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COMPETING THEORIES OF NONVIOLENT POLITICS

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Nonviolent political action is a distinctive genre of political protest identified most closely with mass disobedience and radical acts of non-cooperation. As a self-conscious form of political action, it is primarily a twentieth-century invention. While instances and ideas of conscientious dissent and disobedience, non-resistance and passive resistance, as well as contentious politics in the form of boycotts, strikes, and work stoppages have longer histories and genealogies, it was M. K. Gandhi's innovations that originated the modern theory and practice of nonviolent politics.¹ The name Gandhi designated to signal the novelty on nonviolent politics was the neologism *satyagraha*, which in the midcentury came to be translated as nonviolent direct action. Today, it is commonly referred to as nonviolent resistance or civil resistance.

In the century that has passed since Gandhi's first mass *satyagraha* campaigns, activists have emulated and adapted nonviolent protest in various global settings, most prominently in the midcentury US Civil Rights Movement and in anti-authoritarian struggles from the 1980s to the Arab Spring.² In its globalization, however, the meaning and practice of nonviolence has significantly changed. One especially notable development has been the rise to prominence of the school of *strategic nonviolence*. A key feature of classical nonviolence, associated most prominently with Gandhi and Martin Luther King, was the claim that nonviolent direct action was both morally *and* practically superior to violence in waging political conflict, overcoming oppression and injustice, and

advancing social change. In the last half-century, however, among theorists, advocates, and practitioners of nonviolence, the balance has definitively shifted toward endorsing nonviolence on purely strategic or pragmatic grounds.³

Gene Sharp is credited, and rightly so, with inaugurating and consolidating the turn toward strategic nonviolence.⁴ Sharp was a committed war resister and self-styled disciple of Gandhi, who, from the 1960s onward, began to systemize what he termed *non-violent technique*. Developing technique involved documenting case studies of successful nonviolent struggles and, from this archive, building explanatory theory and a repertoire of effective nonviolent strategies and tactics. For Sharp, the advantage of focusing on strategic or pragmatic technique over moral or principled arguments for nonviolence was threefold. First, it was more descriptively true to the way nonviolence worked in practice; he argued that the overwhelming majority of participants in nonviolent movements were neither pacifists nor absolutist defenders of nonviolence. Second, learning successful strategy from past political experience rather than abstract debates on tactics would better equip activists in the throes of political struggle. Finally, demonstrating pragmatic success would be the most persuasive argument for nonviolence against skeptics of all stripes. For Sharp, the last two aspects were crucial for realizing the long-term goal of replacing violent methods of political struggle.

Sharp's innovations were profoundly influential both for the global dissemination of nonviolent tactics as well as in defining the academic field of study of nonviolent resistance, so much so that in the last decades he has become the international icon and standard-bearer for nonviolence.⁵ In this respect, the model of strategic nonviolence has made possible some truly impressive practical and theoretical achievements. And yet with this consolidation and celebration there is a danger of losing sight of the diversity of ways that nonviolence has and can be practiced. More specifically, strategic theories tend to ignore or underestimate the political valence of some key elements of classical nonviolence—such as the dynamics of discipline, suffering, and conversion—which are often dismissed as outworn ethical and religious ideas.

Strategic nonviolence is premised upon a sharp contrast with *principled nonviolence*. Most often associated with pacifism and figures

like Gandhi and King, principled nonviolence is characterized as a religious, spiritual commitment that its critics view as unnecessary for the successful practice of nonviolence.⁶ Principled nonviolence is most often defined as an ethical practice and choice—a creed or way of life. As a result, it is also often devoid of political content. Especially in the work of its critics, principled nonviolence has become something of a straw man, a placeholder for a variety naïve, apolitical convictions such as a belief in harmony and an aversion to conflict, a focus on moral purity and the intrinsic value of action, and an ethical objection to all forms of coercion.⁷

This chapter is framed by a fundamental doubt about the cogency of this distinction between strategic and principled nonviolence and the work it does in obscuring the theoretical underpinnings of nonviolent politics. Neither strategic nor principled models as currently conceived capture the most innovative and distinctive features of classical nonviolent politics, namely how the moral-ethical and political were creatively imbricated. Consider, for example, the myriad ways in which Gandhi and King staged dissent in nonviolent protest via displays of self-discipline or self-suffering. Crucially, they did so because they understood these ethical practices to be an essential part of the strategic logic and tactical dynamic of nonviolence. That is, ethical practice and moral orientation associated with nonviolence were valued not only for intrinsic but also for instrumental reasons; they were thought to be uniquely efficacious in conditions of deep conflict.

Many critics have questioned the strategic-principled distinction on normative, political, and analytical grounds. In abandoning nonviolence's creedal vision, critics argue that Sharp's focus on pure technique strips nonviolence of any ethical grounding; nonviolent methods themselves appear neutral and readily adaptable by any political movement, even those seeking "evil" ends. For others, strategic and pragmatic nonviolence amounts to a "moderate Machiavellianism," aimed simply at short-term political gains and victories rather than more radical, revisionary, and transformative politics.⁸ Critics have questioned the sharpness of the distinction itself, and contend that the two forms of nonviolence involve elements of their supposed opposite, and therefore are better understood as lying on a "continuum" rather than a strict binary.⁹ In this, they rightly point out that the main architects of

principled nonviolence such as Gandhi and King “also grounded their nonviolent actions on pragmatic and strategic excellence.”¹⁰ All of these critical positions aim to reunite strategic and principled nonviolence, either by enclosing strategic technique within a principled framework¹¹ or by blurring the line between the two.¹²

I want to turn the discussion in the opposite direction and think more capaciously about the diversity of strategic theories and orientations. My contention is that there is more than one way to understand, conceptualize, and theorize the strategic logic of nonviolence. Rather than collapse the distinction between the so-called pragmatic and the principled, instead, I offer an alternative classification of competing strategic theories of nonviolent politics. These I characterize as nonviolence as *collective power* versus nonviolence as *disciplined action*. This classification will sometimes overlap with the existing strategic-principled distinction. But I especially want to resist equating disciplined action with principled nonviolence, for the reasons outlined above. Principled nonviolence implies the privileging of ethical commitment and orientation *over* political objectives and is thereby shorn of any strategic dimension. By contrast, I take both collective power and disciplined action to be strategic theories of nonviolent politics, albeit premised on different theories of politics and, hence, offering different accounts of how the dynamics of political mobilization and protest work.

The chapter begins with a discussion of nonviolence as collective power and the theory of politics that underpins it. I foreground and analyze two key elements: the social theory of power as elaborated most influentially by Gene Sharp, and nonviolence as a technique of mass mobilization. For a discussion of the latter, I turn to Krishnalal Shridharani’s *War without Violence*, an important early interpretation of nonviolence as an insurgent form of mass power. I then analyze nonviolence as disciplined action and delineate more precisely its conceptual logic. The two aspects I focus on are its ontology of action and its account of the persuasive logic of nonviolent discipline. I begin by placing Gandhian *satyagraha* alongside skeptical theories of action that highlight the psychological burdens and frustrations of action. I then explore the ways in which disciplined action and its orientation toward persuasion navigate the inherent dilemmas of action and transform

the affective dynamics of political conflict. I conclude with some thoughts on what is theoretically and politically at stake in diversifying theoretical models of nonviolent politics.

DEFINING COLLECTIVE POWER: WAGING WAR WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Regularly dismissed as naïve pacifism, impractical, and akin to weakness and compromise, nonviolence has always faced severe skepticism. This in part compels the recourse to a categorical distinction between moral and political accounts of nonviolence. Combating such skepticism has been one of the salutary contributions of the paradigm of strategic nonviolence. What has been especially cogent is its insistence that nonviolence be viewed as a theory of action rather than a restrictive political morality or ethics (defined, for instance, by severe injunctions against war and violence). Characterizing nonviolence as a theory of action rebuts implications of passivity, inaction, or a turning away from politics. Rather than the avoidance of conflict, Sharp, for instance, dubs it “an active technique of struggle”; it is a special type of action that aims to show “how to wield power effectively” and wage “conflict without violence.”¹³ Gandhi pursued a similar form of polemic when he sharply differentiated *satyagraha* from passive resistance. In his terms, *satyagraha* was “pure soul-force,” a “power” that “calls for intense activity.”¹⁴

Understood as a political technique, nonviolent action would also differ from a purely aspirational, exemplary, or “prefigurative” politics, as implied, for example, in the bumper-sticker slogan, “be the change.”¹⁵ Here, nonviolent action is often conceived as a form of embodied ethical practice. This view posits a tight unity of means and ends such that action’s primary function is to express intrinsic values or principles. In contrast to ethical practice, the idea of *strategic* action at its core implies a field of iterative social interaction. Nonviolent action emerges then as a method of political contestation, conflict, and struggle, aimed at overcoming opposition to achieve specific goals and change structures of power. In Weberian terms, it is not just value-rational, but also instrumentally rational. I take all of these features to be definitionally true of both disciplined action and nonviolence as collective power.

A theory of action also implies a theory of politics, a set of background assumptions about the nature and sources of political conflict, where the main practical impediments to political change lay, and how they manifest themselves. It then posits forms of action that would be most successful at overcoming them to effect progressive change. It is here that we can begin to meaningfully distinguish collective power and disciplined action. I hope to show that they stem from disparate theories of politics, and hence emphasize different political strategies and tactics, which, ultimately, issue in divergent forms of nonviolent protest.

