

ORAWORLDMANDALA

A Practice for Ahimsa
through the ArtScience of Mandala



SONIA BAZZEATO DEOTTO

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Sonia Bazzoato Deotto

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Foreword—Mexico

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EDITOR'S NOTE

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Our deepest gratitude goes to our beloved elders
His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama and
the Wixárika *Marakame* Dionisio Manukaweiwa de la Rosa Cosío
who inspired us to seek and pursue a new approach for social transformation.



Sol, energía, luz armónica

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EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE

My love and gratitude to the part of the planet we call India and to my alma mater, Gujarat Vidyapith (the university founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920), for giving me the opportunity to live, experiment and mature the OraWorldMandala.

I would like to thank our present Honourable Chancellor, Ela Ramesh Bhatt, who has consistently encouraged publication of this manual, giving me her affectionate blessing and inspiration ever since I joined the university. With the same respect I would like to remember the wisdom and discipline of preceding Chancellors Ravindra Varma, who, with patience and acuity, introduced me to the Gandhian dimension, and Narayan Desai, who taught me, among many other things, the firmness of the heart by accepting self while at the same time questioning self. My sincere acknowledgements also go to the past and current members of Gujarat Vidyapith Mandal (Trust) who have allowed me to stay and serve the university up to the present day. Special mention must be given to the Trustee Radha Bhatt, with whom I had the fortune to share the experiment for periods of time and learn from her. In this perspective of space and time, my deep appreciation also goes to former Vice-Chancellor Sudarshan Iyengar, who has guided me in the research-action approach. His sustained support to the development and systematisation of the OraWorldMandala was crucial in bringing the manual into concrete shape. Arun Dave, former Vice-Chancellor, also offered a brief yet supportive role.

My very hearty vote of thanks and gratitude go to the present Vice-Chancellor, Anamik Shah, for his substantial support of the turning-point generated by this publication and his perspectives of spreading Ahimsa all over the world; to Registrar Rajendra Khimani, who has accompanied the course of this process in its entirety and spurred its evolution to present; to the Peace Research Centre, where the project has been housed; to the former heads Sadhana Vora and Pushpa Motiyani and the present, Premanand Mishra, as well as to my former and present teaching and non-teaching colleagues. I must also give special appreciation to my advisers Prakash Shah, Kanubhai Nayak and Namrata Bali and to my constant interlocutors Manda Parikh, Purnima Mehta, Nimisha Shukla, Ajay Parikh, Hemant Bhavsar, Aalap Brahmhatt, Ashwin Chauhan, Margie Sastry, and Trupti Adesara. My esteem similarly extends to all the friends, students and colleagues who have been an integral part of my life during these years, and to the tireless and erudite researcher Dina Patel, who, thanks to her dedication to the recovery of the original edition of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (KS edition—1956-1994), allows us to access solid sources about the life and the legacy of the Mahatma.

In addition, recognition of and profound sentiment towards the part of the planet we call Mexico for having warmly welcomed this experiment as manifested by the many institutions, organisations, communities and people participating in the OraWorldMandala development. Specifically, regarding this publication, I would like

to offer my thanks to the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico (IPN), particularly to Xicoténcatl Martínez Ruiz, director of the scientific journal *Innovación Educativa* of the Editorial Department, Academics Office. His contagious enthusiasm in spreading to youngsters the power of peace and nonviolence is an example for us all. But, it is equally important to mention the Colegio de San Luis (Colsan) and its current President, David Vázquez, a firm supporter of this venture, and former President María Isabel Monroy, for her solidarity and involvement. The contribution of Juan Carlos Ruiz Guadalajara, director of the Biblioteca Gandhi (Gandhi Library) project, has without a doubt been fundamental to the diffusion and implementation of Gandhian values and principles.

I must express my deep admiration and gratitude to master photographer Raghu Rai and to his Raghu Rai Foundation for Art and Photography. He and his institution have supported the OraWorldMandala since its inception and even now after years of encouragement, Raghu Rai has offered his aesthetic insight to ensure the artistic development of this manual.

My profound affection and admiration to two of the main pillars of the OraWorldMandala: Beba Stoppani, who has supported with unconditional love this experiment from its initial phase up to today with her most recent idea of La Gandhiana Editions publishing project, and Mauricio Sañudo, who generously sustains the implementation of this peace process among Mexican youth through hope and trust.

I am deeply indebted to a great number of other people who have offered their support, friendship, time and energy to this journey of peace. They contributed to my endeavour in many different ways: opening their homes and involving their institutions, sharing their knowledge and skills, often clarifying my doubts and expanding the limits of my understanding, making many useful suggestions and at times even extending financial support. To say that without them OraWorldMandala would not exist is an understatement, which is why I consider them co-authors of this manual. To allow for a smoother flow of the text, I have included their names in the Author's Note found in the closing pages of this manual.

FOREWORD—INDIA

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

*Om Puurnnam-Adah Puurnnam-Idam Puurnnaat-Purnnam-Udacyate
Puurnnasya Puurnnam-Aadaaya Puurnnam-Eva-Avashissyate ||
Om Shaantih Shaantih Shaantih ||*

The above is the opening verse of the Ishavasya Upanishad, a concise wisdom guide. It conveys the following:

That is complete, this is complete.

From the completeness comes the completeness.

If completeness is taken away from completeness, only completeness remains.¹

The word *whole* is also used, instead of *complete*, and conveys the same meaning. The completeness is also referred to as “nothingless”—*shunya*. In terms of divine consciousness in and beyond the universe, it is whole, complete and nothing.²

There are several commentaries that analyse and explain *adha* and *idam* suffixed to *poorna*.³ I don’t intend to get into details but would like to state that perhaps it is from this verse that the concept of Mandala—circle—came into light. The author of the manual explains that the concept of Mandala, or circle, is present in art, science, religion, ethics, spirituality and therefore becomes a significant symbol that has the potential to integrate the thought of interdependence, reciprocity and oneness. The author, a social artist, inspired by her meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama has learned and internalised the significance of Mandala, which is central in Buddhism.

Mandala is used in Buddhism as a symbolic offering of the entire universe at different levels. It is an instrument

1. The Ishavasya Upanishad (also referred to as the Isha Upanishad) is one of the most important Sanskrit texts containing some of the central philosophical pillars of ancient Indian wisdom.

2. The Sufi saint Kabir, who integrated into his teachings visions from different religions, referred to this concept of completeness as a path to renunciation of the self in search of nothingless.

3. The Sanskrit words *adha*, *idam* and *poorna* mean “that”, “this” and “complete”, respectively.

for gaining wisdom and compassion, generally depicted as a tightly balanced and geometric composition wherein deities reside. The principal deity is housed in the centre. The Mandala guides individuals along the path to enlightenment.

For the artist in Sonia Deotto, Mandala was a bridge connecting art, science, religion, ethics and spirituality. Her quest has been peace and harmony with self, with the world and ultimately the cosmos. In 2004, she first learned about Ahimsa, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama suggested introducing Ahimsa in the Mandala paradigm, thus the project of “Ahimsa through ArtScience” was born. She conceptualised the OraWorldMandala, the seed of a worldwide movement that would connect, communicate and strive for peace and harmony among humanity and the entire creation. She writes:

Human beings are interconnected with one another and with the Earth through five elements that manifest in many ways, from the space and air that we share to the plants and animals that are part of the life cycle. Exploring the art and science of a World Mandala could be a way to express this interdependence.

The author explains that *Ora* is drawn from the intention to communicate. *World* indicates the existence and movement of five elements with a “unitary vision of reality (uni-verse), macro and micro, beyond the dichotomy of centre and periphery, stasis and movement, being and becoming”, which is ‘Mandala’.

The methodology of OraWorldMandala is mandalic. The principal deity housed in the centre is Ahimsa, a practical expression of universal love and compassion. It would be encircled by peace and harmony among all living and nonliving beings. M. K. Gandhi’s Constructive Programme has served as the guide to draw circles in the periphery at various levels. Universal harmony reflected by “unity in diversity” is the core effort. Constructive programmes developed by “constructors of Ahimsa” in different parts of the world are visualised in periphery, forming Mandalas. One viewpoint explains it as the inner *poorna* encircled by increasingly larger *poornas*. The micro *poorna* is core; experimentations around the world lead to macro *poorna*.

The action research project conceived by the author was based at the Peace Research Centre, Gujarat Vidyapith, the university founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920.⁴ This rich manual is a guide and also

a document that contains a detailed account of the evolution of the participatory action research, its implementation in India and Mexico, and the Proposed Method that emerged through its application.

The action began in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, where not long before Hindu-Muslim riots had devastated the social fabric of communities. The manual explains how the action researcher conducted creative experiments with different religious communities in the city and shared with them a common platform. The first experiment marks the basis of the Proposed Method, which is the second part of this manual.

Mexico has been identified as the other side of India. The image again is of Mandala: travelling circularly on the globe from India, one would reach a location in Mexico and trace, like the Wixárika *Marakame* Dionisio de la Rosa Cosío with the people of Ahmedabad, an “imaginary line uniting the two opposites”. The Mexico action programmes, developed on the basis of the Ahmedabad experiments, are discussed in the manual. These experiments may inspire others to connect with the Mandala paradigm for world peace and harmony. The peace process takes note of the injury that has struck the planet Earth. The healing is proposed to be brought by Mahatma Gandhi’s Ahimsa. In the author’s words,

This process of raising consciousness and re-humanisation represents the transformative engine for a Mandala of Ahimsa, a dynamic Mandala built on the foundation of action.

The second part of the manual describes in fair detail the steps to move towards forming the Mandala of Ahimsa. The manual suggests that Ahimsa is for Sarvodaya, the upliftment of all. With the consciousness of interdependence of the five elements that compose the universe, the constructor of Ahimsa moves towards Sarvodaya through constructive programmes to implement a cohesive mandalic force.

The next peripheral Mandala involves mapping of Sarvodaya actions in the world. Finally, the Mandala of communication that would connect all is visualised. This is the *poorna idam* that integrates with *poorna adha*. Universal love and compassion encircle the Mandala with the Ahimsa consciousness at its core.

Careful study of the manual is necessary to comprehend the Ahimsa practice at the individual and collective levels, to appreciate the concept and the effort in achieving creative peace and harmony.

Sudarshan Iyengar
Former Vice-Chancellor
Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

4. Gujarat Vidyapith was founded in 1920 by Mahatma Gandhi without a government charter. Presently it is recognised as a “deemed to be” university by the University Grants Commission, a post-Independence government body for Institutions of higher learning. For more details, kindly visit www.gujaratvidyapith.org.

FOREWORD—MEXICO

*“I have nothing new to teach the world.
Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills”.*
—Mohandas K. Gandhi¹

The yearning to live in a nonviolent society is, at the same time, a desire for justice, freedom and truth, a desire that pierces through us and makes us worthy of the sky that shelters us. It also implies the absence of fear and the constant renewal of courage. Yearning and courage are the impulse behind the willingness to practise nonviolence. Both the *satyagrahi*, who makes truth his or her force, and the poet or the ascetic move through a fluctuation of trials and doubts that allow them to understand, practise and train themselves in the methods of nonviolence. Gandhi had a clear idea of this experience and expressed it in *All Men Are Brothers*: “Training in non-violence is thus diametrically opposed to training in violence. Violence is needed for the protection of external things, non-violence is needed for the protection of the *Atma*, for the protection of one’s honour”.²

Atman is a Sanskrit term that means soul, being, essence, individual being; it is also translated as the intimate nature of something. In these diverse meanings the existence of reflective consciousness is implied. The practices of nonviolence protect our essence, our being, our *atman*. According to classical Indian philosophy—expressed in texts such as the *Upanishads*—within the *atman* lies truth, the state of freedom, a full consciousness that we desire, and therein lies the undivided nature that gives life to this universe. The *atman* is pure being, and therefore, it is confirmed in the non-dualistic tradition of India that therein lies the truth. Realising this is the experience of freedom. The vital search for truth and liberty stimulates the capacity to maintain the yearning, the strength, the resistance and an impeccable nobility for nonviolence, *Ahimsa*. It is this impeccable nobility, one of the aromas of truth, that underlies the participatory will of those who make a *Mandala*, an interconnected wheel, or rather, a wheel of wills that are interconnected by a single purpose: peace.

Yearning repeatedly feeds the search for peace and justice. The unmistakable experience of searching, travelling paths, making pilgrimages, allows us to enter into a horizon, translucent in its nobility, where the human experiences of work for participatory nonviolence converge. In this space, where these experiences come together, the fragmentation that gives rise to violence dissolves. It is here where those who make nonviolence their life constantly re-create themselves, dissipating this fragmentation. What is then revealed is the integral unity of

1. From *All Men Are Brothers. Life and Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi*, compiled and edited by Krishna Kripalani, p. iii.

2. *All Men Are Brothers. Life and Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi*, compiled and edited by Krishna Kripalani, p. 140.

reality, the essential principle and meaning of the *Mandala* and of *Ahimsa*. Thus, who immerses him- or herself in *Ahimsa* knows that nonviolence is made of silence, impregnated by the aroma of truth. In this way, the unity of existence gradually becomes clear and unmistakable. The state of unity is also characteristic of the *atman* and the understanding of those who work for nonviolence. Even a glimpse of the *atman* reveals to us—amid the sophisticated slavery and violence of these times—the signs of freedom, of justice, signs that suddenly bring to light an experience that is becoming sharper, clearer, unquestionable, full: the memory of truth that already lives within us. The *satyagrahi* is thus a witness of these glimpses of latent truth and freedom.

Suddenly, experiencing truth and maintaining its force not only reveal the purpose of human experience, but its effects are the impulse behind the practices of *Ahimsa* and peaceful resistance. The experience is clear: there is no promised *Ahimsa*, only practised *Ahimsa*. In this way, the experience of working for nonviolence in environments of violence requires a method that continuously guides us. Greek philosophical thought called this *odos*, “method”. Indian tradition referred to this idea using several terms, such as the Sanskrit, *marga*, or “path”, as well as *paddhati*, or “method”. The roads or paths towards truth and freedom are many, just like the methods used to construct nonviolent societies. Moving along these paths requires a method infused with the force of truth, relevant to contemporary societies. This underscores the importance of the method that creatively guides the lives of those who assume the role of constructors of *Ahimsa*.

If there are several paths to practise nonviolence, then it is the presence of a method that rests upon the force of truth—*Satyagraha*—which helps us not get lost or surrender in the social, mental and political manifestation of *Ahimsa*. Here lies a simple reason: the method is discipline. *Satyagraha* requires an impeccable, demanding, perfected discipline, and at the same time, this discipline leads us to the experience of freedom. Therefore, *ORAWORLDMANDALA. A Practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala* is a book containing the method for the practice of *Ahimsa* in our time. This method is expressed not as a treatise but in an artistic way, stimulated by the rhythms and pauses of art: rhythms that capture the beauty of a life offered up to nonviolence. Through its practical focus, this publication breaks with the condition of something to be stored away, like an object: it becomes a manual for life. Dictated by the rhythms of the heart, by the full experience of silence and aesthetic pleasure, its words, images and evocations capture the sounds of the Earth, of the full stillness of peace, and construct a *Mandala*, one impregnated with the exemplary actions of a human being like Gandhi. This aroma fills the path and the method so that others may re-create the force of truth, an aroma so powerful that it can construct a nonviolent society.

The voice and gaze of Sonia Deotto fills the pages of this manual like an echo, and these echoes will be etched into the purest corners of the heart of those who desire truth, who pass through these pages and, at their own pace, make nonviolence a way of life in this world. *ORAWORLDMANDALA. A Practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala*, by Sonia Deotto, does not become reduced to a personal written work that embodies the principle of

individuality and egoism; it transcends this condition. This book frees the author, who has realised that creative work does not bind, it does not enslave, because it expands like a project for humanity, a collective manual for all. Through the collectivity of wills, it reclaims a way to communicate to the reader of today wisdom as old as the mountains, as Gandhi said.

Underlying Sonia Deotto’s book is intention, *sankalpa*, which expresses the freedom and will of those who have desired a culture of peace and cultivated *Ahimsa* through their example. The reader of today and the days to come will wander through the pulsing brilliance of words and images and then hear what hope is whispering between the lines: we desire and will attain, through the practice of *Ahimsa*, the freedom that is already within us.

Xicoténcatl Martínez Ruiz
National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico

NOTE TO THE READER

This manual was conceived as a practical guide for those who are searching for an overview of the theme of peace and nonviolence and strive to translate its knowledge into action, thus, transforming it into wisdom.

Those who wish to conduct an in-depth analysis of the topics examined herewith may consult the footnotes, Bibliography and Recommended References, which contain valuable sources and comments.

To promote a synergistic understanding of both the theoretical and practical aspects, concepts, inputs and ideas are complemented by visual elements such as images, drawings and illustrations, allowing for the formulation of co-creative projects designed to serve a common call for world peace.

The text occasionally includes terms derived from Sanskrit or words characterised by specific cultural, sociological or historical connotations and are explained on first use. The recurring leitmotif of the manual is that of Ahimsa and as such merits further immediate clarification. *Nonviolence* is the word used by Mahatma Gandhi to express in English the concept of Ahimsa (translated as “absence of violence”, from the Sanskrit *Himsa*, “injury” and *A*, denoting “the opposite of”). At present, the translation of Ahimsa as “nonviolence” is gaining currency as a more precise interpretation of the Sanskrit word’s original meaning.¹ This manual embraces this interpretation in its use of the terms *nonviolence* and *nonviolent* and in reference to the nonviolent movement of today.

For ease of the general reader and user, the words in Sanskrit that appear in this manual do not include the diacritical marks and equivalents conventionally used. As we employ the same typography throughout the text, transliteration reflects common usage in English.

Given the nature of the subject and its goals, the text is laden with references to institutions, reinforcing connections, affinities and collaboration. The reader may note that sometimes the name of one institution has been translated into English, whereas that of another has not. Treatment has been handled on an individual basis, mainly to make the text reader-friendly, that is, to simplify and smoothen the text’s reading without obligating the reader to stumble

1. Peacemaker Pancho Ramos Stierle offers a contemporary attempt to capture the original meaning: “Ahimsa is not only the absence of violence, it is not simply the negation to cause harm, but it is something infinitely more: it is when one’s heart is so full of love, so full of courage, forgiveness, generosity, kindness and compassion, that there is no room for hatred, resentment and violence. It is not a double negative but a SUPERLATIVE POSITIVE! Nonviolence is a call to disobey inhumane laws, treaties and institutions; it is a call to obey the law of love; it is a call to not control anger (if it arises) but to express it under discipline for maximum effects; it is a positive force; it is love in action; it is the thoughts we have, the words we use, the things we do, the cloths [sic] we wear, the food we eat... it is a way of life!” (Earthling Opinion blog: <https://earthlingopinion.wordpress.com/ahimsa-anarchy/>).

over unfamiliar words and names in an assortment of languages followed by their translation into English and abbreviations. Hence, the reader may find references to the Gujarat Vidyapith University and the Colegio de San Luis in the same sentence as the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico, the latter being a complete translation of the entity’s name in Spanish. The rendering an institution’s name in translation or its native language indicates no preference or lack thereof, but rather a concern for clear and concise communication.

Finally, as part of a broader effort to expand our horizons by practising the ancestral knowledge of Ahimsa, I have opted to avoid standard geopolitical conventions when referring to nations on Earth. My intention is to reference a location without separating it from the whole, recognising it instead as part of the same organism. Therefore, I make reference to the part of the planet we call India, for example, and so on. As a visual marker of this concept and to avoid redundant language, this type of geographical reference is rendered as (●*)—the planet with a star next to it (the Sun in the distance)—followed by the country on Earth that I am mentioning (example: ●*India). This practice has not been applied to citations as they are the words of other writers and speakers.

Like any reader, you will take what you find helpful and perhaps set aside what you do not. I ask only that you allow yourself the opportunity to feel the beauty of how Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala is woven into our lives...

INTRODUCTION

Nearly two decades ago, I began to explore different dimensions of the archetypal cognisance of the Mandala.² After some six years, I came to the conviction that this knowledge should find empirical application and have dedicated the years following to engaging in a participatory experiment based on the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi.³

Gujarat Vidyapith, founded by the Mahatma in 1920, recently entrusted me with the task of writing a manual to share the basics of this experimental methodology emerging from the above process. I was therefore inspired to step back and reflect on the different stages of that Truth-seeking journey in order to present a draft manual.

The structure of the manual is simple. It is divided in two parts. The first describes the history of the OraWorldMandala, step by step, and how its development prefigures a possible methodology. The second part seeks to systematise it for the purpose of training.

Every part of this manual attempts to interpret the shared commitment for Truth and Ahimsa expressed along the way through individual and collective participation in the spirit of compassion, solidarity, hope and enthusiasm.

In this age of disenchantment, the search for Truth might be considered a romantic, outdated pursuit, but we believe that this pursuit is the essential ingredient that makes the invisible visible. Thus, may the transformative power of love manifest as respect for all forms of life and deliver our hearts back to the ultimate truth of Ahimsa.

In the vast scenario of human aspirations, this proposal represents a possible step in the direction of awakening. Through the creative power of intention for the upliftment of all, we may each contribute our own talents to rebuild collectively a harmonious society. There is no single recipe for peace and nonviolence.

.....

2. The archetypal cognisance of the Mandala will be progressively deepened throughout the chapters of this manual. Immediately, however, attention may be directed to two key texts that bridge Eastern wisdom and Western knowledge through a mandalic frame of reference: *The Secret of the Golden Flower. A Chinese Book of Life*, a Taoist alchemic manuscript translated and explained by Richard Wilhelm, with commentary by C. G. Jung (first published as *Das Geheimnis der Goldenen Blüte*, 1929), and Giuseppe Tucci's *The Theory and Practice of the Mandala, with Special Reference to the Modern Psychology of the Unconscious* (first published as *Teoria e pratica del mandala, con particolare riguardo alla moderna psicologia del profondo*, 1949).

3. Mohandas K. Gandhi's book *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place* is a foundational reference for this manual, as will become evident with further reading.

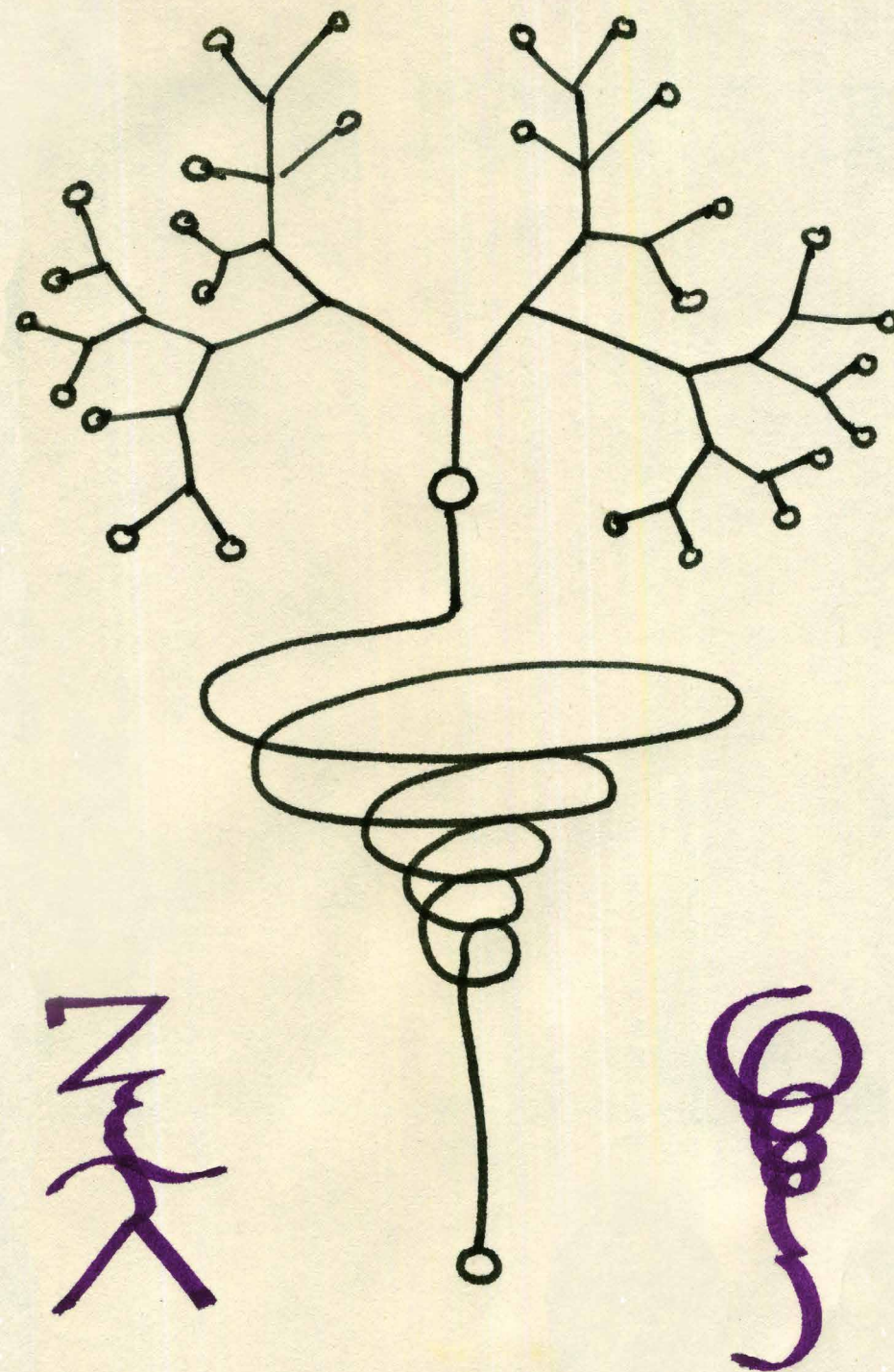


STEP-BY-STEP HISTORY OF ORAWORLDMANDALA

Chancellor M. K. Gandhi during Gujarat Vidyapith's VII Convocation, January 15, 1929.⁴

The motto of Gujarat Vidyapith is "Knowledge is that which liberates".

