

EDITORIAL

New hopes

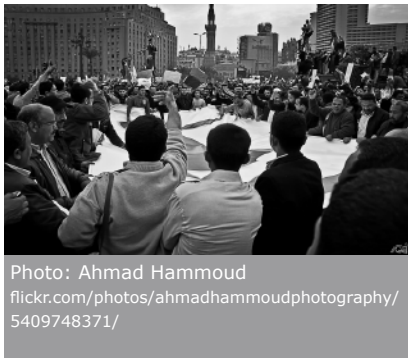


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I have a dream... – Martin Luther King Jr.

That is both the beginning and the title of one of Dr King's most famous speeches, which he gave in 1963 and is considered one of the inspirations behind the non-violent revolution by the black population of the United States. Today, almost fifty years later, his words seemed to resonate elsewhere, in a year in which the first two months have given us some hopeful news.

First, on 10 January, there was the latest communiqué by ETA, which was in itself insufficient and highlighted internal debates. However, it followed the GRIT strategy of unilateral steps, and was in broad agreement with the demands by the international group headed by Brian Currin. A little later, ETA's political counterparts presented the statutes for a new political group that clearly stated that its rejection of violence was explicit, unilateral and the irrevocable. This has created an optimistic scenario, which Pedro Ibarra examines in **Platform**.

Second, and almost simultaneously, an uprising began in Tunisia after an increase in the price of basic foodstuffs. It was not the first time this had happened, but on this occasion the consequences were unforeseeable. A few days later, the Tunisian president was forced to resign by popular pressure, which continued until the prime minister also resigned. Other countries in the Arab and Islamic world have also been shaken by popular uprisings with an obvious domino effect - Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya, Oman, opposition movements in Iran... the list is incomplete, as the snowball effect is still in action. Some people have already christened 2011 as the year of uprisings. These events have also coincided with this issue dedicated to nonviolence, and in our **In depth** section Rafael Grasa's article examines these events from the perspective of nonviolence, given the important role played by nonviolent civil disobedience in these processes of change, with the exception of Libya.

In our **In depth** section, we have also attempted to provide an overview of the various aspects of nonviolence: from its theory and history to its implementation. The articles by Jaume Botey, Pere Ortega, Luca Gervasoni and Carlos Pérez provide us with an perspective on nonviolent thought and action, from the perspective of the Catalan tradition and from the theoretical and practical viewpoint. In **Platform** we have an article by Xavier Alcalde that reminds us of the pacifist roots of the universal language: Esperanto.

Nonetheless, hope does not blind us to persistent problems, such as military expenditure, the securitisation of development and the increasing importance of the privatisation of security. Or harrowing events which continue to fester due to the incapacity of those directly involved and the international community, such as the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, where the post-electoral *impasse* continues, with ongoing violence and a series of unsuccessful mediation missions, which is making governability and everyday life in particular very difficult. Meanwhile, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict remains in a dead end, and in this context, the uprisings in the Arab world appear to reinforce trend towards stagnation. No significant improvements can be glimpsed in Colombia, despite the expectations in early 2011 also being very optimistic, or in Afghanistan.

In short, the international landscape is uncertain and at the same time exciting. It remains to be seen in which direction the winds of change and peace will blow over the next few months.

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IN DEPTH

INTRODUCTION

Nonviolence, a tool for transformation

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ICIP Expert



Nonviolence is a very strong force. The word comes from the Sanskrit (*ahimsa*) and describes both a philosophy of life and a specific way of achieving political and social change. Its distinguishing feature, as the word suggests, is rejection of the use of violence, but this rejection does not imply resignation or submission, but instead quite the opposite. Nonviolence carries out actions of resistance or civil disobedience in order to achieve its objectives. It has strong links with pacifism, but the two terms are not synonymous. Pacifism is not necessarily linked to a desire for change, but instead emphasises a rejection of violence. However, there is an implicit objective of social and political change in nonviolent action.

The events in North Africa and the Middle East in recent weeks are a good example of nonviolence. Despite the fact that those events are not the subject of this article, I believe a few short comments are necessary.

Because all types of commentators and media warn us constantly of the need for armies - and of the uselessness, ineffectiveness and slowness of nonviolent alternatives - we need to hold our heads high on occasions like this. We need to educate and undertake an empirical demonstration by example. Society in Egypt and Tunisia has succeeded in quickly - so far on a nonviolent basis - changing governments that had refused to move for over three decades. The levels of discontent are so high that without any foreign support, and with practically no organisational structure, it has only taken a spark to make people to take to the street and to make their respective governments totter. Quickly and effectively ... and nonviolently. We need to emphasise this!

Finally, to end this short discussion of current events, I have another thought. If these events have been a problem for anyone, it is the Western powers, which were willing to sacrifice respect for human rights and democratic principles in return for a guarantee of stability, advantageous trade policies and energy supplies, in some countries. Their rhetoric - they have always considered themselves lifelong democrats - has shown scrupulous respect for pluralist systems. Their actions and those of those they supported suggested quite the opposite. Hopefully their rhetoric will continue, but from

now on they will decide to make a real effort towards consistency. It is obvious - but it also needs to be remembered - that these governments act in our name and represent us.

Returning to the subject that concerns us here, nonviolence includes a variety of mechanisms aimed at social transformation. Using these mechanisms does not guarantee victory, or that the objectives of the transformation may be considered positive. What is certain is that if one of the two parties to a conflict uses violence, the opportunities for resolving it, or positive transformation, are drastically reduced.

It is also true that in Catalonia there have been many individuals and organisations who have advocated nonviolence as a means for transformation. Indeed, one of those people, Pepe Beunza, is featured in our interview. But taking advantage of this wealth and diversity in the nonviolent tradition in Catalonia, we also thought it appropriate to include an article on this subject written by another of the central figures in the movement, Jaume Botey.

Continuing the theme of returning to the roots and discovering the sources, we have an article by Pere Ortega, who reviews the tradition of nonviolent thought and its central figures, and gives us a summary.

The second part of the articles focuses on putting nonviolence into practice. The first, by Luca Gervasoni, makes a necessary distinction for the uninitiated. Nonviolent resistance and pacifism is not the same thing, although they may coincide, particularly in inspiring principles rather than in practice. He highlights two of the recurring features in studies of the impact and effect of nonviolent resistance.

The second article focuses on its application. In a monograph on nonviolence, we thought it essential to include a first-hand account of how these types of actions are prepared, which precautionary measures must be taken, and some of the risks involved in carrying them out. Carlos Pérez, of Alternativa Antimilitarista - MOC Valencia has written for us about the protests against the NATO summit that took place in Lisbon last November.

Finally, although this is not a news magazine, the importance and dimensions of the white uprisings force us to examine the subject from the perspective of nonviolence. Rafael Grasa does so in an article in which he considers nonviolent resistance movements and to what extent their intellectual inspiration can be attributed to Gandhi or La Boétie.

This series of articles aims to bring together various analyses of nonviolence in order to make it more visible and understandable. The texts reflect this and have the added value that they have also all been written by activists. As well as their knowledge, they also contribute their involvement in this mechanism for social and political transformation.

CENTRAL ARTICLES

The tradition of Nonviolence in Catalonia

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Since the end of the Spanish Civil War, Catalonia has seen the continuous growth of groups for peace and against militarism. The desire for peace in Catalonia is deep-rooted, probably more than anywhere else in Spain. First came initiatives from within the Church, such as Pax Christi, which began in 1954. Later, after the *Pacem in Terris* encyclical and the Second Vatican Council, came the Justice and Peace delegations in each diocese. However, several civil initiatives also began to appear, like those linked to the United Nations system, Friends of UNESCO and the United Nations Association, and in 1967, the Víctor Seix Institute for War Studies began to provide a scientific basis for the subject of peace, a forerunner of the International University of Peace which has been based in Sant Cugat since 1984.

It was hard work, and involved the efforts of Víctor Seix himself, Frederic Roda, Joan Misser, Joan Botam, Joan and Llorenç Gomis, as well as many others, who were prophets of peace in Catalonia. We were in the middle of a military dictatorship, but debates and conferences, the Pax Christi routes, and publications like *El Ciervo*, etc., were fertile ground at that time. The strategy of had yet to be explicitly formulated as a method of struggle, but the ideas of Gandhi, Luther King, Helder Câmara and Lorenzo Milani were already very influential in Catalonia.

Accepting and promoting nonviolence as a model for existence and a spiritual attitude requires considerable personal conviction and inner strength. The first nonviolence collective here was the Friends of Arca Group. Lanza del Vasto had created the Arca community in France based on the principles of nonviolence, life in community, self-sufficiency, contact with nature and openness to all religions. The Friends of Arca disseminated those principles at camps (Castellterçol, Mallorca), the Arc de Santa Maria bookshop and through contacts with sympathetic individuals and groups, such as Pérez Esquivel, Jean Goss and Gonzalo Arias, the author of the book *Los encartelados* [The Summoned]. Among others, the group consisted of Jordi Maluquer, Lluís Fenollosa, Fèlix Saltor, Maria Casas, Marta Casas and Àngels Recasens. From 1981 onwards, under the name of Artisans for Peace, they organised a demonstration every Thursday in front of the Palace of the Government of Catalonia.