The picture of politics implied by the strategic perspective emphasizes the contestation of power, of generating and wielding power to confront and disrupt existing structures of power. I term this view nonviolence as *collective power*, because its two central theoretical elements are a distinct theory of power—what Gene Sharp terms the social view of power—and an account of how mass mobilization can be used to challenge and remake power relations.

The social view of power posits a strong empirical theory of consent or obedience.¹⁶ It extends a broadly Humean intuition that, following the eighteenth-century formulation, “all government is founded on opinion.”¹⁷ That is, government is premised on the actual and voluntary as opposed to the hypothetical or formal consent of the people as the fundamental root of authority, legitimacy, and power. For Sharp, consent to authority has a psychological component—obedience—as well as a material one, namely, cooperation or collaboration. These two features—popular consent and cooperation—have been foundational to nonviolent politics since its invention. In one of his earliest formulations Gandhi argued that “in politics, it [*satyagraha*] is based on the immutable maxim, that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed.”¹⁸ In a similar vein, in *Hind Swaraj*, Gandhi provocatively claimed that “the English have not taken India; we have given it to them. They are not in India because of their strength, but because we keep them.”¹⁹ In more material terms, he contended that without Indian lawyers, judges, civil servants, policemen, and soldiers, the English could not maintain their rule over India. For Gandhi, all regimes—even the most authoritarian—were based on the acquiescence and collaboration of the many and could never be

sustained by pure force. The implication was that all regimes could also be disrupted by the withdrawal of that consent on a mass scale. This logic was famously enacted in the theory and practice of mass non-cooperation, a nonviolent strategy to dramatize disaffection, disrupt the machinery of government, and dilute sources of governmental support to undermine state authority.

For Sharp, this theory of power/consent is the great innovation and conceptual heart of Gandhian nonviolence.²⁰ It foregrounded what he calls “the social roots of political power.” A ruler’s power is neither intrinsic nor self-sustaining but dependent on the ability to command obedience and mobilize resources that have their roots in a plurality of social relationships and institutions.²¹ Hence, this view of power is also often referred to as a “pluralistic” theory of power that stresses the bottom-up, popular basis of power.²² Building on this account of consent and power, studies of strategic nonviolence have tried to delineate with precision the process of breaking the material and ideological infrastructure of state legitimacy. In Sharp’s account, this involves a three-pronged process, each utilizing a different method of nonviolent action. The first are forms of symbolic protest, publicity, and persuasion that through mass assembly—such as marches, demonstrations, and collective vigils—expose injustice and express dissent. The second method implements strategies of non-cooperation and boycott. These are a material indication of noncompliance and the withdrawal of consent that, when effective, can also threaten the regime’s resource base. Finally, nonviolent “interventions” and civil disobedience represent the most active and intense methods of contestation. These include sit-ins, occupations, blockades, and strikes that aim to obstruct and disrupt the machinery of government. Taken together, these tactics undermine the existing regime’s ideological apparatus as well as its resource base, its “pillars of support,” and eventually its ability to implement and benefit from the use of repressive power.²³

The theory of strategic nonviolence came into its own in the aftermath of the successful wave of democratic transitions of the 1980s and 1990s, which were driven by movements that conspicuously deployed mass-based nonviolent resistance. The success stories of Poland, the Philippines, South Africa, Argentina, and Chile, as well as the more precarious achievements of the first Intifada

and Tiananmen Square, were analyzed and incorporated into a broad explanatory theory of strategic nonviolent conflict. These movements were also coupled with earlier historical examples—from the Indian independence movement and the Civil Rights Movement to revisionary accounts of earlier revolutions and wartime resistance—to give shape to a sweeping historical narrative that tracked and celebrated the rise of “people power,” with the twentieth century singled out as “the century of nonviolence.”²⁴ In addition to an array of important empirical studies of civil resistance, unarmed insurrections, and nonviolent revolutions, scholars also began to elaborate more nuanced and expansive theories of nonviolent power, drawing connections, for example, between nonviolent power, democracy, and Arendtian theories of power and revolution.²⁵

All of these accounts commend nonviolence as providing a uniquely effective form of mass mobilization by which ordinary people can organize and act outside of conventional political institutions and structures.²⁶ The attention to mass mobilization is the direct analogue of the theory of popular consent, and likewise had genuine roots in Gandhian politics. To analyze this second, key theoretical element of nonviolence as collective power, I want to turn to an older text, Krishnalal Shridharani’s *War without Violence* (1939), which was the first to conceptualize nonviolent action as an insurgent form of organized mass power.²⁷ Returning to Shridharani reveals how theories of strategic nonviolence—and what I am redefining as collective power—did not emerge as wholesale rejections of Gandhian nonviolence. Rather, they are part of a longer history of interpretation of Gandhian politics that accentuated one particular dimension of *satyagraha*, namely as a mode of power and mass struggle. In tracking this development, we can also see how collective power models came to transform, downplay, and eventually jettison other prominent elements of classical nonviolence such as the strategic role of suffering and discipline.

In the wake of the Salt *Satyagraha* of 1930, the campaign that garnered Gandhi and nonviolence unprecedented global notoriety, a number of seminal texts appeared which theorized *satyagraha* as a novel form of political action that could be adapted to political settings outside of India. Shridharani’s *War without Violence* was one such effort to publicize Gandhian politics in the

United States, which, alongside Richard Gregg's *The Power of Non-violence*, became influential in the Civil Rights Movement and the wider dissemination of nonviolent methods.²⁸ Selections from *War without Violence* were republished in pamphlet form by the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a major pacifist organization, and became the handbook of its offshoot, Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), and through them other campaigns against segregation. Indeed, we can trace some of Shridharani's ideas and language at work in Martin Luther King's seminal text "Letter from Birmingham Jail."²⁹

Of these early works, *War without Violence* was also the text most admired by Sharp because it prefigured his own view of nonviolent action as "a technique of concerted social action."³⁰ Shridharani was keen to show that *satyagraha* was not premised on "Oriental mysticism" or pacifism but "a very matter-of-fact pragmatism" whose purpose was "securing effective action . . . for achieving realistic and needed ends."³¹ Shridharani was harshly critical of pacifism and argued that *satyagraha* was better understood as a species of war.³² He therefore very purposefully analogized the logic of nonviolent direct action to that of warfare. Politics as such is pictured as social warfare, and nonviolent resistance mimicked the strategic logic of armed rebellion. Like war, nonviolence was relevant to situations in which parliamentary procedures were absent or so broken that justice required the resort to "extra-legal and extra-constitutional" measures. This was akin to a revolutionary situation in which "the people take the law into their own hand."³³ And, like war, concerted mass action required an army, trained in "organization, discipline and strategy."³⁴ In this respect, Gandhi's institution-building and strategic orientation made him, according to Shridharani, "the greatest general in the field of 'non-violent direct action.'"³⁵

War without Violence offered the first generation of Gandhian activists a step-by-step playbook of how to engage in this novel form of social combat. The steps included preparatory stages of negotiation, agitation, demonstration, and self-purification followed by progressively more combative forms of direct action.³⁶ An inventory of the various forms of direct action utilized by the Indian nationalist movement—such as strikes, pickets, fasts, boycotts, non-payment of taxes, *hizrat* (emigration), non-cooperation,

ostracism, civil disobedience—was presented and each tactic defined in turn.³⁷ Shridharani argued that these techniques used on a mass scale would “dramatize” grievances and “arouse mass interest and mass enthusiasm.” Like the process of war, they worked to precipitate “an emotional crisis in the life of the community,” they shook people out of normal politics and habitual modes of thinking and behavior.³⁸

Shridharani celebrated nonviolent direct action as the first real innovation of the theory of popular revolution, one that, like its violent counterpart, required intense collective consciousness secured by organized and concerted mass action.³⁹ Through its emphasis on suffering, courage, and sacrifice, *satyagraha* entailed all the romance, heroism, risk, and adventure of war.⁴⁰ As the scene for the display of the “higher virtues” traditionally associated with war, *satyagraha* fulfilled William James’s hope and demand for a “moral equivalent of war.”⁴¹ Crucially, in Shridharani, the “moral” aspects of *satyagraha*—like self-purification, suffering, and sacrifice—became techniques for building solidarity and collective cohesion. To be sure, Shridharani also noted their unusual efficacy, following Richard Gregg, in surprising and throwing the opposition “off balance.” The prime examples were of soldiers and policemen who refused to attack unarmed *satyagrahis* (practitioners of *satyagraha*). Here, nonviolent suffering served to “neutralize” and “paralyze” the “coercive agencies of the state.”⁴² At the same time, Shridharani was careful to insist that this was not a scene of “mere moral suasion.” Indeed, it is worth noting that Shridharani never uses the language of conversion to describe the efficacy of “organized sacrificial suffering.” Rather, “conscious suffering” was understood as a “generator of power,” a “source of social power which compels and coerces.”⁴³

In Shridharani’s account of nonviolent technique, its overriding purpose is collective mobilization and solidarity, which itself generates and displays social power. A further implication of the directness of the analogy to war was that Shridharani was willing to accept a “compelling” element as a necessary feature of the power of nonviolent suffering.⁴⁴ To be sure, this was not equivalent to the outright coercion of warfare, which inflicted suffering on others, often in an unbridled spirit of vengeance and punishment. Nonviolent suffering was directed “inward,” its strategic purpose and

effect was to “compel” the opponent to realize their errors, change behavior, and come to a settlement or accommodation. The acceptance of the necessity of compulsion also allowed Shridharani to recommend a more extensive array of tactics, including some that Gandhi had explicitly rejected as coercive (such as social ostracism and hunger strikes).⁴⁵ Here “nonviolence” is understood in an almost literal sense—anything short of coordinated armed struggle or direct physical harm seemingly falls under its rubric.

