10.

immeasurable oppression, torture and brutality; the Tibetan people have become less populous due to deliberate population transfer [of] Chinese into Tibet; a deliberate attempt has been made to destroy our culture and our very identity; and Tibet's environment has been severely harmed…and it is true that this way of governing Tibet has never accorded with the aspirations of the Tibetan people.

6. It is true that the vast majority of the Tibetan people object to the Chinese occupation and fervently yearn to restore Tibet's independence.
7. It is true that Tibet is not part of China…[N]either the Tibetan head of state nor the Tibetan people themselves have ever legitimately agreed to accede to China…
8. It is true that we Tibetans are a distinct people with our own ethnicity, language, customary clothing, and cultural traditions. Hence it is true that the Tibetan people have the right to self determination…
9. It is true that the Tibetan people have a responsibility to the world to protect, maintain, and disseminate our unique traditions of moral behaviour and inner sciences.
10. It is true that this responsibility cannot be fully met if freedom is not restored to the Tibetan people.
11. Hence it is an irrevocable truth that the restoration of our freedom is the birth-duty of every Tibetan.[231]

It is claimed that satyagraha can be implemented individually or collectively; and if the Tibetans are not ready for a collective movement they should implement it individually.[232] Samdhong Rinpoche takes an extremely moral stance, removed from an activism based on political expediency. For him, satyagraha should not be a public relations campaign or done with the aim of gaining international support.[233] Therefore, the satyagrahis should not attempt to intentionally attract media attention; if they are asked by journalists what they are doing, at that point they can simply convey the truth.[234]

Although someone as erudite as Samdhong Rinpoche had probably read Gene Sharp's work by the time he designed his framework for a Tibetan satyagraha,[235] he shows little interest in ensuring the full conditions for political jiu-jitsu are in place, which relies on media actors to convey the self-suffering of the nonviolent actionists to the broader society. His satyagraha is much more a moral act of conscience and duty than one based on prospective political gains.

Satyagraha is a method of struggle composing of civil disobedience, non-cooperation, and peaceful resistance, and in the Tibetan context, Samdhong Rinpoche suggests that satyagraha could include: ignoring all unacceptable directives of the PRC; refusing to learn Chinese, to sell Chinese goods, and participate in public or government programmes; boycotting Chinese shops, restaurants, and hotels, and to avoid hiring Chinese workers and entering into joint ventures with the Chinese; and resigning from working in government offices, state schools, and factories as an expression of protest.[236] Thus, emphasis is laid on severing all relations and involvement that contributes towards Chinese occupation, PRC's population transfer policy, and the environmental destruction of Tibet. Satyagrahis are also urged to

[231] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., 303-304.
[232] Samdhong Rinpoche says that for a 'collective satyagraha' there is need for at least 5 people. Samdhong Rinpoche, op.cit, 308.
[233] Ibid, 311
[234] Ibid.
[235] Samdhong Rinpoche certainly indicated a familiarity with Gene Sharp's work in my phone interview with him 2013. Given that many of Sharp's works had been published in the 1970s, it might be surmised that by the mid-1990s, when Samdhong Rinpoche wrote about a Tibetan satyagraha, he had probably acquainted himself with Sharp's work on nonviolence. Semi-structured (phone) interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, former Prime Minister of the CTA, 26 January 2013.
[236] Ibid, 309.

express the demands of the Tibetan people to the Chinese people by participating in daily assemblies and other forms of nonviolent action. Since the use of violence is not permissible even for self-defense, the satyagrahis must be prepared to endure great physical trials—but Samdhong Rinpoche adds a caveat that this does not mean that the satyagrahis should wilfully give their life by committing self-immolation or fasting unto death.[237]

Samdhong Rinpoche then lists 12 criteria which an individual must meet to participate in satyagraha.[238] These include maintaining ethical conduct; avoiding behaviour which causes pain to others; removing anger, hatred, and the desire to harm the opponent; nurturing the courage to eschew violence even when violence is used against oneself; keeping one's vow of truth and nonviolence even at the cost of one's life; not expecting any fame, glory, profit, recognition or credit for one's participation; and considering the satyagraha not as a political movement, but as 'a spiritual practice of restoring Tibet's freedom from the sake of all sentiment beings.'[239] Other requirements to ensure the calibre of the satyagrahi includes requiring that the prospective participant leads a life 'free of extremes' and does not have any dependents nor outstanding loans, accounts, or liabilities.[240]

These criteria demonstrate Samdhong Rinpoche's profoundly moral and spiritual conception of satyagraha; so much so that later he would consider no one in the Tibetan community qualified to fulfil them or willing to undergo the rigorous training to do so.[241] Gandhi had similarly laid out extensive rules and principles for his satyagraha campaigns,[242] which nevertheless saw a fair number of willing participants. Since a Tibetan satyagraha movement was never launched, it is difficult speculate as to the actual participation levels would have been. However, if we are to take Samdhong Rinpoche's words at face value, to assume that finding Tibetans who are willing to undergo the required training are extremely limited; one possible explanation for this may be found in the contrasting contexts of India and Tibet, mentioned above, where the latter's prospects for success are deemed to be much lower than it had been for Indian satyagrahis. Another reason might be found in the hope the Tibetans have placed in the Dalai Lama's initiatives such as the Middle Way Approach, diplomatic efforts to negotiate with China, and appeals to the international community for a solution on Tibet.

Samdhong Rinpoche's satyagraha represents a different ideological basis for nonviolence to that of the Dalai Lama. While the Dalai Lama refers to both conventional and ultimate truth as the premise for his nonviolence, Samdhong Rinpoche emphatically locates his satyagraha in conventional (relative) truth. Yet in other ways, the latter's nonviolence has a moral and spiritual dimension that is clearly counter to a more worldly rational choice such as the willingness to endure detention or death to fulfil one's moral duty; while the Dalai Lama's nonviolence includes a more pragmatic approach to preserving Tibetan lives, as exemplified in a passage

---

[237] Ibid.
[238] Ibid, 306-307.
[239] Ibid.
[240] Ibid, 306.
[241] Semi-structured (phone) interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, former Prime Minister of the CTA, 26 January 2013.
[242] Mohandas K. Gandhi. (1930) "Some Rules of Satyagraha" *Young India* (Navajivan) 23 February 1930, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Vol. 48: 340; Mohandas K. Gandhi (1961) *Nonviolent Resistance.* New York: Schocken Books, 37.

from his autobiography quoted earlier.[243] Another point of contrast is that Samdhong Rinpoche's satyagraha envisions a grassroots movement of civil disobedience whereas the Dalai Lama's nonviolent activities tend to take place at a higher level of policy and diplomacy.

Nevertheless, the two nonviolent approaches of these Tibetan Buddhist leaders probably complement more than they contradict each other. For example, Samdhong Rinpoche's incorporation of the principle of 'universal responsibility' into his framework on satyagraha is an affirmation of a doctrine which has been highlighted in the Dalai Lama's teachings and discourse. The two have also worked together cooperatively in the leadership of the exile government: the Dalai Lama as head of the CTA and Samdhong Rinpoche as prime minister. Each of these Buddhist leaders represents a distinct ideological pillar of nonviolence in Tibetan exile society.

Counter Perspectives from Civil Society

Nonviolence in the Tibetan exile community is the ideology of the establishment—supported by Buddhist monks who have occupied by the highest echelons of the exile government until recently and enshrined in the *Charter for the Tibetans-in-Exile*. It is therefore instructive to consider perspectives coming from civil society which can differ from the dominant line of the CTA. The Tibetan Youth Congress, for instance, has given serious consideration to engaging in violent resistance. Many of the civil society organizations (CSOs) still employ nonviolent methods but their approach often leans towards 'pragmatic nonviolence' in contrast to the more 'principled' stances of the exile leadership. Many CSOs have constitutions which are explicitly secular, and thus organizationally, tend not to have a religious affiliation. Nevertheless, individual Tibetan members of the CSOs often bring to bear religious beliefs or influences upon their utterances, for example, by incorporating Buddhist insights or allusions into their rhetoric. Below I discuss perspectives from civil society on the goal and method of the Tibetan struggle which differ or run counter to the establishment discourse in exile. By so doing, I hope to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between nonviolence and Tibetan Buddhism.

ON THE GOAL OF THE TIBETAN STRUGGLE

Planned Referendum

The aim of the Tibetan struggle has been an issue which has divided the exile society ever since the Dalai Lama's presentation of the Strasbourg Proposal in 1988 and the CTA's adoption of the Middle Way Approach. Given that the question of 'autonomy or independence' has proved highly contentious, the Dalai Lama expressed a wish during 1995-1996 to hear from the exile public as to what they seek for the future of Tibet. A referendum to ascertain the future strategy for the Tibetan liberation movement was planned for 1997, with the draft voting papers carrying four options:

[243] For convenience, I quote the relevant words here: "However great the violence used against us, it could never become right to use violence in reply. And on the practical side, I saw the atrocities in the east as a dreadful example of what the Chinese could do so easily all over Tibet if we fought them. I must, I thought, try yet again to persuade my people not to use arms, not to provoke the same or worse reprisals over the rest of our country." See Dalai Lama (1962), op.cit., 160

Middle Way Approach, Independence, Self-determination, and Satyagraha. The latter two options are about the approach of the movement, whereas the first two are more about the goal of the struggle; broadly though the planned referendum sought to clarify the direction of the struggle.[244]

In the end, however, following many debates, forums, and opinion polls, the referendum was never held. As Ardley states, a 'great deal of controversy surrounded this referendum, mainly because some Tibetans feared that once a strategy had been selected by the people, there would have been little opportunity for change if the strategy proved unsuccessful. Further, many believed that Tibetans in exile did not have the right to make a decision that would have had an enormous impact on the six million Tibetans inside Tibet.'[245] Ardley also refers to an anonymous article published on the Office of Tibet's website which stated that 'if the leadership of the government-in-exile fears embarrassment by a strong independence vote, it may call the referendum off.'[246]

However, I was informed by the CTA's Department of Information and International Relations that the main reason for the referendum's cancellation was that the majority of the exile community have expressed that they will simply follow the will of the Dalai Lama.[247] This characterization of the circumstances leading to the referendum's cancellation was also confirmed in my interview with Lobsang Yeshi, the Vice President of the TYC Central Executive Committee in 2005:

> [A]ctually, the referendum is a failure. Why? Because the choice that we have been given is rejected, so to say. The Dalai Lama has offered four options, and the public has rejected [the urging of] the Dalai Lama. Now see, they haven't chosen any of the four. They have chosen something which is not there. But I'd say this is a disloyalty. Not loyalty toward the Dalai Lama…[H]e wanted democracy, and he wants to really democratize generally the Tibetan society…He once said, I'm a monk, I'm a Buddhist, but I'm also a socialist, saying that 'I appreciate the equality of all people.' So Middle Path is the Dalai Lama's option. And the Dalai Lama may change his option. Isn't it? He has changed many times. It may change again. He once said in 1993, the table is empty. I don't have anything to offer to China…Yes people had four choices, and the people chose 'the Dalai Lama's wishes'. And then the Dalai Lama was helpless. When you give me four choices and then ask me to choose and then I choose, 'You do whatever', that means I'm throwing all the responsibility on you… Some people think that the Dalai Lama must be very happy with the Middle Path. That's the last option. He was helpless…Today, when he talks with us, many times, he seems to be very desperate…As his followers, as his subjects, we are supposed to keep him very happy. Isn't it? We are supposed to do from our side. Not throw all responsibility on him. That's what the people have done.[248]

The problem referred to above indicates the challenges in creating a truly democratic culture in a traditional society which is accustomed to (and comfortable with) the

---

[244] A 1997 edition of the *Tibetan Bulletin* contains a series of articles outlining all the issues taken up by the referendum and about the four options. See *Tibetan Bulletin* 1(2) July–August 1997.

[245] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 87. The argument about the Tibetans in exile not having the right to make decisions which concern the Tibetans in Tibet is also made by Lhasang Tsering, a prominent political commentator in exile and former TYC Central Executive Committee President: Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lhasang Tsering, former President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 17 March 2005.

[246] Ibid., 190, fn 16. The article she refers to, 'Turmoil among exiles in India over referendum' (http://www.tibet.com/Referendum/r-8.html)is no longer available.

[247] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Sonam D. Dagpo, Secretary of Department of International Relations, CTA, 1 March 2005.

[248] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Yeshi, Vice-President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 1 March 2005.

traditional-charismatic authority of the Dalai Lama. With the latter's complete devolution of his political authority in 2011, however, the Tibetans in exile are forced to make their political choices through the democratic process today. Although in the mid-1990s, the majority public opinion in exile seemed to lean towards fully entrusting the decisions related to the future of Tibet to the Dalai Lama, the Middle Way Approach has not gone uncontested. Below I review the political debate in exile on the question of what the Tibetans should uphold as the goal of their struggle.

Middle Way vs. Independence

Most of my research participants during my fieldwork in 2005 and 2012 conveyed a sense of compromise when they spoke about the Middle Way Approach: that since that goal seemed unrealistic, 'genuine autonomy' was the next best thing. For example, Samdhong Rinpoche told me that taking into account PRC's attitude, international politics, and the reality of Tibet today, 'there is absolutely no possibility of getting separation or cession from China' which, in his view, is a 'fact' we must accept.[249] He added that the 'best thing we can hope for is to ask for more autonomy within the Chinese constitutional framework.'[250] Whatever might be said about the merits of the Middle Way Approach by the Dalai Lama and the current exile administration, 'genuine autonomy' is ultimately a compromise—probably the furthest concession the Tibetans are willing to make.

Children in exile waiving the Tibetan flag to commemorate the Tibetan National Uprising Day on 10 March 2005 (photographed by author)

The Middle Way Approach entails calling for the legitimate rights of the Tibetans as an 'ethnic minority' within the legal framework of the existing Chinese constitution which already allows for 'autonomy' for such minority groups.[251] The exile government makes reference to the European Union and the special status the PRC accords to Hong Kong in explaining the type of political arrangement they have in

[249] Semi-structured interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the CTA, 9 March 2005.
[250] Ibid.
[251] Ibid.

mind—one that recognizes the interdependent relations of the contemporary world and yet sufficiently allows for the self-rule of the Tibetans to preserve their unique culture, civilization and identity.

One of the justifications given for the Middle Way Approach is the argument that, in order to preserve the unique culture of the Tibetans—that is, to fulfil the 'universal responsibility' of the Tibetans, as Samdhong Rinpoche puts it—the Tibetans must compromise their demand for independence (t. *rangzen*). One of my interviewees from the CTA pointed out that the Dalai Lama has cautioned there is no point for an independent Tibet to be realized in a hundred years' time if the people there speak and behave like Chinese people.[252] With the increasing number of Han Chinese people flooding Tibet (especially after the construction of the Beijing-Lhasa railway), the Tibetans are increasingly rendered a minority population in their own land, which presents serious challenges for the preservation of Tibetan culture. Further, I was informed by another CTA functionary that in order to reach a solution as quickly as possible for the suffering people in Tibet, demanding autonomy is the most viable CTA policy towards China.[253] In other words, the Middle Way Approach is also a compromise made for the sake of the Tibetans in Tibet.

The most significant opposition to the Middle Way Approach has come from the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), which is the biggest Tibetan CSO in exile with over 25,000 in membership and more than 75 branches worldwide.[254] The TYC asserts the goal of their resistance to be an independent Tibet constituted by the three provinces.[255] Other established Tibetan CSOs in exile have supported the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach, but even then, during my fieldwork there was a sense that their true wish was for independence.[256] For example, one member of the Central Executive Committee of the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA), an organization which is known to support the Middle Way Approach, shared with me the evolution of her thinking on the subject:

> [A]utonomy—it's a totally new concept for us. We wanted independence, the natural right of all Tibetans; that is how we were brought up, you know….[W]hen we went to higher studies in colleges, the TYC had lots of branches—in almost all the universities, in all the cities, they have so many regional chapters. And it was compulsory, almost compulsory for Tibetan youngsters to be part of the TYC. In a way, it was a platform through which we expressed our identity as a refugee. And of course, the TYC stands for complete independence…We were very patriotic, we were asking for independence and nothing less. And then I started working…As a person very interested in women's issues…it was natural that I came here to work [in the TWA]. Before coming here, I didn't know that there was this division…that the Tibetan Government-in-Exile and TWA are supporting autonomy. So it was quite new for me; it took some time adjusting my ideology…this policy of the Tibetan government and this organization. And then I was forced to read more about this; why His Holiness has come down [in his demand to China]. We perceive it as a step down from what is ours; rightfully ours. So then I read; of course when you read more, you learn more, and you see things from all perspectives.

---

[252] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Sonam D. Dagpo, Secretary of the Department of International Relations, CTA, 1 March 2005

[253] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Finance and Health Minister, CTA, 4 March 2005; Semi-structured interview with Ms. Dolma Gyari, Vice President of Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, 4 March 2005.

[254] Figure obtained from a pamphlet on Tibetan Youth Congress obtained in 2005.

[255] Ibid.

[256] See also Tashi-Topgye Jamyangling (1998) "Independence or Extinction" in Edward Lazar (Ed) *Tibet: The Issue is Independence*. Delhi: Parallax, 71.

> And now, I think well, we should at least give it [Middle Way Approach] a try. Let's see what will happen.[257]

This TWA member's account displays a common dilemma that Tibetans in exile experience when changing affiliation from one organization to another that holds a different goal for the Tibetan struggle. Although this interviewee showed willingness to see what the Middle Way Approach might bear for the future, it is clear that she sees independence as a birthright of the Tibetans and that this view had been strongly moulded by the TYC. Many former TYC leaders later go on to serve in the CTA, and a similar ideological adjustment to the Middle Way Approach seems to be required in such cases.

Mr. Ngawang Woebar, President of Gu Chu Sum in the middle, author on the right and interpretor on the left (March 2005)

The Gu Chu Sum Movement of Tibet (known simply as 'Gu Chu Sum') is an organization of former Tibetan political prisoners, which had shifted their official position from supporting 'genuine autonomy' to supporting independence. From 1991 to 2001, they had supported the Middle Way Approach of the Dalai Lama and CTA but given that there had been no positive response from the Chinese authorities on the Five Point Peace Plan and the Strasbourg Proposal, they decided to formally change their demands at their 2001 General Board Meeting.[258] Ngawang Woebar, the President of Gu Chu Sum in 2005 explained this shift in the following way:

> Tibet was an independent country. It's very clear from the history, and when we [members of Gu Chu Sum] and the people in Tibet shouted and participated, risking our lives in the streets, facing the Chinese police and the guns; we shouted 'Free Tibet', that Tibet is independent, that we want a free Tibet, and that the Chinese should go home. So we have gone on the streets risking our lives, and believing in a free Tibet. And with that belief, it has resulted in arrest, even death, and suffering, all in the belief that Tibet is independent, that we deserve a free Tibet, we want a free Tibet…. But at the same

[257] Semi-structured interview with Ms. Tsering Tsomo Chatsug, Research Officer at TWA Central Executive Committee, 8 March 2005.
[258] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Ngawang Woebar, GCS President, 2 March 2005 (interpreted by Tenzin Gethoktsang)

> time…[if] some of our friends may think it not wise for us to go for a free Tibet…I tell them please continue to support the Dalai Lama, even if we're for a free Tibet and not autonomy.[259]

The majority of the members of Gu Chu Sum are current or former Tibetan Buddhist monks who had participated in the nonviolent resistance in Tibet in the late 1980s. In fact, the name 'Gu Chu Sum' means 'nine, ten, three', standing for the months in 1987 and 1988 when large demonstrations took place in Lhasa: September and October 1987 and March 1988. The organization's president in 2005 estimated that although around 70 per cent the membership had been monks or nuns back in Tibet, since many disrobe after coming into exile, he told me that in reality, around 30 per cent of the members are currently monks or nuns. Ngawang Woebar said that one of the main reasons for the frequent disrobing that occurs in exile is the post traumatic syndrome experienced by the political prisoners from the incarceration which renders many unable to focus on their Buddhist studies and discipline once in exile.[260]

Aside from the ideological shift, which occurred within Gu Chu Sum, on numerous occasions the Tibetans I interviewed indicated that their true desire was independence but because of their loyalty to the Dalai Lama and/or faith in his wisdom they would support the Middle Way Approach.[261] The President of the Central Executive Committee in 2005 explained that because of the 'larger than life image' of the Dalai Lama, 'however unpopular autonomy may be, they [the Tibetan people] have no problem believing in Dalai Lama.'[262] He pointed out that a peculiar phenomenon among the exile Tibetans is that 'along with autonomy they believe in independence…99 per cent might believe in autonomy, but out of that 95 percent would be supporting TYC' and added that he personally believed 'the day the Dalai Lama is no more, the concept of autonomy will break up.'[263]

Author participating in a peace march with the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) that began on 12 March 2005, to commemorate the Anniversary of the Tibetan Women's Uprising.

[259] Ibid.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Kalsang Phuntsok, President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 9 March 2005; Personal communication with a Tibetan resident in Dharamsala, 1 March 2005. The prevalence of such a view was also apparent from my questionnaire responses.
[262] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Kalsang Phuntsok, President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 9 March 2005
[263] Ibid.

The back of their green peace march vests read "Let Negotiation Begin and Give Peace a Chance", reflecting their support for the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach.

It is interesting to see the types of argumentation and discourses employed by the civil society in exile to justify their demand for independence. Given much of the support for the Middle Way Approach stems from the moral authority of the Dalai Lama as Tibet's supreme religious leader (and possibly as a democratic reformer), some of the pro-independence rhetoric makes explicit appeals to the religious and political sentiments of the people to garner support. For example, Lhasang Tsering,[264] an outspoken pro-independence intellectual and a longstanding critic of the policies of the exile establishment, claims that the Middle Way Approach is both undemocratic and un-Buddhist.[265] He says it is *undemocratic* because the majority of the Tibetans in Tibet are clearly pining for independence and laying their lives down for it: 'Few of us in exile have the mandate to change the call. People inside Tibet are suffering and dying for freedom. And no body can vote more clearly than to vote with their lives.'[266] Further, Lhasang Tsering says the Middle Way Approach is *un-Buddhist* because it does not properly reflect an understanding of impermanence:

> [With] the little that I know about Buddhism, I know enough to understand that one of the key principles of Buddhist teachings is that everything is impermanent and changing. If you're having a nice time, don't get carried away, this can come to an end. If you are suffering, don't fall down and give up, this can also come to an end. That's why we have the concept of the middle way: that we don't go to the extremes. Now, if everything is impermanent and changing, I keep asking, why must we surrender to the idea that only the occupation of Tibet by China will be permanent? Where is it written?[267]

From a practical and rational perspective too, Lhasang Tsering states that the Middle Way Approach has little chance of success. Although the approach tends to be spoken about as 'peaceful negotiations for mutual benefit' he says there is actually little benefit for the PRC to seriously consider a proposal on Tibet's autonomy: 'I

[264] For a time he joined the Tibetan guerrilla force based in Mustang and then served as President of TYC from 1986 to 1988.
[265] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lhasang Tsering, former President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 17 March 2005.
[266] Ibid.
[267] Ibid.

keep asking people – and nobody has yet given me an answer—the Chinese, what do they have to gain by surrendering even a small part of their total control over Tibet? Some people say good public relations but I should think 2.5 million square kilometres of strategic territory rich in natural resources was worth a lot of bad press.'[268]

According to Lhasang Tsering, time is running out for the Tibetans and PRC knows this. On the one hand the Chinese government has received the Dalai Lama's envoys which may give a semblance of the progress of Dharamsala-Beijing negotiations but this, he says, is but a performance to gain time; for all the while the PRC continues to step up its population transfer policies.[269] Even in the unlikely event that negotiations with the Chinese authorities result in a promise for autonomy based on the Middle Way Approach, Lhasang Tsering asserts that, as with the Seventeen Point Agreement (which provided for an autonomous arrangement for Tibet but which was subsequently violated by the PRC), there is no guarantee that China would honour such an agreement.[270] Indeed, he goes so far as to argue that accepting to be part of the PRC under the Middle Way Approach would simply provide a legal basis for Chinese population transfer policies.[271] The biggest harm done by the proposed Middle Way Approach, according to him, is that it has divided the Tibetan liberation movement, which no longer has a clear goal for its struggle.[272]

A key argument of the pro-independence Tibetans in exile is that if neither genuine autonomy nor independence can realistically be achieved in the near future, then the Tibetans should at least continue to demand their heart's true wish, which is independence.[273] Lobsang Yeshi, the Vice President of the TYC Central Executive Committee in 2005 put it as follows:

> Middle Path means a lot of things. So Tibetan people don't understand its importance… His Holiness is saying that [about the merits of the Middle Path], so we have to accept it. When the time comes, 'Now, the Chinese are ready to give you these things, now you go'…then they [the Tibetan people] will hesitate. That's for sure. They have to sing Chinese national anthem. They have to, you know, put up Chinese national flag. How can they do that? Not at all! When they [the Chinese] have killed 2 million people…[274]

The very premise of the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach presupposes cordial and cooperative relations between the Tibetans and Chinese in a positive recognition of interdependence. Yet, the words of Lobsang Yeshi indicate that due to deep-seated distrust against the Chinese, if a time comes for the Middle Way Approach to be implemented, many Tibetans may in fact hesitate to accept an autonomous arrangement under the PRC.

---

[268] Ibid.

[269] Lhasang Tsering (1994) "The issue is independence" in Edward Lazar (ed), *Tibet: The Issue is Independence*, Delhi, Full Circle, 40.

[270] Ibid, 40.

[271] Ibid, 39. However, note that the 'genuine autonomy' sought by the CTA would enable the Tibetan government to restrict the entry of Chinese people into the state in a similar manner to the arrangement in Hong Kong. Semi-structured interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the CTA, 9 March 2005.

[272] Lhasang Tsering (1994), op.cit., 36-37.

[273] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Kalsang Phuntsok, President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 9 March 2005.

[274] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Yeshi, Vice-President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 1 March 2005. Lobsang Yeshi added that the official figure of Tibetan deaths from occupation to 1979 according to the CTA is 1.2 million but the TYC estimates the number of deaths to have reached around 2 million by now.

Further, on the question of whether calling for Tibetan independence is practical or realistic, Lobsang Yeshi advances a rebuttal along the lines of Lhasang Tsering in referring to a Buddhist perspective:

> Whether it [independence] can be realized or not doesn't matter. Why? Because being a Buddhist, everyday we pray…Everybody prays that there be peace in the world; that all sentient beings attain Buddhahood. That's the goal. That's the highest goal. How can that be possible? Buddha is supposed to have realized Buddhahood after, you know, 5000 years of life cycle…If you think that Buddhahood is something that you can attain, why not independence? Because independence has been attained by many, many countries in this lifespan…[W]e have been praying for Buddhahood and in the whole Tibetan history, there is one saint, Milarepa…who was supposed to have attained Buddhahood in his lifespan. Tibetan history is around 3000 years. In those years, only one person has become a Buddha. Now you can compare the statistics. This is more practical or that is more practical?[275]

The leadership of the TYC Central Executive Board who I interviewed in 2005 referred to examples of countries which have achieved independence in recent history, such as Estonia, Latvia, and East Timor, which were not necessarily endowed with great military capacity; or the numerous redrawing of Armenia's national borders, in making the claim that the borders of nation-states do not remain static and that therefore Tibetan independence is possible even if in the distant future.[276]

Although many of the CSOs in exile are secular organizations, most of the individual members of those organizations are culturally (and possibly practising) Buddhist, who have the task of persuading the wider Tibetan community—over 99 percent of which are Buddhist.[277] The advocacy of the leadership of CSOs, therefore, is often peppered by Buddhist allusions, as exemplified by the words of Lhasang Tsering and Lobsang Yeshi above on impermanence and the probability of achieving Buddhahood. The employment of a selective Buddhist discourse by civil society leaders in appealing to the broader Tibetan public and in justifying political stances that significantly differ—or oppose outright—the policies of the exile leadership demonstrates the malleability of the application of religious principles and teachings. Buddhist discourse is thus used to promote the Middle Way Approach as well as to justify continued support to Tibetan independence. As will be seen in the next section, the same discursive malleability applies to the question of nonviolence and violence as a method of resistance.

Before moving on to take a look at the perspectives on the method of the Tibetan struggle, it is useful to consider how the 'Middle Way or independence' debate has split the exile society. From my small-scale survey of 110 exile Tibetans on their views on independence and autonomy, 48 respondents indicated support for independence while 59 chose the 'genuine autonomy' (3 respondents left this question blank). The results of my questionnaire appear in Table 3 below. Given that my sampled group (which included 30 TYC members and 30 monks) is small and does not necessarily representative of the composition of the exile society, and bearing in mind also, Kalsang Phuntsok's point that Tibetans often support both the Middle Way Approach *and* independence, the results of the questionnaire must be interpreted cautiously. It is at best a preliminary indication of the opinion divide among the

[275] Ibid.
[276] Ibid; Semi-structured interview with Mr. Kalsang Phuntsok, President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 9 March 2005.
[277] Personal communication with a member of the Planning Commission, CTA (anonymous), 25 April 2013

Tibetans Dharamsala and some surrounding areas (Sarah and New Delhi from which the questionnaires to the TYC branch members and students were distributed) in 2005 which must be followed by more comprehensive surveys to ensure greater accuracy.

Table 3: Preferences on the issue of 'independence vs. genuine autonomy' among a limited section of the Tibetan exile community in Dharamsala, Sarah, and New Delhi[278]

Multiple choice	TYC Central Executive Committee (8)[279]	RTYC[280] Sarah chapter (22)	Gu Chu Sum (10)	Monks (30)	College Students[281] (26)	Other (14)
Independence	8	18	4	8	8	2
Genuine autonomy		4	5	21	17	12

Nevertheless these preliminary findings suggest that one cannot necessarily determine an individual's views on independence/autonomy from their organizational affiliation alone. Although, as might be expected, most of the TYC members indicated support for independence, the ten Gu Chu Sum members surveyed were divided almost equally between independence and autonomy, despite the organization's shift from the latter to the former. Further, although a high proportion of monks in support of the Middle Way Approach might be expected in a show of loyalty towards the Dalai Lama, not an insignificant number (8 out of 30) supported independence. The goal of the Tibetan struggle continues to remain a contentious issue, and the dynamics of the debate will likely change with the policies of the future exile governments (which will no longer be institutionally connected to the Dalai Lama) and responsiveness or lack thereof from the PRC.

ON THE METHOD OF STRUGGLE

Apart from the goal of the Tibetan struggle which has divided the exile community between supporters of Middle Way and independence, the method of struggle is also a subject of contention. The Dalai Lama and the exile government have long framed the Tibetan movement as nonviolent. Yet, violent resistance has also been debated in exile, namely by the TYC. Furthermore, some interpretations by Tibetan Buddhists characterise extreme self-sacrifice as a type of 'violence'. This point was discussed to some extent in Chapter 3 when considering the Vietnamese self-immolations but the discussion will be furthered in this section when I consider the perspectives of Tibetan Buddhists on indefinite hunger strikes and self-immolation.

Violence

In the past decade, a number of bombing incidents have taken place in Tibet, such as the series of explosions in Lhasa during 1996,[282] and several bomb blasts in Kangding

[278] The difference between the number of members sampled and the total number of responses is explained by the number of unanswered questions, since some respondents answered some questions of the survey but not others.
[279] The number in parentheses contains number of people sampled.
[280] Regional Tibetan Youth Congress
[281] These college students range from ages 19-26. Most were from the Center for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah College, Dharamsala.

and Litang counties and Chengdu (the provincial capital of Sichuan province) in 2001-2002, allegedly by Tibetan activists.[283] As mentioned earlier, some of the demonstrations occurring in the lead up to the Beijing Olympics in 2008 also escalated to violence although they began nonviolently. Whether or not violence should be an option for the Tibetan struggle is a question that has invited serious debate by civil society actors in exile despite the nonviolent ideology of the exile establishment. Various justifications have been advanced to make a case for violence. For example, Lhasang Tsering, a former guerrilla fighter, says that every nation has a right to self-defense, which might be achieved through violent means, and refers to Gandhi's well-known statement that 'where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence I would advise violence.'[284] The interpretive malleability of moral authority is seen once again here: rather than a message of nonviolence, Lhasang Tsering receives from Gandhi, a call to direct action which includes violence.

The TYC's constitution in fact stipulates that the members should 'struggle for the total independence of Tibet even at the cost of one's life',[285] which has been understood as providing scope for a potentially violent movement. Tenzin Yangdon, the Public Relations Secretary of the TYC Central Executive Committee in 2009 explained:

> In the Tibetan Youth Congress constitution we have clearly stated that we, the Tibetan Youth Congress Members, we will fight to gain our independence at the cost of our lives…Sometimes that's interpreted as youth will take a more violent [stance], and I think the way it's stated is ambiguous. … But what we try to explain is that although we have so far been nonviolent, the people who come after us, we can't predict what road they will take.[286]

The TYC have considered the use of guerrilla warfare in the past. In late 1977, they even laid out plans for the formation of a 'freedom fighting wing' and started instruction in guerrilla warfare tactics.[287] The TYC also planned to form 'an elite group of Congress militants', which would 'engage directly in terrorist activities against Chinese embassies and personnel abroad.'[288] A former member of the Central Executive Committee of the TYC explained that 'From the moment Yasir [sic] Arafat was invited to the UN and given a standing ovation, [the TYC] had begun debating

---

[282] The New York Times (1996) "Bomb at Government Offices Wounds 5 in Tibetan Capital" *The New York Times*, 30 December: http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/30/world/bomb-at-government-offices-wounds-5-in-tibetan-capital.html (accessed 10 December 2015)

[283] Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) (2003) "The Execution of Lobsang Dondrub and the Case Against Tenzin Deleg The Law, the Courts, and the Debate on Legality", CECC Special Topic Paper: http://www.cecc.gov/publications/issue-papers/the-execution-of-lobsang-dondrub-and-the-case-against-tenzin-deleg-the-law (accessed 10 December 2015); Erik Eckholm (2003) "China Court Rejects Appeal of Tibetan Monk Sentenced to Death for Separatism" *The New York Times*, 27 January: http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/27/world/china-court-rejects-appeal-of-tibetan-monk-sentenced-to-death-for-separatism.html (accessed 10 December 2015).

[284] Gandhi (1961), op.cit., 132. Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lhasang Tsering, 17 March 2005. Lhasang Tsering, who now runs a bookshop in exile called 'Book Worm' had put up a quote to this nature on the wall of his bookshop.

[285] See Tibetan Youth Congress (2014) "About TYC" Official Website of the TYC: http://www.tibetanyouthcongress.org/about-tyc/ (accessed 11 December 2015)

[286] Ms. Tenzin Yangdon, Public Relations Secretary of TYC Central Executive Committee interviewed by Lauren Pass, 8 May 2009 quoted in Lauren Pass (2009) "Conflict and Adaptation: Tibetan Perspectives on Nonviolent Practice Lauren Pass" Independent Research Project, Emory University Tibetan Studies Program, available at: http://abroad.emory.edu/_customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=6001 (accessed 10 January 2015).

[287] Avedon (1994), op.cit., 131.

[288] Ibid.

the use of terrorism…It was clear the world had come to this: you kill and commit destruction and you are listened to.'[289]

Although serious thought has been given to the use of guerrilla warfare and terrorism, to date, the TYC have not resorted to violence. This is perhaps partly attributable to the hesitation of the Tibetan people to act in ways contrary to the teachings of the Dalai Lama. However, it is probably also due to the fact that Tibetans do not foresee much political gain by the use of violence. As Kalsang Phuntsok, the President of the TYC Central Executive Committee said in 2005:

> At the moment, for so long we've had the leadership of the Dalai Lama. It's difficult for any organization or movement to practically involve in violent activities because he has categorically objected to it. He said that the day Tibetans would resort to violence he would resign from his responsibilities. This is a huge threat, huge threat. But how long this tactic would work, it all depends. As I've said…the day I'm convinced that violence would solve the problem, I would not care what His Holiness says. You see, but today the violence would not help it.[290]

Since the Dalai Lama no longer occupies the political helm of the exile government, it might be said that this 'tactic' of threatening resignation—as Kalsang Phuntsok puts it—no longer holds relevance. Yet, what is more significant in the quotation above is that should the TYC leadership come to see violence as an effective means to solve the Tibet problem, they would not hesitate to adopt it. Kalsang Phuntsok elaborates as follows:

> You have to study the situation. I'm not one who categorically states that violence is something that's totally unacceptable. At the same time, I've been telling all the communities that if you try to involve yourself in violent actions knowing that your actions will not yield the result, it's unacceptable. I know that today Tibetans can kill at least 5,000 to 10,000 Chinese. Very easily. But that's not going to solve the problem. So why should you go about it? That's why we tell people, killing is the last resort; there are other ways, nonviolent ways, so that we can win the support of the international community… Tomorrow if the situation comes—very hypothetical—that you need to kill only two Chinese leaders, and by killing those two Chinese leaders you know that Tibet can gain independence, what would they do? I for one would happily kill them…But definitely, killing just to make some noise, particularly if you are killing some innocent people, you have no justification at all.[291]

Kalsang Phuntsok problematises the immutable demarcation that is often drawn between violence and nonviolence, stating that 'When you come to this world, you cannot escape from violence…If you breathe, you breathe in millions of germs. If you walk, you are treading on hundreds of lives. So you cannot avoid it.'[292] He says that the question is not how to avoid violence at all cost, but determining 'what are the acceptable ones', for example, if a frog is killed in a biology lab, the world accepts this.[293] Similarly, he says, the major world religions, including Buddhism, state 'very clearly that if you need to kill one person to protect the lives of a hundred, it's acceptable; it's justified.'[294] In other interviews, references were made to the story of Captain Great Compassionate (discussed in Chapter 2), where the Buddha in his past

---

[289] Tempa Tsering quoted in ibid.
[290] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Kalsang Phuntsok, President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 9 March 2005
[291] Ibid.
[292] Ibid.
[293] Ibid.
[294] Ibid.

life pre-emptively kills a homicidal criminal on board a ship out of compassion to save the passengers as well as the criminal from negative karma.[295]

The reference to religious authority by this TYC leader would appear to be more than an expedient use of rhetoric when one considers that the Dalai Lama himself has condoned the use of violence and warfare in limited situations. Upon a close reading of the Dalai Lama's views on violence, one can surmise that, of foremost importance in determining the moral status of the act is the nature of the actor's intention or motivation, not whether physical harm *per se* has been carried out:

> In theory violence and religious views can be combined, but only if a person's motivation, as well as the result of his actions, are solely for the benefit of the majority of the people. Under these circumstances and if there is no other alternative, then it is permissible. Now, regarding Tibet, I believe that a militant attitude is helpful for maintaining morale among our youth, but a military movement itself is not feasible. It would be suicidal.[296]

Elsewhere, he has stated:

> There are many kinds of violence and nonviolence, but one cannot distinguish them from external factors alone. If one's motivation is negative, the action it produces is, in the deepest sense, violent, even though it may appear to be smooth and gentle. Conversely, if one's motivation is sincere and positive but the circumstances require harsh behaviour, essentially one is practicing nonviolence. No matter what the case may be, I feel that a compassionate concern for the benefit of others—not simply for oneself—is the sole justification for the use of force.[297]

In the above passages, there is recognition of the possibility of linking religious doctrines to violence with the qualification that this be accompanied by the right motivation and a situation whereby the use of violence would serve the majority. Still elsewhere, the Dalai Lama cautiously acknowledges contexts in which violence might be justified, such as World War Two and the Korean War:

> I want to make it clear, however, that although I am deeply opposed to war, I am not advocating appeasement. It is often necessary to take a strong stand to counter unjust aggression. For instance, it is plain to all of us that the Second World War was entirely justified. It 'saved civilization' from the tyranny of Nazi Germany, as Winston Churchill so aptly put it. In my view, the Korean War was also just, since it gave South Korea the chance of gradually developing democracy. But we can only judge whether or not a conflict was vindicated on moral grounds with hindsight. For example, we can now see that during the Cold War, the principle of nuclear deterrence had a certain value. Nevertheless, it is very difficult to assess all such matters with any degree of accuracy.

---

[295] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Ngawang Woebar, President of Gu Chu Sum, (interpreted by Tenzin Gethoktsang), 2 March 2005; Semi-structured interview with Mr. Sonam D. Dagpo, Secretary of the Department of International Relations, CTA, 1 March 2005. Ngawang Woebar also mentioned in the interview a Tibetan proverb that, in order to save four fingers, it is acceptable to sacrifice one finger. Note that the 14th Dalai Lama also appears to support the principle of compassionate killing as explained in this story when he says: "If someone has resolved to commit a certain crime that would create negative karma, and if there exists no other choice for hindering this person from the crime and thus the highly negative karma that would result for all his future lives, the a pure motivation of compassion would theoretically justify the killing of this person." Quoted in Schlieter, op.cit., 147. Also see Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., 275 and Stephen Jenkins (2011) "It's not so strange for a Buddhist to endorse killing" *The Guardian* 11 May 2011: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2011/may/11/buddhism-bin-laden-death-dalai-lama (accessed 14 September 2015).

[296] John Avedon (1994) *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, New York, Vintage Books, 132. A similar remark can be seen at Dalai Lama (1990b) *The Global Community and the Need for Universal Responsibility*, Boston: Wisdom Publications, 12.

[297] Dalai Lama (1990b), op.cit., 12.

> War is violence and violence is unpredictable. Therefore, it is better to avoid it if possible, and never to presume that we know beforehand whether the outcome of a particular war will be beneficial or not.[298]

More recently, the Dalai Lama has attracted attention for suggesting that the assassination of Osama Bin Laden was justified. When asked about what he thought about the killing of the Al Qaeda leader he said: 'Forgiveness doesn't mean forget what happened… If something is serious and it is necessary to take counter-measures, you have to take counter-measures.'[299] These statements demonstrate that the Dalai Lama's nonviolence is not absolute but more a general principle by which people are strongly urged to live by. He warns of how difficult it is to judge a situation where violence would be morally acceptable and yet clearly admits to situations where it might be justifiably resorted to. The Dalai Lama's dilemma here displays a quintessential example of Appleby's 'ambivalence of the sacred'.[300]

Table 4 shows the responses to a multiple choice question in my questionnaire 'To what extent should the Tibetan struggle adhere to nonviolence?' As might be expected, of those who chose (a) 'Should be nonviolent at all times' the most numerous were monks, with 26 out of the 30 monks surveyed selecting this answer. However, interestingly, nearly half (4 out of 10) of the respondents from Gu Chu Sum—an organization that upholds nonviolence and one where the majority of the members are monks and former monks—chose (d) 'Both violent and nonviolent means should be adopted', indicating that former political prisoners are perhaps more inclined towards accepting violent resistance as an option.

Table 4: To what extent should the Tibetan struggle adhere to nonviolence?

Multiple choice	TYC Central Executive Committee (8)[301]	RTYC Sarah chapter (22)	Gu Chu Sum (10)	Monks (30)	College Students (26)	Other (14)
(a) Should be nonviolent at all times	0	4	6	26	9	7
(b) Should generally be nonviolent, but there could be exceptions	1	3	0	1	6	1
(c) If nonviolence doesn't yield result, then violent means should be adopted.	2	2	0	0	4	2
(d) Both violent and nonviolent means should be adopted	5	13	4	3	7	3
(e) Must use violence/aggression	0	0	0	0	0	0
(f) Other (please explain)	0	0	0	0	0	0

[298] Dalai Lama, "The Reality of War", Official Website of His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet: www.dalailama.com/messages/world-peace/the-reality-of-war/ (accessed 2 January 2016)
[299] Mitchell Landsberg (2011) "Dalai Lama suggests Osama bin Laden's death was justified" Los Angeles Times 4 May 2011: http://articles.latimes.com/2011/may/04/local/la-me-0504-dalai-lama-20110504 (accessed 14 September 2015)
[300] Appleby, op.cit., 11-13.
[301] The number in parentheses contains number of people sampled.

None of the 8 out of the 10 TYC Central Executive Committee members selected (a) but rather chose answers (b), (c), and (d) which allowed for some measure of violence alongside nonviolent methods. Nevertheless among the respondents from the TYC regional chapter in Sarah, a small number (4 out of 22) chose (a) while the majority selected (d) as with the Central Executive Committee members. The responses of the TYC Sarah regional chapter and Gu Chu Sum suggest that these civil society actors do not always hold views that are aligned to the official stance of their organization.

Hunger Strikes

Hunger strikes have been a key method of protest used by Tibetan civil society actors. The TYC have employed this method at its most extreme form in their activism: indefinite hunger strike or fasting-unto death. There have been a number of TYC campaigns featuring indefinite hunger strikes, prominent among which are the 1977, 1988, and 1998 indefinite hunger strikes that took place in New Delhi.[302] The 1977 and 1988 hunger strikes in New Delhi constituted the first and second hunger strikes organized by TYC respectively,[303] and these 'fasts-unto-death' generated much media attention in a post-Gandhi India.

The 1998 fast-unto-death is noteworthy because it was the first time the TYC's campaign was accompanied, albeit spontaneously in a manner unplanned by the organization, by a self-immolation act. On 10 March 1998, on the anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising Day, six TYC members, representing the six million people of Tibet, began an indefinite hunger strike in New Delhi.[304] The hunger strikers made the following demands of the United Nations: 'that the U.N. should discuss Tibet in the General Assembly; that the U.N. should appoint a rapporteur to investigate allegations of human rights abuses in Tibet; that the U.N. should appoint a special envoy on Tibet; and that the U.N. should initiate a supervised plebiscite on the future of Tibet.'[305] Although statements were made by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the European Union in April 1998 to the effect that the TYC members should stop their hunger strike as they have succeeded in drawing the attention of the international community on the issues campaigned upon, there were no attempts by the U.N. or elsewhere from the international community to respond to the demands of the TYC, and the hunger strikes went on.[306]

On 26-27 April, the Indian police in New Delhi cracked down on the TYC's indefinite hunger strike and force-fed the hunger-strikers in hospital—actions likely spurred by the political sensitivity of the protest during the visit of General Fu Quanyou, the chief of the People's Liberation Army of the PRC, to India at the time.[307] It was at this point that Thubten Ngodup, a 62-year-old ex-monk and ex-soldier, who had been one of the scheduled hunger-strikers for the second phase of the

---

[302] Jamyang Norbu (1989) *Illusion and Reality: Essays on the Tibetan and Chinese Political Science from 1978-1989*, Dharamsala: TYC, 44; Roemer, op.cit., 109.
[303] Carole McGranahan (2010) *Arrested Histories: Tibet, the CIA, and Memories of a Forgotten War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 269, n19.
[304] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 47.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid.
[307] Jane Ardley (2000) "Violent Compassion: Buddhism and Resistance in Tibet" Paper for the Political Studies Association UK, 50th Annual Conference. 10-13 April 2003, London, UK: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228588173_Violent_Compassion_Buddhism_and_Resistance_in_Tibet (accessed 3 April 2013).

campaign, took to the dramatic protest of self-immolation on 27 April.[308] This was the first self-immolation to take place in the context of the modern-day Tibetan political struggle. Its significance and symbolism will be discussed further in the next section.

The official reaction to the 1998 indefinite hunger strike from the exile leadership in 1998 was one of discouragement and a characterization of it as a form of violence. The Dalai Lama, after visiting the hunger strikers on 2 April, was quoted as saying: 'I told them that I admire their determination and enthusiasm. But I consider hunger strike unto death as a kind of violence…However, I cannot offer them suggestions for any alternative method…I am in a state of dilemma.'[309] In an interview, Samdhong Rinpoche, who was Chairman of the Tibetan parliament in exile in 1998, and later the exile Prime Minister, reiterated the Dalai Lama's position of discouraging indefinite hunger strikes but elaborated on the reasoning behind it. He explained that if, in the processing of pressing for your demands, one takes a vow that one will 'not eat or drink anything until this demand is fulfilled' and in the course of the demand not being realized one dies, then '[as] there is no intention of dying, but by chance, you meet your death…in that case it can be nonviolent…But today, when people say, I will fast-unto-death, here the ultimate objective is death. And that can be violence. Taking the life of others is violence, and similarly taking the life of oneself is violence also. And self-immolation is absolutely aimed for death, destroying the body. So I don't think it can be called nonviolence. Therefore these methods, I do not recommend.'[310]

Yet, at the same interview, Samdhong Rinpoche also stated the classic Buddhist position that gives paramount importance to intentionality: 'Violence and nonviolence largely depend upon the mindset, the attitude, the motivation. If your motivation is completely lov[ing] and compassionate, and free from hatred or anger, then apparently something violent can be nonviolent.'[311] It is clear that the Dalai Lama and Samdhong Rinpoche view extreme self-sacrifice as constituting a form of self-violence; but they add a caveat that ultimately the motivation of the actor determines the moral (and karmic) status of the act.

The TYC, however, upholds a much more political view of self-sacrifice in the context of protest, understanding it as part of a legitimate nonviolent method. There is nevertheless a sense of frustration on their part at the limited results their nonviolent commitment has borne, which is expressed strongly in the following extract from the TYC's Open Letter to Kofi Annan. The letter was issued on the 27th day of an indefinite hunger strike in 2004 carried out by TYC members in front of the U.N. Headquarters in New York:

> We represent the young generation of Tibetans, born as stateless refugees, yearning to live in freedom in our own country. The U.N. General Assembly passed three resolutions— in 1959, 1961, and 1965— calling for human rights and freedom in Tibet, but has since then failed to take any meaningful action. We have demonstrated at the United Nations more times than we can remember. We have lobbied U.N. representatives at the Commission on Human Rights in Geneva. We have sent countless letters to the U.N. pleading for support. Diplomats and United Nations officials have quietly assured us of their personal sympathies, but the situation in Tibet remains dire. There are no words to describe our frustration. We have undertaken this hunger strike as the most serious nonviolent means we have to display the depth of both our frustration and our resolve.