Towards the end of Francoism, an unprecedented clandestine movement emerged within the army, the Democratic Military Union, whose members, while loyal to what they considered to be the work of the army, conscientiously objected to the Francoist army. All its members were court-martialed. The officers Josep Delàs and Juli Busquets were among its members.

However, it was Lluís M. Xirinacs who formulated and almost personified nonviolent political action in Catalonia in the early 1970s, starting with his first hunger strike in 1973, until his death. Love for one's adversary and analysis of reality were for him two of the basic principles of nonviolent action. He had a highly utopian perspective, and permanently lived on the boundaries between "the system" and the "anti-system," between the politics and freedom of the nonviolence movement and traditional politics. Today, the Randa Foundation is responsible for the study and dissemination of his legacy.

Conscientious objection to military service was prepared almost as a collective action in support of Pepe Beunza by the Friends of Arca, with declarations and marches even before he initially entered prison. In 1974, when he was released, the first group of objectors moved into Can Serra, in l'Hospitalet, to undertake an alternative community service, doing work around the neighbourhood, which was organised by the parish church. A year later, a month after Franco's death, Martí Olivella, Jesús Vinyes and five other comrades from elsewhere in Spain were arrested and taken to various prisons. The year after that, the number increased to thirteen, and to thirty the year after that. The feeling was one of victory, it was an unstoppable avalanche. They were immediately joined by groups of young people aligned to various extents with the libertarian philosophy that advocated refusal to do military service, including Mili KK, the Ganva-Gamba (the Nonviolent Antimilitarist Action Group and Barcelona Antimilitarist Group), which during the period between 1981 and 1984 used the Casal de la Pau centre to foster the Catalan nonviolent movement by means of publications including *La puça i el General* and what was known as nonviolent direct action, which has subsequently continued in alternative social movements, once again highlighting the movement's political autonomy. New NGOs emerged, such as *Fundació per la Pau*, created by Alfons Banda, Toni Soler and subsequently by Jordi Armadans.

The "NO" campaign in the referendum on entering NATO in March 1986, which was led by Gabriela Serra and Rafael Grasa, facilitated the convergence, albeit with some difficulties, of all the sectors of the peace movement - political, social, religious and nonviolent. It was a united mass campaign, but the referendum highlighted the values and the importance of the extra-Parliamentary left. It also coincided with major European mobilisations against the deployment in Europe of missiles by the United States, and led to part of the political left (Manolo Sacristán and the magazine *Mientras Tanto*) considering the possibility of nonviolence as a political strategy for struggle for the first time.

The subject of peace has finally entered public consciousness and the world of academia and has received institutional recognition. In the academic sphere, the institutions include the School for a Culture of Peace at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, directed by Vicenç Fisas between its creation and 1999. Leading organisations (the Red Cross, trade unions, women's organisations, scouts, leisure) allocate resources to it; it is part of civic education, and the Federation of NGOs was created. But the feeling of impotence in the face of today's major conflicts (Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan and the conflicts in Africa) is overwhelming. Obviously, the peace movement has many facets, and has matured, despite the fact that is considered a token presence by the world of realpolitik. For example, it is infuriating to see the contradiction between the arguments of pacifism and the decision made by states to focus on war (military expenditure, research, the arms trade, mines) which is continually condemned by the Josep Delàs Centre for Justice and Peace, and especially by Arcadi Oliveres and Tica Font. At the Centre, Pere Ortega, Tomàs Gisbert, Alejandro Pozo and Pepo Gordillo continue to promote the strategy of nonviolence based on investigation or initiatives such as fiscal objection. Other groups (Peace Brigades International, NOVA, the Nonviolent Peaceforce) undertake nonviolent activism in places of conflict.

Finally, all the factors in the story make up a whole. Meanwhile, the new peace movements, as exemplified by the Stop the War platform (Francesc Tubau, M. Pilar Massana, David Karvala, Roser Palol...) have been able to integrate groups with different ideologies, political origins and strategies, in the knowledge that faced with the serious possibility of a world war, it is necessary to set disagreements to one side. Meanwhile, in the institutional arena, in 2003 the Parliament of Catalonia unanimously passed a Law to promote peace, which anticipated the creation of two instruments: the Council for the Promotion of Peace, a representative body, which was created in 2005, and the International Catalan Institute for Peace, which was created in 2007.

News in nonviolent thought

Pere Ortega

The Delàs Centre for Peace Studies



At a time of crisis - and not only in economic terms - talking about Gandhi's work is a challenge to the vulgarity of prevailing opinion. But above all, because of its extremely topical nature, in view of the violence unleashed after 9/11 by fundamentalisms that were allegedly inspired by religions - both that of Islamic terrorism and that of George Bush, who began wars by invoking the Bible. Gandhi's nonviolence is inspired by the foundations of religion and paves the way for a new type of social and political thought.

Gandhi's nonviolence is almost unprecedented in history, with the sole exception of Leo Tolstoy, with whom the young Gandhi exchanged correspondence and by whom he was influenced. Tolstoy should be considered responsible for the beginning of nonviolent thought as political action. Tolstoy based his own philosophy on the Christian principles of universal love and turning the other cheek, which led him to conscientiously object to the laws of the State that involved violence. This led to a confrontation with the state, for which he felt enormous disdain and to which he attributed the greatest of evils, including subjecting its citizens and preparing armies to make war. And that meant that only one path was left open to him: conscientious objection.

But Gandhi went much further than that. What in Tolstoy are ideas for a universal peace in the face of the evil of the laws of states, Gandhi made into a theoretical body of work with firm foundations, which is constructed using a system of values based on nonviolence, which act as social norms for any human community. And which he put into practice, first in the struggle for Indians' civil rights in South Africa, and then in India in the struggle for independence from the British Empire. And from where Gandhi obtained the ideas to first convince the Indian people and then the rest of humanity, as like Tolstoy, he used the texts on which the great religions are based.

But Gandhi not only also used the Bible; he was also inspired by the Koran, the Gita and the Mahabharata, and by his reading of Zen, Confucius and Buddha. But it was the Bhagavad Gita that provided him with his maxim of *ahimsa*, or do no harm, based on a negation (*a*) and *himsa*, which means 'violence'. In other words, do no harm to any living being: people, animals or the environment. He completed this with readings of the Gospel with his message of peace, love and forgiveness, and especially the Sermon on the Mount, which he admired greatly.

The concept of nonviolence created by Gandhi is not a simple innovation in the world of ideas. Neither is it a new social utopia, but it is instead a revolution comparable in its dimensions to Montesquieu's theory of the separation of powers or Marx's idea of surplus value, and like them, is a new paradigm for the social transformation of humanity.

This can be seen by the amount of followers that Gandhi has influenced, in both politics - Luther King, Petra Kelly, Nelson Mandela, Vandana Shiva, Aung San Suu Kyi, Dalai Lama, Ibrahim Rugova, Corazón Aquino and many others - and in the field of nonviolence theory, where the list is a long one. As far as I know, Italy has for reasons of proximity been the source for texts by Lanza del Vasto, Lorenzo Milani, Aldo Capitini, Danilo Dolci and Giani Pontara; from the USA, there is the work of Gene Sharp, the academic who developed nonviolence into a methodology, and a long stream of authors yet to be translated in this country; from France, Jean Marie Muller; from the United Kingdom, Bar de Ligt and Michael Randle; from Norway, Johan Galtung, and Gonzalo Arias, who is the most well-known in Spain.

Gandhian nonviolence can be synthesised as a few basic ideas: nonviolent society must be constructed democratically from the bottom up, seeking consensus and convincing people to act in the name of truth; the search for the truth can only take place by means of a process of self-reflection, appealing to one's conscience and preparing the body and mind for the struggle for transformation; in order to fight against and prevent injustice it is necessary to be aware of and choose the types of nonviolent struggles; having defined the source of the problem, one's opponents must be convinced, rather than destroyed, as opponents must be respected and receive justice; work must be done to end the inequalities that subjugate people, between men and women and between social classes, including cultural inequalities and those in the social structure; nonviolence is simultaneously a means and an end; it is therefore not only a method, it is also a holistic and liberating way of thinking that embraces humanity as a whole.