The question of coercion, of its necessity and its definition, has always been a source of controversy in the theory and practice of nonviolent politics. Many accounts of nonviolence, from Clarence Case’s *Non-violent Coercion* (1923), Reinhold Niebuhr’s *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), through to Joan Bondurant’s *Conquest of Violence* (1959), expressed varying degrees of skepticism of Gandhi’s strict insistence that *satyagraha* ruled out all forms of coercion.⁴⁶ For advocates of strategic nonviolence, especially, accepting the necessity of coercion is what renders their version of nonviolence more pragmatic and realistic than principled alternatives. They are right to note that Gandhi did not endorse tactics he deemed coercive, such as sabotage, the hunger strike, and ostracism. And, more generally, Gandhi worried that almost all ostensibly nonviolent techniques could come to function coercively, especially in the contexts of mass action, i.e., when their purpose and effect was the display of collective power.⁴⁷ But what is misleading is the assumption that the eschewal of coercion was made on purely principled rather than strategic grounds. For Gandhi and King, coercive tactics that relied on intimidation or veiled force were a problem because they could, like violence itself, intensify cleavages, undermine public support, and thereby threaten the coherence and success of the movement. The point here is that while it might be analytically true that nonviolent direct action necessarily works via the compelling force of mass action, Gandhi and King argued that it was tactically important to mitigate as much as possible the *appearance* of brute coercion via performative practices of self-restraint and self-discipline.

The alternative model of nonviolence as discipline action shares with collective power an underlying theory of consent and power that celebrates the transformative effects of disruptive mass action. Both Gandhi and King utilized, advocated, and praised

nonviolence for its ability to organize and mobilize oppressed people on a mass scale. At the same time, for mass disruption to do its transformative work, it had to be organized and performed in a definite way. Gandhi and King were especially attuned to the distinctive *forms* nonviolent action ought to take, beyond simply the size and scale of protest. For both, mass disruption and disobedience are most potent when *disciplined*, or more precisely when enacted through forms of protest that display and dramatize discipline. The performative dynamics of discipline distinguish the logic of nonviolence from *both* the pure violence of armed rebellion and the “nonviolent coercion” at work in collective power.

DISCIPLINED ACTION: NAVIGATING THE HAZARDS OF ACTION

If collective power emphasizes power and mass struggle, the theory of politics underlying disciplined action foregrounds the affective dynamics of political conflict. Here, the problem of entrenched domination is not only material, requiring the generation of alternative force and displays of mass power, but also moral-psychological. For Gandhi and King, the burdens of political action are heightened or made more dangerous because political contestation unearths and intensifies negative passions and egoistic dispositions. These ideas can be usefully linked to a broadly skeptical or realist view of politics as a realm of recurring violence and of political action as a peculiarly hazard-bound activity.⁴⁸ When left unchecked, the escalating logic of political contestation leads to polarization and entrenchment and inflames feelings of indignation and resentment which, in turn, feed the temptation toward retaliation and violence. I will explore this account—one might even call it an ontology—of political action by reading Gandhi alongside other skeptical theorists of action such as Max Weber and Hannah Arendt.

The animating worry of this competing understanding of nonviolence is that traditional forms of political action and contestation—i.e., enacting politics as a form of combat, even ostensibly nonviolent combat—may exacerbate the given tendencies of politics toward conflict, coercion, and violence. The function of discipline is to navigate these inherent dilemmas of political action, especially the psychological burdens and frustrations

of action. The distinctive innovation of nonviolence as disciplined action is to build into its modes of dissent and disruption, forms of self-limitation and restraint. The aim is not to simply overwhelm or defeat opposition but to undermine and transform it through a complex politics of persuasion. Persuasion involves more than making the better argument or displaying more power; rather, it works via forms of direct action that mitigate the passions that aggravate political conflict. The display and dramatization of discipline weakens, undermines, or otherwise disorients psychological resistance. Discipline thus renders nonviolent protest more effective than either physical violence or other kinds of overt coercion and intimidation involved in traditional forms of mass action.

In what follows I try to specify the theoretical underpinning of aspects of nonviolence—such as the dynamics of discipline, suffering, and persuasion—that have been misunderstood and sidelined in the development of theories of strategic nonviolence that focus on nonviolence as a form of collective power. This section will focus on the dilemmas and hazards of action, while the next will turn to what persuasion means in the context of mass nonviolent protest.

Gandhi and King placed great emphasis on how nonviolent mass disruption was organized and enacted. This is where the real novelty of nonviolence lay—not just in the avoidance of violence, but in the innovation of forms of protest that would expose injustice and unsettle affective resistance to radical change. Such close attention to the style and structure of nonviolent protest was the direct analogue of the extraordinary emphasis they placed on the means of political action.

Gandhi would go so far as to suggest that the determination of means might matter more than specifying the final goal or end pursued. In a 1933 exchange with Jawaharlal Nehru, Gandhi elaborated his position this way:

[Y]ou have emphasized the necessity of a clear statement of the goal, but having once determined it, I have never attached importance to the repetition. The clearest possible definition of the goal and its appreciation would fail to take us there if we do not know and utilize the means of achieving it. I have, therefore, concerned myself principally with the conservation of the means and their

progressive use. I know that if we can take care of them, attainment of the goal is assured. I feel too that our progress towards the goal will be in exact proportion to the purity of our means.⁴⁹

Typically, Gandhi's use of terms like "purity" has been interpreted as a plea for the ethical purity of the actor or act in question—and hence a prime example of a principled or moral constraint on action. I want to suggest that purity can also be understood as a category of efficacy. In what follows, I uncover the underlying assumptions about the nature of action such that it demands the constant vigilance and scrutiny implied in Gandhi's emphasis on the "conservation," "purity," and "progressive use" of nonviolent means.⁵⁰

Disciplined action resonates with broadly skeptical theories of action that foreground the contingency and unmasterable character of action. They emphasize action's imbrication in a political field characterized by necessary conflict and hostage to the play of unintended consequences. This lends action if not a wholly tragic character at least an inherent fragility. For Weber, political action works in a field of interaction in which no individual actor or agent can know or fully control all the effects of action. This unmasterability is an essential part of what he termed the tragedy of action. In his words, "it is a fundamental fact of history . . . that the eventual outcome of political action frequently, if not regularly, stands in a quite inadequate, even paradoxical relation to the original, intended meaning and purpose."⁵¹ In "Politics as a Vocation," Weber suggested that this was a hard fact of history, one that neither the power politician nor the moral absolutist can truly understand or accept. The power politician believes in the easy efficacy of force. This is as much a fantasy as the conviction politician's belief that demonstrating passion for a cause is the same as realizing it. Neither display enough humility before the brute fact of contingency or can bear what Weber termed "the ethical irrationality of world."⁵²

Arendt similarly focuses on the "boundlessness" of action, how action "inserts itself into an already existing web of human relationship, with its innumerable, conflicting wills and intentions."⁵³ Every action sets off a "chain reaction" of new actions and reactions. For Arendt, action's unpredictable endlessness is part and

parcel of its generative capacity, its ability to initiate radical newness into the world. From the viewpoint of the actor, however, this capacity is more often felt as a deep burden. Action seems to never achieve its purpose. It discloses an agent who is at once both doer and sufferer, not an author or producer, a reversal that drives an ongoing frustration with the frailty of action.⁵⁴

Gandhi held to a similar view of action as enmeshed in irreversible, unmasterable, and unknowable chains of cause and effect. This understanding bears the imprint of an underlying theory of karma, an account of ethical causation in which the chains of intentionality and responsibility reverberate in unforeseen and extreme ways. In a karmic worldview, action leads to an irreducible entanglement in and with an irreducible violence; indeed, it imposes on all a fundamental culpability in violence. This extreme sense of culpability underlay the traditional suspicion of action in the Indian tradition and its cultivation of ideals of non-acting and non-attachment. But Gandhi—alongside a number of key Indian thinkers such as Bankimchandra Chatterjee, Vivekananda, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak—rejected the renunciation of action as the appropriate response to the problem of ethical entanglement. In place of renunciation, these thinkers reinterpreted the Gita to instantiate a new model of detached, worldly action—a revisionist understanding of karma yoga—that could meet the demands of political awakening.⁵⁵

Gandhi was suspicious of the choice of “non-acting,” of removing oneself from the chains of action, *himsa* (violence or injury), and destruction, and instead held to a notion of renunciation that “should be sought for in and through action.”⁵⁶ To admit indeterminacy was not to forswear attempts at facing violence or actively seeking political change. Rather, Gandhi tried to reconfigure the inward orientations of non-attachment and discipline to promote the outward efficacy of action.

