



- TPU -

COURSE OUTLINE

- TPU -

Content

1

– TPU –	1
COURSE INSTRUCTORS OUTLINE	
– TPU –	1
(A) Basic Information	2
(B) Personal Note:	2
 (A) Busic mornation (B) Personal Note: (C) Course Content: 	
(D) How is the course designed?	
(E) Course Format	5
(F) Content Carriers	6
(G) Course Syllabus and Timetable	6
(H) Study Material and Suggested Readings, videos and websites	
(I) Assignments	
Deadlines	
Technology	
Certificate	



(A) Basic Information

facebook

g +

twitter

Course Title: Economic-Development-Conflict and Gandhian Alternative Paths to Community & Personal Self-Reliance:The Indian Experience

- Next Term: 12th March- 30th May 2013 (12 weeks)
- Work load: 6/7 hours per week
- Course Instructor: Vithal Rajan
- Course Collaborators: THE YUGANTAR GROUP



E-mail: Vithal.rajan@gmail.com Telephone: +91-9704540608 Website Facebook: Twitter: Skype:

(B) Personal Note:

Vithal Rajan, O.C., Ph.D.[L.S.E.], BA Hons [McGill], has worked as: a business executive in India and Canada; a mediator for the church in Belfast; founding faculty at The School of Peace Studies, University of Bradford; the first Executive Director of the Right Livelihood Award Foundation, Sweden; and Director, WWF-International. He has founded several Indian NGOs. He was made an Officer of the Order of Canada for life-long service to humanity.



THE YUGANTAR GROUP

Vithal Rajan works with groups of like-minded intellectuals and activists, through commitment to a community way of life and out of a firm belief that the best ideas are produced through social practice. He is an integral member of the Yugantar Group which is a registered not-for-profit civil society voluntary group of activists, professionals, academics and intellectuals in India. The group works for a socially just inclusive society, caring of the Earth and People, while ensuring individual freedoms and community cohesion. Yugantar includes:

Deepa Dhanraj (President Yugantar): Internationally known Documentary Film-Maker.

Dr. K.Lalita: internationally known Feminist, Writer, Activist, a key resource person in Women's Studies. **Tejaswini Madabhushi**: A Neo-Gandhian grassroots activist with expertise in Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Sashi Kumar (Secretary, Yugantar): Revolutionary Economist, and former banker.

Madan Mohan Rao: Senior Journalist, and former Ashoka Fellow.

Navroze Contractor: Internationally known Cinematographer.

Triveni Goswami Vernal: former Rotary Peace Fellow, UNESCO/Suzanne Mubarak/Japan-Egypt Friendship Fellow for the Empowerment of Women in Peace and Gender Studies.

Vandana Phottoli: Deputy CEO, Yugantar, and advisor, Hyderabad Start-Ups Group.

Dr Lalitha Iyer: Senior Banker, expertise in Organisational Development, and former Dean, Social Development, Indian Society of Applied Behavioural Sciences.

Diia K. Rajan: Feminist activist and writer, culture studies theorist.

(C) Course Content:

Many people in the world, whether rich or poor, whether living in the West or in Third World countries, experience great dissatisfaction with the way of life that is possible today. The conventional wisdom of leaders seems to be unable to cope with rising crime, job insecurity, falling standards in health care and education, corruption in high places, destruction of the environment, climate change, and social alienation. The purpose of this course is to illuminate what has happened in India over the past century, though it was in the forefront of the struggle not only against 19th century Imperialism, but under the leadership of

Mahatma Gandhi against modern, aggressive and individualistic values of exploitative societies. Gandhi was both a spiritual leader and an astute politician, and he vigourously propagated alternative pathways to a happy and contented quality of life to the prevailing Western model, for he foresaw many of our presentday problems. His vision was based on the age-old knowledge of many Eastern spiritual traditions, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Christian.