4. M. K. Gandhi was Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith from 1920 until his death in 1948.



The Matrix—A Mandala of Universal Love and Compassion

At the end of 1999, His Holiness the Dalai Lama was invited to visit Italy on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of his Nobel Peace Prize. As part of the welcome programme and because of my previous experience with Tibetan art in Venice,⁵ I was asked to design an art event in the city of Milan. This request resulted in the creation of a three-dimensional Mandala art installation, which was in keeping with the Tibetan tradition of offering a Mandala to a spiritual master as a mark of respect. This Mandala as art installation would eventually become the matrix of the OraWorldMandala.

The notion of Mandala⁶ is manifest in the vision of many ancient civilisations, where external reality is perceived as a reflection of human consciousness in a relationship of dynamic interdependence through which knowledge and empathy unite to generate the intention to act. The Mandala manifests the resonance that emerges when elements and forces are in balance with one another: juxtaposed geometrical forms that portray the squaring of the circle.

The space chosen for the Milan event was the Rotonda della Besana museum, selected specifically for its circular architectural characteristics, which provided an ideal receptacle for the mandalic installation. Per tradition, the Mandala depicted the elements of earth, water, fire and air. The fifth element of space, at the centre, would mark the site to receive the XIV Dalai Lama, spiritual leader regarded as the human embodiment of Avalokiteshvara, the Bodhisattva of Universal Love and Compassion (in Tibetan, *Chenrezig*). And love was indeed the driving force of the people from different continents who cooperated to overcome obstacles and accomplish the Mandala.⁷

This foundational Mandala led me into the labyrinths of a cosmic architecture of elements and forces that through its artistic and scientific approach incorporates the ethos of “cooperation versus competition” and that today defines the steps of the Proposed Method.

5. L'ASIA, *Tibet. Oltre la leggenda. Civiltà ed arte dal XII al XX secolo* (Tibet, beyond the legend. Civilisation and art from XII to XX centuries; exhibition catalogue), 1998.

6. For a synthetic description of the Mandala, see *Dictionary of Symbols* by Juan Eduardo Cirlot, pages 199-203.

7. For more details on the creation of the art installation, see Sonia Bazziato Deotto's book, *Tibet, Arte e spiritualità. Un contributo alla storia dell'uomo* (Tibet, art and spirituality. A contribution to humankind).

The Participatory Research Wheel— Rediscovering the World Mandala

The principles of dialogue and cooperation continued to inform the subsequent step, a process of participatory research.

The field research began in **○***India, the place of origin of the Mandala concept, auspiciously on the eve of the new millennium. Encouraged by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, I started to investigate the roots of the Mandala notion with seekers of the main religions practised in **○***India: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism.⁸ Multiple correlations and analogies on the subject reveal the universality of this archetypal engine of peace and harmony. The perception of combined structures encircling a unifying centre, ultimate abode of eternity, is common among different religions and cultures all over the world. However, regrettably, the premise of interdependence is often overlooked. For this reason the Mandala theme has been a common denominator for dialogue during the entire course of the research and a tool for its application.

During this period, the Tibetan Centre for Advanced Studies Amnye Machen Institute (Dharamsala) helped me engage in a dialogue with Tibetan artists from all disciplines (theatre, photography, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc.) so as to explore the notion of Mandala from a contemporary perspective. This new frame of reference led me in turn to involve in the process people of different backgrounds, such as researchers, lawyers, scientists, managers, producers, economists and other specialists, as well as people and friends from other walks of life. Thanks to them the research became participatory and opened up new perspectives of pluralism and systematic exchange with other realities of the world. Actually, a major contribution came from anonymous people encountered in remote or marginalised areas or simply on the road. As I shared with them the Mandala vision, their reactions and comments unveiled a deep understanding of the human condition. I treasure this “wisdom of the road” as the hub of the participatory research wheel.

Later, in 2001, I was invited to Sicily to create, for the Museum-Hotel Atelier sul Mare (Castel di Tusa, Messina), a Mandala of the elements in a fortunate synergy with the same island that gave birth to the Greek-Sicilian philosopher Empedocles of Acragas (Agrigento). Empedocles first propounded the theory of the four elements in the Western world, perhaps inspired by the powerful display of the elements on the island and its volcano.⁹ The

8. For an overview of the religions of **○***India, see Roshen Dalal’s *The Religions of India. A Concise Guide to Nine Major Faiths*, and for more details on their ethno-historical aspects, please explore *India’s Religions. Perspectives from Sociology and History*, edited by T. N. Madan.

9. See the chapter “Empedocles of Acragas”, pages 280-321, in *The Presocratic Philosophers*, second edition, by G. S. Kirk, J. E. Raven and M. Schofield.

correlation with the Eastern theory of five elements¹⁰ testifies to the universality of the Mandala archetype and clearly indicates its being neither a new view nor a new philosophy, but rather an opportunity to re-awaken the interdependence that already is.

Human beings are interconnected with one another and with the Earth through five elements that manifest in many ways, from the space and air that we share to the plants and animals that are part of the life cycle. Exploring the art and science of a “World Mandala” could be a way to express this interdependence.¹¹

In becoming aware of the mandalic dimension of our collective existence we realise that we are the actors of its making and its destruction. This is the theatre of human responsibility.

The first inspirations to pursue the concrete integration of art and science in a unified mandalic dimension came from Jean-Jacques Lemêtre (musician-composer of Théâtre du Soleil—Paris) and his collaborative efforts (2001-2002) with the Fiumara d’Arte Foundation (Sicily), Ergolab of the Paris VIII University (Paris) and the Société des Arts Technologiques/Society for Arts and Technology (SAT, Montreal), together with several creative endeavours ranging from experimental music and intercultural community theatre to hyper-media communication and art technology. These interactions prefigured the co-scripting of a Cyber Opera,¹² bringing together individuals and groups from the planet’s different cultures into a unified “human continent”, performed in Sicily and broadcasted online. Soon we realized the real script was already being written everyday by the human continent. What was missing, however, was awareness of this reality in order to change the script of our life and be actors of a world participatory theatre based on “unity in diversity”.¹³ The recovery of this awareness is what we call “regeneration of consciousness”. It was in the recognition of this universality that the need to reconnect with the vision of the planet as a World Mandala became evident. The womb of consciousness was the womb of space, and in it was glowing the blue sphere of Earth. There, on the Tropic of Cancer was **○***India, our starting point. Opening our arms to embrace the planet, we found **○***Mexico on the other side of this invisible circle.

10. The intuitive supposition that reality manifests from a small number of elemental components occurred in ancient times to both Eastern (Hindu Agamas and Buddhist Tantras) and Western (starting with Empedocles) thinkers. However, Eastern thought posits the fifth element of space as the ground of all and the link to the immaterial entity of consciousness.

11. The World Mandala concept is elaborated on in the section “From Outer Space, a World Mandala” of chapter II.

12. To listen to the music of Jean-Jacques Lemêtre, who, with Patrick Curran (Ergolab director), was the fulcrum of the Cyber Opera, please see: Double CD “*Écoute Ailleurs*” (1993), 4 *Songes pour une Nuit d’Été* (1993), CD À ID – Vol I (1999), CD À ID – Vol II: *Aire de France et D’Ailleurs* (2002) and CD À ID - Vol III: *De-ci De Là, Ca et Là* (2004). The Théâtre du Soleil website (<http://www.theatre-du-soleil.fr>) lists all music productions created by Lemêtre for the Parisian theatre company.

13. The united effort by people of different traditions, cultures and worldviews to contribute to this experiment is recurrent in the manual. More details on the idea of a world participatory theatre for unity in diversity are given in the section “A Mandala of Ahimsa, or a ‘Gandhian Mandala’”, chapter II.

“Life is born only of the spark of opposites”, wrote Carl Gustav Jung,¹⁴ and so the union of opposites is the alchemic process that harmonises the poles to find balance in the centre. Hence, in **○***Mexico (2001-2005) we found a mandalic resonance with **○***India from which a new definition of “Axis Mundi” emerged: an imaginary line uniting two ancient civilisations in the recall of human values and their transformative power.¹⁵ Taking this polarity as the basis of an experiment for peace consciousness in which we trace the imaginary line uniting opposites, our research led us to the UN Action Programme for a Culture of Peace,¹⁶ whose eight points highlighted the tridimensionality of the World Mandala beyond the linear axis, thereby integrating in this vision social themes of planetary interest.¹⁷

The vision of a blue planet as seen from space now became a map of possible actions for change.¹⁸ What kind of consciousness was needed? Our initial exploration of the role of consciousness in the material world had led us to the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) Laboratory at the School of Engineering and Applied Science, Princeton University. The PEAR Lab became a fundamental source of inspiration for understanding the value of resonance among living and nonliving beings for the collective construction of a peaceful planet. This concept became the basis for training on “intention in action” within participatory research and application.¹⁹ Further interaction with the Laboratorio de Investigación en Resonancia y Expresión de la Naturaleza/Nature Expression and Resonance Research Laboratory²⁰ (Mexico City) pointed to the immediate priorities for consciousness: to become aware and raise awareness in others of the harm that the human continent has done to its own planet, and the need to address the resulting action for the rehabilitation of the World Mandala.²¹

14. *Collected Works of C. G. Jung: Volume 7, Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, paragraph 78.

15. See *India-Mexico: Similarities and Encounters throughout History*, coordinated and edited by Eva Alexandra Uchmany.

16. At this point, planning of the OraWorldMandala ideogram began, and the eight interdependent thematic areas of action for a Culture of Peace determined its circumference. Later on, in the step denominated “Research in Action—The Beginning”, it became clear that nonviolence was the central point of the pictogramme and the essential component to transforming the institutional perspective into a life practice (see page 82 in the section under “A Mandala of Ahimsa, or a ‘Gandhian Mandala’”).

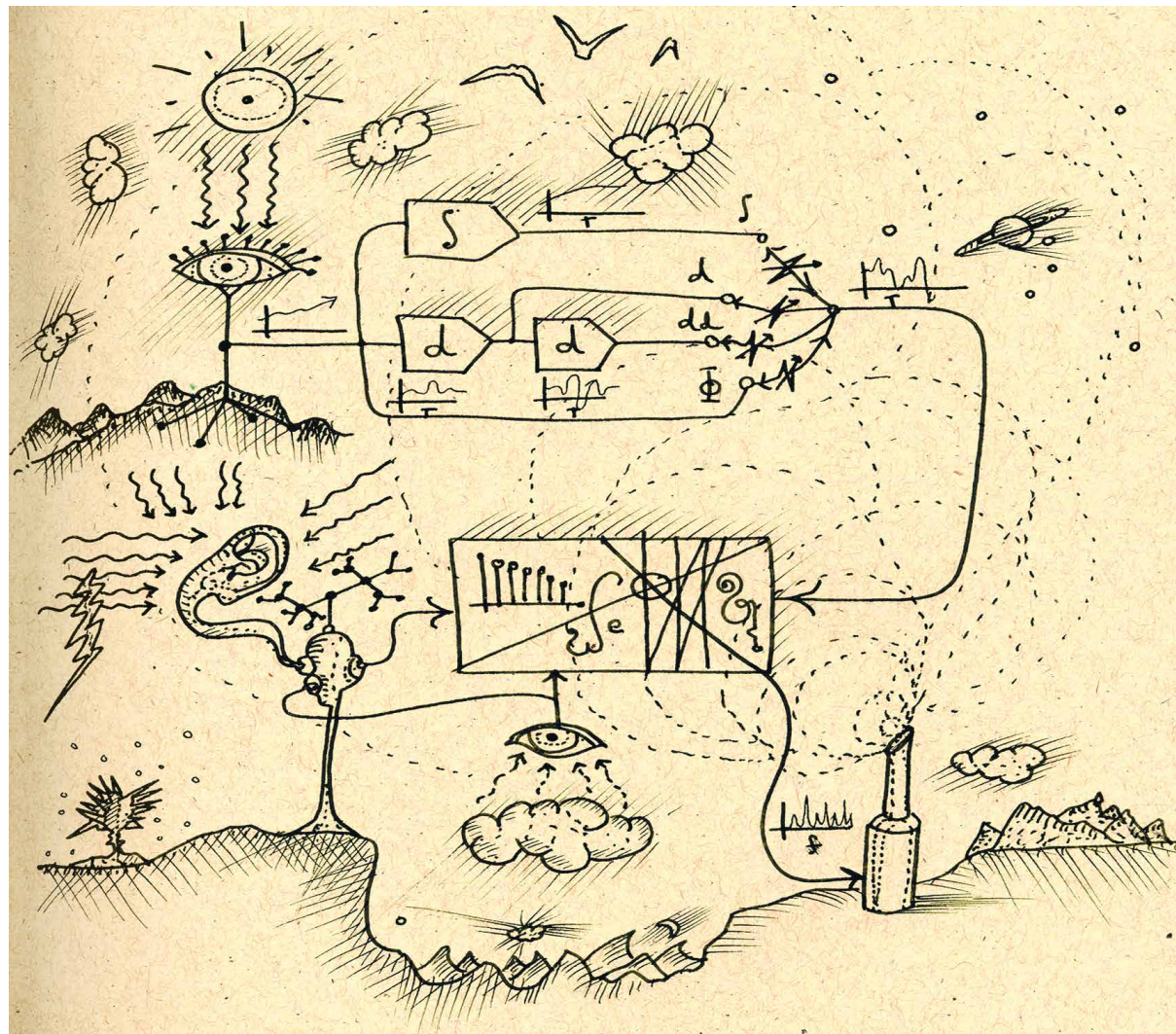
17. An experimental animation video entitled *OraWorldMandala* illustrating the eight points was sponsored by the Istituto Luce’s Historical Archive (Rome). Click on “Mandala” in the Reference Material section, listed under “Model of Education” on the OraWorldMandala website: www.oraworldmandala.org.

18. See the section “Technology for Life: World Mapping for Sarvodaya”.

19. Consciousness and resonance are transversal topics of this manual. Two fundamental books on these subjects have been written by Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne (founders of the PEAR Lab): *Margins of Reality. The Role of Consciousness in the Physical World and Consciousness and the Source of Reality. The PEAR Odyssey*.

20. The Nature Expression and Resonance Research Laboratory gives shape to mechanisms produced on the basis of imaginative art for the service of life. The instruments point to a dialogue with nature in order to connect bridges of consciousness among different dimensions of reality. Ariel Guzik’s *Gray Whale* is an audiovisual example of the lab’s broad exploration of the topic of resonance and dialogue, which is presented in many works and in many forms. See also the publication *CordioX/Ariel Guzik*, which features his work displayed at the 55th Venice Biennale in representation of **○***Mexico.

21. The section “Injured Planet” outlines some of the countless environmental issues that are threatening Earth.



Meteorological Signals

Research in Action—The Beginning

After four years of research, the call to action was mounting and needed to be answered. Opportunely, it was then, in 2004, that I heard for the first time the word *Ahimsa* (nonviolence).²²

His Holiness the Dalai Lama suggested that I work through the World Mandala for the cause of Ahimsa, under the guidance of Ravindra Varma, the then-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith.²³ Introducing Ahimsa in the Mandala paradigm was a new challenge that needed validation in practice. Thus was born the first action, a micro-experiment in the city of Ahmedabad, former capital of the State of Gujarat, where the university is headquartered. Communal²⁴ riots had taken place in the state two years earlier, the city was still fragile and the wounds caused by religious conflict were still open.²⁵

In the spirit of the World Mandala and with the support of Gujarat Vidyapith,²⁶ we began to interact with the pillars of Ahmedabad’s social fabric in order to approach a local peace dialogue among communities. One by one, door to door, we went to meet different religious leaders. To facilitate the transmission of this message we agreed to propose an “artistic soil offering” as a common element for co-creating a peace action and distil locally the essence of World Mandala. The invitation to create a tangible representation of the five elements was our only anchor for inter-religious dialogue.

Gujarat Vidyapith became our home, and the twelve religious communities together with the Adivasi (tribal people) became family with whom we followed this new path of hope and humanity.

22. Please refer to my explanation of *Ahimsa* translated as “nonviolence” in the “Note to the Reader”.

23. Ravindra Varma, who passed away on October 9, 2006, was, in the words of Siby K. Joseph, “an outstanding scholar and activist who made substantial contributions to the study, propagation and understanding of Gandhian Studies and rendered invaluable service to the nation with total devotion and utmost commitment” (from “Ravindra Varma: A Brief Life Sketch”, available at: <http://www.gvpwardha.iecit.in/documents/books/thought/i.pdf>). Varma spent his life spreading the message of Mahatma Gandhi, especially to youth and students. He was a student leader during the Indian Independence struggle, and among other public charges he served as Member of Parliament and Union Cabinet Minister for Labour and Parliamentary Affairs. He headed several Gandhian institutions, for example serving as Chairman of the Institute of Gandhian Studies (Wardha), Chairman of the Gandhi Peace Foundation (New Delhi) and Chancellor of the Gujarat Vidyapith. He wrote countless articles and three books on Gandhi published by Navajivan Publishing House (Gandhi’s publishing house): *Gandhi (A Biography for Children and Beginners)*, *The Spiritual Basis of Satyagraha* and *Gandhi in Anecdotes*.

24. For more information on communalism in the context of **O***India, please refer to page 90 of this manual.

25. A deep analysis on Ahmedabad’s structural violence is given by Tommaso Bobbio in his book *Urbanisation, Citizenship and Conflict in India: Ahmedabad, 1900-2000*. For further reading on the Gujarat riots, see *Gujarat. The Making of a Tragedy* by Siddharth Varadarajan. In *The Man with Enormous Wings*, Esther David poetically shares her experience and feelings of that time.

26. Mahatma Gandhi founded the university to train the freedom fighters for Indian Independence and prepare the Constructive Programme for the regeneration of the country. Sharing a common mission, therefore, Gujarat Vidyapith adopted this peace proposal.

Specifically, the participants were:

- Bhil community (representing the Adivasi) associated with Guru Rajsinhbhai Maharaj (Bhil leader from Dahod district, Gujarat);
- Brahma Kumaris community associated with Brahma Kumaris, Sardar Patel Stadium Road, and at a later time also with Divya Darshan Bhawan;
- Buddhist community associated with Triratna Bauddha Mahasangha Gana (earlier Trailokya Bauddha Mahasangha Sahayaka Gana);
- Catholic community associated with Prashant, Jesuit Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace, and also Gurjarvani;
- Hare Krishna community associated with Iskcon International Society for Krishna Consciousness;
- Jain community associated with International Centre for Jain Studies, Gujarat Vidyapith;
- Jewish community associated with Magen Abraham Synagogue;
- Muslim community associated with Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind;
- Parsi community associated with Parsi Fire Temple, Khamasa Gate;
- Protestant community associated with Church of North India (CNI), Ellisbridge;
- Sikh community associated with Gurudwara Gobinddham;
- Veda community associated with Sola Bhagwat School; and
- Vedanta community associated with Adhyatma Vidya Mandir.

As an offering, each community group selected soils from places that hold sacred and collective significance. As an example, the Ahmedabad Jewish community went to another state to collect soil from Navgaon, the place where Jews arrived in **○***India during the first exodus, as a gesture of thanks to the people of **○***India for accepting the community.

In the initial phase of co-creating the peace action’s script, the soil offering was envisaged as the climax of the action. The realisation of the main set—a textile Mandala to which each religion contributed its embroidered vision of peace and harmony—became the foundation of the experiment.²⁷

Unanimously, the Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram and Gujarat Vidyapith were deemed the most appropriate sites for the

action. It was from the ashram²⁸ that Mahatma Gandhi launched his peaceful Salt March²⁹ to demonstrate that the power of Ahimsa was inherent in all human beings and could be deployed by anyone committed to it.

The script of the action, completed over forty days and dedicated to peace and harmony among communities, reflected a planetary view by connecting also with Mexican people at the other side of the World Mandala.³⁰

Five hundred people—members of the twelve communities and tribal people, as well as representatives of artistic, scientific and social institutions and many others—participated in the action at Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram and Gujarat Vidyapith. They came together to pray, to worship, to sing devotional songs, to dance, to share food, to enjoy, to laugh and to remember Mahatma Gandhi’s message of love and harmony.

The action culminated in the offering of an Earth Mandala, consisting of a large earthen pot where each religious group placed its soil. We call this the “Archive of the Earth”.

This first experiment of the inter-religious core group marked the beginning of the application of an individual and collective practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala, now denominated as OraWorldMandala. This action reflects the first point of the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi,³¹ honouring diversity at the surface level and unity at the heart level. In Gandhi’s words, “Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilisation”.³²

28. *Ashram* is an Anglicization of the Sanskrit *asrama*, whose root is *srama*, meaning “religious exercise”. In the Vedic tradition *asrama* refers to a place of retreat or isolation that a community uses to live under the teachings of a spiritual guide. The term came to be known in the West through the ashram founded by Gandhi when he returned to **○***India in 1915 after his years in **○***South Africa, where he had already adopted this practice of community life. In 1904, inspired by *Unto This Last* by John Ruskin, Gandhi had established in the vicinity of Durban the ashram known as Phoenix Farm and in 1910 a second one in the vicinity of Johannesburg, which he named Tolstoy Farm. Upon his return to **○***India, Gandhi founded a first ashram on the outskirts of Ahmedabad known as Satyagraha Ashram (also known as Kochrab Ashram), which operated from 1915 to 1917, when he moved it to the bank of the Sabarmati River. This second Satyagraha Ashram is also known as Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram. This was Gandhi's headquarters until 1930 when he made the Salt March. Gandhi founded his last ashram in 1936 in the village of Seagon, in Wardha District (Maharashtra, central **○***India), known as Sevagram Ashram (the service village or community). For details, please consult *Gandhi and His Ashrams*, by Mark Thomson.

29. To learn about the emblematic Salt March (March 12–April 6, 1930) within the Indian civil disobedience movement, see *On the Salt March. The Historiography of Mahatma Gandhi's March to Dandi* by Thomas Weber, who retraced Gandhi’s steps a half-century later.

30. Also on the other side of the world, but farther north, in the **○***United States, a coordinated scientific experiment by the Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR) Lab would be conducted in Ahmedabad. As planned, the experiment was active throughout the day, carrying out its mission of “studying the interaction of human consciousness with sensitive physical devices, systems, and processes, and developing complementary theoretical models to enable better understanding of the role of consciousness in establishment of physical reality”. Please visit the following websites for more details on PEAR Lab experiments.


31. For elaboration on the OraWorldMandala and its interrelation with the principles of the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi, see the chapter “OraWorldMandala Proposed Method”.

32. M. K. Gandhi, "Presidential address at Kathiawar political conference, Bhavnagar", *Young India*, January 8, 1925, page 9.

27. This textile Mandala was created with the help, training and cooperation of Italian textile-art master Wanda Casaril, who came to **○***India for this purpose.