Crucially, what makes action dangerous is not the mere fact of action’s contingency or unmasterability or boundlessness but the psychological response to these dilemmas and especially reckless attempts to master or subdue them. Arendt, Weber, and Gandhi all worry about two kinds of insufficient reactions to the dilemmas of action, namely a temptation toward withdrawal, on the one hand, and attempts at mastery through force, on the other. The

second response—the attempt at mastery—is the more dangerous, not only because it valorizes violence and force but also because it is the more psychologically unstable. That force or violence lends itself to more predictably reliable results is itself a delusion, a hyper-realist fantasy that sustains state militarism and revolutionary violence alike. The appeal of violence is often tied a hope that the chain of action will come to an end with one last show of force that can secure a final victory. In this hope, advocates of violence imagine the effects of violence to be not only more predictable but more manageable than they have ever proven to be.⁵⁷ This is perhaps one of the most important political insights that has emerged from the theory and practice of nonviolence across the last century.

The recourse to violence rests on a belief that unilateral force itself can induce the conversion or at least the compliance of opponents. However, Gandhi tried to show that violence breeds resentment and further resistance. Resistance and recalcitrance were basic to nature of political action; indeed, they might be one of the more expected or foreseeable effects of action. For Gandhi, this was especially acute in the case of violence. As an absolute, irreversible deed, violence initiates definite dynamics of resentment, retrenchment, and retaliation—a dynamic that is often pro-saically referred to as the *cycle of violence*. The choice of violent or aggressive action therefore would necessarily escalate conflict and exacerbate tendencies toward polarization and entrenchment.

The problem of unintended consequences is not equivalent to the problem of uncertainty or contingency. Weber and Gandhi were concerned that something about the psychology of action denies acknowledgment of and responsibility for action's consequential effects. Therefore, they tried to make visible the unintended but *foreseeable* consequences of political action. They suggested that acts of provocation and violence often stem from a desire to demonstrate commitment and power and thus can undermine sought after goals. For Gandhi and Weber, excessive attachment to ends and ideals could engender destructive and unstable passions, especially when confronted with the disappointments of political setbacks and failures.

In this vein, consider the parable of the thief Gandhi offered in *Hind Swaraj* to highlight the moral psychology of action. The

parable begins with a confrontation with a thief who illegitimately steals your property. In response, you, full of anger, resolve to punish the thief, “not for your own sake, but for the good of your neighbours.” You organize an armed band to counterattack; the thief responds defiantly and “collects his brother-robbers” and “pesters your neighbours,” who in turn complain that the robber has only resorted to open threats against them “after you declared hostilities against him.” You feel badly that you have worsened the situation but feel trapped. Knowing you will be “disgraced if you now leave the robber alone,” you instead distribute arms to all your neighbors “and so the battle grows . . . the result of wanting to take revenge upon the robber is that you have disturbed the peace; you are in perpetual fear of being robbed and assaulted; your courage has given place to cowardice.”⁵⁸

One of the overt lessons of this story is that improper means chosen to respond to injustice can lead to unintended, deleterious, and unmasterable consequences—more violence, injustice, and instability. The recourse to violence did not diminish but rather excited the resentment and hostility of opponents. Escalation provoked stronger resistance and, in so doing, required more ideological justification, engendering a perverse attachment to principle. In this sense, the parable shows how the investment in, and motivation for, seeking justice and redress is imbricated in the agent’s sense of self such that this investment itself becomes a vehicle for escalation. The choice of violence may force you down a certain path, it raises the stakes of justification and hence of retreat or reconsideration. The extreme irreversibility of violence demands hubris in its undertaking and in its continued justification, a precarious subjective orientation that makes acknowledging errors of judgment and policy reversals difficult and rare.⁵⁹

Gandhi’s call to “conserve” and “purify” action was a plea to structure nonviolent action in such a way that it can best respond—strategically and tactically—to the hazards of action. Traditional antidotes to the dilemmas of action often fall back upon pleas for individual political responsibility and judgment. Think of Weber’s call in the conclusion of “Politics as a Vocation” for an ethics of responsibility that ties the sober calculation of consequences to the cultivation of detached passion and perspective in political judgment.⁶⁰ Gandhi’s innovation was to seek remedies to action

within the terms of action itself, specifically by trying to introduce mechanisms of limitation and control within the very forms that nonviolent action would take.

The key here was to organize and imbue mass action with discipline. Discipline serves to contain and counteract action's irreversibility and unpredictability. In nonviolent protest, actors perform and enact discipline by taking upon themselves the burdens and consequences of action. Acts of protest, resistance, and reform visibly sacrifice benefits (such as money or prestige) and risk severe consequences (such as arrest). In so doing, nonviolent action limits as much as possible the externalizing effects and dangers of action so as to diminish antagonism and negative affect. Moreover, if the act is mistaken, "only the person using it suffers." The disciplined *satyagrahi* does not "make others suffer for his mistakes."⁶¹ By absorbing the consequences of failure, nonviolent actors can more readily retrace their steps. Discipline therefore lent nonviolence an inherent revisability and avenues of self-correction, for in effect its action was never as final or determinate, or dangerous and provocative, as violence.⁶² These are some of the ways that disciplined action anticipates and responds to the foreseeable, negative consequences of disruptive action.

THE PERSUASIVE POWER OF DISCIPLINED ACTION

Disciplined action also aims to positively alter the dynamics of contestation. The function of discipline, here, is to temper the moral-psychological elements of action—the egoistic passions and attachments that drive political conflict—and, thereby, overcome opposition and effect transformative change. This is the broad dynamic at work in the idea of *nonviolent persuasion*. The possibility of persuasion or conversion has been much derided and criticized as either implausible or unnecessary for the successful practice of nonviolent politics. Conversion seemingly implies a change of heart or cooperative resolution as the endgame of nonviolent politics. Critics contend that in fact it is the mobilization of nonviolent power that compels, rather than persuades, the state or opponents to accept and accommodate new claims of justice. I want to suggest that the persuasion sought in disciplined action is not so

naïvely dependent on the reality of mutual goodwill, sympathy, or a harmony of interests between the oppressor and the oppressed. Rather, the animating thought is that nonviolent forms of protest are most effective at mitigating psychological resistance when *orientated toward persuasion*. This ties the question of persuasion to the skeptical theory of politics as driven by endemic tendencies toward escalation and coercion.

Disciplined action is built upon the persuasive powers of *direct action*. The emphasis on action recognizes that political persuasion is a difficult task, and that, in particular, moral criticism and rational argumentation on their own cannot effect radical change. Both Gandhi and King thought political arguments were ripe with rationalizations, psychological modes of resistance that disruptive protest tends to intensify. King suggested that “reason by itself is little more than an instrument to justify man’s defensive ways of thinking.”⁶³ When “words fail, we will try to persuade with our acts.” Nonviolent direct action becomes “the ultimate form of persuasion,”⁶⁴ whereby “we present our very bodies as a means for laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community.”⁶⁵

Gandhi rarely used the term persuasion and instead spoke of *conversion*, a choice that pointedly foregrounded the limits of rational debate in politics. For Gandhi, deeply held beliefs and principles were almost always less rational than they may appear, and the intellect worked hardest to justify existing interests and prejudices. People are attached to their beliefs as aspects of identity and ego and often cling to them tenaciously when these beliefs are attacked or criticized. In the context of political contestation, rational critique would be ineffectual or, worse still, counterproductive.⁶⁶ King likewise argued that “when the underprivileged demand freedom, the privileged first react with bitterness and resistance.” Driven by pride, anger, fear, and resentment, “prejudiced and irrational feelings” distort the recognition and progress of justice.⁶⁷

Therefore, those seeking radical transformation, in Gandhi’s words, had to appeal “not to the intellect” but rather must “pierce the heart.” The central mechanism for appealing to the heart was the work of suffering. Unlike brute force or direct confrontation that can stiffen resistance, suffering works by

converting the opponent and opening his ears, which are otherwise shut, to the voice of reason. Nobody has probably drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I, and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done, you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head, but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens up the inner understanding in man.⁶⁸

For King, suffering was “a powerful and creative social force.” In its willingness to accept violence without retaliation, self-suffering can “serve to transform the social situation.”⁶⁹ In this way nonviolent action can “create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue.” Such creative tension allows for the rethinking of commitments; it weakens entrenched habits and enables people “to rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism.”⁷⁰ The idea that direct action provokes creative crisis echoes Shridharani. For King, however, crisis is triggered not simply by mass mobilization but by the way issues of justice are dramatized via suffering.