Resisting violence, disturbing peace

Luca Gervasoni

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«I'll tell you something: I'm not a pacifist. I don't want to negotiate agreements that legitimise our defeat. I'm fighting for justice» That's what Abdallah Abu Rahma told me in Palestine, in early 2007¹. Abdallah was (and still is) one of the leaders in the Palestinian nonviolent resistance movement against the Israeli occupation. Since then, he has been arrested seven times and injured on thirty-four occasions (on one of them, a high-speed projectile wounded him in the back). He is currently serving a 16-month sentence in the Israeli prison of Ofer. What did he do? He organised a movement against all violence², he mobilised Israeli civil society, and talked about freedom and independence. He never threw a stone.

The UN General Secretary himself, Ban Ki Moon, has recently called on Israel to release him, saying that he was one of the most outstanding advocates of peace he had ever known³. So... what was he talking about when he said he wasn't a pacifist? The phrase surprises all those of us who think of peace as a word linked to justice. But Abdallah had his reasons for saying it. And not only the very poor results of the 17-year peace process between Israel and Palestine. The fact is that the world of activism that advocates social justice and human rights (whether in Barcelona or in Jerusalem) has increasingly distanced itself from all those who think up, write and carry out plans for conflict transformation and the construction of peace. And that is a serious mistake. Throughout his life, Abdallah has witnessed thousands of projects focusing on dialogue, conflict resolution and the restoration of cooperative relationships based on mediation and negotiation (the constructor of peace's toolkit). He has been aware of the thousands of millions of euros that the international community has spent on promoting them. And he has also seen how (almost) none of these projects supported the nonviolent movement against the occupation. It is necessary to set out the arguments for reuniting the "resisters" with the "pacifists".

This is especially true when nonviolent resistance (or civil disobedience) has proven itself to be one of the most effective strategies for transforming conflicts in recent decades. Especially in heavily asymmetrical conflicts (those with oppressed minorities, dictatorships and occupations). And this is not only true of Gandhi and Luther King. A recent study by Maria Stephan and Erica Chenoweth concludes that "the nonviolent campaigns and movements (of the last decade) have been effective in 53% of cases, while only 26% of the armed resistance movements have achieved their aims."⁴ The democratic revolution of the downtrodden in Tunisia appears to be the latest success of civil resistance.⁵ In the words of Tunisia's most famous poet, Abolkacim Ashabi: "If one day the people decide to live, destiny will give us an answer and all the chains will break."

There are excellent and unbiased studies that show us the potential of nonviolence for transforming a conflict and explaining many of the successes achieved (I recommend the study by Véronique Dudouet)⁶. What are the key factors?

Basically, two things.

First, that many modern conflicts are asymmetrical, with the parties in the conflict having levels of power, organisation and resources that vary enormously, which makes it very difficult for them to negotiate under equal conditions and obtain a just peace. Nonviolent resistance, in hundreds of countries and situations, has succeeded (in varying degrees in each case) in mobilising marginalised and/or oppressed groups, making them conscious of their potential, legitimising their demands and thereby obtaining international support for their causes. This enables them to balance the scales in negotiations. Marting Luther King summarised it like this: "Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored."⁷

Second, many of these revolutions, resistance movements, popular uprisings and pro-democracy movements grow and take shape (and are often destroyed and immobilised) without NGOs, study centres and official European agencies for development and the construction of peace having the mechanisms to defend them, raise their profile and disseminate their transformational message. The impact of these movements is often overlooked by the activists in the "resistor" group, which leads to a lack of links with the area of construction of peace which does not enable the transforming potential of uniting the two strategies to be achieved.

We can improve.
(But do not forget Abdallah.)

1. <http://www.popularstruggle.org/freeabdallah>
2. <http://www.bilin-village.org>
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Nonviolent action at the NATO summit

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A hundred activists from Portugal, Spain, Finland, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland and Sweden blocked the entrance for delegates and officials participating in the NATO summit in Lisbon on Saturday 20 November. Using chains and padlocks connected to their bodies, they tried to delay the summit in order to denounce the policy of the Atlantic alliance. Activists also threw red paint on themselves to represent the victims caused by NATO actions. The activists blocked one of the main intersections in the security zone until the police moved in and arrested 42 people.

Activists participating in the anti-NATO camp organised by the Portuguese group CAGA, which hosted hundreds of European and international activists, were involved in these actions. According to CAGA's Jorge Paulo Antunes, "we use civil disobedience to highlight the violence committed by NATO in Afghanistan. They are meeting here today to perfect their arsenal of destruction. It is important to demonstrate, but we believe that it is not enough. With our action we use our bodies to obstruct the war machinery."

This type of action is new in Portugal, and they are taking place thanks to the increasing coordination between European pacifist and antimilitarist groups. This coordination has already led to the organisation of large-scale disobedience actions, such as the invasion of the NATO headquarters in Brussels in the NATO Game Over action of 2008, and the blockades of the NATO summit in Strasbourg, in 2009. Likewise, groups such as Alternativa Antimilitarista-MOC in Spain, Vredesactie in Belgium, OFOG in Sweden, Non au missile M51 in France and Internacional de Resistentes a la Guerra have long-standing contacts with CAGA for preparing civil disobedience actions in Portugal, and encouraging the growing interest from Portuguese activists in organising this type of initiative.

As well as the disobedience actions, in the afternoon, thousands of people (8,000 according to the Portuguese press) participated in the demonstration against the summit. The demonstration was organised by various Portuguese organisations and trade unions, which were mostly linked to the Portuguese Communist Party and the left wing Bloco de Esquerda, and it was not free of controversy due to the latter's refusal to allow organised activists from the anti-NATO camp convened by the anti-war and anti-NATO platform (PAGUEN, in its Portuguese abbreviation) to participate. Finally, the police allowed this group of activists to join the end of the demonstration, with a barrier of riot police between them and the demonstration itself. At the end of the demonstration, a group of around 400 people participated in a demonstration of solidarity with those arrested, which ended with a small march in the city, with samba groups and clowns. A few dozen people also gathered in front of the detention centre where those arrested had been sent before their release at midnight. They were finally charged with a minor offence of disobedience, and then lawyers added that the charge may not end up in court due to the irregularities committed during their arrest.

Despite the large number of Portuguese media that drew attention to the threat of disturbances taking place in the city, as had occurred at the previous NATO summit in Strasbourg, the protests were peaceful. During the weeks prior to the summit, the Portuguese media related the groups participating in the anti-NATO camp with the so-called Black Bloc. In response, the camp organised street actions throughout the week that highlighted the nonviolent nature of the protests, including a public training activity in the central square in Lisbon, focusing on the basic techniques for carrying out civil disobedience actions, a simulation of bombing in front of the central Rossio station, fields of crosses, adding red dye to a fountain and graffiti in businesses involved in the organisation of the Alliance's summit.

The new faces of nonviolence: from hunger riots to white revolutions. Gandhi o La Boétie

Rafael Grasa

President of the IICIP¹



We are living through uncertain and optimistic times: what in other circumstances used to be known simply as “hunger riots” have become almost spontaneously structured social movements (or at least largely outside the basic political parties), with people taking to the streets on a continuous basis after arranging the actions using social networks, using mobile phones and computers. We have seen in Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt and Yemen how these movements have been created based on demands for basic needs, among which the demands for democracy, a change in regime and political leaders and an end to corruption are central. The phenomenon has also been broadcast on television, and of course, by means of social networks all over the world. Much has already been said about the “Facebook effect”, which has helped to achieve one of the things that nonviolent struggle as a strategy always seeks by means of the educational and exemplary nature of its actions: to stir consciences, to encourage more people to take action, to create a “snowball effect”, inside the country and beyond; in this case, in the Arab world.

The result has to date, in mid-February, been the fall of two dictators, Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt. Furthermore, the domino effect is certain to have consequences in many other countries, especially in the Arab world; in the words of Raimon, once you’ve tasted freedom, you have more strength to live. And to fight!

In addition to satisfaction at the impact and congratulations to those involved, this phenomenon, which emerged as this issue of *Peace in Progress* dedicated precisely to nonviolent struggle went to press, warrants three types of urgent reflections, which still have little basis and are perhaps too closely linked to the events and the emotions involved.

First, the causes of the movements, and the objectives and tactics and instruments used, must be carefully analysed, with a case-by-case comparison. The basic fact is that we have moved from hunger riots to so-called “white revolutions”, in which the violence of the former - spontaneous, sometimes intense, and always of short duration - has been replaced by nonviolent actions. Once again, when undertaking analysis and comparison, a distinction should be made between structural causes (social, political and economic) and accelerators and triggers, as well as a distinction between social, economic and political factors. We will leave that for later.

Second, it will be necessary to consider the consequences and impact, beyond the immediate future and the headlines, in each country concerned, in the Arab world, on international relations and foreign policies in the North (in the European Union and the United States in particular) and also at various levels. Many things may change, especially in the evolution of political Islam, in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and even development, peace and human rights policies. However, we must avoid conclusions that are generic and above all hasty: international politics is based firmly on Tomasi di Lampedusa’s principle: make changes so that everything stays the same.