However, the previous two-hundred years of Colonial Rule and the breakdown of the feudal Moghul Empire had almost destroyed the artisanal-industrial fabric of India, and led to wide-spread emiseration throughout the country with repetitive large-scale famines. Indian and

British social reformers tried various ameliorative measures, and it is important to acknowledge their constructive efforts against the general background of imperial policies if we are to understand what followed after Independence.

Widespread poverty and general distress seen against an image of past glories led Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister, to opt for a Western industrial model of development based upon American and Russian successes. Sixty years after following this course, we see India as an IT giant, with over 50



corporate billionaires, and a 100-million strong powerful English-educated middleclass. It is in possession of nuclear weapons. At the same time, half of its children are malnourished, many of whom are child labourers; more than half of India's rural women are illiterate and subject to violence and female infanticide; the rural population is living on less than a dollar a day, and prolonged agricultural crises is leading to hundreds of thousands of farmers committing suicides. In this phase we see in detail the violence that so-called development has perpetrated on the vast masses of people.

The ruling classes of India have tried to ameliorate some of the disastrous consequences of their policies through several measures, giving: reservations to members of disadvantaged communities; subsidies for agriculture, export industries, and renewable energy; and writing off bank loans; and creating opportunities for rural employment. It is important to assess these measures, not only to see the limitations of such efforts but also to perceive the socio-political complexities of governing a billion people struggling to overcome their feudal colonial past and the economic structures of capitalism.

Civic resistance to this form of development has been vigourously voiced by the people; women, scientists, farmers, writers, civil society activists. They have opposed environmental destruction and desertification; the construction of large dams across several rivers; the rapid introduction of nuclear energy; corporatization of agriculture and the introduction of GM crops; and policies that have led to widening social disparities and privatization of education and medical care. There have also been mass protests against widespread political corruption, and against violence against women. This democratic struggle in process is beginning to lessen the influence of highly placed people, and slowly democratize government policies.

However, the most heartening trend is the creation of alternative pathways to development, many of which mirror some of the policies envisioned by Mahatma Gandhi a long time ago. These people's initiatives include non-governmental charitable organizations that take care of their communities; self-help programmes; cooperatives trade unions even of working women; community-based medical care; institutes for training barefoot rural experts; farming associations for preserving grain; and innovative educational methodology.

Many of these examples of people helping themselves and rebuilding their communities from the bottom upwards have lessons for a better life for people living elsewhere, even in the rich countries of the North.

(D) How is the course designed?

4

The course consists of Six Modules, each with a Specific Theme. For every Module, there will be [1] Selected Readings; [2] A One-Hour Skype-based discussion between a circle of participants [never more than 10] with the Course Director and anyone of the Yugantar group who is available on Skype at that time; [3] A collaborative essay assignment to be jointly undertaken by the circle of participants through mutual communication. This written essay should be around five or six pages in length and submitted by email as Word attachment [font size 12]. In addition, any participant is also free to submit a short article [600 words max] on the same or allied topic. [4] A detailed assessment of the essay[s] will be emailed back by the Course Director to the group. [5] In addition every participant will be given background reading material for further study if so wished. [6] Every course participant will be welcome to maintain friendly activist and academic correspondence with the Course Director. Collaborative essay writing and participative Skype discussions are strongly recommended for the completion of the course. Since the goal is to acquire a creative and concrete understanding of conflict dynamics and conflict transformation from the micro



through to the mega level, from literature and history, from complex real-life narratives and exercises, it is absolutely necessary that we share as much as we can. For this reason the entire process is highly interactive and transparent with all participants freely exchanging their thought processes, their interpretations and their views along with the instructor's responses. Through this approach, participants achieve a core understanding of constructive conflict transformation, and they are empowered through their own cooperative efforts to participate in larger attempts at social change in their own societies.