What Gandhi and King defined and invoked as conscious suffering returns us to the centrality of discipline. Though the idea of suffering is associated with feats of self-sacrifice and the ability to endure violence, for Gandhi and King, its transformative impact depended on the staging of dignity and discipline. For Gandhi, the equivalency between suffering and discipline was definitional. “Self-suffering” was a translation of the Sanskrit term *tapas* or *tapasya* which connotes practices of ascetic self-discipline. King also associated suffering with the performance of dignity and discipline. Militant nonviolent struggle, King insisted, must always be conducted “on the high plane of dignity and discipline.”⁷¹ Indeed, King often referred to nonviolent action simply as “dignified social action.”⁷² Crucially, what was staged in nonviolent protest was not abject displays of suffering so as to evoke pity, but a respect secured via dignity in defiance. What was displayed and dramatized was the protesters’ “sublime courage,” “willingness to suffer,” and “amazing discipline in the midst of the most inhuman provocation.”⁷³

How precisely can the display and dramatization of discipline in nonviolent protest persuade recalcitrant opponents? Here I turn

to another early interpreter of Gandhi, Reinhold Niebuhr, who offered insight into the political dynamics of nonviolent discipline and suffering. Like Shridharani, Niebuhr was an important conduit of thinking about nonviolence in the Civil Rights Movement, especially through his influence on Martin Luther King. King's understanding of nonviolence was shaped in part by Niebuhr's appraisal of Gandhi in his seminal early work, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. What made Niebuhr such a canny analyst of nonviolence was how he saw its positive potential within a political world riven by irrational sentiments and egoistic drives.

Niebuhr was a political realist, arguably the most influential realist of the twentieth century. As a realist, Niebuhr argued that political conflict was rooted in struggles over power. Major issues of social and political injustice, for Niebuhr, could never be "resolved by moral or rational suasion alone." Rather, entrenched power and privilege had to be challenged by concerted power.⁷⁴ But a complete reliance on power was also inherently unstable; "a too consistent political realism would seem to consign society to perpetual warfare."⁷⁵ This was because all political contestation generates and is exacerbated by resentments and egoistic sentiments. Any peace established by power could be destroyed by the "social animosities" that a power-induced order "creates and accentuates."⁷⁶

For Niebuhr, nonviolent action diminishes the passions and prejudices that define political antagonism between groups in conflict and thereby interrupts cycles of violence. In this way, nonviolence intimates a form of power that was least dangerous in its effects. Whereas Shridharani extolled the collective power generated by *satyagraha*, Niebuhr, like Gandhi, was much more wary of group egoism. Contestation can generate communal solidarity and sacrifice, but it is a solidarity that arouses egoistic passions and prejudices. Movements that seek social justice will be met with the indignation and resentment of those whose privilege is directly challenged. This is especially the case when criticism takes the form of "personal insults" which will always be felt as "unjust accusations."⁷⁷ In a parallel vein, King argued that campaigns fueled by hate, like the use of violence, would further alienate and "confuse the large uncommitted middle group."⁷⁸

For Niebuhr, protests by their very nature aim to disrupt, inconvenience, and coerce. Boycotts are clear-cut cases of pressure, but

marches and demonstrations also will be resented by those against whom they are aimed. Even neutral bystanders may respond with hostility and misunderstanding to the inconveniences and disorder of public protest. Niebuhr suggested that the middle classes naturally side with the status quo, and view protesters as enemies of public order. Through its “temper and method,”⁷⁹ nonviolence was unusually successful in counteracting and dampening these negative reactions and affective dynamics. Perhaps the most compelling way that disciplined action undercuts resentment is by “enduring more suffering than it causes.”⁸⁰ By taking upon themselves the burdens and consequences of action, protesters give the impression of a detachment from egoism, of working for a moral purpose beyond reaction, envy, and selfish ambition. Gandhi, Niebuhr, and King recognized that resentment against injustice was morally justified and important. It was decidedly more admirable than complacency or passivity. But, from a tactical standpoint, the more “the egoistic element can be purged from resentment, the purer a vehicle of justice it becomes.”⁸¹ In staging goodwill rather than ill will, nonviolence depersonalizes conflict and “protects the agents against the resentments which violent conflict always creates in both parties to a conflict.”⁸²

In Niebuhr’s view of politics, parties to social conflict tend to be extremely partial and self-interested in their analysis of social justice. But the tempering of egoism effected by disciplined action can enable more objective assessment of justice. Here, the key audience or patients of direct action are the potential allies of the movement, what King called the “uncommitted middle,” and the public at large. To this audience, adopting self-discipline allows protesters to negate portrayals of them as outside agitators, criminals, and inciters of violence. Indeed, in many circumstances, the hostility of the opposition reveals the latter as the true “instigators and practitioners of violence.”⁸³ The moral conceit of entrenched interests is punctured as propaganda, and the public can see beyond the inflamed situation to more clearly adjudicate claims of justice.

To have such a dynamic impact, the traits expressed via disciplined action—such as enduring suffering, showing good will, suppressing hate, and depersonalizing conflict—need to be incorporated in the style and structure of nonviolent protest. For King and

Gandhi, these traits and impressions did not simply accrue from the moral intentions of protesters or the rhetorical framing or ideology of the movement; they had to be expressed and embodied in the very organization and enactment of mass protest. This is why advocates and practitioners of disciplined action placed such emphasis on following strict rules and codes of conduct during mass demonstrations and acts of disobedience.

Such attunement to the affective dynamics of political contestation and persuasion entailed a more nuanced but also stricter definition of nonviolent action. In collective power, as you will recall, almost everything short of taking up weapons or the threat of direct physical harm could count as nonviolence. And an extensive variety of disruptive boycotts, strikes, and demonstrations are endorsed—no matter how unruly in form or coercive in implication. Advocates of collective power tend to emphasize the size and scale of resistance rather than the *form* it ought to take. By contrast, discipline was the defining, structural feature of the early or classic phase of nonviolence—in the Gandhian era, in the Civil Rights Movement, and the anti-nuclear protests in the UK—where disciplined conduct and comportment were staged in specific actions such as the sit-in, the march, and the freedom ride. This might be usefully contrasted to (sometimes unruly) mass crowds gathering in public spaces, which is more readily associated with collective nonviolence today.

Gandhi and King were well-known for formulating a plethora of rules of comportment and engagement that were meant to instill and express discipline in mass action. In both the Salt *Satyagraha* and the Birmingham campaign, two of the most celebrated in the history of nonviolent politics, protesters had to explicitly assent to these rules in the form of a vow or pledge in order to participate.⁸⁴ For protesters, the rules were meant to help muster and exhibit discipline in the face of threats, intimidation, and outright violence. For onlookers, allegiance to these rules showed that activists were willing to bear the costs and burdens of protest themselves, from the costs of self-organization to willingly accepting punishment for breaking the law.

Gandhi's meditations on the rules of disciplined nonviolent action were at the center of his weekly journals, *Navajivan*, *Young India*, and *Harijan*. In these voluminous writings, Gandhi took

great pains to establish the precise conditions in which nonviolent tactics could be deployed without inducing escalation or enacting coercion. Gandhi's responses ranged very broadly, from guidelines for large-scale campaigns of non-cooperation and civil disobedience, to delineating rules for specific actions, such as strikes, pickets, marches, work stoppages (*hartal*), and—most controversially—the political fast. Crucially, these rules and distinctions were not only or simply moral criteria about what makes an act more just or legitimate but pragmatic maxims about how to persuasively communicate the meaning and purpose of protest.

Take the case of the *hartal*, or a day-long work stoppage. Gandhi insisted that a *hartal* be announced weeks in advance and that activists refrain from pursuing compliance on the day itself. He contended that a total *hartal*, i.e., with 100 percent compliance, implied coercion, and so the best demonstration of “the voluntary character of the *hartal*” and “a matter of pride . . . from the *satyagraha* standpoint” would be if “some shops stayed open.”⁸⁵ Indeed, the true *satyagrahi* would go further and protect the shops that chose not to comply from harassment. In dramatizing the voluntary nature of the protest as well as restraint in not intimidating dissenters, the movement demonstrated strength and confidence in the justness of their cause. Tactically, by showing civility toward dissenters, it leaves open the door to their potential conversion and more generally draws more public sympathy than coerced compliance.

In the case of nonviolent pickets, strikes, and boycotts, Gandhi argued against aggressively blocking people from crossing lines or entering shops, factories, and schools. For Gandhi, the adverse consequences of economic boycott, for example, on the livelihood of workers involved in the boycotted industry, while not amounting to an “act of love” was also not an act of violence or coercion if the underlying reasons animating the boycott were just.⁸⁶ But this was quite different from the direct physical coercion of blockades and intimidation of social ostracism, which he opposed. Direct coercion not only displayed weakness of will but personalized animosity, which would alienate potential converts to the cause. Gandhi was especially wary of extreme tactics like the political fast, which could very easily become coercive, and thus elaborated especially demanding rules

for them. It is worth remembering that Gandhi at no time fasted against the British government or British rule as such, and never in the name of an open-ended demand for independence. For Gandhi, fasting against a political antagonist or enemy functioned only to escalate bitterness and conflict, because one's enemy would necessarily experience the fast as exhortative. One could not "fast against a tyrant" but only against those whose consciences could be stirred by the willingness to sacrifice one's life.⁸⁷

For King, following Niebuhr, the purpose of nonviolent direct action was to cut through or lessen the emotional temperature of mass protest, and make visible and stark who stands on the side of justice. The larger the crowd, the more confrontational the tactic, the more crucial the need to mitigate any sense of intimidation, coercion, and potential unrest that can obscure or distract from the political message of the protest. Discipline could also be displayed and effected via the performance of collective prayers, songs, and silence during large-scale demonstration and marches. Songs or silent prayer communicated inner calm and resiliency that is very different from what we now associate with the paradigm of disruptive protest. For Gandhi and King, this unique combination of mass disruption tempered by discipline made possible more radical acts of dissent, defiance, and disobedience.