Third, it is necessary to focus on the new use made of nonviolent tactics and strategies, combined with communication technologies. Many people, from Obama to many political analysts, have recently invoked Gandhi when discussing the cases of Tunisia and Egypt. In addition, various authors have been pointing to the relevance of nonviolence that is not based on religious convictions in the new political era for some years.

A mobilisation may be not violent and not necessarily “nonviolent,” despite the use of instruments and tactics based on centuries of nonviolent struggle. It is therefore worthwhile remembering what nonviolence means in the strictest sense of the word.

In the words of Gonzalo Arias, an excellent example of a practising theoretician, the violence that nonviolent individual unilaterally and unconditionally rejects, is his or her own, in order that the rejection of murderous methods “can end the monotonous vicious circle of violence and counter-violence which constitutes most of the history of humanity.”²

Based on this premise, Gonzalo builds an argument about the meaning of rejecting violence and choosing nonviolence, using a non-religious political ethic and focusing on practical action. First, he defines the rejection of violence, restricting the total rejection of direct violence aimed at killing or attacks on people’s physical integrity, which enables moral coercion to be used in the nonviolent struggle. Second, he argues that the rejection must be total, at least on a personal level, and does not accept that violence could be resorted to in some extreme cases. Third, it is necessary to distance oneself from those who believe that a surgical use of violence is acceptable at the end of the process, to provide the finishing touch to the work done up until that point. And fourth, he proposes establishing all nonviolent strategy based on two preconditions: the unambiguous and categorical declaration - mentioned above - in favour of nonviolence and the conviction, which is a guiding principle, that it is always possible under any circumstances to find a nonviolent path, however difficult it may sometime appear.

To put it another way, the thought of the great minds of nonviolence involves a strategic rather than a tactical decision against violence, and in favour of nonviolent struggle in political action. Those involved in nonviolent action therefore have a dual personal commitment to planning their political actions; there are no exceptions to the rejection of violence, and it is always possible to find ways and alternatives to fight against injustice and for peace in a nonviolent manner. In other words, non-violence as an alternative is based on ethical and political principles, not necessarily religious ones, which enable political action and the exercise of influence on public policy-making in a different way. As Gandhi said in his argument which justified the reasons for calling for non-cooperation, in the *Swaraj* they involve accepting that “non-cooperation with evil is as much a duty as is cooperation with good [...] evil can only be sustained by violence, withdrawal of support of evil requires complete abstention from violence”. And doing so really and effectively entails other ways of action, and implementing policies to guarantee the dignity and welfare of all human beings and that of future generations.

Is that what we've seen in Tunisia and Egypt? I'm not one hundred percent sure. I don't think that the principles of Gonzalo Arias mentioned above were always present, at least in the initial intentions and “design” of the actions. However, it does not really matter very much. In my opinion, the thought of Étienne de la Boétie and his position on voluntary servitude has been as relevant or indeed more so than the thought of Gandhi in the “white uprisings”: as long ago as the sixteenth century, he told us that not even the most despotic regime in the world can be maintained without the consent of those governed, which despots often obtain by force, coercion, and especially by fear and force of habit. Once fear has been lost and consent withdrawn, once the dialectic of domination/submission/servitude has been abandoned by important sectors of the population, no dictatorship or despotism can last for very long.

To put it in his own words, which are relevant today: “Resolve to serve no more, and you are at once freed. I do not ask that you place hands upon the tyrant to topple him over, but simply that you support him no longer; then you will behold him, like a great Colossus whose pedestal has been pulled away, fall of his own weight and break in pieces.” That is what the white revolutions have done, by nonviolent means and using nonviolent tactics.

1. The text contains ideas and extracts from a recent text by the author, the prologue to book by David Cortright, *Gandhi avui. Noviolència per a una nova era política (Gandhi and Beyond. Nonviolence for a New Political Age)*. Barcelona: Pagès editors/ICIP, 2011. This book begins the Institute's “Nonviolence and the Fight for Peace” collection.
2. *La noviolència, ¿tentación o reto?*, author's edition, page 146

FINDING OUT MORE

On this occasion we present various resources which may be useful for the study of nonviolent thought and its actions. There are many resources about nonviolence available on the Internet. We would like to highlight a speech (both the text and the images); an institution, the International Center for Nonviolent Conflict, and two manuals on nonviolence.

Speech by Martin Luther King Jr.

If one had to choose the five most outstanding speeches of nonviolent action, there is no doubt that Martin Luther King's speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in August 1963 would be among them. The message was clear and conclusive: all types of racism must be opposed, firmly, but without the use of physical force. As a result, one day the day will come in which racism has disappeared.

The Catalan version of the entire speech is available at:
<http://www.terrificabras-filosofia.cat/cat/referencia4.asp?IDAct=901>

But as an image is sometimes worth a thousand words, you can also see the recording of the speech at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbUtl_0vAJk

International Center on Nonviolent Conflict

<http://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/>

As mentioned above, there are many resources on the Internet focusing on nonviolent action. However, we thought that this one is one of the most interesting and comprehensive. The website, in English, contains an initial more theoretical section, giving a detailed explanation of what nonviolence exactly is, the basic concepts, and frequently asked questions... The second section talks about movements and campaigns. It contains news on current campaigns and a historical overview of cases of nonviolent resistance. Another section includes all types of resources such as books and interviews. Finally, another tab looks at the centre, its activities and its academic advisors.

To round things off, we would like to highlight two manuals that cover the subject of nonviolence from very different perspectives.

Howard Clark; Javier Gárate; Joanne Sheehan (coord.). *The Nonviolence Handbook. War Resisters' International, 2010*

The Nonviolence Handbook. War Resisters' International is a downloadable book (<http://wri-irg.org/pubs/Manual-Nonviolencia>) available in various languages, including Spanish and English. This manual is completely focused on activists, as individuals interested in nonviolent action, to help them find out about it and implement it. The book contains an introduction, followed by a campaigning advice and then examples of some campaigns carried out in various contexts. The manual also includes twenty exercises providing training in nonviolent resistance.

Gene Sharp; Joshua Paulson. *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice And 21st Century Potential. Extending Horizons Books, 2005*

Waging nonviolent Struggle, while not rejecting activism, has a more academic focus. In its introductory section, it analyses the reasons for nonviolence and its methods. The second section refutes some of the clichés about nonviolence (ineffective, slow, mainly Asian...) over twenty chapters, each of which looks at a different case history, and reviews some of the successes of nonviolent resistance. The third part of the book focuses on the dynamics on the nonviolent struggle. Finally, Sharp looks at the challenges in the future that nonviolent resistance must face if it is to continue to be useful during the twenty-first century. We give a few examples of the case studies listed by the author in the book below.

The Russian Revolution of 1905

The Russian Empire was governed by the Tsars with an iron fist, as they believed in their divine right to govern, with a society that was changing from being mainly rural and agrarian to urban and industrial. These changes led to discontent. In December 1904, a strike broke out at the Putilov metal plant in Saint Petersburg. By January, 150,000 workers were on strike in the capital, as well as many more all over the country. The trigger for the revolution was the repression of the peaceful march that took place on Sunday 9 January, which led to numerous deaths and was a catalyst for similar actions elsewhere in the Empire. Over the next six months, the bargaining between the more moderate factions of the government and the opposition continued. In October, the Saint Petersburg Soviet called for a general strike, a refusal to pay taxes and a mass withdrawal of cash from banks. Finally, the Tsar was forced to sign the October Manifesto, which made concessions to many demands from the liberal parties but almost none by the socialist groups. The political movements continued until December of that year, when the Moscow Soviet attempted to undertake a violent revolution. The lack of organisation and its lack of support elsewhere in Russia led to the revolution's total defeat within a week.

Defence against a coup d'état, Germany 1920

At the end of the First World War, the situation in Germany was untenable. Finally, Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and a new regime was established: the Weimar republic. The change in the system did not lead to social peace, but instead aggravated the situation with constant general strikes. In that situation, on 12 March, the military officers Kapp, Bauer, Ehrhardt and Lüttwitz organised a coup d'état. The response from the public was to begin a general strike which completely paralysed the country. Sharp's analysis does not make it clear whether the leaders who were defeated by the strike or their own incompetence. As an example, he explains its financial difficulties, which led them to consider robbing the German central bank, even after they had taken over the government. Four days later, with the country paralysed, and governing it impossible, the plotters decided to leave government and return power to the civilian regime.

Norwegian teachers against fascism, 1942

The Nazis invaded Norway in April 1940. Military resistance was insignificant after the first two months. The Nazis' brutal repression led to the population engaging in symbolic acts of protest, although these were not organised. In February 1942, the collaborationist regime of Vidkun Quisling attempted to create a Fascist Youth Front and Fascist Teachers' Union in which participation was compulsory. In response, over 80% of the teachers wrote identical letters to the government, refusing to join a fascist group. Tens of thousands of letters were then sent within a very short time, in this case by parents, in a protest involving practically the entire country. The government decided to close the schools for a month. In March, a thousand Norwegian teachers were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Afterwards, almost 500 teachers were sent to Kirkenes, a work camp near the Arctic circle. The reprisals became known to the population, which forced the project for the establishment of the fascist group and the structures to put it in place to be abandoned. By November, all the teachers had returned to their home towns.