Archive of the Earth
April 23, 2005



Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram,
Ahmedabad,  India



For many years we were not one. Yet, our unity became real because we experienced the resonance from heart to heart of humanness and oneness, and we were filled with the deep realisation that all of us share the goal of peace and harmony, within ourselves and with the world outside us.



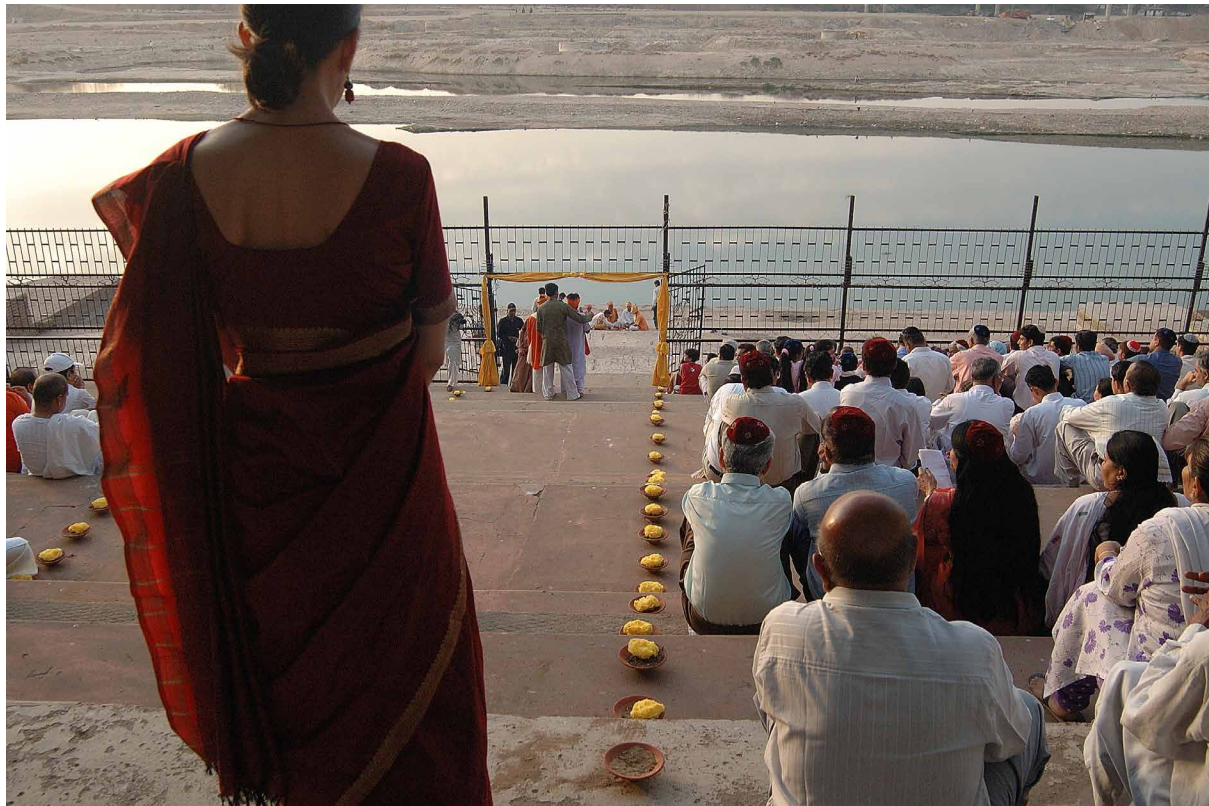
We started at sunrise, with inspiring and sonorous hymns from the ancient Vedanta philosophy.



The Parsis invoked the presence and the blessings of fire.



The Bhils performed a ritual to purify the Sabarmati River.



We crossed the river gate and, with it, the human-made sense of separation.

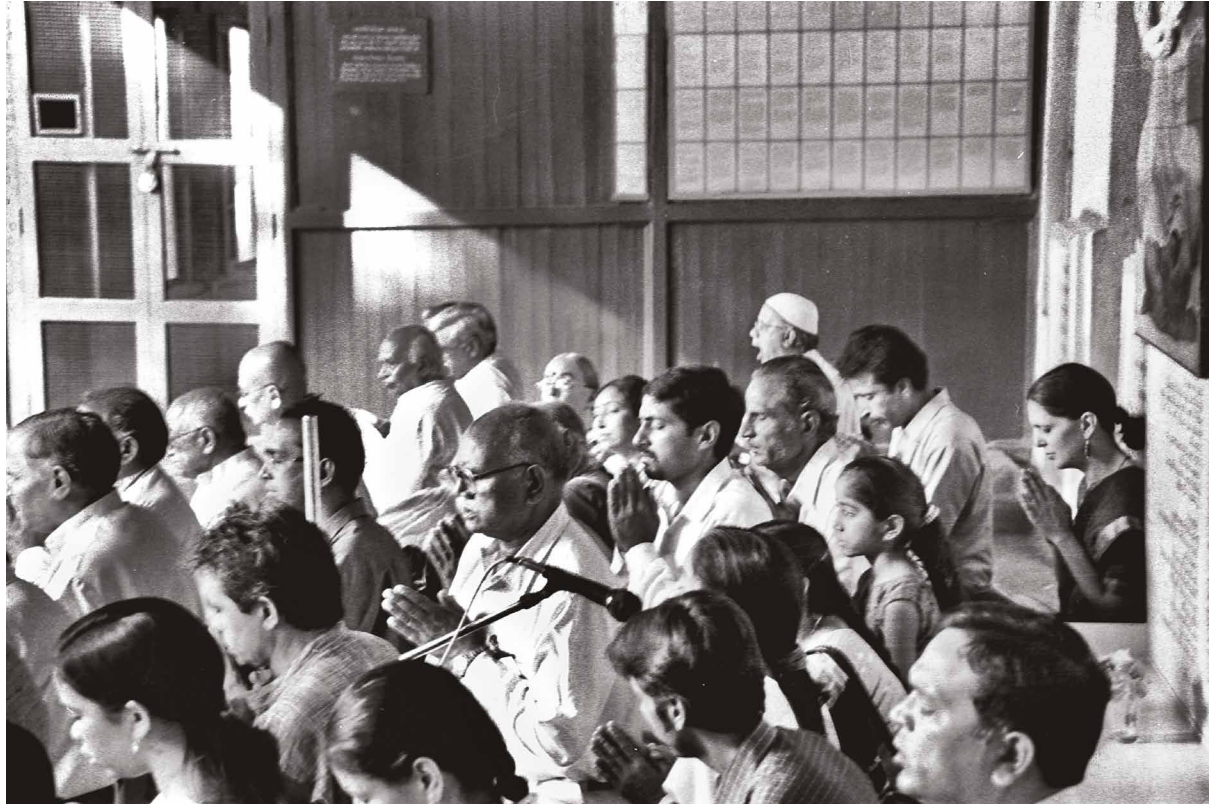


We encircled the Mahatma's former residence, the Hridaya Kunj, to celebrate unity in diversity. We chanted together the Sarva Dharma Prarthana, the "All Religions Prayer", part of the daily routine in Gandhi's ashrams.



For the first time in memory, the Jewish community of Ahmedabad participated in the prayer.





Buddhists concluded by rendering Indian devotional songs to remind us of the inspiration passed down from the Buddha. There were moments when we felt that our hearts were full, when we felt that our eyes too were full, and brimming.



It was time to nourish our bodies, to take in the energy that we needed to face a long day in the heat of the Indian summer. Accompanied by music on the *jal-tarang*, we shared the breakfast kindly offered by the Brahma Kumaris.

From the Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram we moved to Gujarat Vidyapith to carry out the experiment.



In the main Prayer Hall, the Upasana Khand, we offered our soil vessels.



The soil was brought by all of us, from our temples, our homes, our areas of origin, from the places that reminded us of our values.



We all sat in a circle to reconnect the human continent with planet Earth in a deep realisation of the need for equanimity.



Hand in hand, we chanted songs of peace and compassion to heal our hearts.

Image inspired by the Field
REG experiment, coordinated
by the PEAR Lab during the
Archive of the Earth





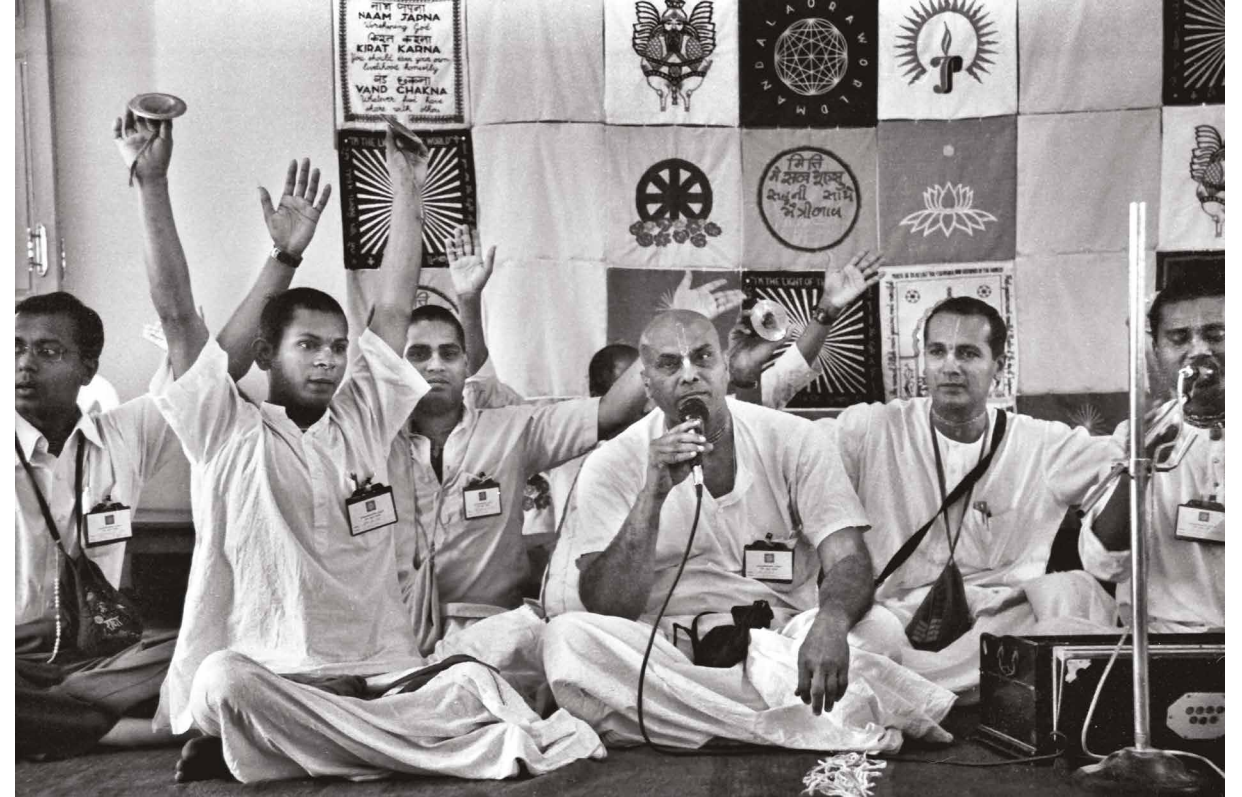
After the session of meditation, we formed a procession, led by Catholic and Protestant fathers. The melody of one of Gandhi's favourite hymns, "Lead Kindly Light", filled the air, and we felt that we were following the footsteps of the great saints and prophets of humanity, on the path of oneness.



We walked to the Bible Khand, where Gandhi used to give teachings on the message of Jesus Christ and the Bible. We circumambulated an art installation made of fallen leaves that we had collected on the campus to restore our grief.



Then we reached the Education Department, where the Vedic School introduced with a chant the textile Mandala, created by all.



We still remember the impact of the Hare Krishna chants...



... and the songs of love and forgiveness rendered by the Muslims.

We shared, one after another, the best of our aspirations and perceptions of Ahimsa through music and other expressions. We needed no speeches or declarations. As our backdrop we had the “Mandala of Religions”, the quilt made of messages of peace that each religious community had collaboratively designed.



During the preceding forty days we had worked together to create this quilt. It is the heart of the collective expression of our yearnings and has helped us overcome the agony and suffering that arose from the conflicts.



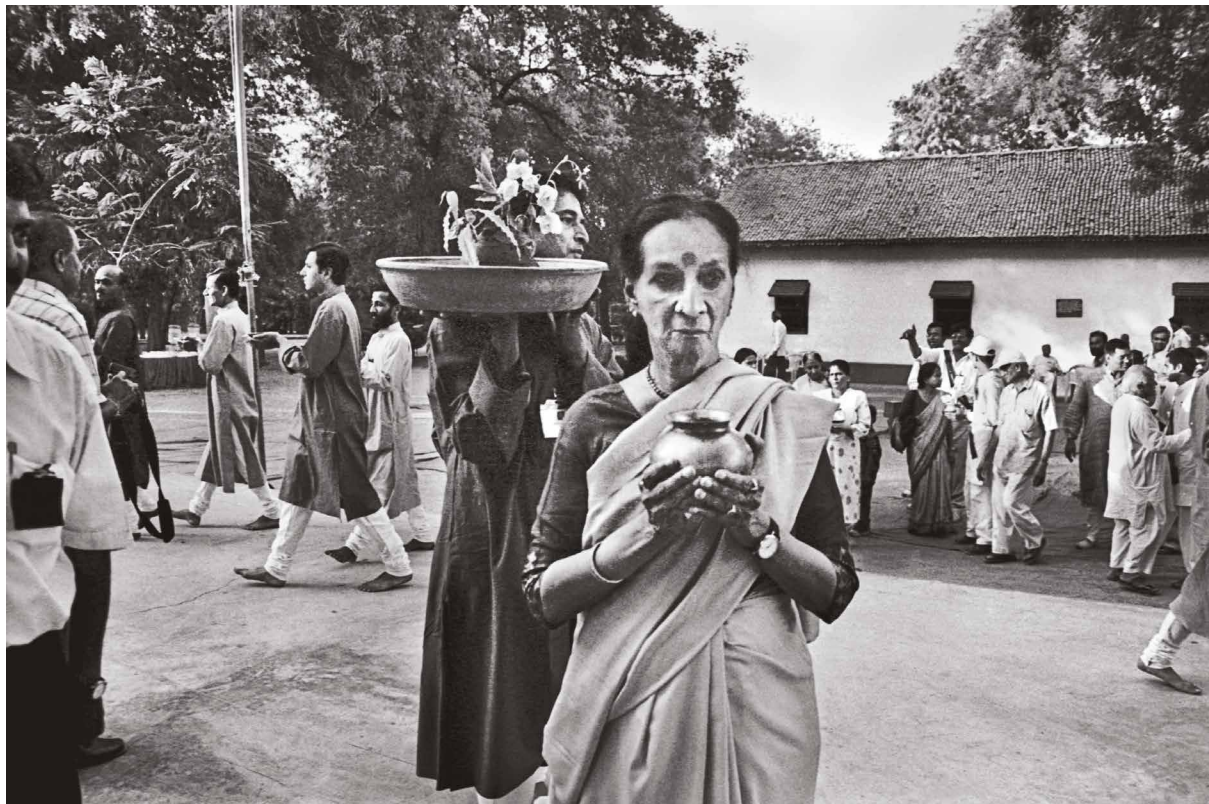
We prepared a unique lunch of items that had been contributed in the spirit of cooperation that inspired the entire action. The Sikhs provided the main dishes: simple food for everybody, eating and sharing under the same roof. The Jains threw light on the importance of *Safai*, the great teaching of the Mahatma on the practice of cleanliness.

After food, we expressed our feelings and thoughts.



The Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith, Ravindra Varma, told us about the importance of Art as a medium for comprehension as well as transmission: “Art reflects reality as it appears to the mind’s eye. Even as there is the physical eye and the eye of insight, or what in Indian tradition is called the divine eye (*Divya Chakshu*), or the eye of knowledge (*Gyan Chakshu*), the artist is gifted with the ability to view reality through the mind’s eye”.

All of us wish to be artists in the spirit of service.



When we went back to the ashram to open the Archive of the Earth, we were received by the classical dancer Mrinalini Sarabhai...



... who guided us to the Mira Kutir platform. Music of universal love accompanied dance.



**As many youth spun, a message came from the past, from a speech of the Mahatma's recorded in 1947. We were thrilled to hear his voice, so vibrant and moving in its powerful exhortation to overcome prejudice and separateness and savour the harmony of hearts. We then sang Gandhi's favourite *bhajan*:
 "The people of God are those who feel pain of others, who do not feel high because they have helped the lowly and remove the suffering of others".**



**After circumambulating the Hridaya Kunj, at sunset we offered our soils in the earthen pot used for the Archive of the Earth.
 In Gujarat, we typically use this large pot to store grain and water, and we prayed that the seed of peace may grow and become a beautiful flower.**



**A woman chanted
an invocation to the
element of earth, and
we released to flight
messengers that
they may carry our
message to the world.**

Research in Action—Follow-up

Since the first action, the Archive of the Earth, the OraWorldMandala operates at the Peace Research Centre of Gujarat Vidyapith, functioning as an urban Laboratory for Research and Action to Promote Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala (OWM Lab) in cooperation with members of the religious communities mentioned in the previous pages, along with other educational institutions and social organizations. The Archive of the Earth in fact has injected inner strength into the communities, generating a common aspiration to experiment Ahimsa through the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi.

As follow-up, several Mandala peace actions³³ for community unity have been co-created over the years, and various constructive works for health and hygiene, the small textile industry, and education of peace and nonviolence have emerged from these.³⁴ Yet, the first peace action realised by the religious communities in 2005 remains the foundation of the experimental methodology.

In 2006, the OWM Lab initiated an Extension Programme in **O***Mexico, the opposite pole of **O***India, specifically in the rural setting of Real de Catorce (San Luis Potosí State), where a pledge was made to the Wixárika *Marakame*³⁵ Dionisio de la Rosa Cosío to trace with the people of Ahmedabad the imaginary line uniting the two opposites. This commitment established a fraternal bond with the Wixaritari native people and our common call for universal peace. The intention was turned into action by making Mandala offerings every year for five years at the Reunar (in Wixárika, “where the sun rises”), known in Spanish as the Cerro Quemado sacred mountain.³⁶ The common understanding of Mandala was reflected in the spiritual offering of the five elements in a fire ceremony led by the *Marakame*.³⁷ This process brought about the integration of inhabitants of the nearby village of Real de Catorce

33. Mandalas created during some peace actions in Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram are shown in the section “First Stage. Reconciliation through Ahimsa: The Making of a Peace Mandala”.

34. A-HOPE (Ahmedabad Harmonic Orchestra for Peace Everywhere) is one of the constructive works to materialise during the experiment’s implementation. It is presented as a chapter in the documentary *Satyagraha: Les Guerriers de la Paix / Satyagraha: The Peace Warriors* by director Karuna Mayi Oettinger.

35. Among the Wixaritari people, the *Marakame* is a Wixárika wiseman or -woman, a spiritual guide. A healer, singer and supplicant, he or she has acquired profound knowledge about the Wixárika culture and acts as the principal guide in ceremonies and in the greater destiny of the community. For information on Wixárika culture and tradition, see the following books by Gabriel Pacheco Salvador: *Los dones de Wixxu* (The gifts of Wixxu), *Tatei Yurienaka y otros cuentos huicholes* (Tatei Yurienaka and other Huichol stories) and *José Benítez y el arte huichol. La semilla del mundo* (José Benítez and Huichol art: The seed of the world).

36. Significantly, at the end of the first Mandala action, the *Marakame* collected soils from the Reunar to be offered to the Archive of the Earth. On October 2, 2006, Wixárika writer Gabriel Pacheco Salvador, together with his father Agustín, offered the soils in a ceremony at Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram, while a parallel offering of Mexican soils was simultaneously taking place at the Gandhi monument in Mexico City (see the subsection “One of Many Paths in the Mandala’s Labyrinth”).

37. See Mandala offering made during the five-year path on page 115.

through a series of participatory Mandala peace actions that sparked a cathartic collective process for community unity and the healing of divisions and prejudices among participants.³⁸

From these Mandala peace actions emerged an experiment in self-organised rural education set up by villagers who started to study and explore the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi through community-organised social actions.

The Real de Catorce experience was later reproduced in other areas of the country.³⁹ A defining example was the encounter with Raúl Álvarez Garín, one of the leaders of the 1968 student movement in **O***Mexico, who has since introduced the OraWorldMandala to formal and informal educational institutions throughout the country.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the significance of October 2 as the day of celebrating Gandhi’s birth (1869) and commemorating the massacre of Tlatelolco during the student movement (1968) has created an historical bond between the people of **O***India and **O***Mexico, sealed by Mandala peace actions simultaneously organised at the two poles for the regeneration of peace consciousness on the planet.⁴¹ This indicates that the theoretical assumption of the union of opposites can be implemented practically.

At the end of 2008, Sudarshan Iyengar, who as Vice-Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith had provided encouragement to the OraWorldMandala over the past decade, suggested we systematise the research and application methods in order to develop a formal nonviolence training programme. Here, the words of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who earlier had defined the research path as a “new method for social transformation”, became clear, and the first “Synergistic Training Seminar for Artists of Ahimsa” was planned at the OWM Lab of the Peace Research Centre (Ahmedabad). Later on, “artists of Ahimsa” would become “constructors of Ahimsa” to honour the social

service of the Gandhian “constructive workers”.⁴² Yet, this first seminar was determinantal in the development of OraWorldMandala training programmes in both formal and informal education systems.⁴³

Another crucial step in the Proposed Method was the historic visit to **O***Mexico of a Gandhian delegation headed by Narayan Desai,⁴⁴ at the time Chancellor of Gujarat Vidyapith, and Radha Bhatt.⁴⁵ It was 2011 when Narayan Desai shared his “Gandhi Katha”⁴⁶ at the University Museum of Contemporary Art (MUAC) to spread the message of Ahimsa in **O***Mexico in the manner of storytelling.

In addition, the delegation⁴⁷ participated in a public debate on *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place* by M. K. Gandhi at the Colegio de México (Colmex) on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the writing of the text. During the Mexican tour, the Indian delegates also met with farmers, students and professors, workers, social activists, artists and scientists associated with the OraWorldMandala experiment.⁴⁸ Over the course of the visit a series of alliances with Mexican universities and institutions was established, which included the

42. Participation of Gandhian veteran Chunibhai Vaidya in the seminar embodied the way of “peace with justice” in the Proposed Method. An “original” Gandhian in many ways, Chunibhai Vaidya remained active well into his 90s. Simplicity, self-sacrifice, courage, leading from the front, devotion to the cause were natural attributes to him. He would take on a task even if he was alone and surrounded by adversity. Surely it was individuals like Chunikaka, as he was affectionately known (in Gujarati *kaka* means “uncle”), who inspired Tagore to write in the “Ekla Cholo Re”, “If no one heeds your call, walk alone ...”. He committed himself to a life of service at a young age, like thousands of people from different walks of life. Chunikaka spent around 12 years in Assam, devoting his exceptional energy to the Bhoodan movement. He edited the Gujarati fortnightly *Bhumiputra* and from this platform fought the government-imposed state of “Emergency” (1975), defied censorship, fought and won a court battle against the government, and spent time in prison. Upon his release, he immersed himself in executing Jayprakash Narayan’s idea of Lok Samiti, a people’s defence committee. In his later years, Chunikaka was never far from struggles to protect land and livelihood, a fighter until his last day.

43. Gradually training has been diffused in Mexico. Beginning at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), it has since been implemented in schools in Tepito (a sensitive area of Mexico City) and other educational and social institutions in the capital. Following this phase, the experimental training programme was adopted by the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí (UASLP) and by formal and informal educational arenas in other states of **O***Mexico.

44. Narayan Desai, who passed away on March 15, 2015, was the son of Mahadev Desai, the personal secretary of Gandhi. Narayan Desai grew up and worked with the Mahatma for almost a quarter century and is considered one of the most relevant figures of the Gandhian movement of our time. Besides being a renowned activist and educator, he wrote more than 50 books in Gujarati, Hindi and English that were then translated into other languages. Among the most outstanding are his recounting of his childhood (*Sant Sevatan Sukrut Vadhe*), written in Gujarati and published in English as *Bliss Was It to Be Young—with Gandhi. Childhood Reminiscences*; his biography of his father, *Agnikundman Ugelun Gulab (The Fire and the Rose)*; and his four-volume biography of Gandhi written in Gujarati, *Maru Jivan Ej Mari Vani (My Life Is My Message)*.