Advocates of collective power have also recognized the tactical necessity of self-discipline and restraint in nonviolent action. Gene Sharp argued along very similar lines that nonviolent behavior was not just a moralist preoccupation but a strategic imperative. Self-discipline and refraining from "hatred and hostility" were especially important for winning sympathy and "attracting maximum participation." He likewise suggested that the use of provocative and polarizing tactics like sabotage, as in the case of violence, would shift attention away from the message of the movement, alienate support, and become alibis for state repression.⁸⁸ At the same time, in these accounts, nonviolent discipline lacks any distinct theoretical grounding. It becomes simply a contingent, pragmatic choice with little conceptual guidance on why and when nonviolent discipline matters. This is part and parcel of the general lacuna in theories of collective power with regard to the moral-psychological dimensions of political conflict.

CONCLUSION

Nonviolence is one of the most important and surprising political phenomena to emerge over the course of the last century. Along with national liberation, people's war, and socialist revolution, it was one of the most prominent forms of mass politics that had a decidedly global reach. Nonviolence has also seemingly outlasted its many rivals. Moreover, it was a form of politics that self-consciously announced its novelty. *Satyagraha* and nonviolence were new terms in politics. Hannah Arendt once suggested that the appearance of new concepts was rare in politics. The twentieth century arguably witnessed the emergence of two, albeit contrary in implication: totalitarianism and nonviolence. Arendt, along with many other eminent philosophers, made the former—totalitarianism—central to political theoretical reflection and argument. By contrast, nonviolence has been conspicuously absent in mainstream debates in political theory. No major political theorist has written a treatise on nonviolence nor made it a prominent feature of their understanding of modern politics.

Part of my interest in exploring diverse theories of nonviolence, and the history of its interpretation and conceptualization, is to offset this shortcoming. The paradigm of strategic nonviolence, and the array of empirical and theoretical work it has generated, has significantly contributed toward making nonviolent politics an object of sustained political and theoretical engagement. Substantively, these studies of nonviolence have demonstrated and confirmed the extraordinary potency of nonviolent politics. As a prominent example, consider the findings of the much-celebrated work, Chenoweth and Stephan's *Why Civil Resistance Works*. Chenoweth and Stephan tracked more than three hundred campaigns across the twentieth century and conclude that nonviolent political movements have been twice as effective as their armed counterparts in anti-regime resistance, and increasingly so over time. This success, they contend, is due to nonviolence's "participation advantage"—that barriers to nonviolent action are much more minimal than armed struggle.⁸⁹ These findings substantiate nonviolence's utility as a tactic of mass mobilization, as a way to organize and display collective power.

Such findings have dispelled long-standing presumptions about the potential scope and range of nonviolent politics. In the wake of the Indian independence struggle and the US Civil Rights Movement, it was commonly asserted that nonviolence might only be viable in and against broadly liberal regimes. But empirical studies have shown that nonviolent insurrections have been increasingly effective in overthrowing non-democratic regimes, no matter how authoritarian such regimes may be.⁹⁰ Perhaps even more significant is the cumulative impact of these studies in casting doubt on the capacity of violence to reliably secure popular consent. In this vein, the ongoing theoretical elaboration of the nature of consent and power underlying nonviolence has not only attested to the transformative power of organized mass power but also undercut deeply held conventional assumptions about the political efficacy of violence. To my mind, chipping away at the tenacious hold these assumptions have on our political imagination is one of the most important theoretical and political implications of nonviolent politics. And it is one that the paradigm of strategic nonviolence has done much to draw attention to.

At the same time, strategic studies of nonviolent conflict have overwhelmingly focused on the power dimension of nonviolence. Such focus has had the unintended consequence of constricting our understanding of the theoretical underpinning of nonviolent politics. In elucidating a competing strategic account of nonviolence, nonviolence as disciplined action, I have tried to make visible overlooked premises and implications of an alternative theory of nonviolent politics. The concept of disciplined action foregrounds the affective dynamics of political conflict which, as I hope I have shown, were extraordinarily significant to early practitioners of nonviolence and their theoretical interlocutors and interpreters. In limiting, even denying, a place for discipline, suffering, and persuasion—usually sidelined as dispensable moral commitments associated with principled forms of nonviolence—theories of collective power have misunderstood the political purpose and potential of nonviolence.

In diversifying the ways in which the strategic logic of nonviolent politics is conceptualized, we can think more precisely about what defines and distinguishes nonviolent action not only from

armed rebellion but also from other modes of collective action. Acknowledging the different ways in which nonviolence can be and has been practiced also challenges us to think more conceptually about how the political dynamics of nonviolence vary across different political contexts. Among the most recent studies of nonviolent resistance, the paradigmatic example of successful nonviolent politics has been anti-authoritarian, anti-regime resistance. Moreover, a significant determinant of the ability of nonviolent, mass-based movements to topple governments seems to be to their majoritarian character. Despite its proven efficacy in such cases, it is unclear how such modes of collective resistance can be translated to different political situations and forms of conflict, from the struggles of oppressed minorities, economic inequality, and class conflict, to political contestation within democracies. Models of collective power that emphasize mass disruption and cascading revolution might be especially discordant in situations where the primary political antagonist is not a foreign power or a repressive state but is comprised of fellow citizens.

Gandhi and King were particularly attuned to the constraints and possibilities of nonviolent action in conditions of deep social polarization. In such contexts, disciplined action and its orientation toward persuasion were meant to mitigate the negative passions and resentments that are unearthed and intensified by political conflict. Gandhi's campaigns of non-cooperation and mass civil disobedience against British rule are taken to be exemplary instances of nonviolent, anti-regime resistance. But Gandhi also attempted to deploy nonviolent action to resolve various forms of social conflict and domination, such as conflict between Hindus and Muslims and caste oppression. While the results of the campaigns against untouchability and for Hindu-Muslim unity were often mixed and precarious, they involved imaginative experimentation with nonviolent techniques to undo conditions of mistrust and forge alliances and solidarity across entrenched social division.

There is a resonance here with the ways in which King defended disciplined nonviolence as a method with unique advantages in the struggle for racial justice. King recognized that, despite their overlapping moral and political commitments, the political coordinates of the Civil Rights Movement were qualitatively different from anti-colonial struggles. The aim and orientation of

anti-colonial movements of self-determination was the overthrow of existing regimes and autonomy from former oppressors. King was arguably the first major theorist of nonviolence to fully recognize the limited applicability of models of anti-regime resistance to minority movements. Securing social equality and integration, in King's eyes, was more complicated and demanding than independence. When oppressed minorities demanded freedom, they did so against a majority that resisted and resented their empowerment. Dramatizing suffering, dignity, and discipline were means by which nonviolent action could be made persuasive within the context of such recalcitrance. Moreover, conflicts between minorities and majorities, between the oppressed and oppressor, were also struggles between citizens who would have to create ways of coexisting in peace, equality, and dignity. Given these challenges, it was, for King, a strategic and tactical imperative that nonviolent direct action orient itself toward reconciliation and not simply the defeat, overthrow, or humiliation of the oppressor.

For analogous reasons, disciplined action is an important concept to revivify in relation to the demands of democracy. The arc of the Civil Rights Movement attests to distinct challenges nonviolent protest faces within the context of democratic politics. The resistance to the movement showed how democracies and democratic publics can be surprisingly hostile to nonviolent protest, especially when waged on behalf of minority interests. As King noted, challenging entrenched interests inflamed and embittered resistance. The democratic demands of living together through crises and conflict require confronting head-on the moral-psychological dynamics of political contestation.

The structures of democratic competition and the continual contest for power fuel resentments, antagonism, and polarization. Democracy also institutionalizes competition and provides mechanisms to express political dissent and effect political change. Insurgent movements, when they take up extra-legal forms of protest, challenge the legitimacy of these institutions and often elicit polarizing and passionate responses. They bear the burden of justifying the necessity of acts of dissent, agitation, and disruption. Scrutiny of political means is a central feature of the politics of protest, but this is especially so in the context of democratic politics. Nonviolent protest, like all protest, becomes subject to public political

debate about when and whether direct action is warranted. For Gandhi and King, the use of excessively coercive or aggressive means can distract the public from seeing and engaging with the moral and political message of the movement. This was why the form of protest was so crucial for both King and Gandhi. The dramatization of discipline tries to cut through rancorous debate about the means, lessen affective resistance, and draw people's attention to the underlying issues at stake. At its most imaginative and powerful, disciplined nonviolent protest would involve a perfect convergence of means and ends, with the message itself being mirrored in the form of protest.

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NOTES

1 What is especially key is that Gandhi advocated and practiced *satyagraha* as a novel form of *mass politics*. Here I follow Gene Sharp's claim that what distinguished Gandhi from intellectual precursors like Tolstoy was that he was the first to experiment with nonviolence as practical politics and consciously developed nonviolent organization, tactics, and strategy. Sean Chabot describes the forging of *satyagraha* as a "transformative invention" and qualitatively distinct from forms of contentious politics practiced by mass social movements of the nineteenth century. See Gene Sharp, "Gandhi's Political Significance," in *Gandhi as a Political Strategist* (Boston: P. Sargent Publishers, 1979); and Sean Chabot, "The Gandhian Repertoire as Transformative Invention," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 18, no. 3 (December 2014): 327–367.

