

The Courage of Truth: Psychoanalytic Resonances & Reflections on Mahatma Gandhi

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* Nitya Prakesh

Abstract

The paper attempts to establish an intimate and epistemic connection between the philosophy of Gandhi and Psychoanalysis. The paper seeks to understand *ethico-affective* connection between the 'truth methods' employed by Gandhi (Satyagraha) and psychoanalysis as a technique, both passionately devoted to the quest of conscious/ unconscious truths. Both have been based on honest explorations of primal feeling, fears, and ever pervading intra psychic conflicts that humans constantly grapple with. The ethical and political plane of Satyagraha will be explored to situate its psychological significance of truth, using the psychoanalytic insights on Gandhi, by some eminent psychoanalytic thinkers such as Erik Erikson, AshisNandy, SudhirKakar and many others.

The paper, as an ode to Gandhi and his explorations of truth, will help us understand its psychological characteristics underlying Gandhian values and its power of greatest transformative potential. One such psychological components of Satyagraha, identified by Erikson, was the critical significance of self-analysis paired with an attempt to understand another man's inner conflicts. Secondly, how for Gandhi, the methods of confrontation with the enemy (internal and external) was purely non-violent based on the acceptance of oneself as a person who also shares other's inner mechanisms. Thus, we find an idea of psychological interconnected and oneness permeating the human consciousness. Lastly, the paper will highlight the non separation of personal and political realm, which is the marker of Gandhian life philosophy, unique as it has been so far.

Keywords: Gandhi, psychoanalytic lens, non violence,

Introduction

To know the truth one must imagine myriads of falsehoods. For what is Truth? - Oscar Wilde

For a beginner to understand the life of Mahatma Gandhi in totality would be a naive attempt, not because of the expansiveness of ideas but because grasping him would entail a serious engagement, an experiment with one's own life- a task of truthful inward engagement with oneself. Many have sought Gandhi, for he called himself as a 'Worshipper of truth' (Gandhi, p.20). The pursuit to unfold this great personality is like an endless hermeneutic which requires a constant need for a discourse.

This paper is a psychological attempt to understand the making of Gandhi into the man of Truth. Through this paper I seek to delve deeper into the Gandhi's soul force through his conception of Truth. It is the very quest of truth, following which Gandhi transcended the domain of private, personal and political realm and

acquired the eternal status of 'Mahatma'. His idealisation as the perfect paternal ego-ideal got established as a redeemer for the entire humanity. I would like to begin this paper by unfolding symbolic stature of Gandhi as a **Father** of a nation. From a psychoanalytic perspective, the imagination of Gandhi as a Father calls for a critical deliberation. It appears that if Gandhi was positioned as the father, and the nationals imagined themselves, in relation to him, as his children. This father-child imaginary will be explored by revealing its inherent politics of intimacy which indicates the nature of power the father exercised on the child.

Freud has clearly gauged the weighty import of father's psychic impression on the child. The father spearheads a symbolic order where the law and name of the father operates. The father imposes a law. Gandhi thus, presented a symbolic force and undoubtedly became an uncontested object of identification to the masses. Freud effectively states in *Civilization and its Discontents*, that, "I cannot

*Assistant Professor, O P Jindal University, Sonapat, India.

site any childish need that is as strong as the need for paternal protection”(1930, p. 10). He further writes, “To me the derivation of religious needs from the helplessness of the child and a longing for its father seems irrefutable” (ibid, p.10). In a chapter called, ‘An advance on Intellectuality’ in *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), Freud problematically proposes the supremacy of patriarchal order on society. Does Gandhi’s symbolic appeal confirm the patriarchal phallicity or does it reverse this patriarchal conception of father by subverting the masculine phallic order as Erikson remarks, “ Gandhi made himself representative of bisexuality in a combination of autocratic malehood and enveloping materialism” (Erikson, 1969, p. 26). The return to the maternal realm was considered to be a radical and fresh departure within Psychoanalysis, from phallic lack to maternal plenitude. This further facilitates an inquiry into the symbolic appeal of Gandhi as a father and the nature of his law.