Saving Jewish husbands in Berlin, 1943

Towards the end of the Second War and after defeat at the Battle of Stalingrad, the elite Leibstandarte unit of the SS returned to Berlin with a mission: to make the city a place completely free of Jews. On 27 February, the Jews that still remained in Berlin were all imprisoned. The wives of those arrested, who were mostly from mixed marriages, found out where their husbands were, in Rosenstrasse, and began to meet there. They decided to come back the next day to demand that their husbands be allowed to return home. The protests continued on 1 March, but the deportations to Auschwitz also began on that day. The protests continued until Goebbels himself decided to release approximately 2,000 Jews who had been imprisoned in Rosenstrasse. The decision was due to the poor image of the protests created and the need to improve morale among Berlin's population. The release was therefore a direct consequence of the stubborn resistance of the women demonstrated.

INTERVIEW

Pepe Beunza, Spain's first conscientious objector

Cèlia Cernadas

Journalist



Pepe Beunza was the first person to introduce a new way of fighting against the army to Spain. In 1971, when the country was still under Franco's dictatorship, he decided to use civil disobedience, and was imprisoned for his refusal to join the army. He soon became an internationally known figure, beginning what would later become the movement against military service which would finally succeed in bringing it to an end. This interview looks back at those events and his story in recent years.

You were the first antimilitarist and pacifist conscientious objector in Spain, during general Franco's dictatorship, and you paved the way for thousands of young men who subsequently refused to do military service. Was the decision very carefully prepared?

Yes, a lot of thought and action went into it. It took me two years to make the decision, and another two years to prepare the action. After participating in the struggle at university, I came across the subject of conscientious objection in 1967. Despite the predominant nature of the struggle by the Communist party, I came from a left-wing Christian background, and I was thinking in other terms. Some summer I went to the Arca Community in France, and I met Lanza del Vasto. He talked to me about Gandhi, conscientious objection, ecological agriculture, the fight against the war in Algeria, occupying nuclear power stations ... That opened my mind up. Obviously, the problem arose when I went back to Spain. There was freedom there, but there wasn't any here. After a lot of thought, I decided to be an objector. And that meant I had to be ready to go to prison. And how do you do that? I had to prepare myself mentally and physically, with two things in mind: to resist, because I wanted to do other things when I came out of prison, and to obtain a law recognising conscientious objection. So I had a personal objective and a political objective in mind. I did yoga, I learned handicrafts, how to play the flute... Once a week I fasted, and I gave myself a psychiatric examination, to find out how I could withstand very strong pressure. On a political level, we prepared support groups in Valencia, Madrid and the Basque Country, and we travelled around Europe, because I didn't want to suffer for nothing. That campaign was very successful, because at that time Europe was still shocked that Franco was still around. That was after May '68, this was in 1970. Franco was an affront to European democrats. When the European pacifists found out about a Spanish pacifist, they were happy to get involved.

But how did you reach that conviction and that decision? We're talking about a situation with a dictatorship, there was no pacifist tradition, and the concept of nonviolence was relatively new and unheard of in Spain. Did you have any ideological background in your family?

I was one of nine siblings, my father did military service, he was a Carlist, and my grandfather had been shot by the Republicans... There was no family history in my case. My father was simply an honest Catholic. But it was mainly the entire Arca community in France, which ran courses every year in Castellterçol. I was very interested in nonviolent action. And I gradually met people who became my teachers. They were very brave people in France, who opposed the war in Algeria in 1963. It was a very strong group, they took me in, they taught me, they gave me the theoretical and practical tools and they gave me the momentum. I travelled a great deal around Europe, and I met other objectors who had been to prison. Conscientious objection was completely unheard of in Spain. There has only been an article about it in *El Ciervo* and *El Mundo Social*, a Jesuit magazine. The only ones here were the Jehovah's Witnesses. There were 150 of them in prison for refusing to do military service, but they were not trying to achieve any political objective.

Were you scared?

I was terribly scared. The fear was physical, of being hurt, and moral, of not being able to go through with it and letting people down. But as soon as I said no, and I went into the cell, I had a feeling of intense joy: I felt caged like a lion, but at the same time I was happy because I had done it, because I have succeeded. It was a very moving moment. And from that point on, it was a question of waiting and coping.

What was the left's opinion of your decision? Did they support the nonviolent struggle in the way that you advocated it?

It was very difficult, because the feeling of solitude was very strong. In Valencia, I was relatively well-known because I had been involved in the struggle at university for years. The left respected me, but they thought I was crazy. They thought going to prison was ridiculous, and that escape was the right tactic. They also said that it was necessary to do military service to learn how to use weapons and advocated violent revolution. It was the era of Che Guevara, the Vietnam war..., but it was also the time of Martin Luther King. So we weren't completely defenceless.

Here is a phrase of yours that appears in the book "The rebellious utopia of Pepe Beunza," by Pedro Oliver: "The strength of nonviolence and civil disobedience is marvellous. I was telling the police that I was going to commit a crime and that they could do nothing to prevent it".

The police in Valencia already knew me. A few days before I refused to do military service, they called me, saying they wanted to talk to me. I went to the police station, and they asked me what was all this about, that I wasn't going to do military service. I said that was what I was going to do and that's where the sentence comes from: I was going to commit a crime and the police had no way of preventing it. It was then that I understood the strength and wisdom of nonviolence. One of the conditions is that nonviolence cannot be clandestine, although you have to choose the time and place to publicise your action very carefully. And at that time, the police were not allowed to use arms. The police were very well-trained for violent action, but they didn't know what to do when dealing with nonviolent action.

Pedro Oliver, the author of the book and himself an objector, says that you gave him a contemporary context for the Christian commandment "thou shall not kill". Is your ideological decision linked to social Catholicism or social pacifisms?

My Christian background was very important to me, because that's how I had been brought up, including the commandment "thou shall not kill" which is hardly ever put into practice. A few years ago, there was a roundtable debate organised about Gandhi, featuring various people, and each one had 5 minutes. And I spend the 5 minutes saying: "Thou shalt not kill". And I said to those attending: "I don't know if you'll remember what the others said, but I'm sure you'll remember what I said". The message is so obvious... The idea was given to me by a French anarchist, called Marie Laffranque, who was wheelchair-bound and came to Spain to demonstrate. She was an anarchist, and advocated "thou shall not kill", a nonbeliever, and she had to remind me, a Catholic! It's about having a culture of life.

Anyway, I reached a point where I saw through all the deceit and the structural set-up surrounding the Church. The bishops in Spain had military ranks, they blessed cannons and participated in military parades - there was a contradiction there. The mass in prison, which was compulsory, was unbelievable, completely fascist. I was outraged and I turned against the official church.

In the end, you spent two years in prison and fifteen months in a disciplinary battalion in the Sahara. You faced two court-martials. Was it worth it?

When you spend time in prison that is time that has been stolen from you. I went in when I was 23 years old, and I came out when I was 27. When I went in, I was finishing my education, and when I came out my classmates had jobs, and had got married and had children. But on the whole, I think our results have been marvellous. Not even in our wildest dreams would we have imagined that military service would have disappeared 30 years later. It was inconceivable. Almost a million young men declared themselves objectors, 40 thousand refused to do it and were willing to go to prison ... and military service ended in 2001. So it has been very difficult, but the results have been very positive. There were difficult moments, but there were also some very funny times, which must be said as well. I think it is the most exciting adventure you can

offer a young person: to get involved in the nonviolent struggle to transform society, for justice, for human rights. They will have very strong emotions, they will suffer, but they will also have extraordinary joy. You want to climb Everest, you have to prepare for it; the same is true of this struggle. And you don't start with Everest, you start with Tibidabo, a little bit at a time, don't you?

Because you could also have said: I don't want to do military service, so I am leaving and going to live abroad...

Yes, of course, but what I wanted was to change society, I wanted to be a revolutionary, I wasn't interested in spending my life as a vegetable, like a pretty flower.

What did you do when you came out of prison? How did you continue the fight?

When I came back from the Sahara I worked with Justice and Peace, on a campaign for conscientious objection and the establishment of community service, and we collected signatures. We collected around 900, and we presented them to the Church and to the government. I also gave talks all over Spain, and I was able to get in touch with a lot of people. That is how we created a group which began the Can Serra campaign, in l'Hospitalet. When Franco died, all sorts of people started to be conscientious objectors. Those support groups were the seedbed for the rejection movement. I squatted for two years at Gallecs, a rural area threatened by urban development, and then I became a teacher in Caldes de Montbui, where I settled down a bit. But I carried on giving talks and providing support to the conscientious objection movement: I visited them in prison and picked them up when they came out, I wrote to them... And I did that until 2002, when compulsory military service ended. But we didn't have any time to celebrate it, because the Iraq war led to the Aturem La Guerra (Stop The War) campaign, demonstrations for disarmament ... I've participated in everything that I can.