[308] Ibid.
[309] Quoted in Ardley (2002), op.cit., 48.
[310] Semi-structured interview with Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the CTA, 9 March 2005.
[311] Ibid.

> We look at the world around us caught in an endless cycle of violence, fear and anger. Those who resort to violent means, taking innocent lives and sowing chaos, receive the attention of the media and the world community. The U.N. calls for world peace, and yet it ignores and silences a people who have steadfastly waged their struggle through nonviolent means. We worry about the signal the United Nations is sending to the younger generations of our people. They grow increasingly frustrated and ask themselves whether a nonviolent movement will bring them the justice they hunger for. *Your Excellency, please show them that violence and terror are not the sole means of compelling the United Nations to act. Please show them that you value peaceful perseverance and nonviolent methods.* After 27 days, we are no longer hungry for food, only for freedom and justice.[312]

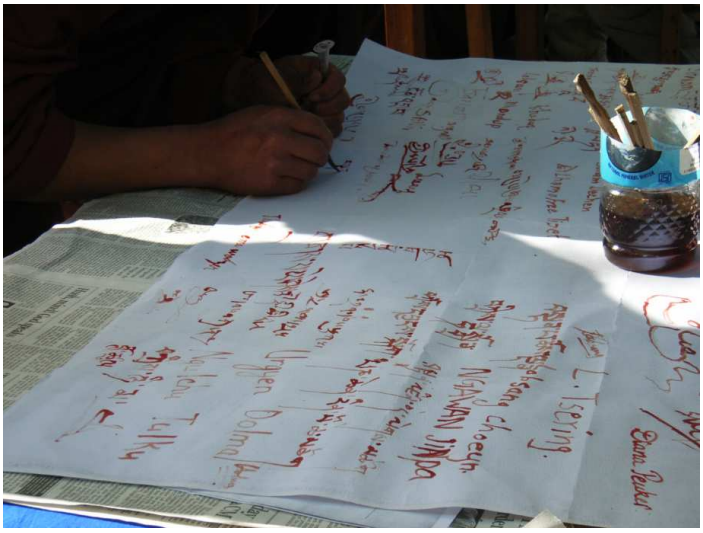
In a more recent hunger strike organized by the TYC, the organization's leadership displayed a more strategic selection of issues raised in their campaigns. Whereas previously, the hunger strikers' demands would include something on the future status of Tibet—which would inevitably reinvoke the political divisions in the Tibetan community regarding 'Middle Way vs. independence'—in their 2015 indefinite hunger strike, the TYC made demands around which the whole Tibetan community could unite. These included calling on the UN to raise the Tibetan issue in its General Assembly and Human Rights Council and to send an independent delegation to Tibet to assess the situation, as well as for the U.N. to urge China to address the demands of Tibetan self-immolators, to present evidence about the safety of the 11th Panchen Lama, and to release Tibetan political prisoners.[313] This hunger strike was called off on its 32nd day on 11 October 2015 after the TYC received assurance from the U.N. that they will address the demands of TYC.[314]

Drawing blood for a blood signature campaign calling for the release of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, a respected lama who is a Tibetan political prisoner in the PRC (photographed by author).

[312] Dolma Choephel, Sonam Wangdu, and Gyatso (2004) "An Open Letter to Kofi Annan from Three Tibetans on Hunger Strike" *International Herald Tribune*, 29 April 2004, reprinted by Phayul: http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=6779 (accessed 15 July 2005) (my italics)

[313] See Vijay Kranti (2015) "A Personal Encounter with Three Brave Hearts of Tibet TYC Hunger Strike in New Delhi" 1 October 2015, Rangzen Alliance Blogs: http://www.rangzen.net/2015/10/01/a-personal-encounter-with-three-brave-hearts-of-tibet/ (accessed 12 November 2015)

[314] Tibetan Youth Congress (2015) "TYC Indefinite Hunger Strike Called Off", TYC Official website, 11 October 2015: http://www.tibetanyouthcongress.org/2015/10/tyc-indefinite-hunger-strike-called-off/ (accessed 17 December 2015)



Tenzin Delek Rinpoche was sentenced to death in 2002 but after many international appeals, including from human rights groups, his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment in January 2005

The hunger strike, including its indefinite variant, which is a form of protest tried and tested by Gandhi, is understood to be an important nonviolent method in most political and secular contexts. During my interview with Dorji Damdul, the Dalai Lama's interpreter and a holder of the *geshe* degree (doctorate in Buddhism), I asked why the Dalai Lama, who has extolled Gandhi as a moral teacher, would ask his fellow Tibetans to refrain from indefinite hunger strikes. Dorji Damdul explained this apparent contradiction as deriving from differences in perspective and positionality:

> [I]f you speak from a more profound level, the philosophical approach or Buddhist perspective…the same thing can be classified as bad, from the point of view of someone else, and yet the whole thing can be very good from the point of view of yet someone else's perspective. So this means…[f]rom the point of view of that very person [engaging in the hunger strike] he's engaging in that action for the benefit of other sentient beings and he's actually behaving very indifferently to his own concerns. This is from his own perspective. Whereas from the perspective of His Holiness, he is actually a source of compassion, [and the hunger striker] is actually included as one of the sentient beings who really deserves the compassion of His Holiness…As such, he would never encourage anyone to engage in any kind of action which would cause self-destruction or which would cause harm to himself or to anyone else. So definitely, from the perspective of His Holiness, definitely he treasures each and every life. And he would rather sacrifice his own life for others, you know. And again, from the perspective of that very individual who is sitting for the hunger strike, he has to treasure the life of all other sentient beings, and actually be willing to sacrifice his own life. So it depends on the perspective.[315]

What this philosophical explanation indicates is that the Dalai Lama would discourage his fellow Tibetans to make great personal sacrifice in the struggle for Tibet by reason of the very spiritual role he holds, whereby he embodies compassion for all sentiment beings. Yet, this does not mean that an objective application of Buddhist teachings would yield a conclusion that all Tibetan should abstain from selfless acts for the national cause. Dorji Damdul's words go some way to explain how the different stances in the Tibetan struggle, as exemplified by those of the exile government and civil society actors, may be justified having reference to Buddhist principles.

[315] Semi-structured interview with Geshe Dorji Damdul, Personal Translator of the Dalai Lama, 5 March 2005.

Demonstration in Dharamsala on 10 March 2005 to commemorate the Tibetan National Uprising Day (photographed by author)

(photographed by author)

Self-Immolation

Self-immolation by fire as political protest began in exile in 1998 to express the suffering and frustrations of the Tibetans against Chinese repression. In Tibet, the first self-immolation took place in 2009 and protests involving this extreme self-sacrifice escalated from 2011. The self-immolations of Tibetan protesters have given rise to much debate, both among Tibetans and the scholarly community. Among the key issues debated are: whether the self-immolations are violent or nonviolent, whether or not they are concordant with Buddhism, whether they call for independence or Middle Way, whether they are politically effective in furthering the Tibetan cause, and whether they should stop.[316] It is beyond the remit of this thesis to canvass all these issues. However, I will focus on the questions of whether self-immolation is

[316] Chung Tsering (2012) "Online Articles on Self-immolation by by Tibetans in Exile—A Brief Survey" *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* No. 25, December 2012: 99-104 at 102-103; Dhondup Tashi Rekjong (2012) "Online Debates among Tibetans in Exile" *Cultural Anthropology*: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/112-online-debates-among-tibetans-in-exile (accessed 12 October 2015).

nonviolent or violent and whether or not it accords to Buddhist principles. Before discussing these issues, however, I review the background to the Tibetan self-immolations and how the acts have been interpreted.

Background to the Self-immolations in Tibet and Exile

Since 1998, at least 153 self-immolations by Tibetans have taken place,[317] including seven in exile.[318] Of those in exile, three occurred in Nepal and four in India.[319] As mentioned earlier, the very first self-immolation was committed by Thubten Ngodup in India, when a TYC indefinite hunger-strike in New Delhi was forcibly ended by the Indian police.[320] Thubten Ngodup died of almost 100 per cent burns in hospital on 29 April 1998.[321] The next self-immolation did not occur until 11 years later in Tibet when on 27 February 2009, a monk in his mid-twenties called Tapey from Kirti monastery in Ngawa county (in the traditional province of Amdo) self-immolated near a market place holding the Tibetan flag with a picture of the Dalai Lama after the Chinese authorities cancelled the prayer ceremony at his monastery.[322] The third self-immolation in Tibet occurred in March 2011 by a monk called Phuntsok from Kirti monastery, after which time the number and frequency of self-immolation stepped up during 2011 and especially 2012 but slowed down after 2013.[323] Ngawa county and Kirti monastery (belonging to the Geluk school of Tibetan Buddhism) became locations from which the highest numbers of immolators were counted.[324]

Just as monks were at the forefront of the 2008 protests, they have also taken the lead in initiating self-immolation as political dissent.[325] Indeed, the first 13 self-immolations were carried out by monks or former monks mostly from the Geluk school; though when in December 2011 a layperson committed self-immolation, the scope of this protest was broadened, and today more laypeople have set themselves alight.[326] The majority of the self-immolators are men, though not an insignificant number are women.[327] Most of the monastic self-immolators in 2011 and the first half of 2012 were young Buddhist monks in their teens and early twenties.[328] By January 2016, the monastic immolators included three monks of high rank (*tulku*s), 39 ordinary monks, and eight nuns.[329]

---

[317] Tsering Woeser (2016) "Why are Tibetans Setting Themselves on Fire?" *The New York Review* 11 January 2016: http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/01/11/why-are-tibetans-self-immolating/ (accessed 5 February 2016)
[318] International Campaign for Tibet (2015) "Self-Immolation by Tibetans" Updated as of 4 September 2015: http://www.savetibet.org/resources/fact-sheets/self-immolations-by-tibetans/ (accessed 21 September 2015)
[319] Ibid.
[320] Ardley (2000), op.cit., 20.
[321] Ibid.
[322] Katia Buffetrille (2012) "Self-Immolation in Tibet: Some Reflections on an Unfolding History" *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* No. 25, December 2012: 1-17 at 4.
[323] According to CTA's figures, of the 142 self-immolators in Tibet from 2009 to 31 August 2015, one took place in 2009, 12 in 2011, 85 in 2012, 26 in 2013, 11 in 2014, and 7 in 2015.
[324] Ibid.
[325] Woeser (2016), op.cit.
[326] Ibid.
[327] Ibid.; The International Campaign for Tibet reports that 26 of the self-immolations as of 4 September 2015 were carried out by females.
[328] Carole McGranahan and Ralph Litzinge (2012) "Self-Immolation as Protest in Tibet" *Cultural Anthropology*: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/93-self-immolation-as-protest-in-tibet (accessed 12 October 2015).
[329] Woeser (2016), op.cit.

The causes of these self-immolations have been traced to oppressive practices of the PRC, which Woeser categorizes into fives types: (1) suppression of Tibetan religious freedom, as exemplified by the 'patriotic education' campaigns in monasteries and the kidnapping and replacement of the Panchen Lama appointed by the Dalai Lama, (2) environmental destruction of Tibet by copper, gold, and silver mining; dam constructions; and pollution of the source of the major Asian rivers (in particular, the Mekong, the Yangtse, and Yarlung Tsangpo rivers), (3) the systematic undermining of Tibetan language education (for example, in Qinghai Province, Chinese has been made the primary language of instruction, and Tibetan downgraded to a 'secondary language'), (4) population transfer policies which ensure a steady stream of Han immigrants to Tibet, which take the form of preferential tax, land, finance and welfare policies for these immigrants in the name of 'developing' Tibetan regions, (5) the development of a comprehensive surveillance system (known as 'the grid') which divides neighbourhoods into units corresponding to government offices under the pretext of expanding social services, but where in practice, the offices are used to monitor potential political dissidents.[330]

Woeser also explains that the Dalai Lama's admission on 10 March 2008 that his diplomatic efforts and negotiations with the PRC since 2002 has borne 'no concrete result at all' and that Chinese repression and brutality have in fact increased 'shocked Tibetans, who had been waiting patiently, year after year, for any sign of real progress.'[331] It was after this statement that the Tibetans in Tibet allegedly took the protests into their own hands in the lead up to the Beijing Olympics, and afterwards resorted to more dramatic forms of resistance as self-immolation.

Unlike other Buddhist contexts like Vietnam and China,[332] Tibet has no real tradition of self-immolation.[333] Scholars have pointed to a couple of obscure references to self-immolation in Tibetan historical texts from the nineth and eleventh centuries[334] but as Buffetrille argues, 'it is difficult to assert that self-immolation as an act of offering or protest constituted a widespread tradition in Tibet.'[335] In other Buddhist cultures where there is a tradition of worshipping the Lotus Sutra, there have been historical practices of emulating the Medicine-King Bodhisattva who sets him self alight as an offering to the Buddha. However, the ascetic practice of self-burning was never established in Tibet. Furthermore, unlike the Hindu tradition where austerities are an accepted religious practice, which provided Gandhi with the discursive context for his self-suffering, in the Madhyamaka tradition integral to Tibetan Buddhism, the emphasis is rather on transcending the extremes of indulgence and asceticism. It is perhaps because of these doctrinal and contextual differences that there appears to be less scope for supporting indefinite hunger strikes and self-immolations under Tibetan Buddhism in contrast to the religious contexts of Vietnam and India.

---

[330] Ibid.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Rahula (1978), op.cit., 110.
[333] Woeser (2016), op.cit.
[334] Buffetrille, op.cit., 8-9; Gyurme Dorje, Tashi Tsering, Heather Stoddard, André Alexander, Ulrich van Schroeder (eds) (2010) *Jokhang, Tibet's Most Sacred Temple*. London: Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 136-137.
[335] Buffetrille, op.cit., 9.

Interpreting the self-immolations

The initial interpretations from the exile community of the self-immolations occurring in Tibet characterized the acts as 'desperate', 'despairing' and 'helpless' in a 'pathos-based' appeal to the international community.[336] However, Christophe Besuchet's essay has helped interrupt and dislodge this type of portrayal by showing the self-immolations to be wilful acts of defiance on the basis of available information on the immolators: 'There is definitely no sense of despair that we know of in any of these acts of protest. Nor any hopelessness. As far as we can tell, these self-immolations are, like every single act of resistance in Tibet, a striking example of confident resiliency, of high hopes and of unflinching determination. These sacrifices carry the dream and the moral strength of an entire nation and cannot be, carelessly or sarcastically, reduced to some tragic but useless individual acts.'[337] A similar criticism was levelled against the exile leadership by *Tibetan Political Review* in February 2012, which asserted that the CTA's portrayal 'falsely turns a powerful act of Tibetan resistance into a sign of Tibetan despair and helplessness.'[338] Both Besuchet and the *Tibetan Political Review* have referred to the audio testament left behind by Lama Soepa, a high-ranking lama, who emphasized the nature of his act as a selfless offering: 'I am sacrificing my body both to stand in solidarity with [the other self-immolators] in flesh and blood…I am taking this action neither for myself nor to fulfil a personal desire nor to earn an honor.'[339]

The exile leadership has found itself in a dilemma in terms of how to respond to the self-immolations in an unequivocal way. For example, in July 2012 the Dalai Lama said that the self-immolations are a 'very, very delicate political issue' and that he wanted to remain 'neutral', explaining that 'now, the reality is that if I say something positive, then the Chinese immediately blame me…If I say something negative, then the family members of those people feel very sad. They sacrificed their…life. It is not easy. So I do not want to create some kind of impression that this is wrong.'[340] A similar prevarication to honour yet discourage self-immolations can be seen in Lobsang Sangay's op-ed to *The New York Times* in August 2011: 'We do not encourage protests, but it is our sacred duty to support our voiceless and courageous compatriots.'[341]

The Tibetan commentators in exile and in Tibet are virtually unanimous in acknowledging the courage of the self-immolators, who are described as '*pawo*

---

[336] Elliot Sperling (2012) "On the Questions of Why and to What End" *Cultural Anthropology*. 1 April 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/106-on-the-questions-of-why-and-to-what-end (accessed 11 October 2015).

[337] Christophe Besuchet (2012) "Beacons of resistance, not desperate acts" Rangzen Alliance: http://www.rangzen.net/2012/01/28/beacons-of-resistance-not-desperate-acts/ (accessed 27 September 2015).

[338] Nima R. T. Binara, Tenzin Dickyi, Tenzin Wangyal, and Wangchuk Shakabpa (2012) "The Balancing Act of the Exile Tibetan Government" *Cultural Anthropology*. 28 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/111-the-balancing-act-of-the-exile-tibetan-government (accessed 11 October 2015).

[339] Tibetan Political Review (2012) "Final Words of Lama Soepa Recorded in Audio Message to Tibetans": http://www.tibetanpoliticalreview.org/articles/tibetanlamaurgesunitynationhoodbeforeself-immolating (accessed 12 November 2015)

[340] Buffetrille, op.cit., 14; Ananth Krishnan (2012) "Dalai Lama speaks of dilemma on spreading self-immolations" *The Hindu* 9 July 2012: http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3617428.ece (accessed 5 August 2015). The Karmapa, an important Tibetan Buddhist hierarch in exile, has publically called for an end to self-immolations in November 2011 without effect. See Sperling (2012), op.cit.; Buffetrille, op.cit., 7.

[341] Binara et al (2012), op.cit.

(heroes)' in Tibetan or 'martyrs' in English.[342] Scholarly commentators have offered various other interpretations of self-immolation. Some have seen in it an ultimate and final act of asserting freedom against the Chinese state,[343] in a 'reclamation of sovereignty over one's own self within a state of siege.'[344] Tsering Shakya locates Tibetan self-immolation in the modern narrative of 'self-sacrifice' where the giving of one's body is 'one of the key modern idioms of nationalism: the conflating of body and nation.'[345] Other interpretations characterize self-immolation as an act of 'virtue' or the immolator as reminiscent of a 'religious virtuoso'. Tenzin Mingyur Paldron, for example, refers to Talal Asad's allusion to Oedipus' self-inflicted pain[346] which is framed not as 'punishment' but an 'ethics of passionate necessity' ('Oedipus suffers not because he is guilty but because he is virtuous') and suggests that the suffering of the self-immolators similarly indicates a 'certain kind of virtuous action in which an intimate encounter with pain is integral to the virtue of the deed.'[347] In a complementary vein, Janet Gyatso, refers to the traditional Buddhist social structure of the two mutually dependent communities—'virtuoso clerics and the lay people who support them'—in an explanation of self-immolations as embodying the spiritual power of a disciplined virtuoso which is pitted against the military and legal power of the state:[348]

> Traditionally, ascetic practice targeted an inner enemy: selfish clinging, vanity, enmity. Today the target of Tibet's recent self-immolations is an outer enemy: an intrusive, repressive, unsympathetic state. Differently from the old pattern, this outer foe is compelled to witness the display of yogic power, the power to withstand the pain of fire, the power to face down death or torture. But this is not a witnessing that bolsters the power of the state. It is a forced witnessing of a spectacle that aspires to delegitimize the state. It is a spectacle that purports to demonstrate with deadly precision where real power still resides: in the vision and skill of the virtuoso who masters his own destiny.[349]

This characterization is similar to the 'moral power' of nonviolence and self-suffering which, according to the theories of Gregg and Sharp, works to delegitimize the opponent through a process of moral or political jiu-jitsu. Even if self-immolations may be futile in moving 'bureaucratic hearts in China,' the moral power of self-immolation is nevertheless felt strongly among the Tibetans themselves, resulting in a strengthened sense of unity and solidarity that has galvanized many into action;[350] and

---

[342] Chung Tsering (2012), op.cit., 101; Buffetrille, op.cit., 10.
[343] Buffetrille, op.cit., 12.
[344] Emily Yeh (2012) "On 'Terrorism' and the Politics of Naming" *Cultural Anthropology*. 24 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/102-on-terrorism-and-the-politics-of-naming (accessed 9 October 2015).
[345] Tsering Shakya (2012) "Transforming the Language of Protest" *Cultural Anthropology*. 28 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/94-transforming-the-language-of-protest (accessed 11 October 2015).
[346] In the story of Oedipus, he puts out his eyes after discovering that he mistakenly killing his father and marrying his mother.
[347] Tenzin Mingyur Paldron (2012) "Virtue and the Remaking of Suffering" *Cultural Anthropology*. 1 April 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/98-virtue-and-the-remaking-of-suffering (accessed 13 October 2015).
[348] Janet Gyatso (2012) "Discipline and Resistance on the Tibetan Plateau" *Cultural Anthropology*. 26 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/96-discipline-and-resistance-on-the-tibetan-plateau (accessed 13 October 2015).
[349] Ibid.
[350] For example, the very first self-immolation in exile committed by Thubten Ngodup elicited an outpouring of solidarity and patriotism among the Tibetans. The TYC honoured him thus: 'We salute the unwavering bravery shown by Mr. Ngodup…A martyr is born to inspire us all. In death, he has dignified our existence. He has shown to the world that if we Tibetans cannot live with honour, we can

it is here that the effectiveness of self-immolation is most tangible.[351] What the numerous self-immolations in Tibet also demonstrate, is that at a time when the efforts of the exile leadership, such as the negotiation attempts by the Dalai Lama's envoys, have reached an impasse, 'it is the Tibetans inside Tibet who are taking the Tibetan struggle into their own hands…taking the movement into untested waters…'[352]

Beyond despair and helplessness, therefore, the above interpretations suggest that self-immolations embody a range of things: defiance, confidence, virtue, selflessness, unity, solidarity, and above all courage and initiative. Self-immolation, as a politically and emotionally charged act is a symbol of multifarious meaning, contested and debated earnestly. Below I examine the use of Buddhist discourse in the Tibetans' discussion of self-immolation, including the issue of whether self-immolation constitutes violence or nonviolence.

Moral and religious status of the Tibetan self-Immolations

The issue of whether self-immolation is violent or nonviolent has been at the centre of the Tibetan debate and is closely linked to whether such an act of extreme self-sacrifice is acceptable under Buddhism. A religious ethos clearly informs the self-immolations as demonstrated by the Buddhist references in the words left behind by the immolators and the fact that most of the early self-immolations were committed by monks. As Tenzin Mingyur Paldron points out, the self-immolations serve to 'complicate a troubling model of non-violence and violence as immutable and distinct categories: a model prevalent not only in framing the "Tibet issue," but also in secular liberal practice of applauding or delegitimizing various social and political struggles.'[353] Certainly, whether self-immolations are labelled as 'violence' or 'nonviolence' has an enormous import for the justifiability and legitimization of those acts in the context of the Tibetan struggle.

The Buddhist interpretations of self-immolation which underline intentionality over materiality can at times confound the debate. As Chung Tsering points out, 'Almost all of the arguments lack a discussion of non-violence as understood by the world at large. Gradually the articles have begun to manifest an ability to distinguish between the general non-violent approach of resistance movements from that of the non-violent doctrines advocated by Buddhist teachings.'[354] Perhaps in an effort to bridge the disjuncture between the generally accepted methods of nonviolence and the

---

die with dignity. His act has challenged the conscience of the world and its leaders...The Tibetan people have sent a clear message to the world that they are willing to sacrifice themselves for the cause of a free and independent Tibet.' (Quoted in Ardley (2002), op.cit., 50). Further, Lobsang Yeshi, the Vice-President of the TYC in 2005 described the legacy of Thubten Ngodup to me as follows: 'Thubten Ngodup achieved many things through that martyrdom. It hasn't gone to waste. It has unified the entire Tibetans, it has reenergized or synergized the movement of the Tibetans youth's cause, and the best example is, even if you're uneducated, even if you're poor, even if you're sick, even if you're helpless, you're not wasted; you can contribute something for the cause.' (Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Yeshi, Vice-President of TYC Central Executive Committee, 1 March 2005). Thubten Ngodup was also specifically mentioned in the audio testament of Lama Soepa before his self-immolation in January 2012: 'I am grateful to Pawo Thupten Ngodup and all other Tibetan heroes, who have sacrificed their lives for Tibet and for the reunification of the Tibetan people.' See *Tibetan Political Review* (2012), op.cit.

[351] Elliot Sperling, op.cit.

[352] Ibid.

[353] Tenzin Mingyur Paldron, op.cit.

[354] Chung Tsering (2012), op.cit. 102

Tibetan Buddhist perspectives on extreme self-sacrifice, a comment that was repeatedly heard from exile Tibetans during my field research was that politically, the self-immolations were 'nonviolent', but from a religious perspective they were, or could be seen as, 'violent'. These awkward contortions of language, however, probably beg the question of whether the terms 'violence' and 'nonviolence' are even useful categories in such stark, normative applications.

As in the case of the Vietnamese supporters of self-immolation, the Tibetans who claim that the self-immolation is concordant with Buddhist teachings tend to invoke the *Jātaka* tale about the Buddha giving his own body to feed a hungry tigress in his previous life.[355] For example, in his audio testament, Lama Soepa makes an explicit reference to this story:

> I am sacrificing my body with the firm conviction and a pure heart just as the Buddha bravely gave his body to a hungry tigress (to stop her from eating her cubs). All the Tibetan heroes too have sacrificed their lives with similar principles. But in practical terms, their lives may have ended with some sort of anger. Therefore, to guide their souls on the path to enlightenment, I offer prayers that may lead all of them to Buddhahood.[356]

Lama Soepa's words suggest, on the one hand, that extreme self-sacrifice can be interpreted as being aligned to Buddhist teachings as long as it is done with a 'pure heart', but on the other hand, there is a caution against harbouring negative motivations, including anger.[357] Supporters of self-immolation also make allusions to the passages in the Lotus Sūtra where the Bodhisattva Medicine King sets himself on fire as an offering to the Buddhas.[358] Similarly to Vietnam, it is as an 'offering' to stand in solidarity with those who suffer and to enlighten those who perpetuate the suffering, that the offering of the self-immolator is made. That is, the sacrifice is carried out in an effort to 'intervene in that suffering, much as the Buddha intervened in that of the tigers.'[359] Tenzin Mingyur Paldron argues that the significance of self-immolation 'lies in its interruption of the terms we use to make sense of fractious situations' and the *jātaka* story of the Buddha and tigress 'is a lesson about how one responds as a witness to suffering, rather than an argument against or justification of suffering. In order to enact breaks in certain cycles of suffering, there must be a willingness to endure some of the pain one witnesses, rather than mere desire to manage pain without ever touching it.'[360]

Those who maintain that self-immolation is discordant with Buddhist principles point to the Vinaya rules (Buddhist code of discipline) which discourages monks from taking their own life (though, as noted in Chapter 2, such an act is not considered a *pārājika* offence).[361] From this perspective, to 'damage one's body deliberately is to damage the vehicle for enlightenment, as well as to prevent oneself from working tirelessly for others' spiritual welfare.'[362] The general position of the Dalai Lama and the exile leadership to discourage self-immolation and extreme self-sacrifice largely stems from this reasoning.[363] Yet, as Craig points out, the Buddha's

---

[355] Ibid.
[356] *Tibetan Political Review* (2012), op.cit.
[357] Ibid.
[358] Ibid.; Buffetrille (2012), op.cit., 8.
[359] Tenzin Mingyur Paldron, op.cit.
[360] Ibid.
[361] Sienna R. Craig (2012) "Social Suffering and Embodied Political Crisis" *Cultural Anthropology*. 26 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/97-social-suffering-and-embodied-political-crisis (accessed 13 October 2015); Chung Tsering (2012), op.cit. 102
[362] Ardley (2002), op.cit., 51
[363] Binara et al (2012), op.cit.; Buffetrille, op.cit., 14.

gifting of his own body, and the self-mastery evinced through such a gift, complicates the Vinaya injunction.[364]

After the first self-immolation in exile, the Dalai Lama visited Thubten Ngodup in hospital on 28 April 1998, the day after the latter's self-immolation and before he passed away. Apparently, the Dalai Lama told him not to harbour hatred and ill-feeling towards the Chinese, and reassured him that his act had created unprecedented awareness of the Tibetan cause.[365] What the Dalai Lama emphasized to Thubten Ngodup was the importance of keeping his intentions pure; all the more since in Tibetan Buddhism one's state of mind at the time of dying is said to have implications for one's next birth.[366] Publicly, however, the Dalai Lama expressed clear disagreement with self-immolation as a method of protest, and the day after Thubten Ngodup's self-immolation, he issued the following statement:

> Recently, six Tibetans undertook a hunger strike unto death, organized by the Tibetan Youth Congress. When I visited the hunger strikers at the beginning of this month, I told them that I was against any form of violence, including hunger strike unto death. Yesterday, we witnessed the most unfortunate incident of a Tibetan man burning himself alive. I am deeply saddened by this. For many years, I have been able to persuade the Tibetan people to eschew violence in our freedom struggle. Today, it is clear that a sense of frustration and urgency is building up among many Tibetans, as evidenced by the unto-death hunger strike and the tragic incident of yesterday…Although I disagree with their method, I do admire the motivation and determination of these Tibetans. They were prepared to die not for their selfish ends, but for the rights of six million Tibetans and the survival of their culture.[367]

Although it is not absolutely explicit, the Dalai Lama suggests that he considers self-immolation (as well as fasts-unto-death) to be violent in nature. However, Dorji Damdul's explanation of the different perspectives concerning Tibetan fasts-unto-death likely holds here too: it could be that the Dalai Lama's is speaking from the viewpoint of the spiritual leader of the Tibetans and the incarnation of Avalokiteśwara, who, out of compassion, would not wish to see his fellow Tibetans laying down their lives like this.

In Tibetan Buddhism, suicide is considered to be an extremely negative act, and it is said that a person committing suicide will not be able to reincarnate as a human being for many lifetimes after that.[368] Yet Dolma Gyari, a member of the Tibetan exile parliament[369] who met Thubten Ngodup in hospital after his self-immolation explained to me that most Tibetans would recognize there is a difference between suicide and self-immolation:

> [A]ccording to Tibetan Buddhism, [self-immolation] is not a very good way…[Yet] why do we say self-immolation and not suicide? Because I think it is different. Though it is an end to a human life, we have different names to different ways of ending it. And I think

---

[364] Craig (2012), op.cit.

[365] Jamyang Norbu (2008) "Remembering Thubten Ngodup" *Shadow Tibet* (Jamyang Norbu's Blog) 28 April 2008: http://www.jamyangnorbu.com/blog/2008/05/12/remembering-thupten-ngodup/ (accessed 5 July 2015). This account was also confirmed in my semi-structured interview with Passang Dolma, General Secretary of TWA Central Executive Committee, 1 March 2005.

[366] Buffetrille, op.cit., 2.

[367] Dalai Lama (1998b) "Statement by His Holiness the Dalai Lama" 28 April 1998: http://www.tibet.to/tyc1998/tyce.htm#09 (accessed 18 January 2016); also quoted in King (2000), op.cit., 12.

[368] Semi-structured interview with Mr. Lobsang Nyandak Zayul, Finance and Health Minister, CTA, 4 March 2005.

[369] Dolma Gyari was the Vice President of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies (exile parliament) in 2005 when I interviewed her.

> psychologically when we grow up, we have this mindset of how we see those words connected with the act of passing away. So for me, self-immolation could not be absolutely negative like suicide…I mean, I don't encourage self-immolation, but I do believe you need a lot of courage to do it, and I would not be able to define it or express myself in one word, to say whether it amounts to being violence or nonviolence. It depends on the way it is carried out…And when [Thubten Ngodup] self-immolated, his hands were folded; it's a very peaceful act. And he's offering himself for a cause to draw public attention to the plight of the Tibetan people. Therefore for me I cannot say that particular act was violent. But at the same time, I cannot say that all self-immolations are nonviolent acts.[370]

Dolma Gyari's statement reveals a similar equivocal position on self-immolation assumed generally by the exile leadership, where self-immolation is discouraged as a form of political expression ('not a good way') while admiration and respect is voiced for the courage of the immolators. She echoes the opinion of many Tibetan Buddhists in saying that the deciding factor for whether self-immolation is violent or nonviolent lies in the intention or mindset of the immolator.

Possibly because the Chinese authorities have begun to appropriate for their own political ends the argument that self-immolation is 'un-Buddhist' or 'anti-Buddhist',[371] the exile government today has become highly cautious in expressing its discouragement of self-immolation. In 2013, the CTA translated, and reposted on its official website, an affirmative article about the sacrifice of the self-immolators written by Tenzin Kun-khyab and published by *Phayul* (an online Tibetan news website), which described self-immolations carried out with the right motivation ('altruistic and for the betterment of dharma and humanity') as equivalent to 'an act of Bodhisattva.'[372]

In any case, the 'un-Buddhist' critique levelled against self-immolation has not gained traction among Tibetans.[373] This is probably in a large part because of the respect and admiration towards the immolators' courage, accompanied by a feeling of one's own inadequacy and uselessness in the Tibetan struggle—a sentiment poignantly captured by one monk in exile:

> My monk students [in Tibet] demonstrated by making themselves lamps while living between the fangs of demons, and I went on a candle-light march in the alleys of McLeod Ganj. This is the difference of place. They demonstrated by truly engaging in the practice of exchanging oneself with others, the practice on which *bodhicitta* is based, while I paraded reciting prayers to generate *bodhicitta*. This is a real difference. My monk students demonstrated for the sake of the Buddha's teachings, the source of benefit for all sentient beings, and for the cause of Tibet. Will I be able to take to the West those who have not yet lost their lives, for them to be treated, thanks to international pressure? If their burns are so severe that there is no hope of survival, then I pray that they pass away soon. This is the difference of aims. My monk students demonstrated by burning their golden bodies of unfathomable value, on which others would even hesitate to prick a needle. While I, without feeling anything, lit a free candle and paraded. This is the

[370] Semi-structured interview with Ms. Dolma Gyari, Vice President of Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, 4 March 2005.
[371] See for example, Xinhua (2013) "Buddhist doctrine opposes self-immolation" *China Daily* 17 January 2013: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-01/17/content_16129983.htm (accessed 5 January 2016).
[372] Tenzin Kun-khyab (2013) "Is Self-Immolation Anti-Buddhism?" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration, 17 June 2013: http://tibet.net/2013/06/is-self-immolation-anti-buddhism/ (accessed 17 December 2015).
[373] Sperling, op.cit.

difference of sacrifice. Or this is the distance. Thinking of this distance over and again gives me a real pain in the heart.[374]

Self-immolation, as an act of selflessness performed in the particular political and discursive context of Tibet, assumes rich religious meaning. Even Woeser, who claimed that the self-immolations should not be judged in Buddhist terms but by their political results, could not help reaching for religious descriptors when she said 'Self-immolators are bodhisattvas sacrificing the self for others, phoenixes reincarnated from the flames of death.'[375]

In the questionnaire I distributed in 2005, I had asked whether the respondents considered short-term hunger strikes, indefinite hunger strikes (fasts-unto-death), and self-immolation to be violent or nonviolent. Table 5 below shows the responses received. What is noteworthy about the answers is that despite the public discouragement of the exile government against extreme self-sacrifice, and the Dalai Lama's statement suggesting that these acts are a form of violence, the vast majority of my respondents from the TYC, RTYC, Gu Chu Sum, monasteries and colleges still regarded these acts as constituting nonviolence. Moreover, the high proportion of monks who described fasts-unto-death and self-immolation as 'nonviolent' suggests that their preference is to view the great sacrifice of the Tibetan protestors in terms that are religiously consonant rather than to frame self-immolation as 'violent' and contrary to Buddhist principles. A number of the respondents who answered 'both' added an explanation that these acts of self-sacrifice employed in protest could amount to either nonviolence or violence depending on the motivation; or that actions 'in [the] Buddhist view are violent, but in political terms [are] non-violent.'[376]

Table 5: Are short-term hunger strikes, indefinite hunger strikes (fasts-unto-death), and self-immolation to be violent or nonviolent?

	TYC Central Executive Committee (8)[377]	RTYC Sarah chapter (22)	Gu Chu Sum (10)	Monks (30)	College Students (26)	Other (14)
Short-term hunger strike	V= 1 NV= 6 Both= 1	V= 3 NV= 17 Both=1	V= 1 NV= 9 Both=0	V= 1 NV=21 Both= 3	V= 5 NV=20 Both=0	V= 2 NV= 9 Both=1
Indefinite hunger strikes (fasts-unto-death)	V= 1 NV=6 Both= 1	V= 5 NV= 16 Both= 1	V= 1 NV= 9 Both=0	V= 2 NV= 20 Both= 3	V= 7 NV=18 Both=0	V= 3 NV= 8 Both=1
Self-immolation	V= 2 NV=5 Both= 1	V= 4 NV= 16 Both= 1	V= 2 NV= 8 Both= 0	V= 2 NV= 19 Both= 3	V= 7 NV=19 Both=0	V= 3 NV= 7 Both=1

(Keys: V = violent; NV = nonviolent; Both = could amount to both violence and nonviolence)

[374] Bongya Tenrap quoted in Chung Tsering, op.cit., 101.
[375] Woeser (2016), op.cit.
[376] Questionnaire response from a 25-year-old student. Similar views were also heard in my semi-structured interviews with Mr. Yeshi Togden, former president of Gu Chu Sum, 3 March 2005; Ms. Tsering Tsomo Chatsug, Research Officer at TWA Central Executive Committee, 8 March 2005.
[377] The number in parentheses contains number of people sampled.

Conclusion

Tibetan Buddhism, in the context of the nonviolent struggle of today, operates as a 'religion of resistance', and it also falls into the special case of *religion of the counterrevolution* mentioned by Lincoln. Although there are sectarian differences to be found inside Tibetan Buddhism (with some sects historically enjoying more patronage and privilege than others), by and large Tibetan Buddhism before Chinese occupation of Tibet was a 'religion of the status quo.' When it lost its political standing, it transformed into a 'religion of the counterrevolution' bearing the tell-tale signs predicted by Lincoln[378]—profound nostalgia, condemnation of the new order (PRC), and in its early years, active attempts to restore the political conditions of its former dominance (as in the period of violent resistance). An example of the nostalgia felt by the Tibetan Buddhists can be found in the fact that many of the monasteries built in exile carry the same names as the monasteries in Tibet and retain the practices of these 'sister' monasteries, with which they maintain a special affiliation.

The 'counterrevolution', in the sense of restoring Tibetan freedom, has not seen much success to date. This is mostly due to the overwhelming difference in power with the PRC but also in part due to the method of nonviolence opted for by the exile leadership, which has been characteristically mild. In fact, almost no instances of political jiu-jitsu can be seen, for the Dalai Lama's peace diplomacy and the civil society activism in exile have mostly avoided direct contact with the PRC's violence. In the last decade, the nonviolent resistance of Tibetans in 2008 as well as the self-immolations inside Tibet have attracted more attention to the plight of the Tibetans, but even here, Tibetans have found it difficult to overcome the repression and stringent censorship of the PRC. However, there has been more progress made with respect to the 'constructive programme' in exile.

'Nonviolence' in the Tibetan exile community has been interpreted in various ways by different actors. The Dalai Lama, motivated by Buddhist doctrines of compassion, interdependence, and emptiness, has channelled his efforts into seeking a diplomatic solution on the issue of Tibet and in driving forward a project of political modernity in exile. By the latter, he has sought to provide a 'positive' alternative to the political system in Tibet by building a democratic government and developing a politico-religious policy based on the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of *rimé*. Samdhong Rinpoche, on the other hand, displays a much more Gandhian orientation in his understanding of nonviolence. His plans for a satyagraha, which never materialised, indicates a very different mode of nonviolent action to that of the Dalai Lama. The exile government, which has been closely aligned to the vision of the Dalai Lama over the decades, has today a legal basis and a political mandate for its nonviolent commitment. With the Dalai Lama's retirement from politics in 2011, it is likely that the exile government will continue to develop a more 'secular' conception of nonviolence. The differences in conceptualising nonviolence might be said to largely derive from the positionality of each actor.

Perspectives from the Tibetan civil society in exile indicate that the goal and method of the Tibetan national struggle are highly contested issues. Although many Tibetans support the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach, vehement voices are also heard from civil society calling for independence. There has even been some interest within Tibetan civil society in considering violent resistance as a method of struggle. What qualifies as 'nonviolent' within the Tibetan struggle has also been a matter of some debate. While for many Tibetans the concept extends to acts of extreme self-

[378] Lincoln, op.cit., Locations 1222-1223.

sacrifice like indefinite hunger strikes and self-immolations, determining whether these acts are 'nonviolent' or 'violent' is much more complex from a Buddhist viewpoint where the motivation of the actor becomes the foremost determinant of the moral status of the act. The diversity of views on the goal and the method of the Tibetan struggle is testament to the emergence of a pluralistic Tibetan society in exile; one that is likely to continue to strengthen with the consolidation of the democratic reforms in 2011.

Chapter 5

Nipponzan Myōhōji's Mission of Peace

Introduction

Nipponzan Myōhōji (hereafter 'Nipponzan') is a small group of Nichiren Buddhists which emerged in the early twentieth century. The first dōjō or temple was established in 1918 in Liaoyang, China. Today, it is said that the membership of Nipponzan is only about 150 monks and nuns[1], and counting the lay followers the group is said to be around 1,500 strong.[2] Organizationally, Nipponzan has a loose structure where the activities tend to revolve around the monks and nuns more so than the lay followers. There is no explicit hierarchy among the monastic membership, and all monks are given the honorific title 'shōnin' (literally, 'holy priest/monk') and nuns 'anju' (literally, 'prioress'). As an unspoken rule, however, there is an informal seniority system based on the years of monkhood but no formal hierarchy exists. The evident exception is, of course, the founder Nichidatsu Fujii himself, who is referred to by the title of 'oshishō-sama' (お師匠様) meaning 'master'.

There is just a handful of scholarly works on Nipponzan. In Japan, Tetsuo Yamaori (山折哲雄) who edited Fujii's autobiography has written several short articles, and more critical commentaries have come from Shigeki Tokoro and Teruo Maruyama. But to date there has not been a comprehensive study of the movement and ideology of Nipponzan. Nor can an extensive analysis of Nipponzan be seen among the scholarship of non-Japanese scholars, and the group tends to be referred to as one of several examples in a comparative study,[3] or as the subject of an article reflecting a more contained scholarly undertaking.[4] Although my own research far from constitutes an exhaustive study, through it I have sought to fill the gaps left behind in the existing scholarship on Nipponzan.

There are also few publications by Nipponzan monks other than Fujii. The reason for this is that in this Buddhist order, monks are urged to cultivate one-pointed devotion to Fujii's teachings and avoid the pitfalls of pride and vanity by publishing their own views. The negative appraisal of publishing one's own words means that there are only a very limited number of publications by Nipponzan monks. The same taboo does not seem to apply to third parties like journalists or researchers who write and publish about Nipponzan.

For these reasons, it can be seen that the writings left behind by Fujii hold a status of paramount importance in understanding the ideology of this Nichiren Buddhist

---

[1] Paula Green (2000) "Walking for Peace: Nipponzan Myohoji" in C.S Queen (ed). *Engaged Buddhism in the West*, Boston: Wisdom Publication: 128-155 at 144

[2] Robert Kisala (1999) *Prophets of Peace: Pacifism and Cultural Identity in Japan's New Religions*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, p45; Jacqueline Stone (2003) "Nichiren's Active Heirs: Soka Gakkai, Rissho Koseikai and Nipponzan Myohoji" in C. Queen, C. Prebish and D. Keown, *Action Dharma: New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, Taylor & Francis Group: 63-96 at 77

[3] See Kisala (1999), ibid.; Stone, ibid.

[4] Green (2000), op.cit.

group. So much is apparent from the words of one of his disciples: 'Nipponzan Myōhōji is another name for oshishō-sama and oshishō-sama alone is Nipponzan Myōhōji. If there were to be any ideological conflicts among us, that is because some external ideology infiltrated our order.'[5]

The view that 'Nichidatsu Fujii himself is Nipponzan' is one that prevails across this group, and the absolute faith that the monks place in Fujii was plain from my fieldwork. Hence, Fujii's writings could be read as textual material embodying what this order intends, aspires, and holds precious. At the same time, however, now that some time has elapsed since Fujii's passing, there is scope for (re)interpreting Fujii's words and some conflicts of opinion or divergent directions can be seen in the movement today. In this chapter, I draw on the limited extant scholarship on Nipponzan, Fujii's writings, and my own field research composed of participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and a survey to analyse the nonviolent ideology and action of this Buddhist order.

Historical Background: Nipponzan Before and During the War

Nichidatsu Fujii was a man who lived until 101 years old and his actions during his remarkable life provide a reference point and a source of inspiration for his followers. To understand Nipponzan Myōhōji and its creed of nonviolence, there is a need to trace Fujii's life path, which spanned the dramatic historical periods of Japan from the Meiji Era to World War Two to post-war reconstruction and development.

THE EARLY LIFE OF NICHIDATSU FUJII

Nichidatsu Fujii (1885-1985) was born into a farming family from Aso in Kumamoto Prefecture. In his autobiography, Fujii recounts that his interest in Buddhism began early when he was still a child and that the first seeds of faith were sown by his grandmother, who was a devout follower of the Hongan-ji school of the Jōdo-shin sect of Buddhism.[6] His grandmother had taught him Buddhist hymns and teachings, and it came naturally to him to pay his respects at temples when Buddhist ceremonies were held during the equinox weeks or the anniversary of the birth of the Buddha (Vesak). Growing up, Fujii was also influenced by prominent thinkers of the time, such as Kanzō Uchimura (内村鑑三), Chogyū Takayama (高山樗牛), and Masaharu Anesaki (姉崎正治).[7] Upon graduation from Usuki Agricultural High School, Fujii decides to pursue studies in Nichiren Buddhism. Adamant to pursue the path of renunciation despite his father's opposition and threats of disinheritance, Fujii leaves home to join the Hōon-ji temple as a monk when he was 19 years of age. After this time, he studies at Nichiren University (the forerunner of Risshō University), Kyoto's Chōmyō-ji temple, and the educational institutions of the Jōdo, Shingon, and Rinzai schools as well as Nara's Hōryū-ji temple. Fujii studied the main schools of Japanese Buddhism, and through his broad academic interests and pursuits, developed a certain appreciation of other sects and religions. This appreciation was spurred, in part, by his first-hand exposure to the practitioners of the different schools.

---

[5] Quoted in Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1983) *Hakuju* 白寿. Nipponzan Myōhōji Hakuju Kyōsan Committee, 2 (my translation).
[6] Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1992) *Waga Hibōryoku* わが非暴力. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 3.
[7] Ibid., 8-9.

During his time at Nichiren University, Fujii whole-heartedly immersed himself in the study and recitation of the Lotus sutra for a period.[8] As a poor student, Fujii recalls that he used to eat only ground barley and soy pulp, and even tried to subdue his hunger by drinking water. It is quite plausible that the simple and frugal life-style of Nipponzan today finds its roots in these early experiences of Fujii. Voluntary poverty would eventually become one of the trademarks of Nipponzan, and at their Calcutta dōjō in India, a humorous Japanese poem adorns the wall, which can be translated as follows: 'Nipponzan, protected by the god of poverty, will surely fulfil its vows of *Ryōbō-kujū* (令法久住) [aspiration to see the Buddha-dharma to ever prosper and spread far and wide].'[9]

When Fujii studied the Yogacara (Consciousness Only) school at Hōryū-ji temple, he received an offer to head a temple that was planned to be built near the imperial mausoleum to commemorate the passing of the Meiji Emperor.[10] He was told that he could use this temple as a base to begin his mission to edify the masses. Fujii found himself in a deep dilemma at that time and he sought the divine direction by practising self-burning.[11] Like the Vietnamese self-immolations, this practice was inspired by Chapter 23 of the Lotus Sutra, which tells the story of the previous lives of the Medicine-King Bodhisattva where he burns his body—and in another life his arms—as an offering to the Buddha. Later, self-burning would become a relatively widespread practice among Nipponzan monks.

Not long after Fujii undertook this practice, he receives a message in a dream telling him not to embark on the mission of spreading the teachings to others until he is 33 years old.[12] In this way, at certain critical junctures in his life, Fujii would turn to the guidance of divine directives received through dreams and visions. Ascetic practices such as fasting and self-burning also tended to be employed when Fujii feels himself to be facing an impasse or a dilemma. Such practices have later been adopted by Nipponzan monks in the context of nonviolent campaigns.

Although Fujii had decided not to proselytize the teachings of Nichiren until he was 33 years old, in 1914 at the request of a lay follower of the Nichiren sect, he helps establish a temple in Katada in Saga prefecture.[13] At that time, there was still an atmosphere of discrimination against Buddhism due to a political move to exclude it in the early Meiji era as part of the new government's policy to separate Buddhism and Shintō. This was done in an effort to build a state ideology based on the latter. In this context, the official permission required for the construction of a Buddhist temple had not been forthcoming. On the other hand, due to foreign pressure the Meiji government was forced to grant permission to construct churches. Fujii therefore called his Katada temple a 'church', and resided there for sometime, following a life of monastic discipline. During this time, he acquires around ten followers and gains some experience in managing a temple, which proves useful later when he embarks on his overseas missionary work.[14]

---

[8] Ibid., 14-16.

[9] Tetsuo Yamaori 山折哲雄 (1978) "Hantai shukyo kaikaku: Fujii Nichidatsu no jirei 反対宗教改革—藤井日達の事例—" in *Tenno no Shukyo-teki Ken-i to wa Nani ka* 天皇の宗教的権威とは何か. Tokyo: San-ichi Publishing Co, 267 (my translation).

[10] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 30.

[11] i.e. burning a section of one's skin, usually on the arm, with incense. Ibid., 30-31.