The law of father operates through a function. Coming to the functions of a father from a psychoanalytic view, the symbolised function is invoked in the child’s mind, not only as a castrating source of threat and intimidation, but given the phylogenetic roots of the paternal function, it also represents a liberating force, one who takes the child out of maternal symbiosis” (Diamond, 2017, p.866). The father through his intervention, facilitates the child’s subjectivity by enhancing the ability to symbolize and by individuating the self. The paternal function serves a sort of symbolic castration. In the context of Gandhi, the methods of separation could be understood as that caused the separation of truth from untruth, of violence from non-violence.

Gandhi embodied and emulated his quest for the law of truth through his life-actions and the masses responded by introjecting his fatherly image to follow the same law of truth. Gandhi indeed represented a overly charge and idealized figure of authority with whom the masses largely identified themselves. Considering the nature of this authority, Zoja in ‘The Father Today’, writes, - “The finest aspects of the archetypal father, is putrefied within *his moral authority* and has little to do with his physical prowess” (Zoja, 2005, p. 239). Undoubtedly, Gandhi exercised a moral supremacy which enticed and seduced the masses. Therefore, it seems pertinent to point out that for Gandhi, this symbolic law that appealed to many masses was his quest for the law of Truth and Non - violence and both has morality as its underlying basis and function. Gandhi claims with remarkable conviction,

“ that morality is the basis of things, and truth is the substance of all morality” (p.45).

Henceforth, this paper attempts to establish an intimate and epistemic connection between the philosophy of Gandhi and Psychoanalysis. The paper seeks to understand *ethico-affective* connection between the ‘*truth methods*’ employed by Gandhi (Satyagraha) and psychoanalysis as a technique, both passionately devoted to the quest of conscious/unconscious truths. This paper, in its naivety, attempts to weave a symbiotic link or affinities between ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and Psychoanalysis on the conception of methods of truth. The paper, as an ode to Gandhi and his explorations of truth, will help us understand the oedipal and psychological characteristics underlying Gandhian values and its manifested power of greatest transformative potential.

Return to the Repressed

The unconscious imaginary of Gandhi as father still remains alive and his ideals are still held high but we need to enliven a fresh bond with this neglected father, for his ideas, despite gaining universal currency has been repressed. It requires a reopening of the canon called Gandhi. As McGowan (2014) states, psychoanalysis has a special contribution in the *Canon opening movement* (McGowan, 2014, p.15), in order to facilitate an encounter with the *repressed other*. Hence, an attempt to unveil requires a revisit and rediscovery.

From a psychoanalytic lens, rediscovery implies a prior loss or erasure. It means at some point of time, they must have been forgotten. This also connotes the existence of an unconscious attempt of denial at a cultural level and forgetting at collective level. (Ibid, p.8). Another aspect of it suggests an amnesia or even a nostalgia of the past- which is a product of a rupture of distant time where we seem to regain a lost connection to our very own past. In this context, it is the *loss of the paternal connection*, to somewhat lost or neglected father. Psychoanalytically speaking, this reveals the internal phenomenon of a missing a fatherly function. This project thus should be taken as to an attempt to reawaken our repressed desire to seek this distant father and his potent political tools.

This question is embedded in the larger problematic of relevance of Gandhian thought and philosophy in contemporary times. It seems of considerable

importance to me to invoke Gandhi at a time of human history where violations have gained a normative function. When Erik Erikson while attempting to write a psychohistory of Gandhi, asked a former prime minister and a Gandhian, Gulzari Lal Nanda the meaning of Non-violence, he replied with a deep pensiveness, "Nonviolence," "will be the weapon of choice wherever democracy itself has made issues so opaque and complex that a return to an utter simplicity of approach becomes mandatory" (Erikson, p.48). Through this paper, I also feel a deep urgency to return and revisit his lessons of truth imparted by our forgotten father and his law of truth (Satyagraha).