45. Radha Bhatt, born in Uttarakhand, **O***India, is a peace activist who has spent her entire life spreading the message of Mahatma Gandhi through direct actions in **O***India and beyond in defence of nature, the empowerment of women and the protection of life in all its forms. Her educational service to the Himalayan community of Lakshmi Ashram is an example for many Indian villages. Radha Bhatt was the first woman to chair the Gandhi Peace Foundation of New Delhi (2006-2015). At present she sits on the board of different Gandhian organizations and is a Trustee of Gujarat Vidyapith. She has received several recognitions, among them the “People’s Nobel Peace Prize” in 2015, awarded posthumously to the Mahatma by Swedish citizens and which she accepted in his name (see “Mahatma Gandhi: Premio Nobel del Pueblo 2015”, by Juan Carlos Ruiz Guadalajara, available online: <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2016/01/29/opinion/022a2pol>).

46. To listen to the story of Gandhi’s life as narrated by Narayan Desai, please consult the UNAM website: <http://www.difusioncultural.unam.mx/dcitunes/dc/img/ImgMassivEmail/ligas2015/English%20version%20Gandhi%20Katha.pdf>

47. The other members of the delegation were Sudarshan Iyengar, Rajendra Khimani, Sanghamitra Desai and Lakshmi Iyengar.

48. Worthy of mention is a research project developed by the University of Guadalajara through Wixárika linguist Gabriel Pacheco Salvador as a direct outcome of the exchange of knowledge cultivated over the years between Gandhian philosophy and Wixárika wisdom.

38. Some Mandalas collectively offered during peace actions in Real de Catorce are shown on page 126-127.

39. A few examples are given in the subsection “One of Many Paths in the Mandala’s Labyrinth” in chapter II.

40. A collaborative arrangement established in 2008 with the University Cultural Center of Tlatelolco (CCUT) of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) has mobilised the ongoing educational peace training between people of **O***India and **O***Mexico.

41. It is important to underscore that in **O***India, October 2 is a day of national celebration in memory of Gandhi’s birth (in Hindi, Gandhi Jayanti). To pay tribute to the Mahatma, the United Nations General Assembly, in 2007, declared October 2 the International Day of Non-Violence. In juxtaposition, in 2008, the Mexican Congress voted on a bill to declare October 2 a National Day of Mourning, which was later ratified in December 2011, to commemorate those who died in the struggle for democracy that took place in the Plaza of the Three Cultures in 1968 (officially the Aniversario de los caídos en la lucha por la democracia de la Plaza de las Tres Culturas en Tlatelolco en 1968). The book *La estela de Tlatelolco. Una reconstrucción histórica del Movimiento estudiantil del 68* (The trail of Tlatelolco: an historic reconstruction of the student movement of ’68) by Raúl Álvarez Garín offers firsthand testimony and analysis of the tragic event. In addition, *Massacre in Mexico* by Elena Poniatowska poetically narrates the attack on students and other civilians on October 2, 1968. The article "Gandhi, México y el 2 de octubre" by Juan Carlos Ruiz Guadalajara (*La Jornada*, October 1, 2015; available online: <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2015/10/01/opinion/019a2pol>) explores the significance of the date inevitably linking the two cultures.

commitment to produce reference material in Spanish and native languages for the development of the Proposed Method.⁴⁹ Beyond its institutional achievements, the visit of Narayan Desai to **O***Mexico and the years of inspiration, reflection and affection he provided to Mexican constructors of Ahimsa continue to keep him alive in our hearts.

In 2015 OraWorldMandala established an alliance with the Tosepan Titataniske Cooperative Union,⁵⁰ an indigenous farmers’ movement in **O***Mexico that for over forty years has worked for the upliftment of all. *Tosepan Titataniske* means “United we will win” in Nahuat. Its name therefore is a statement that embodies the process of cooperation uniting the Nahua and Totonac peoples⁵¹ in the eradication of material poverty in the face of socio-economic injustice.⁵² This Mexican effort to transform historical distances into a creative expression of human dignity represents a concrete example of Gandhi’s Constructive Programme in action. Furthermore, as elective affinities and convergences blend our dreams for a possible utopia, they manifest a “new world of goodwill” reflected in a “five elements offering” for community unity.⁵³ Thus, the implementation of constructive works developed over the years by the cooperatives became a tangible hope for the rebuilding of a new and just society based on the needs of the people and on the unification of nonviolent forces for the defence of life against the attacks of others’ greed.⁵⁴

49. One of the main efforts is the project Biblioteca Gandhi (Gandhi Library), coordinated by the Colegio de San Luis (Colsan). The first book of the Biblioteca Gandhi is *Programa Constructivo. Su significado y lugar*, co-published by the Colegio de San Luis, Gujarat Vidyapith, National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico, OraWorldMandala, La Gandhiana Editions, and Red Columnaria. The documentary *Gandhi en México, una mirada a la Noviolencia* (Gandhi in Mexico, a look at nonviolence, available with English subtitles), co-produced by TV UNAM, Gujarat Vidyapith and OraWorldMandala, illustrates the basis of the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi.

50. According to Aldegundo González-Álvarez, in the book *El Kuojtakiloyan. Patrimonio biocultural Nahuat de la Sierra Norte de Puebla, México* (Kuojtakiloyan, Nahuat biocultural heritage of the Northern Sierra of Puebla), (p. 293), edited by Víctor Toledo, the union is based out of Cuetzalan del Progreso municipality in the Northeastern Sierra, in the state of Puebla. It is made up of 410 local cooperatives belonging to communities in a total of 26 municipalities and falling under eight regional umbrella cooperatives and three local NGOs. Its mission is to improve the quality of life of member families through organised work towards the construction of a “Good Living” project, an idea or concept known as *Yeknemilis* in Nahuat (the language is also known as Nahuatl or Maseualtajtol). González-Álvarez is director of the Kaltaixpetaniloyan (“the house where the spirit opens”) Training Centre, which offers guidance in attaining Good Living among families and communities of the region.

51. Two distinct indigenous groups from the Northeastern Sierra de Puebla undergoing their own process of socio-cultural empowerment, which explains variants in self-denomination (for example, the Nahuat language is also referred to as Maseualtajtol; the name of the Nahua people is also rendered as Nahuat and Maseualmej; and Totonac, as Tutunaku and Totonakú). For more information on their empowerment process, see *El Kuojtakiloyan. Patrimonio biocultural Nahuat de la Sierra Norte de Puebla, México*, edited by Víctor M. Toledo.

52. For a firsthand interpretation of the process of social organisation, struggle and defence of territory on the part of the Nahua and Totonac in the Northeastern Sierra de Puebla, please consult the following two articles: Pierre Beaucage and Ignacio Rivadeneyra Pasquel, “Luchas por el espacio político: las organizaciones totonacas de la Sierra Norte de Puebla, 1960-2013,” (Struggles for political space: Totonac organisations of the Northern Sierra de Puebla, 1960-2013) and Pierre Beaucage, Leonardo Durán Olguín, Ignacio Rivadeneyra Pasquel and Claudia Marina Olvera Ramírez, "Con la ayuda de Dios. Crónica de luchas indígenas actuales por el territorio en la Sierra Nororiental de Puebla" (With God's help. Chronicle of current indigenous struggles for territory in the Northeastern Sierra de Puebla). Recommended documentaries include the following by Jesús Ramírez Cuevas: *Corazones de maíz: La milpa nahuat y totonakú* (Hearts of maize: The Nahua and Totonac cornfield), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snRUhDepBoY&app=desktop>, and *Sierra Norte por la vida* (Sierra Norte for Life), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQ85vHvNSHA>.

53. This statement was made by a native elder reflecting before a Milpa Solar Mandala. See page 132.

54. The book *El Kuojtakiloyan*, edited by Víctor M. Toledo, shares, among other things, the beauty and richness of the territory for which people are struggling.

This common aspiration spurred the formation of a collective cycle of studies on Gandhi’s nonviolent approach that naturally integrates and resonates with the perspective of the people of the Northeastern Sierra de Puebla.⁵⁵ The present OraWorldMandala Proposed Method consequently incorporates the nonviolent direct action approach adopted by movements to strengthen community unity, overcome fear and abide by the loving insistence on Truth.⁵⁶

Nonviolent direct actions have been organised in synergy with the ongoing struggle in defence of the Earth from predatory projects that threaten life and people’s territory. This exchange of knowledge must thus be recognised as a living form of an ancestral vision and demands reflection on the role of indigenous peoples in the transmission of ancient knowledge to modern civilisation. In the same way, the universal wisdom nourishes the principles and values of the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi towards the autonomy of peoples.

This communion of intention has resonated with individuals, educational institutions and social movements in **O***Mexico and other parts of the American continent, giving life to a collective process of research, training, action and communication denominated CoLiViNovi—Comunidad en Línea para la Vida y la *Noviolencia* (Online Community for Life and *Nonviolence*). The community seeks to facilitate online communication for the nonviolent movement along with personal interaction and synergy among participants. The long-term experience of Tosepan Titataniske Cooperative Union’s Constructive Programme serves as inspiration for others to find ever new ways and skills to grow together.⁵⁷ This process highlighted the need for decentralisation fostered by the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi in the creation of self-managed realities that can uphold the way of life in the countryside and support the rural educational system to transmit a comprehensive perspective of Ahimsa to future generations.

The use of “Technology for Life” has marked a new step in the evolution of the OraWorldMandala Proposed Method. The need to facilitate the flow of information, cooperation, participation and support among Ahimsa seekers in a constructive work for community unity becomes a positive and immediate answer to structural violence and the media bombardment we undergo daily. The resulting proposal consists of the co-creation of a map for a new social order for the upliftment of all built on a bioregional basis and developed via Internet by the nonviolent movement. This virtual tool will allow the user to know “who does what” in the communities, villages and neighbourhoods

55. The collective listening of the “Gandhi Katha” by Narayan Desai is the main instrument for training and reflections on, and inspiration for, nonviolence.

56. See the section “Second Stage. Ahimsa for Sarvodaya: Constructive Works” in chapter II.

57. CoLiViNovi integrates members of the National Centre for Social Communication (CENCOS), the scientific journal *Innovación Educativa* of the Editorial Department of the Academics Office of the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico (IPN), the Applied Social Research Laboratory of the Morelia Campus of the UNAM National School of Higher Studies (ENES-UNAM), the Human Rights Master’s Programme of the School of Law “Abogado Ponciano Arriaga Leija” of the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí (UASLP), the Undergraduate History Department of the Autonomous University of Zacatecas “Francisco García Salinas” (UAZ), the Intercultural Platform Project of the University of Guadalajara (UdeG) under the coordination of Gabriel Pacheco Salvador, the NGO Pro-Energía Que Es Vida A.C. of Aguascalientes, the Tosepan Titataniske Cooperative Union, the University of the Earth—California (Oakland) and the University of the Earth—Oaxaca.

on the map. In this way, any individual who wants to cooperate in the mission of social transformation will find a place to serve in his/her/the nearest community, village or neighbourhood.⁵⁸ The OraWorldMandala has set into action a pilot project to launch this constructive work for community unity. Jointly developed and activated with the Applied Social Research Laboratory of the Morelia Campus of the UNAM National School of Higher Studies (ENES-UNAM), the project also includes collaboration with the scientific journal *Innovación Educativa* of the Editorial Department of the Academics Office of the National Polytechnic Institute of Mexico (IPN), the Human Rights Master’s Programme of the School of Law “Abogado Ponciano Arriaga Leija” of the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí (UASLP), the Undergraduate History Department of the Autonomous University of Zacatecas “Francisco García Salinas” (UAZ), the Intercultural Platform Project of the University of Guadalajara (UdeG) under the coordination of Gabriel Pacheco Salvador, the National Centre for Social Communication (CENCOS), the NGO Pro-Energía Que Es Vida A.C. of Aguascalientes, the Tosepan Titataniske Cooperative Union, the University of the Earth—California (Oakland) and the University of the Earth—Oaxaca, El Colegio de San Luis, and, recently, the Zacatecas Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (COZCyT).⁵⁹ This step is crucial for the development of the experimental proposal and represents the turning point for a worldwide participation.

In order to foster the implementation of this turning point and develop a convergence in the different phases of the Proposed Method, the OraWorldMandala joins hands with the Nature Expression and Resonance Research Laboratory.⁶⁰ This conjunction naturally opens horizons to different perceptions where the subjective and the expanded consciousness make visible the invisible for the re-enchantment of the world. This universe becomes the ethical basis to recognise an eco-centric approach for an all-encompassing Ahimsa with the intention to give life to a “manifesto in action” for the recovery of the World Mandala.

A New Beginning:
Soils Return to Earth
January 30, 2018

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58. Details are given in the section “Technology for Life: World Mapping for Sarvodaya”.

59. For constructors of Ahimsa who are ready to initiate constructive work in their areas and willing to connect with us, please visit www.oraworldmandala.org.

60. See page 9.



Pranjivan Vidyarthi Bhavan, original campus of Gujarat Vidyapith University

After 13 years of experimenting with the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi between two geographical sides of the world—O*India and O*Mexico—we celebrated our unity in diversity through a collective Mandala peace action for spreading Ahimsa in Ahmedabad, O*India, and all around the planet. During the opening on January 30, Martyrs’ Day, we held a moment of silence in remembrance of Mahatma Gandhi.



Along with A-HOPE (Ahmedabad Harmonic Orchestra for Peace Everywhere), our inter-religious orchestra, we evoked the essence of all traditions with our emblematic “Sacred Chants” as well as with “Premal Jyoti”, the Gujarati version of “Lead Kindly Light”. Students of Bharatiya Bhasha Sanskriti Sansthan, the university’s language school, shared their international project, Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye, referring to one of the Mahatma’s favourite songs, which was sung in a variety of world languages. The Earth flag, donated by the agnostic community, was shining bright with its prayer for the respect of all life.



In the presence of our Honourable Chancellor and respected dignitaries, we released the book *OraWorldMandala. A Practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala*. Movement elders Swami Veditatmananda and Nisar Ahmed Ansari, accompanied by Sudarshan Iyengar, commented on the history and contents of the publication.



Left to right: Sonia Deotto, Swami Veditatmananda, Ela Bhatt, Nisar Ahmed Ansari, Sudarshan Iyengar, Anamik Shah and Rajendra Khimani

This is a guide to our peace experiment and the Proposed Method that has emerged from it: a world participatory theatre of human responsibility for peace and nonviolence.



Its pages present the practice of active nonviolence based on the understanding and development of the principles of the interdependence of the five elements and on community harmony, which together constitute the nature of the Mandala, an ancient archetype that combines the basic fundamentals of science and art in a single representation.



The Mandala is thus transformed into a method for conflict resolution, and Ahimsa, the means and the goal of the entire process.



The book offers a spark of hope by describing the possibility of transforming the whole planet into a Mandala moved by Ahimsa and inspired in the individual and collective transformation, as Mahatma Gandhi taught us through his own existence.



Offering fire, water, earth, air and space...



Together with the representatives of the twelve religious communities of Ahmedabad and the Bhils, we remembered the bond we have formed over the years, while the musical group Khalsa Roop Jatha sang the kirtan “Koi Bole Ram, Koi Khudai, Koi Sevai Gosaiya, Koi Allah Hai”.

Unplanned, joining of hands completed the full circle of our consciousness: that is the OraWorldMandala.



**With humility and sincerity in
our hearts, we brought with us
the Archive of the Earth...**



...to return the soils of O*India and O*Mexico to the Earth.



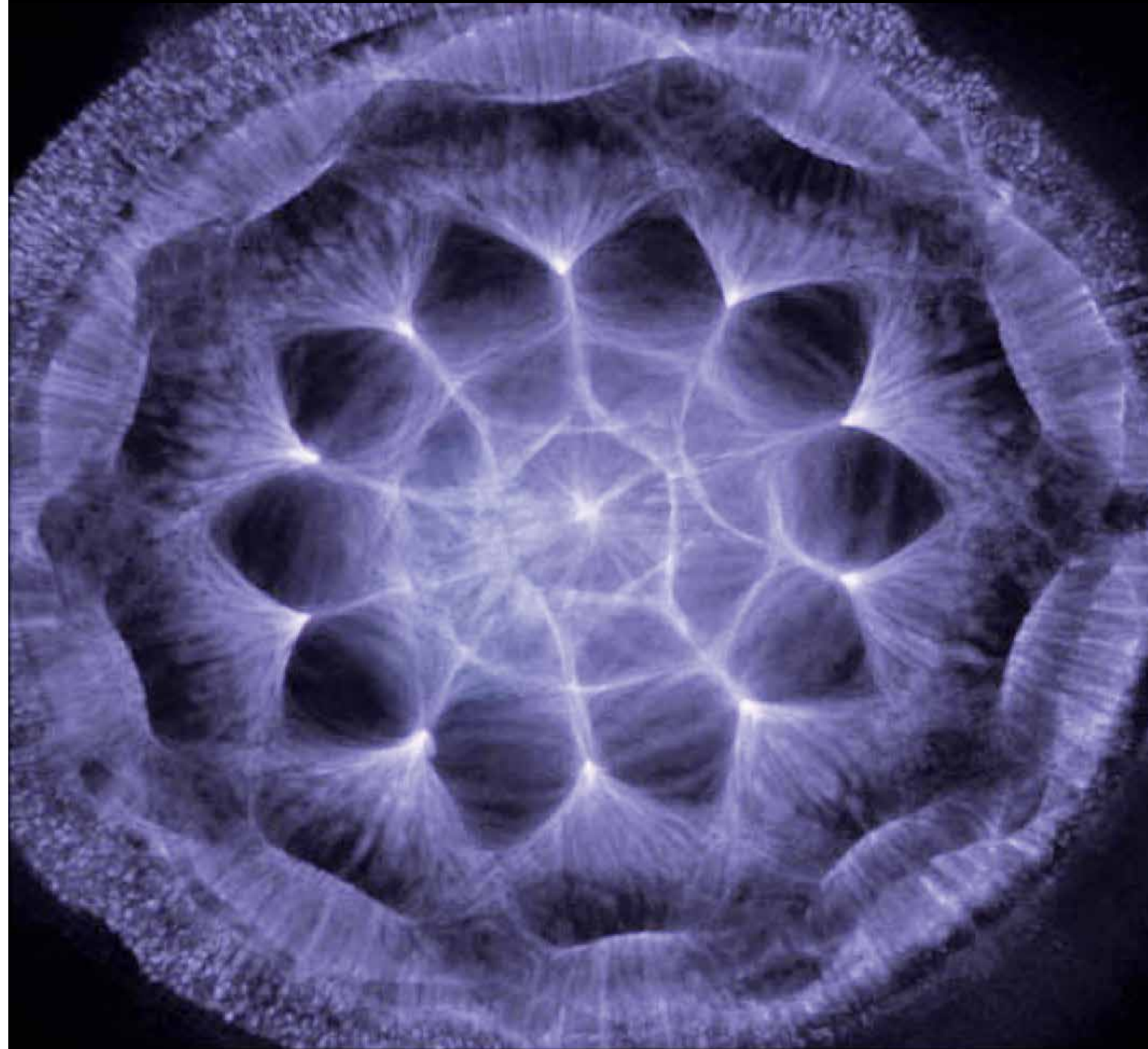


ORAWORLDMANDALA PROPOSED METHOD

We planted a banyan tree, which, just as we, will be nourished by the elements of life and by that which makes the invisible visible.

Within this dialogue between diverse species, Ahimsa manifests itself to make its journey towards the multiple horizons of the universe.

Water vibrating in a fifth harmonic
Harmonic Spectral Resonator >





**The time has come to
reconnect consciousness
with body and the human
continent with planet Earth.**

A Practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala

The compound name of *OraWorldMandala* reflects the need to communicate the intrinsic condition of the world as a “wheel of peace” and the real possibility of restoring it as such through Ahimsa, the hub of the Mandala wheel, according to the perception of ArtScience as a whole.

ORA: The use of the Latin term *ora* (“speak” or “communicate”, singular imperative of the verb *orare*)⁶¹ denotes the intention to urge human beings to regenerate their inner truth and its connection with the world and communicate it to others in the trust that its power can lead to a united world of peace, the World Mandala.⁶²

WORLD: Together with the element of space, which allows the world to exist and move, the four elements of earth, water, fire and air account for everything that is, lives and thinks. Supported by continents and oceans and sharing its resources with a great number of other living creatures stands a vast population of humans, the human continent. Different as they may appear, humans are united by the common nature of consciousness and the tremendous power of intention that can either create or destroy.

MANDALA: The core concept of the Mandala is central to both the ancient traditions East and West. It suggests a unitary vision of reality (uni-verse), macro and micro, beyond the dichotomy of centre and periphery, stasis and movement, being and becoming.

In many traditions Mandalas are made into offerings as a sign of welcome, respect and appreciation or as symbols of wholesomeness, peace and harmony. The OraWorldMandala too is an offering to all beings, serving as a reminder that we all depend on one another as well as on the kindness of our planet.

Based on this premise, the OraWorldMandala experiment, open to dialogue and suggestions for growth, was developed through the individual and collective application of research on the meaning of the Mandala as a

61. The Latin root of *orare* is *os* (singular), *ora* (plural), meaning “mouth” or “orifice”. In later ecclesiastic Latin, *orare* came to mean to “beg or plead to a deity”, hence to “pray”. Among the methods of prayer to bring us closer to God, we have oral, mental and mystical union. Oftentimes we feel the need to express in words the feelings of our heart: *ex abundantia cordis os loquitur* (“From an abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks”). In the advanced stages of mystical union with God or with the beloved, words are no longer necessary: “it goes without saying”, “words are superfluous”, “says more than a thousand words”, “I look at Him, and He looks at me”. My thanks to professor of Latin José Pascual Guzmán de Alba for his guidance and input on this point.

62. To retrace the path of the research/action that has given life to the World Mandala concept, please read anew the sections “The Matrix—A Mandala of Universal Love and Compassion” and “The Participatory Research Wheel—Rediscovering the World Mandala” in chapter I.

primordial vehicle for inner and social transformation while rediscovering its vital core in the principles of Ahimsa. The research and consequent actions have involved people from different cultures and backgrounds through discussions, interviews, group meetings, sharing of experiences and views, cycles of studies, analysis and production of documentation for the development of this process of cooperation.

During the “research in action”, nonviolent actions for peace and justice that embody the method of Mahatma Gandhi’s Constructive Programme were experimented. An elaboration of this structural correspondence is provided in the following pages.

The understanding of the OraWorldMandala as a “practice” is crucial to the design of the proposed method and its implementation. A constructor of Ahimsa is one who can say, as did Gandhi, “My life is my message”.⁶³

The concerted effort of framing the proposal of Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala is an interactive learning process that requires continuous improvements and adaptations to specific situations. The contents of the following proposal reflect present conditions.

ArtScience of Mandala

In the sacred Indian texts of the Rigveda,⁶⁴ the word *mandala* means “circle” in Sanskrit. The same word is rendered in Chinese as *man tuo luo*; in Japanese and Korean as *mandara*; and in Tibetan as *dkyil ’khor*.⁶⁵

Mandalas are described in detail in the ancient scriptures of the Hindu Agamas, in Buddhist Tantra and in the Jain tradition as pictorial representations of the universe.

Later, Mandalas were further developed by trained Tibetan teachers, who passed them down to the present day as a spiritual practice to reconnect with the primordial quintessence of being.⁶⁶ They are mostly represented as wall paintings, scroll-banner paintings (*thangkas*) and three-dimensional architectural structures (*stupas*). For significant cycles of teachings, Tibetan lamas meticulously trace sand Mandalas using coloured powders, which are undone afterwards as a reminder of impermanence.⁶⁷

The Navajo of North America, as well as several other native peoples, practise the same observance as a respectful restitution of the essence of the forces of nature.⁶⁸

But the Mandala is much more than a sacred space for ritual purpose. It is a collective heritage of humanity, a living diagram of the entire cosmos for the continuous transformation and reintegration of consciousness beyond time and space.⁶⁹

64. Please see the translation from Sanskrit to English by H. H. Wilson, Ravi Prakash Arya and K. L. Joshi, *Rgveda Samhita*.