(E) Course Format

The course is articulated in Six Modules. Each module includes a live discussion-session on Skype every two weeks, for around 60 minutes maximum. No session will include more than 10 participants to ensure maximum interaction. The Skype sessions will take place on alternate Saturdays at a time most convenient for most persons, to be decided by the Course Director after consulting everyone by email before the start of the course. You will experience how enlightening it is to have participants join in from all around the world. And there will be opportunities to contribute by asking questions and making comments on the course website.

Every one of the Six Modules will follow this format:

First Week

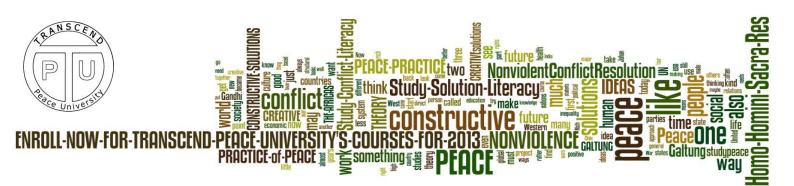
Tuesday – The Reading Material [and also a few videos or audios] will be sent as email attachment and or as an easily accessible reading list and web-links to all participants.

Saturday – A One-hour Skype session will be fixed after mutual consultations with all participants forming each study circle. The timing will depend on everyone's location and convenience. The essay assignment will be finalized after this discussion.

Second Week

Thursday – After three or fours days of mutual consultation, the study circle will finalize and email back a 5 or 6 page essay on the agreed assigned topic. An individual participant can also submit a short article on the same or allied topic.

Saturday – The Course Director will email back to all the participants a detailed assessment of the essay[s], with additional suggestions for future study.



(F) Content Carriers

For every module, the Course Director will send to every one of the participants, as email PDF or Word file attachments, selected reading material taken from books, newspapers and magazine articles. This reading material will be introduced by a short note from the Course Director. In addition, for time to time, short video or audio recordings and photos may also be uploaded, or their links given, if these will add to the discussion. Then, for every one of the six modules there will be a Skype discussion for approximately 60 minutes led by the Course Director with the participants.

Participants will discuss among themselves through Skype meetings while writing their collaborative essay, and deliver it to the Course Director as email attachment during the second week of every module, and the Course Director will return an assessment as email attachment.

The Galtung-Institut platform will also make available Web-based 'Forum' and 'Chat' spaces where at mutually agreed times participants can communicate with each other or the Course Director.

(G) Course Syllabus and Timetable

Module 1 – Gandhi's Vision of Alternative Ways of Living

Weeks 1 & 2: Who was Gandhi – privileged background, boyhood nationalist, middle-temple lawyer, British liberal values, initiates anti-racism struggle in South Africa, experiments with Tolstoy Farm, forms a philosophy of life.

Gandhi's idea of 'swaraj' or Independence – ideas on Gram Swaraj – i.e. independence of action at the village level – he was against modern western values, but not against science – he was for nonviolent struggle, political and spiritual, and for community constructive action.

Gandhi's notion of how life should be lived – inclusive of all spiritual traditions, self-governance at the village level, horizontal system not hierarchical, austerity not indulgence, for spiritual growth, better health, and happier community, for bottom upwards development, for small plans, and for self-help

Questions for Discussion and for deciding the Assignment:

Do Gandhi's ideas have any relevance today? Can they be used for a more humane form of development in Third World poor countries? Can they be used for improving the Quality of Life in richer Western countries? Are any of Gandhi's ideas useful to you for personal growth and better community action?

Module 2 – The Colonial Period & introduction of new Western Values

Weeks 3 & 4: The Intrusion of British Colonialism – new liberal democratic values, but rulers destroy remaining economic fabric of collapsing moghul empire, social reformers and critics of imperialism arise





First impacts - destruction of textile industry, creation of landlord 'zamindari' class, increase of landless labour, change from local food crops to crops like indigo, opium for export, savage famines, destruction of an independent self-sufficient peasantry.

Second Impacts – civil Resistance, formation of nationalist aspirations.