The psychological project will take Gandhi down the pedestal of a great soul so that we can throw a sensitive human light at him. If we continue to revere Gandhi in exalted terms, his symbolic capacity would lose its relevance for the ordinary people. This move to imagine and foreground the ordinariness in Gandhi does not erase the idealization of a heroic and epic Gandhi, but only humanises it to the core. Shoma Chaudhary calls this attempt as "scaling Gandhi differently, scaling him down to body and flesh".

TRUTH AND ITS METHODS

Gandhi interpreted life in terms of truth and non-violence, which are timeless ideals. Truth was certainly Gandhi's highest aim, as he imagined truth as God. Let us now investigate Gandhi's true voice. Sartre stated that "the only way to gauge the strength of affection is to undertake an action that confirms or characterises it" (Sartre, 1945 p.32). One can find this voice of truth in numerous facets of one's life, but the solution is Gandhi himself, through his acts, as his pursuit of truth represented a fundamental consistency.

"Truth became my sole objective" (p. 45) declared Gandhi and later even defined Truth as the God. He firmly believed that "devotion to truth is the sole reason for our existence and all are activities should be cantered in Truth". (Gandhi, 1924, p.443).

Using his life as a laboratory, he found universal truths. For him, truth was a daily fight to self-examine. Gandhi's method of truth was founded on Ahimsa, non-violence (Rao, 1990, p. 430). Gandhi's life was not divided. For Vohra (1993), Gandhi's thought is ever expanding, testing new sectors of our political, economic, cultural and spiritual lives on an anvil of truth and non-violence, establishing their indivisibility and

inter-connectedness. Gandhi discovered a concept of oneness behind seeming diversity in Nature, as did Gandhi (Vohra, 1993).

Psychoanalytic conception of Truth: Truth in psychoanalytic sense is explained through repression. Psychoanalysis seeks to understand the psycho-sexual and psycho-social aspects of truth about the human mind and existence. "As Sartre and Merleau Ponty have observed that sexuality itself is coextensive with existence, every experience has a sexual significance. (De Beauvoir, 1949, p.70). Sexuality here must not be understood in a reductionist pleasure oriented sense but rather as a boarder conception of Eros - anything that promotes and affirms the life force.

Psychoanalytic theory is finely immersed in clinical practice. The psychoanalytic couch is seen as a place to unveil inner truths and buried thoughts. The concept of truth is based on the comprehension of the hidden, because truth must be revealed. In The Repressive Hypothesis, Foucault contends that language subdued sex through prohibitions, muteness, silences, and censorship (Foucault, 1976). Analysis differs fundamentally and drastically from normal discourse. The other is what makes psychoanalysis valuable. Foucault writes, "On the subject of sex, silence became the rule" and "is it legitimate to ask as to why sex was always associated with sin and why do we burden ourselves with guilt" (ibid, p.3). Through an interrogation of psychoanalysis, he gives the purest expression to the notion that "the subject's truth is to be found through a discourse on his or her sexuality" (Forrester, 1990, p.297).

Like Gandhi's "The Story of My Experiments with Truth" and Freud's "The Interpretation of Dreams," both require a confrontation with infancy and sexuality. Childhood is the basic organising axis of mental activity, according to psychoanalysis, and all human-psychic phenomena may be traced back to early childhood events. For example, family is a major feature disclosed by psychoanalysis. Another transforming potential is suggested by psychoanalysis. Moreover, a child's imagination is strongly linked to parental items.

The goal is to comprehend Gandhi's oedipal dynamics in connection to his parents. A major psychic phenomenon of childhood, the Oedipus complex (Freud, 1924, p.419) remains unresolved and its psychic ramifications on the individual child remain unresolved.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, Erikson writes of Gandhi, “the way one resolves this complex might cause a guy to be either magnificent or neurotic” (p.62).