2 On the translation and adoption of Gandhian *satyagraha* by civil rights activists and anti-nuclear protesters in the United States and Britain, see Sean Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West: The Mahatma and the Rise of Radical Protest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Sean Chabot's *Transnational Roots of the Civil Rights Movement: African American Explorations of the Gandhian Repertoire* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012) analyzes how African Americans came to interpret, adopt, and creatively implement nonviolent techniques. For more overarching accounts of the globalization of nonviolence, see Jonathan Schell, *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People* (New York: Henry Holt, 2003); Peter Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000); and Gene Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle: 20th Century Practice and 21st Century Potential* (Boston: Extending Horizon Books, 2005).

3 Gene Sharp's work is the most important in this genre—about which I will say more below. Other key works include: Peter Ackerman and Christopher Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: The Dynamics of People Power in the Twentieth Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994); Kurt Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections: People Power Movements in Nondemocracies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005) and *Civil Resistance Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015); Dustin Howes, *Toward a Credible Pacifism: Violence and the Possibilities of Politics* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2009) and “The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence,” *Perspectives on Politics* 11, no. 2 (2013): 427–446; Sharon Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Nonviolent Struggle: Theories, Strategies, and Dynamics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); and Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014). Popular books promoting nonviolent activism such as Mark and Paul Engler's *This Is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt Is Shaping the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Nation Books, 2016) further attest to the strength and salience of the paradigm of strategic nonviolence.

4 Written as a handbook for activists, Sharp's most popular work is *From Dictatorship to Democracy: A Conceptual Framework for Liberation* (Boston: Albert Einstein Institution, 2003). But the three-volume treatise, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: P. Sargent Publishers, 1973), is the foundational work that covers the theory, method, and dynamics of nonviolent action. The essays collected in *Gandhi as a Political Strategist* (1979) predate this major work but usefully track Sharp's turn to strategic nonviolence. On the development of Sharp's thinking, see Thomas Weber,

“Nonviolence Is Who? Gene Sharp or Gandhi,” *Peace & Change* 28, no. 2 (2003): 250–270.

5 Consider, for instance, his popular reputation around the time of the Arab Spring: “Gene Sharp: Machiavelli of Non-Violence,” *New Statesman*, www.newstatesman.com. See also the prominent obituaries that appeared in 2018: “Gene Sharp, Global Guru of Nonviolent Resistance, Dies at 90,” *New York Times*, February 2, 2018, www.nytimes.com.

6 Alongside Sharp, another influential work that originated the idea of two differing forms of nonviolence is Judith Stiehm, “Nonviolence Is Two,” *Sociological Inquiry* 38, no. 1 (1968): 23–30. Stiehm distinguishes between “conscientious” and “pragmatic” nonviolence. For useful overviews of the distinction, see Weber, “Nonviolence Is Who?”; Iain Atack, *Nonviolence in Political Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 9–30; Nepstad, *Nonviolent Struggle*, 4–12, 45–65; and Schock, *Civil Resistance Today*, 25.

7 For more nuanced accounts of principled nonviolence see Stiehm, “Nonviolence Is Two”; Sharp, “Types of Principled Nonviolence” in *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*; Weber, “Nonviolence Is Who?”; and Robert Burrowes, *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996).

8 The term “moderate Machiavellianism” is a reference to Jacques Maritain’s “The End of Machiavellianism” and taken up by L. K. Bhardawaj in the short comment, “Principled versus Pragmatic Nonviolence,” *Peace Review* 10, no. 1 (1998): 79–81. Clements contrasts this to a principled nonviolence that is based on a “radical ontology” that challenges the “militarized, dominatory, and sovereign nature of contemporary politics” (12). In abandoning this more expansive critical orientation, Clements argues that pragmatic nonviolent movements become “snared” to the coercive logic of the Weberian state (14). In a similar vein, Chabot and Sharifi suggest that in pursuing a purely instrumentalist practice of strategic violence, Egyptian and Iranian resistance movements have limited their political horizon, making them susceptible to, and compatible with, the hegemony of free market liberalism. See Kevin P. Clements, “Principled Nonviolence: An Imperative, Not an Optional Extra,” *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 3, no. 1 (2015): 1–17; Sean Chabot and Majid Sharifi, “The Violence of Nonviolence: Problematizing Nonviolent Resistance in Iran and Egypt,” *Sociologists without Borders* 8, no. 2 (2013). Clements and Chabot and Sharifi point to Gandhi as the purveyor of an ethically transformative model of nonviolent politics. In this they are in line with many scholars who likewise position Gandhi as offering a more radical critique of modern politics. On this point, see especially Uday Mehta, “Gandhi and the Common Logic of War and Peace,” *Raritan* 30, no. 1 (Sum-

mer 2010): 134–156 and “Gandhi on Democracy, Politics, and the Ethics of Everyday Life,” *Modern Intellectual History* 7, no. 2 (2010): 355–371; and Ramin Jahanbegloo, *The Gandhian Moment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).

9 Chaiwat Satha-Anand, “Overcoming Illusory Division: Between Nonviolence as a Pragmatic Strategy and a Principled Way of Life,” in *Civil Resistance: Comparative Perspectives on Nonviolent Struggle*, edited by Kurt Schock (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).

10 Satha-Anand, “Overcoming Illusory Division,” 292. Though Nepsstad relies heavily on the principled/pragmatic classification, she acknowledges that the dividing line between the two is not clear. She also notes that what falls under the rubric of principled nonviolence also has a strategic dimension and tries to outline what alternative techniques issue from this perspective. See *Nonviolent Struggle*, 10–12, 50–57.

11 Clements, “Principled Nonviolence”; Chabot and Sharifi, “The Violence of Nonviolence.” Howes is particularly innovative here in building on the strength of strategic nonviolence to reformulate pacifism “as a principled commitment to non-violence grounded in a realistic understanding of the historical record and the inherent political liabilities of violence.” Howes, “The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence,” 428.

12 Satha-Anand, “Overcoming Illusory Division”; Weber, “Nonviolence Is Who?”; Victor Lidz, “A Note on ‘Nonviolence Is Two,’” *Sociological Inquiry* 38, no. 1 (Winter 1968): 31–36.

13 Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part One: Power and Struggle*, 63–64.

14 M. K. Gandhi, “*Satyagraha*—Not Passive Resistance (2-9-1917),” *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 16, 10. References are to *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Electronic Book), 98 vols. (New Delhi, 1999) and cited hereafter as CWMG, followed by volume and page number. King likewise repeatedly contested the implications of passivity, arguing that nonviolence was “not a method for cowards: it *does* resist.” And, when socially organized and pursued with unyielding persistence, it becomes a powerful “mass-method” that “disintegrates the old order.” See Martin Luther King Jr., “Nonviolence and Racial Justice” and “The Social Organization of Nonviolence” in *A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, edited by James M. Washington (New York: HarperOne, 1986), 7, 33.

15 The term *prefigurative politics* originated in analyses of New Left movements to distinguish forms of organizing and action that enacted radical democratic values from a more strategically oriented politics. See Wini Brienes, *Community and Organization in the New Left, 1962–1968: The*

Great Refusal (New York: Praeger, 1982). For its use as a description of nonviolent action, see B. L. Epstein, *Political Protest and Cultural Revolution: Nonviolent Direct Action in the 1970s and 1980s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991). On the genealogy of the concept and its revival in contemporary left activism, see Uri Gordon, "Prefigurative Politics between Ethical Practice and Absent Promise," *Political Studies* 66, no. 2 (2018): 521–537. For provocative and subtle analyses of Gandhian *satyagraha* as exemplary action, see especially Akeel Bilgrami, "Gandhi, the Philosopher," *Economic and Political Weekly* 38, no. 39 (September 23, 2003): 4159–4165; and Uday Mehta, "Gandhi on Democracy, Politics and the Ethics of Everyday Life." As an aside, it is very unclear if in fact the quote "be the change"—can be directly attributed to Gandhi, as is often supposed. See Brian Morton, "Falsar Words Were Never Spoken," *New York Times* (August 29, 2011).

16 Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part One*, 7–16. It is also referred to as the "consent" theory of power or the "pluralistic" view of power. Sharp himself often turns to the sixteenth-century essay, "Discourse on Voluntary Servitude," by Étienne de la Boétie, to fill out the theoretical roots of this account of obedience.

17 "As force is always on the side of the governed, the governors have nothing to support them but opinion. It is therefore, on opinion only that government is founded; and this maxim extends to the most despotic and most military governments, as well as to the most free and most popular." David Hume, "Of the First Principle of Government," *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1987), 32.

18 M. K. Gandhi, "Evidence before Disorders Inquiry Committee (9-1-1920)," *CWMG*, 19, 217.

19 M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, *CWMG*, 10, 262.

20 Sharp, "Gandhi on the Theory of Voluntary Servitude," and "Origins of Gandhi's Use of Nonviolent Struggle: A Review-Essay on Erik Erikson's *Gandhi's Truth*," in *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*.

21 Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part One*, 10–12.

22 Nepstad refers to it as "citizen-based power" to emphasize its non-elite character. Howes calls it a "people-centered" understanding of power. This also resonates with the widespread adoption of "people power" as a moniker for nonviolent resistance, a slogan first made famous by pro-democracy activists in the Philippines in the 1980s. Iain Atack highlights the horizontal character of nonviolent power, and in its positive form, defines it as "integrative" or "cooperative" power. See Nepstad, *Nonviolent Struggle*, 45–49; Howes, "The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence," 435–437; and Atack, *Nonviolence in Political Theory*, 100–121.