[12] Ibid., 32.

[13] Ibid., 43-46.

[14] Ibid., 46.

A year after the founding of the Katada 'church', Fujii once again begins to contemplate about his future. While based at Katada, feeling the limits of a scholarly approach to the sutras and with a hope to enter the 'dharma gate' of Buddhist practice more profoundly, he engages in fasting and the practice of sitting under a waterfall (j. *takigyō* 滝行).[15] It appears that his strivings bore fruit, for he encounters mystical experiences at the waterfalls of Yatsubuchi and Momo'o which gives him some direction in his future. While fasting and engaging in these austerities at the Yatsubuchi falls, he has a dream which communicates the message that 'the enemy lies within, not externally.'[16] Fujii concludes from this dream that the 'internal enemy' which can be found in oneself, one's sect, and among the believers, presents the biggest threat to Buddhism; that the decline of religion always starts from within; and that the only way to prevent internal disintegration is diligence and devotion to the dharma. It is perhaps vigilance against such 'internal enemies' that gave rise to many of Nipponzan's strictures and spiritual disciplines.

In 1916, the year before Fujii turns 33, he utters his vows on the last day of his weeklong practice at Momo'o falls upon which he experiences a state differing from both a dream and a vision, where suddenly his visual range broadened to show the world as one Pure Land of the Buddha (j. *tsūichi butsudo* 通一仏土).[17] He then sees a pilgrim walk by with a drum in hand, carrying a small child on the back. When Fujii asks about who they were, he is told that the pilgrim is Bodhisattva-Superior-Practices (j. *Jōgyō Bosatsu* 上行菩薩) and the child is Sakyamuni. They then disappear from his sight. After this experience, Fujii feels his life orientation was set. The mission of Bodhisattva-Superior-Practices was to enlighten the world and Fujii resolves that rather than academic study he would spread the sound of the dharma drum throughout the world to honour Sakyamuni Buddha.[18]

Not long after, Fujii makes a vow to work towards bringing people everywhere—of the four seas under one heaven—to return to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra (j. *itten shikai kaiki myōhō* 一天四海皆帰妙法) .[19] He engages in a practice called *gyakku senryō*, where one beats a hand drum shaped like a fan while chanting *namu myō hō renge kyō* (南無妙法蓮華経), the name of the Lotus Sutra (j. *odaimoku* お題目), for the first time at Kasuga shrine.[20] His explanation for conducting this practice at a Shinto shrine reveals Fujii's distinct stance towards other religions:

> The sage Nicihren had thought that as long as the gods of different nations are worshiped by the people, that must be respected. From the perspective of the Buddha of beginning-less time, these different gods manifested as saviours of the peoples of each nation. Those gods are worshipped by those people using a suitable religious ritual and therefore they must all be affirmed… If they have been worshipped through religious ritual, it is better to accept them as they are. This has been my policy, and even when I go to India I would recognize the Hindu gods and offer my respects to them.[21]

From this passage, it is apparent that Fujii heeded the sentiment of the people and respected their ritual practices. It is also evident that Fujii here demonstrates a

---

[15] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1997) *Tenku: Yōmonshū* 天鼓・要文集. (Fujii Nichidatsu dai shōnin hōwa shū) 藤井日達大聖人御法話集. Tokyo: Nipponzan Myōhōji, 19.
[16] Ibid; Fujii (1992), op.cit., 48-49 (my translation).
[17] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 20; Fujii (1992), op.cit., 53.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 56.
[20] Ibid., 53.
[21] ibid (my translation).

inclusivist attitude towards other religions, seeing the different gods as manifestations of a timeless Buddha. This grassroots orientation can be seen in Fujii's thought and action before and after the war, and it continues to remain a feature of Nipponzan's nonviolent practice today.

SPREADING NICHIREN'S TEACHINGS IN CHINA AND JAPAN

In 1917, upon reaching 33 years of age and following in the footsteps of one of Nichiren's disciple Venerable Nichiji, Fujii decides to start his mission of edifying sentient beings (j. *shujō kyōke* 衆生教化) from the Asian continent.[22] His initial plan had been to travel via Manchuria and Shanghai to India, but soon after his train enters Manchuria, he witnesses a shooting incident between the Japanese military police and local bandits on horseback and hesitates to pass through the place. After some soul-searching, a weeklong fast, and a dream about teaching children in a kindergarten (which he interprets as a sign to take the time to 'look after' the Manchurians before venturing onto India), Fujii decides to stay for a while in Manchuria.[23]

When Fujii witnessed the shooting incident, his first thought was 'Japan could not effectively rule Manchuria like this'[24]—which betrays an attitude favouring Japanese occupation of Manchuria. In short, his was a view like the popular Japanese opinion at that time, which supported Japan's political ascendency in Manchuria and other parts of Asia. Yet, at the same time, Fujii clearly wished to see better relations between the Japanese and the Manchurians and lamented that the behaviour of the military police could not hope to 'win hearts'.[25]

He also strongly criticises the South Manchuria Railway Company under the management of the Japanese military. In his view this company had been 'exploiting the Manchurian people to reap unconscionable profits.'[26] He was also critical of the Japanese temples sponsored by the company and more generally, his compatriots living lavishly as a result of exploiting the Manchurian locals.[27] In respect of the Japanese Buddhist monks there, he accused them of having 'no connection to the people of Manchuria' and merely serving as 'funeral service providers' for the Japanese stationed there.[28] An acceptance of Japanese colonial rule and a denunciation of Japan's exploitation thus lay side by side in Fujii's thinking.

The simple life of the local people who lived in harmony with the land also deeply impressed Fujii. Witnessing the local Manchurians and the lower-class labourers living on cornflour balls and soup he thought, 'the Japanese could never match them. With their lavish and expensive lifestyle there is no way that the Japanese could remain here longer then the locals. At some point, they would have to return: I could already start to see the unpromising prospects for the Japanese as compared with the local people.'[29] Of course, these words are uttered in hindsight in Fujii's autobiography, long after the Second World War and it is debatable what Fujii's actual views at the time were. Nevertheless, it is evident that the lifestyle of the local people both impressed and influenced Fujii. For him, a modern life of luxury has

[22] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 66, 71-73
[23] Ibid, 71-73.
[24] Ibid, 71 (my translation).
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid, 79 (my translation).
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid, 74, 79-80 (my translation).
[29] Ibid, 85 (my translation).

severe limits, and returning to a 'simple, primitive living' is preferred.[30] He recalls how he emulated the Manchurians and the low-class labourers to change the manner of his daily living.

Now, with regard to his missionary work in Manchuria, at the beginning Fujii just practised *gyakku shōdai* (撃鼓唱題 synonymous with *gyakku senryō* 撃鼓宣令). Then in December in Dalian, he would go out in a thin robe bare-footed, and practice austerities in the cold to strengthen himself spiritually (j. *kangyō* 寒行) until his senses were numb. His austerities drew some attention and he was even taken up in a newspaper article.[31] Eventually he attracted a following of 20-30 disciples, and Fujii thought about building a temple. But with obstruction from the colonial authorities, he could not easily obtain permission. Fujii protested at the colonial government office on several occasions, and was finally granted permission the following year in 1918.[32] The first Nipponzan Myōhōji temple was thus built in Liaoyang (the site of the Russo-Japanese war). The name 'Nipponzan Myōhōji' is based on a Nichiren sect temple called Nihon-ji in Takomachi, Chiba Prefecture, where Fujii had previously studied.[33] The police told him that a temple with the name of 'Nipponzan' could be taken as a political institution or outpost, and that he should consider renaming the temple something else since such a name could invite misperception.[34] Yet, Fujii would not budge and argued back as follows:

> In Tokyo, there is a bridge called Nihon-bashi; in Dalian there is also a bridge called Nihon-bashi. Bridges are there for people to walk over and pass, and no one is suspicious of a bridge. As recorded in *Miraiki* Venerable Nichiren had prophesied that 'Japanese Buddhism would spread to China, India, and then the whole world.' I personally think that in terms of missionary work abroad, there is a need for Japanese Buddhism. I particularly want to spread the teachings of Nichiren. That is why I named my temple 'Nipponzan' and there is no reason for you to refuse the name. I'm not a spy of the Japanese government office, nor am I your minion. I am a disciple of Venerable Nichiren.[35]

Although Fujii explains that 'Nipponzan Myōhōji' was a namesake of the temple in Takomachi where he had studied, the fact that the name of his first temple outside Japan features the lexical constituent 'Nippon' (日本 meaning 'Japan')[36] tells of the weight he attributed to Japan's role, and indeed the role of Japanese Buddhism, abroad. As can be seen from Fujii's response to the police, he saw a special spiritual mission for Japanese Buddhism, which might be described as a type of religious nationalism.

During his six years in China, and following the construction of the dōjō in Liaoyang, Fujii builds five more dōjōs in Manchuria, and begins to engage in missionary work in the north, in Tianjin and Beijing, even contemplating entering the USSR. However, in 1923, upon hearing the news of the Great Kantō Earthquake and the Emperor's ill health, he decides to return to Japan immediately. In his

---

[30] Ibid (my translation).
[31] Ibid., 77.
[32] Ibid., 80.
[33] Tomidaka, Gyōho 富高行保(1977) "Nipponzan Myōhōji no chūgoku tairiku fukkyō 日本山妙法寺の中国大陸布教", *Senjika no Bukkyō* 戦時下の仏教, Kōza Nihon Kindai to Bukkyō Vol 6. Kokushokankōkai, 117.
[34] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 83.
[35] Ibid., 83-84 (my translation). Note that "Nihon" and "Nippon" mean "Japan".
[36] Literally "Nipponzan" means "Japanese mountain" and Myōhōji" means the "Temple of the Magnificent Dharma (of the Lotus Sutra)".

autobiography, Fujii says that reflecting deeply on the Great Kantō Earthquake gave new insight into Nichiren's *Risshō ankoku ron* (立正安国論 lit. 'Theory on Establishing the Correct Teaching for the Peace of the Land'). Whereas before Fujii had not quite understood some of the passages of *Risshō ankoku ron* and why Nichiren had protested against the Shōgunate, now rereading Nichiren's words as coming from somebody who had experienced a similar earthquake disaster, the passages offered new meaning.[37] According to Nichiren's prophesy, after a great natural disaster two types of war will follow—one is the calamity of revolt within one's own domain, such as civil strife and internal power struggle (j. *jikai hongyaku nan* 自界叛逆難), and the other is the calamity of foreign invasion (j. *takoku shinpitsu nan* 他国侵逼難).[38]

Fujii, convinced that he must 'take heaven's warning in earnest and pray for the country not to fall into ruin'[39] focuses his energies upon his return to Japan on establishing a *risshō ankoku* movement—a movement for realizing a peaceful nation following the 'correct teachings' of the Lotus Sutra.[40] The following year, Nipponzan builds its first temple in Japan at the foot of Mt. Fuji in order to pray for the peace and prosperity of the country. Fujii's selection of Mt. Fuji as the site of Japan's first Nipponzan temple harks back to his thinking on what constitutes the nation's centre. According to him, 'Japan must have a centre, and that centre is none other than the imperial household. If we then think about the land of Japan, its [geographical] centre of course lies in Mt. Fuji… Venerable Nichiren had in mind both the nation and its territory when he spoke of *risshō ankoku*. First, the land of Japan must be kept tranquil and then the nation and the state would become peaceful.'[41]

Hence Fujii attributed much importance to the imperial court as the nation's political centre. In the same year, he builds a monastic hut at the foot of Mt. Fuji, near where the Taishō Emperor was in retreat in Hayama. There, he engaged in *gyakku shōdai* day and night to pray for the recovery of the Emperor. This became the cause of Fujii's first major confrontation with the police, who asked him to 'at least conduct his prayers during fixed hours.'[42] Fujii refused, maintaining that 'the Emperor's life is in peril so I want to pray incessantly whether day or night.'[43] At last, Fujii is arrested and taken to the police office in Kamakura. Even there, he remains adamant, and starts an indefinite hunger strike with his followers, resolving that if he cannot practice his prayers, 'it is the same as being dead while alive; I might as well die here in custody.'[44] Fujii's hunger strike becomes known in Hayama and in the end the police give way and release him and his disciples a few days later. Yet even upon release, thinking that unless the police comprehend the deep significance of his prayers it would be difficult to continue activities in the future, he returns to the police station where he was detained and begins a protest, asserting that 'It is not right for

---

[37] Ibid., 94-96.
[38] Ibid., 96-97; also see Shinobu Tsujimura (2005) "Fujii Nichidatsu's Buddhist Pan-Asianism in Manchuria and India" in Panel Session 12M "Modern Japanese Buddhism and Pan Asianism", The 19th World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. http://homepage1.nifty.com/tkawase/osigoto/mjbpa.pdf (accessed 2 November 2015), 12
[39] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 97 (my translation).
[40] Miyazaki, Eishū 宮崎英修 (1972) "Kisei kyōdan no shin tenkai 既成教団の新展開" in Kōza Nichiren Vol. 4, *Nihon kindai to Nichiren shugi* 日本近代と日蓮主義. Tokyo: Shunjūsha, 255.
[41] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 98 (my translation).
[42] Ibid., 100 (my translation).
[43] Ibid (my translation).
[44] Ibid., 101 (my translation).

the police to repress us in this way. The law which obstructs people from conducting prayers out of concern for the crises of the Emperor or the nation is not right.'[45] Apparently his protest turned into quite a speech campaign, where he demanded the police to face him and explain the basis of why religion should be regarded as a nuisance.[46] Since then, Fujii was constantly tailed by the police. Nevertherless, during his time back, Fujii manages to establish a number of Nipponzan temples around Japan, including in Namazu, Suga, Nikkō, Gotenba, and Atami.[47]

The above incident shows Fujii's spirited use of nonviolent action in the form of a hunger strike, and his decisive stance against an authority he objects to. It also shows the extent to which he regarded the imperial court as a pivotal institution for the Japanese nation. The incident is the first of Fujii's nonviolent protests and in some ways contains the stylistic features of Nipponzan's activism to come later, which characteristically involves remonstrating with those in power following in the footsteps of Nichiren.

PROSELYTIZATION IN INDIA AND FUJII'S MEETING WITH GANDHI

In 1930, upon the death of his mother, Fujii makes a vow of *saiten kaikyō* (西天開教 spreading Buddhist teachings to India, described as the 'western heavens'). Fujii's inspiration for this missionary work stems from Nichiren's prophesy in *Kangyō hachiman shō* (諫暁八幡鈔; Nichiren's writings entitled 'Remonstrance with the Bodhisattva Hachiman') which claimed that Japanese Buddhism would return to India.[48] In this passage from Nichiren's writings, India is likened to the moon travelling from West to East, and Japan is compared to the sun which moves from East to West. Although Buddhism had travelled east from India to a number of countries including Japan, Nichiren prophesied that a brighter version of the dharma based on the Lotus Sutra would travel from Japan back to India like the sun.[49] Further doctrinal basis for this also comes from the 'Life Span of the Thus Come One' chapter (j. *Nyorai juryō hon* 如来寿量品) of the Lotus Sutra, which refers to the 'return of the teachings whence they came' (j. *genrai kike* 還来帰家).[50]

Saiten kaikyō is understood by Fujii as a major life mission[51] and here too its significance is understood in terms of religious nationalism or form of 'religious colonialism' typical of an inclusivist position: 'The teachings of *namu myō hō renge kyō* emerged among the Japanese people and it is not easy to be grasped by foreigners…[but] when the Indian people come to embrace those teachings that will be the time when the authentic religious connection is recovered… That will be the religion that saves India. Not only India; the whole of mankind.'[52] As another motivation to go to India, Fujii mentions his fascination with India's independence movement led by Gandhi.[53] He was critical of Japan's acquiescence of British

[45] Ibid., 103 (my translation)..
[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid., 105.
[48] Ibid., 121
[49] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1981) *Bukkyō to sekai heiwa* 仏教と世界平和. Revised ed. Japan-Bharat Sarvodaya Mitrata Sangha, 35.
[50] Ibid, 121 & 126 (my translation).
[51] Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1996) "Kōkuyō shari 広供養舎利" in *Fujii Nichidatsu Zenshū* 藤井日達全集 Vol. 3. Tokyo: Ryūbunkan, 160.
[52] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 126 (my translation).
[53] Ibid., 127.

colonization of India as a result of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, and felt that Nipponzan should lend its support to Gandhi's movement.[54]

Initially, Fujii encounters opposition from several people to his plan of *saiten kaikyō* and faces a number of obstacles upon arrival in his effort to 'revive' Buddhism, which takes him from Nepal to Calcutta to Bombay.[55] In fact, while in China en route to India, the former Japanese Consular-General to India had warned him that his mission was likely to fail since even after a hundred years' of British rule, Christian missionary efforts had borne little fruit since the Hindu tradition was so deeply rooted, and that Buddhism was a religion that no longer had currency in the country.[56] Nevertheless, by the end of 1931, he builds himself a small hut in Bombay near a cremation site from where he engages in his *gyakku shōdai* practice. Fujii states that during his time in Bombay, he did not particularly engage in missionary work but merely prayed for Gandhi's success. He did not gain any disciples but recalls that the people and children around the cremation site sometimes visited him and the children gradually began to emulate him in chanting *namu myō hō renge kyō*.[57] The story of the cremation-site children copying Fujii's chant reached Gandhi's ashram in Wardha; and on one occasion Fujii was visited by Gandhi's wife Kasturba. Apparently she had come to see the Japanese Buddhist monk and his entourage of children chanting the name of the Lotus Sutra.[58]

In 1933, Fujii crosses over to Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) where he fares much better in terms of being accepted as a Buddhist monk given the country has a strong Buddhist tradition.[59] At a small village called Ginigathhena at the foot of Mt. Sri Pada, Fujii meets a monk called N. Piyaratna who was known to collect Sakyamuni Buddha's ashes. This monk was reportedly very fond of Japan and bestowed on Fujii a few pieces of the Buddha's ashes (j. *busshari* 仏舎利),[60] which later provided the inspiration for Nipponzan's 'Peace Pagoda' movement enshrining the ashes received by Fujii and others.

In September that year, Fujii returns to India for a meeting with Gandhi, which had been organized by his disciple Tadao Okitsu (興津忠雄). The meeting took place at Gandhi's ashram in Wardha on 4 October 1933.[61] Fujii recollects that when he entered the room for the meeting Gandhi was spinning cotton and did not stop his hand even when Fujii entered. The Mahatma greeted Fujii with an artless, child-like smile—a sight which so touched Fujii that he was moved to tears.[62] Gandhi happily received Fujii's gift consisting of a Japanese snack called *arare* (あられ) but comments, 'The things made by Japan are all beautiful and cheap and yet even then

[54] Ibid., 128.
[55] Ibid., 125-130.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid., 132.
[58] Ibid., 133.
[59] Fujii recollects that he was respected as a Buddhist monk and the local people give him offerings. However, although he gains a number of disciples among the Japanese living in Ceylon, only several locals converted to Nichiren Buddhism. Ibid., 134-137.
[60] Ibid., 149-150.
[61] Note that there is a slight disparity in the description of the meeting with Gandhi between the Fujii's autobiography and his diary which was kept during his time at the ashram in Wardha. Where differences exist, priority is given to the account in Fujii's diary. See Fujii (1992), op.cit., 144-145; Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1972) "Waruda Nikki shō 藁田日記抄" in *Ichi Embudai* 一閻浮提. Tokyo: Daihōrinkaku, 164.
[62] Fujii (1972), op.cit., 164

they are quite expensive [for Indians]. Does Japan intend to conquer India thus?'[63] When Okitsu asked what Gandhi meant, Gandhi adds, 'by its products'.[64] Fujii's thoughts on this exchange, as recalled in his autobiography, were as follows:

> At that time, Japan had been selling to India attractive but cheaply made products like clothes that would fall apart after the first use. Japan had been buying cotton from India at exploitative prices and as a result India remained impoverished. Japan was profiting by buying raw produce cheaply and selling back poor quality products in return. Gandhi was referring to this. I told him 'We do not know anything about commerce.' To this he replied, 'Selling one container of this food is one form of conquest and acquiring political power is another. But only religion can conquer the hearts of people.' I then thought about how in the past India had completely 'conquered' Japan with Buddhism, and thought that such usage of the word 'conquer' was interesting.[65]

The rest of the meeting time was taken up by questions from Gandhi about Fujii's hand drum, about the Nichiren school, and Gandhi's recommendation to Fujii to learn Hindi.[66] At that time, Fujii was fluent in neither Hindi nor English, and had entrusted the interpretation of the whole conversation to Okitsu. After the meeting, he tells Okitsu that he should have told Gandhi: 'If it were possible at all for us to use the word 'conquer' then today we must conquer India through Japanese Buddhism. 1,300 years ago, India had conquered Japan through Buddhism, and the various civilizational traditions in Japan have since evolved. In order to repay our debts to the grace we have received from Buddhism, it is our duty today to return Buddhism to India.'[67]

Although Fujii was not able to talk directly to Gandhi during his first meeting, three days later on 7 October, he was able to hand a letter to Gandhi which explained his vow of *saiten kaikyō*.[68] The letter recorded Fujii's understanding of the history and significance of Japanese (particularly Nichiren) Buddhism and his own patriotism. As this letter usefully provides us with a glimpse into Fujii's ideology at the time, its content will be reviewed here.

In this letter, Fujii asserts that with the exception of one or two wars with China and Korea, Japan has remained incredibly peaceful during its history.[69] Yet in the early 1930s, international community strongly criticized Japan for establishing a puppet state in Manchuria called Manchukuo. Fujii defends the actions of Japan in Manchuria, saying 'Even if Japan were to be isolated and be subjected to military duress by the whole world, she must do what needs to be done to follow the course she believes to be just.'[70]

Fujii then writes about the strength of the Japanese people's patriotism. He refers to Gandhi's words 'without faith in religion, there cannot be love for one's country' and says 'It follows that the reason why Japan is strong is that the people are filled with an ardent love for the country…[W]hen religious faith is also a sincere expression of patriotism, the welfare of a nation depends on the correctness of that religion. The superiority and depth of a religion is determined not by its philosophical ambit but by whether or not a nation flourishes.'[71] As Robert Kisala comments, not

[63] Ibid., 165 (my translation).
[64] Ibid (my translation).
[65] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 144-145 (my translation).
[66] Ibid.; Fujii (1972), op.cit., 164-169.
[67] Fujii (1972), op.cit., 169 (my translation).
[68] Fujii (1983), op.cit., 74.
[69] Ibid., 76.
[70] Ibid., 75 (my translation).
[71] Ibid., 77-78 (my translation).

only is a denunciation of Japan's militarization and military policy towards China absent in Fujii's letter to Gandhi, but there are statements which appear to condone Japan's actions so as to amount to a discourse on just war.[72] Of course it is evident that Fujii based his nationalism more on religion than politics and he asserted that, rather than its military strength or industrial development, Japan should be known for spreading the true teachings of the Buddha to the world and for helping the world transform to a place of purity, calm and peace.[73]

After explaining the significance of the *namu myō hō renge kyō* chant and drum beating, in his letter, Fujii states that *saiten kaikyō* is a mission he is prepared to accomplish even at the cost of his life.[74] He notes that spreading 'the Buddhism of *namu myō hō renge kyō*' in India would not be easy, acknowledging that in his three years since arriving in India he has not managed to acquire a single disciple. But Fujii explains that if people were able to believe the magnificent dharma (j. *myō hō* 妙法) easily, then the teaching would merely be superficial in character. By his claim, it is testament to the esoteric and profound nature of this dharma that the Indian people have not easily embraced it.[75]

Fujii writes that the Japanese people were nurtured through Buddhism and Buddhism in turn evolved through the Japanese people.[76] As 'one disciple from a Buddhist nation' he has come to restore the Buddhist ruins in India to its former glory and to offer the teachings of the Buddha to the people who gave birth to this religion.[77] From such declarations, we can see that Fujii's letter was written in a manner that purported to represent Japanese Buddhism, and indeed, the Japanese nation, beyond Nipponzan Myōhōji and Nichiren Buddhism.

To this letter, Gandhi writes a reply the next day. His reply was not one that accepted the claim that 'the Buddhism of *namu myō hō renge kyō*' should be embraced by the Indian people—rather the tenor of his reply was that today the spirit of Gautama Buddha has been assimilated into the Hindu tradition.[78] From the English original and Nipponzan's Japanese translation of Gandhi's lette, it is clear that Gandhi was not supportive of Fujii's proselytization mission, although he stopped short of denying the value of such a mission.[79] Note that there is an obvious mistake in the Japanese translation of the letter, which becomes evident when comparing it to the original. Whereas the original letter stated, 'As a Hindu of Hindus, he [Gautama Buddha] gave a new orientation to Hinduism', the translation had read 'As one Indian of India, he [Gautama Buddha] had given a new orientation to the religion of India (j. *indo kyō* 印度教).'[80] Perhaps this (intentional?) mistranslation, which shifts the emphasis of the sentence to Gautama Buddha's 'Indian-ness' from his 'Hindu-ness' served to soften Gandhi's refutation of the Fujii's missionary work.

---

[72] Robert Kisala ロバート・キサラ (1997) *Shūkyō-teki heiwa shisō no kenkyū: Nihon shin shūkyō no oshie to jissen* 宗教的平和思想の研究—日本新宗教の教えと実践. Tokyo: Shinjūsha, 58.
[73] Fujii (1983), op.cit., 77.
[74] Ibid., 78-79.
[75] Ibid., 81.
[76] Ibid., 78-79.
[77] Ibid (my translation).
[78] Mohandas Gandhi (1973) "Advice to Japanese Buddhist Priests" dated 4 October 1933, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, The Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India, 56.
[79] ibid; Fujii (1983), op.cit., 84.
[80] Gandhi (1973), op.cit., 56; Fujii (1983), op.cit., 84 (my translation).

Gandhi's letter directs attention to Hinduism's profoundness and 'layered' nature and also gives advice to Fujii in light of his goal to achieve the revival of Buddhism.[81] From Gandhi's perspective, the essence of the Buddha's teachings has been most faithfully preserved in India, whereas those teachings have degenerated in the countries to which Buddhism had spread.[82] Against Fujii's claim of the superiority of Japanese Buddhism, Gandhi's letter encompasses an assertion of Hinduism's superiority, and their letter exchanges are in some respects indicative of a clash of religious nationalisms (and religious inclusivisms) between the two leaders.

In Fujii's 'Wardha Diary' there is no mention of how he responds to Gandhi's letter, but when Gandhi met Fujii at the time of handing the latter his reply, he asked for Fujii's schedule with regard to his stay at the ashram. On learning that Fujii was still to be in Wardha for a few days, Gandhi says, 'If so, come again tomorrow. Everyday at four in the afternoon, I have come to look forward to the bold sound of your drum. I like the sound of your drum.'[83] Hearing this, Fujii is rapturous and sees enormous import in Gandhi's remark.

> The heartfelt gratitude of three billion people at the sound of our dharma drum was expressed as a voice of joy from Gandhi-ji's lips here at the ashram of Wardha … In the end I learnt that there is no basis for seeking the rightful appreciation of *gyakku senryō* other than in the leader of India's independence movement himself… The prayer of *risshō ankoku* and the dharma sound of *gyakku senryō* has *correctly transmitted to India*. When Gandhi-ji beats the dharma drum of *namu myō hō renge kyō* and when Buddhist disciples come to reside here, India's day of independence is nigh. Oh Japan's heavy mission entrusted upon us by our founder Venerable Nichiren was today accomplished in an age of degeneration of the dharma (*mappō* 末法). Despite those who would scorn me, who could deny that the messenger's mission described in Chapter Six 'Life Span of the Thus Come One' of the Lotus Sutra was not fulfilled in India? My struggle for this long-held cause was more than vindicated today by Gandhi's words.[84]

Okitsu, who heard that Gandhi liked the sound of the drum, immediately gave his own hand drum to Gandhi, teaching the Mahatma how to beat it. Following Fujii's interpretation of this incident, many members of Nipponzan today understand Gandhi's practice of *gyakku shōdai* as signifying the return of Buddhism to India (*genrai kike*).[85]

Fujii stayed at the Wardha and Sevagram ashrams for a total of two months, during which time he had occasion to speak with Gandhi several times. The latter's influence on Fujii is evident especially in Nipponzan's post-war peace movement. On the other hand, at Gandhi's ashram, Fujii's influence was also seen. A multi-faith prayer which includes Islam and Christianity had been recited daily at Gandhi's ashram, and after Fujii's visit, '*namu myō hō renge kyō*' was added as a prayer representing Buddhism. The multi-faith prayer came to be uttered every evening at the ashram.[86]

---

[81] Gandhi (1973), ibid, 56.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Fujii (1972), op.cit., 176 (my translation).
[84] Ibid., 176-177 (my translation).
[85] This understanding was evident from my field research.
[86] Fujii (1972), op.cit., 177. See also Institute of Oriental Philosophy (2014) "'The Lotus Sutra: its Message of Peace and Coexistence' Exhibition (Hokkaido)": http://www.totetu.org/exhibition/1/15.html (accessed 6 July 2015)

NIPPONZAN AND WAR RESPONSIBILITY

It is after the Second World War that Fujii and Nipponzan assume a clear position of nonviolence but Fujii's outlook is much more ambiguous before and during the war. Nipponzan's actions up until 1945 remain controversial, and it is a matter that cannot be evaded if one is to fully understand this group's post-war creed of nonviolence. In this section, I shall take a look at the wartime actions of Nipponzan as well as the ideology underlying those actions. The issue of Nipponzan's war responsibility will be examined from both sides of the debate.

Nipponzan's wartime actions

In September 1931 after the eruption of the Manchurian Incident, a strong anti-Japanese movement develops in Shanghai, which is suppressed by the Japanese military. The following year on 18 January, in an alleged plot to distract the attention of the international community from the creation of the puppet state of Manchukuo, it is said that the Japanese military had paid a Chinese man to kill a Japanese mendicant monk to escalate the conflict between Japan and China. That bonze was none other than a Nipponzan monk.[87] This version of the events is told by historians,[88] though according to Nipponzan the incident concerning the killing of the monk was a mere coincidence, not an engineered murder, though they acknowledge it was true that the military exploited the matter during the Shanghai Incident.[89]

The Nanking massacre occurs when Fujii was still in India in December 1937. It is an established historical fact that, at the time of the Battle of Nanking, three Nipponzan monks had climbed the walls of the Nanking Palace ahead of the Japanese army.[90] This was later favourably received by the Japanese military, which provided Nipponzan with a large building that had been a Confucian shrine, where Nipponzan taught Chinese children Japanese language and Buddhism.[91] Nipponzan received a plea from the Chinese Red Swastika Society[92] to help dispose of the corpses left behind by the massacre, to which Nipponzan agreed.

During the war, Nipponzan had cultivated a distinct relationship with the military which is a matter giving rise to some debate. When Fujii returns from India in 1938, he presents the pieces of the Buddha's ashes he had received to the Japanese navy. According to his autobiography, Fujii's motivation in doing so can be traced back to a request from an Indian acquaintance who had boarded the same ship as Fujii. This acquaintance had said that while many countries in Asia were succumbing to colonialism, he wished to see Japan and China work together to revive Asia through their Buddhist ties.[93] As a first step Fujii should build Buddhist stupas to honour the war dead. This Indian acquaintance had lamented that these two still-independent

---

[87] Fujii (1992) , op.cit., 168.

[88] Keiichi Eguchi 江口圭一 (1982) Shōwa no rekishi 昭和の歴史 Vol. 4. *15nen sensō no kaimaku 15年戦争の開幕*. Tokyo: Shōgakukan.

[89] Gyōjun Imai 今井行順(1998) "Tangyō raihai no gyōsha: Fujii Nichidatsu-shi no toikakeru mono 但行礼拝の行者—藤井日達師の問いかけるもの" (keynote address of the 30th Chūō Kenkyūkai) in *Gendai Kenkyū-hō* 現代研究報. Nichiren Buddhism Modern Religious Institute. Issue 32: http://www.genshu.gr.jp/DPJ/syoho/syoho32/s32_295.htm (accessed 7 September 2006)

[90] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 163.

[91] Ibid.

[92] This was a society based on the principles of the Red Cross led by a Taoist philanthropic organization.

[93] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 155.

Asian countries were fighting each other and suggested that: 'If a commanding officer of the Japanese military expresses a wish to see the stupas built, although some resentment may remain between China and Japan, through Buddhism there would be a means to restore relations between the two countries. Then us Indians would join in. Thus, the three leaders [of Asia] would put our hands together in prayer in front of the Buddhist stupas. We could explore ways of building peace in Asia by coming together in places like Tianjin and Nanking where there were many casualties of the Sino-Japanese war.'[94]

To this proposal, Fujii agreed wholeheartedly and upon his return to Japan, he wasted no time in presenting the Buddha's ashes to the Japanese navy. He addresses an explanatory letter accompanying the presentation of the ashes to the Minister of War, Seishirō Itagaki. Although a wish to see peace in Asia is expressed, the letter also affirms the spread of religious teachings 'by the sword'.[95] In this letter Fujii explains the value of constructing five Buddhist stupas in cooperation with the Japanese army in China as well as in Taiwan, Korea, and the Kantō region. He also alludes to the Shinto creation myth of Japan (j. *tenchi kaibyaku* 天地開闢) where the gods Izanagi and Izanami use a spear to stir the ocean, and upon withdrawing the spear, the salt from the tip of the spear falls back into the ocean to form the islands of Japan. The spear in the Shinto myth serves as a metaphor for the military prowess of modern Japan in Fujii's letter, and the salt is likened to the lifeblood (j. *chishio* 血潮) which must flow to create the 'land of the nation'.[96] Fujii openly recognizes that the Japanese nation seeks new lands in the Asian continent. He exhorts that seeds of peace and the dharma to build the Pure Land should already be sown during the necessary bloodshed. According to his letter, peace would resound across conquered lands with the construction of the five stupas.[97]

In this way, Fujii pins his hope to the expansion of Buddhism 'through the sword', and refers to the Shinto creation myth in stating that the new nation cannot be engendered without the sacrifice of life. His allusion to this myth shows that Fujii made a conscious effort to fit his religious ideals to the prevailing State Shinto ideology. In other words, the 'peace' he speaks of here is one that accepted Japanese imperialism as a given. His claim that the sounds of peace and dharma must be found even amidst war is a stance that clearly differed from Gandhi's position where means and ends cannot be separated (ie. peace cannot be achieved through war).

After the bloodless occupation of Burma, the Japanese army attempts to advance into India in March 1944 through Operation Imphal but fails. The relationship between Nipponzan and Operation Imphal is complex and even today there are aspects which have not been illuminated. Fujii states that he also does not know about the chain of information and relations on the Indian side at that time.[98] Gandhi and Nehru had of course been staunchly against the expansion of Japanese military forces to India, but Chandra Bose, one of the leaders of Operation Imphal, had argued that in order to rid India of British rule, Indians had to cooperate with the Japanese army. Fujii says that he could not completely agree with Bose's thinking but in the end a Nipponzan monk called Gyōryō Maruyama (丸山行遼), who used to stay at Gandhi's ashram in Wardha, accompanied Operation Imphal.[99] Given the importance of the

[94] Ibid., 154 (my translation).
[95] Fujii (1996), op.cit., 160-161(my translation).
[96] Ibid (my translation).
[97] Ibid.
[98] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 170.
[99] Ibid., 170-171.

matter, Fujii had wanted to accompany the operation but the military chose to take his disciple instead.[100]

Fujii, who was back in Japan at the time, was invited to the military's General Staff Office in Tokyo to provide additional information before Operation Imphal. Learning that the main aim of the military was to subjugate India by military might, and that they had merely wished to use Nipponzan as a pacification strategy, Fujii responds in the following manner:

> If you think that India could be ruled by military might alone, you are mistaken. Even if it succeeds in the beginning, it is bound to disintegrate later. In order to avoid that scenario, you would need to enter India with religion, with the correct teachings of the Buddha. Presently, there is no correct religion to be found among military authorities and therefore this battle will fail in the end. If you try to rule India without religion, that is like seeking to catch fish by climbing a tree. With a strategy like yours, there is no way you could succeed in the violent coercion of the Indian people who are led by Gandhi. Unless you think this further, you will face a dead end.[101]

Fujii advised the General Staff Office to support India's independence movement instead and cultivate friendly relations with the Indians.[102]

Thus Fujii indicates his opposition to the military's approach to Operation Imphal. Conversely, however, his words suggest that if the military advances into India with the 'correct teachings of the Buddha' then the military expedition may succeed. When Colonel Iwaaze (岩畔大佐) asked Fujii, despite his response, 'But if we were to proceed with the operation, could we expect Nipponzan's support?' Fujii answers that in the event of the execution of the operation, he would accompany the military.[103] As stated above, in the end, the military prefers to take his disciple, Maruyama, who also made an effort to align the military's behaviour to Nipponzan's ideas, such as by advising to the army personnel to put their palms together in respect when they meet an Indian.[104] Of course this practice was never adopted by the military but at the end of the war many former army personnel did join Nipponzan as monks, including Shōzō Kawabe, the Commander of the forces in Burma.[105] As with Nipponzan's part in breaching the walls of the Nanking palace, Operation Imphal demonstrates the close but complex relationship Nipponzan maintained with the Japanese military.

The debate on Nipponzan's war responsibility

In this section I review the debate on Nipponzan's war responsibility, which was triggered by the writings of Shigeki Tokoro (1966) and Teruo Maruyama (1976) critical of Nipponzan's wartime actions. Fujii has published refutations to both, and the debate that is worth examining with a view to understanding the 'ambivalence' of Nipponzan on the issue of violence before 1945.

---

[100] Ibid, 171.
[101] Ibid, 172 (my translation).
[102] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (2005a) "Sekai heiwa to bukkyōto no sensō sekinin (jō): Nipponzan e no gokai o tadasu 世界平和と仏教徒の戦争責任（上）—日本山への誤解を正す—" in *Tenku* 天鼓 August Issue, Nipponzan Myōhōji, 32.
[103] Ibid (my translation).
[104] Ibid., 33.
[105] Ibid.

Critique and Rebuttal

In his book *The Religion and Nationalism of Modern Japan* (*j. Kindai Nihon no Shukyō to Nashonarizumu* 近代日本の宗教とナショナリズム)[106] Shigeki Tokoro (戸頃重基) dedicates a whole chapter on Nipponzan, in which he states, 'This group of monks acted as agents of Japanese fascism during the Sino-Japanese war on the Asian continent, actively engaging in pacification activities.'[107] Against this charge, Fujii advances the following counterarguments: [108] (1) Most Buddhist military chaplains as well as pacification units needed the recommendation of the head of the Temple Office or permission from the Ministry of Education, but Nipponzan did not hold any such support documentation, nor had they sought to obtain it[109]; (2) After the fall of Nanking, Nipponzan's lack of such documentation was considered problematic and there was a plan to expulse the whole order from the continent; (3) Far from acting as an agent for the Japanese army, Nipponzan tended to be treated as a nuisance by the military, and at one time, an officer even made an attempt on the life of a Nipponzan disciple to rid Nanking of 'loafers who borrow the name of religion'; (4) Even at the time of Japan's defeat when Japanese pacification units and others were forced to leave the continent, an adviser to Chang Kaishek in Nanking requested Nipponzan's disciples to stay in Nanking, believing their religious activities would help rebuild relations between China and Japan in the post-war period.[110] In short, in his reply to Tokoro, Fujii lays emphasis on Nipponzan's clashes with the military and how they had gained the trust of the local people.[111] In his autobiography, Fujii adds, 'It is true that we had accompanied the military to the battleground, but if you probe a little deeper, you would find that Nipponzan had always clashed with the military. The reason why we joined the military was that we felt the problem of China presented a major crossroad for Japan. We were determined to remonstrate against the policies of the Japanese army and to offer our prayers until the end...'[112]

In a further response to Fujii's counterarguments, Tokoro says it may be that there are a number of points on which he needs to correct his understanding but 'notwithstanding some misinterpretation… even if Nipponzan had quarrelled with the Nichiren sect and been harassed by the military authorities, if we look at the role played by Nipponzan Myōhōji during the war from an objective perspective, it is clear that their actions cannot be said to be so pacifist as to elude the disgrace of being characterized as an accomplice to the invasion of the continent.'[113] Thus, Tokoro maintains his criticism of Nipponzan's war-time actions.

The article of Teruo Maruyama (丸山照雄) entitled 'Buddhist groups and their war responsibility (j. *Bukkyō kyōdan to sensō sekinin* 仏教教団と戦争責任)' asserts the importance of Japanese Buddhist groups generally to face up to the 'negative

---

[106] Shigeki Tokoro 戸頃重基 (1966) *Kindai Nihon no Shūkyō to Nashonarizumu* 近代日本の宗教とナショナリズム. Tokyo: Fuzanbō.
[107] Ibid., 226 (my translation).
[108] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1967) *Tenku* 天鼓. Issue 2, Nipponzan Myōhōji, 39-41
[109] Ibid, 39-41
[110] Ibid.
[111] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 165.
[112] Ibid (my translation); Tokoro, Shigeki 戸頃重基 (1972) "Gendai ni okeru ronsō: Nichiren heiwa shisō nit suite 現代における論争－日蓮平和思想について－" in *Kōza Nichiren* Vol. 3. *Nichiren shinkō no rekishi* 日蓮信仰の歴史. Tokyo: Shunjusha, 225-226.
[113] Tokoro (1972), op.cit., 228 (my translation).

legacy' and the 'unaccounted past' of their war-time conduct.[114] Among the Buddhist groups discussed, Maruyama mentions Nipponzan several times. He argues that 'When Japanese people speak of peace, it lacks cogency unless there is acknowledgement of what to do about the debt of war responsibility. In reality, the word "peace" is hollow and the Buddhist peace movements, in particular, are empty endeavours.' [115] Immediately following this statement, he refers to Nipponzan's conduct in Nanking.

Maruyama says that the actions of Nipponan in breaching the walls of the Nanking Palace and in disposing of the dead bodies after the massacre encompass a problem that cannot be left unacknowledged.[116] He asserts that if Nipponzan had been at the site of a massacre, they should at least fulfil their minimal obligation today to come forward and state the facts as they are.[117] Maruyama criticises Nipponzan for not accepting responsibility for their part in cooperating with the military authorities:

> The fact of being the first Japanese to breach the walls of the Nanking Palace, and of engaging in a peace movement [in the post-war period] may be matters lying in the same realm for Nipponzan, but from a third party perspective, it is difficult to see these as a set of actions belonging to the same sphere. If we were to try to explain them as lying in the same sphere, it would only be as a kind of opportunism that adapts to the currents of the time. Thus, in order to go along with such flows, they would breach the walls of Nanking and they would, on the other hand, engage in peace activism. What we then have is a dissemination of Buddhist exegeses that are unprincipled, arbitrary, and free of all rules. The kind of era that we find ourselves in is particularly dangerous.[118]

In his article, Maruyama listed five types of activity for which Japanese Buddhists are liable to assume war responsibility: (1) promotion of war through use of religious ideology; (2) pacification activities among the people of the Chinese continent; (3) espionage and plotting; (4) furnishing of military supplies in Southeast Asia; and (5) pacification activities in Southeast Asia. Fujii argues that the military chaplains of the various other sects of Japanese Buddhism may have been guilty of these five activities but claims that Nipponzan had followed its own distinct course of action which exonerates it from war responsibility.[119] He attempts to show how in thought (j. *igō* 意業), word (j. *kugō* 口業), and deed (j. *shingō* 身業) Nipponzan is free of such responsibility.

Starting with the words expressed (*kugō*), Fujii refers to an article he had written just after the war in 1946 where he said that the reason for Japan's defeat lay in its militarism and strongly criticised the 'murderous war', describing the military as an 'inauspicious vessel'.[120] Fujii then refers to an article he wrote in June 1944 to demonstrate that his critical position towards the military had stayed consistent before and after the war.[121] In this wartime article, the tone is less condemning than the one in 1946 but he nevertheless reproves the military's lack of courtesy and conduct towards their compatriots. He questions whether they herald the *jikai hongyaku nan*

---

[114] Maruyama, Teruo 丸山照雄 (1976) "Bukkyō kyōdan to senso sekinin 仏教教団と戦争責任" in *Gendaijin no Shūkyō* 宗教の可能性 現代人の宗教 Vol. 10, Shūkyō no kanōsei. Tokyo: Kawadeshobōshinsha.
[115] Ibid., 153 (my translation).
[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid., 154 (my translation).
[119] Fujii (2005a), op.cit., 22-24
[120] Ibid., 27 (my translation).
[121] Ibid.

that Nichiren prophesied and remarks that he hears the 'knell' of Japan's doom at large.[122]

As examples of his protestations against the military he refers to his objection to Operation Imphal as well as a statement he made at an assembly of leaders from the Imperial Army in Xinjing, the capital of Manchukuo. With regard to the latter, Fujii states that he had told the Imperial Army, 'You may be wishing to permanently stay in Manchuria but unless you are prepared to kill off all the Manchurians, every one of you should go back to Japan. I have heard what the Manchurians have said about the Imperial Army and that is why I am telling you thus.'[123] Upon hearing these words, Fujii recounts that an enraged leader of the Imperial Army tried to attack him with a sword.[124] Apparently all missionary activities by Nipponzan were suppressed in Manchukuo after this incident.

With regard to Nipponzan's action (*shingō*) of breaching the Nanking walls, Fujii insists that this does not amount to war cooperation or action that accrues war responsibility.[125] His argument is as follows: The monks of Nipponzan who climbed the walls of the Nanking palace had neither weapons nor ammunition, and had simply gone over the palace walls with a flag bearing the words *namu myō hō renge kyō* and their drum in hand. The intention of Nipponzan was not to be the first to breach the walls, but to shine the light of *namu myō hō renge kyō* into the darkness of unenlightened passions.[126] Fujii maintains that because Maruyama misconstrued this action his criticism of Nipponzan does not hold. Those who appreciated the prayers and *gyakku senryō* of Nipponzan were the ordinary rank and file at the frontlines of the battlefield, and those who did not find joy in these prayers were the officers in command behind the frontlines.[127] Here, Fujii seems to explain Nipponzan's active involvement which placed monks at the forefront of Japan's entry into Nanking by referring to the need to provide spiritual solace to the underlings of the Japanese army who were typically positioned at the battlefronts. With respect to the disposal of the corpses after the massacre, Fujii points out that this was done as 'peace activities to soften the rage of the Chinese people'[128] and that as a result of this assistance, the Red Swastika Society began to cooperate with their Buddhist services and even requested that a Buddhist stupa be built in the city of Nanking.[129]

Fujii counters Maruyama's claim that a third party would find it difficult to see how the breaching of the Nanking walls and Nipponzan's post-war peace movement could coexist in the same moral universe. He asserts that throughout the war, Nipponzan had advocated for peace and describes Nipponzan's entry into Nanking as a way of turning the calamity of war into a means of creating 'the Pure Land of a Buddhist realm'.[130] In this regard, Fujii refers to how Nipponzan had offered pieces of the Buddha's ashes to be enshrined at the Martyrs' Monument at the foot of Mt. Jijin in Nanking and constructed a stone pagoda atop Mt. Jijin. As, supporting evidence for the positive reception by the Chinese, he directs attention to the fact that the

---

[122] Ibid., 28-29.
[123] Ibid., 30 (my translation).
[124] Ibid.
[125] Ibid., 34.
[126] Ibid., 34.
[127] Ibid,. 34-35.
[128] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (2005b) "Sekai heiwa to bukkyōto no sensō sekinin (ge): Nipponzan e no gokai o tadasu 世界平和と仏教徒の戦争責任（下）—日本山への誤解を正す—" in *Tenku* 天鼓 September Issue, 13.
[129] Ibid., 14.
[130] Ibid., 16-17 (my translation).

Kuomingtang leaders Chang Kaishek and Li Tsung-jen had asked Nipponzan to construct a Buddhist stupa in Nanking.[131]

In terms of the thought and intention behind their actions (*igō*), Fujii lays emphasis on the courage demonstrated by Nipponzan's monks. He refers to Nichiren's writings in Sado stating that those endowed with a 'heart of a lion' would attain Buddhahood, and points to the chapter on 'Emergence of the Treasure Tower' (j. *Ken hōtō hon* 見宝塔品) in the Lotus Sutra, which extols the virtues of bravery and diligence.[132] Fujii refers also to Maruyama's own comment that, in spite of its moral status, breaching the Nanking walls was nevertheless a 'brave' act.[133] Fujii concludes that Nipponzan's display of courage has remained consistent during and after the war rendering them worthy of the description in the Lotus Sutra of the brave and diligent seeker of the dharma.[134]

Lastly, Fujii pre-empts a query that might be raised by a third party: if Nipponzan had all along been consistently pacifist, why was it that they had sent their young monks to accompany the military to the battlefield?[135] In his response, Fujii quotes the words of Maruyama himself, who wrote: 'I have always believed that religions at the time of historical transitions must play a leading role in ushering in the era…In times of tumultuous transitions such as our era where characteristics of a pandemonium can be seen… there is no other way than to take the path through the pandemonium itself. I have said time and again that without taking this path, there is no place of rest for the individual.'[136] Fujii says the reasons for Nipponzan's presence at the sites of war were precisely to take the 'path into the pandemonium (j. *shura-dō* 修羅道)' and to impart the teachings of salvation.[137]

On Questions of Consistency and Remorse

When one examines the debate between Tokoro and Maruyama on the one hand, and Fujii on the other, one is struck by an ambiguity and complexity of discussing the moral conduct actions belonging to a bygone age in the post-war period. At times, Nipponzan chastises the military and yet at other times they extend spiritual support by leading the way at the front lines and gifting the Buddha's ashes to the navy. From my fieldwork and interviews with Nipponzan monks, the view that Fujii's ideology during and after the war has remained consistent was widely held. Yet, *what* stayed consistent and *how* were often left unexplained. Based on my research, I would say that at the very least, four elements in Fujii's thought during and after the war has remained by and large constant: (1) the assertion that while Western civilization is on the ascendant, Nipponzan must advocate to preserve and maintain Eastern (spiritual) civilization; (2) the efforts made to spread the prayer of *namu myō hō renge kyō* and to construct Buddhist stupas;[138] (3) the belief that the spread of the teachings of the Lotus Sutra will lead to world peace, in which Buddhism's return to India is an

[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid., 22-23.
[133] Ibid., 17-19 (my translation).
[134] Ibid., 22-23.
[135] Ibid., 27.
[136] Ibid., 27-28 (my translation).
[137] Ibid.
[138] Note that during the war, efforts were made by Nipponzan towards construction of Buddhist stupas, but it was only after the war that the first Nipponzan stupa, referred in English as a "Peace Pagoda" would be built.

important part; and (4) the focus on cultivating good relations with the grassroots and local communities.