So nonviolence is still a tool for change and pressure...

Of course. A short time ago, for example, I read an article by Manuel Castells, which said that in order to achieve independence in Catalonia, civil disobedience was the only alternative left.

And what form would that disobedience take in order to be effective?

A general strike; as well as not paying taxes, creating parallel structures for self-government... You would have to think about it very carefully. They are long term struggles. But look what happened in Tunisia. It's like the existence of the army. Armies are useless, because they can't defend us from anything. But there is no parliamentary political party advocating the abolition of armies. Some day, someone will realise that all this military spending is ridiculous. With a quarter of what the world spends on arms, we could solve hunger, poverty, housing ... People will see the light one day, but it won't happen just like that. Here in Catalonia, [Joan] Carretero's party has proposed creating a Catalan army and that made my hair stand on end. All military ideology is based on deceit. That we have to protect the southern frontier; but the Spanish Government is giving arms to Morocco!

What would be the alternative to armies?

When we talk about abolishing armies, it sounds like a negative idea. The positive proposal would be to create a nonviolent Civilian Service or peace force. In a conflict, we only have the Army that can get involved, and that makes the conflict worse. We need people who are trained in mediation, negotiation and arbitration. Obviously, we need to continue the debate: we know a lot about violence, but we're all learning about nonviolence. Violence is highly mythologised, and violence leads to nothing more than destruction, your own and that of the others. Just look at the atomic bomb. Catalonia could be a pioneer in this area: why don't we create a parallel diplomatic corps, for mediation, like Norway and Sweden have?

PLATFORM

The future of ETA and the democratic question

Pedro Ibarra
Lokarri



The latest communiqué from ETA (10 January 2011) is the inevitable response from a violent political organisation that cannot yet accept that it must - silently - shut up shop. On the one hand, it is convinced that its history is coming to an end, among other reasons, and above all, because "its" civilian organisation, the left-wing nationalist movement, has decided to cut links with it. The left-wing nationalist movement has carefully and calmly decided to focus exclusively and to all intents and purposes on peaceful political means. However, ETA cannot resist the idea that it could "monitor" the fulfilment of the democratic process (which it sees as a process leading towards self-determination and independence). Hence the last sentence in the communiqué, in which they say they will continue their struggle until the end of the process.

There is no doubt that not even they believe that final phrase/statement. It is a piece of revolutionary rhetoric for the benefit of those around them, or perhaps for their own benefit, or perhaps even for a small number of them; it is a concession to an intransigent internal minority. It seems quite obvious that ETA will not attack again, regardless of what happens in the process. But not attacking is one thing, and saying that they will never do so again is another thing entirely. We are entering the realms of rhetoric. Nobody, including the Government and undoubtedly the left-wing nationalist movement, believes that they can turn back. ETA will do nothing, regardless of whether its associated political parties are legalised. The most probable scenario is that after they are legalised, it will release another communiqué announcing its final dissolution, this time without any literature. At that point, they will say that thanks to them, the process is headed for its final victory and they are therefore relinquishing the struggle permanently. The levels of ignorance, arrogance and self-delusion that sectarian armed organisations (which is what ETA has been for many years) display in their communiqués have no limits. That is the situation. In this case... fortunately.

When considered in more detail, both the communiqué and the process begun by the left-wing nationalist movement established two separate scenarios for the conflict some time ago. First, there is the problem of ETA (which is in no way a political conflict). The problem is how to create an agreement for it to dissolve, which it would not even be strictly necessary to formalise. This is the real scenario that is now beginning to develop, and it is highly likely that within it, ETA and the Government will be putting out feelers aimed at the definitive end of the conflict.

It would be no problem at all for ETA:

- providing that the situation makes it clear that they are withdrawing of their own volition, and
- providing that commitments are made by the government on the gradual reincorporation of prisoners and exiles to civil life.

And the Government would not have too many problems:

- providing that the contacts do not appear to be simply symbolically linked to political concessions,
- providing that the Government is also able to show how ETA has been defeated, and
- obviously, providing that all the contacts take place in the strictest secrecy.

The other conflict, which is a political conflict, is the one involving the legalisation of the left-wing nationalist movement. This is the only conflict arising from, but today not linked to, the entire long history of the violent conflict in the Basque Country. It is the reason why processes and scenarios of inter-party discussions focused on establishing new legal and political frameworks for the Basque country are not on the political agenda under any circumstances, even in the medium term.

The new statutes of what is also the new left-wing nationalist movement, in addition to their political declarations, are grounds - or should be - for great satisfaction. This means that we can at last look to the future with justified optimism.

First, because they mean the end of violence in its social dimension. The end of the violence that was supported, or tolerated, or understood, by significant sectors of society. Our rejection of ETA's violence was undoubtedly based above all on its consequences; the deaths and pain it causes. It is no less true to say that violence, while it was not supported directly, was justified and encouraged by some sectors of our community and our fellow citizens. This created a great deal of anxiety, and a profound feeling of unease. We rejected these positions both in themselves and also because they embodied a society - our society - with a political culture, a minority but one that was debased, disturbing, and perverse.

The new statutes are not merely words. They are actions - and in this case, striking actions - which point to the beginning of the end of the violence. First, although they do not guarantee it, they are an extremely important tool for ending ETA's real violence. Second, because they guarantee the disappearance of the political culture of violence in our community.

The second reason for satisfaction is that we are able to say that all the political alternatives in this country, including the largest group of pro-independence socialist Basque nationalism, will be fully entitled to operate in the political realm, vote for their candidates and exercise political power where they have been elected to do so. If these statutes began an irreversible process of ethical and political regeneration in society, it is now clear that they also enable some extremely pressing democratic requirements to be met. The exclusion of the left-wing nationalist movement from the political arena was open to criticism. Now it is also impossible. The left-wing nationalist movement, must be, can be and will be legalised. It must be registered and active like any other political party. If this does not happen, democratic legality will be seriously violated. Let us consider the democratic legal requirements. According to the Supreme Court, a political organisation is not the continuation of any other organisation that has been declared illegal when the new party, regardless of the previous political history of its members, declares in its statutes that it is different in fundamental aspects from the preceding organisation. In specific terms, the previous organisations were prohibited because they failed to condemn the violence by ETA. The current group is radically different from its forerunners because it condemns the violence by ETA, with all its consequences and in all its aspects. And it should therefore be and will be legalised.

Now let us briefly turn to a question from the past. The demand that the left-wing nationalist movement review its past, and engage in self-criticism of its foundations and its tolerance of violence is undoubtedly worthy of respect. It is understandable that if it remained silent about the past, this could be seen as a type of highly reprehensible contempt for the victims of violence. These demands and possible criticisms of the left-wing nationalist movement are perfectly understandable. But they have little to do with the question of democracy. Failure to meet these demands does not under any circumstances provide justification for its prohibition. Democracy demands that a party should be legalised based on what it says it is and how it acts as a consequence in the present and the future. Good or bad memories, old friendships and kindness have nothing to do with legalisation. An example that has been repeated ad nauseam, but which remains appropriate is that (some of) the founders of Spain's People's Party and those following them collaborated with the violent dictatorship of general Franco and (none of them) ever condemned the dictatorship. Nobody is suggesting that their party should be made illegal.

Esperanto, a tool for peace

Xavier Alcalde
ICIP Expert



Historically, we have committed an injustice by not including Esperanto and its founder, Ludwig Lazarus Zamenhof, in most of the courses, seminars and anthologies on the theorists of nonviolence. Because he should be included, in a central role.

His ideas emerged in a context of imperialist struggles and in the absence of any institution for international governance or the resolution of conflicts between nations. The ethical and global project in which Zamenhof included Esperanto as a basic tool for communication also contains a series of basic and universal principles, with rules for behaviour that could be considered the forerunners of human rights. It is these ideas that are an effective complement to Tolstoy's nonviolence and which within the Esperanto movement are embodied above all by its creator Zamenhof, who as a Russian writer was interested in linking the more commercial aspects of language and the idea of a peaceful bridge between peoples.

It is no coincidence that Esperanto reached its zenith of popularity and influence in the inter-war period, when there were serious attempts to make it into a universal second language in the new international political framework that emerged after the Great War. It was thought at the time - and there is nothing to suggest otherwise today - that the use of Esperanto in the League of Nations would facilitate communication between nations to the extent that it would have prevented the Second World War. Esperantists advocated the creation of new laws on the relationships between states, as well as a spirit of mutual understanding.