Let us explore, in Erikson’s term, the *‘forcefulness of Gandhi’s personality’* (p.19) through a oedipal inquiry. Erikson gives psychoanalytic insight into a man’s inner life as a composite of “the modern and the archaic, the logical and the non-rational, the proper and the passionate”.(p.25)

Now I will show some crucial threads from Gandhi’s boyhood memoirs. In analysing Gandhi’s reality, these examples will reveal Erikson’s psychological polarity landscape. Erikson’s research follows a developmental epigenetic theory that states that at each stage of life, “a strength is reintegrated into a larger ensemble Early childhood develops the “virtue” of hope, whereas childhood develops the “virtues” of purpose, initiative, and skill “. Erikson, p. To analyse his “greatness,” we must first imagine how a sequence of unique relationships were assigned, starting with his parents.

GANDHI’S OEDIPAL IDENTIFICATIONS

Gandhi writes, *“I was devoted to my parents. But no less I was devoted to the passions that flesh is heir to. I had yet to learn that all happiness and pleasure should be sacrificed in devoted service to my parents”* (p.22). Gandhi clearly recognises the twin truth which powerfully influences one’s life-parental influence and the carnal passions of the flesh. Both are truthfully confessed by him. With regard to the parents, Gandhi in his memoir of experiments recalls the story of *Shravana*, leaving a deep mark on him. *“Shravana carrying, by means of slings fitted for his shoulders, his blind parents on a pilgrimage”* (p.19), left, Gandhi says, the most *“indelible”* impression on him. Gandhi further remembers saying to himself *“Here is an example for you to copy, the agonized lament of the parents over Shravana’s death is still fresh in my memory. The melting tune moved me deeply, and I played it on a concertina which my father had purchased for me.”*(Gandhi, p.21). It is in this context, Erikson locates the oedipal strivings of the Gandhi

Born to a mother, when she was only twenty-five, Moniya (Gandhi), the youngest, shared a special exclusive bond with his mother. Gandhi’s mother is always described as an ideal housewife, *“the first one*

to rise and the last to go to bed,” eating only “when she could manage it,” (Erikson, p.58). Gandhi writes, *“The outstanding impression of my mother has left on my memory is that of saintliness. She was deeply religious. She would not take her meals without her daily prayers”* (Gandhi, p. 17). Erikson attributes the behaviour of the mother emulating the *‘ancient models whose conduct was strictly regulated’* (Erikson, 1969, p.58) And, indeed, Moniya seems to have internalised the deep religiosity, sacrificing temperament and a capacity to think of others before oneself. Gandhi further wrote-

“I was my mother’s pet child, first because I was the smallest of her children but also because there was nothing dearer to my heart than her service. Play had absolutely no fascination for me in preference to my mother’s service. Whenever she wanted me for anything, I ran to her.”

“No doubt being the last child of a young mother gave him a central place in the family and one conducive to “spoiling.” (Erikson, 1969, p.59). It was with his relationship with his mother and incessant devotion to her that moniya developed the capacity to insist on special relationships. It seems necessary to assume that Gandhi emerged from the love and care of his relationship with his mother as one an intense relationship with one person at a time, which manifested as, in Erikson’s words, *“relationship of service, nay, salvation of the other”*.(ibid, p.63). Gandhi’s affinity with his mothers confirms the Lacanian psychoanalytic insight that mother is truly the first other and in fact the unconscious is primarily the discourse of the mother.

Enveloped with maternal fusion, Gandhi seems to have cultivated the quality of forging one to one bond with others. This further indicates an inward relationship with oneself which made Gandhi project onto others where he seemed to have developed quality of *special* and unique relationship every other-objects. Erikson elucidates this by saying “While he always felt relatively isolated in groups, his was the most intense search for one-to-one relationships, until in South Africa he found a professional and political style of being one-to-one with a community—of followers” (Erikson, 1969, p.59).

This deep immersion with the mother and the need to always be there for her further suggests a clear identification with the mother’s needs. Erikson

effectively notices a complete identification with the maternal object-

“It is well known that many interpreters emphasize Putali Ba’s religious observance, if not obsession, and some insist on blaming her for Gandhi’s propensity for fasting at critical moments. Undoubtedly, all this contributed to the style of living later created by Gandhi in his ashram: a life of mutual observation and intricate discipline hard to grasp and harder to condone for the uninitiated. Gandhi had tried to erect a bulwark based on radical factualness, obsessive punctuality, and absolute responsibility—all within a meaningful flux which he called Truth”.(Erikson, 1969,p.26).