65. Religious historian Mircea Eliade emphasises the Indo-Tibetan perspective of Mandala without omitting its relation with other cultures in *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*, especially in the chapter “Yoga and Tantrism”. A remarkable overview of sacred Indian art is also given by Heinrich Zimmer in the chapter entitled “Yoga and the Linear Sacred Image (the *Yantra* and the Mandala)” in his book *Artistic Form and Yoga in the Sacred Images of India. The Theory and Practice of the Mandala, with Special Reference to the Modern Psychology of the Unconscious*, written by Giuseppe Tucci after several expeditions to **O***Tibet, rebuilds theory and practice of Indian and Tibetan psycho-cosmographical representations. Elisabeth ten Grotenhuis examines the Japanese scenario in her book *Japanese Mandalas: Representations of Sacred Geography*. The Chinese approach to the concept of Mandala is addressed in Carl Jung’s commentary—particularly in the section “The Circular Movement and the Centre”—on the 8th-century manuscript of the Chin Tan Chao oral tradition, translated by Richard Wilhelm and published in English as *The Secret of the Golden Flower. A Chinese Book of Life*.

66. An explanation of the transmission of Mandala teachings is given in Namkhai Norbu’s *Dzog-Chen. Lo stato di auto-perfezione* (Dzog-Chen: the state of self-perfection), pages 33-35.

67. For more details, see *Mandala: Sacred Circle in Tibetan Buddhism* by Martin Brauen, and in the context of scientific studies of consciousness-related physical phenomena, see “Sandpainting and Survival”, pages 349-355, “Section V—Consolidation and Closure” in *Consciousness and the Source of Reality: The PEAR Odyssey* by Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne.

68. For the Lakota Native American perspective, read chapter 7, "Lakota Mandala", of Lakota Star Knowledge: Studies in *Lakota Stellar Theology* by Ronald Goodman.

69. A complete exploration of this from a Tibetan perspective is provided in *Le Mandala de l’expérience* (The mandala of experience) by the magazine *Dharma*,

63. Within the universe of Gandhian thoughts shared over his lifetime, “My life is my message” is among the most famous. According to first-hand testimonies, however, not until 1946-47 did he begin to use this statement, that is, not long before his assassination. For example, in February 1946 he addressed Britons from Poona, stating in his written missive that “My life is itself a message for the English people”. The *Hindustan Standard*, meanwhile, reproduced on September 7, 1947, Gandhi’s message to Shanti Sena Dal, which contained the now iconic phrase. That same year on November 29, Gandhi uttered “My life is my message” in his address to Majoor Mahajan workers (members of the Ahmedabad Textile Workers’ Union) and closed with “Blessings to all the labourers”. Please see *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, specifically vol. LXXXIII, p. 161 for "Message to British People", February 21, 1946; vol. LXXXIX, p. 156 for "Message to Shanti Sena Dal", September 7, 1947; and vol. XC, p. 131 for "Letter to Anasuya Sarabhai", November 29, 1947.

The Mandala appears in the iconography of different human cultures as an archetypal instrument of harmony that discloses as a whole the fundamentals of interdependence, synchronicity and resonance.

In the symbol of Tao, the two interconnected contrary forces, *yin* and *yang*, are enclosed by the circle suggesting the overcoming of duality and the victory of complementarity.

The Japanese Esoteric Buddhist tradition illustrates the worldly dimension of humans through the Diamond World Mandala, while the Womb World Mandala represents the reality of the unconditioned, the universal sacred world of deities. Yet, “Each mandala is fully meaningful ... only when paired with the other” and becomes the Mandala of Two Worlds.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, on the Western side of the globe, we find a Mandala in the Aztec calendar stone where the symbol of the fifth era—*ollin*—is framed by representations of the previous four eras.

The Mandala resides as well in the rose windows of Europe’s Gothic churches, where the artists represented the history of creation through images and figures that were converted into a source of light and a communion of colours and form. Although we cannot overlook the labyrinth of Chartres Cathedral, the crucifix in general is probably the most powerful Mandala that we can identify in Christianity: the sacrifice of the body is the centre and the cross is the four directions from which the essence spreads out and re-integrates into the eternal.

From another viewpoint, in the Mexican sierra of Durango, Jalisco, Nayarit and Zacatecas, the Wixaritari (also known as the Huichol people) construct—as part of their rites of passage—the *tsikiri* (God’s eye), a spiritual art installation reflecting the character of the elements through the

Wixárika vision of five directions that converge in a central one.⁷¹ This icon recalls the wind rose Mandala, with an additional orientation.

The *tjurunga* (*churinga*) in the Australian Aboriginal tradition is a “stone of return” of the ancestor’s dream, the return to the centre from which everything is derived and everything has been generated. It is a sacred object for spreading the ancient knowledge universally with the auspicious wishes of fertility and continuation of the species.

.....
La Voie du Bouddha.

70. From *Japanese Mandalas: Representations of Sacred Geography*, by Elisabeth ten Grotenhuis, page 37. For further study of the Diamond World Mandala, the Womb World Mandala and the Mandala of the Two Worlds, read chapters 3, 4 and 5.

71. More information on the God’s eye as spiritual art form can be found in chapter 6 of Carl Lumholtz’s *El arte simbólico y decorativo de los huicholes* (Symbolic and decorative art of the Huichols), pages 215–223. A *tsikiri* Mandala created during a Mandala peace action on the Cerro Quemado sacred mountain is pictured on page 116-117 of this manual.

These principles are also evoked by the primitive spiral present in African cultures, in Celtic symbolism, in a shell, in a flower and in the infinite expressions of nature on Earth and in space.⁷²

The oldest known example of a sacred mandalic architecture is the circular Neolithic temple of Göbekli Tepe in **O***Turkey dating back to the 10th millennium BCE, which, according to archaeologists, may rewrite the history of human settlements: spiritual pursuit rather than agriculture was the driving force behind humanity’s shift toward sedentariness, as groups first built a sacred structure as a territorial marker without entirely forgoing nomadism for social reproduction.⁷³

In modern times, through drawing and dreams of Mandalas, the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung recognised the Mandala as a “window on eternity” that draws the self back to the centre. This positive projection responds to the inner healing power expressed by the totality of the being and “corresponds to the microcosmic nature of the soul”.⁷⁴

From yet another perspective, the Mandala is in our eyes, starting from our pupil, light receptor and projector of the external reality through its own centre, a mirror of oneself reflected in the Sun. Or, as Goethe put it, “If the eye were not sun-like, it could not catch sight of the sun”.⁷⁵

By building a bridge between the Eastern connotation of this living archetype and the Western perception of its potential, these examples underline the power of the Mandala to unite and spread its light to the entire planet while invoking our call for peace to humankind.

The approach to the ArtScience of Mandala is taken from these worldviews, challenging the ordinary understanding of art as a skill acquired through knowledge and practice or as a creative discipline like music, dance or theatre, and science as a “knowledge based on observed facts and tested truths arranged in an orderly system”⁷⁶ or as a discipline such as mathematics, logic or medicine.

.....
72. There are many other interpretations on the mandalic character of the symbols included herewith. Please see, for example, José and Miriam Argüelles’ *Mandala* and Rüdiger Dahlke’s *Mandalas. Cómo encontrar lo divino en ti* (Mandalas: how to find the divine in you).

73. See "Modified Human Crania from Göbekli Tepe Provide Evidence for a New Form of Neolithic Skull Cult" by Julia Gresky, Juliane Haelm and Lee Clare (*Science Advances* 3, no. 6, June 28, 2016), available online: <http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/3/6/e1700564>.

74. To know more about Jung’s Mandala experiment, see the chapter “Confrontation with the Unconscious” in C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. On the specifics of the symbolism of Mandalas, see the chapter “The Symbolism of the Mandala” in his *Psychology and Alchemy*.

75. Quoted in *The Unknown in Art*, by Willi Baumeister, page 64.

76. Definition from the *World Book Dictionary*, 1996.

Both art and science are rooted in philosophy, from the different and complementary corners of the human being. Therefore, they belong to the same source.⁷⁷

In the Conclusion of Leo Tolstoy’s *What Is Art?* (1897), one of the books that inspired Mahatma Gandhi, the vision of interdependence between art and science is described as deriving from its correlations with truth: “Science and art are as closely bound together as the lungs and the heart, so that if one organ is vitiated the other cannot act rightly. True science investigates and brings to human perception such truths and such knowledge as the people of a given time and society consider most important. Art transmits these truths from the region of perception to the region of emotion. Therefore, if the path chosen by science be false so also will be the path taken by art”.⁷⁸

Nearly a century later, in 1979, arts scientist Joseph Beuys stated in an interview with Volker Harlan: “...we have art as the science of freedom, and as a consequence of this, we also have art as primary production or as the original, underlying production for everything else. Now this concept is apparently too lofty for many people; many object that not everyone can be an artist. But that’s precisely the point: to make the concept into one that once more describes the essence of being human, the human being as the expression of freedom, embodying, carrying forward and further evolving the world’s evolutionary impulse”.⁷⁹

Hence, in a mandalic vision of “an integrated structure organised around a unifying centre”,⁸⁰ there is not solely art or solely science as separate components of our reality, nor is there art *and* science. The use of the expression *ArtScience of Mandala*, where art and science are merged into a single word, acknowledges this statement of unity in the interdependence of all phenomena⁸¹ and a call for the awareness of belonging to the same Truth.

The ArtScience of the Mandala appears in the atom, in human beings and all creatures, in the Sun, the Moon, the galaxies. The deconstructing of the paradigms of division and separation is a way to redirect the human consciousness towards the primary state of peace and oneness:

Unfortunately we humans prefer to ignore this inescapable truth and in a desperate attempt to go against all evidence, we create imaginary solid, permanent, frozen mandalas. These imperfect mandalas do not flow freely and harmoniously with the energy of the universe, because at every step they are jammed by what we could describe as the “deadly glue” of greed, hatred and confusion, on the part of the “personal agendas” of individuals, organizations and entire social communities. In due course of time, these systems become frozen in space and/or in time to the point when they cannot function anymore and then, when the whole structure is completely out of sync with the perfect universal mandala, the systems erupt, tear off, and those ruptures manifest as crises, wars, devastating violence in the natural, social, political and economic structures. ... Art can be the fire that ignites the process of transformation—or should we say transmutation—from the imperfect to the perfect, leading to the fulfilment of the intrinsic purpose of the mandala.⁸²

77. For the inter-relation between art and science, see *XXIV Coloquio Internacional de Historia del Arte. Arte y Ciencia* (XXIV international colloquium on art history: art and science), edited by Peter Krieger. More information from a scientific viewpoint is given by Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne in section I—“Venues, Vistas and Vectors”, under “Consciousness and Creativity” in the book *Consciousness and the Source of Reality: The PEAR Odyssey*.

78. Leo Tolstoy, *What Is Art?*, page 201, available online: https://archive.org/stream/whatisart00tolsuoft/whatisart00tolsuoft_djvu.txt.

79. *What Is Art? Conversation with Joseph Beuys*, page 10.

80. In Longchenpa, cited by Linda A. Shkrelī in “Nature Mandalas: Performance Practice and Narrative Metaphor”, a chapter in the e-book *Spirituality: An Interdisciplinary View* (2016), page 146.

81. As Antonella Simonelli observes, in scientific terms “the mandala resolves the unity of appearance and emptiness, an equation that is expressed by quantum mechanics as the particle-wave simultaneity; this amazing non-dual nature of reality is in itself a Work of Art, the self-perfected aesthetics of the primordial dimension” (expressed in a conversation with the author). The first-ever photograph of light as both a particle and wave may be viewed at: <https://phys.org/news/2015-03-particle.html>.

82. From Antonella Simonelli, *The Way of the Mandala*, available on the OraWorldMandala website (www.oraworldmandala.org) under “Mandala”, available under Model of Education, then Reference Materials.



Leh, Ladakh, 2014
His Holiness the Dalai Lama inaugurating the Kalachakra Mandala sand offering⁸³

83. Werner Herzog's documentary *Wheel of Time* (2003) narrates the creation process of a Kalachakra Mandala. Available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8Og2bYsPTM>.

“All religions, arts and sciences are branches of the same tree. All these aspirations are directed towards ennobling man’s life, lifting it from the sphere of mere physical existence and leading the individual towards freedom.”
—Albert Einstein⁸⁴

84. Quoted in *Consciousness and the Source of Reality: The PEAR Odyssey* by Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne, page 22.

From Outer Space, a World Mandala

Uncountable types of Mandalas continuously permeate the universe during the course of its transformation. They generously guide the practitioner along the path of enlightenment and self-realisation. Even the perception of the simple observer will allow him or her to find them in the balanced geometric composition of everything.

Viewed from outer space, the Mandala of our World appears as a rotating bluish sphere in perfect equilibrium with earth, water, fire and air, the basic elements of life that manifest in many interconnected forms. This harmonious combination brings to mind memories of hope and beauty. A lonely tree offers its buds to the sky; the wind scatters ashes back to the earth while dancing tongues of young fire herald a new inception. Nothing is missing in the silent drifting in space. At the mercy of this enchantment, the mind surrenders to the unfamiliar happiness of peace.

**“The nature of the variety of phenomena is non-dual, >
Yet each phenomenon is beyond the limits of the mind.
The authentic condition ‘as it is’ does not become a concept,
Yet it manifests totally in form, always good.
All being already perfect, overcome the sickness of effort
And remain naturally in self-perfection: this is contemplation”.**⁸⁵



85. Namkhai Norbu and Adriano Clemente, *The Supreme Source: The Kunjed Gyalpo, the Fundamental Tantra of Dzogchen Semde*, page 174.

An Injured Planet

“It is not enough not to take another’s property without his permission. One becomes guilty of theft even by using differently anything which one has received in trust for use in a particular way, as well as by using a thing longer than the period for which it has been lent. It is also theft if one receives anything which one does not really need. The fine truth at the bottom of this principle is that Nature provides just enough, and no more, for our daily need.” —M. K. Gandhi⁸⁶

Under close scrutiny, the distant vision of a perfect planet becomes an unconcealed debacle. Life-giving forests yield to desolate lands; crowded mechanised urban spaces suffocate the atmosphere and fill the earth with poisoned garbage.

Rivers forced into altered courses produce flood and drought. Mountains carved by open-pit mining alter local geography and the life and wealth of local communities, engendering conflicts and social unrest.

Oceans turn into acid soups of micro-plastic debris that kill marine life. Our wise elders the whales rush to die on our beaches in despair. The Great Barrier Reef is dead, and others are doomed.

Genetically-modified foods are changing the life force of humans and animals. Polar caps and glaciers are melting into oceans of tears, threatening our coastal cities. Water wars loom ahead for humanity.

Harmful gases from machinery drill holes in the ozone layer, while microwaves from cell phones and towers slowly cook our flesh.

Technologies that enrich a few have long surpassed the pace of human adaptation, threatening our lives with a host of new diseases whose acknowledgement—if it ever comes—will be too late.⁸⁷

“One index of human impact is the extinction of species, now estimated to be at about the same rate as it was 65 million years ago when an asteroid hit the Earth. That is the presumed cause for the ending of the age of the dinosaurs, which opened the way for small mammals to proliferate, and ultimately modern humans. Today, it is humans who are the asteroid, condemning much of life to extinction.” —Noam Chomsky⁸⁸

86. M. K. Gandhi, "Satyagraha Ashram", June 14, 1928, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. XXXVI, pp. 399-400.
87. For an in-depth examination of this issue and consultation of current scientific findings, please see the following Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change publications: *Climate Change 2013. The Physical Science Basis*; *Climate Change 2014. Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part A: Global and Sectoral Aspects* and *Part B: Regional Aspects*; *Climate Change 2014. Mitigation of Climate Change*; *Climate Change 2014. Synthesis Report*. For an historic overview of long-term human abuse of natural resources and the impact of decisions on the survival or disappearance of civilisations, see Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed*.
88. “The End of History?” *In These Times*, September 4, 2014.

Burial of an unknown child,
Bhopal gas leak disaster,
O*India, 1984





“Pietas 1 —0° at 5000 metres”
Rhône Glacier, **O***Switzerland, 2015



“Pietas 4 —0° at 5000 metres”
Rhône Glacier, **O***Switzerland, 2017

A Mandala of Ahimsa, or a “Gandhian Mandala”

A Mandala of Ahimsa

In the Mandala, the idea of good and bad does not exist. Everything manifests as one totality. Our lives are a dynamic flow of constant change, “and every moment is an opportunity for transformation”.⁸⁹ To become conscious of our disease is the first necessary step in the healing of each other and the Earth.⁹⁰ Humankind has indeed acted as an aggressor, wounding the Earth with arrows of greed, competition, injustice and hatred. It is our responsibility and an imperative need to act for a restoration of the intrinsic harmony of nature and heal ourselves from the cause of violence.

Rediscovering the World Mandala of interdependence and resonance brings back the vision of a peaceful planet ruled by the spirit of cooperation among its inhabitants and consecrated to respect the elements and their different manifestations. Our body, too, inhabited by consciousness, consists of the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and space. This aspiration for peace and harmony is a way to locate ourselves on the map of awareness, a compass for preparing the self to struggle for the preservation of life. The creative power of intention is in our hands. We are all small units of self-integration in the same World Mandala.

The source of action dwells in the centre, the point of unity and perfection of the one and the multiple. From this point, a “spiral of regeneration” is traced by the power of Ahimsa—love in action for the respect of all forms of life. A Mandala of Ahimsa is a “world in progress” for the benefit of all beings.

The principle of Ahimsa originated in Jain, Buddhist and Hindu thought. But as a universal practice of compassion and unconditional love beyond cultures and frontiers, it has been applied in varying forms throughout human history by people of other traditions and creeds.⁹¹

89. Ravindra Varma constantly practised these principles and referenced them when addressing the topic of nonviolence. See footnote 23 on page 11 for more about him and his life.

90. Pancho Ramos Stierle recalls a poignant conversation during a recent session (September 2017) of the monthly seminar "Other Political Horizons", promoted by University of the Earth—Oaxaca: "A central line of reflection opened when two participants—a Maya sister and a Tarahumara brother—made us see that there are no words in Maya and Rarámuri to refer to what we commonly call 'health' or 'disease'. They said that, in any case, that condition was not an individual affair or was not related to a physical or mental state of a person; rather, they were disturbances of harmony in relationships in the community, whether between people or other living or non-living things, that could or may not manifest in the condition of any given person. The question offers very different angles of analysis, which we need to continue to explore. Among other things, it shows us the limitations of our current language, constructed and conditioned by the dominant regime. The path of emancipation will have to go through the construction of a new language." (from correspondence via email with the author).

91. To offer a concrete idea on the application of Ahimsa, I would like to mention the case of Ashoka the Great. In the inscription of the XIII Edict, the king praises the “Victory of Compassion”, “the higher among all human conquests”. The metamorphosis from war to peace embodied by King Ashoka’s transformation after the bloody battles for the conquest of Kalinga Kingdom (262-261 BCE) is a significant testimony of individual and political revolution. For a deeper understanding of King Ashoka’s edicts, see Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli’s *Gli editti di Asoka* (The edicts of Ashoka).



“The Earth does not belong to man; we belong to the Earth”.
—Chief Seattle, 1851

In modern times, Mahatma Gandhi said: “The principle of ahimsa is hurt by every evil thought, by undue haste, by lying, by hatred, by wishing ill of anybody. It is also violated by our holding on to what the world needs”.⁹² This declaration clearly underlines the fact that Ahimsa implies much more than non-injury or non-killing. It is a practice of purification from mental obsessions to the extent of sacrificing the self for the manifestation of the loving compassion treasured in our heart. This expression of “intention in action” implies true courage, conviction and firmness of mind and body.

In this regard, Gandhi defined Ahimsa as the “attribute of the brave” and applied this discipline himself with fearlessness and a conscious effort in all human affairs, from his personal life to the freedom movement against the British.⁹³ His profound aspiration of being a friend to the whole world entailed the constant attempt to conquer his opponent with love. He said: “Literally speaking, *Ahimsa* means ‘non killing’. But to me it has a world of meaning, and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher. It really means that you may not offend anybody; you may not harbour an uncharitable thought, even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. To one who follows this doctrine there is no room for an enemy”.⁹⁴

Narayan Desai⁹⁵ reminded us that these lessons on moral values can be understood by everyone, adding that one need not be a mahatma⁹⁶ to work under these principles. All of us can be “small mahatmas” in our self if we walk on the path of Truth, but thoughts, words and actions should be on the same straight line. We can start simply, with small experiments to which we should be faithful, and from this, we can try to ascend.⁹⁷ The “practice of Ahimsa” should become “living Ahimsa”. Ahimsa is a journey of self-discovery and self-realisation; it is not a static point.

92. “Letter to Narandas Gandhi”, July 28/31, 1930, in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. XLIV, page 58.

93. In *An Autobiography, or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Gandhi transmits the power of Ahimsa as manifested during transformative life passages.

94. Homer A. Jack, ed., *The Gandhi Reader: A Sourcebook of His Life and Writings*, page 138.

95. See footnote 44 on page 51 about Narayan Desai.

96. Sanskrit word for “Great Soul”.

97. Here we may allude to many small experiments that eventually became major through the clarity of human intention and determination. Among them is the story of Danilo Dolci and his work in Sicily for the creation of a civil front “for resistance without shooting” and several nonviolent actions organised with local volunteers of an educational project against the mafia and social injustice. The maieutic approach (Socratic method) is central to Dolci’s experiments and is highlighted in *Conversazioni contadine* (Farmer conversations), in which Dolci writes about his direct dialogue with Sicilian farmers of Partinico to understand their concerns and needs and grow together constructive reflections for a society free from violence and war. See also *Planning with the Poor: The Nonviolent Experiment of Danilo Dolci in Sicily*, Eliana Riggio Chaudhuri, and the illustrated biography *Danilo Dolci, Verso un Mondo Nuovo, Mediterraneo* (Danilo Dolci, towards a new Mediterranean world), by Alessio Surian et al.

With the understanding that the power of Ahimsa is in our grasp, through our “hands, heart and head”,⁹⁸ we can “one to one” begin the task of reverting the course of decadence that our planet follows. In this way, we can create together a spiral of regeneration drawn by all people who share belief in this possibility of a peaceful world and who are willing to explore their inner evolution, as well as to initiate change in their own families, communities and institutions along the way.

This spiral of regeneration will make us visualise that peace prevails on Earth, and those who are working against these fundamental needs are but a minority that cannot endure if all others do not cooperate with them.

This process of raising consciousness and re-humanisation represents the transformative engine for a Mandala of Ahimsa, a dynamic Mandala built on the foundation of action.

98. Reference to Gandhi’s education scheme called Nai Talim, or Basic Education (for all), which calls for the use of the three *h*’s—hands, heart and head—for the harmonious development of the individual. This pedagogical principle introduces knowledge and work as a united form of education. Gandhi wrote extensively on the subject: In particular, *Towards New Education* and *Village Swaraj* (pages 74-90) elaborate on a wide range of contexts and perspectives. See also *The Story of Nai Talim. Fifty Years of Education at Sevagram* (1937-1987) by Marjorie Sykes. Additionally, the history of Gujarat Vidyapith and its Nai Talim program is highlighted in number 20 of *Social Transformation through Nai Talim. Success Story Series of Nai Talim Institutions of Gujarat*, by Maganbhai, J. Patel. You may read an online excerpt of Gandhi’s vision, originally published in *Young India* in 1921, at <https://www.servicespace.org/about/gandhi/?op=arch&nid=39>.

**“*Ahimsa* is the means;
Truth is the end”.**
—M. K. Gandhi



A Gandhian Mandala

The human and social mission of OraWorldMandala is rooted in Ahimsa according to the philosophy of Gandhi. The vision of OraWorldMandala is represented through a pictogramme symbolising the planet as seen from outer space.

As a projection of the Mandala of Ahimsa, the central point represents Ahimsa, the radiant light of the power of action. It intersects with the whole and determines the eight interdependent thematic areas of action in which the OraWorldMandala operates for the collaborative and progressive creation of Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala proposal.