Events suggested that they were right. With thousands of people learning the universal auxiliary language, the idea of a more just society was really considered possible. The Catholic International was established, which also used Esperanto in an attempt to unite Catholicism and pacifists.

One of the main contributions of the Esperanto movement to the ideal of nonviolence is the need for a practical application of philosophy for peace, which has historically found it very difficult to define or establish an idea as abstract as peace. From the perspective of Esperanto, this idea is much more specific and involves achieving mutual understanding and empathy based on a common auxiliary language for everyone that is easy to learn. The utopian brotherhood of Esperanto will therefore be achieved by means of communication.

How can these ideals be put into practice? There are some very inspiring examples, such as the Japanese Esperantists who translated the first-hand accounts of the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki into Esperanto, which helped European Esperantists to translate them into vernacular languages and thereby made it possible for civil society in other countries to become aware of the sufferings experienced by victims of the atomic bombs.

During the second world war, there were Esperantists who taught the language in concentration camps, others who hid Jews and others who were saved because the soldier hunting them realised that they were believers in the same cause. Similar events took place in other conflicts, such as the war in Bosnia, albeit on a smaller scale. Other well-known examples are the bridges between the eastern and western blocs built by Esperantists, and in other cases of censorship and even under dictatorships.

It was in Esperanto that the earliest research into peace took place, which looked at the social and economic roots of conflict. In fact, many of the leading pacifists of the last century were also Esperantists. At that time, pacifism and Esperantism were almost synonymous, as can be seen by the work of intellectuals such as Edmond Privat, a friend of Mahatma Gandhi, and Romain Rolland, one of the prime movers in the development of Esperanto after the death of Zamenhof, and a nonviolent pacifist who campaigned for Polish and Indian independence.

But Esperanto's contribution goes further than creating understanding between states, as it facilitates peaceful co-existence between individuals and peoples. UNESCO, which has acknowledged the value of Esperanto in several resolutions, says in its preamble that "it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed". It is at this point where Zamenhof's ideas are brought to bear. Rather than in official communication channels and abstract declarations on international co-operation, it is at the level of personal contacts where it has an impact.

The Polish doctor's thought evolved, as did his movement. In his later years, Zamenhof advocated the creation of a European Tribunal to regulate conflicts and a United States of Europe, and the Universal Esperanto Association shifted its emphasis from utopian ideals to practical internationalism, and was one of the first international organisations to declare its agreement with the objectives of the United Nations. Considering the problem of an absence of an international language as well as other social problems, the future of Esperanto appears to be linked to the fate of the movement for the establishment of a more peaceful and just international order. Today, as the agendas of social movements converge, pioneering Esperantists are at the heart of the anti-globalisation nonviolent actions by activists for international solidarity seeking a new, fairer and more peaceful international order.

The feasibility of Esperanto as a language today is open to debate (many see it as the solution to many of the problems in the European Parliament), but what is undeniable is Zamenhof's contribution to the theory of nonviolence. His legacy should be recovered as a matter of urgency.

To find out more, see the book by Ulrich Lins "The work of the Universal Esperanto Association for a more peaceful world". Rotterdam 2000. Esperanto Documents 45 A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

El mètode de la NOVIOLÈNCIA

Aldo Capitini



The nonviolence method

Aldo Capitini. *El mètode de la noviolència*. Institut Català Internacional per la Pau; Pagès, 2010. Col·lecció Noviolència i lluita per la pau, 2.

As a courageous advocate of an active and positive conception of nonviolence, Aldo Capitini believed in the primacy of direct action. That is the reason why he was imprisoned twice in Fascist era, and that is why he organised the first march for peace from Perugia to Assisi, in 1961. It was a good example of how to engage in politics, influencing power relations by means of nonviolent methods, despite not being a party politician.

As a philosopher, he is very thought-provoking and even innovative in his arguments for concepts like copresence, which broadens the range of our moral responsibility as thinking beings to include everyone - the living, the dead, those yet to be born, future generations, non-human animals, everything that lives. Using clear and sometimes poetic language, he expresses the religious feeling of the copresence of the living and the dead and respect for all living beings.

This book shows us individual and collective techniques for nonviolence, emphasising the need for training so that when the time comes to use them, we are not unprepared. And it also includes examples of successful cases, because it advocates something that too often goes unnoticed: the nonviolent method works.

For Capitini, the nonviolent method is the practical expression of the poetic and religious concept of copresence, with total coincidence between the means and the ends, according to Giuliano Pontara in this first edition to be published in Catalan: "Violence, however revolutionary it is, paves the way for tyrants." A lesson from history.

However, nonviolence rebels against the passiveness of nonviolence. It is a permanent revolution, a continuous fight against the destructive indoctrination of autonomy and the personal sense of identity (personal transmutation). And it also transforms structures and institutions. It is against war and against militarism, against dogmatism and against the violence intrinsic to market fundamentalism, against dictatorships, against corruption and against the sclerosis of political parties and churches. We should bear in mind that Capitini was an Italian. We should also remember that many concerns have been raised about the Italianisation of political systems, including the system in Catalonia. This should be remembered in order to understand the topical nature of a work like this one in our modern environment.

J. A.

GANDHI avui

NOVIOLÈNCIA PER A UNA
NOVA ERA POLÍTICA

David Cortright



Gandhi and Beyond

David Cortright. *Gandhi avui: noviolència per a una nova era política*. Barcelona: Institut Català Internacional per la Pau; Pagès, 2010. Col·lecció Noviolència i lluita per la pau, 1.

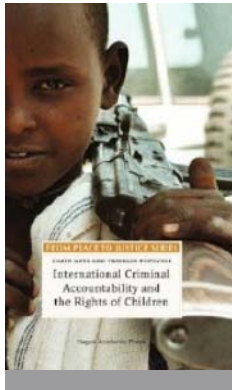
Everyone likes Gandhi. Social and political figures from various areas and with various ideologies often quote him, when justifying civil disobedience, among other reasons. They attribute a great victory to him, in his use of peaceful means against the structural violence used by the British Empire. However, they doubt whether his actions could be applied in other situations. As a result, he is considered an exceptional case (together with Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela), in a very specific context which therefore cannot be repeated, because it is linked to a unique person in history.

That is why in today's conflicts, the sometimes cynically rhetorical question "What would Gandhi do?" is used to legitimise the use of force as a valid and effective means. David Cortright's approach goes further. He seriously considers what Gandhi would do, or to put it another way, what someone inspired by Gandhi, such as Barack Obama, would do. How should a citizen committed to nonviolence behave today in a Palestinian refugee camp, in the midst of the Iraq War, when faced with a suicidal terrorist, a sex attacker, in strategic debates within the social movement for international justice, or in the new forms of communication?

This book shows us that apart from Gandhi, Luther King and Mandela, there have been other luminaries of nonviolence, such as Dorothy Day and Barbara Deming, although the majority of its heroes are nameless. That is what

both history and modern reality tells us. And perhaps this is the key contribution made by this text: it invites us to participate and therefore to be anonymous heroes of contemporary nonviolence. Few books contain such a successful combination of theoretical lessons and the practical advice necessary for carrying out successful nonviolent actions. In other words, actions that change situations of social injustice. In short, this is a well written book with interesting content, but above all it is a useful book.

J. A.



International Criminal Accountability and the Rights of Children

Karin Arts and Vesselin Popovski (ed.). *International Criminal Accountability and the Rights of Children*. Hague Academic Press, 2006.

“Our exploratory reflections focused on the future must have the courage to think the unthinkable and imagine the unimaginable. This is the only way to end the perpetual and vicious spiral of violence that we do not foresee, inadequate responses, more violence, etc.”

These words conclude an academically excellent book, in which the most distinguished authors in the field of international criminal justice provide an overview of the protection of children’s rights by the international criminal justice system. The first question they ask is as follows: should children who have committed atrocities and human rights violations pay for their crimes? The answer seems to suggest that as a general rule, they should not, as children should be considered victims of armed conflict. However, if they have committed a serious violation of human rights, then punishment could be justified, providing that the trial complies with the international laws on juvenile justice, taking into account the inherent vul-

nerability of children, seeking alternatives to prison and in short, aiming at their reinclusion in their communities. International criminal courts have limited resources and children and teenagers are considered to mostly be obeying orders, and it is therefore much more efficient, as well as more just, to prosecute and punish those responsible for their actions. Second, the current treaty on children soldiers, the optional protocol to the convention on the rights of the child which came into force in 2002, permits voluntary recruitment from sixteen years of age, and this still happens in many countries. The example of the British soldiers under eighteen years of age stationed in Iraq is a paradigm in this respect. They cannot vote, but they are allowed to participate in armed conflicts. Third, it highlights the need to maintain the connection between justice and truth and peace, so that accountability can lead to the construction of a more sustainable peace, as this affects the past but will also have consequences in the future. For example, prosecution of the political and military leaders of Japan and Nazi Germany after the Second World War enabled the German and Japanese societies to overcome their collective feelings of guilt.