Gandhi’s expansive tolerant acceptance of every religion also stems from his mother’s myriad mix of traditional values of the Vaishnavite religion and the Jain culture which surrounded Moniya. Putali Bai belonged to a small sect which unified the Koran with the Hindu scriptures. Adding on to that- “vegetarianism and periodical fasting; cleanliness and purification; the making of confessions and the taking of vows; and above all: ahimsa, avoiding harm to living beings”(ibid, p.61) suggests an unconscious and conscious internalisation of the maternal values”. In fact, Erikson even traces the ontogenetic origin of sit-down mode of protest to moniya’s dissent to his mother when “He used to scatter the utensils of worship and to “write” on the floor. When his mother tried to forbid this, he (in Pyarelal’s words) “stoutly dissented,”(Erikson, 1969, p. 60).

Surrendering oneself completely in front of the superior maternal presence, Erikson suggests Moniya could never face the ‘natural superiority of women’ without a competitive attempt at becoming more maternal than the most motherly of mothers. (Erikson, 1969 p.61). If service to others or nursing was another passion of his life, then it all started when in his own unique ‘oedipal arrangement’, he became a mother to his father—a mother who always had time for him. (ibid, p. 61). When this boy appointed himself his father’s nurse, “there was a drive in it which later would suffice for the care of all India as well as of Untouchables and lepers, of mankind as well as of an ashram”.(ibid, p.61).

FUSION V/S SOLITUDE

Another landscape of Gandhi’s psyche, which Erikson identifies, in relation to the maternal realm, is

marked by a ‘dynamic polarity’ characterized by ‘fusion in the masses and utter solitude’, ‘the polarity of intense loco-motor activity and meditative stillness’. This overweening need and longing for fusion and isolation and its psychological underpinnings is attributed to “the diffusion of the mother in the joint family in which the mother is required to respond to all & belongs to the child only in fleeting moments”.(Erikson, 1969, p.25) The joint nature of the family, in which Gandhi was brought up, is held responsible in escaping the oedipal rivalry in full intensity as the presence of other objects led to transfer of affects onto other-objects. “The wider family permits a closeness making one always dependent, demanding yet seeking a fusion which affirms, confirms and fulfils”, exclaims Erikson. On the other side of fusion is the contemplative Gandhi in solitude. Romain Roland writes of him, “He feels at ease only in a minority, and is happiest when, in meditative solitude, he can listen to the “still small voice” within” (as cited in Erikson, p.4).

This sense of solitude can be attributed to his shyness, which also made him aversive to play during childhood. His mode of play was mainly to act as a peacemaker which “according to Pyarelal, became the passion of his life. In fact he would never play if he was not in the position of moral dominance”.(Erikson, 1969, p.60). Gandhi himself writes under the section ‘At the high school’ - “My shyness was one of the reason for my aloofness”(Gandhi, p.27); “I used to be very shy and avoided all company” (p.18). Moreover, Erikson brilliantly provides a psychoanalytic insight into this “deep recurring need to escape the multitude” where he finds Gandhi’s remarkable capacity for being alone, even in the crowd.

Psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott in the paper ‘Capacity to be Alone’ (1958) illuminates us through his conception of solitude, using the notion of *ego relatedness*. “Ego-relatedness means relationship between two people, one of whom at any rate is alone; perhaps both are alone, yet the presence of each is important to the other” (Winnicott, 1958, p. 30). The necessity of being alone reflects the presence and existence of a positive internalised object in the psychic reality of the individual. The good internal relationships are well enough to make an individual feel confident in utter solitude” (p. 31). Adam Philipp further calls this

psychic capacity as “*Fertile solitude*” and is regarded as a principal sign of emotional maturity which is not acquired by all individuals. The individual’s capacity to be alone, a capacity that develops throughout life, depends largely on the psychic tuning with the mother.