In relation to this last point, apart from Nipponzan's emphasis on building relations with the local people in China, another example can be found from their time in Burma. I was told that the youth who had created the Burma Independence Army (BIA)—the forerunner of the Burma National Army led by Aung San Suu Kyi's father, General Aung San—used to frequently gather at the Nipponzan temple in Rangoon under N-shōnin.[139] At the end of the war, the Burma Independence Army apparently helped N-shōnin escape from the country.

Even conceding that there are a number of elements which remained constant during and after the war, with regard to Nipponzan's views on war, violence, and military force, I would have to say that there appears be a disjuncture between Nipponzan's war-time and post-war ideology. Gyōho Tomidaka (富高行保) who had engaged in missionary work on the Chinese continent offers his thoughts on the matter:

> We engaged in military chaplaincy with a view to providing solace to the wounded soldiers and to lift the morale of the combatants. All we did was continuously beat our drum. *But underlying all of this was Fujii's thinking at the time that we must protect Eastern civilization and in order not to relent to those who try to destroy this civilization, we need to fight force with force*. Fujii spoke of this view as a mistake in his memorial speech at the 28th anniversary of Gandhi's death held at Nipponzan Myōhōji's Kudan dōjō on 30 January 1967. It seemed as if he deeply felt the irony of Japanese and Chinese people fighting each other in this beautiful part of the world. The notion of war never quite sat well with him even while he accompanied the military to the battlefields.[140]

Other facts too, demonstrate that Nipponzan's wartime conduct was vastly different from their post-war activism. In 1944, Fujii had undertaken an extended fast at Mt. Minobu where he prayed for Japan's war victory.[141] On the back of a Nipponzan obelisk erected during the war was the inscription 'Enemy Nations Surrender'. From these facts, we would have to conclude that Nipponzan had lent a type of support to Japan's war. That 'support' may have one that envisaged a very different relationship between Japan and the colonized people, or reluctant support in the desperate circumstances of Japan towards the end of the war. Nevertheless, despite Fujii's criticism and disagreements with the military authorities during the war, he never made a clear anti-war statement or engaged in an anti-war movement: these would only become the hallmarks of Nipponzan's activism in the post-war period. Fujii's war-time actions and statements betray an ambivalent acceptance of violence which contrasts with his almost absolute avowal of nonviolence in the post-war period.

On the issue of whether Fujii had later repented his stance during the war, the views of commentators diverge. As seen above, Maruyama states that Nipponzan has never repented its wartime cooperation or acknowledged its war responsibility, but according to Tetsuo Yamaori, Shigeki Tokoro, and Eishū Miyazaki (宮崎英修), Nipponzan has expressed regret and remorse.[142] Further, the quoted passage above from Tomidaka mentions Fujii admission to the effect that his previous thinking that force must be countered by force was a 'mistake'.

---

[139] Semi-structured interview with M-shōnin, 13 September 2006.
[140] Tomidaka (1977), op.cit., 121 (my italics and translation).
[141] Yamaori (1978), op.cit., 257.
[142] See ibid, 257; Tokoro (1966), op.cit., 230-231; Miyazaki, op.cit., 257.

Miyazaki and Tokoro find in Fujii's 1946 article called 'Tangyō Raihai (但行礼拝)'[143] a remorseful attitude and reflective tone. This article, however, refers more to Fujii's despair at witnessing Japan's defeat and post-war American occupation in spite of all his prayers and austerities for war victory. Fujii laments that Japan as a land of the (Shinto) gods was but a dream, and that he has woken up to the rude reality of a post-war society that now debates the overthrow of the imperial system, where Allied troops have occupied the country and the national flag of Japan has been 'tucked deeply away'.[144] While there is an expression of lamentation, overall, rather than reflecting on Nipponzan's conduct during the war, Fujii bemoans Japan's defeat. As one Nipponzan monk told me, 'It would be unreasonable to say from this article that Fujii had admitted war responsibility. Shigeki Tokoro, who claims so is already entangled in his own words and is not able to move from that position.'[145]

From my fieldwork in 2006 and 2008, the mainstream understanding within Nipponzan was that Fujii had never expressed remorse for his and Nipponzan's conduct during the war. In Fujii's reply to Maruyama, he also states in no uncertain terms that Nipponzan 'never had to speak about "war responsibility" or of "war cooperation" in the past 30 years because there was no need to.'[146] Fujii's maintains that 'Nipponzan never engaged in war cooperation and has no reason to shoulder war responsibility.'[147] Despite some admission of Nipponzan's mistakes during the war, this far from amounts to a full recognition of war responsibility or a clear expression of remorse.

I have reviewed the debate on Nipponzan's wartime actions and war responsibility at some length, because it is important to appreciate this group's historical ambivalence towards war and violence in order to fully grasp the nature of Nipponzan's nonviolent stance in the post-war period. As discussed already, there are many features that have stayed constant in Nipponzan's activities during and after the war. Yet, there is also some ideological disjuncture between these periods and the point of divergence lies precisely in Nipponzan's approach towards violence and nonviolence. In the next two sections, I shall examine the features of Nipponzan's nonviolence by looking firstly at the nature of Nipponzan's post-war peace activism, and then at the ideological elements that have supported their nonviolent stance.

The Peace Activism of Nipponzan Myōhōji

I should like to point out here that although I examine Nipponzan's activism as a nonviolent action, it is not necessarily the case that this is how Nipponzan monks themselves characterize or understand their movement. Rather, their espousal of peace and nonviolence are simply intertwined as part of their religious practice, and there is no conspicuous or conscious engagement in, or labelling of their activism as a 'nonviolent movement'. Note therefore that the reference to Nipponzan's nonviolent movement or action is an analytical characterization.

According to one of the main organizers of Nipponzan's peace marches today, there are three guiding principles for Nipponzan's activism:

---

[143] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1961) *Dokku* 毒鼓. Tokorozawa, Saitama: Waseda shobō, 363-364; Fujii (1983), op.cit., 170.
[144] Ibid (my translation).
[145] Correspondence with Kb-shōnin, 29 September 2006 (my translation).
[146] Fujii (2005a), op.cit., 34.
[147] Ibid (my translation).

(1) To carry out action in unison and solidarity with other actors for the cause of nonviolence and peace;
(2) To act in such a way that it is clear for the onlookers what their prayers and appeals are;
(3) To maintain the stance as a religious believer as well as a 'citizen of the earth', avoiding hypocrisy while engaging in the practice of *gyakku shōdai* and adhering to the peace prayer form.[148]

The above are the points mentioned by Takao Takeda-shōnin (武田隆雄上人) from Shibuya dōjō who yearly organizes the Tokyo-Hiroshima/Nagasaki Commemorative Peace Walk, the Okinawa Peace Walk, and the Bikini Atoll Commemorative Peace Walk inside Japan.

The three principles described by Takeda could be observed during my field research. With regard to the first point about acting in unison with others for the cause of nonviolence and peace, I witnessed Nipponzan joining forces numerous times with other religious groups and even political parties (such as the Communists or Socialists) depending on the campaign. The second point was borne out in the way they employed their peace prayers in their activism, which typically involved carrying a flag with the words *namu myō hō renge kyō*, and intoning the chant and beating the hand drum as they walked on their peace marches. The reference to being 'citizens of the earth' in the third principle indicates that Nipponzan monks not only act in their religious capacity but have a broad awareness of their duty in the world which involves struggling against oppressive, unjust, or environmentally harmful structures in society. This disposition requires Nipponzan monks to know what is happening in the world and to intervene as keepers of their society's conscience.

In this section, I take a look at Nipponzan's nonviolent activism, which is composed of civil disobedience, peace walks, construction of peace pagodas, and missionary activities abroad. I have made an analytical distinction between these activities for the sake of scholarly examination but it should be noted that in reality these activities are part of a unified approach to peace, and one set of activities frequently overlap and reinforce other activities. Below, I focus on aspects of Nipponzan's practice that are especially of relevance to my focus on nonviolence.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

As discussed already, examples of Nipponzan's civil disobedience can be seen in Fujii's confrontation with the police at Hayama when praying for the recovery of the Taishō Emperor and also in Nipponzan's involvement in Gandhi's noncooperation campaigns in India. In the post-war period, Nipponzan's civil disobedience began in 1954 with the Daigo Fukuryū Maru incident where a Japanese tuna fishing boat was exposed to nuclear fallout from the United State's nuclear testing at Bikini Atoll. Following this incident, anti-nuclear movements gain ground in Japan and Nipponzan joins the wave of demonstrations calling for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen bombs. It is from this time on that the yellow robes of Nipponzan monks become conspicuous on the streets of Japan.

According to Tokoro, after the anti-nuclear movement in Japan split into conservatives and reformists, and into further factions among the latter, Nipponzan, began to assume greater influence in the anti-nuclear movement as they were

[148] Takeda, Takao 武田隆雄(2006) "Hibōryoku teikō kōdō no nakani koso hontō no yasuragino ba ga aru 非暴力抵抗行動の中にこそ本当のやすらぎの場がある" *Oruta (Alternatives) オルタ*. June Issue. Pacific Asia Resource Centre (PARC). 24.

considered politically neutral.[149] Nipponzan has since engaged in peace movements to protest war, nuclear weapons, military bases, and social discrimination, among other issues of peace and social justice. Nipponzan monks have also been vociferous in anti-war campaigns in Japan and the United States related to the wars in Vietnam, the Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq. Almost without fail, they conduct prayers in front of the Japanese Diet during parliamentary proceedings to remonstrate against Tokyo's military or political policies. Nipponzan's noncooperation with actors and structures of power also features prominently in their peace walks as well be seen below. In this section, I confine my discussion of 'nonviolent civil disobedience' to two well-known campaigns: the movement to stop the expansion of Sunagawa military base and the movement to prevent the militarization of Narita airport.

The Sunagawa struggle

The protest movement to stop the expansion of the US military base in Sunagawa (known as the 'Sunagawa struggle' 砂川闘争) erupted following the announcement of plans to extend the runaway of the US military airfield in Tachikawa, spurring farmers, labourers, students, women's groups, communists, socialists, and other reformists to come together to form the Alliance for the Opposition of the Expansion of Sunagawa Military Base. Active among this group were Nipponzan monks.

Up until that time, the farmers in Sunagawa had had much land seized without compensation and therefore when a survey squad tried to measure their land for the purpose of extending the US airfield runway in October 1956, the farmers immediately organized a movement to stop the survey activities. On 11 and 12 October, they managed to send back the survey squad but on 13 October, police officers wearing steel helmets forced their way in to the fields and clashed with the farmers.[150] The government allowed the police to use clubs and those attempting to obstruct police activities were beaten mercilessly.[151] It is said that approximately 1,000 people were injured in the Sunagawa struggle. Hiroi Takase, who was a journalist covering the Sunagawa struggle at the time, describes Nipponzan's involvement as follows:

> At the forefront of these farmers was a group of monks clad in yellow robes who ceaselessly chanted *namu myō hō renge kyō*, furiously beating their drums …The police clubs beat down relentlessly on their shoulders and heads, staining their yellow robes and white frocks with blood and knocking the monks unconscious to the ground. Still the monks in yellow continued to chant and did not stop bowing to the police, who had become personifications of violence. At that time, as a journalist I sought to record this appalling spectacle through my camera and microphone so that the public will know what is happening. At the same time, I was deeply impressed by this group of monks who unflinchingly resisted with nonviolence without succumbing to using force. I thought to myself: 'What is the nature of their belief? Where do they get their energy to carry out this nonviolent struggle to oppose the military base? Why is it that they can keep going even when they have been struck in the stomach, kicked, and bloodied…?'[152]

---

[149] Tokoro (1966), op.cit., 223-224. Also see Fujii (1981), op.cit., 114-115.

[150] Hideo Hamada (Director) (1983) *Kusanone no hitobito: Sunagawa Tōsō no kiroku* 草の根の人びと—砂川闘争の記録 (Documentary Film). Hamada Productions.

[151] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 228.

[152] Takase, Hiroi 高瀬広居 (1974) *Busshin (tsuzuki): Gendai no meisō o tazunete* 佛心（続）—現代の名僧を訪ねて—. Tokyo: Futabasha, 279-280 (my translation).

Nipponzan's nonviolent discipline was well received by Japanese society, and the media reported critically on the government, commenting that the police had acted 'as savage beasts' towards the protesters.[153] So many reporters and supporters visited Sunagawa that the government was forced to halt its survey activities on 14 October. The farmers built a small shack for Nipponzan to conduct their religious practices, which became known as the 'Peace Prayer Dōjō' and they then erected a stupa tower in front of the shack with the words *namu myō hō renge kyō* inscribed on it. This Peace Prayer Dōjō was built just beneath the take-off and landing area, and strangely, around the time of the stupa's completion one of the planes went up in flames.[154] Similar accidents were to follow.

Seven members of the Alliance for the Opposition of the Expansion of Sunagawa Military Base who had breached the enclosure fence and entered several metres into the American military base were charged with infringing the Special Criminal Act and taken to court. In March 1959, the Tokyo District Court found the Japan-US Security Treaty to be unconstitutional, and by extension, the penalties under the Special Criminal Act based on the treaty. The Tokyo District Court therefore concluded that the seven demonstrators who had been taken into custody were not guilty. However, this decision was reversed by a Supreme Court judgement in December 1959.

A further nine years on, the government, which had previously not paid any compensation for its land acquisitions, began to buy up lots of land around the airfield. Just before the finalization of the extended runway, Nipponzan built another stupa on a piece of land, which had not yet been acquired. Around the time of completion of this stupa, another accident occurs involving a plane crash, and Fujii remarks that, with this, the authorities began to sense something ominous.[155] In December 1968, after the completion of the stupa, The US military decides to abandon their plans to expand the Tachikawa base, and in the following year, announces the withdrawal of the air force unit from the base. The outcome of the Sunagawa struggle is certainly the result of a united opposition of various actors but the role of Nipponzan Myōhōji within the struggle cannot be understated. The spiritual leadership and guidance provided by Nipponzan monks had boosted the morale of the struggle movement and left a profound impression on third party actors such as journalists,[156] to convert such actors to support their cause.

The Sanrizuka struggle

The movement to stop the militarization of Narita Airport (known as the 'Sanrizuka struggle' 三里塚闘争) emerged in 1966. The approach of Nipponzan was similar to the struggle in Sunagawa. Nipponzan protested the planned construction of a 4,000 metre runway in Sanrizuka, objecting that there is no need for such a long runway for a civilian airport.[157] Nipponzan suspected that the Americans' actual intent was to prepare Narita Airport as a base for staging US military intervention in wars taking place Asia.[158] At that time, almost half of the planes leaving Haneda Airport were charter planes bound for Vietnam to support the US forces there. Even then, the US needed more facilities and began using its bases around Tokyo and in Kyushu to

[153] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 228.
[154] Ibid, 229.
[155] Ibid, 230.
[156] Hamada (1983), op.cit,; Takase, op.cit., 279-80.
[157] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 233
[158] Ibid.

support its military operations in Vietnam. The fact that just after the extension of the runway of US Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, B-52 bomber planes began entering the base was also fresh in people's memory. For these reasons, Nipponzan was convinced that the construction of a 4,000 metre runway would be put to military use by the Americans, turning Narita Airport into a 'base from which to launch a war of invasion in Asia'. [159]

Fujii states that the intent of Nipponzan's nonviolent resistance was not just to 'oppose for the sake of opposing' [160] but to ensure that Narita Airport is not put to military use. Nipponzan therefore demanded that the airstrip be kept within 3,000 metres which was deemed to be plenty for civilian purposes. They transferred the stupa which had been erected to at Sunagawa to the area where the 4,000 metre airstrip was planned, telling the Governor of Chiba Prefecture that if the authorities were to confine the runway to within 3,000 metres, they 'would not need to move the stupa…which instead would serve as a site of prayer for the safe landing of planes.'[161] Within this stupa was enshrined nine pieces of the Buddha's ashes which Nipponzan had received in Burma during the Second World War.[162] Note that Fujii framed the Sanrizuka struggle as a fight between a violent scientific civilization and a nonviolent spiritual civilization. In his view, this was 'a struggle between police violence and Buddha's ashes' [163] where Nipponzan monks were 'hoisting the flag of spiritual civilization against the scientific civilization represented by the airport.' [164] Fujii civilizational worldview will be examined further under the section on Nipponzan's ideology below.

The president of the opposition alliance, Issaku Tomura (戸村一作) called for violent resistance, which resonated with many farmers, labourers and students at the time. Yet as time wore on, Fujii recalls that 'the farmer's violence against the government's violence' reached an impasse.[165] In order to move forward, Nipponzan organized a prayer meeting, which was attended by approximately 3,000 students from across Japan, who then marched behind Nipponzan monks.[166] Below are Fujii's words explaining Nipponzan's position in the Sanrizuka struggle:

> No matter how much violence the government might employ to destroy us, we resolve to maintain our nonviolence through it all. Physically we might be destroyed by the government's violence, but the real substance of the issue goes beyond that. We utterly believe in what we were doing. Our adherence to nonviolence is without doubt. It is because of this that we are throwing ourselves into a life of prayer.[167]

The efforts of Nipponzan and the local protesters bore fruit, and in 1972, the Director-General of the Public Corporation of the New Tokyo International Airport addressed a letter to Fujii with the following words: 'On our part, we regret that our explanation of the non-military nature of the airport and our consideration towards the livelihood and welfare of the local residents were not always sufficient. However, the airport we are building is in no way intended to be used for a military purpose despite the US-Japan Security Treaty. We hope the new airport will be supported by the local

[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid, 234 (my translation).
[161] Ibid (my translation).
[162] Ibid, 232 & 235.
[163] Ibid, 235.
[164] Ibid, 239 (my translation).
[165] Ibid, 236-237 (my translation).
[166] Ibid.
[167] Ibid, 237 (my translation).

residents as a peaceful civilian airport. We plan to advance a development plan of the areas peripheral to the airport which centres on safeguarding the livelihood and welfare of the local residents as well as noise control. This will be pursued in utmost good faith.'[168] The non-military character of the airport was also later stipulated in memoranda issued by the Ministry of Transport and the Public Corporation of the Airport.

In both the Sunagawa and Sanrizuka movements, the demands of the opposition alliance were heeded in the end after many years of struggle. In both cases, Nipponzan joins forces with the local people in a grassroots movement to protest the decisions of government authorities. It is certain that the willingness of Nipponzan monks to work together with other likeminded actors played a critical role in the success of these campaigns. Their close cooperation with the local people is a characteristic of their activism, which can be seen also in their peace marches, construction of Peace Pagodas, and their overseas missionary efforts.

WALKING FOR PEACE

For Nipponzan, peace is not just an object of activism but an inherent part of their religious belief. Thus, even their peace marches are understood and described as a 'peace pilgrimage (*heiwa angya* 平和行脚)'. Their walks are also accompanied by chanting and drum beating, and during my fieldwork I heard Nipponzan monks describe the walk as spreading the sacred sound of *gyakku shōdai* for the general populace to hear. In other words, Nipponzan's peace walks are also a method of proselytization. Further, walking and *gyakku shōdai* were described as 'seed sowing' for peace and *risshō ankoku*. There was a general understanding in Nipponzan that in an age of *mappō* (末法), these seeds would take some time to germinate but convictions were expressed that their efforts in the streets would eventually lead to the realization of peace in the future. The marches of Nipponzan are thus a blend of the religious and political: there is a clear religious purpose embodied in *gyakku shōdai* but the peace marches are also a means to make political appeals to and remonstrate with government authorities, military bases, international organizations and companies. There have been innumerable peace marches organized and undertaken by Nipponzan over the decades. Below I introduce only the most representative and well-known.

In 1982, Nipponzan organized a World Peace March timed to conclude in New York in June that year when the Second Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly was scheduled. This was a large-scale and multi-front peace walk where groups of marchers arrived in New York from Asia, Europe, North America and elsewhere. A similar march was also organized prior to the commencement of the Third Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly in 1988. On both occasions, Fujii addressed a large audience in New York, offering his prayers and advocating an end to the spread and manufacture of nuclear weapons. The 1980s saw Nipponzan's peace marches carried out worldwide on global issues, such as the Bikini Atoll commemorative march in 1985 (Hyakuri—Tokyo—Yaizu), a peace march in India in 1986 (Delhi—Rajgir), an anti-nuclear march in Europe in 1987 (Sweden—Greece), and a peace march in Sri Lanka

[168] Ibid, 237-238 (my translation).

(Sri Pada—Anuradhapura) in the same year.[169] Nipponzan has also walked for peace in places such as Africa (including South Africa and Nigeria), Latin America (including Nicaragua), the former USSR, Israel, Iraq and Australia. These walks have at times taken the character of a protest march and at other times more of a pilgrimage for peace.

In 1962, Nipponzan had participated in a peace march from Hiroshima to Auschwitz. 32 years later, they organized an eight-month march in 1994-1995 in the opposite direction from Auschwitz to Hiroshima to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the end of World War Two, and the release of Jewish captives from Nazi Germany's concentration camps.[170] Starting from Auschwitz, the marchers journeyed through Bosnia, the Middle East, Iraq, Cambodia and ended their walk by attending the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony. It is reported that the Auschwitz-Hiroshima march provided an opportunity for the participants to remember the inhumane massacres that of World War Two, contemplate the moral challenges the international community face today, and for Japanese marchers to reflect on the suffering inflicted on the people in Asia by Japan during the World War Two.[171]

Nipponzan monks have also shown support to marches organized by other peace ctivists. For example, in 1976, Nipponzan participated in an eight-month march called the Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice from Ukiah in the State of California to Washington, which was co-organized by a number of American peace organizations including the War Resisters League, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Fellowship of Reconciliation, American Friends Service Committee, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, and Catholic Peace Fellowship.[172]

In 1978, Nipponzan joined forces with the American Indian Movement, participating in the Longest Walk[173] to protest laws that discriminate against Native Americans. At that time, Fujii delivered a speech in New York, where he stated: 'The United States has become the world's largest military power. With this might, it is provoking wars across Asia and the world, and incessantly engaging in military intimidation. The force which controls and removes this power cannot be another type of armed power. Only the realization of peace by the American people, and nonviolent actions based on such realization, can abate America's military might.'[174] Fujii then attributed significance to the Longest Walk by calling it the 'first step' in the nonviolent actions needed for Americans to build a peaceful country.

In the section below, I shall detail my observations from participating in two peace walks of Nipponzan in Japan: the 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk and the 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk.

---

[169] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1991) "Nenpyō: Onshi Nichidatsu shōnin no gosenge yori heisei 3 nen made 年表—恩師日達聖人の御遷化より平成 3 年まで" *Gaze seshonshi* 我是世尊使, 24.
[170] Paula Green, op.cit., pp.151-52
[171] Ibid.
[172] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 126
[173] This march started from San Francisco Bay in February 1978 and crossed the continent to Washington, where they arrived in July. The Longest Walk is said to be the first peace march in the history of Native Americans where approximately 80 Indian tribes came together in solidarity. See ibid, 133.
[174] Ibid, 124-125 (my translation).

The 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk

The 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk started in Tokyo on 24 June and ended on 9 August in Nagasaki. The dates of my participation were roughly two weeks from 2-8 July and 2-9 August. The walk also sought to commemorate the nuclear accident in Chernobyl. Typical of their other walks, Nipponzan's 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk was accompanied almost throughout by *gyakku shōdai* (the chanting of *namu myō hō renge kyō* to the rhythm of the hand drum) and incorporated visits to local governments, power companies, and military bases. At many of these places, I witnessed Nipponzan's characteristic remonstration with the representatives of those institutions which called to mind the admonition that Nichiren is said to have directed to the government of his day. Nipponzan's Statement of Demands during this peace walk read as follows:

1. To support the 2020 Vision movement led by the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which aims to abolish nuclear weapons by the year 2020.
2. To oppose the Referendum Bill now before the Parliament, which intends to abrogate Article 9 of the Constitution.
3. To oppose the deployment of Japanese Self-Defence Force troops to Iraq and the emergency war legislation (especially the deployment of civilians under the Civil Protection Act) and uphold the principles of non-killing and nonviolence enshrined in Article 9 of the Constitution.
4. To oppose the occupation of Iraq by American and British troops for the restoration of Iraq's sovereignty.
5. To support the Pyongyang Declaration between Japan and North Korea aiming to alleviate the tensions between the two countries and oppose economic sanctions against North Korea, which negatively impact the lives of the North Korean people.
6. To demand that the Japanese government and power companies protect human life and the earth's environment by decommissioning all nuclear power plants, such as the one in Hamaoka, preventing an unexpected situation of disaster in which an earthquake leads to a nuclear disaster.
7. To transition from the 'burn and bury' waste disposal programme to one of 'reduce and recycle' in order to protect the environment and to increase efforts to prevent environmental degradation caused by endocrine disrupting chemicals, chlorofluorocarbons (CFSs), and global warming. [175]

From this petition alone, the breadth of Nipponzan's peace concerns can be seen. Nipponzan's view of peace and *risshō ankoku* (a nation guided by the 'correct teachings' of the Lotus Sutra) is multifaceted and spans military, political, legal, and environmental issues.

During the peace walk, Nipponzan adjusted the weight placed on each of these demands to fit the local context of a particular area. For example, during the first week of my participation in Shizuoka, the concerns posed by the nuclear power plant in Hamaoka were the focus of Nipponzan's appeals. According to Nipponzan, if the Great Tōkai Earthquake (forecasted to be at least eight on the Richter scale in magnitude) occurs in the future, a double nuclear-earthquake disaster could occur. Given the aged state of the nuclear Hamaoka power plant, such an accident would be catastrophic. T-shōnin, the chief organizer of the peace walk, made appeals to this end to the Shizuoka Prefectural Office as well as the city offices of Omaezaki, Kakegawa, Kikugawa, and Iwata.[176]

---

[175] Statement of Demand, 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk, produced by Nipponzan Myōhōji Shibuya Dōjō (my translation).
[176] These sites were visited between 2 to 4 July 2006.

Above: The van that accompanied the Peace Walk (photographed by author).

Around Shizuoka (photographed by author)

Further, Nipponzan opposed Japan's MOX (Mixed Oxide) Fuel Plan—a plan to use nuclear fuel made from reprocessed plutonium and uranium in the country's nuclear reactors.[177] They saw this plan as an excuse for Japan to acquire plutonium (necessary for the manufacture of nuclear weapons) and perceived it as a step towards remilitarization. They have joined forces with local anti-nuclear groups, including the Interfaith Forum for Review of National Nuclear Policy, to protest the use of MOX.[178] In this way, Nipponzan not only opposes actions which directly relate to war, but also those which could indirectly lead to militarization.

During the Tokyo-Hiroshima/Nagasaki peace walk, Nipponzan visited the office of the Chūbu Electric Power Company, the corporation which runs the nuclear power plant in Hamaoka. There, they referred to the dangers posed by the Great Tōkai Earthquake to the operation of the nuclear power plant, the voices of concern from local residents, and their opposition to the MOX Fuel Plan. Nipponzan requested the Chūbu Electric Power Company to be mindful of their corporate social responsibility and to immediate cease the operation of the nuclear power plant to ensure the safety of Hamaoka residents.[179] Nipponzan then offered the *risshō ankoku* prayer, chanted *namu myō hō renge kyō* three times, and bowed three bows towards the Chūbu Electric Power Company.

[177] For more information on Japan's MOX Fuel Plan see World Nuclear Association (2016) "Japan's Nuclear Fuel Cycle" Updated February 2016: http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-g-n/japan-nuclear-fuel-cycle.aspx (accessed 27 February 2016).

[178] See Official Website of *Genshiryoku Gyōkai o Toinaosu Shukyō-sha no Kai* 原子力行政を問い直す宗教者の会 (2015): http://mukakumuhei.com (accessed 4 December 2015)

[179] Speech by T-shōnin, the leader of the 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk in front of Chūbu Electric Power Company, 7 July 2006.

Above: Discussions with the Hamaoka Nuclear Power Safety Inspection Office, under the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (photographed by author)

A similar format of appeal and prayer was followed when Nipponzan visited the military bases between Tokyo and Nagasaki. These included the Japanese Self-Defense Force bases at Camp Komakado, Omaezaki, Kure, Camp Kaitaichi, and Sasebo, as well as US military bases in Ikego and Sasebo. The following words were directed at the Japanese Air Self-Defence Force at Omaezaki Sub Base:

> Peace cannot be born of war. The American soldiers who have killed civilians in Iraq are today dependent on drugs and alcohol to ease their mental agitation….Both the killer and the killed are victims. Many civilians were massacred for a small group of war profiteers in the oil and weapons industry who are verily the 'merchants of death'…and many among the Japanese Self-Defense Force who have been repatriated from Iraq have committed suicide…As long as human beings have hearts and live in a world governed by the law of karma, there will be psychological consequences for killing other human beings, for preparing for, and cooperating in a war. In Japan, there is a peace teaching encapsulated in Article 9 of the Constitution which says that 'humans should not kill other humans', 'we should not engage in war'. Under this constitutional provision, our lives are protected, including the lives of the Self-Defense Force personnel…Today, the US-Japan Security Treaty is becoming a global military arrangement and the reorganization of the US military means that the Japanese Self-Defense Force may be deploeyd overseas [to fight foreign wars]… Today, the greatest threat to world is the wars started by the USA. It is as a concomitant to such wars that terrorism and other incidents are occurring. This is but karmic consequence. We need to remove the cause and seek to solve the problem. To do so we should not engage in warfare. We should not kill another. We should not support the war effort. Please join us in our endavour to preserve and realize the spirit of our nation's Constitution.[180]

Nipponzan's reference to the psychological trauma of the American and Self-Defense Force personnel, and the way in which they consider both the killer and the killed a 'victim' exemplify the Buddhist teachings of compassion which underlie Nipponzan's nonviolence and pacifism. The words above display a curious blend of spiritual and

[180] Speech by T-shōnin, the leader of the 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk in front of Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JASDF) Omaezaki Sub Base, 4 July 2006 (my translation).

temporal allusions in its reference to karmic consequences and the nature of the modern-day weapons industry, and the way in which Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution is described as a 'peace teaching'. This remonstrance was followed by the *risshō ankoku* prayer. At other points in the peace walk too, the organizer of march spoke of Article 9 as a 'teaching' that had been won through the sacrifice of countless lives in Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Pacific War—a teaching which Japan needs to pass down to future generations.[181]

(photographed by author)

Nipponzan monks heading to the peace ceremony to commemorate the atomic bombing of Hiroshima (photographed by author)

[181] Speech by T-shōnin, the leader of the 2006 Tokyo to Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk in front of JGSDF Camp Kaitaichi, 3 August 2006.

During this peace walk, Nipponzan also visited the houses of their followers, the Daigo Fukuryū Maru Exhibition Hall, and a number of pagodas and peace parks along the way. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Nipponzan conducted several Buddhist memorial services, including prayers and vigil at the cenotaph for the atomic bomb victims and a ceremony to commemorate the birthday of Fujii who had turned 60 the day Hiroshima was bombed.

There were also exchanges with other religious groups during the peace walk. For example, we paid a visit to a Pure Land temple, took our breaks at a Shinto shrine, and on a few occasions stayed in a Christian church or facility. Monks from the Zen and Nichiren schools and Christians participated in the walk. Around Nagoya, a 90-year-old Christian woman called Chisako Sugiyama, who lost her left eye in an air raid during the Second World War, joined the walk. She is an activist who founded the Japan Association for the War-Disabled in the 1970s and whose life and activism has been recorded in a documentary film.[182] When I asked her how she came to know Nipponzan and what urged her to participate in their peace walks, she answered:

> When I came to be known for my involvement with the Japan Association for the War-Disabled, there was an assembly of 500,000 people in Tokyo…Venerable Fujii from Nipponzan Myōhōji was scheduled to speak at the assembly right after me. So we were sitting together backstage. As I was waiting for my turn to speak, he casually said a few words to me. At that time, I had no concept of a movement for peace. I am making public statements to call help for myself; but calling for peace—or world peace—was something that seemed too lofty and difficult for me to do. First, I need some assistance with my own daily life. This is how I was speaking to him. But then Venerable Fujii tells me 'No, peace is not a difficult thing.' He went on, 'Your feet, put one in front of the other. First the right, then left, then right again. As you do so, you go forward. That is what leads to peace. So first, try walking.' That's all he said. I thought to myself, well if simply walking led me onto a path of peace, this was something I could do. Perhaps I should walk too. And as I walked, I realized gradually what Nipponzan Myōhōji was saying. I also wondered why no one was taking note of such an important thing. Why didn't more people listen to what Venerable Fujii was saying, watch his actions, and follow his example? These feelings became stronger and I became more involved. But I have no inclination to discard my faith in Christianity. My faith is my faith. There is no wish to convert. But once I realized the positive value of Nipponzan and heeded what they were saying, I began to consider other religions too and now I would take the time to at least listen to what they are saying.[183]

Here, one gains a glimpse into the way Fujii would interact with members of other religions, his influence upon people, and the importance he placed on walking as a way to achieve peace. The quotation also shows how the cooperation between Nipponzan and different religionists lead to mutual respect and goodwill.

Doctrinally, Nipponzan adheres to Nichiren's exclusivist teachings on the Four Dictums (j. *shika kakugen* 四箇格言), which asserts the supremacy of the Lotus Sutra over the teachings of the Pure Land, Zen, Shingon and Ritsu schools.[184] Yet, in Nipponzan's peace activities, an overriding priority is given to working together with other peace-seeking religions and sects. This propensity for interfaith and inter-sectarian cooperation conspicuously marks their social engagement today. For example, Nipponzan has been actively involved in the Group of Religious Supporters

[182] The documentary film released in 2006 is entitled *Hito no Ishibumi* and directed by Masayuki Hayashi.

[183] Semi-structured interview with Chisako Sugiyama, 7 July 2006 (my translation).

[184] The Four Dictums are as follows: (1) Nembutsu [repetition of the name of Amitabha, a practice in the Pure Land school] leads to the hell of incessant suffering, (2) Zen is the invention of the heavenly devil, (3) Shingon will ruin the nation, and (4) Ritsu is a traitor to the nation.

of Article 9 (*Shūkyō-sha kyū jō no wa* 宗教者 9 条の輪) and the Network of Religious Peace Builders (*Heiwa o tsukuridasu shūkyō-sha netto* 平和を作り出す宗教者ネット).[185] Nipponzan's Shibuya dōjō in fact serves as the main administrative office for both these interfaith networks. The senior monk at Shibuya dōjō, who is also the organizer of much of Nipponzan's peace activism in Japan, explained to me that their cooperation with other religions and political parties does not mean that they wholly accept the ideologies of those organizations—rather, the scope of cooperation squarely focuses on one point: the call for peace.[186] Yet, during my fieldwork I observed numerous occasions where this 'one-pointed cooperation' (j. *itten kyōdō* 一点共同) led to an attitude of tolerance and respect on the part of Nipponzan towards other religious actors.

Ms. Chisako Sugiyama in the middle, author on the right, and a Nichiren sect nun on the left also participated in the 2006 Tokyo-Hiroshima/ Nagasaki Peace Walk.

The 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk

The 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk was held from 16 to 30 October. I participated in the first week of the walk, which in structure was similar to the Tokyo-Hiroshima/Nagasaki walk. The main issue taken up was the US bases in Okinawa. The participants of this walk visited a number of US bases to pray and demand the US to withdraw and remonstrated with local government authorities, which had acquiesced to host the base. We also paid respects at the cenotaph of the war victims in Okinawa. The Statement of Demands of the 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk addressed to the local governments canvassed a range of issues beyond those specifically related to Okinawa, such as the need to maintain the integrity of Article 9 of the Constitution; Japan-Korea relations, including the issue of war reparations; and opposition to the war in Iraq and a call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Iraq, including the Japanese Self-Defense Force.[187] With regard to issues relating specifically to Okinawa, Nipponzan demanded as follows:

---

[185] See Shūkyō-sha kyū jō no wa 宗教者 9 条の輪 (Circle of Religious Supporters for Article 9) (2016): http://www.shukyosha9jonowa.org/index.html (accessed 10 February 2016)
[186] Semi-structured interview with T-shōnin, 16 September 2006.
[187] Nipponzan Myōhōji's Statement of Demand for the 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk addressed to local governments.

1. To support the immediate and unconditional reversion of Futenma US Air Base (Marine Corps Air Station in Futenma) to Japan.
2. To oppose the new US base planned for construction in Henoko Bay.
3. To support the immediate cessation of the simulated urban combat training at Camp Hansen in Igei, Kin.
4. To support the removal of the US Transmitter Site in Kisenbaru, Onna, whose electromagnetic waves are thought to pose health risks to the local residents.
5. To request the Japanese and American governments for the unconditional and complete reversion of all American bases in Okinawa Prefecture to realize a base-free and peaceful Okinawa.[188]

(photographed by author)

Compared to the Tokyo-Hiroshima/Nagasaki Peace Walk, the Okinawa Peace Walk involved more exchanges with local grassroots movements. During the former peace walk, there was a tendency for individual activists to join in on parts of Nipponzan's march; however, in Okinawa the peace walk participants themselves visited the sites and offices of various local movements. During my weeklong participation, we visited the residence of a well-known Dugong conservationist called Takuma Higashionna;[189] the 'solidarity dōjō' (j. *danketsu dōjō* 団結道場) of the Committee for the Protection of the Land of Iejima;[190] and an anti-war resource centre called Treasure of Life House (j. *Nuchidū takara no ie* 命どう宝の家). The latter was established by the former president of the Protection of the Land of Iejima, Shōkō Ahagon, who came to be known as the 'Gandhi of Okinawa'.[191] We also visited the

[188] Ibid (my translation).
[189] For information about Takuma Higashionna's current activism see: http://takumahigashionna.jimdo.com/ (accessed 5 May 2015).
[190] For a brief background of this committee, see: Ie Village Official Website (2015) "Danketsu dōjō'": http://www.iejima.org/document/2015011000237/ (accessed 5 May 2015).
[191] In the post-war period, Ahagon stood at the forefront of Okinawa's anti-war movement when around 60 percent of the land of Iejima was compulsorily acquired for the benefit of the US military. From 1955-1956, he led the famous "Beggars' March" across Okinawa to draw attention to the

'surveillance shack' (j. *kanshi goya* 監視小屋) serving as a local centre to oppose the construction of a P-3C anti-submarine base of Japan's Maritime Self-Defense Force. During each of these visits and exchanges, I observed scenes of mutual information sharing, support, and encouragement. On 21 October, there was a large rally in Okinawa city to oppose the deployment of the 'Patriot' missile, where Nipponzan joined 1,200 protesters in Okinawa, marching from Okinawa City Stadium to the second gate of Kadena Airfield (US military base).

In front of the Kadena US military base (photographed by author)

Nipponzan's 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk marked their 20th walk in Okinawa and it was clear that over the years Nipponzan had forged strong ties with the local grassroots activists and movements. The trust of these groups proved extremely helpful when in late 2005 a Nipponzan monk called Hiromitsu Kitsu (木津博充) was arrested in Okinawa while distributing flyers, allegedly for obstructing the passage of a police vehicle.[192] Upon his arrest on 29 October, the various peace groups with whom Nipponzan usually works with displayed their resolute support and solidarity. Calls for his immediate release came not only from within Okinawa but from across Japan and even abroad.[193] It is said that such an outpouring of support was a significant factor leading to his release after 20 days. Below is an excerpt from a statement issued by the arrested monk upon his release:

---

injustice of forced land acquisition by the US. See Ryūkū Shimpō 琉球新報(2002) "Ahagon Shōkō san shikyo/Iejima de no beigun tochi shūdatsu ni teikō 阿波根昌鴻さん死去/伊江島での米軍土地収奪に抵抗" 22 March 2002: http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/prentry-102257.html (accessed 9 March 2015).

[192] Ryūkū Shimpō 琉球新報 (2005) "Kōmu Shikkō Bōgai, sōryo taiho no hamon 公務執行妨害、僧侶逮捕の波紋" 8 November 2005, available at: http://nehan.net/fusessyou/kizujiken.htm (accessed 10 March 2015).

[193] Personal communication with Ms. A, 16 October 2006. Ms. A is a committed lay follower of Nipponzan who has helped organize the Okinawa Peace Walk and other walks in Japan over numerous years.

> I was held in police custody and then in prison in Naha city for 20 days, enduring the unreasonable violence of the Okinawa Police. This followed the sudden and unlawful arrest at Gate 2 of the US Kadena Air Base during our 2005 Okinawa Peace Walk. At the time of this unlawful arrest, I injured my throat as a result of police violence and because of that I could not eat anything while in custody. I practically fasted. On the fourth day, I had to be carried by a number of police officers to the interrogation room. During the interrogation, I was intimidated by officers who yelled and pressurized me to confess, and faced restrictions in seeing people. Whatever I said, I was told the opposite, and since nothing I said would be accepted, I lost all motivation to speak during the interrogation and ultimately remained silent till the end. During the 20 days of unlawful arrest, I was not even permitted to chant the name of the Lotus Sutra… I came to understand with the core of my being how the so-called 'frame-ups' in society are done. From the very beginning I did not harbour any resentment towards anyone—not even the police who arrested me. For 20 days I dealt with them respectfully. It is certain that in the future our peace movement will be subject to ever increasing repression at the hands of the pro-war Japanese and American governments… On this occasion, the united action of those in Okinawa and across the whole nation who unflinchingly prayed and remonstrated against the high-handedness of police power led to my release… I intend to continue to do my utmost in helping to build a nonviolent world together with you.[194]

In recounting his experience of arrest and detention, Kitsu-shōnin demonstrates the hallmarks of an advocate of principled nonviolence in his refusal to harbour feelings of resentment and hate towards his oppressors.

Some monks within Nipponzan question the appropriateness of the kind of activities carried out during the annual Tokyo-Hiroshima/Nagasaki and Okinawa peace walks. They point out that such appeals and remonstrations with government authorities, the military, and corporations turn what ought to be Nipponzan's religious practice into political activism.[195] However, against this view is an assertion by the organizers of these peace walks who say that as long as the issues pertain to human life, there can be no distinction made between politics, economics and religion.[196] In other words, for these committed nonviolent advocates, everything that bears upon human life is within the remit of religion's concern.

PEACE PAGODAS

During the Second World War, Nipponzan had made vows to construct stupas (which they call 'Peace Pagodas' in English) to enshrine the Buddha's ashes they received. However, it is only after the war that the realisation of this vow took place. All of Nipponzan's Peace Pagodas are said to contain the Buddha's ashes. After the first pieces of ashes were gifted by Piyaratna to Fujii in Sri Lanka, reportedly further pieces were given to Nipponzan by a nun in Calcutta and Prime Minister Nehru.[197] Still more pieces were received from Kashmir, Burma, and Rajigir, and according to Gyōjun Imai (今井行順), the former Patriarch of Nipponzan, in total Nipponzan has received around 200 pieces of the Buddha's ashes.[198]

---

[194] Kitsu, Hiromitsu 木津博充 (2005) "My encounter with unlawful arrest and detention 不当逮捕・不当勾留に身を置いて" *Tenku* 天鼓 Nov-Dec 2005: http://www.nipponzanmyohoji.org/yobikake/okinawa051029_1.htm (accessed 15 May 2006).

[195] Personal communication with Mb-shōnin, 6 August 2006.

[196] Personal communication with T-shōnin, 9 August 2006.

[197] Imai (1998), op.cit. Further, during my fieldwork in 2006, I was also told that there were reports by Nipponzan monks of a miraculous phenomenon where the Buddha's ashes increased on its own in the urn.

[198] Ibid.

The very first Peace Pagoda was built in Hanaokayama in Kumamoto city where Fujii was born. According to Fujii's autobiography, this first Peace Pagoda was built with indescribable effort, taking seven years from the start of the construction in 1954.[199] There was a strong sentiment at that time that the Peace Pagoda should symbolize world peace and thus to celebrate the completion of the Peace Pagoda in Hanaoka, Nipponzan organized a world conference of peace advocates[200] which was attended not only by the Japanese Buddhist community but also Christians and international participants from countries like India, Sri Lanka, and Australia.[201] Following the construction of the Peace Pagoda in Hanaoka, numerous stupas have been erected by Nipponzan across Japan, including Fukui, Kushiro, Himeji, Atami, Wakamatsu, Osaka, Gotenba, Hiroshima, and Yokohama. Abroad, Nipponzan has built around 80 stupas in various countries including India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, the USA, the UK, and Australia.[202]

To appreciate the significance of the Peace Pagodas, it is worth noting the ideological import that Nipponzan ascribes to these stupas. When World War Two ended, Fujii had been staying in Mount Kumgang in Korea (now North Korea). Soon after learning of Japan's defeat, he returns to Japan and dwells in Mount Aso, where he contemplates Japan's future. Fujii still saw the value in walking for peace but also reflected on its limitations.[203] During this period, the idea of building the Peace Pagoda came to him as a breakthrough. When he looked back upon Japan's history and thought about when the most peaceful era had been, he realized that it was around the time of the Nara and Heian periods (CE 710-1185) following the reign of Prince Shōtoku.[204] Fujii also concluded that the impetus for peace in Japan came from Buddhism, and that Buddhist spiritual life during that era had centred around stupa worship as evident from the practices of the large monasteries (j. *garan* 迦藍; s. *sangharama*) built by Prince Shōtoku.[205] Fujii reflected that during the Nara period, there was no capital punishment and social mores were such that murders hardly occurred.[206]

However, there is some contention over the doctrinal correctness of building stupas to enshrine the Buddha's ashes. Both the Nichiren sect and Sōka Gakkai[207] tend to be critical of Nipponzan's efforts to erect stupas. Under the leadership of Jōsei Toda, Sōka Gakkai had issued Nipponzan with a statement of *shakubuku* (折伏)[208] which asserted that it was foolish to make the Buddha's ashes an object of worship since Nichiren had proscribed venerating the ashes in *Honzon mondō shō* (本尊問答抄; *A Summary of Questions and Answers Concerning the Object of Worship*).[209] In

[199] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 188
[200] The first of these conferences was held at Gandhi's Wardha ashram.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Semi-structured interview with I-shōnin, 24 September 2006.
[203] See Fujii (1992), op.cit., 180.
[204] Ibid, 181
[205] Ibid.
[206] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 149
[207] Sōka Gakkai is Japan's largest new religious movement: it is a lay organization based in Nichiren Buddhism, which with a following in Japan and around the world of approximately 12 million practitioners in 192 countries and regions. Clark Strand (2008) "Faith in Revolution" *Triycle* Winter: http://www.tricycle.com/interview/faith-revolution (accessed 20 February 2016).
[208] Literally "break and subdue" – this is a term used to denote persuasion and conversion of new recruits in Nichiren Buddhism, often including rebuttal of views deemed erroneous or heretical.
[209] See Sōka Gakkai, "Nihon no jashū (No. 8): Nipponzan Myōhōji" in *Daibyaku-renge* Issue 77 reprinted in Fujii (1961), op.cit., 217-315.

his response to Sōka Gakkai,[210] Fujii explains that he finds the doctrinal basis for the construction of stupas and the worshipping of the Buddha's ashes in the Lotus Sutra itself, from which he quotes several passages.[211] Regarding the sections in Nichiren's *Honzon mondō shō* to which Sōka Gakkai referred, Fujii admits that those passages may be taken as a discouragement of such worship[212] but maintains that if, as Sōka Gakkai claims, Nichiren had indeed disallowed the worship, Nipponzan would not hesitate to disregard this proscription.[213]

(photographed by author)

The doctrinal divergence that can be seen between Nipponzan on the one hand, and Sōka Gakkai and the Nichiren sect[214] on the other, stems from the weight attributed to the teachings of the Lotus Sutra and those of Nichiren. For Sōka Gakkai, Nichiren is the ultimate religious teacher, and 'it is Nichiren's writings, rather than the text of the *Lotus Sūtra* itself, that hold normative authority for members.'[215] On the other hand, since Nipponzan prides itself in returning to the source of Buddhism,[216] the Lotus Sutra, which is considered to embody the ultimate teachings of the Buddha, is the object of highest reverence. On the multi-tiered Nipponzan altar, one would find at the very top a statue of the Buddha, a statue of Nichiren below, and lastly a picture of Fujii at the bottom.[217] The order of veneration and worship, therefore, is plain from

[210] Fujii describes his response as a '*shakubuku* of Sōka Gakkai's *shakubuku*'
[211] Fujii (1961), op.cit., 250-251. Fujii particularly quotes the words from chapters 11 and 16 of the Lotus Sutra.
[212] Ibid, 253. He also rebukes the arguments of Sōka Gakkai by stating that they themselves harbour ideological inconsistencies. Ibid, 254.
[213] Ibid, 254.
[214] Note that within the Nichiren sect are also monks who are sympathetic towards Nipponzan's programme to build Peace Pagodas. In fact, during the 2006 Okinawa Peace Walk, I met a Nichiren monk who had assisted Nipponzan in their pagoda construction. In Sado, the Nichiren sect has even built a stupa of their own with some assistance from Nipponzan. However, generally speaking, the Nichiren sect does not favour the construction of stupas. See Fujii (1992), op.cit., 187.
[215] Stone, J. I., op.cit., p70.
[216] Quoted in Editor's note in Fujii (1983), op.cit., 1-2.
[217] I have observed this to be the case in the numerous Nipponzan dōjōs I've visited in Japan.