Third Impacts – creation of a new nationalist middle-class with both British liberal and Indian traditional values. Leaders like Gandhi reject many traditional practices such as discrimination on the basis of caste, or gender.

After a long period of uniform condemnation of Colonialism, there is now a new justification of it.

Questions for Discussion and for deciding the Assignment:

Did the 'benefits' of British Colonialism outweigh the disasters it caused in India? Were there better forms of Colonialism anywhere else in the World? Could any form of Colonialism have been more humane, or is the concept of the rule of one people over another inherently wrong? Could you suggest ways for a multicultural mutually enriching relationship to take place between peoples of different cultures in your own community?

Module 3 – The Western Model of Economic Development after Independence

Weeks 5 & 6: Independent India rejected Gandhi's notions of development, similar to Suchmacher's 'small is beautiful' concept – Nehru chose the American-USSR model – initial conditions very different from those of the West Noted Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal calls India a soft state – gradual non-performance of the 5-year Plans – onset of widespread political corruption – choking bureaucratic control, flagging economy, widespread poverty New era of privatization and globalization – the IT period – widening gap between rich and poor - restricted growth of manufacturing - agricultural neglect and near disaster wrong political-economic priorities.

Questions for Discussion and for deciding the Assignment:

Did India have other developmental choices available after Independence? Did any other poor country do better? Could Gandhi's and Schumacher's ideas have produced a more humane path of development? Could you suggest a mix of Big is Necessary with Small is Beautiful for People's Empowerment in your own country?

Module 4 – Governmental and other Elite Efforts at Amelioration of Distress

Weeks 7 & 8: The Indian government attempts amelioration through populist measures – reservations in education and jobs for disadvantaged communities – public distribution system for essential commodities at controlled prices – employment of wage labour for the jobless – subsidies for the agricultural and energy sectors - subsidies for industry

Benefits for the poor are very limited because of widespread corruption at every level – the powerful work the Westminster form of democracy for their own benefit

Parliament amends the Constitution to put power in the hands of village-level committees, and give rights over forests to forest-dwelling tribals, but these measures are largely inoperative because of power of the haves over the have-nots



The rise of criminal politicians, government in the grip of the rich and powerful – unable to prevent megascale corruption or violence against the poor, lower castes, minorities, women

Questions for Discussion and for deciding the Assignment:

Could India's democracy have been shaped to serve the poor majority? Are there successful cases of people's empowerment? *Could you use Gandhi's ideas to critique your government, at the national or community level?*

Module 5 – Civil Resistance to Elite Policies

Weeks 9 & 10: After two decades of acquiescence Indian civil society rebels – several NGOs formed for community work, they take inspiration from Gandhi's 'constructive work' as part of Freedom Struggle, and follow his example of non-violent struggle

Medha Patkar leads the struggle against big dams, once called the new temples of India by Nehru

Vandana Shiva leads the struggle for keeping seeds and control over agricultural practice in the hands of Indian farmers, opposes GM crops, corporatization of agriculture

Udaykumar now heads the struggle against large-scale deployment of nuclear energy plants

The Indian middle-class itself takes to the streets to protest against mega corruption and scams of politicians

A few months ago, women led historic protest marches against violence on women and the state's indifference to it

Questions for Discussion and for deciding the Assignment:

Are such protests echoed elsewhere? What historical incidents trigger people to launch non-violent protests? How can we sustain such protests for improving governance and empowering people? *What were the civic protests that you have witnessed or participated in, and what were the positive results*?

Module 6 - Local Grassroots Initiatives Mirroring the Gandhian Vision

Weeks 11 & 12: In parallel to civic protests, several excellent grassroots initiatives have created sturdy organizations of people-centred development. A few of these exemplary organizations are:

A few months before his death, Gandhi inaugurated Gandhigram, in Tamil Nadu, a self-sustaining nongovernmental agency that has continued to serve the people of several villages over the last 60 years.

One of the earliest and most successful examples of poor women helping each other was SEWA, established by Ela Bhatt in Gujarat.