This Gandhian Mandala with Ahimsa at its centre invites transformation of the eight interdependent areas of the UN Action Programme for a Culture of Peace⁹⁹ that define its circumference, from institutional declaration of principles into life actions that imply an understanding of our real needs according to our capacities to fulfil them. In this perspective, words like *education, development, poverty, empowerment, justice, democracy, governance, dialogue, security, information*, and so on, will reflect, not the needs of a collapsing global system, but the vision of “constructors of Ahimsa” who are ready to overcome paralysis in the face of structural violence and instead serve a culture of peace at heart level, that is, with Ahimsa and Truth.¹⁰⁰

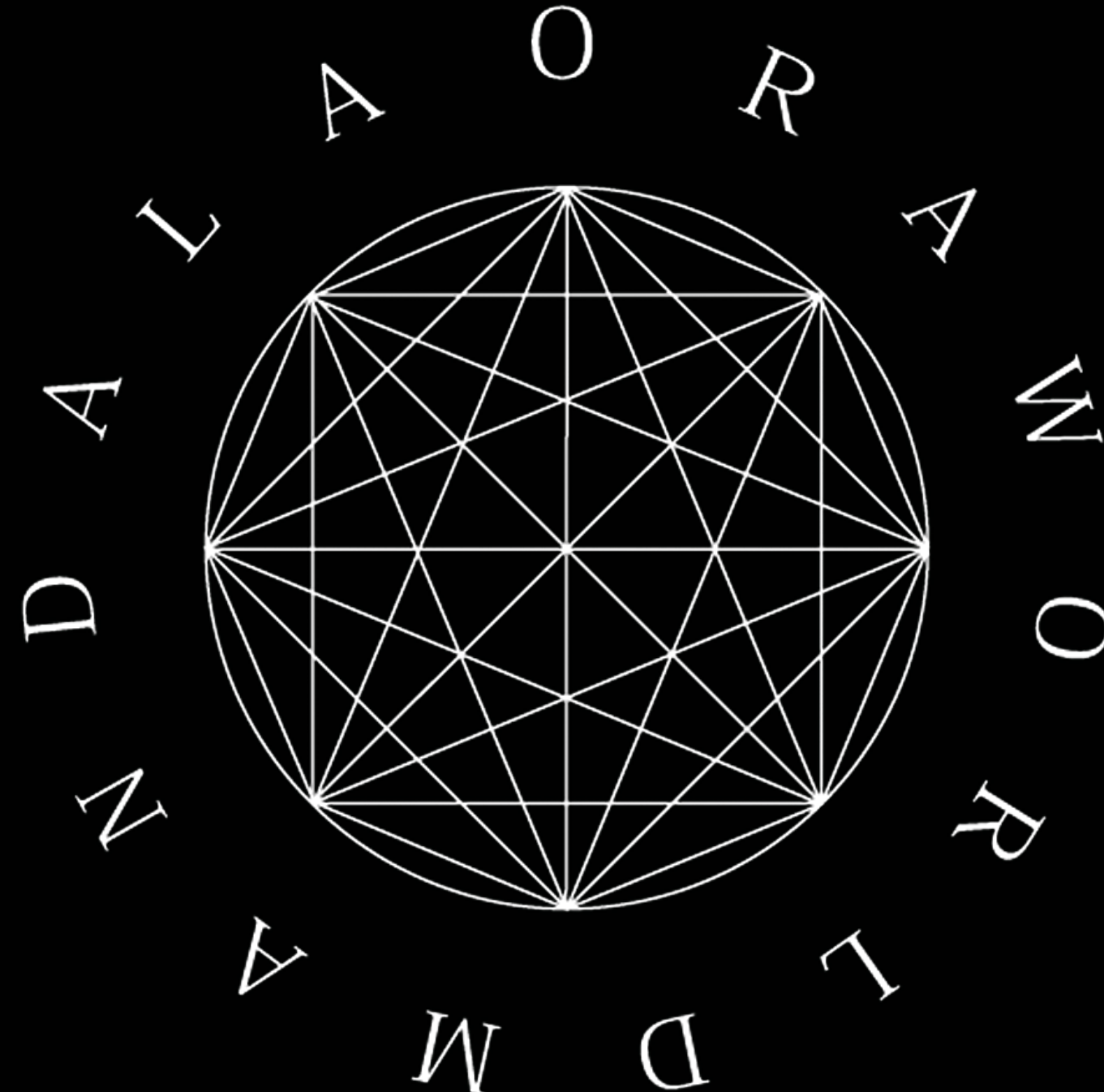
99. The areas of the UN Action Programme for a Culture of Peace are defined as having the following objectives: 1. Foster a culture of peace through education; 2. Promote sustainable economic and social development; 3. Promote respect for all human rights; 4. Ensure equality between women and men; 5. Foster democratic participation; 6. Advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity; 7. Support participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge; 8. Promote international peace and security.

The Programme was formulated on the basis of the UN Resolution A/53/243 approved on October 6, 1999. For its implementation, see the following UN document: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/709805>.

It is relevant to mention that the concept of nonviolence was integrated into the UN resolution declaring the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010: <http://www.un-documents.net/a56r5.htm>. For an extensive exploration on a Culture of Peace, see: <https://en.unesco.org/cultureofpeace/ressources>. See also *World Peace Through the Town Hall: A Strategy for the Global Movement for a Culture of Peace* by David Adams and *Cultura de paz. Fundamentos y claves educativas* (A Culture of peace: fundamentals and key educational points) by José Tuvilla.

100. In his numerous essays, the Austrian philosopher Ivan Illich (1926-2002) insistently addressed the dangers of industrial civilisation. In his text entitled *Tools for Conviviality* (1973), Illich wrote: “Society can be destroyed when further growth of mass production renders the milieu hostile, when it extinguishes the free use of the natural abilities of society’s members, when it isolates people from each other and locks them into a manmade shell, when it undermines the texture of community by promoting extreme social polarization and splintering specialization, or when cancerous acceleration enforces social change at a rate that rules out legal, cultural, and political precedents as formal guidelines to present behaviour. Corporate endeavours which thus threaten society cannot be tolerated. At this point it becomes irrelevant whether an enterprise is nominally owned by individuals, corporations, or the state, because no form of management can make such fundamental destruction serve a social purpose” (11). In *Energy and Equity* (1973), Illich reiterated his warning about the consequences of a possible global collapse of the industrial system: “But if ecologists are right to assert that nonmetabolic power pollutes, it is in fact just as inevitable that, beyond a certain threshold, mechanical power corrupts” (6). Both texts are available online: http://debate.uvm.edu/asnider/Ivan_Illich/Ivan%20Illich_Energy%20and%20Equity.pdf; https://monoskop.org/images/7/71/Illich_Ivan_Tools_for_Conviviality.pdf.

For specific analysis of real needs and capacities, please read “Deprofessionalize Ourselves” (<https://earthlingopinion.wordpress.com/2017/09/27/desprofesionalizarnos-deprofessionalize-ourselves/>) by Gustavo Esteva, “deprofessionalized intellectual” and founder of the University of the Earth—Oaxaca.



As noted by the Mahatma: “Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like the two sides of a coin, or rather of a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say which is the obverse, and which is the reverse? Nevertheless, Ahimsa is the means; Truth is the end”.¹⁰¹

Furthermore, Gandhi said that Truth (*Satya*) reached him naturally whereas he had to learn Ahimsa and other life values along the path in search of Truth, and that it was impossible to reach Truth without adhering to Ahimsa. The word for Truth in Sanskrit derives from the root *Sat*, meaning “existence”. Truth therefore incorporates the existence of the individual as well as of the whole universe. From this perspective, Truth and Ahimsa are melded in the power of action, a positive power that can “move mountains and change the soul of rocks and stones”.¹⁰²

Gandhi held that life teaches much more than written or spoken words do and that if we want a change in others and in society we must start with ourselves. Under this premise, there is no education without using together “hands, heart and head”, there is no development without considering all of its dimensions, there is no security without fearlessness, there is no equality without self-sacrifice, there is no tolerance without compassion, there is no information without ethics, and so on.

As a “practical idealist” (his definition), Gandhi believed that the problems of the world could be condensed into three categories: the problems of humans with themselves, with others and with nature. Truth—existence—is the connecting point of the three levels, yet all levels of problems are created by the individual. For this reason, Gandhi’s approach to these problems considered their interconnectedness and resonance in a holistic and practical way; for example, he could not conceive ethics as separate from economy. Another pillar of Gandhi’s belief was that if peace is our goal, then even the means have to be peaceful. In other words, he strongly believed that the end does *not* justify the means. The illness is in the system, not in the individual, and an individual who acts according to the system is a victim of the system.

Grounded in this empathetic *Satya-Ahimsa* viewpoint and taking Mahatma Gandhi as an exemplary case, the OraWorldMandala strives to utilise the power of Ahimsa to implement the eight areas of action previously mentioned and collectively build a dynamic proposal, adaptable to different scales, depending on the needs of the peace process. Thus, what we call the Mandala of Ahimsa may as well be called a Gandhian Mandala.

Based on this transformative process, the OraWorldMandala acts as a “world participatory theatre”, building bridges of reconciliation between divided realities and their differences. All participants, regardless of their culture, gender or personal beliefs, can be constructors of Ahimsa.¹⁰³

A constructor of Ahimsa is any individual who, through creativity and method, is educated and educates in Ahimsa, sharing with society his or her specific abilities—hands, heart and head—for the benefit and well-being of all.

The concept of a “world participatory theatre” counters the traditional idea of theatre as a fictional space of drama¹⁰⁴ and acknowledges all of us as actors of human and social change on the global stage, striving for a culture of peace and Ahimsa so needed by the planet.¹⁰⁵

103. To recapitulate the process of collective creation of the Gandhian Mandala vision, please review the sections “The Participatory Research Wheel—Rediscovering the World Mandala” and “Research in Action—The Beginning” in Chapter I.

104. To visualise the principal parameters of the classic conception of theatre from an architectural perspective, see Fabrizio Cruciani’s *Arquitectura teatral* (Theatrical architecture).

105. As Alejandro Jodorowsky says in his book *Psychomagic: The Transformative Power of Shamanic Psychotherapy*, “If the objective of other arts is to create oeuvres, the goal of theater is specifically to change man. If theater is not a life science, it cannot know how to be an art” (page 38).

101. M. K. Gandhi, “Letter to Narandas Gandhi”, July 28/31, 1930, in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. XLIV, page 59.

102. Narayan Desai, *Gandhi Katha. Ciudad de México* (Gandhi Katha. Mexico City), 2d session at MUAC-UNAM.

Recalling the melancholic words of Antonio, from Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*, “I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano, / A stage where every man must play a part, / And mine a sad one”. As an antidote, however, we would like to conclude with Mahatma Gandhi: “Let us not leave everything to destiny, nor be vain about our endeavour. Destiny will take its own course. We should only see where we can intervene or where it is our duty to do so, whatever be the result”.¹⁰⁶

106. M. K. Gandhi, "A Thought for the Day", March 17, 1945, in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. LXXIX, p. 433. I would like to thank Dina Patel for providing this citation and for alerting me to the erroneous attribution of “Be the change you wish to see in the world” to Gandhi. Originally we planned to use the well-known phrase, and Dina Patel generously prevented us from committing such a widespread mistake by sharing part of her knowledge on the subject. This same scholar, in November 2011, addressed the faulty attribution of the phrase to Gandhi under the following fundamentals: "About the so-called quote of M. K. Gandhi: 'Be the change you wish to see in the world': 1. No, this so-called quote *does not seem* to be Gandhiji's; 2. So far, it has not been found in the authentic sources like the CWMG; 3. Gandhiji's style involves qualifying a remark; and placing it in a certain situation; 4. He would speak for himself and sometimes ask his reformer associates to do a certain thing or not; but would not issue dictates of a general kind; and he would *not* leave the word open for *any* interpretation to be attached; 5. He used the word 'change' in several different contexts; but the 'change' to be the real change for the reformer, he would qualify in many ways: change of attitude, change of heart, change brought about without conviction, change brought about by pure/impure means, change without being accompanied by corresponding effort, etc. **And all these uses of the word 'change' had different moral connotations**; 6. In this so-called quote, the construction is in the 'preaching' mode; it does not qualify 'change' as such, and therefore, would include any change in its definition; and this construction puts focus on 'change' per se; and this is, therefore, not Gandhiji's style; 7. Thus, this is a preachy, simplistic and general statement; and the focus is on 'change' per se, 'change' which is not qualified, as if 'change' is itself a moral entity; 8. When Gandhiji said something, he always qualified it and referred to it for a specific situation, specific instance, specific condition, specific goal; and he invariably placed the matter in a moral/ethical framework; 9. And he addresses a reform to himself per se, which may or may not impact the other person; 10. Therefore, **'Be the change ...' sentence cannot be said to have been formulated by Gandhiji**; 11. It is possible that some person expressed his/her perception, his/her understanding of Gandhiji in these words, and that expression found its way in circulation, dropping the tag of the original author of that expression, and mis-attributing the same to Gandhiji."



First Mandala peace action of the world participatory theatre,
April 23, 2005, Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram, Ahmedabad

From Macro to Micro



**Each of us cannot prosper unless All of us prosper.
Sarvodaya can be reached only through Ahimsa,
the necessary practice for a World Mandala.**

As mentioned in the introductory section, the participatory nature of the proposal—a collaborative and progressive construction of the Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala—is a synergistic learning process for constructors of Ahimsa that implicates constant development in its formulation. For this reason it cannot be a framed and rigid equation of schematic ideas but rather the heartfelt search of individuals who believe in the power of love in action. As Gandhi once said, “Thought is never complete unless it finds expression in action”.¹⁰⁷

At a macro level, the co-creation of this proposition refers to the Gandhian Mandala approach and contents illustrated in the previous section.

Moving from macro to micro, the application and workable nature of the eight interdependent thematic areas that place Ahimsa at their centre is made possible through the principles and action plan defined in the Constructive Programme,¹⁰⁸ Gandhi’s nonviolent action guide for the autonomy of the people and the rebuilding of a just, decentralised and self-sustainable society. Through the Constructive Programme, Gandhi visualised the method of creating a new social order, which he called “Sarvodaya”¹⁰⁹ (from Sanskrit *Sarva*, meaning “all”, and *Udaya*, meaning “uplift”; in other words, the “upliftment of all”). Inspired by the poet John Ruskin’s book on economics, *Unto This Last*,¹¹⁰ Gandhi developed the Sarvodaya concept as a social order based on simple life and equality under which all human dimensions could flourish in accordance with the principles of Truth and Ahimsa.¹¹¹ In the Sarvodaya world, there is no peace without justice, no rights and duties as absolutes; it encompasses the individual, social, economic, political and spiritual dimensions.

107. M.K. Gandhi, “Discussion with Ian Stephens”, April 7, 1946, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. LXXXII, page 153.
108. In Hindi, *Rachnatmak Karyakram*, which can be translated literally as “creative programme”.
109. For further exploration, see *Sarvodaya. Its Principles and Programme* by M. K. Gandhi and *Sarvodaya (The Welfare of All)* by M. K. Gandhi, edited by Bharatan Kumarappa. A comprehensive description of Sarvodaya is given by Kanti Shah in the book *Gandhi’s ‘Hind Swaraj’. A Fresh Look*.
110. *Unto This Last* was initially published as essays in *Cornhill* magazine in 1860. After heavy criticism by magazine subscribers, in 1862 Ruskin collected the essays in book form. Gandhi read the book only at the beginning of 20th century, during his time in **O***South Africa. He writes about the life-changing effects of the book in the chapter “The Magic Spell of a Book” from *An Autobiography, or The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, pages 248-250. He highlighted three main points of the book: 1. The good of the individual is contained in the good of all; 2. Everyone’s work is equally precious because everyone has equal right to exist; 3. A life of labour (i.e., the life of the ploughman and the craftsman) is the life worth living. Only after embodying these and understanding through a life change, Gandhi translated and adapted the book into Gujarati, titling it *Sarvodaya*, a term he coined especially for the translation. *Ruskin: Unto This Last, A Paraphrase* by M. K. Gandhi is available online: <http://www.mkgandhi.org/untothislast/untothislast.htm>.
111. The founder of the Community of the Ark, Lanza del Vasto-Shantidas (Mahatma Gandhi gave this name to Lanza), on the basis of his experiments with simple life, truth and nonviolence, stated: “Esta simplicidad puede volverse el último refugio de una civilización y la fuente de una renovación” (This simplicity may become the last refuge of a civilisation and source of renewal). Cited in *Lanza del Vasto o la experimentación comunitaria* (Lanza del Vasto, or community experimentation) by Frédéric Rognon, page 40.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Gandhi implemented the Constructive Programme for the empowerment of communities through local nonviolent actions of social transformation in different fields, such as health and hygiene, eradication of addiction, women’s empowerment, preservation of native languages, basic and adult education, and others. The actions were identified as “constructive works” as they led to the regeneration of people’s power through awareness of their cultural, social and economic resources. This restoration of human dignity was possible only through harmonious coexistence reflected in a social Mandala of unity in diversity. This, indeed, is the reason why Gandhi considered communal unity to be the first fundamental step of the Constructive Programme.

In order to understand the meaning of “communal unity”, it is necessary to contextualise it historically and geopolitically. As we know, **○***India, the second-most populated country in the world, is considered a microcosm of all religions. The challenge of respecting multiplicity represents an everyday exercise for Indians that unfortunately may not always be successful. In 1915, when Gandhi returned to **○***India after his lengthy social struggle in **○***South Africa, he understood that people were compartmentalised in their own religious creeds, a condition rooted in communalism,¹¹² which was impeding the understanding that they, the people of **○***India, possessed the power and ability to liberate themselves from British domination.

We, like Gandhi, must understand that the achievement of communal unity or communal harmony, to which the Mahatma devoted his life, continues to be the master key for the renewal of the Constructive Programme in **○***India beyond the political goal of independence. However, to embrace a greater array of different historical and geopolitical contexts, we may substitute the concept of communal unity with the term *community unity* and thus reaffirm that the same challenge must be addressed elsewhere on the planet to rebuild a peaceful and just society.¹¹³

The Constructive Programme, which was under experimentation for more than twenty years before being finalised as an historical document in 1941, was designed to provide the necessary discipline and training to the constructive workers who would apply nonviolent civil disobedience.

112. Defined in *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 10th ed., as: “Loyalty to a sociopolitical grouping based on religious or ethnic affiliation”. For more details on communalism, see M.K. Gandhi, *Programa Constructivo. Su significado y lugar*, pages 7-8.

113. A collection of essays of different religions and perspectives address the matter of communal identity in *Communal Identity in India. Its Construction and Articulation in the Twentieth Century*, edited by Bidyut Chakrabarty. Another book on the subject is *Gandhi and Communal Harmony*, edited by Asghar Ali Engineer. To retrace an essential part of Indian history on communalism, read “*Going to Wipe Their Tears*” by Pyarelal Nayar. The book describes the tremendous inner power of Mahatma Gandhi to face the peace mission in riot-affected areas of Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar and Delhi during 1946-47, “...when like a Titan he rushed from one danger spot to another”, in the words of Pyarelal. Further evidence of communal violence determined by Indian Partition is given in *Train to Pakistan* by Khushwant Singh, with 1947 photographs by Margaret Bourke-White.

In his foreword to the Constructive Programme, Gandhi calls it a tool “to build up the nation from the very bottom upward”.¹¹⁴ Satyagraha (from Sanskrit: *Satya*, or “Truth”, and *Agraha*, “Insistence or Force”) was his direct action to fight injustice, a method that was possible only through purifying one’s mind, inner transformation and training in the day-to-day of the Constructive Programme.¹¹⁵ So, while Satyagraha was dismantling the old and unjust structures along the path to total independence, constructive works developed by people were making real the “India of their dreams”.¹¹⁶ To Gandhi, the training of ethical satyagrahis (practitioners of Satyagraha) in the spirit of self-sacrifice for the greater good of society, including the good of the opponent, was fundamental to the success of a direct action. To educate, cultivate and train in the conquest of self-centredness, Gandhi proposed eleven vows to be followed by satyagrahis. Truth and Ahimsa are among the first of these vows.¹¹⁷ The eleven vows are considered among the main pillars for the self-realisation of the satyagrahi. They are like lyrics of the “chant of the memory” to awaken the forces that exist within us: the Love force, the Truth force and the Soul force.¹¹⁸

Yet, the Mahatma developed the Constructive Programme as a permanent guide of application and enrichment, reaching far beyond the independence of his nation. In it, education plays a crucial, long-term role, and thus Gandhi introduced a “new or basic education” that involved the use of hands, character building and intellectual preparation for future generations.¹¹⁹

With this perspective of creative Ahimsa proposed through the Constructive Programme, the OraWorldMandala experiment takes place at a level of self-managed entities working in rural and urban contexts. Every local entity contributes actively in the planetary process of raising awareness and re-humanisation. Therefore, each entity is a fundamental part of the spiral of regeneration of the human consciousness that resonates in its interconnection with other entities for the recovery of the vision of a World Mandala of interdependence and oneness.

114. M. K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place*, page 3.

115. The first Satyagraha is described by Gandhi in his book *Satyagraha in South Africa*. For further analysis, see *Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 2: *The Discovery of Satyagraha—On the Threshold* and vol. 3: *The Birth of Satyagraha—From Petitioning to Passive Resistance*, by Pyarelal. See also *The Spiritual Basis of Satyagraha* by Ravindra Varma. The book *The Gandhian Iceberg*, by Chris Moore-Backman, offers an accessible, contemporary and comprehensive exploration of Satyagraha.

116. Allusion to “*India of My Dreams*”, a compilation of Gandhi’s expectations for Post Independent India.

117. “There is a suggestion in Vishvanath’s letter that every week I should write and send a discourse to be read out at prayer time. ... Here is something for this week. ... I deal first with truth, as the Satyagraha Ashram owes its very existence to the pursuit and the attempted practice of truth”. *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. XLIV, page 40.

This and other discourses on the ashram vows, known as Ekadash Vrat in Hindi and Gujarati, were contained in the letters dispatched every week to Narandas Gandhi, secretary of the ashram, words written to encourage and inspire the ashramites. They first appeared in book form under the title *Mangal Prabhat* (auspicious morning). The translation is reproduced in *From Yeravda Mandir*, with a few changes to bring it into conformity with the Gujarati. Gandhi states in the preface to the booklet that he had gone through it carefully and revised the translation in places. Those interested in reading the original text may refer to *From Yeravda Mandir*, Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad. Various other editions are also available: <http://www.navajivantrust.org>.

118. Gandhi used the three characteristics of the inner force interchangeably.

119. To educate all faculties, mental and physical, into skilled work (previously described as Nai Talim).

These entities are set up by volunteers acting as constructors of Ahimsa, who personally invite others to a “one-to-one” communication to participate in the co-creation of Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala.

Yet, OraWorldMandala is not an organisation. Since it has no fixed base or hierarchical structures, the constructors of Ahimsa are people who intend to experiment with the power of nonviolence in their own environments to overcome conflicts, fears and barriers prevailing in today’s society. They are aware that through the spirit of service it is possible to raise awareness, come together and peacefully struggle for a better present and future.

At a micro level, the ongoing proposal presents two principal stages:

1. “Reconciliation through Ahimsa” consists of the co-creation of a “five elements Mandala” installation/representation as a result of the peace process initiated by the constructors of Ahimsa together with their communities for the establishment of a “social Mandala of unity in diversity”. It relies on the recovery of the community’s inner culture and tradition and portrays the climax of the individual and collective practice of Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala. In this way the making of the Mandala becomes the vehicle of self- and collective realisation for the prevention or overcoming of conflicts as well as for the strengthening of community unity.
2. “Ahimsa for Sarvodaya” consists of the activation of creative constructive works developed by local actors thanks to the Ahimsa experience acquired in the previous stage. The constructive works emerge as a consequence of community unity, and their typology depends on the specific community’s vision and its basic needs. With the ultimate goal being people’s autonomy in creating an equal and just society to the benefit of all (Sarvodaya), the constructive works are self-managed and self-supported, thus reaffirming Gandhi’s belief that the means are the ends. Only persistent commitment to their implementation can sustain the path towards autonomy.

In a contingency of resistance, having undergone the two stages, communities are prepared to face Satyagraha in their own way and struggle peacefully to protect their environment, community and dignity and ensure respect. As Mahatma Gandhi wrote at the conclusion of the Constructive Programme, “My handling of Civil Disobedience without the constructive programme will be like a paralysed hand attempting to lift a spoon”.¹²⁰

120. M. K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place*, page 29.

First Stage. Reconciliation through Ahimsa: The Making of a Peace Mandala

The first stage of the peace process initiated by a constructor of Ahimsa is known as the “Reconciliation through Ahimsa” and mainly focuses on the participatory building of a common platform for peace and nonviolence.