23 In *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Sharp outlines the theory of power and consent in Part One, and then inventories in great detail an enormous variety of nonviolent methods of protest, noncooperation, and intervention in Part Two: *The Methods of Nonviolent Action*. The concluding volume, *The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*, presents an analysis of how these methods can lead to the accommodation of protesters' demands, a redistribution of power, and, ultimately, regime change. On Sharp's theory, see Nepstad, *Nonviolent Struggle*, 57–64; and Atack, *Nonviolence in Political Theory*, 114–125.

24 Key works include Ackerman and Kruegler, *Strategic Nonviolent Conflict*; Ackerman and DuVall, *A Force More Powerful*; Schock, *Unarmed Insurrections*; Sharp, *Waging Nonviolent Struggle*; Adam Roberts and Timothy Garten Ash, *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action from Gandhi to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions*; and Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*.

25 Jonathan Schell and Dustin Howes, in particular, developed the Arendtian distinction between power and violence to explore the inherent democratic potential of nonviolent power understood as a form of “action-in-concert.” Schell himself was skeptical of Sharp's emphasis on nonviolence as pure technique. By contrast, Howes explicitly tried to build upon the findings of strategic nonviolence to construct a new, “re-invigorated and pragmatic brand of pacifism.” Schell, *The Unconquerable World*; Howes, *Toward a Credible Pacifism*, “The Failure of Pacifism and the Success of Nonviolence,” and *Freedom Without Violence: Resisting the Western Political Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); and Atack, *Nonviolence in Political Theory*.

26 Atack, *Nonviolence in Political Theory*, 8.

27 Krishnalal Shridharani, *War without Violence: A Study of Gandhi's Method and Its Accomplishments* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Co., 1939).

28 Richard Gregg, *The Power of Nonviolence* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co., 1934). Both Gregg and Shridharani were directly involved in the Gandhian movement and also closely connected to the Fellowship of Reconciliation's efforts at disseminating and experimenting with nonviolence methods in the 1940s and 1950s. Shridharani had participated in the Salt March, for which he spent time in jail. Soon after, Shridharani attended Columbia University to pursue his PhD—the dissertation eventually became *War without Violence*—while also lecturing on Gandhian politics to student groups, religious groups, and peace activists. On Shridharani and his influence, see Sudarshan Kapur, *Raising Up a Prophet: The African-American Encounter with Gandhi* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992), 120–121; Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*, 122–130; Chabot, *Transnational Roots of*

the Civil Rights Movement, 86–99. The revised 1959 edition of Gregg’s *The Power of Nonviolence* has recently been republished with a new introduction by James Tully in the Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

29 Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” *Why We Can’t Wait* (New York: Signet Classics, 2000 [1963]), 85–112. Of particular resonance is King’s outlining of the stages of nonviolent direct action and the need for creating crisis via direct action to enable negotiation.

30 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, xxix.

31 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, xxviii.

32 See especially 270–275 and chapter X, 276–294. It is notable that the pamphlet version of *War without Violence* included chapter X which directly compared *satyagraha* and war, alongside chapter I and the concluding remarks.

33 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 4.

34 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 285.

35 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, xxxi.

36 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, ch. 1, 3–47. This was the centerpiece of the pamphlet and proved to be especially key for CORE activists. See Scalmer, *Gandhi in the West*, 125–130, 144–147; and Chabot, *Transnational Roots of the Civil Rights Movement*, 86–99.

37 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 14–47.

38 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 278–279. Compare with King’s account of nonviolent direct action as a form of dramatization that triggers creative crisis. On King’s understanding of dramatization, see Karuna Mantena, “Showdown for Nonviolence: The Theory and Practice of Nonviolence,” in *To Shape a New World: The Political Philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, edited by Brandon Terry and Tommie Shelby (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).

39 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 116.

40 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 291–294.

41 Shridharani’s project as a whole is framed as a response to James’s 1910 essay, “The Moral Equivalent of War.” See especially 285–287. See also H.J.N. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression: A Study of Gandhi’s Moral Equivalent of War* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).

42 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 36–41. Both Gregg and Shridharani recounted scenes from the Salt *Satyagraha* made famous by journalists Webb Miller and Negley Farson. Gregg famously described this process as “moral jiu-jitsu.” See Gregg, *The Power of Non-Violence*, 41–54.

43 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 283–285.

44 Shridharani, *War without Violence*, 292.

45 Shridharani was aware that he was deviating from Gandhi on this point. See *War without Violence*, 22, 33.

46 Clarence Marsh Case, *Non-violent Coercion: A Study in Methods of Social Pressure* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1923); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001 [1932]); Joan Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1958).

47 For a more extensive discussion of this point, see Karuna Mantena, “Mass *Satyagraha* and the Problem of Collective Power,” in *Political Imaginaries: Rethinking India’s Twentieth Century*, edited by Manu Goswami and Mrinalini Sinha (forthcoming).

48 Karuna Mantena, “Another Realism: Gandhi and the Politics of Nonviolence,” *American Political Science Review* 106, no. 2 (2012): 455–470.

49 M. K. Gandhi, “Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru (1933),” *CWMG*, 61, 393.

50 A number of interpreters have read Gandhi’s attention to the purity of nonviolent action—and more generally his emphasis on means—as a response to the so-called dirty-hands dilemma and indicative of an overarching concern with protecting the moral purity of political actor. On this point, see Raghavan Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1972); and, more recently, Dipesh Chakrabarty and Rochana Majumdar, “Gandhi’s Gita and Politics as Such,” *Modern Intellectual History* 7, no. 2 (2010): 335–353. I am not persuaded that Gandhi was so preoccupied with moral corruption of this kind. Rather, the logic ran the other way. The *integrity* of nonviolent action mattered because it was, for Gandhi, closely tied to its political *efficacy*. See Mantena, “Another Realism.”

51 Max Weber, “The Profession and Vocation of Politics,” in *Weber: Political Writings*, edited by Peter Lassman and Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 354–355.

52 Weber, “The Profession and Vocation of Politics,” 361.

53 Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 184.

54 Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 233.

55 See Nagappa Gowda, *The Bhagavadgita in the Nationalist Discourse* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011); Shruti Kapila and Faisal Devji (eds.), *Political Thought in Action: The Bhagavad Gita and Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Sanjay Palshikar, *Evil and the Philosophy of Retribution: Modern Commentaries on the Gita* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2014).

56 M. K. Gandhi, “Jain *Ahimsa?* (25–101928),” *CWMG*, 43, 131.

57 This point is made in different ways by Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, ch. 9; Howes, *Toward a Credible Pacifism*; and Schell, *The Unconquerable World*.

58 M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, CWMG, 10, 288–289.

59 Bhikhu Parekh, *Gandhi's Political Philosophy: A Critical Examination* (London: Macmillan, 1989), 147.

60 Weber, "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," 365–368.

61 Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, 10, 293.

62 On nonviolent action's "principle of reversibility," see Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (London: Sage, 1996), 271–273.

63 Martin Luther King Jr., "Pilgrimage to Nonviolence," *A Testament of Hope*, 36.

64 Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2010 [1958]), 211–212.

65 King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 88.

66 In this vein, Akeel Bilgrami has contrasted the Gandhian practice of moral exemplarity with enlightenment criticism in the Kantian mold. He argues that the latter entails the calling into question of one's opponent's worldview and thereby becomes a moralizing criticism, easily susceptible to corruption (egoistic investments) with "the potential to generate other psychological attitudes (resentment, hostility) which underlie interpersonal violence." See Bilgrami, "Gandhi, the Philosopher," 4163.

67 King, *Stride Toward Freedom*, 214.

68 M. K. Gandhi, "Speech at Birmingham Meeting," CWMG, 54, 48. Part of this quote also appears in King in "An Experiment in Love," *A Testament of Hope*, 18.

69 Martin Luther King Jr., "Love, Law, and Civil Disobedience," *A Testament of Hope*, 47.

70 King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 90.

71 Martin Luther King Jr., "I Have a Dream," *A Testament of Hope*, 218.

72 King, *Stride Toward Freedom*, 206.

73 King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 110.

74 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, xxxi.

75 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 231.

76 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 232.

77 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 248.

78 King, "The Social Organization of Nonviolence," 33.

79 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 250.

80 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 247.

81 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 250.

82 Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society*, 247.

83 King, *Stride Toward Freedom*, 210.

84 King, *Why We Can't Wait*, 68–69.

85 M. K. Gandhi, “Satyagraha Leaflet No. 21,” *CWMG*, 18, 41.

86 M. K. Gandhi, “What It Is Not,” *CWMG*, 27, 210–212.

87 M. K. Gandhi, “Was It Coercive?” *CWMG*, 61, 377.

88 Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part Three: The Dynamics of Nonviolent Action*, 594–635. Even the Englers, who especially emphasize the disruptive dimensions of nonviolent protest, acknowledge the tactical necessity of discipline for radical movements. See Engler and Engler, *This Is an Uprising*, 225–250.

89 Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*, 3–61.

90 Chenoweth and Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works*, especially ch. 3.