GANDHI’S GUILT

Gandhi’s honest revelations and confessions are full of “admission of having been possessed by irrational guilt, with the devils of shame and doubt, guilt and inferiority”.(p.59). While exploring the trajectories of affective dimensions in the life of Gandhi, the presence of *guilt* emerges as a dominant emotion with an overarching presence. One might pause to find the efficacy of guilt in the methods of truths employed by Gandhi. This affective core has been situated in the context of his relationship with father, his friend-Shiekh Mehtab and his child-wife. Unlike extreme idealization of the mother, Gandhi held an ambivalent attitude towards his father. Recognising his father’s tendency of being “*given to carnal pleasures, for he married for the fourth time when he was over forty*” (Gandhi, p.16), Gandhi has audaciously hinted at his own carnal strivings. Most of it occurred in the context of his attempt at transgressions such as meat eating, stealing or his visits to brothels, albeit in the company of his friend. One always finds a consistency of guilt through these confessions. Once he said to himself “*Though it is essential to eat meat, yet deceiving and lying to one’s father and mother is worse than not eating meat*” (p. 34).

Gandhi recalling his experiments, regarded numerous events as “*moral lapses*”(Gandhi, p.35), lurking with the insatiable carnal desires. He writes, “My friend once took me to a brothel. I went into the jaws of sin. I was almost struck blind and dumb in this den of vice”(Gandhi, p.35). Furthermore he writes, “*Man often succumbs to temptation, however he may resist it*”.(ibid.). Gandhi openly admits his sexual fervour in relation to his wife and its repentance actually made him consider women “as an incarnation to tolerance” (ibid, p.36). Although we find evasion of many fact, but Gandhi admits his repentance of actions which could have forced his wife to seek for separation.

His confession of remorse to his father about stealing highlighted the experience of guilt as a potentially redemptive feeling. An encounter that

changed him forever. The purest sort of repentance is a clean confession with a pledge never to commit a sin again, says Gandhi. This was an enduring Ahimsa lesson for him (p.39).

Perhaps one of the most critical and life transfiguring experience of Gandhi’s life is his reminiscence of ‘Double shame’ - both linked with his Oedipus guilt. Being divided between his ailing father and his wife who was expecting a baby, youthful Gandhi felt deep shame for not being able to restrain his carnal impulses. He writes, “*this carnal lust got the better of what I regarded as my duty to my parents. Every night while my hands were busy massaging my father’s legs, my mind was hovering about the bedroom*” (p.40). Further on he blames himself for not being present while his father was dying, “if animal passion had not blinded me, I should have been spared the torture of separation from my father during his last moments. (p.41). Gandhi refers to it as a “*blot never been able to efface or forget*” due to “*moment in the grip of lust*” (p.41). Finally wholeheartedly admitting, “It took me long to get free from the shackles of lust, and had to pass through many ordeals before I could overcome it (ibid, p.41).

The “feminine” service to his father could be interpreted as to deny the boyish wish to replace the (aging) father in the possession of the (young) mother and the youthful intention to outdo him as a leader in later life. Thus” the pattern would be set for a style of leadership which can defeat a superior adversary only non-violently and with the express intent of saving him as well. (Erikson, 1969,p.70). Erikson views this episode of nursing care of the father also hints at Gandhi’s repentance for how he might have unconsciously felt for his father. “*For this was this a parable in which the son not only atones for his own sins, but also forgives the father for his too?*”*By forcing his son into an early marriage, his father had in a significant way upset Gandhi’s sexuality, by omission or commission, became permanently marred by what to him was juvenile excess, depleting his power of spiritual concentration.*”(Erikson, 1969,p.66).

It is also possible to deduce Gandhi’s guilt from a fundamental lens that Psychoanalysis defines as the son’s unconscious intention for patricide. It is given a high degree of universality, which is central to oedipal occurrences. Instinctively, the wish leads to the dream of the father’s death, which in turn leads to the fear of

80/ The Courage of Truth: Psychoanalytic Resonances....

the father and its destruction. This is the castration-complex. There was also the boy's love and respect for his father. "The boy's battle between the parts of himself that hated and wanted to destroy his father and the parts that loved him involved him in a sense of guilt." Winnicott, p. Guilt implied that the boy could withstand and hold the inherent conflict of healthy life.