As stated earlier, community unity is the basis of the Constructive Programme. According to Gandhi, “Everybody agrees on the necessity of this unity. But not everybody understands that unity does not mean a political unity which may be imposed. It means an unbreakable heart unity”.¹²¹ Referring to inter-religious dialogue, which is historically considered the most critical problem of **O***India, the Mahatma was saying that we must cultivate personal friendships with individuals from faiths other than our own, as well as those without one,¹²² and thereby create a happy environment without barriers and separation. Taking this teaching as a universal assumption, we can easily realise that the achievement of a state of community unity promotes the same dynamics of loving and sharing as provided by the family.

To become a family, therefore, is to put into practice Ahimsa and implies reconciliation with oneself, reconciliation with nature and reconciliation with others. It is a process of self-transformation to purify our heart and, in harmony with nature, unite with other beings under the principles of love and equality. Since we all have this spark of Truth—*Satya*—in ourselves, even the most hardened criminal will have something positive within. To trust in others and see the good in all people make us mirrors of positivity and hope.

Another approach to the essence of reconciliation is the practice of *Seva*, Sanskrit for “selfless service”, an act of unconditional love. For Gandhi, spirituality began through serving others, especially the downtrodden. He held that “Our earth is like a particle of sand in this vast universe. On that particle of dust we are, so far as our bodies are concerned, mere specks... Death means nothing but the soul leaving the body. Why should we fear it, then? Why all this desperate struggle to delay its coming? Let us all, grown up and young, ponder over this constantly and give up the fear of death, and, while the body lasts, spend it in the service of others”.¹²³

Gandhi, while on the path of *Satya-Ahimsa*, was very mindful of mistakes. He believed that when we do something wrong, we must amplify its remembrance because our tendency is to minimise our mistakes and inflate the mistakes

121. M. K. Gandhi, *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place*, in the chapter “Communal Unity”, page 6.
122. An example of a successful collaboration between Gandhi and a non-believer is recorded in *An Atheist with Gandhi* by G. (Gora) Ramachandra Rao, written in 1951.
123. M. K. Gandhi, “Lesson on Death”, May 30, 1932, in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. XLIX, page 496.

of others. Yet, when the mistake is clear, we must, rather, share it with others and feel in our heart the loss of Truth that caused us to err. Then, we must repent and ask for forgiveness with the clear intention of not repeating the same mistake. This exercise denotes great humility and a deep desire for reconciliation with the whole of one’s self and one’s world.¹²⁴

Reconciliation through Ahimsa, the first stage in the peace process, can basically be described in seven main steps.¹²⁵

1. Foundation of the “core group”

The constructor of Ahimsa starts the peace process in communion with a core group of volunteers consisting of his or her nearest fellows. This is an expression of *Swadeshi*, a word derived from Sanskrit that combines *Swa* (“Self” or “own”) and *Desh* (“country”). Aside from the political meaning of *Swadeshi* during the independence movement (interdependence of community and self-sufficiency), Gandhi gave to this word a more ample meaning. He argued that *Swadeshi* means to begin by serving the people nearest you and gradually expand the horizon to others.¹²⁶

Along the same lines, the constructor of Ahimsa invites his or her closest people, identified among family, neighbours, friends, companions, associates, partners, to take together a first step on the path of peace when need arises to overcome social conflicts of common concern. Diversity among the core group members regarding their ways of thinking, their beliefs or their ideas will enrich the seed platform of “unity in diversity”.¹²⁷

As in the case of the initiator—that is, the constructor of Ahimsa—the involvement of these core individuals begins with their intention to support a certain cause with their abilities, ideas or available time and eventually becomes a process of self-transformation.

2. Analysis of social conflicts

The core group begins an analysis of local conflicts that may be transformed during the peace process. A study of the socio-historical context—and the eventual presence of multiple related conflicts—in which the core group intends to operate will guide the selection, decided by a majority in a team effort. For example,

124. Narayan Desai elaborates on this idea in the first session of the *Gandhi Katha. Ciudad de México* (Gandhi Katha. Mexico City).

125. To fully understand the procedure, the reader may find it useful to revisit the “Archive of the Earth” Mandala peace action before analysing the seven steps.

126. Chapter 16, “Swadeshi”, from *From Yeravda Mandir* by M. K. Gandhi. In addition, see page 40 of *Village Swaraj* by M. K. Gandhi.

127. To learn about Gandhi’s concept of “unity in diversity”, see *Gandhi’s India: Unity in Diversity*.

during times of political conflict it is essential to analyse the implications that the choice of a specific conflict will have. However difficult this may be, it is important to maintain the (pure) intention to transform suffering into a collective and constructive catharsis. As Rumi says, “The wound is where the Light comes in”. The development of the Mandala will invariably bring diverse aspects of the situation to the centre. This method naturally provides a holistic approach to the issues at hand. Some social conflicts are publicly evident. In such cases, the core group may decide whether to work on them directly or indirectly through similar local conflicts.

In the urban context it is advisable to confine the area of action to a neighbourhood or district. Circumscribing local conflicts in a limited area facilitates the process of raising awareness and re-humanisation.

3. Identification of key players, the “pillars”

This is the stage where the core group identifies a list of people and/or groups/communities/institutions—the “pillars”—to be invited to participate in the Mandala peace action from different social realities of the area, including opponents in the identified conflict. These include social, educational, economic, political, religious, ethnic, artistic, scientific leaders who are involved directly or indirectly in the conflicts that need to be overcome. The selection of pillars should result in a balanced composite in order to create a platform for community unity that can expand alliances in the Reconciliation through Ahimsa stage.

4. Invitation to participate

The core group goes door to door inviting the identified pillars to participate in the co-creation of the script of the Mandala peace action. This act follows the same personalised “one-to-one” modality through which the members of the core group were invited by the constructor of Ahimsa to be part of the experiment.

Gandhi taught us that we learn more from our heart than from our head. This assumption is a source of inspiration for using the language of love—Ahimsa—in the invitation. If peace is the objective, the means to reach it must be peaceful too. If we desire a just society, the means must be just. It is the law of cause and effect: the means influence the end.¹²⁸

128. As the satyagrahi Pancho Ramos Stierle states, “If you want to be a rebel, be kind”. To learn more about Ramos Stierle, a contemporary example of love in action, see <http://www.dailygood.org/story/127/if-you-want-to-be-a-rebel-be-kind/>.

This awareness infuses the core group with a desire to work for nonviolent communication¹²⁹ and to establish a dialogue with the pillars based on the contents of the *Satya-Ahimsa* vision and mission. It becomes a synergistic training to sharing the proposed method and expanding the peace movement in the group’s living area and all the way to the other side of the world. Being part of a world experiment for the integration of opposites—represented by the **O***India-Mexico axis¹³⁰—is also a way to expand the vision and overcome fear and scepticism. One of the strategies adopted by Gandhi in his work against violence was to build a larger movement that allowed people to forget their smaller, local violent incidents.

Depending on synchronicity, empathy and resonance, the pillars decide their involvement in the experiment. The core group must be ready to accept any outcome and not take negative responses as personal. Far from a symbolic performance, the Mandala action is a step-by-step practice of Ahimsa. *Satya-Ahimsa* will surely prevail.

5. Co-creating the script of the peace action

Through conscious listening and constant recalling of Ahimsa—the centre of the Mandala—the core group facilitates the collaborative creation of the peace action’s script with the pillars who accepted to participate in the Mandala peace action. The script emerges from the dialogue among the different parts, guided by the core group, which serves as “spokesperson”. Unless specifically requested by the parts, there is no physical encounter among the pillars during the script’s elaboration. The action, rather, will mark the gathering of the heart, a cathartic resonance to heal miscommunication, hatred and misunderstanding. Its culmination will occur in the last sequence of the Mandala making, the collective representation of the five elements in a three-dimensional Mandala or a conceptual representation of the same. This will be the converging and unifying action among the different participants.

The elaboration of the script consists of an ongoing proposal of actions, reflections, moments of silence, declarations, dances, sharing of food, processions, songs and so on, performed by the pillars and their representatives. Each group, community, movement or institution decides the modalities of its active participation in the Mandala peace action. Every dynamic is the result of a self-organised community effort, a reflection of its vision and its inner resources. There are no external sponsors or factors involved in the Mandala peace action. The local spirit of cooperation is the only engine of the experiment and as such, becomes a rediscovered treasure belonging to the community.

As previously mentioned, the final sequence of the script rests in the co-creation of a five-elements Mandala installation/representation. This step of designing a script, however, goes beyond simply defining a chronological order of the action, such as declarations, songs, etc., all of which are components of the peace message and the dialogue among the parts. More than this, it is a collective creation of a “work of art” that reflects a tangible manifestation of the Reconciliation through Ahimsa process.¹³¹ The core group plays a key role as the harmoniser and mediator among the social actors in the definition of the idea that will give shape to the work of art. The Mandala can take shape as an explicit installation of the five elements created during the peace action or a more conceptual representation of the ArtScience of Mandala, as described in previous sections. Its materialisation will be a rediscovery of the local tradition and will depend on the cultural backgrounds of the different participants. The central part of the Mandala installation/representation will be the key to the design and development of the “work of art”, as it will reflect the common intention of the different participants to transform conflicts into a tangible expression of love and forgiveness.

Last but not least, the identification of the place of action is a structural element of the script’s elaboration. The choice should reflect the collective vision of peace and nonviolence, a place of common empathy. Selection will determine the dynamics and logistics of the Mandala at the time of action and mark in the area the historical antecedent of the peace process. It can be a peaceful location or a place that needs to be transformed into a positive public reference.

The same approach should be taken for the selection of the date of action. It should be a day that facilitates the participation of all and, if possible, one that may come to symbolise the sentiments of peace and nonviolence. This is another crucial decision taken by the parts during the development of the experiment.

6. Building bridges with civil society and the local educational system

As the pillars start to mobilise their communities for the preparation of the Mandala peace action, other people or groups come to know about the project. This is an opportunity to invite or include other realities and build bridges with civil society. It marks the point in time when the co-creation of the action becomes more inclusive and participatory as the core group, together with the pillars, work together to integrate new partners and consequently elaborate new sequences of the script.

129. Marshall B. Rosenberg proposes a nonviolent approach for staying connected with our compassionate nature based on his life process in *Nonviolent Communication. A Language of Life*.
130. As discussed on page 8.
131. Leo Tolstoy asserted that to understand what art is, we have to look to life because art is a vehicle for sharing human feelings. In the book *What Is Art?*, page 106, he writes: “Universal art arises only when some one of the people, having experienced a strong emotion, feels the necessity of transmitting it to others”. This assertion leads one to view the Mandala as a useful art at the service of human feelings, an act of disobedience against the art of human decline. Fernando Castro Flórez offers a critical analysis of the general status of art today in *Contra el bienalismo. Crónicas fragmentarias del extraño mapa artístico actual* (In opposition to the bienales: Scattered chronicles of the strange current artistic map).

At this point, the community inevitably suggests the inclusion of children. With the pillars and civil society, the core group can approach the local educational system and invite schools to participate in the Mandala peace action. The collaborative creation of a platform for community unity is a concrete and powerful educational message to be transmitted to children. Workshops on the interrelationships and interconnectedness of all creatures of the planet are instruments to produce paintings, sculptures, written messages, installations, etc. that can be used as backdrops and props for the peace action. In this manner, the children become the set designers of the Mandala.¹³²

Also high schools, colleges and universities are invited to participate in the experiment through the development of new parts of the script. Work with youth becomes a requisite for peace-building and its development. In Gandhi's words, "It is good that the future depends upon our strength, truth, courage, firmness, hard work and duty".¹³³

7. The time for action

When all the participants of the Mandala peace action are in agreement with the script and their role, it is time to act.

It's important to remember that the making of the Mandala is not simply the peace action programmed on that particular day and at that particular place. It is a long process that starts with the intention of the constructor of Ahimsa to make a positive change through active interaction and collaboration with the residents and social actors of his or her environment. The steps previously described remind us of the entire procedure for getting all the area's people involved in the action. But, it is possible that this will happen in different phases and through various Mandala peace actions. This option is also part of the peace process: no one can guarantee us peace; rather, it is a state of consciousness that must be sustained through the constant practice of *Satya-Ahimsa*.

In a way, the time for action is a kind of ritual to celebrate the peak of a catharsis. The sequences of the script entail the process of raising awareness of the interdependence in action. In other words, each individual, group, community or movement plays a specific role in the action: to follow the order of the agreed-upon script is an act of responsibility and discipline.

The Mandala participatory theatre is a theatre without rehearsals. The time for action is the moment for

expressing the intention of peace and nonviolence. But, there is no public, no audience for this act of love because all the people are already involved in the same human Mandala to reconnect with the Earth and rediscover in our innocence the power of Ahimsa and Truth. When the action takes place, the "mandalic alchemy" of "unity in diversity" creates a new reality beyond time and space and overcomes the barriers of incompatibility.

This is when fear loses its power and the level of consciousness soars. This environment generates an atmosphere of trust and hope among people that cleanses the heart and mind, drives in us the realisation of the common inner source and dissolves residual negativity. It is a healing process that allows us to grow together and reply with love to the crisis encountered on the life path.

Any five-elements installation/representation of the Mandala can correspond to the collective image of transformation for the overcoming of social conflicts. There is no pretty or ugly Mandala. Each creation materialises the individual and collective practice of Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala. It is the expression of the spirit of cooperation for the common cause of community unity. The Mandala thus is the atom, the human being and the Earth. Any representation of this principle reflects the beauty of oneness and "unity in diversity".

To open and close the Mandala peace action, a cleansing of the environment plays a key role. To clean the place of action marks a turning point of purification of the space as well as of the sore spots of the heart.¹³⁴

At the close of the action, once the participants decide to return the Mandala to nature, a humble dialogue is opened. This gesture of detachment connects us with all the manifestations of life in the farthest corners of the universe. Thus, the offering of the elements to a river, a tree in the forest, a mountain, the waves of the sea is an act of love dedicated to Ahimsa and Truth.

These seven steps are but a tiny proposal to nourish the five elements awareness and become instruments of planetary harmony through the intention of Ahimsa in action, manifested in the community unity process for the development of the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi and the recovery of the World Mandala.

At this point participants can make the commitment to implement the co-creation of Mandala peace actions or other experiments to dedicate their service as constructors of Ahimsa for Sarvodaya.

134. For Gandhi *safai*, "cleaning" in Hindi, was one of the most important actions for the empowerment and dignity of people. In fact, Gandhi considered education on *swachhh* (from Hindi, meaning "cleanliness") a fundamental constructive work for a satyagrahi. It included practising self-purification to reconcile heart with mind. In the book *In the Footsteps of Mahatma... Gandhi and Sanitation*, Sudarshan Iyengar extensively elaborates on *swachhh* through Gandhi's life and struggles.

132. Please consult the following "Teaching Tools" video (directed by José de Castro; performed by Alejandra Ricardez) available on the OraWorldMandala website under the "Model of Education: First Stage" at www.oraworldmandala.org.

133. M. K. Gandhi, "Letter to G. D. Birla", July 18, 1937, in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. LXV, page 418.

One of Many Paths in the
Mandala's Labyrinth

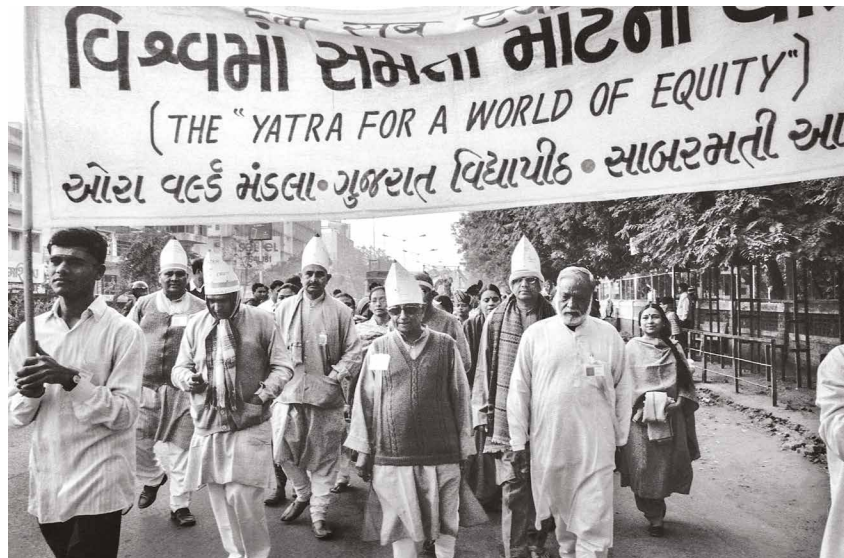


December 18, 2005—Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram (O*India)

From the seed of the first Mandala peace action, a colourful flower bloomed: thousands of paper petals, created by the children of the first experiment's inter-religious core group of Ahmedabad, were installed around the Archive of the Earth.

The children together led the “Yatra (march) for a World of Equity” from Gujarat Vidyapith to Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram. They expressed their dreams of Ahimsa by writing, painting and singing their aspirations for a better future. At the end of the Yatra, more than seven thousand children, women and men created a Flower Mandala and sang the “Song of the Wind” to invoke the air's currents to diffuse the peace petals to the opposite side of the world.







THE DALAI LAMA

MESSAGE

I have been very touched to hear about and see photographs of the occasion on 23rd April 2005 in Ahmedabad, when people of the city, including representatives of the various religious communities, came together to mingle soils from their places of worship as a gesture of interreligious understanding. I feel it was particularly appropriate that this meeting should have taken place at an institution founded by Mahatma Gandhi whose dedication to non-violence and reconciliation has been a major source of inspiration to me.

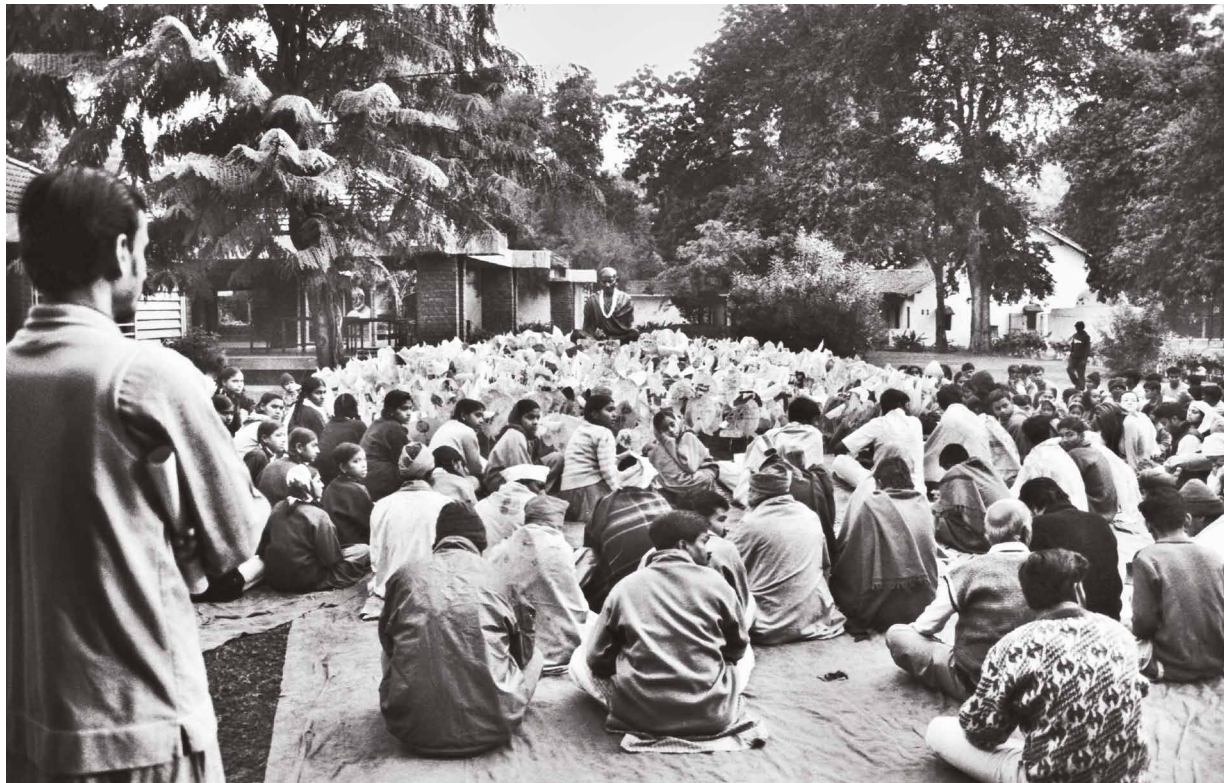
I understand that a second event will take place on 18th December when women and children will lead a procession to draw attention to the need for justice and equality in the world. On this occasion the children will carry to the Sabarmati Ashram symbolic flower petals on which they will write their hopes for peace and equality. On 21st December representatives of the various religious communities will come together again to assemble the flower, symbolically born out of ~~the~~ mingled soils of the city's spiritual traditions.

On the one hand, all religions counsel forgiveness, patience and compassion and ways to cultivate them. These are practical qualities that are of great value in creating a dialogue ~~that we~~ can share with others. On the other hand, as we all know, it is an unfortunate fact that religion is sometimes the source of conflict. When this is the case, the cause more often than not is ignorance and misunderstanding, and the fear that result from them. I believe each of us can contribute to countering these shortcomings through engaging in active dialogue with members of other faith traditions. I have no doubt there is much we can learn from each other.

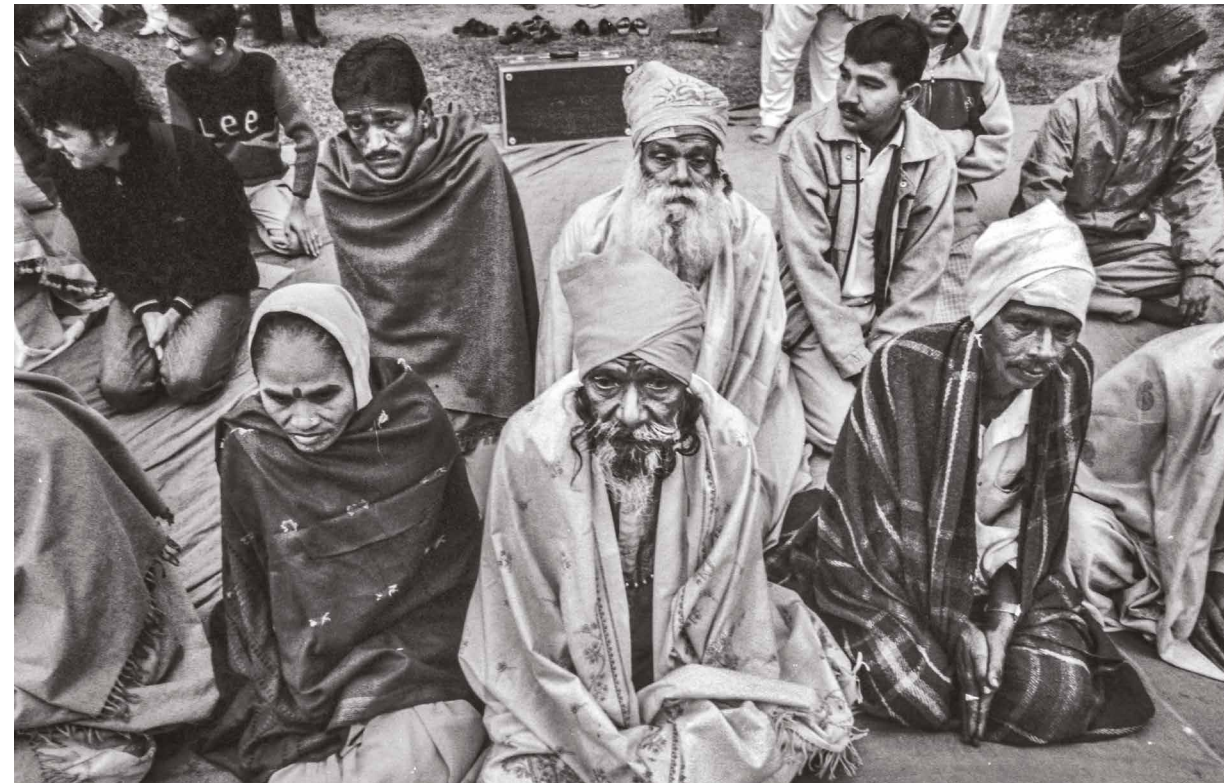
Harmony among different religions is essential for peace not only in the world at large, but also in the very localities where we live. In order to develop genuine harmony, it is extremely important that we cultivate genuine respect for one another. Religious differences should not be the

grounds for antagonism. Religion should be the basis for friendship, brotherhood and sisterhood. I believe that people with religious interests have special responsibilities in this regard and I am impressed by the efforts being focussed in this direction by concerned citizens of Ahmedabad. I respect and admire your commitment and the practical steps you are taking to engender friendship and goodwill. Please continue to work together and in so doing show that it is possible to live in peace, harmony and mutual respect. Do not think that this is a small or limited achievement. Sowing even one seed of good will go a long way towards contributing to the harvest of peace in the world. I offer my greetings to everyone participating in these events and my prayers for your future and enduring success.