Dr. Rajnikant Arole established a unique community health programme in one of the poorest regions of Maharashtra, giving health cover to several villages.

The Rishi Valley School, Andhra Pradesh, originally established by J. Krishnamurti, modern India's saintly teacher, has created a unique and affordable pedagogy for educating poor out-of-school children.

Bunker Roy in Tilonia, Rajasthan, runs a successful 'barefoot college' for giving technical training to poor village women and men.

AME, Karnataka, is a group of committed agricultural scientists who help small farmers on drylands to achieve sustainable livelihoods.



Questions for Discussion and for deciding the Assignment:

Do these organizations exemplify Gandhi's earlier vision of independence at the village level? Can a State replicate such models on a large scale? Do such initiatives exist in richer countries? *Could you start or participate in similar initiatives in your community*

(H) Suggested Readings

* THIS LIST WILL BE SUPPLIED LATER

(I) Assignments

Module 1:

Assignment given after Skype Discussion: Saturday, March 16, 2013 Assignment Due back: Thursday, March 21, 2013 Assessment: Saturday, March 23, 2013

Module 2:

9

Assignment given after Skype Discussion: **Saturday, March 30, 2013** Assignment Due back: Thursday, April 4, 2013 Assessment: Saturday, April 6, 2013

Module 3:

Assignment given after Skype Discussion: **Saturday, April 13, 2013 Assignment Due back: Thursday, April 18, 2013** Assessment: Saturday, April 20, 2013

Module 4:

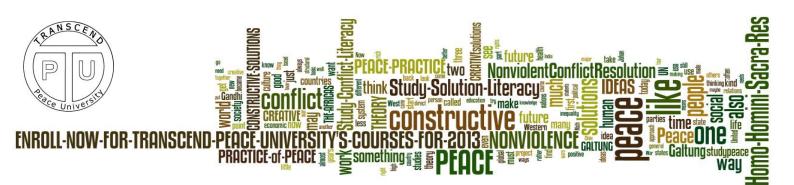
Assignment given after Skype Discussion: **Saturday, April 27, 2013 Assignment Due back: Thursday, May 2, 2013** Assessment: Saturday, May 4, 2013

Module 5:

Assignment given after Skype Discussion: **Saturday, May 11, 2013** Assignment Due back: Thursday, May 16, 2013 Assessment: Saturday, May 18, 2013

Module 6:

Assignment given after Skype Discussion: **Saturday, May 25, 2013** Assignment Due back: Thursday, May 30, 2013 Assessment: Saturday, June 1, 2013



Deadlines

As we adhere to a weekly schedule that includes activities such as skype-discussions and assignments, let us all pay careful attention to the following deadlines. Due to the fast paced and digital nature of this course, deadlines cannot be extended.

Technology

Participants and the Course Director will be connected through an entirely web-based set of multiple courses. TPU will be cooperating with the Galtung-Institut for Peace Theory and Peace Practice (G-I) which will be providing TPU with a new and improved digital infrastructure. Participants are requested to familiarize themselves with the G-I community which is the interface where Course Instructors and Students meet and interact. They can easily complete all TPU work from home or en route as long as they have internet connections. For this course to be successful, we need to be in contact with each other, to write to each other and to discuss content and procedures swiftly. TPU offers a course model staunchly based on interconnectivity and interoperability. For this purpose, no specific technology is required. You can use an e-mail account of your own to interact with each other, but we highly recommend using the interaction-infrastructure provided by the G-I Community for communicating with the TPU-Administration, the Course Director and with each other. Most importantly, you will have to maintain your mailbox to ensure it does not overload. To better support you, we do offer a chat-room and a forum which are both very easy to use. Please make sure to familiarize yourself with your G-I environment and share suggestions for improvement with TPU-Admin.

Certificate

At the end of the course we will provide a certificate of completion signed by the Course Instructor and by the current Rector of TPU, Prof. Johan Galtung.