Nipponzan's altar, and the basis of Fujii's resolve to disregard the alleged directions of Nichiren is evidently to be found here.

Gyōjun Imai delivered a speech to the Nichiren sect after the death of Fujii, in which he spoke of the issue thus:

> In the [Lotus] stura, it is true that it says 'there is no need to enshrine the ashes of the Buddha.' I believe these are words which were edited from a perspective antagonistic to such worship. But they could also be taken to mean, depending on one's interpretation, that 'even if the Buddha's ashes are not enshrined, stupas should be built'…I dare say that it is more natural to understand the words in that way. [One may say] 'There is no need for sutras or stupas.' It might be said that there is no need for temples or scriptures. Yet the need for faith remains.[218]

Imai also refers to the legend that after the death of Gautama Buddha, his ashes were scattered in 84,000 pieces. If that were the case, he says there would be a need to build an equal number of stupas; but from the political strength of the Buddhists at that time this would have been close to impossible.[219] Imai surmises that the proscription of worshiping the Buddha's remains in the Kegon sutra (s. *Avatamska*) probably came about with the aim of reining in the arrogance of the few privileged believers who possessed the ashes of the Buddha. Imai concludes that the words discouraging such worship should be understood in the context of a particular historical period, and asserts that they do not amount to a basis to oppose the worship today.[220]

As the above debate demonstrates, the doctrinal appropriateness of constructing stupas to enshrine the Buddha's ashes is a subject of contention between Nichiren Buddhist groups. Yet for Nipponzan, this activity remains an important part of their peace efforts. These stupas are built as a monument for peace, and the grounds on which the stupas are built are often called 'peace parks'. According to I-shōnin, whom I interviewed, Fujii had said when there are a hundred Peace Pagodas in the world there would be world peace.[221] He further told me, 'Well I don't know on what basis Venerable Fujii said one hundred but if a saint says so then as his disciple and the hands and feet that does his bidding, I must act on it.'[222]

Fujii saw the worship of the Peace Pagodas as a method of 'transcending sectarian differences and to return to the Buddha himself, who lies at the centre of Buddhist unity.'[223] This idea is now universalized and today Nipponzan's stupas have become pagodas to symbolize peace transcending the divisions of religion, ideology, creed, race and political affiliation. For example, at the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of the Sado Peace Pagoda on 10 September 2006, the senior monk at Sado dōjō stated in his commemorative address: 'We must transcend our differences regarding ideology, creed, sect, political party, race, and country to contribute, even in small ways, to achieve *risshō ankoku* and world peace. We've endeavoured to hold these

---

[218] Imai (1998), op.cit (my translation).
[219] Ibid.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Semi-structured interview with I-shōnin, 24 September 2006.
[222] Ibid (my translation). I-shōnin told me a story about his personal inspiration for constructing Peace Pagodas. He said that three years after he joined Nipponzan he received five pieces of the Buddha's ashes from a Sri Lankan monk as well as a Nipponzan monk. Feeling that he was still much too new as a monk to know what to do with such a gift, he went to Fujii to hand over the ashes. Then Fujii, after taking the ashes from I-shōnin gave it back to him and said "Please build Peace Pagodas with this." I-shōnin recounted that this experience gave him a direction for his practices in Nipponzan (ibid).
[223] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 182 (my translation).

ideals in our hearts and will continue our efforts towards their fulfilment.'[224] The emphasis on peace and unity in Nipponzan's thought and practice today shows an ideological orientation towards a kind of universalism, which reflects a felt need by the group to overcome conflict and foster harmony and cooperation in the society.

A traditional dance of Sado at the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of the Sado Peace Pagoda. Notice the flags of different nations above. (photographed by author)

Imai notes that the Peace Pagoda that Nipponzan built in Wardha, India had the effect of 'breaking through' communalism in Indian society. When the Peace Pagoda was built, both the Gandhians at Wardha ashram and the new Buddhist followers of Ambedkar, who tended to be critical of Gandhi, paid their respects.[225] Imai recalls: 'When festivities were held at the Peace Pagoda several times a year both groups would come to participate. This kind of thing never happened with other events. When I went back to Wardha, many Catholics and Muslims were also visiting the Peace Pagoda, and we drank tea together…On occasions such as this, I believe the power of the dharma gate of *risshō ankoku* is revealed.'[226] A similar observation was made by another Nipponzan monk who lives at the Darjeeling dōjō in India. This monk explained the attitude of the Indian people towards the Peace Pagoda in the following way:

> It appears that Indians, who are a very pious people, see in the Peace Pagoda a peace symbol that transcends sectarianism. The symbol speaks deeply to their heart. The visitors who come hear the name of the Lotus Sutra being chanted. As they do so, a seed of the dharma is planted in their hearts. Through the name of the Lotus Sutra, they will become

[224] Speech by K-shōnin at the 25th anniversary of the construction of the Sado Peace Pagoda, 10 September 2006 (my translation). On the leaflets advertising this event were words that echoed his message, describing the pagoda as 'a stupa for prayer that transcends national, racial and religious differences.'
[225] Imai (1998), op.cit.
[226] Ibid (my translation).

> human beings who practise non-killing and nonviolence. I believe this will lead to the revival of Buddhism among Indian people.[227]

Whilst I cannot attest to the way in which Indian people—or people of any other country—view Nipponzan's Peace Pagoda, the meaning of the stupa for Nipponzan monks themselves is amply clear. The Peace Pagoda continues to serve as a symbol of human unity transcending the categories and social identities that create division. As such, the pagoda also reinforces a pluralistic outlook which leads the Nipponzan to adopt a tolerant attitude towards other faiths and sects.

In Fujii's thought, the Buddha's remains have consistently been associated with peace.[228] However, this is not to say Nipponzan makes a syllogistic connection between the erection of Peace Pagodas and peace. In fact, Imai explains that Fujii had clearly stated: 'The stupa is a construction and so it does not on its own build peace.'[229] Imai also recalls an incident in India when he was challenged by a direct disciple of Gandhi in the following way:

> Mr. Imai, Fujii guruji[230] talks much about the Peace Pagoda but in India scores of stupas were built. The stupas in Bharhut, Sanchi, and Amaravati. What have become of these today? They are all ruins. Then there are the stupas in Sri Lanka, Burma, and Thailand, which you see down to the villages. But Burma and Sri Lanka were also colonized like India. They were conquered by Portugal and Britain, humiliated by the Netherlands. This is the history of these countries. Did the Buddhist stupas save them? How can I believe that if we construct stupas, we'll attain peace?[231]

To this, Imai answered:

> [In Japan] the period in which the first stupa was built was at Shitennō-ji temple in the sixth century. In Japan stupas were constructions built out of a prayer for a peaceful nation (j. *chingo kokka* 鎮護国家). The stupas in Bharhut and Amaravati, however, were built out of a wish to be reborn in heaven, that is, for individual salvation. The Peace Pagodas my Master wishes to build are not those kind of stupas. He is trying to return to the source of Japanese Buddhist culture. How did Japanese people adopt Buddhism? We do not consider that Buddhism just naturally made its way into Japan. The Japanese chose to embrace a Buddhism that fits the Japanese nation, picking and choosing certain elements. The Buddhism chosen by the Japanese people was a dharma to ensure a peaceful nation. Today, Fujii guruji tells us to be active in a movement. He is not just telling us to build stupas.[232]

Imai recounts how his explanation seemed to convince this Gandhian.[233] Thus, Nipponzan's pagodas are said to embody the prayer for peace at the national level, and by extension, the whole world. The above makes clear that the act of constructing stupas alone is not enough: the wish to realize peace must be accompanied by necessary action. The way in which Nipponzan focuses on the nation-state as a reference point for their peace activities serves to ensure the socially engaged nature of their religious practice. Like the case studies on the Vietnamese and Tibetan Buddhist movements, theirs is a movement where the concern for the nation is inextricable from their spiritual world view.

---

[227] Written correspondence with Tb-shōnin, 16 October 2006 (my translation).
[228] As discussed earlier, even during the war Fujii had given the Japanese navy pieces of the Buddha's ashes received in Sri Lanka in hope of promoting peace in Asia.
[229] Imai (1998), op.cit (my translation).
[230] "Guruji" is a term of respect meaning "teacher". The term was for used by Gandhi in addressing Fujii.
[231] Imai (1998), op.cit (my translation).
[232] Ibid (my translation).
[233] Ibid.

PROSELYTIZATION

The overseas missionary work of Nipponzan for the purpose of realizing their religious ideal of *itten shikai kaiki myōhō* (the return of four seas under one heaven to the magnificent teachings of the Lotus Sutra) has been a central part of Nipponzan's religious practice from the beginning. Since Nipponzan's proselytization efforts abroad have already been discussed under the historical background section, here I shall simply indicate the scope of their missionary activities and touch upon the significance of their work. It should be noted that not all of Nipponzan's actions abroad are typical of the quintessential 'missionary work'. Nipponzan has its own specific way of understanding proselytization: even if there is no blatant effort to convert non-Buddhists, the very acts of walking for peace, chanting, and beating their drum in the streets are considered ways of spreading the teachings of the Lotus Sutra.

Nipponzan's work to promote and spread Buddhist teachings in India (j. *saiten kaikyō*) clearly lie at the heart of their missionary activities, given the importance of *genrai kike* (the return of Buddhism to India) in Nichiren's thought. When Nehru was prime minister, he invited Fujii to participate in a four-person committee for the reconstruction of Rajgir and the restoration of the Buddhist ruins. Aside from contributing to Buddhist revival in India in this way, Nipponzan monks have also built Peace Pagodas in seven locations in India: Rajgir, Ladakh, Darjeeling, Orissa, Wardha, Vaishali, and New Delhi. In 1979, Fujii was awarded the Nehru Award for International Understanding for his religious efforts, international exchanges, and nonviolent creed.[234]

Since the mission of *saiten kaikyō* holds such a central place in Fujii's thought, in my field research I included this as a subject of specific inquiry. What I found was that there was some divergence of opinion as to whether *genrai kike* was actually achieved. As mentioned previously, from my survey it was evident that many monks saw *genrai kike* as having been attained with Gandhi beating the hand drum and chanting *namu myō hō renge kyō*.[235] Other opinions referred to Fujii's statement in 1983 that '*saiten kaikyō* was none other than India's independence'[236] or to Fujii's address at the opening ceremony of the Rajgir dōjō in 1981 where he said *saiten kaikyō* has been accomplished.[237]

However, there are also different views on the matter. For example, one monk told me that, although Gandhi's practice of *gyakku shōdai* meant the achievement of *genrai kike* as far as Fujii's own mission was concerned, *genrai kike* is in fact an eternal mission entrusted to the whole order of Buddhist disciples, and hence as long as the Lotus Sutra continues to be worshipped, the work of *saiten kaikyō* will continue.[238] A minority of respondents to my questionnaire also answered that *genrai kike* has not yet been realized.[239]

From Fujii own writings too, it might be inferred that the work of *saiten kaikyō* is not yet complete. For example in his Wardha Diary entry on 8 October 1933, after Gandhi remarked approvingly of the sound of his drum, Fujii writes: 'This was the

---

[234] For Fujii's acceptance speech at the award ceremony, see Atlanta Dōjō website (2010) "The Most Venerable Nichidatsu Fujii": http://atlantadojo.tripod.com/gurujipage.html (accessed 14 August 2015)
[235] Survey conducted with Nipponzan monks in Japan in 2006.
[236] Imai (1998), op.cit (my translation).
[237] Semi-structured interview with I-shōnin, 24 September 2006.
[238] Personal communication with S-shōnin, 10 September 2006.
[239] Questionnaire responses from Nipponzan monks in Japan in 2006.

day when our prayers for *risshō ankoku* carried by sound of the Japanese dharma drum reverberated across India's revolutionary movement. From now on, the work of *saiten kaikyō* need simply be an extension of today.'[240] In these words, the need for an 'extension' is indicated, implying that there is still work to be done in spreading Buddhism in India. Before Fujii passed away he told his disciples in India: 'We have built Peace Pagodas and restored Buddhist sites, but this is not the end of my *saiten kaikyō*. The final important work of *saiten kaikyō* is ensuring that the Indian people chant *namu myō hō renge kyō*—the one mantra bestowed to us as medicine to save us in this age of *mappō*. We must also see to it that the nonviolent India Gandhi left behind rises to its purpose of creating a nonviolent world for all of humanity. This mission is still left for us.'[241] From these words, it would seem that Gandhi's *gyakku shōdai* marked the commencement rather than completion of *genrai kike*—the mission of which still continues.

Nipponzan has also been active in spreading the teachings of the Lotus Sutra to other places of the world. Their movement in the USA began with their cooperation with the American Indian Movement (AIM) during the Longest March. In 1978 there were further exchanges between Nipponzan and AIM when Fujii invited the AIM leaders to Japan.[242] Nipponzan also joined forces with the Black Liberation Movement and with other peace activists in the United States. Nipponzan's increasing turn towards a position of religious pluralism in the post-war period is exemplified by the fact that Nipponzan allowed the construction of a Theravada Buddhist temple for followers of the Cambodian Buddhist leader Maha Ghosananda on the same land as their Peace Pagoda in Leverette, Atlanta. Today, the grounds are fondly referred to as 'Buddha Hill' by the locals of Leverette.[243] My correspondence with one American Nipponzan nun indicated that many supporters of Nipponzan in the United States are in fact not Buddhist but people who sympathize with Nipponzan's goal of peace and method of activism.[244] In America today there are Peace Pagodas in Leverette (State of Georgia), Grafton (State of New York), and the Smoky Mountains (State of Tennessee).

Outside Japan, Nipponzan has dōjōs in India, Sri Lanka, the USA, Nepal, the UK, Sweden, and the Ukraine,[245] but they have also walked for peace in countries and regions where they have no dōjō. For example, there is a Nipponzan monk who lives a mendicant life, appealing for liberation of the Chechen people,[246] and another monk who has been engaging in peace activism in Israel for the past couple of decades.[247] I was also told about a monk who had travelled extensively between Afghanistan and Pakistan to advocate for peace[248] and who, in the mid-2000s, entered mainland China for the purpose of visiting sites particularly affected by Japan's war, such as Nanking. At these places, he would apparently hold up a large placard with the word 'Apology' to express regret for Japan's atrocities during World War Two.[249] Monks who engage

---

[240] Fujii (1972), op.cit., 180 (my translation).
[241] Terasawa, Junsei 寺沢潤世 (1996) *Ten ni todoroke, chi ni uruose* 天に轟け、地に潤せ. Tokyo: Jiyūsha, 196 (Terasawa is a Nipponzan monk) (my translation).
[242] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 134 & 142
[243] Green, op.cit., p148.
[244] Written correspondence with D-anju, 16 October 2006.
[245] I was also informed that in the past there were dōjōs in France, Germany, and Holland, but in recent years these have closed down.
[246] Terasawa (1996), op.cit., 196.
[247] Semi-structured interview with M-shōnin, 13 September 2006.
[248] Ibid.
[249] Ibid.

in such solitary activism take large personal risks, and frequently mentioned to me during my fieldwork, was a Nipponzan monk called Yokotsuka-shōnin who was killed in October 1984 in Jaffna—a war zone in Sri Lanka he chose to enter to pray for peace.[250]

Nipponzan monks thus engage in various peace activism around the world, not all of which have the official backing or support of the entire order. However, the loose structure of their organisation, especially after the passing of Fujii, has allowed for these autonomous initiatives to take place.

The Nonviolent Ideology of Nipponzan Myōhōji

Tetsuo Yamaori wrote that a kind of ideological exchange had taken place between Fujii and Gandhi. The latter, moved by Fujii's piety and discipline took up chanting *namu myō hō renge kyō* and Fujii embraced Gandhi's creed of nonviolence.[251] Yet, while acknowledging the critical influence of Gandhi on Fujii's thinking, if we trace Fujii's words, we learn that his emphasis on nonviolence only began after the war, more than a decade after his meeting with Gandhi. Fujii himself acknowledges:

> The reason why I have come to assert passive resistance, demilitarization, and the renunciation of war is not because I met Gandhi-ji. It is because I witnessed the unprecedented tragedy in the history of mankind of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which wrecked unspeakable devastation upon hundreds of thousands of innocent women and children. It is also because I saw the madness, stupidity, and savagery of modern warfare which in the end had resulted in the unconditional surrender of Japan. If one were to turn the pages of my 'Wardha Diary' my views at that time can be contrasted with my outlook today and one may know the change that had occurred in my thinking. [252]

Here, Fujii clearly admits that there was a shift in his ideology and that he only began to assert demilitarization and nonviolence after the war. However, many disciples of Fujii do not find it easy to accept that there was an ideological change in their master's thought. As one monk who joined Nipponzan after the war said, 'Devoting yourself to a master is something you do 100 percent. It's not 99 percent but 100 percent. So for me, there is no question of oshishō-sama changing his attitude after the war. Such a thing is not possible to believe…It is not possible for my master—that is all I can say'.[253] This monk admits that his knowledge of Nipponzan's conduct before and during the war is incomplete. Yet, as a matter of faith, he seeks consistency and coherence in the ideology of his master. During my fieldwork, I found that this outlook was not solely confined to this monk and the issue of the divergence in Nipponzan's ideology during and after the war continues to be a sticky question.[254]

---

[250] Nipponzan Myōhōji Net 日本山妙法寺ネット(2015) "Risshō Ankoku no gokinen to fushaku shinmyō (Yokotsuka-shōnin Jafuna hōnan) 立正安国の御祈念と不惜身命 (横塚上人ジャフナ法難)": http://nipponzanmyohoji.net/preach/article/立正安国の御祈念と不惜身命（横塚上人ジャフナ法難） (accessed 11 July 2015).
[251] Yamaori (1978), op.cit., 253-254.
[252] Fujii (1961), op.cit., 153 (my translation).
[253] Semi-structured interview with I-shōnin, 24 September 2006 (my translation).
[254] As a student of religion, I wish to respect the expressions of faith of my research subjects and as discussed already I have found a number of ideological strains in Fujii that indeed stayed constant before, during, and after the war. However, regarding his position of nonviolence, as Fujii himself implies, I would have to say that a definite ideological divergence seems to have taken place in the post-war period.

One of the questions in my questionnaire asked what elements of Nipponzan's beliefs are important for the ideology and practice of nonviolence. Perhaps the most accurate answer I received was from a respondent who said that the teachings of the Buddha (including the Lotus Sutra), Nichiren, and Fujii are all equally important—and what within the body of teachings a believer chooses to focus on is up to that believer. Yet this answer is a truism that does not help our understanding of Nipponan's doctrinal basis for nonviolence.

In the course of my field research and analysis of Fujii's writings, I did find that some doctrines and teachings were emphasized more so than others in relation to nonviolence. For example, from the 11 questionnaires returned, four respondents stated that the example of *tangyō raihai* (但行礼拝; the practice of continuous worship) by Bodhisattva Never-Despising (常不軽菩薩) was central for Nipponzan's nonviolence, while another four respondents stated that chanting *namu myō hō renge kyō* was of foremost importance. Other answers mentioned *risshō ankoku* and the realization of Sakyamuni Buddha's true intention (j. *nyosetsu* 如説). A response rate of 11 out of the 50 distributed questionnaires is not high but the relative emphasis on Boddhisattva Never-Despising's *tangyō raihai* chanting of the name of the Lotus Sutra shows these to be salient elements in Nipponzan's nonviolent ideology. Fujii's writings highlight still other notions in relation to nonviolence. In this section, I focus on the doctrines and teachings which shape Nipponzan's ideology of nonviolence which became apparent from my research as a whole. These include the precept of non-killing, *tangyō raihai*, compassion, *risshō ankoku* and as Fujii's own ideological contribution, his thinking of about ethnic and civilizational identity, the emphasis on faith, and the ascetic practices of Nipponzan accompanying their spirit of renunciation.

THE PRECEPT OF NON-KILLING

In the post-war period, Fujii uses 'non-killing', 'nonviolence' and 'the spiritual' almost as synonymous terms.[255] The extent to which he came to uphold the precept of non-killing can be witnesses in his exchanges with Shigeki Tokoro on the subjects of pacifism and Nichiren Buddhism. This debate is interesting as it teases out some doctrinal points of contention in Nichiren's thought and shows how Fujii's commitment to non-killing extends beyond a literal allegiance to Nichiren's teachings.

According to Tokoro, there is a radical strand in Nichiren's thought which is indicated by the doctrines of *hōbō zanzai*[256] (謗法斬罪; 'execution of the blasphemous') and *issetsu tashō* (一殺多生; 'killing one to save many').[257] In Tokoro's view, 'It cannot be said that Nichiren formally adhered to the precept of non-killing and claims that Fujii's ideology which exhorts people to put their palms together in prayer before an invader's deadly weapons does not derive from the thought of Nichiren.'[258] Fujii counters that *hōbō zanzai* was part of Nichiren's rhetoric directed at the Bakufu government in his *Risshō ankoku ron*, and argues that 'the kind

[255] See for example: Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1969) "Fusesshō-kai 不殺生戒" in Japan Peace Committee (Ed). *Heiwa undō 20-shūnen kinen ronbunshū* 平和運動 20 周年祈念論文集. Tokyo: Ōtuski shoten. hotobook). Nipponzan Myōhōji, 474

[256] Sometimes pronounced *bōhō zanzai*.

[257] A parallel principle is reflected in the Vietnamese proverb, 'one may kill one cat to save a million mice.' See Nguyen Tai Thu, Ed. (1992). *History of Buddhism in Vietnam*, Hanoi, Social Sciences Publishing House, 312.

[258] Tokoro (1966), op.cit., 241-242 (my translation).

of incident which would lead to *hōbō zanzai* never materialized even in Venerable Nichiren lifetime, nor in the 700 years' history of Nichiren Buddhism.' [259]

Fujii agrees that Nichiren's affirmation of *issetsu tashō* does mean that the latter is not a formalistic adherent of the precept of non-killing. Rather, Nichiren was someone who accepted the irrelevance of a dogma in an age of *mappō*[260] and it is for this reason that Nichiren permitted 'killing for good reason'. Fujii explains that in an era where killing took place one-on-one, the notion of *issetsu tashō* may not have caused much damage but in today's world where weapons of mass destruction proliferate, once we allow killing, 'we risk human extinction and turning the world into a graveyard. If humankind aspires to survive, it is essential that the precept of non-killing be respected unconditionally and absolutely.' [261] In Fujii's view, therefore, Nichiren's acceptance of 'killing for good reason' is no longer apposite.[262] Today, no matter how many or how cruelly lives are taken, those responsible would attempt to justify this by raising moral, religious or economic arguments which sound reasonable to the ear. Fujii retorts that 'reason' in human society is but a convenient contrivance for justifying the sin of destroying life.[263]

The problem of 'reason' which Fujii raises is in fact a fundamental issue pertaining to creating exceptions to nonviolence. For advocates of pacifism, there is a perennial concern that once an exception is made to nonviolence and non-killing, people would be inclined to stretch the exception, and it would open the floodgates to all kinds of justifications of violence.[264] For example, with respect to the 'just war' tradition within Christianity developed by Thomas Aquinas, the use of violence and warfare was allowed as an exception to the pacifist teachings of Christ ('turning the other cheek') and the exception was ultimately used in the military rhetoric of the Crusades.[265] As a safeguard against unwarranted or excessive use of force, Aquinas had argued that there must be proportionality where the 'overall destruction expected from use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved.'[266] Yet in an age of nuclear weapons many today believe that humans can no longer fulfil the condition of proportionality and that today 'just war' is a misnomer.

Fujii refers to the 'rationale' of a holy war used by Japan after the Meiji period and the American rhetoric of fighting for 'freedom and democracy' during the Vietnam War to assert that 'the precept of non-killing should be maintained and given priority over all types of reason. It is the golden rule for the survival of mankind.' [267] In reply to Tokoro, he argues that the doctrines of *hōbō zanzai* and *issetsu tashō* in Nichiren's thought do not amount to a contradiction of the precept of non-killing. Rather, they should be understood as irrelevant statements to be wilfully ignored.[268] From Fujii's counterargument, it is evident that he is not a dogmatic follower of

---

[259] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達(1968) "Hokekyō to heiwa shisō: Tokoro hakase no hōbō zanzai, issetsu tashō, busshō-ron wo hasuru ben 法華経と平和思想—戸頃博士の謗法斬罪・一殺多生・仏性論を破する弁" *Daihōrin* 大法論, March, 149-150. (my translation).
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid (my translation).
[262] Ibid., 152.
[263] Ibid.
[264] Sharon K. Walsh & Evelyn D. Asch (2004*). Just War: A Wadsworth Casebook in Argument*, Canada: Thomson Wadsworth, 68-71
[265] Paul Christopher (1999) *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction to Legal and Moral Issues*. Upper Saddle River, N.J. : Prentice Hall.
[266] Walsh & Asch, op.cit., 81.
[267] Fujii (1968), op.cit., 153 (my translation).
[268] Ibid.

Nichiren but a thinker who interprets Nichiren's teachings in light of his own convictions and the needs of society.

THE EXAMPLE OF BODDHISATTVA NEVER-DESPISING

A key component of the practice of nonviolence is the attitude directed towards one's opponent. Those who espouse nonviolence as a creed argue that the attitudes of goodwill and love towards the opponent are central to nonviolence. This element of principled nonviolence is particularly underlined in religious nonviolent movements. As already seen in the case studies on Vietnam and the exile Tibetans, these movements typically view the emotions of anger and hatred as logically connected to violence. The 'emotion work' undertaken to promotion good will towards the opponent is thus also a way of maintaining nonviolent discipline.

Nipponzan finds in Bodhisattva Never-Despising (s. *sadaparibhuta*) an exemplary model for nonviolent action. This bodhisattva, depicted in Chapter 20 of the Lotus Sutra, is known for his practice of worshipping and bowing to the Buddha-nature in all sentient beings, notwithstanding the scorn, insult, and aggression he encounters. Bodhisattva Never-Despising never becomes angry or harbours ill will towards others, and instead leads his scorners to Enlightenment. The practice of continuously worshipping the Buddha-nature in sentient beings based on the example of Bodhisattva Never-Despising is called *tangyō raihai* (continuous worship). This is a practice where one holder of Buddha-nature worships another holder of Buddha-nature, and thus Fujii has also called it 'the worship of non-duality (j. *jita huni no raihai* 自他不二の礼拝)'.[269]

Bodhisattva Never-Despising provides a strong inspiration for Nipponzan's nonviolence. As Fujii exhorted: 'Today, Nipponzan carries out a nonviolent movement around the world, opposing military expansionism and war. Our inspiration must be found in *Kangyō hachiman shō* [諫暁八幡鈔; *Remonstrance with the Bodhisattva Hachiman*].[270] We must engage in *tangyō raihai*. Nipponzan should not just copy others.[271] We must follow in the footsteps of Bodhisattva Never-Despising.'[272] For Nipponzan *tangyō raihai* is a practice that must be carried out with the right thought, word, and deed. It is composed of the act of bowing respectfully to others (*shingō*), chanting the name of the Lotus Sutra (*kugō*),[273] and perceiving the Buddha-nature in all sentient beings (*igō*).[274] Thus, whenever Nipponzan monks remonstrate with government authorities and representatives of military bases, they are sure to put *tangyō raihai* into practice by first intoning *namu myō hō renge kyō* and then bowing deeply to those they protest against. Strong faith in the salvific power of repeating the name of the Lotus Sutra could also be observed during my

---

[269] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1979) "Kanjin honzon 観心本尊" Speech delivered at Atami dōjō on 31 August 1979 (Unpublished material).

[270] Specifically, Fujii used to refer to Nichiren's words "In the *mappō* period, the enemies of Buddhist teachings (the Lotus Sutra) abound. During this period, the practice of Bodhisattva Never-Despising would benefit sentient beings." (Communication with T-shōnin in 2006).

[271] Here, there is an implicit reference to Gandhi from the context of the statement. See Fujii (1997), op.cit., 334.

[272] Ibid (my translation).

[273] The *kugō* of Bodhisattva Never-Despising was utter the words. "I deeply respect you and will not despite you." In place of these words, Nipponzan repeats the name of the Lotus Sutra. See Fujii (1997), op.cit., 61.

[274] Stone, op.cit, 80; Fujii (1997), ibid, 52, 60-61. On *tangyō raihai* also see Fujii (1997), ibid, 22, 43, 52, 60, 189.

fieldwork. One monk, who returned the questionnaire paper only with the words *namu myō hō renge kyō* on it, seemed to suggest that all the answers to my questions on nonviolence lay in this one mantra.[275]

The intentional aspect of *tangyō raihai* is to see Buddha-nature in all sentient beings and by doing so the practitioner is said to be able to nurture compassion. In relation to this intentional aspect (*igō*), one of the questions in my survey asked 'How do you feel towards those whom the peace movement opposes, such as the self-defence force, the American army, those who seek to amend Article 9 of the Constitution, the governments sending troops to Iraq, and the companies and local authorities involved in promoting nuclear power plants? Do you feel anger towards such actors?' To this, three respondents replied that they felt pity and compassion; two replied that they feel pity but sometimes anger; and another two replied that they feel anger, though among these latter two, one added 'But I try to control my anger and transform it to compassion by prayer.' Indeed as Fujii states, one of the merits of intoning *namu myō hō renge kyō* is its ability to dissipate hatred and anger.[276] In his view, the mark of a truly lasting and influential religion is to be found in hearts that engender 'compassion and peace' and which look upon 'all sentiment beings as one's child.'[277]

The questionnaire responses, seen as a whole, show Nipponzan's nonviolence to be based in an effort to follow the right intentionality of *tangyō raihai* and the teachings of compassion.[278] This gives rise to an awareness that anger should be controlled as much as possible, although there was some admission that this ideal is not always realized. Kitsu-shonin'a emphasis on taking care to treat the police officers in Okinawa with respect and not harbouring anger after his arrest in 2005 also indicates an effort to follow the example of Bodhisattva Never-Despising.

RISSHŌ-ANKOKU AND CIVILIZATIONAL IDENTITY

According to Fujii, in order to achieve *risshō ankoku*, that is, a peaceful nation following correct religious teachings, the spirit and practice of compassion must infuse all social organizations, including politics, economics and the military. To this end, it is necessary that the religion of compassion be propagated.[279] Fujii asserts that this religion cannot be a religion that only preaches individual salvation such as those expounded by Saichō, Kūkai, Eisai, and Dōgen: what is needed is a religion that can guide a nation-state.[280] For this reason, Nipponzan sees Nichiren's Buddhism as the 'correct teachings' to realize *risshō ankoku*.

Nichiren is said to have understood that if society were to be characterized by unrest, there could be no peace for the individual and the journey to the Pure Land is rendered uncertain.[281] In Fujii's view:

---

[275] See also Fujii (1997), ibid, 284 & 292.
[276] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 223.
[277] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 32 (my translation).
[278] After distributing the questionnaire, I came to realize that Nipponzan in fact avoids the word 'opposition' and favours use of the word 'prayer' instead to describe their peace activism. Although in this thesis I continue to use the words 'opposition' and 'opponent' as analytical categories, in my field research, I began to be more careful in my word choice, using words such as 'appeal' and 'prayer' instead.
[279] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 32.
[280] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 181.
[281] Ibid.

> It would be farcical to assume that a Buddhism that is useless in this world would have relevance after one's death. Nichiren highlighted the importance of first addressing the suffering we see in front of us. He thought 'what can we do about this?' He knew that it would not be enough merely to preach to individuals. What is needed, he said, was to lead the state organization onto the correct path. This is what he meant by *risshō ankoku*.[282]

Thus, when Nipponzan monks remonstrate with Japanese or American governments, they are purporting to provide guidance to state authorities in line with the ideal of *risshō ankoku*. Sometimes Nipponzan uses '*risshō ankoku*' as a synonym for 'peace' as seen by the fact that their peace marches are sometimes called 'a prayer march for *risshō ankoku* (*risshō-ankoku kinen angya* 立正安国祈念行脚).'[283] The real meaning of *risshō ankoku* was explained to me as bringing peace to the whole world, not just Japan. The ideal of *risshō ankoku* thus embodies a universal mission of peace and Nipponzan engages in a worldwide peace movement.

In the course of promoting peace, however, Fujii also highlights the national identity of Japan. Accompanying the universalism in Nipponzan's peace mission is thus a particularism that buttresses ethnic identity:

> The Buddhism as revealed by Nichiren is the Buddhism of the whole world and the Japanese people will certainly awaken to this. The Japanese people are the people who must spread this Buddhism to the world. We are a spiritual nation. In the past 1,300 years of history, the Japanese people have never rejected Buddhism. The peaceful nature of the Japanese nation which embraced Buddhism will in turn engender world peace. Right now, this nature is a little clouded over. Often it is said that Japan doesn't have its own Buddhism: that it has simply copied the Buddhism of India and China. But actually Japanese Buddhism was evolved by Nichiren. Moreover, this Buddhism of Nichiren is humanity's final religion of salvation… Pure Land, Zen and Esoteric Buddhism do not have that power.[284]

It might be said that a distinct relationship between nationalism and universalism is apparent in Fujii's thought both during and after the war, but that the particular expression of these elements in his ideology has changed with the times. During the war, the mixture of nationalism and universalism gave rise to an ambiguous acceptance of Japan's imperialism, while in the more pluralistic ethos of today, Nipponzan tends to down play its nationalism and place more weight to interfaith and inter-ethnic cooperation to realize world peace. Nevertheless, the religious nationalism of Nipponzan, which asserts the superiority of Nichiren Buddhism is an ideological feature that remains current in Nipponzan beliefs.

Fujii's tendency to speak in terms of a national 'mission' is not confined to Japan. For example, after Nipponzan's participation in the Longest Walk with Native Indians in the United States in 1978, Fujii met with the Indian leaders and praised their lifestyle which revolved around spiritual prayer and gratitude.[285] He told them that as a people who did not resist the white settlers with violence or arms, they were worthy standard-bearers of nonviolence, and that through their nonviolent movement they must prevail over America's violent policies.[286] Fujii expressed his hope to see the Native Indians be the trigger for the first steps of America's nonviolent revolution.[287]

---

[282] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 181 (my translation).
[283] Nipponzan Myōhōji 日本山妙法寺 (2006) Tenku 天鼓. September. Tokyo: Nipponzan Myōhōji, 68 (my translation).
[284] Fujii quoted in Takase (1974), op.cit., 313 (my translation).
[285] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 131.
[286] Ibid, 139.
[287] Ibid, 141.

What Fujii seemed to suggest is that he views the Native Americans as shouldering an important mission of peace like the people of Japan.[288]

A similar statement is also made of the people of India:

> Those who can dispel the darkness that resides in worldly life and in the hearts of people are only those compassionate practitioners of the correct teachings who can withstand the unbearable hardship, blood and tears of painful sacrifice. In the past, those who have endured this sacrifice are the people of India who gave birth to Sakyamuni, to Nagarjuna, and to Vasubandhu, as well as the Japanese nation and people who received and upheld the ancient and veritable teachings of the Buddha to offer a ray of hope to guide the sullied masses in the age of *mappō*. India has been likened to the moon and Japan to the sun. The mission of both nations is to banish the darkness from the human heart and this war-worn earth, to spread peace, rein in murder, and protect life. When Japan and India endeavour to realize their mission of peace, the negative [proscriptive] commandment of nonviolence, non-resistance, and non-killing serves to restrain evil, and *tangyō raihai* serves as the positive [prescriptive] commandment to bring about good.[289]

Thus, for Fujii, the creation of peace is a matter pertaining to the destiny of a nation, and by entrusting this task to the state (which is exhorted to follow the correct religious teachings), *risshō ankoku*, peace and nonviolence are ideologically linked. However, in Fujii's thinking, nonviolence is not only something for the Japanese nation to uphold but an inherent quality of Eastern civilization itself.[290] He therefore attributes the mission of peace to the peoples of Asia, including India and Japan. At this point, it might be said that Fujii's nationalism broadens to a kind of pan-Asianism.

Fujii subscribes to a dualistic understanding of civilization and world history, as demonstrated by his words 'Western civilization is the civilization of materialism, war, invasion, and conquest. Eastern civilization is a civilization of spirituality, peace, and sacrifice. The civilization of peace has arisen at a time of crisis brought about by the civilization of war. The threat faced by humankind will be relieved by the civilization of peace, which will in turn nurture world peace.'[291] In this dualistic logic, the scientific tradition of the West is linked to military development,[292] resulting in the West's invasion and colonization of Asia.[293] On the other hand, Eastern civilization, characterized by the principle of non-killing, is a civilization which must gain ascendency over the West to help mankind escape destruction.[294]

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAITH

Fujii calls Western civilization a 'science civilization' (j. *kagaku bunmei* 科学文明) and sees its opposite in a spiritual civilization where faith or belief prevails.[295] He holds that the practice of nonviolence relies on a readiness to believe in the good of others: 'It is not because one should wish to see in others a good person that one should believe in the good of others. By believing others to be good, we are able to

---

[288] See Ibid, 131.
[289] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 44 (my translation and emphasis). These are Fujii's words from 1951.
[290] Nipponzan Myōhōji 日本山妙法寺(1980) Tenku 天鼓. October. Tokyo: Nipponzan Myōhōji, 88.
[291] Ibid (my translation).
[292] In this narrative, Western military development culminates in the advent of Nuclear weapons which is used to subjugate Japan in 1945. see Fujii (1997), op.cit., 92.
[293] Ibid, 22-25.
[294] See Fujii (1981), op.cit., 18-19.
[295] Ibid, 105. Also see Fujii (1983), op.cit., 307; Kisala (1997), op.cit., 63.

expel the fear from ourselves, and build friendly relations with others.'[296] Fujii seeks to witness the espousal of nonviolence at a national level, and as such, he lauds Japan's adoption of the peace constitution and criticises the existence of the Self-Defense Force.

To my question hypothesizing a situation of Japan's complete demilitarization, 'But what would you do if the country was invaded?' Nipponzan monks responded with statements of absolute faith in the conscience of the international community: 'There is no way that the world would allow such a thing to happen', 'These situations should be resolved through diplomacy.'[297] Such opinions directly echo Fujii's own views, which place significant faith in international public opinion and action:

> If we are unarmed, even if enemy planes were to come, they would not be able to drop bombs. Even if they were to bomb us and enemy troops land in our country, if we are unarmed we simply should not engage with them. What would they do? They would disembark and try to occupy us—occupy this or that town. They may do so. But that would not amount to Japan's defeat nor humiliation. If they were to abuse the territory of Japan without reason, the world would not allow it. The world community also has such power…This power can drive out the invaders.[298]

Yet Fujii also shows a readiness to face a situation where his faith in human conscience is not met:

> What shall we do if a truly demilitarized Japan without a Self-Defense Force were to encounter a national crisis? In that event, the leaders of Japan should line up and face the fearful weapons of the invaders, bow to them in prayer, and start a peace negotiation. The men and women of the nation should follow suit. Witnessing this, the troops of any nation, no matter how hateful and hostile of heart, could not wantonly fire at us or drop bombs. The human mind is developed in such a way that it cannot do such violence. This is the basis of the Buddha's precept of non-killing. Yet even then the invaders, in spite of our prayers and appeals for peace, may mercilessly fire upon the nation's leaders, men and women who line up before them. If this were to happen, let us accept it and lay down our lives. This will be the sacred sacrifice of building lasting world peace; the practice of a bodhisattva saving humanity from peril and suffering.[299]

Thus, Fujii urges the 'sacred sacrifice' of the bodhisattva not only to Nipponzan monks but also to political leaders and the common people of Japan. Elsewhere, he says that from a Buddhist's perspective, 'the Japanese nation must act as a bodhisattva to undertake the vow of constructing the Pure Land and to make the most of the opportunity it has been given to fulfil practices worthy of a glorious Buddhist country.'[300] Fujii bases his assertions on the Mahayana tradition of a bodhisattva who makes an 'offering' of oneself (j. *shashin kuyō* 捨身供養)[301] or takes on the suffering of others (j. *daijuku* 代受苦)[302] but expands the concept of a 'bodhisattva' from a saintly individual to a spiritually guided nation. He draws on a feature of Nichiren's thought in locating the 'spiritual unit' of Buddhism not just in the individual aspirant but in the nation itself.

---

[296] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 159 (my translation).
[297] These are comments heard in the course of my fieldwork in 2006 (my translation).
[298] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 118-119 (my translation).
[299] Fujii (1972), "Fusesshō-kai" in op.cit., 253 (my translation).
[300] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 34.
[301] *Shashin kuyō* was also mentioned in my questionnaire responses as a characteristic of a Buddhist renunciate.
[302] This term was also seen in one of my questionnaire responses.

RENUNCIATION AND AUSTERITIES

The monks of Nipponzan in most cases renounce family life,[303] lead a life of simplicity, and engage in a variety of austerities, such as the *rōhatsu sesshin* fast[304] every winter, *kangyō*[305] (寒行; the practice of enduring the cold), and self-burning by some monks. These practices reveal a definite ascetic streak to the discipline of Nipponzan monks. The significance of such practices are explained in terms of strengthening one's will and obtaining mastery over the body. For example, Fujii explains the significance of *kangyō*:

> It might all seem like such trouble but this is religious discipline. One cannot bring a life of ease into this discipline. Yes it is difficult and it is cold. But when we encounter the cold, the thing that allows us to overcome it is not wearing more layers but having a body that can withstand it. When we develop a body that does not feel the cold, nothing can be stronger than this.[306]

Gandhi's nonviolence was deeply connected to his asceticism. Through practice of self-denial, he sought to purify himself and thereby perfect his nonviolent method. He also employed the means of purification itself, such as fasting, as a nonviolent method. In my survey, therefore, I sought to find out whether there was any relationship between Nipponzan's practice renunciation and austerity on the one hand, and nonviolence on the other.

In my questionnaire, I asked two somewhat overlapping questions: 'Do you think peace/nonviolence are related to Nipponzan's emphasis on renouncing worldly/family life (j. *shukke shugi* 出家主義)?' and 'In the practice of nonviolence, do you think that asceticism and renunciation is important? Why is it that Nipponzan does not allow marriage as a general principle?' The answers to these questions were diverse, and below I present some of the responses received.

At the time of distributing my questionnaires I had not been aware that although Nipponzan monks are usually unmarried, there is no hard prohibition of marriage. One monk pointed this out in his response, adding that some Nipponzan monks are in fact married.[307] He explained that marriage is usually 'not recommended because it can present an obstacle to realizing our ideals.' Further, what I termed 'asceticism' or 'austerity'[308] was not particularly viewed by Nipponzan monks as such, but more as

---

[303] This is in contrast to the fact that most other Japanese Buddhist sects allow monks to marry.

[304] This is a fast usually undertaken by Zen monks where the practitioner fasts for eight days from 1 to 8 December, engaging in mediation day and night without sleep.

[305] *Kangyō* is usually practiced by Nipponzan every year in January.

[306] Nichidatsu Fujii 藤井日達 (1991) "Nichidatsu-shōnin no saigono hōwa 日達上人の最後の法話" in *Zengahō—Nyozetsu shugyō no gyōsha Fujii Nichidatsu sono sho to ga* 禪画報—如説修行の行者藤井日達その書と画 (Zen Graphic), Summer Issue 16, 52 (my translation).

[307] However, upon further questioning, usually those who are married are monks who have joined Nipponzan later in their life after marriage and starting a family. It would be extremely rare to find a monk who first joined Nipponzan and then married. There was also a response that even acknowledged the potential positive impact of marriage: "Even for those who are ready to sacrifice their own selves, it is hard to imagine hardship befalling their family. So in this way, having a wife and children can be a burden for the movement. But there are also times when to work together with your spouse engenders a power more than 1+1. So I feel that it is not always important to be fixed on renouncing family life." (questionnaire response)

[308] Note however that the Japanese equivalent terms "kugyō' or 'nangyō kugyō' are also terms used in Yamaori's work on Nipponzan. See Yamaori (1978), op.cit.

practices befitting of a renunciate who is expected to give up worldly desires.[309] As one monk explained:

> It is not that we are particularly looking for self-suffering or self-mortification. We wish to nurture a mind and body that can overcome whatever hardship that may befall us. That is why we aim for simplicity in our clothing, eating, and housing; and have a daily routine of getting up early, engaging in the necessary work around the temple, and beating our drum during our walks for peace (my translation).

There were those who saw the practices of a renunciate and that of a bodhisattva as 'one and the same thing', seeing renunciation as indispensable to the realization of nonviolence and peace.[310] Another respond drew the connection between asceticism and nonviolence slightly differently: 'I think our efforts to engage in bodhisattva practices discourage us from marrying. It is not that asceticism and self-denial come first; our adoption of nonviolence as a way of life has naturally led us to a life of celibacy.'[311] By this perspective, nonviolence and bodhisattva practices are strongly associated, and self-denial and austerities are secondary considerations.

The view that one would not be 'free to act' after marriage was expressed a number of times among the questionnaires returned. It was explained to me during fieldwork that if, in the course of a nonviolent struggle, one faces a situation where one needs to give up one's life it would be much more difficult if one had a family. One Nipponzan monk I interviewed also linked renunciation of family life to Nipponzan's mission of proselytizing in India:

> As you know, most monks in Japan have a family. If such monks were to go to India to spread their beliefs, no one would take them seriously. The reason why Nipponzan promotes renunciation of married life is also because we have the mission of *saiten kaikyō*. If we are only speaking in terms of Japan it is not a problem that Nipponzan monks marry as other Buddhist sects are doing so. But since we have the goal of *saiten kaikyō* and are engaged in spreading our religion abroad under the name of *itten shikai kaiki myōhō*, we would need to continue our celibacy or we could not hope to succeed in our missionary work.[312]

One respondent remarked that renunciation of family and worldly life amounts to training and preparation to develop the courage that necessary to practice nonviolence. An ideology of principled nonviolence such as that of Nipponzan relies on the disposition of its members to be willing to make sacrifices, rein in their self-interest, and to accept suffering. Nipponzan's austerities such as self-burning, fasting, and *kangyō* might also be understood as a kind of 'preparation' for accepting pain and suffering in a nonviolent campaign.

Every year from 1 to 8 December, Nipponzan engages in *rōhatsu sesshin* (臘八摂心),[313] a fast to commemorate the Buddha's attainment of enlightenment typical of Zen practice. Fasting is usually more a religious practice of Nipponzan, but

---

[309] For example, one respondent said: "The renunciate gives up everything and so has a peaceful heart, and leads a life that embodies nonviolence." Another response seemed the question the relevance of ascetic practice today: "Gandhi-ji put great importance on it [asceticism]. But in today's world, how many can live up to his example? If you become fixated on that, there is no moving forward. I would say you would need to leave it up to your destiny from previous karma (j. *innen*)."

[310] For example, responses such as the following were heard: "There is a limit to the freedom of one's beliefs and actions if you are married"; "In order to save people from suffering, it is a given that one should renounce comfort and pleasure in one's own life."

[311] My translation of questionnaire response.

[312] Semi-structured interview with I-shōnin, 24 September 2006 (my translation).

[313] This is a practice which Fujii has adopted from the Zen school but is not part of the doctrines of the Lotus Sutra nor from Nichiren's writings. See Fujii (1997), op.cit., 270.

occasionally it is also mobilized as a method of protest, as exemplified by Fujii's hunger strike against the police in Hayama who had tried to stop his prayers for the recovery of the Emperor. Another example of using fasting as a method of protest was when Nipponzan monks went on a hunger strike to make a public anti-war appeal at the time of the Gulf War in front of Shibuya station.

The majority of Nipponzan monks have emulated Fujii's practice of self-burning.[314] It was explained to me that sometimes this practice suggests a need to repent or atone for something but more often it signifies a pledge or vow related to an act of peace, such as the construction of the Peace Pagoda.[315] Great importance is attributed to the initiation of a wish to build a stupa, and the undertaking is often accompanied by a vow to accomplish the construction coupled with a ritual of burning a patch on one's arm or leg. The meaning of this act was explained to me as an 'offering' to the Buddha, in exchange for the achievement of a great religious undertaking such as the construction of a peace pagoda.[316]

An example of carrying out self-burning in the context of a nonviolent protest can be seen in the action of a Nipponzan monk called Terasawa Junsei (寺沢潤正) who has been actively campaigning for peace in Eurasia. In 1983, when NATO had decided to deploy medium-range nuclear weapons, the protesters, including Terasawa, had decided to march from both the east and west of Europe to meet at the gate of Brandenburg in Germany.[317] During this walk, the Communist bloc countries would not allow the marchers to pass. As a way to overcome the deadlock and as a 'candle to the peace pagoda in London,' Terasawa burned off his finger.[318] Given that he was a lover of the piano when he was young, it can be surmised that this offering was a significant personal sacrifice.[319] Thereafter, he leaves the other marchers to walk through Eastern Europe alone, apparently without any further obstruction.[320]

With regard to self-burning, the example of the Medicine-King Bodhisattva in the Lotus Sutra provides an important religious referent for Nipponzan monks, as it did for the Vietnamese Buddhist self-immolators. As with the Vietnamese Buddhists, however, there is no official encouragement in Nipponzan to engage in self-burning nor is there a religious duty to do so.[321] The decision to engage in the practice is regarded as a deeply personal one that can only be made by the individual.