In 'Character types encountered in psychoanalytic work' III (1914-1916), Freud writes, "*The results of analytic work regularly leads us to the conclusion that sense of guilt is derived from the Oedipus complex and is a reaction to those two great criminal intensions, killing the father and engaging in sexual intercourse with the mother. It is important to remind ourselves that parricide and mother-incest are two great human crimes, the only that primitive societies persecute and abhor; also how close other investigations have led us to the assumption that humanity has acquired its conscience, which now gives the impression of being an inherited spiritual force, by the way of the Oedipus complex.*" (p. 347).

Erikson acknowledges the ontogenic guilt of all brilliant men. Such men, he claims, confront the existential scourge that befalls all humanity. Men who can process shame have the ability to channel it into a powerful source of passion and energy. In Erikson's Gandhi context, "a young man consumed with guilt and purity, and a failure in the world's ways, had exceptional abilities of observation and determination. So he grows up almost obligated, guilt-ridden, to surpass and generate value at all costs" (Erikson, 1969, p.70).

Erikson claims Gandhi's fixation with sensual desire morphed into "some vindictiveness, especially toward women as the temptress, which drove him insist on total chastity for leaders in nonviolence". (Erikson, 1969) Later, the Gandhi ashram model would be found as a community where inmates could only relate as brothers and sisters. According to Erikson, phallicism is sublimated either through a highly provocative and assertive nonviolent attitude, or by a regressive concentration on the removing quality of phallus - an obsession with cleanliness (p.67).

POSSIBILITY OF RECONCILIATION

Is there a possibility of reconciling Gandhi and Freud in their understanding of human nature. Perhaps the link which joins the two of them is *the centrality of the other in the construction of our experience*

linked through the affect of guilt. Gandhi and psychoanalytic conception of truth gets mediated by the capacity to contain the otherness in oneself and to capacity to tolerate the otherness in others. There we find a moral basis of truth, perpetually linked to the other. The view of the moral sense, in relation to truth is of considerable philosophical interest here. Gandhi never claimed any ultimate finality on his conclusion on truth. But at the same time he found that, "Truth... is what the voice within me tells me" (Rao, 1990). For Gandhi, Akeel Bilgrami throws light, truth is exclusively a moral notion. In fact truth in the first place is not, for Gandhi, a notion independent of our own experience of moral value. (Bilgrami, 2003).

Truth thereby loses its cognitive value and can only be premised upon experiential or moral value. It is the voice of a conscience that entails it. Just like a psychoanalytic practice requires a consistency in its analytic exercise, a practice which demands a commitment to the inquiry of truth, Gandhian method of truth requires this consistency in its pursuit. The methods that the satyagrah is employ while walking on the path of truth. Bilgrami interprets Gandhian mode of being a 'Satyagrahis' as non-violent activists -as a personification of being a moral exemplar, which an indomitable life commitment to non-violence (Bilgrami, 2003), meaning non- violation of the other.

Can we entirely be free of violence, or so to speak, this tendency to violate others, from our hearts? Violence as discussed before is defined in a very moral sense. Can we become entirely uprightly moral, free from any dust of malice?

Freud attempted to comprehend and appreciate both the positive and negative aspects in the human psyche. Similarly, Gandhi taught humanity to contain, constrain, or fight harmful forces, while nurturing good powers, which he called Truth Force. Erikson (1969) For example, Gandhi's fasting approach, "was only to curb animal lust if done with self-control. Fasting is useless without a constant desire for self-control" (p.311).

A collective activity, for example, might readily escape or deny guilt, according to Freud. (Segal, 2002) Thanks to Gandhi's truth methods, we can release our repressions and reveal the truth of guilt, which can actually predisposition our psychological capacity towards non-violation. Gandhi demanded total personal accountability and made it a requirement of Satyagraha

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