Which are more useful: global mechanisms for responsibility, or the application of justice on a local level? Whatever the case, there is agreement that these mechanisms must always have a perspective that specifically focuses on children. The book discusses concepts such as human dignity, values shared by everyone, vulnerability, but also children’s resistance under the most difficult circumstances. And the importance of prevention and therefore training armed forces to respect human rights and the rights of children. This is an essential book for all those interested in this subject, as well as those interested in the aspect more applicable to armed conflicts, such as voluntary workers, as well as journalists and soldiers on the “humanitarian missions”.

J.A.



Janadesh

Janadesh is the Hindi word that means 'the verdict of the people'. It is also the title of the documentary produced by Quepo <<http://www.quepo.org/ca>> which looks at the 350-kilometre march by 26,000 people over twenty-five days to demand that the Indian government undertake a land reform programme. The documentary has many outstanding merits. First, it depicts events which took place in 2007 and which despite their importance, received more or less no media attention. Obviously, it was a nonviolent march with an objective related to social justice, it was not a war, and it contained

nothing to arouse morbid curiosity.

Another outstanding feature of the documentary is the way it is constructed, as participants on the march create the story as they are marching. But the central figure in the story is Rajagopal, leader of the Ekta Parishad movement, which organised the protest. His words reflect his political conviction and insight, as the inspiration behind the march, as the heir to Gandhian thought, as a speaker when the march is resting, as the strategist when explaining his political movements and above all, as a true leader and activist in an organisation that must survive him.

Janadesh is the story of a struggle, a collective dream, at a time when our "advanced" societies have few collective dreams left, and unfortunately those that come together around them usually have more to do with twenty-two people chasing a ball.

P.A.



Peace and Collaborative Development

<http://www.internationalpeaceandconflict.org/>

Peace and Collaborative Development Network is, as the portal itself says, a professional networking site for individuals and organizations worldwide involved in development, conflict resolution and related fields to foster dialogue and sharing of resources in international development. Membership is free and it provides access to resources, research and above all, contact with other professionals all over the world.

It is an excellent source for any area of the construction of and education for peace. New debates, publications and projects on the field are produced every week. New information on grants, report, debates, events, training and news all over the world is constantly available.

At a time when social networks are in vogue, the emergence of specialised networks is necessary for the management of information by professionals. PCDN is a portal that uses some of the most popular web 2.0 tools to make the creation of networks possible and more importantly, to provide a platform for sharing knowledge.

It is a pioneering initiative in the field of peace which is having a considerable impact on the community. It remains to be seen how it will adapt its services to the needs of its professionals and how it filters information to avoid one of most common problems on this type of website: the excess of information.

G.M.

NEWS

ICIP NEWS

“Om Mohammad”, a documentary about everyday life for women in Gaza, premieres in Olot

The ICIP commissioned the photographer and filmmaker Dani Lagartofernández to travel to Gaza to document a day in the life of Sabah, a widow with five children, one of whom lives in Catalonia. Sabah is the director of the local association Beit Almostuqbul, which provides support for women and families in the village of Khuza'ha, in an agricultural society fractured by war. The result is the fifteen-minute documentary “Om Mohammad. Mohammad's mother,” available in Catalan, Spanish and English. This production complements the activities organised by the ICIP to commemorate the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 of the United Nations, recognising women and children as the main victims of conflicts, and the key role that they can play in their resolution.

The documentary premiered in Olot on 29 January, accompanied by the exhibition “Barefoot words. Women making peace,” which is also by Dani Lagartofernández, and looks at thirteen women working for reconciliation in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza.

To see the documentary: <http://vimeo.com/16425653>

The ICIP library is getting ready to open its doors, with an initial collection of 2,000 volumes

The ICIP library, specialising in the areas of peace, security and conflicts, is getting ready to open its doors. Many of the works available at the ICIP can be consulted in the Catalogue of the Specialised Libraries Network of the Government of Catalonia (XBEG), of which it is a member. It currently contains almost 2,000 works.

The library is for use by the general public and has a consultation room. There will also be a loan service for accredited researchers linked to universities and research centres.

The archive is constantly increasing and a considerable increase in the number of volumes is anticipated in the coming year. Among the material acquired are audiovisual materials which in the near future will be used to establish a media library, which will be one of the branches of the library.

You can visit it and take advantage of its services at Gran Vía de Les Corts Catalanes 658, baixos. Opening hours are from 9 am to 6.30 pm on Mondays to Thursdays, and 9 am to 2 pm on Fridays.

Additional services for library users

Apart from the monographs and books section, the library has created new services for its users:

- Access to the “Political Science Complete” and “International Security & Counter-Terrorism Reference Center” databases containing hundreds of specialised publications in the field.
- Consultation service for issues of the current year and back issues of 155 electronic journals specialising in peace and conflicts.
- Regular publications

The ICIP at the World Education Forum in Santiago

The ICIP participated in the World Education Forum from 10 to 13 December held as part of the 2010 Forum in Santiago, focusing on the area of education, research and the culture of peace. The President of the ICIP, Rafael Grasa, addressed the international plenary session on research for peace. The Institute also organised two workshops. The first, entitled “Can peace be measured?” involved the participation of the ICIP Director, Tica Font, and its President, Rafael Grasa, as well as members of the School for a Culture of Peace, the Josep Maria Delàs Peace Studies Centre and the University of Granada Institute of Peace and Conflicts. The second workshop, led by the ICIP's head of training and dissemination, Elena Grau, and the photographer and filmmaker Dani Lagartofernández, presented proposals for communication and awareness raising for peace in conventional formats.

Publications

The Barcelona Declaration on the Human Right to Peace is now available in five languages: Catalan, Spanish, English, French and Arabic. This document includes the contents approved in Barcelona in June after many months of international debate. The campaign aims to obtain recognition by the United Nations for peace as a fundamental right, so that peace, development and human rights are linked

The report on the seminar organised by the ICIP in late September on "Conditions pour la consolidation de la paix en Côte d'Ivoire" in the country's commercial capital, Abidjan, in collaboration with the co-operation with the CERAP (Centre de Recherche et Action sur la Paix) and the University of Bouaké is now available, currently in Catalan and French.

This year's Working Paper number 8 has been published, and is entitled "Conflict, peace and security in Africa: an assessment and new questions after 50 years of African independence", by Rafael Grasa and Óscar Mateos.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Uprisings in north Africa and the Middle East

The first few weeks of the year have seen a substantial number of countries -Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan and Yemen - where the citizens have decided to take to the streets in order to demand a change in their governments. These are protests against corruption and demands for more democratic governments. So far there have been some deaths, but the demonstrations have mostly been peaceful and the regimes have not used violence to repress them. Indeed, in some cases the army has acted as a guarantor of peace and legitimised the protests. We do not yet know where this wave of democracy will lead or its geographical extent (the word "Egypt" has been prohibited on Twitter in China) but any progress made, if it is a consequence of peaceful mobilisation by citizens, is welcome.

The independence process in Sudan

A referendum on independence for the south of Sudan took place between 9 and 15 January. The result leaves little room for doubt: with a participation rate of 97%, 98% voted in favour of secession. This is another step towards the pacification of the region. In 2005, after twenty years of civil war between the south and north, a peace agreement was signed which included this referendum and the establishment of joint management of the country's energy resources. The steps that have been taken do not guarantee that the future will be easy, as part of the frontier has yet to be defined. The same is true of the distribution of earnings from the petrol reserves, and the referendum has yet to be held in some areas of the country, such as Abyei, precisely because the region is subject to dispute.

Creation of the Solidarity Committee of the Parliament of Catalonia

A new legislature has recently begun in the Parliament of Catalonia, and various committees must be constituted. The Solidarity and Co-operation Committee was established on 19 January, and includes 17 members of Parliament from all the parliamentary groups. This parliamentary committee is responsible for development cooperation policies, humanitarian issues and peace issues. Its members are Marta Alòs, Pere Aragonès, Joan Boada, Joan Ferran, Anna Figueres, Gerard Figueres, Lluís Guinó, Roberto Labandera, Joan Laporta, Rafael López, Rafael Luna, Caterina Mieres, Anna Miranda, Begonya Montalban, Roger Montañola, Carles Pellicer and Núria Segú.

Declaration by ETA

On 8 January 2011, the terrorist organisation ETA once again declared a "permanent and general ceasefire which will be verifiable by the international community." While this is not a declaration of the organisation's dissolution, it is nevertheless a step in the right direction. In order to analyse the scenarios that this opens up, this issue contains the article by Pedro Ibarra "The future of ETA and the democratic question". Hopefully, the desire for peace will not be frustrated once again.

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Tica Font, ICIP Director
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Design/Layout: ComCom

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