There have been two members of the order who have committed self-immolation in Nipponzan. I was told during my fieldwork that regarding one of them, the reason for the act was uncertain. In respect of the other, however, the intentions were clear. Since the continuation of the imperial family line depends on the birth of a boy child, One Nipponzan nun had engaged in intense prayer for a son to be bestowed to the imperial family. She had vowed that if a boy child was born she would offer her life

---

[314] I was told that more than half the monks in Nipponzan engage in the practice of self-burning (information from T-shōnin, 2006).
[315] Ibid.
[316] Personal communication with I-shōnin, 10 September 2006.
[317] Metta Spencer (2001) "That Peace Monk: Junsei Terasawa" (interview by Metta Spencer) *Peace Magazine* July-Aug: http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v17n3p16.htm (accessed 18 January 2015).
[318] Ibid. Note that Terasawa had been one of the masterminds behind the construction plan for the London Peace Pagoda.
[319] See Terasawa (1996), op.cit.
[320] Metta Spencer (2001), op.cit.
[321] Tetsuo Yamaori implies that self-burning is something that Nipponzan monks feel the need to participate in as an obligation even though the practice is not compulsory. However, from the information I received from Nipponzan, this seems to be a misperception on the part of Yamaori since there is no sense of obligation attached to the practice. See Yamaori (1978), op.cit., 247-248.

in return. On 23 December 1933, her prayers were answered and she set herself on fire as an offering to the Buddha as promised. This incident shows just how much weight Nipponzan had placed on the imperial court as the 'centre' of the Japanese state. Yet today with many monks having been educated in the post-war period, the tendency to attribute uppermost importance to imperial family is not as strong as before. This trend was conspicuously revealed in a survey study conducted by Robert Kisala. To his question about Japan's imperial system, more than half (57.1 percent) of the respondents from Nipponzan supported the discontinuation of the system.[322]

VIETNAM WAR AS A 'NONVIOLENT VICTORY'

As seen from Fujii's position in his debate with Tokoro on the precept of non-killing, at first sight it appears that Fujii's espousal of non-killing and nonviolence in the post-war period is absolute. For example, Fujii says, 'If we truly want to ensure the survival of thousands of people, we should not permit even one to be killed. When we allow the killing of one, the killing of thousands begin. When we strictly prohibit the killing of one, immediately thousands of lives are saved. That is when the precept of non-killing is borne out.'[323] However, despite such explicit statements, there is still a measure of ambivalence regarding some types of warfare. Notably, Fujii calls the outcome of the Vietnam War a 'victory of nonviolence' (j. *hibōryoku no shōri* 非暴力の勝利)[324] by the North Vietnamese, which is explained as follows:

> The practice of nonviolence and non-killing continues actively in the hearts of people. America has transformed into an all-powerful devil, developing all kinds of inhuman and murderous weapons of destruction. They have dispatched over 500,000 fully-armed soldiers into Vietnam for no good reason…and have sought to annihilate all that moves on the ground…The Vietnamese soldiers fighting a war of liberation have hid in forests and caves to devise a strategy to defend their country. They have not killed a single civilian in America—a country with a population over five times their own. Further, they have not fired a single shot into the land of America, a territory which is 28 times bigger than their own country. Not only that, although 5,000 tonnes of explosives are dropped daily on the battlefield and a few hundred thousand Vietnamese have been killed, when an American bomber plane was shot down and its pilot became a prisoner of war, the Vietnamese decided not to call him a 'prisoner' which connotes antagonism but rather by a new empathetic name 'a pilot who lost his plane'. Regarding the daily needs of this prisoner, the Vietnamese spent almost eight times the amount they do for their own daily needs. This incident is like a single beautiful flower in the bloody history of war.[325]

Above, Fujii attributes the 'nonviolent victory' of the Vietnamese people to the spiritual and nonviolent disposition of the Vietnamese which overcame US military might. This 'victory' was also explained in part by the dishonour and moral failure of the Americans as manifested in the anti-war movements within the United States and the criticism of America's war crimes by the Russell Tribunal.[326] The victory of North Vietnam is understood by Fujii as a 'contemporary miracle' and the workings of a 'divine power'.[327] His reference to the practice of nonviolence and non-killing in the 'hearts of people' as well as the empathetic attitude of the Vietnamese soldiers to the

---

[322] Kisala (1997), op.cit., 78.
[323] Fujii (1968), op.cit., 152 (my translation).
[324] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 135 (my translation). These words were uttered in a speech delivered at the Peace Pagoda at Mt. Fuji on 25 July 1976. Also see Kisala (1997), op.cit., 61.
[325] Fujii (1997), ibid, 133 (my translation).
[326] Ibid, 134.
[327] Ibid (my translation).

Americans suggest that, like other Buddhists, Fujii attributes overriding importance to motive and intention in determining the moral status of an act. Unlike the Dalai Lama who states that some uses of force may be 'justified' if motivated by the right intention, Fujii goes a step further in claiming that violent resistance such as the one carried out by North Vietnam is 'nonviolent'.

In his writings, Fujii also refers to Gandhi's acceptance of the use of violence in limited situations. He points to Gandhi's claim that in certain times, the adoption of violence is to be allowed to protect one's life and honour.[328] Fujii also writes that when Gandhi's eldest son had asked his father whether it would be acceptable to use violence in defense if he were to see his father's life being threatened by an attacker, Gandhi had answered his son 'If you were by my side when an assailer should threaten my life, you should resist that person. Nonviolence does not mean doing nothing in such a situation.'[329]

One Nipponzan monk told me in an interview that there is the type of nonviolence which is carried out by unarmed actors but nonviolence is also possible even where the resisters bear weapons.[330] In his view, a situation where an oppressed populace resists those in power in a spontaneous uprising with makeshift weapons does not amount to violence.[331] This monk explained that such grassroots struggles cannot be mechanically described as violent or nonviolent but would need to be understood in a 'multifaceted' way, taking into account factors such as the history of that country in order to discern the nature of the movement. Yet, in the case of Japan, he asserted that nonviolence means demilitarizaton.[332]

To this Nipponzan monk I asked whether there was actually a need to describe the outcome of the Vietnam War as 'nonviolent' even if we grant that the war fought by the North Vietnamese soldiers could be justified. He responded that Fujii probably had in mind the 'vices of Hinayana' (j. *shōjō no heigai* 小乗教の弊害) when he described the victory of North Vietnam as a 'nonviolent victory'.[333] Since Hinayana monks place great emphasis on following the Vinaya precepts, they tend to think that they are 'righteous monks' but rarely do they 'join the masses to share their suffering.' On the other hand, although the Vietnamese soldiers (among which, my interviewee pointed out, there would also have been monks) may be physically involved in killing, they are doing so out of a desire to protect their own people. Thus, he concluded, rather than the Hinayana monk who is strictly adhering to the precept of non-killing, the actions of the Vietnamese fighters are more in line with the spirit of nonviolence and it is in this sense that Fujii had made his remark.[334] My interviewee added: 'Buddhism doesn't exist for the sake of the precepts. The precepts become necessary in the course of practising Buddhism. It is in this respect that our master seeks to correct and break through (j. *hashaku* 破折) such misperceptions.'[335]

An exception in Nipponzan's ideology to a strict adherence to physical nonviolence can thus be seen. Yet this exception is nevertheless interpreted as a kind of 'spiritual nonviolence'. Although similar justifications were articulated by the

---

[328] Fujii (1997), op.cit., 75
[329] This is the author's English translation of Fujii's quotation of Gandhi in Japanese. See Fujii (1997), op.cit., 75.
[330] Semi-structured interview with T-shōnin, 16 September 2006.
[331] Ibid.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid (my translation).
[334] Ibid.
[335] Ibid (my translation).

Tibetans in relation to violence carried out with a compassionate intention (as in the story of Captain Great Compassionate), Nipponzan perhaps goes furthest among my case studies in demonstrating the 'ambivalence of the sacred' by actually describing warfare as a kind of spiritual 'nonviolence'.

Conclusion

In many respects, the various strains of peace activism pursued by Nipponzan monks today inherit elements of the remarkable life of Fujii Nichidatsu. Even before and during the Second World War, Fujii showed an inclination to venture outside Japan, to connect with the locals and grassroots movements, and to see in the nation-state, an entity in need of spiritual guidance, which usually took the form of remonstration, following the footsteps of Nichiren. What is evident in Fujii's thought is a noteworthy measure of doctrinal independence. He broadly subscribes to Nichiren Buddhism, and yet does not follow the directives of Nichiren to the letter, as exemplified by his stance on the principles of *hōbō zanzai* and *issetsu tashō*. Further, notwithstanding the words in the Lotus Sutra which appear to discourage the practice of enshrining the Buddha's ashes, Nipponzan has actively engaged in the construction of Peace Pagodas around the world. It might be said that the independent, self-directed nature of Fujii's religious thought and practice has today been passed down to those Nipponzan monks who lead a mendicant life in pursuit their own autonomous peace initiatives.

During his life, Fujii at times revealed an ambivalent position with regard to warfare. While this ambivalence was especially seen before and during World War Two, it was also evident in the post-war period with respect to the Vietnam War. Fujii's description of the outcome of the Vietnam War as a 'nonviolent' victory for the North Vietnamese not only confounds standard terminological use but also suggests a potential for a religious reality to overlay a conventional one in seeing nonviolence—and the cause for peace—where there is in fact war.

Yet, this ambivalence sits side by side with a near-absolute doctrine of non-killing and disarmament in the context of contemporary Japan. Nipponzan's yellow-robed monks have been seen at the helm of numerous anti-war and anti-nuclear demonstrations inside Japan and abroad over the years from 1945. Even recently in 2015, their presence was conspicuous on the streets of Tokyo at the time of the mass protests leading up to the Diet's passage of the new security bills, which concerned Japan's participation in 'collective self-defense'.[336] Nipponzan's appeals and activism have at times proven remarkably prescient. Their warnings over many decades of the dangers of operating nuclear power plants in an earthquake prone country as Japan were tragically borne out in the Fukushima disaster in March 2011. These monks have been the voice of pacifism even during decades when the Japanese populace may have been lulled into thinking that war was something of the distant past. The case study of Nipponzan serves as a powerful demonstration of the 'ambivalence of the sacred'—one which challenges us to probe deeper into the different shades of nonviolence and its relationship to violence.

[336] See Asahi Shimbun Digital (2015) "Shūkyōsha anpo hōan ni kōgi kinen kyōgi no waku koe" *Asahi Shimbun Digital*, 25 August: http://www.asahi.com/articles/ASH8S6GF5H8SUQIP03B.html (accessed 18 October 2015); Bukkyō Times (2015) "Shūkai to demo de heiwa o kikyū: 8 gatsu 24 nichi shūkyōsha-ra 500 nin chō ga kokkai mae de" *Bukkyō Times*, 27 August 2015: http://www.shukyosha9jonowa.org/news/news150824.html (accessed 18 October 2015)

Conclusion

The three case studies examined in this thesis are each different in nature from the other and yet together they offer key insights into the nature of nonviolence in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition. Each of my case studies is also a movement of nationalism where the 'religion of resistance' constructs and asserts a national identity. Despite the exclusive nature of nationalism, however, the Buddhist movements also show a tendency towards embracing the opponent or 'other' at a spiritual level. There is thus both a tendency to *exclude* and *embrace* the 'other' in these movements, which is a dynamic that will be analysed in this chapter. Below, I begin with an examination of the relationship between Buddhism and nationalism, followed by a discussion of how the 'two truths' of Mahayana Buddhism shaped the nonviolent actor's approach towards the political opponent and religious 'other'. In the following section, I discuss the theoretical contributions of this study to the scholarship on nonviolence, and conclude with a number of observations about the implications of my study for understanding nonviolence.

Buddhism and Nationalism

The three nonviolent movements taken up in the previous chapters are nationalistic movements. Each invokes a Buddhist ideology as a countervailing force against the infiltration of a foreign culture or civilization. In South Vietnam, Buddhism provided the majority of the Vietnamese people with a sense of national identity first in their resistance against the French,[1] and then against the United States and the pro-Catholic and military governments sponsored by the Americans in South Vietnam. For the Tibetans, the imperative to preserve their 'unique' spiritual tradition of Buddhism occupied a central position of importance in their political struggle for freedom against the PRC. Nipponzan Myōhōji's mission was also marked by nationalism, albeit of an expansive type, which sought to propagate a home-grown 'Japanese' Buddhism to the world, especially to India and areas of Asia under Japanese military occupation.

Chatterjee's account of non-Western nationalism discussed in Chapter 2 captures a number of the dynamics in my case studies. It helpfully explains the way that Buddhism constituted the core 'inner' domain of national identity for the Vietnamese, which was defended against both the French and Americans. This inner domain was nurtured in the rich Buddhism traditions of Vietnam but it did not remain unchanged by the colonial experience. Vietnamese Buddhism embarked on a project of self-renewal in the 1930s, drawing on 'modern' ideologies of nationalism and humanism in its reform to make itself relevant to the country's future. Of course, the applicability of Chatterjee's theory for the construction of non-Western nationalism does not say anything about the prospects of political success for such a movement, nor does it mean that non-Western nationalism cannot draw on non-religious and exogenous systems of thought, as exemplified by North Vietnam's espousal of Communism. Nevertheless, it is a well-founded historical fact that many post-colonial

[1] Pham Van Minh (2001), op.cit., 138.

movements of nationalism did draw on their endogenous religious traditions, and Chatterjee's theory helps to illuminate what dynamics are at work in such movements.

For the Tibetans, the 'spiritual domain' constituted the core of their national struggle against the PRC, demonstrated by the fact that much of the resistance after the fall of the guerrilla forces, such as the large-scale protests in the late 1980s and 2008, has been initiated by monks, as were the first spate of self-immolations after 2009. Tibetan Buddhism became a 'religion of resistance' that desired to counter the Communist revolution—but the counterrevolution the Tibetans sought did not mean reverting to to their former feudalistic and theocratic past. In fact, it was in exile that their project of political modernity took place, where they built a representative democratic system of government, which asserted a 'positive' alternative to the government in Tibet. The Tibetans have also sought to reform their historical practices by refashioning the relationship between Buddhism and the state in a modernised version of *chösi sungdrel* (combination of religion and politics). Arguably, the Dalai Lama's promotion of a religion-friendly 'secularism' (t. *chöluk rime*) in exile offers a modern political alternative to the atheism of Chinese communism. The preservation of the 'spiritual domain' of Tibetan Buddhism thus lies at the heart of Tibetan nationalism, and for some, such as Samdhong Rinpoche, it is the *raison d'être* of the struggle.

Nipponzan's expansive religious nationalism presents a different type of movement to the more 'defensive' Vietnamese and Tibetan movements. Before and during World War Two, Nipponzan's movement at times seemed to coalesce with Japanese imperialism so that the mission to spread Nichiren Buddhism in Asia conflated with the military conquests of the Japanese empire. Yet even before the Second World War, Nipponzan was a far cry from being a 'religion of the status quo'. In fact, this order of monks has always sat on the fringes of Japanese society, remonstrating with the political power-holders to uphold the correct teachings of the Buddha. There was also a defensive streak in Nipponzan's nationalism, for their mission was partly a reaction against the threat posed by the imperial power of the West. Nipponzan's assertion of the 'spiritual domain' against the 'material domain' took place in a civilizational duel where Eastern civilization as 'a civilization of spirituality, peace, and sacrifice' was pitted against the Western civilization of materialism, war, invasion, and conquest.[2] In the post-war period, however, Nipponzan's expansive nationalism has transformed into a kind of internationalism: Japan's identity and the role of Japanese (Nichiren) Buddhism are still promoted abroad but there is an increased awareness of the need to transcend religious, ethnic, and political divides with nonviolence and tolerance to realise peace.

The Two Truths and Perspectives on the 'Other'

In all three case studies, there is a propensity for the Buddhist movements to exclude the political 'other' from interfering in the 'spiritual domain' of the nation. Buddhism is defended and asserted against the PRC, the United States, the governments of South Vietnam, and Western civilization. There is also a rejection of the oppressive, unjust, or pro-war policies of the opponent—the very grounds on which their nonviolent movements are usually launched. The exclusion of the 'other' or the rejection of the policies of the opponent takes place at the level of conventional truth. As Samdhong Rinpoche commented, from the perspective of ultimate truth, the aims and methods of

[2] Nipponzan Myōhōji (October 1980), op.cit., 88 (my translation).

nonviolence cannot be comprehended.[3] This is because from the viewpoint of ultimate truth, all phenomena are 'empty' (s. *sunyata*) of autonomous and intrinsic substance, and the claim that Tibet was once an independent nation, or that the PRC's policies are oppressive, would not have any meaning. Samdhong Rinpoche points out that the values and norms of conventional truth, such as 'freedom, justice, equality and human dignity' must be the basis for nonviolence.[4]

However, my reading of the case studies is that the Buddhist actors could not just remain in the conventional sphere, for their very religion impels them towards an understanding of ultimate truth. For the Tibetan Buddhists, the ultimate truth is founded on an understanding of the 'emptiness' of the oppressor and awareness of one's 'interdependence' with the opponent. It is from this viewpoint that the Dalai Lama claims that a real 'enemy' does not exist.[5] Whereas conventional truth spurs a nonviolent actor to resist and reject the injustice or oppression of the political opponent (what I will call the *exclusive* strain of nonviolence), an understanding of ultimate truth urges the actor to embrace and accept the opponent in a deep sense (the *embracive*[6] strain).

The other case studies too show a similar dynamic of accepting the opponent at a deeper level, although the doctrine of 'emptiness' may not be emphasized as much as in the Tibetan case. The Vietnamese Buddhists highlighted the principle of love and compassion towards the opponent as well as the wretched based on an understanding of interconnectedness—what Nhat Hanh calls 'interbeing'.[7] The Buddhists in Vietnam engaged in extensive 'emotion work' to cultivate love and banish hatred and anger from their hearts in an effort to bring their emotions in line with their ideal of nonviolence. The religiously rooted 'truth' many Vietnamese Buddhists upheld appears to differ from the 'ultimate truth' stripped of all moral qualities as in Madhyamaka's 'emptiness', Hick's Real, or *nirguna Brahman* (Brahman without qualities) in Advaita Vedanta. Still, their efforts to nurture love and compassion based on an understanding of interconnectedness represent the pursuit of a spiritual truth beyond the political goals of liberation and justice.

For Nipponzan, the imperative to accepting the 'other' in a spiritual sense derives from the example of Bodhisattva Never-Despising who continuously worshipped and bowed to the Buddha-nature in all sentient beings notwithstanding the scorn, insult, and aggression he encountered. This example provides a key inspiration for Nipponzan's nonviolence, and it is also what encourages forbearance towards their opponent in a similar spirit to that demonstrated in the *37 Practices of a Bodhisattva* taught by the Dalai Lama.[8] The practice of *tangyō raihai* is a way of training oneself to see the Buddha-nature in others, however ill-intentioned they may be. As Fujii explained, through the recognition of the Buddha-nature in others, the practice serves to reiterate non-duality between the self and the other.[9]

---

[3] Samdhong Rinpoche (1999), op.cit., 313.
[4] Ibid, 314
[5] Chan, op.cit., 124.
[6] Here, I use the term 'embracive' rather than 'inclusive' to distinguish its meaning from 'inclusivism' as discussed in the literature on religious pluralism. Since the term 'exclusive' or 'exclusivism' is employed in a similar manner in this literature to my usage, I have kept the terms the same.
[7] Nhat Hanh (1998b), op.cit.
[8] As discussed in Chapter 3, this commentary describes numerous practices where the bodhisattva takes on all the negativities of another through the power of compassion. See Dalai Lama (1995a), op.cit., 71.
[9] Nichidatsu Fujii (1979), op.cit.

These key Buddhist teachings of emptiness, love and compassion, interdependence,[10] and the recognition of the Buddha-nature are all aspects of an embracive disposition in Buddhism that underlines unity or interrelatedness with others stemming from an awareness of the ultimate truth. There is thus a coexistence of exclusive and embracive strains in the Buddhists' nonviolent ideology. Indeed, it is the very mode of nonviolent action which enables religious actors to be true to both their responsibility to society and their commitment to spiritual practice.

Another commonality between my case studies is that all three Buddhist nonviolent movements were inspired by the bodhisattva ideal. At times, the self-immolators in both the Vietnamese and Tibetan case studies were referred to as 'bodhisattvas'. It is my contention that the bodhisattva, who, instead of advancing to a state of *nirvāna*, chooses to return to the world to help the suffering masses, provides such a potent inspiration for Buddhist nonviolent actors because his saintly being strides both worldly and spiritual spheres, having reference to both conventional and ultimate truths. The bodhisattva is a potent symbol of Mahayana Buddhism's engagement in society, which condenses the aspirations of the Buddhist nonviolent movements: to reflect an enlightened view of reality in their engagement with the world. The proclivity among Tibetan Buddhists to highlight the teachings of Mahayana (over Sravakayana and Vajrayana elements) in formulating their nonviolent ideology is not by coincidence. The Mahayana tradition, with its emphasis on the salvation of sentient beings, is particularly well-placed to provide the spiritual inspiration for positive social action.

Interfaith and Inter-sectarian Relations

It is not surprising that religious nonviolent movements tend to be accompanied by a display of goodwill towards, and cooperation with, other religious faiths and sects. The nonviolent actors' embracive perspectives on the 'other', carefully nurtured through their relations with the political opponent, inevitably spills over and shapes their view of the 'religious other' too. Thus, Gandhi's efforts to foster Hindu-Muslim unity in India were an inseparable part of his nonviolence, and all of my case studies feature cooperative interfaith and/or inter-sectarian relations.

In the case of Vietnam, although the Buddhists' protests in 1963 were triggered by the religious discrimination they suffered at the hand of a pro-Catholic government in South Vietnam, the UBC nevertheless found ways of working together with the Catholics for peace, especially after Nhat Chi Mai's self-immolation in 1967 where she burned herself in front of statues of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Quan Yin) and Virgin Mary. In the Tibetan exile society, the Dalai Lama has made strenuous efforts to foster inter-sectarian harmony by promoting 'secularism' in the exile government and ecumenical exchanges within the monastic community based on the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of *rimé*. While the Shugden controversy has created a religious rift among a certain segment of the Tibetan community, it must be acknowledged that overall, the Dalai Lama's religious policy in exile has transformed inter-sectarian relations and contributed to Tibetan unity spelling a notable change from the past where inter-sectarian relations were characterised by strife and even violent conflict.

Both the Vietnamese and Tibetan Buddhist movements clearly incline towards a position of religious pluralism. The Vietnamese Buddhists in 1963 made explicit that their campaign was for religious equality and that they did not oppose Catholicism as

[10] Or its synonyms, 'interconnectedness', 'interbeing', 'dependent origination' etc.

a religion. As Nhat Hanh stated, 'there are 84,000 dharma gates in Buddhism, and Catholicism was seen as just another gate leading to liberation.'[11] He elaborated that 'whoever believes that his or her religion is the only truth is mistaken according to the Buddha'.[12] His view reflects a classic example of religious pluralism where one's own religion, as 'one of a possible number of sources of transcendent transformation' is seen as existing in a 'rough parity' with other faiths.[13]

The Dalai Lama also acknowledges that there are 'compelling similarities' between different religions 'in that they all emphasise the indispensability of love and compassion in the context of ethical discipline.'[14] This perspective provides the basis for his 'secular' ethics.[15] Yet, while the Tibetan spiritual leader encourages interfaith dialogue and ecumenism, he is not ignorant of the potential doctrinal difficulties posed by such exchanges:

> It is true that from the point of view of the individual practitioner, it is essential to have a single-pointed commitment to our own faith. It is also true that this depends on the deep conviction that one's own path is the sole mediator of truth. But at the same time, we have to find some means of reconciling disbelief with the reality of a multiplicity of similar claims. In practical terms, this involves individual practitioners finding a way at least to accept the validity of the teachings of other religions while maintaining wholehearted commitment to their own. As far as the validity of the metaphysical truth claims of a given religion is concerned, that is of course the internal business of that particular tradition.[16]

What the Dalai Lama recognises here is the point of contention between religious pluralists and particularists discussed in Chapter 1. Note that the way the Dalai Lama resolves the contradiction between each religion's claim to 'one truth' and the reality of the plurality of faiths is to 'understand that in the case of a single individual, there can indeed be only one truth, one religion. However, from the perspective of human society at large, we must accept the concept of "many truths, many religions".'[17] By taking such a route, he avoids the claim that 'ultimately all religions are the same'[18]—a claim for which John Hick has been much criticised.

While the Vietnamese and Tibetan Buddhists display a clear penchant for religious pluralism, Nipponzan's stance is much more complex. It seems that throughout much of his life, Fujii conceived of his faith in absolutist terms—whether inclusivist or exclusivist. For example, he demonstrated a classic inclusivist bent when he explained that he first practiced *gyakku senryō* at Kasuga shrine, notwithstanding that it was a Shinto sanctum, because he saw the different Shinto gods as a manifestation of a timeless Buddha.[19] This is almost a Buddhist version of Karl Rahner's concept of the 'anonymous Christian'.[20] The religious 'imperialism' in Fujii's thought was demonstrated during the war, when Fujii expounded on the need to spread 'Japanese' Buddhism for Japan's conquest of other lands to succeed. At other points, Fujii's thought demonstrated a more exclusivist strain that drew on Nichiren's Four Dictums. Fujii himself had studied the different Buddhist schools in

---

[11] Quoted in Pham Van Minh (2002), op.cit., 183.
[12] Quoted in ibid, 189
[13] Race (2013), op.cit., Location 415 & 624.
[14] Dalai Lama (1999), op.cit., 236-237.
[15] Dalai Lama (2012), op.cit.
[16] Dalai Lama (1999), op.cit., 234.
[17] Ibid, 235.
[18] Ibid, 236.
[19] Fujii (1992), op.cit., 53.
[20] Rahner (1978), op.cit.

his religious training and took in elements of some schools, such as Zen's *rōhatsu sesshin* fast, but he nevertheless asserted that only Nichiren's Buddhism had the potential to provide correct teachings to guide the state, and that the other major schools of Buddhism taught by Saichō, Kūkai, Eisai, and Dōgen, which focus on individual salvation, had no such power.[21] Fujii's own ideology thus seemed to oscillate between inclusivism and exclusivism within an absolutism that asserted the superiority of a 'Japanese' Buddhism based on Nichiren's teachings and the Lotus Sutra.

In *practical* terms, however, this strain in Nipponzan's thought has not translated into a religious imposition on other faiths. Even during the war period, Nipponzan never sought to win souls by forced conversion. In the post-war period, there is even an inclination towards religious pluralism as Nipponzan monks join forces with other religions in a relationship of 'rough parity' in their work for peace and nonviolence. This propensity is exemplified by their active involvement in the Group of Religious Supporters of Article 9 and the Network of Religious Peace Builders, where interreligious prayers, exchanges, and activism are a common occurrence. Nipponzan's Peace Pagodas, which symbolise human unity transcending categories and social identities that create division would also suggest a tendency today whereby their assertion of religious superiority gives way to the imperative of peace and coexistence.

It appears to be a feature of religious nonviolence, therefore, to reinforce a pluralistic outlook insofar as it concerns the actors' practical interaction with the 'religious other'. This tendency was seen even in Nipponzan, a group which, in doctrinal terms, is characterised more by absolutism. In my view, this pluralistic orientation in religious nonviolence occurs because of the embracive view of the 'other' nurtured with reference to the ultimate truth. The Buddhist in my case studies recognised 'nonviolence' as not only expressed by action but also by thoughts and words, and the nonviolent attitudes they cultivated exerted a profound influence on their general disposition towards other religions.

Many of the Buddhists in my case study—though perhaps not all—seemed to carry an awareness that their 'religion' still occupied the phenomenological plane or the realm of conventional truth; that is, a recognition of the limits of 'religion' as a social category, institution, and belief system expounded through language and human concepts. As discussed in Chapter 1, though religion was something to be cherished and deeply respected, it did not equal the ultimate truth for both Hick and Gandhi. The point is well captured in the Zen Buddhist maxim 'the raft is not the shore', meaning that although religion is an invaluable means to one's ultimate spiritual destination, it is not to be confused with the goal itself. It is perhaps this awareness of the phenomenologically-bound nature of religion that many of the Buddhists in my case studies have shown an inclination to transcend the differences based on religious identity.

Contributions to Nonviolence Theory

Unlike other works on nonviolence, it has not been the intention of this study to examine the factors that contribute to the success or effectiveness of nonviolent action. Rather, my focus throughout has been on uncovering the ideological elements within the Buddhist movements which led to an espousal of nonviolence. Nevertheless, there

[21] Fujii (1981), op.cit., 181.

are several respects in which I believe my study can contribute to the extant literature on nonviolence.

First, the three case studies provide examples of 'principled nonviolence' in operation. This means that rather than resorting to nonviolence as an expedient tactic ('pragmatic nonviolence'), the Buddhist actors chose nonviolence as their creed and way of life. Indeed, it may be observed from a purely political perspective that the Buddhist movements have not been so successful in achieving concrete outcomes: this is certainly the case with respect to the Vietnamese and Tibetan movements, although arguably the former, with their mass support base, would have been able to overthrow the governments in South Vietnam if not for the heavy-handed interventions of the United States. Nipponzan has been successful in some of their peace activism (such as the Sunagawa and Sanrizuka struggles) but not others. Principled nonviolence means that even if the nonviolent method does not bear immediate result, and even if the movement were to have the means to use violence for advancing its cause, it nevertheless chooses the path of nonviolence. Given the proliferation of violence in the name of religion in the world today, understanding the spiritual motives for principled nonviolence is useful for policymakers in deciphering the kinds of religious groups they could consider supporting to enhance peacebuilding efforts.

Second, by focusing on the ideology of the Buddhist movements, this study has analysed a powerful discursive structure (religion) which often goes un-examined by theorists of nonviolence. Cultural and religious contexts can both constrain and enable social action. Although recent trends in nonviolence theory show an inclination to paying greater attention to the institutional structures of power,[22] more consideration needs to be given to the structures of culture, including religion. Cultural structures also have an important influence on how, or in what circumstances, the nonviolent actionists' self-suffering generates the popular support needed for the operation of political jiu-jitsu. As seen in the case study on Vietnam, self-immolation as a symbolic act could not have produced the 'moral shock' and outpouring of support it did if not for its discursive resonance with the general populace. That resonance was, to a large extent, produced by the weight of the Buddhist tradition in Vietnam. Understanding the discursive context is thus necessary for fully appreciating the impact of nonviolent action, particularly as it concerns the operation of political jiu-jitsu.

Finally, this study has sought to contribute to a deeper understanding of the *constitutive operation* of nonviolence by addressing the question of extreme self-sacrifice. All three case studies involve self-sacrifice to different degrees, including self-immolation. In the Vietnamese and Tibetan cases, there have been debates on whether extreme self-sacrifice can be called 'nonviolent'. Generally, the Vietnamese Buddhists understood the self-immolations as nonviolent protests, whereas there has been a propensity among the Tibetan Buddhist leaders, namely the Dalai Lama and Samdhong Rinpoche, to imply that indefinite hunger strikes and self-immolations are 'violent' towards the self—although they add a caveat that the actor's intentionality is of overriding importance.[23] Yet, these discussions on whether extreme self-sacrifice constitutes violence or nonviolence seem to misconstrue the very nature of nonviolence, which depends on a dialectical interplay with violence. The extremity of the self-sacrifice involved is but a reflection of the enormity of the violence that must

[22] Iain Atak (2006), op.cit., 87-107; Martin (1989), op.cit.

[23] In more recent years, however, statements by the exile leadership have transformed to broader expressions of solidarity with the self-immolators in Tibet.

be interiorised. Self-sacrifice, therefore, does not contradict nonviolence but is part of the necessary operation of nonviolence where the actor must take upon him or herself the violence of the other. The Dalai Lama and Samdhong Rinpoche are no doubt speaking from a position of compassion when they discourage their fellow Buddhists not to resort to extreme self-sacrifice; but they also demonstrate a lack of understanding of the intrinsic workings of nonviolence. It is perhaps for this reason that, despite the great emphasis they place on this principle, the exile movement has not managed to bring about the dynamic of political jiu-jitsu vis-à-vis the PRC, and the movement today is left with few direct options in dealing with the latter now that the diplomatic efforts have reached an impasse. An appreciation of the constitutive operation of nonviolence would help the theorists and practitioners alike in better understanding the internal structure and working dynamics of nonviolence.

Upholding Nonviolence in a Violent World

It is relevant to note that many of the political and religious imperatives in my case studies—nationalism, defense of the dharma, compassion for the oppressor and the wretched, self-sacrifice inspired by the bodhisattva ideal, even the theory of two truths—are all elements that can also be found in violent Buddhist movements as reviewed in Chapter 2. The question naturally arises, what then distinguishes nonviolent from violent Buddhist movements?

In my view, there are two key differences between a violent and nonviolent Buddhist movement. The first is the willingness to which the actors interiorise the violence of the situation rather than outwardly deflect it. As has been argued, interiorisation is part of nonviolence, whereas outward deflection would amount to violence. The second difference might be found in the way that the two truths interact with one another in the worldview of the Buddhist movement. Buddhists may wield the two truths in a variety of ways. A Buddhist participating in violence may interpret the emptiness of ultimate truth as rendering inconsequential the death of the opponent, and conventional truth as directing him to violent struggle for justice. A nonviolent Buddhist, on the other hand, may understand emptiness as meaning that there are no true enemies, and see conventional truth as impelling her towards fighting for social justice through constructive engagement in society. In this illustration, an understanding of emptiness and a wish to achieve justice drives both Buddhists but the way in which the conventional and ultimate truths relate to one another differs.

The difference may be a matter of degree and in some contexts even an evolved Buddhist may nevertheless conclude that violence is needed. The Dalai Lama's acceptance of the use of armed force in the Korean War or against the Nazis and Al Qaeda, or Fujii's attitude towards the conduct of the North Vietnamese in the Vietnam War might be seen in this light. The 'ambivalence of the sacred'[24] is no doubt one that springs from the exigencies of engaging in an imperfect world. In Mahayana Buddhist thought, it is known as 'skilful means' (s. *upāya*) where the bodhisattva may use means—even an expedient, morally imperfect one—appropriate for a particular situation in order to lead sentient beings towards enlightenment.[25] What is important here is that the wielder of skilful means must be a sufficiently advanced Buddhist practitioner who contemplates on all the facets of a given situation in deciding what

[24] Appleby, op.cit., 11-13.

[25] As Pye explains, skilful means is about 'the way in which the goal, the intention, or the meaning of Buddhism is correlated with the unenlightened condition of living beings.' See Michael Pye (2003) *Skilful Means: A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism*. Second Ed. New York: Routledge, 1.

action should to be taken. It is noteworthy that despite the exceptions to nonviolence made by the Dalai Lama and Fujii, both were staunchly opposed the use of violence for their own contemporary causes. By their discernment, the 'means' to be adopted in their own context was clearly nonviolence.

What my study of the ideologies of the Vietnamese, Tibetan and Japanese Buddhists indicates is that rather than finding inconsistency and dissonance where Buddhist actors demonstrate ambivalence towards the use of physical violence, scholarly observers perhaps need to reassess the usage of their own categories. It is all too simplistic and superficial to see in 'nonviolence' and 'violence' absolute, airtight categories. Indeed, as argued above, nonviolence frequently contains violence within itself. Yet the conclusion that 'nonviolence' and 'violence' are fluid categories does not invalidate the distinction that is made between them. In fact, the attempt by both non-religious and religious actors to make such a distinction in the first place is usually accompanied by a search for a way forward that is consonant with the spirit of humanitarianism or the tenor of their sacred traditions. Nonviolence is not the ineffable truth of emptiness, but it may well be the 'highest experiential knowledge.'[26]

Nor is the distinction between nonviolence and violence purely a theoretical one. The endeavour of deciphering what is *more* nonviolent or violent in a particular situation influences the actual choices people make. What separates the 'ambivalence' of religious exponents of nonviolence from political opportunism is that, for these practitioners of faith, the emphasis is on the purity of intention rather than external results. Like the bodhisattva, who has reference to both conventional and ultimate truths, the nonviolent religious advocate at once seeks to intervene in the suffering of the world, and engage in that world in such a way as to lead all, including the opponent, to a more enlightened path. While such practices may not always be black and white, this study has hoped to capture the clarity of spirit with which the Buddhists have offered their nonviolence.

[26] Adam and Codling, op.cit., 182-183.

Appendices

Letters of the Vietnamese Self-Immolators 1963-1970

1. Letter of Quang Duc dated 1 May 1963
2. Poems of Vu Hoang Chuong
3. Excerpt from Tri Quang's unpublished book translated by Pham Van Minh
4. Letters/Poems of Nhat Chi Mai dated May 1967
5. Letter of Thich Nguyen Huong dated 4 August 1963
6. Letters of Thich Duc Phong dated 2 August 1963
7. Letters of Thich Tieu-Dieu dated 15 August 1963
8. Letter of Mai Tuyet An dated 12 August 1963
9. Poem of Yeu Thien Khich dated 13 August 1963
10. Letters of Than Tue dated 13 August 1963
11. Letter of Thien Lai dated 10 April 1970

APPENDIX 1: Quang Duc's Letter before his self-immolation[1]

My religious name is Thich Quang Duc, abbot of the of the Quan The Am temple, in Phu Nhuan, Gia Dinh. Buddhism in our country is facing hardship and turbulence. I am a Buddhist monk and as the eldest son of the Buddha, I cannot sit quietly and let Buddhism disappear. Therefore, I joyfully volunteer to immolate my transitory physical body. In order to preserve Buddhism, I offer to the Buddha, this virtuous deed.
I hope that the Budda of the Ten Directions, the venerables, and the monks and nuns will accept my action, which I perform to achieve the following wishes:

I pray to the Buddha to give light to President Ngo Dinh Diem so that he will accept the five minimum requests of the Vietnamese Buddhists which appear in the Declaration.
I pray to the compassionate Buddha that, with his blessings, Buddhism will live long in Vietnam.
I wish for Buddha's grace to be showered upon the venerables, monks and nuns and all the Vietnamese Buddhists, so that they may avoid arrest and imprisonment by the evil doers and victimization at the hands of terrorists.

[1] This English translation was rendered by Tam Dao and the author. With all our translations, Mr. Tam would explain the text to me in English, upon which I would reword it into grammatically correct written form. Sometimes I have needed to rephrase sentences where a literal translation would obscure the meaning in Vietnamese. After every paragraph or so, Mr. Tam would check over what I have typed so as to confirm the accuracy of the translation. This letter was found in Duc Nhuan (1996), *Buddhism and its Vietnamese History*, California: Vietnamese Buddhist Philosophy Institution, pp507-9; Dong Bon. (1997). *Danh Tang Viet Nam (Famous Monks of Vietnam),* Ho Chi Minh City: HCMC Publishing House.

I pray that the country will be serene and the people will be peaceful…

Before closing my eyes to go the realm of the Buddha, I have the honour of presenting my words to President Ngo Dinh Diem, to ask him to be kind and tolerant towards his people and enforce the policies of religious equality, so that he may maintain lasting stability in the country.
I also would like to call upon all the monks, nuns, and the Buddhist people to unite in one force and make sacrifices to preserve the Dharma.

NAM MÔ ĐẤU CHIẾN THẮNG PHẬT
(Homage, to the Buddha of Victorious Struggle)

Respectfully, Bhikkhu, Thich Quang Duc
Written at An Quang temple, on the 8th of the Fourth Month, Year of the Rabbit (1963). (1 May 1963)

APPENDIX 2: Vu Hoang Phuong's poems about Quang Duc's immolation

Igniting the fire of Compassion (Noi Lua Tu bi)[2]

Our people can never lose
Our Dharma will ever be bright.
Passing through many upheavals
We are oppressed, slandered and betrayed.
But the mountains and the rivers are still there.
And the temple still towers above
Oh those people who live without hearts!
Look at those who died without homes
They are now sitting up- and no force can stop them-
to connect each other in a poem.
Please return to us, the birthday of the Buddha
And let end soon this national catastrophe.
The bomb may blast their bodies into pieces
but now they stand up to yell
and break the rivers and lakes.
All the beaches are neglected
All the forests are torn:
Da Nang, Da lat,
Over there the city of Hue…
dry bones scatter in the heat
The souls who died as victims of injustice,
open their tombs and step out

[2] Translated by Tam Dao and author. The original poem in Vietnamese was found at: Nguyen Tang. www.quangduc.com, Melbourne, Australia, accessed 4 August 2003.

Buddhists from the other side of murdering
With a heart of courage, daring to forget their life
returning with vast love
Spanning the bridge of the gong and wooden fish
the sound of the six paths resound

We struggle beyond our limit
The door of life and death…is mysterious; limitless Dharma.
The powerful stream does not dry up through the autumns
And the water of the willows purify the unjust charges

We are fortunate and surviving
How come we are not overwhelmed?
not hearing the ceaseless call
echoing through the bright and dark regions?
The Buddha has ushered in the dawning era
It is the fourth month of the year,
yet, why doesn't the moon bring people together?
The chanting of Buddha's name runs along the page of history,
in ten directions of believers, monks and nuns.
The heart of Master Quang Duc motions
to raise the Buddhist flag
after 175 days and nights of joining the fire of compassion
not caring whether rain or sun.
The fire rises higher and the mysterious wind has turned to the season
As usual…the throne of Christ…
Underneath their bullets…the wielders of the gun will be destroyed.
Only the spirit of humanism is left
The brightness of mountain and rivers beside the towering temple
Although we have passed through many upheavals
We are oppressed, slandered and betrayed.
Still, Buddhism is always luminous.
The Vietnamese people will never lose.

Compassionate Fire (Lua Tu Bi)[3]

Flames! Blazing flames rushing up the Lotus Throne!
From eight, nine points, the flesh-bodies and worldly dust hearts
Into poetry they all melt,
In prostration, down they start.
A the Orient and the Occident, two haloed fireballs
With tears of pearls veiling their blurred eyes
Clasping their hands, they salute the new sun Dial,
The Golden Religion's lustre rising up, tiding high…
This truly, the day of Heaven's presence!
This, the hour of Faith's splendour.

[3] English translation extracted from Thien An. (1975). *Buddhism and Zen in Vietnam in Relation to the Development of Buddhism in Asia*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, pp175-6.

Thousands of selfish craving blocks just awakened
Gaze at one another amid Brotherhood's grandeur.
Homage to Buddha, the Enlightened One!
That Ganges River, what causes its dust to stir?
Mercy for Mankind immersed in the samsara of suffering!
The Great Monk emerges from night's darkness and earth's thickness,
He advances, sits in dhyana,[4] his face to the West turning,
Evoking the flames to enter his flesh and skin defenceless.

Hieratic, he prays, his arm holds the ritual position…
Somewhere, above, from the Six Paths of Transmigration
Breathless they stand, fascinated, the wandering souls;
A sharp breath, He expires, and stops the Great Wheel's roll.
The air twists and writhes, into a tornado bursts crying,
He ascends to salvation…the storm subsides from now on.
His shadow, beyond the nine layers of clouds, keeps so airing-
Human beings feel all fresh with the shade of Bodhi's parasol.

From jade or marble, his statue will never be needed!
On silk or bamboo, history will never be necessary!
The sacred spot where He sat- a thousand-autumned masterpiece;
In the Invisible, its features will radiate with Mercy.
Later, in future…what would be left?
Jade, marble, will go to ashes…silk, bamboo, will both decay;
With time fleeing by, trudging, its paces all bloody.
Eternally, the Bodhisattva's heart does exist and stays,
Pouring its beams to remote cells of Hell's purgatory.

O Magnanimous Fire!
Three thousand worlds, in an instant struck with stupor,
Form the realm of Darkness, they turn to Nirvana.
The poets' rhythms and rhymes are but a straw and a feather,
Only aspire to be straw and feather,
And burnt out, they join with the prayers
Beseeching a lasting peace for Mankind
That forever Brotherhood will attach and will bind.

Listen to the plaints emanating from the earth's core,
Wishing to be a Happiness-Fruit returning to the Bodhi tree.
O Sakyamuni Buddha!
We fellowmen, hand in hand, flooded with tears of sorrow,
In a nine-storied Tower appears our Fraternity.

[4] Meditation

APPENDIX 3: An Excerpt from Tri Quang's Unpublished Memoirs Relating to Quang Duc's Self-immolation[5]

« Being born in human form is difficult to achieve » .

Most sutras agree on this. Self-immolation is only mentioned in Mahayana, particularly in the chapter of Bodhisattva's Vows in the Lotus Sutra. Self-immolation obviously could be used as a means to actualise the Bodhisattvas' Vows and is only allowed in two circumtances: when the Dharma is at risk of being destroyed and when self immolation is an expression of compassion for the wretched. Most definitely, self-immolation is not suicide. One participant can burn the whole or part of the body. Sometimes burning part of the body is used as a way to measure one's inner strength, to see if one can endure it.
No bystander can request or encourage a participant to perform self immolation, but it should be alright if he decides not to interfere with this act. Therefore burning part or the whole body is not alien to Buddhism.

During the most critical period in the struggle (against President Diem) I received a letter from Venerable Quang Duc, requesting the Buddhist Congregation allow him to self-immolate. The letter was written on a small piece of paper to avoid detection and handed over to me by a Vietnamese reporter working for a foreign news Agency. The handwriting is carefully crafted. Quang Duc said that the Dharma was seriously undermined (by the government) and because of his old age, he was not able to help the Sangha. He wanted to emulate the Medicine Buddha and offer to self-immolate as a vow protect the Dharma. He hoped that the Sangha would accept his request and set the time for his self-immolation. It was a very serious matter and I would not dare to decide it myself, so I called a special meeting, with the Supreme Partriarch Thich Tinh Khiet as the convener and with the attendance of other Sangha leaders, including Venerable Trí Thủ, Thiện Siêu, Thiện Minh and I.
Every one at the meeting was deeply moved and no decision was made. Finally I was entrusted by the participants of that meeting to make the decision, if his wish would be granted and if it would, when this could be realised (naturally in Saigon). I kept his letter with me but still could not make any decision. I did not even acknowledge his request. Then Tu Dam Pagoda (in Hue) was completely surrounded by the police. Suddenly we heard the news of his self immolation, that was immediately informed me by the provincial Chief. The next day President Diem invited us to come to the negotiation table in Saigon. His immolation was the most important event in the Budhdist Movement in 1963.
I did not know Quang Duc previously, only met him as an Abbot of Phuong Hoa Pagoda once or twice. I only vaguely recalled that he practised the path precribed by the Lotus Sutra. Before his self-immolation I had only contacted him through that letter. Later I knew that he prepared his self immolation carefully, simply and discreetly. He kept on practicing the Lotus Sutra everyday, went about his daily activities in a normal way. However one may have had a vague impression that he was about to make a long journey to somewhere. He prepared his Will carefully and

[5] Apparently Tri Quang had told the Buddhist community not to publish his memoirs while he is alive. However, Mr. Pham Van Minh was able to obtain permission on my behalf to access this particular excerpt from Ms. Thai Kim Lan in France. Mr. Pham, who, apart from being a scholar, is also a professional translator and interpreter, and he kindly offered to translate this excerpt for me.

only let his personal attendant, a newly ordained monk, know it on the day he was to self immolate.

His Will contains his wishes and his motives. It reflects his Bodhisattva's vows. He expressed no ill-will to president Ngo Dinh Diem and only hoped that the act of self-immolation would awaken the President. His act of self-immolation was captured by a series of photos, taken by Malcolm Browne, from the time when the fire started engulfing him until when he slightly fell backward. The photos showed the fire suddenly engulfed his body, then a side of his shoulder and half of his head, then his forehead, only his face remained clear of fire for a while. It showed his calmness in a meditative gesture. Not a distressed sign was shown and he maintained his calmness effortlessly. Later the photographer (Malcolm Browne) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize. When the fire engulfed his whole body, he still sat motionless. The fire finally died down, yet he still sat there like a black bronze statue. After a while, he moved lightly forward as if he wanted to bow and say farewell to the Buddhists around him and then slowly fell backward.

APPENDIX 4: Poems and Letters of Nhat Chi Mai (Phan Thi Mai)[6]

Letter of the Heart

My fellowmen, listen to me
Because I love my people
Because I love my country
I want to be a light
even a dim one
in this dark night
in order to prove
the presence of `man'
I wish to use my body as a torch
to dissipate the darkness
to waken Love among men
and to bring Peace to Viet Nam
(she hung this poem in front of her during the ceremony of sacrifice).

The Last Words of One Who Loves Vietnam

O Vietnam, Vietnam
Please listen
to the last words
of one
who loves Vietnam!

I am on the side
of my forefathers
of Revolution
of the young generation
of all those who suffer:
orphans, widows,
the injured, the exiled.
I am for the fatherland:
I cry because of the shedding of blood
of both innocents and wicked.
O Vietnam, Vietnam
why this hatred among men?
why this killing of one another?
who will be the defeated?
who will be the winner?
O please remove all labels!
we all are vietnamese
we all are vietnamese
let us take each others' hand

[6] All these poems and letters of Nhat Chi Mai are from Hassler (1970), op.cit., 199-204. Phan Thi Mai is her Buddhist name.

to protect the fatherland.
O Vietnam, Vietnam!
- the one who burns herself for Peace.

Phan Thi Mai, May 1967

To My Fellow Countrymen

I do not know how to address my countrymen,

I do not know how to make the suffering of my people known- my people have been victims of ambition and hatred- for more than 20 years!

I do not know how to help my countrymen remember that they are of the same origin, that they will share the same future, so that they may accept each other and stop the killing.

I do not know how to help enemies to become friends regardless of race, religion, political affiliation, so that love and wisdom may come to them, so that they will stop all massacre, all fanaticism and injustice.

I do not know how!

In order for my love to all and my aspiration for Peace will not be misunderstood or deliberately distorted,

I AM BURNING MYSELF

asserting that my sacrifice is for Peace in Vietnam and for Love and Justice.

I am doing what Thich Quang Duc and N. Morrison[7] have done.

I pray that the flame that is consuming my body will burn away all ambition and hatred which have been pushing many of us into the Hell of the Soul and creating so much sufferings among human beings.

I pray that the human race will be able to inherit Buddha's Compassion, Jesus' Love and the legacy of man's humaneness.

Homage to the Compassionate Buddha,
and to the Spirit of the Nation.
Phan Thi Mai

A Letter Addressed to the Governments of the North and of the South-May 1967

Gentlemen,

Being a Vietnamese citizen, I share the responsibility towards the history of the nation and towards the people of our country.

I believe I do have the right to express my ideas and aspirations concerning my own country. But you have not allowed me to say anything, even in this 'free' part of the fatherland. This is why I have to die in order that my desperate voice be heard, my voice and that of the peasants who have no power and no means to make known their unjust sufferings!

Please let my last Words to be heard everywhere. Let the people speak their mind. Listen to them in order to act for them as you have often declared. Be

[7] Norman Morrison was a 32 year old American Quaker who immolated himself at an entrance to the Pentagon on 2 November 1965.

courageous to listen to the voice of the people even if what this voice has to say is not fitted to your ideas.

We poor peasants, we don't need ideologies, we don't need labels, we only want to live peacefully and with dignity. But in the present situation, under your rule, we are living under opposite conditions.

You have been taking modern foreign weapons or asking hundreds of thousands of foreigners to come to kill our people in the name of your empty words. One side is motivated by ambition, the other side by hatred. You are shouting from your comfortable palaces without being aware of our sufferings.

Are you aware of the fact that much injustices and corruptions have been created? That our society has been miserably degenerated because of your reliance on foreign aid?

Please be lucid to find a way out for Vietnam.
Please negotiate peace.
Please solve the problem by ourselves.

Please remove all labels in order to cooperate with each other.
Millions of Vietnamese are waiting for Justice and Compassion from your part.
History waits for good actions of yours.

Respectfully,
the one who burns herself for peace,
Phan Thi Mai

A Letter to the U. S. Government Through President Johnson

May 1967

I am only an ordinary Vietnamese woman, without any talent or ability. But I feel painful everytime I look at the situation of my country.

I want to say that the empty words you have been using, 'to defend Freedom and Happiness for Vietnam', have lost all their meaning and become ridiculous.

How many tons of dollars and bombs have been dropped on our people to destroy both their souls and bodies?

How many patriotic Vietnamese have been suppressed and liquidated by your policy?

How many courageous, humanitarian and enlightened Americans who dared to point out to you your mistakes, have been condemned and imprisoned?

All this is neither freedom nor happiness.

Do you realize that most of us Vietnamese feel in the bottom of our heart this hatred towards those Americans who have brought the sufferings of the war to our country?

The more you escalate the war, the more you intensify your efforts here, the greater defeat you will get. Because of your mistakes, you are now without a right cause. Please re-read the Vietnamese history.

I feel painful everytime I think of the sufferings of my people, and I also feel sorry for the fate of American soldiers and their family. They have too been pushed into this absurd and ugly war! People have been using beautiful words to intoxicate them!

What kind of honor will the U.S. get from a 'victory' over a tiny country like Vietnam and perhaps more than 20 years from now?

What kind of dishonor will the U.S. have to encounter if she realizes that being a big power she only wants to stop something she has done wrong?

In the hope to save the lives of millions of Vietnamese, I am appealing to the Americans and to the powerful U.S:

1) to stop the bombing over North and South Vietnam.
2) to gradually withdraw their troops, and let the Vietnamese to decide what regime they are going to adapt.
3) to let the U.N. sponsor free elections in Vietnam. The Vietnamese will be wise enough to make their own choice in order to get freedom and happiness.
4) to help the Vietnamese rebuild their country which has been destroyed by your bombs. Vietnam consents to be a small brother of the powerful U.S.

The history of Vietnam of the U.S. and of the world will record your civilized and humanist acts.

Respectfully, the one who burns herself to oppose War
Phan Thi Mai

APPENDIX 5: Letter by Nguyen Huong before his self-immolation[8]

Respectful regards to the Buddhist fellows of the Buu-Tich Temple

I am at a loss for words in bidding farewell to the Buu Tich temple and the good men and believing women there.

Dear good men and believing women,

The teachings of the Buddha have spread to Vietnam for nearly eighteen centuries. But it has never been discriminated as in the present hour under the regime of the Republic of Vietnam. The blood of the Buddhists has flowed for the first time at the Buddha's birthday celebration in the capital, Hue. The temples were blockaded and the monks and the nuns were kidnapped and severely beaten. I feel pain and anguish and would like to immolate myself as an offering to the Buddhas in the Ten Directions and as a prayer to the government to open their hearts to compassion and seriously consider the Five Demands of Buddhists.

Dear fellow Buddhists, because of the little time I have, I can only summarise a few words. I hope you will understand and be sympathetic to me.

My regards to brother Qui: I wish you progress in cultivating the way; I will be dying in the name of the True Dharma. I hope you will do your best in serving the master and above all, the Buddhist faith.

[8] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Original letter extracted from Quoc Tue (1987) *Cong cuoc tranh-dau cua Phat-Giao Viet-Nam tu Phat-dan den cach-mang* (*The Vietnamese Buddhist Movement of 1963)*, Bagneux, France: Chua Khanh Anh, p289.

My wish is that all the good men and believing women will be at one in their hearts and make decisive sacrifices in order to protect Buddhism.

APPENDIX 6: Letters by Duc Phong before his self-immolation[9]

To the Most Venerable President of the Vietnamese Buddhist Association, the Venerables, the nuns and all the Buddhists in Vietnam and abroad,

Dear all,

The discrimination of our religion has become more and more serious by the day, and the blood of the monks, nuns and other Buddhists have flowed increasingly by the hand of oppression, yet the government continues to maintain their same rhetoric in hope of misleading Buddhism. The late Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc has pledged himself to the mission of protecting the True Teachings[10] and has immolated himself for that cause. Although his name has spread throughout the world, his five main wishes have not been achieved yet. Is it because the government desires to cause delay in hope of discouraging the Buddhists who take upon themselves, the responsibility of preserving the True Teachings?
As a young novice who sweeps the leaves at the temple, I cannot sit quietly and witness this sorrowful situation where millions of Buddhists suffer under the cruelty of oppressive policies. Therefore, I pledged myself to offer this humble physical body to the Buddhas in the Ten Directions in order to ask that the government heed correctly the following declaration containing my wishes:

Firstly, I do not wish to obtain any position like the late Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc. I only wish to be his disciple.
I ask for my religious freedom and for the religious freedom of others to be respected so that they may serve humanity and lead us to peace.
I strongly object to this situation of arresting and terrorizing monks, nuns and the Buddhist faithful.
I feel the sorrow for the wounded Buddhists and those who are now being wounded in this struggle to protect the True Dharma.

Dear all, I make this vow a silent one because I am afraid that my wishes cannot be achieved. In my personal opinion, the duty to protect the Dharma during this catastrophe not only lies with the true practitioners, but with all those who look towards the true teachings.

Dear all, please happily forgive me; I vow to immolate and offer this physical body to the Three Jewels,[11] praying that the worthy struggle of the Buddhists will be achieved soon and that the true teachings will live forever.

The True Teaching bemoans the wrongful deeds
Many are struggling for survival

[9] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Extracted from ibid, p287, pp290-1.
[10] True dharma, true reality or true principles.
[11] Buddha, Dharma and Sangha (the monastic community)

Whoever believes in the words of the Gentle Father
how can they ignore and evade the situation?
The True Teaching bemoans the wrongful deeds
Who is the protector of the spiritual flag?
Immolating the physical body on the public road
Not caring whether one loses or not
The heart resolving firmly
Sacrificing for the True Teaching sets a noble example
Thi-Thuy[12] is known for his mysterious will
Immolating the physical body on the public road
Demonstrating his good example everywhere
Sacrificing for the True Teaching, rather than for name or benefit
Wanting only to liberate humans from their suffering
The True Teaching is profound and endless
The master has set forth a mysterious example

Respectfully,
Thich Duc Phong

Dear Dad and Mum, 2 August 1963

I want to send a few words of respect and regards to you- I wish you lasting happiness. Also, I have a few words of regards for my relatives: I wish them peace and health. Dear dad and mum, I dip my pen in ink to leave behind a letter for you. Please don't be sad with what I have written. I bow to you, to the devotion you've shown me in having given birth and raising me. When I was a child, you held me in your arms. You showed me love and care and looked after me up until I was six, when I entered [the monastery] to followed the Truth of the Buddha. In order to seek the light, out of my conscience I would like to decisively offer my remaining life for the Way so as to propagate the true teachings of the Great Father, Sakyamuni Buddha. In order to guide the earthly man who is living in ignorance. But still just at the beginning of my path, up until now, I have not been able to spread the teachings much. I admit that there is still a hidden spite in me towards those who commit misdeeds and cruelty to the tradition and morals of the Vietnamese. Those cruel acts cast a stormy and tumultuous cloud over the nation, affecting the whole world, and have caused the monks, nuns and the Buddhist faithful to shed their blood for the Dharma of the world. The Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc has sacrificed his whole life in order to protect the true Dharma; requesting the five wishes declared by the Most Venerable Patriarch. But the government has not yet heeded those five wishes and is in fact violently repressing the monks. Alas, mum and dad, it is pitiful to see them suffer like that! Therefore I vow to follow the example of the Most Venerable Quang Duc. I immolate myself praying that the five wishes be achieved which will bring peace for Buddhism, and restore the good life and happiness of all people. I beg you mum and dad, don't be anguished by the loss of my body. Think about this and accept my loss- otherwise it will mean you accept the people's hardship and their sea of suffering.
As I leave the earthly world, I pray to the Buddha to assist and protect you to be safe and live long. To live long, remember to devotedly repeat the name of the Buddha. Mum and dad, remember my vows. I ask that you repeat the name of the Buddha and

[12] Dharma name of the Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc

see my master to mark how much you repeat the Buddha's name in the little book I brought home from the temple.
Dear mum and dad, after I'm gone, I implore you to refrain from doing things which will make my master sad. This matter is decided by my own conscience; neither my master nor my grandmother is aware of this. Nobody knows in the whole family. Mum and dad, you should be happy and don't make my master sad, for you'll be causing my soul sorrow. Although my physical body may go, my soul will always remember and think of you. Now, I want to stop my pen here. This is the last stroke of my pen; goodbye mum and dad. I implore you to accept my respectful heart.

Your child,
Thich Duc Phong.

APPENDIX 7: Letter by Tieu Dieu before his self-immolation[13]

To the most venerable Thich Tinh-Khiet, President of the Buddhist Federation of Vietnam Hoi-chu Tong-hoi Phat-giao Vietnam) and the Supreme Patriarch of the Unified Buddhist Church, and to all the monks, nuns, and the Buddhists in the country,

Tonight I will offer this old physical body to the Buddhas of the Ten Directions, using my body as a way to urge President Ngo Dinh Diem, so that the five wishes of the Buddhists will be resolved and satisfied by the date specified. I also request that the President immediately cease his acts which are in breach of the Constitution that he himself publicly declared nine years ago (ie. the 1954 Constitution of the Republic of South Vietnam). After I die, I entrust the remains of my physical body to you, who have the right to deal with it however you see fit.

Before I close my eyes and return to the realm of the Buddha, I respectfully pray that the Buddha will protect and help you so that:
- you will be blessed with clarity of mind
- your bodies will remain strong and healthy.

in order to continue the struggle against the increasing oppression of the cruel authorities upon us.
Respectfully,

At Tu-Dam, on the 26th of the Sixth month (of the Lunar Calendar), 1963.
[15 August 1963]

Thich Tieu-Dieu
(birth name: Doan-Me. 71 years old)

[13] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Extracted from ibid, pp358-9.

To my son, Thich Thien-An, and all other children, grandchildren and relatives,

Your father has written this letter at the lotus feet of the Buddha. Before, your father returns and serves the Buddha in the Pure-land [ie. the Western Paradise of Amitabha Buddha]. Before leaving this earthly world, I hope you, my children, will remember my works and refrain from doing anything that will cause my heart pain when I am lying by the tranquil springs.

We all know that we are at a time when the Dharma is facing a great catastrophe. You, my children, are immensely fortunate that you are living by the sutras and have the guidance of the monks and nuns who have been practicing the Way for many years. The duty of protecting the Dharma, therefore, should rest on your shoulders.

Because your father thinks you are still young and that your level of education is still undistinguished, today I volunteer to take up the responsibility for you all. I know no better use for my physical body than to serve as a torch to light my heart, your heart, all the hearts of the Vietnamese Buddhists, and especially of those who intend to oppress Buddhism.

You have studied the Dharma and so you know that this physical body is meaningless. All the forms of funerals in this earthly world are illusionary…

[he went on to explain how his funeral should be conducted]

Now I go…

At Tu-Dam, on the 26th of the Sixth month (of the Lunar Calendar), 1963.
[15 August 1963]

Thich Tieu Dieu

APPENDIX 8: Letter by Mai Tuyet An before sacrificing her arm[14]

Dear Venerables, monks and nuns and all the Buddhist faithful, 12 August 1963, Saigon

In order to contribute to the struggle for the implementation of the Five Demands, your child, a Buddhist who is not officially recognised as a Buddhist (because I have not yet made my vows to take refuge in the Three Jewels), would now like to vow and offer to the Three Jewels and the Buddhas of the Ten Directions, my left hand. I hope to make this small but meritorious contribution to protect the righteous Dharma of the Buddha which has been befallen by catastrophe.
May the Enlightened One and the venerables, monks and nuns and the Buddhist faithful kindly forgive me as I let my blood flow in front of Buddha's statue.

[14] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Extracted from ibid, pp334-5.

May the dragon god (spirit) and the god protector of Dharma support and help me to achieve my vows.

Respectfully,

Mai Tuyet An
A female Buddhist of the Thi Nghe Chapter

APPENDIX 9: A Poem by Yeu Thien Khich lamenting Mai Tuyet An's Sacrifice[15]

Then another hand

Tonight the wind is cold and the stars, melancholy and dim
One by one the leaves are falling as are the petals of flowers
The sound of music and the rainfall are sad and lament continuously
In front of the temple the blood if flowing

Tonight we look onto the front yard through the grilles of the window
Blood has flowed, the blood of the heart
The blood for freedom and for the freedom of religion
The blood of a faithful female believer runs continuously

A hand holding an axe...can you see?
Blood that now overflows and that which has already flowed
Blood of Lac-Hong,[16] the descendent of Trung-Trieu[17]
Indeed, the hand is unyielding

Striking strong in order to pray
Praying for the Buddhist faith to emerge from its tribulation
For, the five demands have not yet been met
And the motherland is in sorrow....

Remembering a night full of tears

Written at Xa-Loi, on the night of the 13th August 1963
Kyman (pseudonym)
(Yeu Thien Khich)

[15] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Extracted from ibid, pp338-9.
[16] She refers here to the myth about how the Vietnamese were created by the union of a Dragon and the Fairy.
[17] When Vietnam was occupied by China two sisters, Trung and Trieu, formed an army each to fight the Chinese. They have since become legendary figures.

APPENDIX 10: Letter by Thanh Tue before his self-immolation[18]

To all the nuns, monks and the Buddhist faithful of Vietnam

Before I return to the realm of the Buddha, I respectfully send to you my final greetings. I sincerely pray that the grace bestowed by the three treasures of the Bodhisattva Quang Duc and the martyrs will support and assist all of you to be healthy so that you may closely unite behind the Most Venerable Patriarch Thich Tinh Khiet of the United Buddhist Church to protect Buddhism, to struggle for the belief of the people and to request the government to implement the minimum wishes which we have stated on our banners and in the Buddhist press.

Respectfully,
Thich Thanh Tue

To my two Masters and all the fellow Buddhists of the Phuoc-Duyen Temple

Before I return to the realm of the Buddha I respectfully greet my dear Masters, and my fellow Buddhists, who, I pray will remain healthy after I am gone. I go to serve the Dharma and follow the fearless example of the late Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc.

Respectfully,
Thich Thanh Tue,
Buddhist name, Quang Tri

2am 24th of the Sixth Month of the Lunar Calender, Year of the Rabbit (13th of August 1963)
To Mr. Bui-Du,
Bach Khe (hamlet), Hai Thuong (village), Hai Dang (district), Quang Tri (province)

My dear family,[19]

Dear uncle, realising the existence and disappearance of the Dharma, I have decided to sacrifice my body to fulfil the duty of a Buddhist renunciate. Death is natural to all sentient beings; you should not be sad.
After I die, you will have to face the threat but you should not be afraid. Do not be allured when they employ trickery - you must completely resist it for Buddhism. Even if this is at the cost of your body perishing; the body which is constituted by the four elements.[20]

---

[18] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Extracted from ibid, pp348-50.
[19] Literal translation is: "To my uncles, two brothers and three sisters and all my niece and nephews." But sometimes words such as "uncle" and "brother" do not necessarily refer to one's relatives as in the Western sense. I have therefore used the word "family" which can also mean people close to oneself who are not necessarily of blood relation.
[20] These being earth, water, fire and wind.

This is the last time I send my regards and farewell before returning to the realm of the Buddha. I wish to send my regards to my family, uncles, aunties, my cousins and all my close and distant relatives on father's and mother's side.

Respectfully,
Your child, Bui Huy Chuong
Thich Thanh Tue

APPENDIX 11: Letter by Thien Lai before his self-immolation[21]

Phu Nhuan district, 10 April 1970

To the Most Venerable Thich Hai Trang at Pho Quang Temple,

Homage to the original teacher, Sakyamuni Buddha
Dear Most Venerable and all the Venerables of this temple.
I am Thich Thien Lai, my earthly name is Bui Dinh Tan , 74 years old.
Bikkhu of the temple.

I feel pained before the miserable and turbulent situation of the country. The hearts of the people are scattered; there are even the monks[22] who are traitors and lackeys to foreign powers, betraying the Dharma and the people. Their names are known by everybody.

Seeing this situation, I vow to offer this physical body as a torch to awaken and light the conscience of those who betray the Dharma and the people so that they will learn repentance, and I pray that our people will be liberated from the present situation of bloodshed.

I know that by doing as such, I am causing worry to the Most Venerable and the Buddhist faithful of the United Buddhist Church. But in the campaign for peace and in requesting the basic rights of religious freedom for Buddhism, I think each citizen has a duty to contribute to this struggle. Doing my part, I wish to offer my physical body to show my love for the people and country of Vietnam and to express my sincerity in helping to preserve the Dharma. I wish the Most Venerable and the venerables will in turn show loving kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity23 towards me. Before I take my last breath, I pray for the United Buddhist Church and that our people will be liberated from the suffering and miserable situation soon.

Homage to the Bodhisattva of Continuing Progress.

Thich Thien Lai

---

[21] Translated by Tam Dao and author. Extracted from Thien Hoa (1970). *50 Nam Can Hung Phat Giao Viet Nam (50 years of Vietnamese Buddhism)*, Vietnam: Vien Hoa Dao, 208.
[22] Note that he uses the word 'Thay tu' which is not confined to Buddhist monks.
[23] These are the Four Imponderable Minds of Buddhism.

APPENDIX 12: List of events participated in during my 2012 fieldwork in the Tibetan exile community in India

1. Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) opera performance 30.6.2012
2. Dalai Lama's Birthday Celebration organised by the CTA at Main Temple 6.7. 2012
3. TIPA performance (essentially a "thank you India" concert). 6.7. 2012
4. TIPA performance for the Dalai Lama's birthday celebration 7.7. 2012
5. Candle light vigil to mourn self-immolation 10.7.2012
6. Book launch event for *Yak Horns* by Bhuchung D. Sonam 15.7.2012
7. Candle light vigil to mourn self-immolation 17.7.2012
8. TYC Press Conference on Order 5 18.7. 2012
9. Lecture on the Tibetan struggle at Oasis Café 18.7.12012
10. Self-immolation Puja, Main temple 2.8.2012
11. Visit to Tong-Len school (a school run by a Tibetan monk for former Indian street children) 4.8.2012
12. TYC Working Committee meeting, First Day Bir 8.8.2012
13. TYC Working Committee meeting, Second Day Bir 9.8.2012
14. Candle light vigil to mourn self-immolation of two teenager monk 28.8.2012
15. Self-immolation puja at Main Temple 31.8.2012
16. Freedom Concert 1.9.2012
17. Democracy Day proceedings 2.9.2012
18. Dalai Lama's Buddhist teachings for Southeast Asian Buddhists 4.9.2012-6.9.2012
19. Public audience with Karmapa 8.9.2012
20. Auditing the Parliamentary Session of the 15th ATPD 20.9.2012
21. Talk on "Future of Tibet" at TCV day school, organised by the Association of Tibetan New Generation 23.9.2012
22. First day of Special General Meeting on the crisis in Tibet 25.9.2012

Bibliography

Ackerman, Peter and Jack Duvall (2000) *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict.* New York: Palgrave.

Adam, Martin T. & Wayne Codling (2008) "Buddhist Perspectives on Terrorism" in Bryan Rennie and Philip L. Tite (Eds) *Religion, Terror and Violence: Religious Studies Perspectives.* London: Routledge: 177-194

Alger, Chadwick F. (2002) "Religion as a Peace Tool" *Ethnopolitics* 1(4): 94-109.

Anderson, Benedict (2003) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso

Andrugtsang, Gompo Tashi (1973) *Four Rivers, Six Ranges*, Dharamsala: Information and Publicity Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Apple Jr, R.W. (1966) "Ky Orders Hue Mayors to Quell Dissident Forces", *New York Times*, 3 June 1966: 2.

Appleby, R. Scott (2000) *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Archer, Margaret S. (1995) *Realist Social Theory: the Morphogenetic Approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Ardley, Jane (2000) "Violent Compassion: Buddhism and Resistance in Tibet" Paper for the Political Studies Association UK, 50th Annual Conference. 10-13 April 2003, London, UK: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228588173_Violent_Compassion_Buddhism_and_Resistance_in_Tibet (accessed 3 April 2013).

Ardley, Jane (2002) *The Tibetan Independence Movement: Political, religious, and Gandhian perspectives*. London: Routeledge Curzon.

Asad, Talal (2007) *On Suicide Bombing*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Atak, Iain (2006) "Nonviolent Political Action and the Limits of Consent" *Theoria* 111 (Dec): 87-107

Atlanta Dōjō website (2010) "The Most Venerable Nichidatsu Fujii": http://atlantadojo.tripod.com/gurujipage.html (accessed 14 August 2015)

Avedon, John (1994) *In Exile from the Land of Snows*, New York, Vintage Books

Avedon, John (1997) *In Exile from the Land of Snows.* London: Wisdom

Bartholomeusz, Tessa J. (2002) *In Defense of Dharma: Just-War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka*. London: Routledge Curzon

Bartoli, Andrea (2005) "Conflict Prevention: the Role of Religion is the Role of its Actors" *New Routes* 10(3): 3-7.

Benn, James A. (2007a) "Introduction" in James Benn & Jinhua Chen (Eds) *Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-Sacrifice*. Hualien, Taiwan: Tzu Chi University Press: 1-11

Benn, James A. (2007b) "Self-Immolation in the Context of War and Other Natural Disasters" in James Benn & Jinhua Chen (Eds) *Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-Sacrifice*. Hualien, Taiwan: Tzu Chi University Press: 51-83

Berkwitz, Stephen C. (2006) "Buddhism in Sri Lanka: Practice, Protest, and Preservation" in Stephen C. Berkwitz (Ed) *Buddhism in World Cultures: Comparative Perspectives*. California: ABC CLIO

Berger, Peter L. (1999) *Desecularisation of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*. Washington D.C.: Ethics Public Policy.

Berrigan, Daniel and Nhat Hanh (1975) *The Raft is Not the Shore: Conversations Toward a Buddhist/Christian Awareness.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Besuchet, Christophe (2012) "Beacons of resistance, not desperate acts" Rangzen Alliance: http://www.rangzen.net/2012/01/28/beacons-of-resistance-not-desperate-acts/ (accessed 27 September 2015).

Bhargava, Rajeev (2010) "The 'Secular Ideal' before Secularism: A Preliminary Sketch" in Cady, L. E., and E. Hurd (Eds). *Comparative Secularisms in a Global Age*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan: 160-176

Bhargava, Rajeev (2011) "Rehabilitating Secularism" in Craig J. Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan VanAntwerpen (Eds). *Rethinking Secularism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press: 92-113.

Bhuchung D. Sonam (2012) *Yak Horns: Notes on Contemporary Tibetan Writing, Music, Film and Politics*. Dharamsala, India: TibetWrites

Blum, Lawrence (1980). "Compassion" in Rorty, A.O. (ed.), *Explaining Emotions.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bodewitz, Henk W. (1999) "Hindu Ahiṁsā and its Roots" in Jan E. M. Houben & Karel R. Van Kooij (Ed) *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-Violence, and the Rationalization of Violence in South Asian Cultural History*. Leiden: Brill: 17-44

Bondurant, Joan (1971) *Conflict: Violence and Nonviolence.* Chicago: Aldine-Atherton.

Bondurant, Joan (1988) *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict.* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Bondurant, Joan V. and Fisher, Margaret W. (1971) "Gandhi: A Psychoanalytic View" *The American Historical Review* 76(4): 1104-1115

Boserup, Anders & Mack, Andrew (1974) *War Without Weapons: Nonviolence in National Defence*. London: Frances Pinter

Botman, H. Russell (2004) "Truth and Reconciliation: The South Africa Case" in Harold Coward, H. and Gordon S. Smith (Eds) *Religion and Peacebuilding*. New York: State University of New York Press: 243-260

Bouscaren, Anthony T. (1965) *The Last of the Mandarins: Diem of Vietnam.* Pittsburgh, Penna: Duquesne University Press.

Bowker, John W. (1970) *Problems of Suffering in Religions of the World.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boyd, Helen R. (2004) *The Future of Tibet: the Government-in-exile Meets the Challenge of Democratization*. New York: Peter Lang

Browne, Malcolm (1993) *Muddy Boots and Red Socks: A Reporter's Life.* New York: Random House.

Brox, Trine (2012) "Unyoking the Political from the Religious: Secularisation and Democratisation in the Tibetan Community in Exile" in Bubandt, N, and M. van Beek (Eds). *Varieties of Secularism in Asia: Anthropological Explorations of Religion, Politics and the Spiritual*. Abingdon, Oxford; New York: Routledge: 55-74

Buffetrille, Katia (2012) "Self-Immolation in Tibet: Some Reflections on an Unfolding History" *Revue d'Etudes Tibétaines* No. 25, December 2012: 1-17

Burrowes, Robert (1996) *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach.* Albany: State University of New York Press

Byrne, Peter (1995) *Prolegomena to Religious Pluralism: Reference and Realism in Religion.* New York: St. Martin's.

Calhoun, Craig (2001) "Putting Emotions in Their Place" in Jeff Goodwin, James Jasper and Francesca Polletta (eds.) *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Campbell, Joseph (1988) *The Power of Myth.* New York: Doubleday.

Campbell, Joseph (1990) *The Flight of the Wild Gander.* New York: Harper Perennial.

Cao Ngoc Phuong (1969) "Voice from the Burning House" (pamphlet submitted for the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation to Paris). New York: Publications of the Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Cao Ngoc Phuong (1988) “Days and Months”, in Eppsteiner, F. (ed.), *The Path of Compassion: Writings on Socially Engaged Buddhism*. Berkeley: Parallax.

Cao Ngoc Phuong (Chan Khong) (1993) *Learning True Love: How I Learned and Practiced Social Change in Vietnam*. Berkeley: Parallax Press.

Case, Clarence Marshall (1923) *Nonviolent Coercion: A Study in Methods of Social Pressure*. New York: Century.

Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) (2016) “History of the MWA” Middle Way Approach, Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://mwa.tibet.net/ (accessed 8 December 2015).

Chan, Victor (2004) *The Wisdom of Forgiveness: HH the Dalai Lama and Victor Chan.* London: Hodder & Stoughton

Chatterjee, Partha (1993) *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton. New Jersey: Princeton University Press

Chenoweth, Erica & Stephan, Maria J. (2011) *Why Civil Resistance Works: The logic of nonviolent conflict.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Chouinard, Vera (1997) “Structure and Agency: Contested concepts in human geography*” Canadian Geographer* 41(4) Winter: 363–377

Christopher, Paul (1999) *The Ethics of War and Peace: An Introduction to Legal and Moral Issues*. Upper Saddle River, N.J. : Prentice Hall.

Chung Tsering (2012) “Online Articles on Self-immolation by by Tibetans in Exile—A Brief Survey” *Revue d’Etudes Tibétaines* No. 25, December 2012: 99-104.

Cobb, John (2005) “Some Whiteheadian Assumptions about Religion and Pluralism” in David Ray Griffin (ed) *Deep Religious Pluralism*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press: 223-232

Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC) (2003) "The Execution of Lobsang Dondrub and the Case Against Tenzin Deleg The Law, the Courts, and the Debate on Legality", CECC Special Topic Paper: http://www.cecc.gov/publications/issue-papers/the-execution-of-lobsang-dondrub-and-the-case-against-tenzin-deleg-the-law (accessed 10 December 2015)

Connolly, William E. (1983) *The Terms of Political Discourse*, Oxford: Martin Robertson

Coward, Harold and Smith, Gordon S. (2004) *Religion and Peacebuilding*. New York: State University of New York Press

Craig, Mary (1992) *Tears of Blood: A Cry for Tibet*, London: HarperCollins

Craig, Sienna R. (2012) "Social Suffering and Embodied Political Crisis" *Cultural Anthropology*. 26 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/97-social-suffering-and-embodied-political-crisis (accessed 13 October 2015)

Crossette, Barbara (2002) "Tibetan Monk Prepares Exiles for a Political Shift." *Tibetan Bulletin*, May-June (Reprinted from *The New York Times*, 21 July 2002): 28.

Crow, Ralph, Philip Grant and Saad I. Ibrahim Eds. (1990). *Arab Nonviolent Political Struggle in the Middle East*. London: Lynn Rienner.

CTA (1998) *The Worship of Shugden: Documents related to a Tibetan controversy.* Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Religion and Culture

CTA (2001a) *Introduction to the Central Tibetan Administration*. Dharamsala, India: Department of Information and International Relations

CTA (2001b) "Samdhong Rinpoche takes Oath" 9 January 2001. Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/2001/01/09/samdhong-rinpoche-takes-oath/ (accessed 22 January 2013).

CTA (2003) *Tibetan Community in Exile. Integrated Development Plan-III. Investment & Implementation Guidelines 2003–2006.* Dharamsala: Planning Commission.

CTA (2008) *Supreme Justice Commission* (brochure). Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Information and International Relations.

CTA (2011a) *Collected Statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on Devolution of Power to the Elected Leaders of Central Tibetan Administration*. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Information and International Relations.

CTA (2011b) *Historical Account of the Tibetan Monasteries in Exile (Btsan byol bod mi'i dgon sde khag gi lo rgyus)*. Vols 1-3. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Religion and Culture.

CTA (2011c) *Report of the 11th General Meeting of the 4 Religious schools and Bön, 22-24 September 2011 at Surya Hotel, Dharamsala (Bod kyi chos brgyud chen po bzhi dang g.yung drung bon bcas kyi chos tshogs thengs buc gcig pa chos rig las khungs kyi go sgrig 'og bod rgyal lo 2138 phyi lo 2011 zla 9 tshes 22 nas 24 bar rda sa su rya mgron khang du bskyangs pa'I snyan tho bzhugs so)*. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Religion and Culture.

CTA (2015a) "20 Years on—Tibet's Panchen Lama Still Missing Since Age Six", Feature Flash News, Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/2015/04/20-years-on-tibets-panchen-lama-still-missing-since-age-six/ (accessed 10 December 2015)

CTA (2015b) "Department of Information and International Relations" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/information/ (accessed 28 September 2015)

CTA (2015c) "Renewed Contacts (2002-2010)" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/important-issues/sino-tibetan-dialogue/an-overview-of-sino-tibetan-dialogue/sino-tibetan-dialogue-renewed-contacts-2002/ (accessed 25 September 2015).

CTA (2016a) "His Holiness the Dalai Lama" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/about-tibet/his-holiness/ (accessed 25 January 2016)

CTA (2016b) "Offices of Tibet" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration: http://tibet.net/contact/offices-of-tibet/ (accessed 20 January 2016).

Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher (2013) "Understanding Strategic Choice: The determinants of civil war and nonviolent campaign in self-determination disputes" *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 291-304.

Dalai Lama (1962) *My Land and My People: Memoirs of the Dalai Lama of Tibet.* New York: Potala Corporation.

Dalai Lama (1987) "Five Point Peace Plan: Address to the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus, 21 September 1987" Official Website of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet: http://www.dalailama.com/messages/tibet/five-point-peace-plan (accessed 16 January 2016)

Dalai Lama (1988) "Strasbourg Proposal 1988: Address to the Members of the European Parliament, Strasbourg, France, June 15, 1988" Official Website of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet: http://www.dalailama.com/messages/tibet/strasbourg-proposal-1988 (accessed 16 January 2016)

Dalai Lama (1990a) *Freedom in Exile: Autobiography of the Dalai Lama*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

Dalai Lama (1990b) *The Global Community and the Need for Universal Responsibility.* Boston: Wisdom Publications.

Dalai Lama (1995a) *Commentary on the Thirty Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva.* New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Workds and Archives

Dalai Lama (1995b) *Dialogues on Universal Responsibility and Education*, New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives

Dalai Lama (1995c) *Opening the Mind and Generating a Good Heart*, New Delhi: Library of Tibetan Works and Archives

Dalai Lama (1996) *Kindness, Clarity and Insight*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers

Dalai Lama (1998a) "Guidelines on Future Tibet's Constitution" in Shiromany, A. A. (Ed.). *The Political Philosophy of His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama*. New Delhi: Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Center: 276-286.

Dalai Lama (1998b) "Statement by His Holiness the Dalai Lama" 28 April 1998: http://www.tibet.to/tyc1998/tyce.htm#09 (accessed 18 January 2016)

Dalai Lama (1999) *Ancient Wisdom, Modern World: Ethics for a New Millennium*. London: Abacus

Dalai Lama (2012) *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World*. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers India.

Dalai Lama (2013) "Meetings and Talk on 'Educating the Heart' in Cambridge, England" Official Website of His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet: http://www.dalailama.com/news/post/935-meetings-and-talk-on-educating-the-heart-in-cambridge-england (accessed 20 January 2016)

Dalai Lama (2016) "The Reality of War", Official Website of His Holiness The 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet: www.dalailama.com/messages/world-peace/the-reality-of-war/ (accessed 2 January 2016)

Dalal, C. B. (Ed.) (1971) *Gandhi: 1915-48, A detailed Chronology*, 1st ed., New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation in collaboration with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Davis, Andrew (2010) "Defining Religious Pluralism for Religious Education" *Ethics and Education* 5(3): 189-202

Dawa Norbu (2001) *China's Tibet Policy.* Surrey: Curzon.

Dargyay, Eva K. (1991) "Sangha and State in Imperial Tibet" in Steinkellner, Ernst, and Uray Géza. *Tibetan History and Language : Studies Dedicated to Uray Géza on His Seventieth Birthday*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien: 111-127

D'Costa, Gavin (1996) "Impossibility of a Pluralist View of Religions" *Religious Studies* 32: 223-232

Deegalle, Mahinda (2003) "Is Violence Justified in the Theravāda Buddhism?" *The Ecumenical Review* 55(2): 122-131

de La Boetie, Étienne (1975) *The Politics of Obedience: The Discourse of Voluntary Servitude*. Trans. H. Kurtz, Reprint, Montreal: Black Rose Books

Delhey, Martin (2006) "Views on Suicide in Buddhism: Some Remarks" in Michael Zimmermann (Ed) *Buddhism and Violence*. Rupandehi, Nepal: Lumbini International Research Institute: 25-63

Demiéville, Paul (2010) "Buddhism and War" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 17-57

Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) (1999) *Chibetto Nyūmon* チベット入門. Suwashi, Nagano: Choeisha.

Dharan, Anjali, J. (2003) *Indo-Tibetan Political Relations: Past, Present and Future of Tibet*. Independent Research. Emory-IBD Tibetan Studies Program Dharamsala, India: http://abroad.emory.edu/_customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=5991 (accessed 4 May 2012).

Dhondup Tashi Rekjong (2012) "Online Debates among Tibetans in Exile" *Cultural Anthropology*: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/112-online-debates-among-tibetans-in-exile (accessed 12 October 2015).

Di Noia, Joseph A. (1992) *The Diversity of Religions: A Christian Perspective*. Washington, DC: Catholic Univeristy of American Press

Dolma Choephel, Sonam Wangdu, and Gyatso (2004) "An Open Letter to Kofi Annan from Three Tibetans on Hunger Strike" *International Herald Tribune*, 29 April 2004, reprinted by Phayul: http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=6779 (accessed 15 July 2005)

Dong Bon. (1997). *Danh Tang Viet Nam (Famous Monks of Vietnam)*. Ho Chi Minh City: HCMC Publishing House.

Donnet, Pierre-Antoine (1994) *Tibet: Survival in Question* (trans. Tica Broch), London: Zed Books

Dorjee Tsetan (2015) "China's Worst Kept Secret: 5 Facts About the Abduction of Tibet's Panchen Lama" *Huffington Post* 19 May 2015: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dorjee-tseten/chinas-worst-kept-secret-_b_7308598.html (accessed 10 December 2015)

Drew, Rose (2003) "Reconsidering the Possibility of Pluralism" *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 40: 245-266.

Dreyfus, Georges (1999) "The Shuk-den Affair: Origins of a Controversy" CTA, Dharamsala: Department of Information and International Relations. [Originally printed in 1998 in the *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21(2)].

Duc Nhuan (1996). *Buddhism and its Vietnamese History*. California: Vietnamese Buddhist Philosophy Institution.

Durkheim, Émile (1926) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology*. London: G. Allen & Unwin.

Durt, Hubert (2007) "Peace and Self-Sacrifice in Buddhism" in James Benn & Jinhua Chen (Eds) *Buddhism and Peace: Issues of Violence, Wars and Self-Sacrifice*. Hualien, Taiwan: Tzu Chi University Press: 35-49

Earl, Jennifer (2003) “Tanks, Tear Gas, and Taxes: Toward a theory of movement repression” *Sociological Theory* 21(1): 44-68.

Eckel, Malcolm David (1999) “The Concept of the Ultimate in Madhyamaka Thought: In Memory of Frederick Streng” in Sallie B. King and Paul O. Ingram (eds) *The Sound of Liberating Truth: Buddhist-Christian Dialogues*. London: Routledge.

Eckholm, Erik (2003) "China Court Rejects Appeal of Tibetan Monk Sentenced to Death for Separatism" *The New York Times*, 27 January: http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/27/world/china-court-rejects-appeal-of-tibetan-monk-sentenced-to-death-for-separatism.html (accessed 10 December 2015).

Eco, Umberto (1984). *Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Edin, Maria (1992) *Transition to Democracy in Exile—A study of the Tibetan Government's Strategy for Self-determination*, University of Uppsala: Department of Government Minor Field Study No. 16

Eguchi, Keiichi 江口圭一 (1982) *Shōwa no rekishi* 昭和の歴史 Vol. 4. *Jūgonen sensō no kaimaku* １５年戦争の開幕. Tokyo: Shōgakukan.

Eliade, Mircea (1987) *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, translated by Willard R. Trask. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

Erik Erikson (1964) *Insight and Responsibility*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Erikson, Erik (1969) *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company

Faure, Bernard (2010) “Afterthoughts” in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 211-225

Fitzgerald, Frances. (1972) *Fire in the Lake: The Vietnamese and the Americans in Vietnam*, Toronto: Little, Brown & Company.

Forest, James H. (1978) *The Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam: Fifteen Years for Reconciliation.* Alkmaar, The Netherlands: International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Foucault, Michel (1980) *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*, translated and edited by Colin Gordon, New York : Harvester Wheatsheaf

Freud, Sigmund (1957) *The Future of an Illusion*, translated by W.D. Robson-Scott. Garden City, N.Y. : Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1961) *Dokku* 毒鼓. Tokorozawa, Saitama: Waseda shobō.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1967) *Tenku* 天鼓. Issue 2, Nipponzan Myōhōji.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達(1968) “Hokekyō to heiwa shisō: Tokoro hakase no hōbō zanzai, issetsu tashō, busshō-ron wo hasuru ben 法華経と平和思想—戸頃博士の謗法斬罪・一殺多生・仏性論を破する弁” *Daihōrin* 大法論, March, 149-150.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1969) “Fusesshō-kai 不殺生戒” in Japan Peace Committee (Ed). *Heiwa undō 20-shūnen kinen ronbunshū* 平和運動 20 周年祈念論文集. Tokyo: Ōtuski shoten.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1972) “Waruda Nikki shō 藁田日記抄” in *Ichi Embudai* 一閻浮提. Tokyo: Daihōrinkaku.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1979) “Kanjin honzon 観心本尊” Speech delivered at Atami dōjō on 31 August 1979 (Unpublished material).

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1981) *Bukkyō to sekai heiwa* 仏教と世界平和. Revised ed. Japan-Bharat Sarvodaya Mitrata Sangha.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1983) *Hakuju* 白寿. Nipponzan Myōhōji Hakuju Kyōsan Committee.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1991) “Nenpyō: Onshi Nichidatsu shōnin no gosenge yori heisei 3 nen made 年表—恩師日達聖人の御遷化より平成 3 年まで” *Gaze seshonshi* 我是世尊使 (Photobook). Nipponzan Myōhōji.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1991) “Nichidatsu-shōnin no saigono hōwa 日達上人の最後の法話” in *Zengahō—Nyozetsu shugyō no gyōsha Fujii Nichidatsu sono sho to ga* 禪画報—如説修行の行者藤井日達その書と画 (Zen Graphic), Summer Issue 16

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1992) *Waga Hibōryoku* わが非暴力. Tokyo: Shunjūsha.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1996) “Kōkuyō shari 広供養舎利” in *Fujii Nichidatsu Zenshū* 藤井日達全集 Vol. 3. Tokyo: Ryūbunkan.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (1997) *Tenku: Yōmonshū* 天鼓・要文集. (Fujii Nichidatsu dai shōnin hōwa shū) 藤井日達大聖人御法話集. Tokyo: Nipponzan Myōhōji.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (2005a) “Sekai heiwa to bukkyōto no sensō sekinin (jō): Nipponzan e no gokai o tadasu 世界平和と仏教徒の戦争責任（上）—日本山への誤解を正す—” in *Tenku* 天鼓 August Issue, Nipponzan Myōhōji, 32.

Fujii Nichidatsu 藤井日達 (2005b) “Sekai heiwa to bukkyōto no sensō sekinin (ge): Nipponzan e no gokai o tadasu 世界平和と仏教徒の戦争責任（下）—日本山への誤解を正す—” in *Tenku* 天鼓 September Issue, 13.

Fukuyama, Francis (1989) "The End of History?" *National Interest* 16(Summer): 3-18.

Fukuyama, Francis (1992) *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York: The Free Press

Galtung, Johan (1965) "On the Meaning of Nonviolence" *Journal of Peace Research* 2(3): 228-257

Galtung, Johan (1995) "On the Politics of Peace Action: Nonviolence and Creativity" in Glenn D. Paige, Lou Ann Ha'aheo Guanson, and George Simson (eds) *Hawai'i Journeys in Nonviolence: Autobiographical Reflections*. Honolulu, Hawai'i: Centre for Global Nonviolence Planning Project, Matsunaga Institute for Peace, University of Hawai'i.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1909/1999) "Hind Swaraj" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 10. New Delhi: Government of India: 245-315.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1930) "Some Rules of Satyagraha" *Young India* (Navajivan) 23 February 1930, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Vol. 48: 340

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1925/1999) "Satyagraha in South Africa" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 34. New Delhi: Government of India: 1-277

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1934) *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*. 4th Ed. Madras: Natesan

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1939/1999) "Requisite Qualifications" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 75. New Delhi: Government of India: 195-196.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1941/1999) "Constructive Programme: Its Meaning and Place" in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 81. New Delhi: Government of India: 355-374.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1944). *Nonviolence in Peace and War*, 2nd Ed. Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publishing.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1948). *Nonviolence in Peace and War*, Vols. 1 and 2, Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan Publishing.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1950) *Hindu Dharma*. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1954) *Satyagraha in South Africa.* California: Academic Reprints.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1958a) *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 28, New Delhi: Government of India, Publications Divisions

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1958b) *The Hindu*, 19 August 1920, in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 18, New Delhi: Government of India, Publications Divisions

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1959) *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Vol 54. New Delhi: Government of India Publications.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1961) *Nonviolent Resistance*, New York: Schocken Books.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1973) "Advice to Japanese Buddhist Priests" dated 4 October 1933, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, The Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1993) *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Gandhi, Mohandas K. (1997) *Hind Swaraj and Other Writings*. Anthony J. Parel (ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Ganguli, Birendranath N. (1973) *Gandhi's Social Philosophy.* Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.

Gardner, Alexander P. (2006) "The twenty-five sites of Khams: religious geography, revelation and nonsectarianism in nineteenth-century Eastern Tibet." DPhil Thesis—University of Michigan (Asian Languages and Cultures: Buddhist Studies).

Garfield, Jay L. (2002) *Empty Words: Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gier, Nicholas F. (2014) "Gandhi, Deep Religious Pluralism, and Multiculturalism" *Philosophy East & West* 64(2): 319-339.

Goddard, D. Ed. (1938) *A Buddhist Bible.* 2nd ed, Thetford, Vermont: Swight Goddard.

Godrej, Farah (2006) "Nonviolence and Gandhi's Truth: A Method for Moral and Political Arbitration" *The Review of Politics* 68: 287-317

Goffman, Erving (1974). *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organisational Experience.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Goodwin, Jeff, James Jasper and Francesca Polletta Eds. (2001) *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gould, John A. & Moe, Edward (2012) "Beyond Rational Choice: Ideational assault and the strategic use of frames in nonviolent civil resistance" in Nepstad S. E. & L. R. Kurtz (eds) *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: 123-154.

Gravel, Senator Ed. (1971) *The Pentagon Papers* Vol.2. Boston: Beacon Press.

Gray, John (1998). "Global Utopias and Clashing Civilisations: Misunderstanding the Present," *International Affairs* 74(1) January: 149-163

Green, Paula (2000) "Walking for Peace: Nipponzan Myohoji" in Christopher S. Queen (ed). *Engaged Buddhism in the West*. Boston: Wisdom Publication: 128-155

Gregg, Richard (1934) *The Power of Nonviolence.* London: James Clark & Co.

Gregg, Richard (1966) *The Power of Nonviolence.* 2nd rev. ed., New York: Schocken Books.

Griffin, David Ray (2005) "John Cobb's Whiteheadian Complementary Pluralism" in David Ray Griffin (ed) *Deep Religious Pluralism*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press: 39-66.

Griffin, David Ray (ed) (2005). *Deep Religious Pluralism*. Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press.

Grose, Peter (1964a) "Catholics Rally in Saigon, Charging Bias by Regime" *New York Times*, 8 June: 1.

Grose, Peter (1964b) "Khanh Responds to Young Critics" *New York Times*, 23 August: 3.

Grose, Peter (1964c) "Riots Continuing" *New York Times*, 26 August: 1.

Grose, Peter (1964d) "Violence Widespread" *New York Times*, 25 August: 10.

Gyatso, Janet (2012) "Discipline and Resistance on the Tibetan Plateau" *Cultural Anthropology*. 26 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/96-discipline-and-resistance-on-the-tibetan-plateau (accessed 13 October 2015).

Gyurme Dorje, Tashi Tsering, Heather Stoddard, André Alexander, Ulrich van Schroeder (eds) (2010) *Jokhang, Tibet's Most Sacred Temple*. London: Edition Hansjörg Mayer, 136-137.

Hallin, Daniel (1989) *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hamada, Hideo (Director) (1983) *Kusanone no hitobito: Sunagawa Tōsō no kiroku* 草の根の人びと—砂川闘争の記録 (Documentary Film). Hamada Productions.

Hao, Yan (2000) "Tibetan Population in China: Myths and Facts Re-examined" *Asian Ethnicity* 1(1), March.

Harrison, Victoria (2006) "Internal Realism and the Problem of Religious Diversity" *Philosophia* 34: 287-301

Harrison, Victoria (2008) "Internal Realism, Religious Pluralism, and Ontology" *Philosophia* 36: 97-110

Hartley, Lauran R. (1997) "A Socio-historical study of the Kingdom of sde-dge (Derge, Kham) in the late nineteenth century: *ris-med* views of alliance and

authority." MA Thesis—Indiana University (Department of Central Eurasian Studies), 49.

Hassler, Alfred (1967). "Afterword", *Vietnam: Lotus in the Sea of Fire*, London: SCM.

Hassler, Alfred (1970) *Saigon, USA,* New York: Richard W. Baron Press.

Hay, Colin (2002) "Beyond Structure and Agency: Context versus Conduct", *in Political Analysis: Contemporary Controversies.* London: Palgrave

Haynes, Jeffrey (1998) *Religion in Global Politics.* London: Longman.

Haynes, Jeffrey (2010) "Conflict, Conflict Resolution and Peace-building: The role of religion in Mozambique, Nigeria and Cambodia" in Jeffrey Hayes (Ed) *Religion and Politics: Critical Concepts in Religious Studies*. London: Routledge: 221-243

Hayward, Susan (2012) *Religion and Peacebuilding: Reflections on Current Challenges and Future Prospects* (Special Report 313). Washington: United States Institute of Peace.

Hebblethwaite, Brian (1976). *Evil, Suffering and Religion.* London: Sheldon Press.

Heim, Mark S. (1994) "Salvations: A More Pluralistic Hypothesis" *Modern Theology* 10: 341-360

Heim, Mark S. (1995) *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis

Hess, David & Martin, Brian (2006) "Repression, backfire, and the theory of transformative events." *Mobilization* 11(1): 249-267

Hick, John (1985) *Problems of Religious Pluralism*. London: St. Martin's.

Hick, John (1987) "The Non-Absoluteness of Christianity" in John Hick and Paul Knitter (eds) *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

Hick, John (1989) *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*. London: Macmillan.

Hick, John (1999) *The Fifth Dimension: An Exploration of the Spiritual Realm*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications.

Hick, John (2000) "Ineffability" *Religious Studies* 36(1): 35-46.

Hick, John (2004) *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Hick, John (2005) *A Christian Theology of Religions: The Rainbow of Faiths.* Louisville: Westminister John Knox Press

Higashionna, Takuma (2016) Official Website of Takuma Higashionna: http://takumahigashionna.jimdo.com/ (accessed 5 May 2015).

Himal (2002) "Satyagraha in exile" *Himal* (September), Kathmandu, reprinted in *Tibetan Bulletin* 2002 Jul-Sept, 22

Ho Tan Anh (2001) Letter of Ho Tan Anh. Excerpted in *Vietnam Democracy*: *A Monthly Publication of the Free Vietnam Alliance*, September 2001, X(9): 1-8.

Hochschild, Arlie (1979) "Emotion Work, Feeling Rules and Social Structure", *American Journal of Sociology* 85(3): 551-75.

Hope, Marjorie and James Young (1977) "The Third Way: Thich Nhat Hanh and Cao Ngoc Phuong", *The Struggle for Humanity: Agents of Nonviolent Change in a Violent World*, New York: Orbis Books.

Hosseini, Seyed Hassan (2010) "Religious Pluralism and Pluralistic Religion: John Hick's Epistemological Foundation of Religious Pluralism and an Explanation of Islamic Epistemology toward Diversity of Unique Religion" *The Pluralist* 5(1): 94-109

Huntington, Samuel (1993) "The Clash of Civilisations?" *Foreign Affairs* Summer: 22-49.

Huntington, Samuel (1996) *The Clash of Civilisations and the Making of the World Orde*r. New York: Simon & Schuster

Ie Village Official Website (2015) "Danketsu dōjō'": http://www.iejima.org/document/2015011000237/ (accessed 5 May 2015).

Imai, Gyōjun 今井行順 (1998) "Tangyō raihai no gyōsha: Fujii Nichidatsu-shi no toikakeru mono 但行礼拝の行者—藤井日達師の問いかけるもの" (keynote address of the 30th Chūō Kenkyūkai) in *Gendai Kenkyū-hō* 現代研究報. Nichiren Buddhism Modern Religious Institute. Issue 32: http://www.genshu.gr.jp/DPJ/syoho/syoho32/s32_295.htm (accessed 7 September 2006)

Institute of Oriental Philosophy (2014) "'The Lotus Sutra: its Message of Peace and Coexistence' Exhibition (Hokkaido)": http://www.totetu.org/exhibition/1/15.html (accessed 6 July 2015)

International Campaign for Tibet (2015) "Self-Immolation by Tibetans" Updated as of 4 September 2015: http://www.savetibet.org/resources/fact-sheets/self-immolations-by-tibetans/ (accessed 21 September 2015)

International Commission of Jurists (1959) *The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law*, Geneva: ICJ

Iyer, Raghavan Ed. (1973) *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Iyer, Raghavan Ed. (1986) *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* Vol 2. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Jackson, Timothy P. (2003) *The Priority of Love: Christian Charity and Social Justice.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Jamyang Norbu (1989) *Illusion and Reality: Essays on the Tibetan and Chinese Political Science from 1978-1989*, Dharamsala: TYC.

Jamyang Norbu (1990) "Opening of the political eye: Tibet's long search for democracy." *Tibetan Review* November: 13-17.

Jamyang Norbu (1994) "The Tibetan Resistance Movement and the Role of the C.I.A" in Robert Barnett and Shirin Akiner (eds.) *Resistance and Reform in Tibet*, London: Hurst & Company.

Jamyang Norbu (2008) "Remembering Thubten Ngodup" *Shadow Tibet* (Jamyang Norbu's Blog) 28 April 2008: http://www.jamyangnorbu.com/blog/2008/05/12/remembering-thupten-ngodup/ (accessed 5 July 2015).

Jasper, James M. (1998) "The Emotions of Protest: Affective and Reactive Emotions in and around Social Movements", *Sociological Forum*, 13(3): 397-424.

Jasper, James M. (1997) *The Art of Moral Protest: Culture, Biography and Creativity in Social Movements.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Jasper, James M. and J. D. Poulsen (1995) "Recruiting Strangers and Friends: Moral shocks and Social Networks in Animal Rights and Anti-nuclear Protests", *Social Problems* 42: 493-512.

Jasper, Karl (1953) *The Origin and Goal of History* (English translation by Michael Bullock). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Jenkins, Stephen (2010) "Making Merit through Warfare According to the *Ārya-Bodhisattva-gocara-upāyaviṣaya-vikurvaṇa-nirdeśa Sūtra*" in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 59-75

Jenkins, Stephen (2011) "It's not so strange for a Buddhist to endorse killing" *The Guardian* 11 May 2011: http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2011/may/11/buddhism-bin-laden-death-dalai-lama (accessed 14 September 2015).

Jerryson, Michael (2010a) “Militarizing Buddhism: Violence in Southern Thailand” in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 179-209.

Jerryson, Michael (2010b) “Introduction” in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (Eds) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 3-16

Jessop, Bob (2001). “Institutional (Re)Turns and the Strategic-Relational Approach” *Environment and Planning A* 33(7) July: 1213-1235.

Juergensmeyer, Mark (2000) *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Juergensmeyer, Mark (2008) *Global Rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militias to Al Qaida*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Kahin, George (1986) *Intervention: How America Became Involved in Vietnam*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Kane, Anne (1997) “Theorising Meaning Construction in Social Movements: Symbolic Structures and Interpretation during the Irish Land War, 1879-1882”, *Sociological Theory* 15(3), Nov: 249-76.

Karma Monlam Ed. (2000) *The New English-Tibetan Dictionary*. Dharamsala, India: CTA, Department of Education.

Karnow, Stanley (1983) *Vietnam: A History.* New York: Penguin.

Karuvelil, S. J., George V. (2012) “Absolutism to Ultimacy: Rhetoric and Reality of Religious ‘Pluralism’” *Theological Studies* 73: 55-81.

Katsiaficas, George Ed. (1992). *Vietnam Documents: American and Vietnamese*

Kauffmann, Thomas (2011) “Put your compassion into action: the political and religious agendas of the Central Tibetan Administration in a world of transnational organisations”. Thesis DPhil—University of Oxford, 193

Kemper, Theodore D. (1989) “Love and Like and Love and Love”, in Franks, D. D. and E. D. McCarthy (eds), *The Sociology of Emotions: Original Essays and Research Papers*, London: JAI Press.

Kemper, Theodore D. (2001) “A Structural Approach to Social Movement Emotions” in Goodwin, Jeff, James Jasper and Francesca Polletta (eds). *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social* Movements. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kent, Daniel W. (2010) “Onward Buddhist Soldiers: Preaching to the Sri Lankan Army” in Michael K. Jerryson & Mark Juergensmeyer (eds.) *Buddhist Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press: 157-177

Keown, Damien (2001) *Buddhism and Bioethics*. London: MacMillan

Keown, Damien and John Keown (1995) “Killing, Karma and Caring: Euthanasia in Buddhism and Christianity” *Journal of Medical Ethics* 21: 265-269.

King, Mary (1999) *Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr; The Power of Nonviolent Action*, Paris: UNESCO Publishing.

King Jr., Martin Luther (1958) *Stride towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story*, New York: Harper & Row.

King, Sallie, B. (1996) “Thich Nhat Hanh and the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam: Nondualism in Action” and “Conclusion: Buddhist Social Activism”, in Queen, C. S. and S. B. King (eds). *Engaged Buddhism: Buddhism Liberation Movement in Asia*, Albany: State University of New York Press.

King, Sallie, B. (2000) “They Who Burned Themselves for Peace: Quaker and Buddhist Self-immolators during the Vietnam War” *Buddhist-Christian Studies* 20: 127-150.

King-Hall, Stephen (1958) *Defence in the Nuclear Age*. London: Gollancz; Gene Sharp (1959) “Britain considers her weapons: a record of debate” *Gandhi Marg* 3: 104-126

Kisala, Robert ロバート・キサラ (1997) *Shūkyō-teki heiwa shisō no kenkyū: Nihon shin shūkyō no oshie to jissen* 宗教的平和思想の研究—日本新宗教の教えと実践. Tokyo: Shinjūsha.

Kisala, Robert (1999) *Prophets of Peace: Pacifism and Cultural Identity in Japan’s New Religions*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Kitsu, Hiromitsu 木津博充 (2005) “My encounter with unlawful arrest and detention 不当逮捕・不当勾留に身を置いて” *Tenku* 天鼓 Nov-Dec 2005: http://www.nipponzanmyohoji.org/yobikake/okinawa051029_1.htm (accessed 15 May 2006).

Klieger, Paul Christiaan (1991) *Tibetan Nationalism: the Role of Patronage in the Accomplishment of a National Identity*. Meerut, India: Archana Publications.

Knitter, Paul (1995) *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility*. Maryknoll, MY: Orbis

Knitter, Paul (2009) *Without Buddha I Could Not Be a Christian*. New York: Oneworld, 214-216

Kosek, Joseph Kip (2005) “Richard Gregg, Mohandas Gandhi, and the Strategy of Nonviolence” *The Journal of American History* 91(4): 1318-1348

Kranti, Vijay (2015) "A Personal Encounter with Three Brave Hearts of Tibet TYC Hunger Strike in New Delhi" 1 October 2015, Rangzen Alliance Blogs:

http://www.rangzen.net/2015/10/01/a-personal-encounter-with-three-brave-hearts-of-tibet/ (accessed 12 November 2015)

Krishnan, Ananth (2012) "Dalai Lama speaks of dilemma on spreading self-immolations" *The Hindu* 9 July 2012: http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3617428.ece (accessed 5 August 2015).

Kristensen, William B. (1971) *The Meaning of Religion: Lectures in the Phenomenology of Religion*, translated by John B. Carman. The Haugue: Martinus Nijhoff

Kritzer, Herbert M. (1974) "Nonviolent National Defense: Concepts and Implications" *Peace Research Reviews* 5(2): 1-57

Kurtz, Lester R. (2008) "Gandhi and his legacies" in *Encyclopedia of Violence, Peace, and Conflict*. Amsterdam: Elsevier: 837-851.

Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe (1987) "Post-Marxism without Apologies" *New Left Review* 166, Nov/Dec: 79-106.

Landsberg, Mitchell (2011) "Dalai Lama suggests Osama bin Laden's death was justified" Los Angeles Times 4 May 2011: http://articles.latimes.com/2011/may/04/local/la-me-0504-dalai-lama-20110504 (accessed 14 September 2015)

Larimer, Tim (1999). "I Wish I Were Free to Fly Out of My Window", *Time International* 153(2), 18 Jan: 19.

Lhasang Tsering (1994) "The issue is independence" in Edward Lazar (ed), *Tibet: The Issue is Independence.* Delhi, Full Circle

Lhasang Tsering (2003) *Tomorrow & Other Poems*. New Delhi: Rupa. Co.

Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tokyo (2016) *Chibetto no rekishi* チベットの歴史: http://www.tibethouse.jp/history/index.html (accessed 3 February 2016)

Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tokyo (2016a) "Chūkyō-chibetto 17 kajō kyōtei ni tsuite 中共・チベット１７ヶ条協定について" http://www.tibethouse.jp/cta/beijing/19510523_17agreements.html (accessed 12 November 2015)

Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tokyo (2016b) "Kyōsan chūgoku no chibetto shinnyū: chūgoku kyōsan-gun rasa ni tōchaku 共産中国のチベット侵入 - 中国共産党軍、ラサに到着 -": http://www.tibethouse.jp/about/mainland/history/19510909.html (accessed 5 February 2015)

Liaison Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia (2016) "Chibetto no Rekishi チベットの歴史": http://www.tibethouse.jp/about/culture/history/ (accessed 17 January 2016)

Lincoln, Bruce (2006) *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11* (e-book), Second ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Location

Lipsitz, Lewis & Kritzer, Herbert M. (1975) "Unconventional Approaches to Conflict Resolution: Erikson and Sharp on Nonviolence" *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 19(4): 713-733

Lobsang Sangay (2010) "Constitutional Analysis of the Secularization of the Tibetan Diaspora." In Kaplan, L. V. and C. L. Cohen (Eds). *Theology and the Soul of the Liberal State.* New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: 291-320

Lobsang Sangay (2011) "*Vietnam: The Unheard Voice* (Prime Minister): A personal perspective." Talk at Fairbank Centre for Chinese Studies, 25 April 2011: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A6QmQM_1nxM (accessed 10.1.2013).

Macy, Joanna Rogers (1979) "Dependent Co-arising: The distinctiveness of Buddhist Ethics" *The Journal of Religious Ethics* Spring 7(1): 38-52.

Maher, Derek F. (2007) "The Dalai Lamas and State Power" *Religion Compass* 1(2): 260–278

Maney, Gregory M. (2012) "The Paradox of Reform: The Civil Rights Movement in Northern Ireland" in Nepstad S. E. & L. R. Kurtz (eds) *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: 3-26

Mantena, Karuna (2012) "Another Realism: The Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence" *American Political Science Review* 106(2): 455-470.

Martin, Brian (1989) "Gene Sharp's Theory of Power" *Journal of Peace Research* 26(2): 213-222

Martin, Brian (2001) "Political Jiu-jitsu against Indonesian Repression: Studying Lower Profile Nonviolent Resistance", *Pacifica Review* 14(2), June: 143-156.

Martin, James (2002) "The Political Logic of Discourse: a Neo-Gramscian view", *History of European Ideas* 28: 21-31.

Maruyama, Teruo 丸山照雄 (1976) "Bukkyō kyōdan to senso sekinin 仏教教団と戦争責任" in *Gendaijin no Shūkyō* 宗教の可能性 現代人の宗教 Vol. 10, *Shūkyō no kanōsei*. Tokyo: Kawadeshobōshinsha.

Marx, Karl (1976) *Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McAllister, Pam (1999) "You Can't Kill the Spirit: Women and Nonviolent Action", Stephen Zunes, Lester. R. Kurthz & Sarah Beth Asher (eds.), *Nonviolent Social Movements: A Geographical Perspective.* Oxford: Blackwell.

McConnell, Fiona (2009) "Democracy-in-Exile: The 'Uniqueness' and Limitations of Exile Tibetan Democracy." *Sociological Bulletin* 58 (1): 271-310

McConnell, Fiona (2011) "Exile Tibetan Elections 2011, Briefing report for parliamentarians," Office of Tibet, London: 1-4

McGranahan, Carole (2010) *Arrested Histories: Tibet, the CIA, and Memories of a Forgotten War*. Durham: Duke University Press.

McGranahan, Carole and Litzinge, Ralph (2012) "Self-Immolation as Protest in Tibet" *Cultural Anthropology*: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/93-self-immolation-as-protest-in-tibet (accessed 12 October 2015).

McGuinness, Kate (1993) "Gene Sharp's theory of power: A feminist critique of consent" *Journal of Peace Research* 30(1): 101-115

Mills, Martin (2003) "This turbulent priest: contesting religious rights and the state in the Tibetan Shugden controversy." In Wilson, R. and J Mitchell (Eds). *Human Rights in Global Perspective: Anthropological Studies of Rights, Claims and Entitlements*: 54-70. London: Routledge.

Minh Thanh (trans.) (2000) "The Brahma Net Sutra" New York: Sutra Translation Committee of the United States and Canada: https://web.archive.org/web/20110611151922/http://www.ymba.org/bns/bnstext.htm#N_9_ (accessed 15 January 2017)

Mitchell, Claire (2006) "The Religious Content of Ethnic Identities" *Sociology* 40(6): 1135-1152

Miyazaki, Eishū 宮崎英修 (1972) "Kisei kyōdan no shin tenkai 既成教団の新展開" in *Kōza Nichiren* Vol. 4, *Nihon kindai to Nichiren shugi* 日本近代と日蓮主義. Tokyo: Shunjūsha.

Mohr, Charles (1966) "4 Buddhists Die as Suicides Rise in Anti-Ky Drive", *New York Times*, 30 May 1966: 1.

Mousseau, Michael (2002/03) "Market Civilisation and Its Clash with Terror" *International Security* Winter: 2-19

Mukherji, Gangeya (2009) "Exploring Non-violence: A Seminar Report" *Economic & Political Weekly* 44(26): 23-25

Mullin, Chris (1975) "Tibetan Conspiracy" *Far Eastern Economic Review* 133 (36): 30-34

Murti, T. R. V. (1955) *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism: A Study of Madhyamika System*. London: Allen and Unwyn.

Naess, Arne (1958) "A Systematization of Gandhian Ethics of Conflict Resolution", *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, II, n2, June

Naess, Arne (1974) *Gandhi and Group Conflict: An Exploration of Satyagraha*, Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.

Nam Thanh (1964) *Cuoc Tranh Dau Lich Su: Cua Phat Giao Viet Nam, (The Historic Struggle of the Buddhists)*, Saigon: Vien Hoa Dao Publishing.

National Liberation Front (1964) "Statement of the South Vietnam Liberation National Front, February 3, 1964", in Hai Thu, *Coup after Coup in Saigon*, Hanoi: Foreign Publishing House.

National Review (1963) "What's Really Going on in Vietnam", *National Review*, 5 November: 389

Nepstad, Sharon Erickson & Kurtz, Lester R. (Eds) (2012) "Introduction" in *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited

Nepstad, Sharon Erikson (2011) *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil resistance in the late 20th century*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Nguyen Tai Thu, Ed. (1992) *History of Buddhism in Vietnam*, Hanoi, Social Sciences Publishing House.

Nguyen Tang (2016) "Noi Lua Tu bi (Igniting the fire of Compassion)" Vietnamese Buddhism in Melbourne Australia: www.quangduc.com (accessed 8 July 2015)

Nguyen-Okwu, Leslie (2016) "The Dalai Lama's Right-hand Woman" OZY 15 January 2016: http://www.ozy.com/rising-stars/the-dalai-lamas-right-hand-woman/65381 (accessed 20 January 2016)

Nhat Hanh (1966) "Thich Nhat Hanh", "A Monk at Town Hall" and "Statement of the Venerable Nhat Hanh", *Fellowship*, July, International Fellowship of Reconciliation: 3-5.

Nhat Hanh (1967) *Vietnam: The Lotus in the Sea of Fire*, London: SCM.

Nhat Hanh (1968) *The Cry of Vietnam,* California, Unicorn Press.

Nhat Hanh (1969) "Love in Action: The Nonviolent Struggle for Peace in Vietnam" (Conference Paper for the Vietnamese Buddhist Peace Delegation), Paris: Published by the Overseas Vietnamese Buddhist Association.

Nhat Hanh (1972) *Viet Nam Poems*, trans. by Nhat Hanh and Helen Coutant, Santa Barbara: Unicorn Press.

Nhat Hanh (1974) "Listening to the Poplar Tree", *Fellowship*, January, International Fellowship of Reconciliation: 2-7.

Nhat Hanh (1988) *The Heart of Understanding: Commentaries on the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra.* Berkeley: Parallax Press.

Nhat Hanh (1989) *Being Peace.* Berkeley, California: Parallax Press.

Nhat Hanh (1993) *Love in Action: Writings on Nonviolent Social Change.* Berkeley: Parallax.

Nhat Hanh (1998a) *Interbeing: Fourteen Guidelines for Engaged Buddhism.* 3rd Ed, Berkeley: Parallax Press.

Nhat Hanh (1998b) *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching: Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy and Liberation*, Berkeley, California, Parallax Press.

Nihon Shūkyo-sha Heiwa Kyōgikai 日本宗教者平和協議会 (1994) *Shūkyo-sha no sensō sekinin; Zange, Kokuhaku Shiryo-shu* 宗教者の戦争責任—懺悔・告白資料集. Fukuoka, Kita-kyūshū: Shiraishi shoten

Nikolayenko, Olena (2012) "Tactical Interactions between Youth Movements and Incumbent Governments in Postcommunist States" in Nepstad S. E. & L. R. Kurtz (eds) *Nonviolent Conflict and Civil Resistance*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited: 27-62

Nima R. T. Binara, Tenzin Dickyi, Tenzin Wangyal, and Wangchuk Shakabpa (2012) "The Balancing Act of the Exile Tibetan Government" *Cultural Anthropology*. 28 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/111-the-balancing-act-of-the-exile-tibetan-government (accessed 11 October 2015).

Nipponzan Myōhōji 日本山妙法寺(1980) *Tenku* 天鼓. October. Tokyo: Nipponzan Myōhōji.

Nipponzan Myōhōji 日本山妙法寺 (2006) *Tenku* 天鼓. September. Tokyo: Nipponzan Myōhōji.

Nipponzan Myōhōji Net 日本山妙法寺ネット(2015) "Risshō Ankoku no gokinen to fushaku shinmyō (Yokotsuka-shōnin Jafuna hōnan) 立正安国の御祈念と不惜身命(横塚上人ジャフナ法難)": http://nipponzanmyohoji.net/preach/article/%E7%AB%8B%E6%AD%A3%E5%AE%89%E5%9B%BD%E3%81%AE%E5%BE%A1%E7%A5%88%E5%BF%B5%E3%81%A8%E4%B8%8D%E6%83%9C%E8%BA%AB%E5%91%BD%EF%BC%88%E6%A8%AA%E5%A1%9A%E4%B8%8A%E4%BA%BA%E3%82%B8%E3%83%A3%E3%83%95%E3%83%8A%E6%B3%95%E9%9B%A3%EF%BC%89 (accessed 11 July 2015).

Nolting, Frederick (1988) *From Trust to Tragedy: The Political Memoirs of Fredrick Nolting, Kennedy's Ambassador to Diem's Vietnam*, New York: Praeger.

Nonviolence International (2000) *Truth is Our Only Weapon*, Bangkok, Nonviolence International

O'Brien, Barbara (2015) "Madhyamika: School of the Middle Way" http://buddhism.about.com/od/mahayanabuddhism/a/madhyamika.htm (accessed 2 September 2015)

Official Website of *Genshiryoku Gyōkai o Toinaosu Shukyō-sha no Kai* 原子力行政を問い直す宗教者の会 (2015): http://mukakumuhei.com (accessed 4 December 2015)

Ogden, Shubert (1992) *Is There Only One True Religion or Are There Many?* Dallas: Southern Methodist UP.

Panikkar, Raimundo (1981) *Unknown Christ of Hinduism*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis

Pass, Lauren (2009) "Conflict and Adaptation: Tibetan Perspectives on Nonviolent Practice Lauren Pass" Independent Research Project, Emory University Tibetan Studies Program, available at: http://abroad.emory.edu/_customtags/ct_FileRetrieve.cfm?File_ID=6001 (accessed 10 January 2015).

Patterson, George (1960) *Tibet in Revolt*. London: Faber and Faber

Peissel, Michel (1972) *Cavaliers of Kham: The Secret War in Tibet*, London: Heinemann

Pelton, Leroy H. (1974) *The Psychology of Nonviolence*. New York: Pergamon Press.

Pema Thinley (1996) "Democracy is an integral part of the Tibetan freedom struggle." *Tibetan Bulletin*, May-June: 11-13

Pema Thinley (2000) "Editorial: Pitfalls of Gifted Democracy." *Tibetan Review* July: 3

Pema Thinley (2010) "Editorial: Time to unpack our gift of democracy." *Tibetan Review* September: 3

Pham Van Minh (2001) *Socio-Political Philosophy of Vietnamese Buddhism: A Case Study of the Buddhist Movement of 1963 and 1966*. Master's Thesis, School of Social Ecology and Lifelong Learning, University of Western Sydney

Pham Van Minh (2002) *Vietnamese Engaged Buddhism: The Struggle Movement of 1963-1966*, C.A., USA: Van Nghe.

Pham, J. Peter (2004) "Lazarus Rising: Civil Society and Sierra Leone's Return from the Grave", *The International Journal of Not-For-Profit Law* 7(1): http://www.icnl.org/research/journal/vol7iss1/art_2.htm (accessed 18 February 2015).

Phillips, D. Z. (assisted by Mario Von der Ruhr) Ed. (1997) *Rush Rhees on Religion and Philosophy.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Phung Khac Khon (1975) "On War" in Nguyen Ngoc Bich (ed). *A Thousand Years of Vietnamese Poetry*, trans. Nguyen Ngoc Bich with B. Raffel and W. S. Merwin, New York: Alfred. A. Knopf Inc.

Popovski, Vesselin., Reichberg, Gregory M., and Turner, Nicholas (Eds) (2009) *World Religions and the Norms of War*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

Post, Stephen G. (2000). "The Traditions of Agape", in Post, S., L. Underwood, J. Scholoss, and W. Hurlbut, (eds.) *Altruism and Altruistic Love: Science, Philosophy and Religion in Dialogue*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pye, Michael (2003) *Skilful Means: A Concept in Mahayana Buddhism*. Second Ed. New York: Routledge

Quoc Tue (1987) *Cong cuoc tranh- dau cua Phat-Giao Viet-Nam tu Phat-dan den cach-mang* (*The Vietnamese Buddhist Movement of 1963).* Bagneux, France: Chua Khanh Anh.

Race, Alan (1983) *Christians and Religious Pluralism: Patterns in the Christian Theology of Religions*. Maryknoll, MY: Orbis Books.

Race, Alan and Hedges, Paul M. (2008) *Christian Approaches to Other Faiths*. London: SCM Press; Alan Race (2013) *Making Sense of Religious Pluralism: Shaping Theology of Religion for our Times*. London: SPCK (E-book).

Rahner, Karl (1978) *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. New York: Seabury Press.

Rahula, Walpola (1978) *Zen and the Taming of the Bull: Towards the Definition of Buddhist Thought.* London: Gordon Fraser.

Rai, Ajay Shanker (2000) *Gandhian Satyagraha: An Analytical And Critical Approach* (Gandhian Studies and Peace Research Series No. 14), New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

Religions for Peace (2016) "History" Religions for Peace website: http://www.religionsforpeace.org/vision-history/history (accessed 14 February 2015).

Reychler, Luc (1997) "Religion and Conflict" *The International Journal of Peace Studies* 2(1): 19-38

Ricoeur, Paul (1974) *The Conflict of Interpretations.* Evanston: Northwest University Press.

Ricoeur, Paul (1976) *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning.* Texas: Christian University Press.

Ringu Tulku (1997) "The Rime Movement of Jamgon Kontrul the Great" in E. Steinkellener (Ed). *Proceedings of the 7th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies 1995*. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie des Wissenschaften

Roberts, Adam (1967) *The Strategy of Civlian Defence*. London: Faber & Faber

Roemer, Stephanie (2009) *The Tibetan Government-in-Exile: Politics at Large*. London: Routeledge

Ruether, Rosemary Radford (1987) "Feminism and Jewish-Christian Dialogue: Particularism and Universalism in the Search for Religious Truth" in John Hick and Paul Knitter (eds) *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, Oregon: Wipf&Stock: 137-142.

Ruhmkorff, Samuel (2013) "The Incompatibility Problem and Religious Pluralism Beyond Hick" *Philosophy Compass* 8(5): 510-522

Ryūkū Shimpō 琉球新報(2002) "Ahagon Shōkō san shikyo/Iejima de no beigun tochi shūdatsu ni teikō 阿波根昌鴻さん死去/伊江島での米軍土地収奪に抵抗" 22 March 2002: http://ryukyushimpo.jp/news/prentry-102257.html (accessed 9 March 2015).

Ryūkū Shimpō 琉球新報 (2005) "Kōmu Shikkō Bōgai, sōryo taiho no hamon 公務執行妨害　僧侶逮捕の波紋" 8 November 2005, available at: http://nehan.net/fusessyou/kizujiken.htm (accessed 10 March 2015).

Saddhatissa, H. (trans.) (1994) *The Sutta-Nipata: A New Translation from the Pali Canon*. London: Routledge Curzon.

Said, Edward (1978) *Orientalism*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Samdhong Rinpoche (1999) *Selected Writings and Speeches on Buddhism and Tibetan Culture*, Vanarasi, India: Alumni of Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies

Samdhong Rinpoche (2001) "Statement: New Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche Speaks" *Tibetan Bulletin* Sept-Oct: 25-28

Samdhong Rinpoche (2003) "Governing in Exile: Two Years of the 12th Kashag: Address by Kalon Tripa" *Tibetan Bulletin*. Sept-Oct: 10-14

Samdhong Rinpoche, and Donovan Roebert (2006) *Samdhong Rinpoche: Uncompromising Truth for a Compromised World: Tibetan Buddhism and Today's World*. Bloomington, Indiana: World Wisdom Books

Sapir, Edward (1935). “Symbolism” *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* 14: 492-5.

Schecter, Jerrold (1967) *The New Face of Buddha: Buddhism and Political Power in Southeast Asia*, London Tokyo: John Weatherhill.

Schlesinger, Arthur (1965) *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Schlieter, Jens (2006) “Compassionate Killing or Conflict Resolution? The Murder of King Langdarma according to Tibetan Buddhist Sources” in Michael Zimmermann (Ed) *Buddhism and Violence*. Rupandehi, Nepal: Lumbini International Research Institute: 131-157

Schmithousen, Lambert (1999) “Aspects of the Buddhist Attitude Towards War” in Jan E. M. Houben & Karel R. Van Kooij (Ed) *Violence Denied: Violence, Non-Violence, and the Rationalization of Violence in South Asian Cultural History*. Leiden: Brill: 45-63

Schmidt-Leukel, Perry (2005) "Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism: the Tripolar Typology—Clarified and Reaffirmed" in Paul F. Knitter (Ed) *The Myth of Religious Superiority: A Multifaith Exploration*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press: 13-27

Schmidt-Leukel, Perry (2009) *Transformation and Integration: How Inter-faith Encounter Changes Christianity*. London: SCM Press

Schock, Kurt (2005) *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press

Schwartz, Ronald D. (1994) *Circle of Protest: Political Ritual in the Tibetan Uprising*. London: Hurst and Company

Shaliyeh, Emile (1990) “Religious resurgence and political modernisation” in Emile Shaliyeh (ed.) *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

Sharp, Gene (1959) “Types of Principled Nonviolence” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 3, March, 44-61

Sharp, Gene (1960) *Gandhi Wields the Weapon of Moral Power: Three Case Histories*, Ahmedabad, India: Navajivan

Sharp, Gene (1971) *Exploring Nonviolent Alternatives*. Boston: Porter Sargent Publisher

Sharp, Gene (1973) *The Politics of Nonviolent Action.* Boston: Porter Sargent Publishers.

Sharp, Gene (1992) ‘To the Editor’ *Civilian-Based Defense* 8, October, 13-15.

Shaykhutdinov, Renat (2010) “Give Peace a Chance: Nonviolent protest and the creation of territorial autonomy arrangements” *Journal of Peace Research* 47(2): 179-191.

Sheehan, Neil, Henrick Smith, E. W. Kenworthy and Fox Butterfield (1971) *Pentagon Papers a Published by the “The New York Times”,* New York: Bantam Books.

Shigaraki, Takamaro 信楽 峻麿 (1989) “Senji kyōgaku ni okeru shinzoku nitairon 戦時教学における真俗二諦論”, *Nihon no shūkyō to bunka: Reizō Hiramatsu sensei koki kinenshū* 日本の宗教と文化：平松令三先生古稀記念論集. Dōhōsha publishing, 977-997.

Shimazono, Susumu 島園進 (2013) *Nihon Bukkyō no Shakai Rinri: “Shōbō” rinen kara kangaeru* 日本仏教の社会倫理―「正法」理念から考える. Tokyo: Iwanami Gendaizensho.

Shiromany, A. A., Ed. (1996) *The Spirit of Tibet: Vision for Human Liberation (Selected speeches and writings of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama).* New Delhi: Tibetan Parliamentary and Policy Research Centre in association with Vikas Publishing House

Shūkyō-sha kyū jō no wa 宗教者９条の輪 (Circle of Religious Supporters for Article 9) (2016): http://www.shukyosha9jonowa.org/index.html (accessed 10 February 2016)

Silva, Sarath N. (2008) “Conflict Resolution: How the Lord Buddha’s way offers an answer”, *Sunday Times*: http://www.sundaytimes.lk/090510/news/sundaytimesnews_29.html (accessed 18 January 2017).

Skow, Lisa and George Dionisopoulos (1977) "A Struggle to Conceptualize hotographic Images: American Print Media and the 'Burning Monk'," *Communication Quarterly* Fall, 45(4): 393-410.

Smith Jr, Warren W. (1996) *Tibetan Nationalism: A History of Tibetan Nationalism and Sino-Tibetan Relations*, Colarado: Westview Press

Smith Jr., Warren W. (2004) “China’s Policy on Tibetan Autonomy” *East-West Center Washington Working Papers* No. 2, October, East-West Center, Washington, available at: http://www.eastwestcenter.org/fileadmin/stored/pdfs/EWCWwp002.pdf (accessed 10 December 2015).

Smith Jr., Warren W. (2008) *China’s Tibet?: Autonomy or Assimilation*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Smith Jr., Warren W. (2010), *Tibet’s Last Stand? The Tibetan Uprising of 2008 and China’s Response*, New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.

Smith, Donald E. (1990). "Limits of Religious Resurgence", in E. Shaliyeh (ed.) *Religious Resurgence and Politics in the Contemporary World*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press

Smithey, Lee and Lester R. Kurtz (1999) "'We have bare hands': Nonviolent social movements in the Soviet block." In S. Zunes, L. Kurtz & S. Asher (eds) *Nonviolent Social Movements: A geographic perspective*. Malden, MA: Blackwell: 96-124.

Smock, David (2002) "Divine Intervention: Regional Reconciliation through Faith" *Harvard International Review* 25(4), Winter: 46–50

Snow, David and Robert D. Benford (1992). "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest", in Aldon D. Morris and Carol M. Mueller (eds.) *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Snow, David, E. Burke Rochford, Steven K. Worden, Robert D. Benford (1986) "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilisation and Movement Participation" *American Sociological Review* 51, August, pp464-81.

Sorokin, Pitirim (1954) *The Ways and Power of Love: Types, Factors, and Techniques of Moral Transformation*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Spencer, Metta (2001) "That Peace Monk: Junsei Terasawa" (interview by Metta Spencer) *Peace Magazine* July-Aug: http://www.peacemagazine.org/archive/v17n3p16.htm (accessed 18 January 2015).

Sperling, Elliot (2012) "On the Questions of Why and to What End" *Cultural Anthropology*. 1 April 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/106-on-the-questions-of-why-and-to-what-end (accessed 11 October 2015).

Stcherbatsky, Theodor (1968) The *Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

Stephan, Maria J. & Chenoweth, Erica (2008) "Why Civil Resistance Works: The logic of nonviolent conflict" *International Security* 33(1) Summer: 7-44.

Stiehm, Judith (1968) "Nonviolence is Two" *Sociological Inquiry* 38, Winter, 23-30.

Stone, Jacqueline (2003) "Nichiren's Active Heirs: Soka Gakkai, Rissho Koseikai and Nipponzan Myohoji" in C. Queen, C. Prebish and D. Keown, *Action Dharma: New Studies in Engaged Buddhism*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, Taylor & Francis Group: 63-96.

Strand, Clark (2008) "Faith in Revolution" *Triycle* Winter: http://www.tricycle.com/interview/faith-revolution (accessed 20 February 2016).

Strathern, Alan (2013) "Why are Buddhist monks attacking Muslims?" BBC, 1 May 2013: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-22356306 (accessed 10 December 2016)

Strenski, Ivan (1997) *Contesting Sacrifice: Religion, Nationalism and Social Thought in France*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Strong, Anna-Louise (1960) *When Serfs Stood Up in Tibet*, Peking: New World Press
Student for a Free Tibet (2016) "Uprisings" Website of Student for a Free Tibet: https://www.studentsforafreetibet.org/Plone/about-tibet/uprisings (accessed 12 January 2016).

Subhadra Joshi (ed), (1967) *RSS: A Danger to Democracy*, Sampradayikta Virodhi Committee, New Delhi.

Sueki, Fumihiko & Shinobu Tsujimura 末木文美彦と辻村志のぶ (2011) "Sensō to Bukkyō 戦争と仏教" in Fumihiko Sueki 末木文美彦(Ed) *Shin Ajia Bukkyō-shi Vol. 14 Nihon IV: Kindai Kokka to Bukkyō* 新アジア仏教史 14 日本 IV: 近代国家と仏教: 218-249.

Sugirtharajah, Sharada (2012) "Gandhi and Hick on Religious Pluralism: Some resonances" *International Journal of Gandhi Studies* 1: 3-41

Takase, Hiroi 高瀬広居 (1974) *Busshin (tsuzuki): Gendai no meisō o tazunete* 佛心（続）—現代の名僧を訪ねて—. Tokyo: Futabasha.

Takeda, Takao 武田隆雄(2006) "Hibōryoku teikō kōdō no nakani koso hontō no yasuragino ba ga aru 非暴力抵抗行動の中にこそ本当のやすらぎの場がある" Oruta (Alternatives) オルタ. June Issue. Pacific Asia Resource Centre (PARC).

Tambiah, Stanley J. (1976) *World Conqueror and World Renouncer; A Study of Buddhism and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Tashi Rabgey & Tseten Wangchuk Sharlho (2005) "Sino-Tibetan Dialogue in the Post-Mao Era:Lessons and Prospects (Part 1)" *Phayul* 10 July 2005 (reproduced from an article prepared for the East-West Center Washington): http://www.phayul.com/news/article.aspx?id=10172 (accessed 3 February 2015)

Tashi-Topgye Jamyangling (1998) "Independence or Extinction" in Edward Lazar (Ed) *Tibet: The Issue is Independence*. Delhi: Parallax

Taylor, Charles (2007) *A Secular Age*. Cambridge, Mass; London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press

Tenzin Kun-khyab (2013) "Is Self-Immolation Anti-Buddhism?" Official Website of the Central Tibetan Administration, 17 June 2013: http://tibet.net/2013/06/is-self-immolation-anti-buddhism/ (accessed 17 December 2015).

Tenzin Mingyur Paldron (2012) "Virtue and the Remaking of Suffering" *Cultural Anthropology*. 1 April 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/98-virtue-and-the-remaking-of-suffering (accessed 13 October 2015).

Terasawa, Junsei 寺沢潤世 (1996) *Ten ni todoroke, chi ni uruose* 天に轟け、地に潤せ. Tokyo: Jiyūsha.

The New York Times (1964a) "Saigon Students Score Army Rule" *New York Times*, 22 August: 2

The New York Times (1964b) "Ministry Office Sacked" *New York Times*, 24 August: 3

The New York Times (1966) "Buddhist Protest Being Intensified: Suicide Toll at 5", *New York Times*, 31 May: 1

The New York Times (1990) "Chinese Said to Kill 450 Tibetans in 1989", *New York Times*, 14 August: http://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/14/world/chinese-said-to-kill-450-tibetans-in-1989.html (accessed 13 January 2016)

The New York Times (1996) "Bomb at Government Offices Wounds 5 in Tibetan Capital" *The New York Times*, 30 December: http://www.nytimes.com/1996/12/30/world/bomb-at-government-offices-wounds-5-in-tibetan-capital.html (accessed 10 December 2015)

The World Council of Religious Leaders (2002) "About the World Council" The World Council of Religious Leaders Website: http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.org/wc_about.html (accessed 12 February 2015).

The World Council of Religious Leaders (2002) "Ongoing initiatives" of the World Council of Religious Leaders website: http://www.millenniumpeacesummit.org/initiatives.html (accessed 12 February 2015).

Thien An (1975) *Buddhism and Zen in Vietnam in Relation to the Development of Buddhism in Asia*, Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company.

Thien Hoa (1970) *50 Nam Can Hung Phat Giao Viet Nam (50 years of Vietnamese Buddhism)*. Vietnam: Vien Hoa Dao.

Thomas, Mandy (2001) "Public Spaces/Public Disgraces: Crowds and the State in Contemporary Vietnam" *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Oct, 16(2), n.306: 1-12

Thomas, Scott (2000). "Religious resurgence, postmodernism and world politics", in Esposito, J. & Watson, M. (eds.) *Religion and Global Order*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press

Tibet Justice Centre (2016a) "Charter of the Tibetans-in-Exile (1991)": http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/tibet/tibet6.html (accessed 1 February 2016)

Tibet Justice Centre (2016b) "Constitution of Tibet (1963)": http://www.tibetjustice.org/materials/tibet/tibet2.html (accessed 1 February 2016).

Tibetan Bulletin (2001) "Governing in Exile: A Step in Democratic Direction" *Tibetan Bulletin* Sept-Oct: 5-7

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) (2012) *Democracy in Exile: Special Report 2012*. Dharamsala, India: TCHRD

Tibetan Political Review (2012) "Final Words of Lama Soepa Recorded in Audio Message to Tibetans": http://www.tibetanpoliticalreview.org/articles/tibetanlamaurgesunitynationhoodbeforeself-immolating (accessed 12 November 2015)

Tibetan Review (2002) "Dalai Lama's envoys visit Beijing and Lhasa" *Tibetan Review*, October.

Tibetan Review (2003) "Dalai Lama devolves his powers to elected leaders" *Tibetan Review* October: 13.

Tibetan Review (2011a) "Dalai Lama turns down head-of-state role" *Tibetan Review* June: 6

Tibetan Review (2011b) "Dalai Lama signs himself out of political power" *Tibetan Review* July: 10

Tibetan Youth Congress (2014) "About TYC" Official Website of the TYC: http://www.tibetanyouthcongress.org/about-tyc/ (accessed 11 December 2015)

Tibetan Youth Congress (2015) "TYC Indefinite Hunger Strike Called Off", TYC Official website, 11 October 2015: http://www.tibetanyouthcongress.org/2015/10/tyc-indefinite-hunger-strike-called-off/ (accessed 17 December 2015)

Tillich, Paul (1953) *Systematic Theology* Vol 3. London: Nisbet.

Tokoro, Shigeki 戸頃重基 (1966) *Kindai Nihon no Shūkyō to Nashonarizumu* 近代日本の宗教とナショナリズム. Tokyo: Fuzanbō.

Tokoro, Shigeki 戸頃重基 (1972) "Gendai ni okeru ronsō: Nichiren heiwa shisō nit suite 現代における論争－日蓮平和思想について－" in *Kōza Nichiren* Vol. 3. *Nichiren shinkō no rekishi* 日蓮信仰の歴史. Tokyo: Shunjusha, 225-226.

Tomidaka, Gyōho 富高行保(1977) "Nipponzan Myōhōji no chūgoku tairiku fukkyō 日本山妙法寺の中国大陸布教", *Senjika no Bukkyō* 戦時下の仏教, Kōza Nihon Kindai to Bukkyō Vol 6. Kokushokankōkai.

Topmiller, Robert (1994) "The 1963 Buddhist Crisis in South Vietnam" Master's Thesis, Central Washington University.

Topmiller, Robert (1999) "Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc", in Quang Duc Buddhist Webiste: Nguyen Tang,

http://www.quangduc.net/English/vnbuddhism/013quangduc.html, Melbourne, Australia, accessed 17 May 2003.

Topmiller, Robert (2002) *Lotus Unleashed*. Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press.

Tran Da Tu (1996) "Gifts as Tokens of Love" in Huynh Sanh Thong (ed). *An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems: From the Eleventh through the Twentieth Centuries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Tran Duc Uyen (1996) "A Letter to My Future Child" in Huynh Sanh Thong (ed). *An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems: From the Eleventh through the Twentieth Centuries.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Tran Huien An (1996) "My Mother's Son" in Huynh Sanh Thong (ed). *An Anthology of Vietnamese Poems: From the Eleventh through the Twentieth Centuries.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa (1982) *Tibet: A Political History*. New Delhi: Paljor Publications

Tsering Shakya (2012) "Transforming the Language of Protest" *Cultural Anthropology*. 28 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/94-transforming-the-language-of-protest (accessed 11 October 2015)

Tsering Woeser (2016) "Why are Tibetans Setting Themselves on Fire?" *The New York Review* 11 January 2016: http://www.nybooks.com/daily/2016/01/11/why-are-tibetans-self-immolating/ (accessed 5 February 2016)

Tsujimura, Shinobu (2005) "Fujii Nichidatsu's Buddhist Pan-Asianism in Manchuria and India" in Panel Session 12M "Modern Japanese Buddhism and Pan Asianism", The 19th World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions. http://homepage1.nifty.com/tkawase/osigoto/mjbpa.pdf (accessed 2 November 2015).

United States Institute of Peace (2016) "Religion and Peacebuilding, GLAS: Center for Governance, Law and Society" United States Institute of Peace website: http://www.usip.org/centers/religion-and-peacebuilding-center (accessed 11 February 2015).

Unnithan, T.K.N. and Singh, Yogendra (1973) *Traditions of Nonviolence.* New Delhi: Arnold-Heinemann.

Van der Leeuw, Gerardus (1963) *Religion in Essence and Manifestation*. New York: Harper & Row

van Dijk, T. A. (1997) "The Study of Discourse" *Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, London: SAGE Publications.

Victoria, Brian A. (2007) "Holy War: Towards a Holistic Understanding" *Journal of Religion, Conflict, and Peace* 1(1): http://religionconflictpeace.org/volume-1-issue-1-fall-2007/holy-war-toward-holistic-understanding (accessed 6 April 2014)

Victoria, Brian Daizen (2006) *Zen At War*. Second Ed. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Victoria, Brian Daizen (2013) "Violence-enabling Mechanisms in Buddhism" *Journal of Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 5: 170-211

Walsh, Sharon K. & Asch, Evelyn D. (2004) *Just War: A Wadsworth Casebook in Argument*, Canada: Thomson Wadsworth.

Walt, Stephen M. (1997) "Building up New Bogeymen" *Foreign Policy*, Spring, Issue 106: 189.

Watanabe, Manabu 渡邉学(1998) "Kuro-nka to Poa クローン化とポア" *Journal of the Nanzan Academic Society* 67: 251-267

Watanabe, Manabu 渡邉学(2008) "*Ai, jihi, zō'o no tadanaka no shūkyō bōryoku* 愛、慈悲、憎悪の只中の宗教暴力—マー・ユルゲンスマイヤー教授への応答" in Susumu Shimazono, Gerrie ter Harr & Yoshio Tsuruoka (Eds) *Shūkyō—Sōkoku to Heiwa <Kokusai Shūkyō-gaku Shūkyō-shi kaigi Tōkyō Taikai (IAHR 2005) no Tōgi>* 宗教—相克と平和＜国際宗教学宗教史会議東京大会 (IAHR2005) の討議>. Tokyo: Akiyama shoten: 44-59

Weber, Max (1963) *The Sociology of Religion*. Boson: Beacon Press.

Weber, Max (1968) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Volumes 1-3. Guenther, R. and C. Wittich (Eds). Berkeley: University of California Press

Welch, Holmes (1967) *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism: 1900-1950.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig (1953/2009) *Philosophical Investigations*. G. E. M. Anscombe, P. M. S. Hacker and Joachim Schulte (trans.) Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

World Nuclear Association (2016) "Japan's Nuclear Fuel Cycle" Updated February 2016: http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/country-profiles/countries-g-n/japan-nuclear-fuel-cycle.aspx (accessed 27 February 2016).

Xinhua (2013) "Buddhist doctrine opposes self-immolation" *China Daily* 17 January 2013: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2013-01/17/content_16129983.htm (accessed 5 January 2016).

Xue Yu (2005) *Buddhism, War, and Nationalism*. London: Routledge

Yamaori, Tetsuo 山折哲雄 (1978) "Hantai shukyo kaikaku: Fujii Nichidatsu no jirei 反対宗教改革—藤井日達の事例—" in *Tenno no Shukyo-teki Ken-i to wa Nani ka* 天皇の宗教的権威とは何か. Tokyo: San-ichi Publishing Co.

Yeh, Emily (2012) "On 'Terrorism' and the Politics of Naming" *Cultural Anthropology*. 24 March 2012: http://culanth.org/fieldsights/102-on-terrorism-and-the-politics-of-naming (accessed 9 October 2015).

Zanden, James W. (1963) "The Nonviolent Resistance Movement Against Segregation" in Paul A. Hare and Herbert H. Blumberg (eds). *Nonviolent Direct Action: American Cases: Social-Psychological Analyses*. Washington: Corpus Books, 356.

Zimmermann, Michael (2006) "Only a Fool Becomes a King: Buddhist Stances on Punishment" in Michael Zimmermann (Ed) *Buddhism and Violence*. Rupandehi, Nepal: Lumbini International Research Institute: 213-242.

Zurcher, Erik (1959). *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, Leiden: E.J. Brill.