December 17, 2005



December 21, 2005—Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram (O*India)
Representatives of the various religious communities
assembled around the flower that was born from the common dream of peace.



Guru Rajsinhbhai Maharaj (front, centre) with other representatives of the Bhil tribal community



**June 11, 2006—Cerro
Quemado sacred mountain
(Real de Gatorce, O*Mexico)**



Petals were offered by Mexican children to the Wixaritari elders on the other side of the planet.

The *Marakame* Dionisio chanted during a night ceremony of the five-year commitment to uniting the opposites O*India-Mexico.



“In the mountains here we do not see the Sun, but at this moment it is illuminating mountains on the other side of the world. There, at our polar opposite, is a land called India and its mountains and forests where the Sun appears when it is hidden here, or where it sets when it rises here. The other side of the Cerro del Quemado is a place called Ahmedabad. Here, we are in the state of San Luis Potosí. There, it is called the state of Gujarat. The Sun unites the two distant lands with light and dark. The Sun makes them vibrate together, although we may be unaware. Each of the two lands takes turns watching over the day or watching over the rest. For there, in the state of Gujarat, was born Gandhi, a pure man, a guide to the Indian people, who for his spiritual strength and his love of peace was called ‘Great Soul’, which in his language is *mahatma*. Mahatma Gandhi gave the message of Ahimsa, which is cooperation, love, nonviolence, peace”.

**—Carlos Montemayor,
“June 11th on the Cerro Quemado”**

He collected soils from the sacred mountain and a *Tsikiri* Mandala was rendered by the Wixaritari native people together with villagers and volunteers.





October 2, 2006—Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram

A few months later, on the occasion of Gandhi's birth anniversary, "Iftar" (breaking fast during Ramadan) was celebrated at the Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram in O*India by the different religious communities of Ahmedabad as a gesture of respect to the common vision of interfaith harmony. Chief guest was a delegation from O*Mexico.



After prayer, Wixaritari representatives Agustín Pacheco and his son Gabriel made an offering of soils from the Cerro Quemado in O*Mexico.



The action in O*India culminated with chants performed by Mexican leaders in front of a Fire Mandala shared with Bhil people and members of the twelve communities of Ahmedabad.



Simultaneously, an action was taking place at the Gandhi monument in O*Mexico's capital: a *Tsikiri* Mandala was offered by other Wixaritari representatives and people from different religions and traditions of Mexico City together with survivors of the tragic event of October 2, 1968. It was a touching moment to reflect on the fact that for O*India and O*Mexico October 2 holds antithetical significance. This notable coincidence in date encouraged and strengthened the bond between people from both sides of the world to jointly transform violence into nonviolence.



A children's choir singing for peace



Raúl Álvarez Garín sharing the vision of the Earth Mandala for Ahimsa



Little Nicole inviting people to participate in the earth offering



The *Marakame* Maurilio
Trinidad Chivarra

**January 30, 2011—
Gandhi Monument
(Mexico City)**
With the same
approach, January
30, marking Mahatma
Gandhi's martyrdom,
also gradually
became a day for
community unity in
O'Mexico, and the
Gandhi monument, a
reference site for peace
dialogue. On this day
in 2011 a commitment
to nonviolence was
made to overcome
social conflicts
created by a mining
project. Villagers of
Real de Catorce, anti-
mining activists,
representatives
of human rights
institutions and
members of the mining
project assembled
at the platform to
exchange views and
take the pledge of
nonviolence.
As the action
concluded, a child was
observing the Mandala
for Ahimsa co-created
by all.





June 2, 2009—Real de Catorce (O*Mexico)
In fact, since 2009 Mandala peace actions for community unity have been created by inhabitants of Real de Catorce, welcoming the native Wixaritari people with songs of fraternity. The spirit of nonviolence was pervading the village and the intention to maintain it was residing in the heart of all.



April 6, 2011—Real de Catorce (O*Mexico)
A Salt Mandala was co-created as the climax of a pilgrimage dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi's Salt March to evoke people's power.

February 6, 2017—Northern Sierra de Puebla (O*Mexico)

It is a fact that the defence of life on Earth has become one of the major concerns of our time. In the name of progress, farmers, native people and villagers of different parts of the world are threatened daily by projects that imply the destruction of mountains, lakes, deserts, forests and other bio-diverse areas. In unison, to uphold the nonviolent resistance movement, many groups and communities now join hands: the visit to O*Mexico of the Native American Lakota people of North Dakota, guardians of Standing Rock, represents an indelible seal of this effort.

The Lakota leader Cheryl Angel blesses people before going onstage to give a message during an assembly for the defence of life



In this struggle, the Constructive Programme developed by the people of the Northern Sierra de Puebla is a concrete example of community unity and social transformation, and its essence is reflected in the diverse aspects of life.





May 15, 2017—Cuetzalan (O*Mexico)
On the occasion of the Tosepan Titataniske Cooperative Union's annual celebration, co-workers offered a Milpa Solar Mandala made with water, flowers, soil and other precious elements collected from the rivers and lands harassed by open-pit mining, fracking, hydro-electric power plants and high-voltage electrical lines. The light was generated by solar panels installed at the back of the five-elements offering in order to blind greed and instead draw people's attention to the issues of energy autonomy and resistance against the depredation of territory.

Gifts of the Northern Sierra de Puebla >





January 30, 2015—LXVII Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's Martyrdom (Mexico City)
In support of the families of the 43 students of Ayotzinapa, disappeared on September 26, 2014, Mandala created for the restitution of life.

This path of “life protectors” in the Mandala Labyrinth naturally brings us back to one of the main constructive works proposed by Mahatma Gandhi: empowerment of those who live in rural settings for the decentralisation of power. The foundational education of heart, hands and head plays a fundamental role for the strengthening of young people who are studying to become rural teachers and serve children in the most remote areas of the planet. Their work is a key instrument in the eradication of structural violence. One of the emblematic cases of this violence is the disappearance of 43 students from the Raúl Isidro Burgos Rural Teachers’ College, the result of conflict between rural education programmes and models oriented towards hyper-consumerism, competition and segregation.



August 18, 2009—Tepito neighbourhood (Mexico City)
A family who created their own Fire Mandala

Many more paths cross in the Mandala Labyrinth. Interconnection, synchronicity and resonance determine a new course, a new opportunity for reconciliation with self, with others and with nature.

Second Stage. Ahimsa for Sarvodaya:
Constructive Works

The second stage of the peace process is known as “Ahimsa for Sarvodaya” and corresponds to the implementation and development of the peace process initiated in the first stage by the constructors of Ahimsa together with the core group and their communities for the creation of a platform of unity in diversity.

The Mandala peace action proposal is an instrument to overcome social conflicts and gradually reinforce the feeling of oneness and empathy among individuals, groups, communities and movements. Ahimsa for Sarvodaya marks the growth of the constructive works from the experiential understanding of the power of Ahimsa attained during the first stage. The community, now infused with a newfound self-confidence and the gift of larger family bonds, awakens to the natural desire to put to use its talents and abilities in constructive works. Depending on the community’s essential needs, participants organise themselves to develop and maintain over time specific constructive works oriented towards empowering the people to build a loving society for the good of all (Sarvodaya).¹³⁵

We should not forget that when the Constructive Programme was proposed to the Indian National Congress (1922), only a few themes were suggested, but by the time of Independence (1947), eighteen constructive works were operating¹³⁶ and even more were needed, according to Gandhi, to develop the autonomy of the country based on the intrinsic ability of its tradition and culture. His legacy can be found in the growth of new constructive works, for the acquisition and distribution of land to farmers, for raising environmental awareness towards recycling and the protection of forests, rivers and mountains defaced by human greed, and many others.¹³⁷

Ahimsa for Sarvodaya, therefore, should be a nonstop journey full of creative enthusiasm concretised in ad hoc constructive works to encompass equally the educational, economic, social and spiritual needs of communities.

135. A contemporary example of co-existence, reciprocity and complementarity among beings of the planet is manifested in *sumak kawsay* (good living), the 13 principles for living well among the Quechua and Guaraní indigenous people of South America, integrated into the constitutions of **○***Ecuador (October 20, 2008) and **○***Bolivia (February 7, 2009). Eduardo Gudynas explores *sumak kawsay* in "Buen vivir: The Social Philosophy inspiring Movements in South America" (<https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/buen-vivir-philosophy-south-america-eduardo-gudynas>).

136. The constructive works under the Constructive Programme were 1. Communal unity; 2. Removal of untouchability; 3. Prohibition; 4. Khadi (hand-spun cloth); 5. Other village industries; 6. Village sanitation; 7. New or basic education; 8. Adult education; 9. Women; 10. Education in health and hygiene; 11. Provincial languages; 12. National language; 13. Economic equality; 14. *Kisans* (peasants); 15. Labour; 16. Adivasis (original people); 17. Lepers; and 18. Students.

137. To learn more about the acquisition and distribution of land to farmers and the Bhoodan-Ganga (Land-Gift movement), see Vinoba Bhawe, *Moved by Love: The Memoirs of Vinoba Bhawe*, pages 18-19, 129-181, 187-188, 198, 218, 234, 244, 248 and 253-254.

In today’s world, depending on the location of action, Gandhi’s Constructive Programme may still be referenced, but as he suggested, we can invent or adapt constructive works according to contemporary local needs and promote self-sufficiency through respect for life in a socially and economically just manner that conscientiously utilises regional resources and rejects the consumerist society that overexploits nature.¹³⁸

Gandhi observed that “the constructive programme is the truthful and non-violent way of winning Poorna Swaraj”¹³⁹ (from Sanskrit: “Complete Self Rule” or “Total Independence”), as it focuses on strengthening people through actions of local transformation. Gandhi considered the Constructive Programme a strong medium for the independence of the human being and an extraordinary vehicle for dignity and trust among people. For this reason, he recommended that the programme be developed even after political independence. For Gandhi, *Swaraj* was a total conquest of the self that embraces all dimensions of life, from the ability to objectively assess oneself and cleanse the being of impurity to attaining self-reliance (*Swadeshi*).

138. A contemporary example of proven grassroots change affecting the lives of millions can be found in the work of Ela R Bhatt, a Gandhian who has galvanised thousands of self-employed, poor, marginalised women for the last forty years to form and join SEWA (Self Employed Women’s Association), which has become a trade union of more than a million women across **○***India. She shared this experience in her book *We Are Poor but So Many*, which traces the formation and evolution of SEWA as well as the pioneering role of microfinance with the formation of the SEWA bank. More recently, she widened the scope of SEWA to include not just women but entire communities. After a study of villages in Gujarat, she devised the “100 Mile Principle” under which people should strive to fulfil their basic needs, including food, shelter and clothing, as well as health, education and banking services, within a radius of 100 miles. She explores the topic in *Anubandh. Building Hundred-Mile Communities*. To learn more, see *The SEWA Movement and Rural Development. The Banaskantha and Kutch Experience* by Daniel W. Crowell.

The constructive work of the Tosepan Titataniske Cooperative Union (see page 52 of this manual) offers a Mexican counterpart. Other constructive alternatives succeeding in finding autonomous paths of social transformation around the world are illustrated in the chapter “La insurrección en curso” (The insurrection underway) by Gustavo Esteva in the book *Crisis civilizatoria y superación del capitalismo* (Civilising crisis and overcoming capitalism) edited by Raúl Ornelas, as well as in *México, regiones que caminan hacia la sustentabilidad. Una geopolítica de las resistencias bioculturales* (Mexico, regions on the path to sustainability. A geopolitical study of bio-cultural resistance), by Víctor M. Toledo and Benjamín Ortiz-Espejel.

139. Foreword to *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place* by M. K. Gandhi.

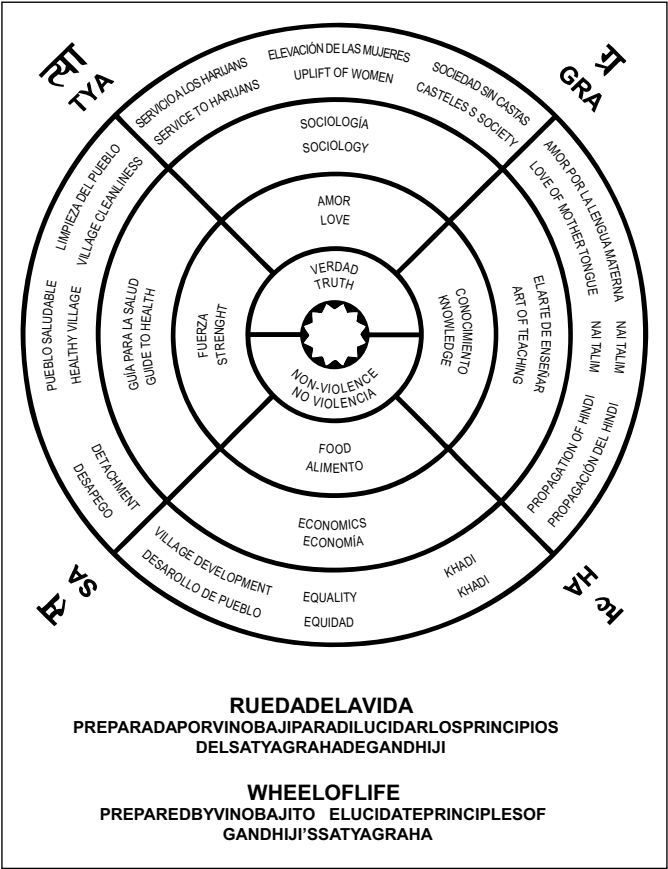
Khadi,¹⁴⁰ the highest symbol of Indian Independence, manifested as a massive action of self and collective liberation through the hand-spinning of cotton and hand-weaving of cloth, encapsulates these principles, with the spinning wheel becoming an active vehicle for social transformation. An act of defiance against British exploitation of Indian cotton shipped to the textile manufacturing industry back in Manchester and then sold as finished clothes and cloth in **O***India at exorbitant prices, the hand-spinning en masse of khadi, launched by Gandhi, not only was a boycott of British goods but became a pillar of the Swadeshi movement.¹⁴¹ The ultimate goal of producing one’s own clothes drove the Indian people to reconnect with their heart, head and hands while overcoming British economic control, attaining self-reliance and establishing an equitable, self-sustained rural society.



Swaraj: Massive action of self and collective liberation
“Real home-rule is self-rule or self-control”.
—M. K. Gandhi¹⁴²

140. Gandhi describes the subject of khadi in his *Constructive Programme. Its Meaning and Place*, pages 9-13.
141. The Gandhi Heritage Portal (<https://www.gandhiheritageportal.org/>) is a significant source of research and studies on the Sarvodaya perspective. Key texts and documentary films on Gandhi’s life, Satyagraha, the Swadeshi movement and other crucial aspects and activities relating to **O***India’s struggle for freedom are available there.
142. *Hind Swaraj, or Indian Home Rule*, page 90.

Keeping in mind that the Constructive Programme was originally the foundational preparation for Indian civil disobedience and a parallel reconstruction plan, the satyagrahi Vinoba Bhave¹⁴³ elucidates the principles of Gandhi’s Satyagraha in the “Wheel of Life”. It is a Mandala of Truth and Ahimsa that embodies the harmony among the Constructive Programme’s main elements and the power of Satyagraha, or insistence on Truth.



143. To learn more about Vinoba Bhavé, see *Moved by Love—The Memoirs of Vinoba Bhavé* and *Vinoba Darshan*, with photographs by Gautam Bajaj.

In this proposal for a new social order the Mahatma emphasised the role of village units¹⁴⁴ for the creation of a self-sufficient society, described in the oceanic circles vision:

Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus, every village will be a republic or *panchayat*¹⁴⁵ having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs even to the extent of defending itself against the whole world. It will be trained and prepared to perish in the attempt to defend itself against any onslaught from without.

Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit. This does not exclude dependence on and willing help from neighbours or from the world. It will be free and voluntary play of mutual forces. Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour.

In this structure composed of innumerable villages, there will be ever-widening, never-ascending circles. Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages, till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units.

Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle, but will give strength to all within and derive its own strength from it. I may be taunted with the retort that this is all Utopian and, therefore, not worth a single thought. If Euclid’s point, though incapable of being drawn by human agency, has an imperishable value, my picture has its own for mankind to live. Let India live for this true picture, though never realizable in its completeness. We must have a proper picture of what we want before we can have something approaching it. If there ever is to be a republic of every village in India, then I claim verity for my picture in which the last is equal to the first or, in other words, no one is to be the first and none the last.¹⁴⁶

This reference to the oceanic circles is the source of inspiration on the path of Ahimsa for Sarvodaya. Its principles of equity, love and truth resonate fully with the inner power that resides in each of us. We are units struggling for human evolution and ready to die for the World Mandala Village.

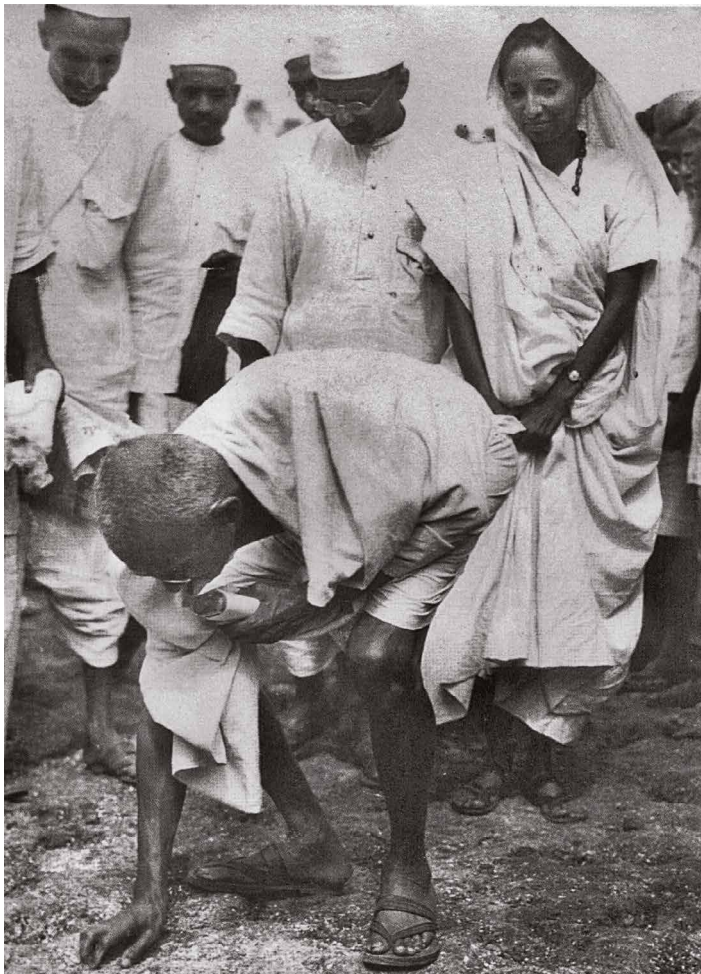
144. The book *Village Swaraj* by Gandhi (compiled by H. M. Vyas) offers a panoramic view of the meaning of *Swaraj* and its multiple perspectives in the context of village units.

145. *Panchayat* in Hindi is “village council”.

146. M. K. Gandhi, “Independence”, *Harijan*, 28 July, 1946, page 236.

When the constructors of Ahimsa and their communities decide to offer protest against an unfair law or imposition of power, the practice of insistence on Truth may be realised through Mandala peace actions for community unity¹⁴⁷ transformed into “Satyagraha Mandalas for direct action”. The assimilation of experience gained by co-creating Mandala peace actions for community unity and the consequent constructive works facilitates the process, allowing communities to face Satyagraha in an organised and shared way. The focus on the co-creation of the script and the building of the Mandala art installation is oriented towards empowering the community and transmitting the message of dissent to the opponent. But, before commencing creation of the script of the Satyagraha Mandala for direct action, it is essential that the cause of civil disobedience and/or boycott campaign is understood with absolute clarity. Without this comprehension, the dissidence will be misdirected towards the persecutor rather than towards the unfair law or imposition of power, which is the true cause of disagreement and indignation. Keeping this objective clear, of not considering the executor of the injustice as the enemy, is the foundation for creating a script that can help the opponent to see the Truth in the same way that the protesters are able to perceive it. At this point, only creativity, love and fearlessness will be the main elements of the alchemic process generated by offering insistence on Truth.

147. The seven steps of a Mandala peace action for community unity are described in the first stage of “Reconciliation through Ahimsa”.



Bhimrad, April 9, 1930: Mahatma Gandhi picks up a handful of salt, an act of peaceful defiance.

A few days before, he had broken the Salt Law, in Dandi on April 6, the culmination of the historical Dandi Salt March.¹⁴⁸

148. From the OraWorldMandala perspective, this photograph of Mahatma Gandhi captures him collecting one of hundreds of thousands of handfuls of salt offered in a Satyagraha Mandala for direct action for the independence of the Indian people and generations to come. May these grains of salt reach our consciousness to awake the re-enchantment of the world.

Technology for Life: World Mapping for Sarvodaya

The transformative power of Ahimsa, driven by the consciousness of the five-elements interdependence and its different implications, has generated local constructive works that resonate in their surroundings. It is this one-to-one resonance that will progressively draw the spiral of regeneration of human consciousness towards the empowerment of people for the creation of a culture of peace and nonviolence on the planet, the foundation of a Sarvodaya social order.

As mentioned earlier, the intrinsic nature of OraWorldMandala is that of an experimental approach without conditions or organisational bonds.¹⁴⁹ It is a proposal for a self-managed system attuned to the creation of a new society based on Ahimsa and Truth. Each of us can contribute to retrieve the World Mandala, but in order to multiply the individual efforts and accelerate the reconstruction of a planetary society, we should consider the multiplicity of contemporary tools at our disposal.

For some time many have speculated how Mahatma Gandhi would have regarded and used the communication technologies of our time for the spreading of the *Satya-Ahimsa* message.

If we visualise the inner power expressed by Gandhi during the course of his life, we understand how a single human being can drive much stronger communication campaigns than those created by modern, sophisticated, colossal high-tech companies. This raises some doubts. Does modern technology respond to the needs of an indolent society content with minimising effort and maximising appearance? Moreover, is this a society willing to be hypnotised by machine power and unable to react to a possible techno-economic collapse?¹⁵⁰

We can assume that to Gandhi this would appear as a social mechanism against evolution, a sleeping pill to suppress the potential of the consciousness in action by incarnating the machine’s essence. As he wrote in the book *Hind Swaraj, or Indian Home Rule*, “This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will self-destroyed”.¹⁵¹ Indeed, it appears that some of the achievements of modern science are more destructive than

149. For more context of the “intrinsic nature” of the OraWorldMandala, see the section “From Macro to Micro”.

150. In *Homo confort. Il superamento tecnologico della fatica e le sue conseguenze* (Homo comfort: the technological overcoming of fatigue and its consequences), Stefano Boni observes the magnitude of the different forms of violence caused by the consequential inertia of today’s technology comfort. This comfort at any cost is on the one hand destroying the equilibrium between human beings and nature and on the other increasing competition, greed and human impoverishment. Furthermore, Boni reflects on this paradoxical condition of human existence by analysing the danger of depending on an economic system sustained merely on a precarious technological basis.

151. Chapter 6, “Civilisation”, page 33, of *Hind Swaraj, or Indian Home Rule*, by M. K. Gandhi. Written by Gandhi in Gujarati in the ten days aboard a ship on his return trip from **O***England to **O***South Africa (November 1909), the text is considered his political manifesto on *Swaraj*, an analysis of modernity and its scientific discoveries utilised to debilitate the people by feeding the oligarchy’s power and domination. In the context of a planetary reconfiguration to attain a

constructive, including the progress of scientific research at the service of death and war. The process of self-destruction is already on maximum alert.¹⁵²

So the question is, what do we do with this information and communication technology at our disposal to create room for ethical perspectives to counteract societal erosion?¹⁵³

The way history is passed down to us relays mostly violent events, war and hatred. We live in a state of fear¹⁵⁴ and endless bombardment by media and other information systems.¹⁵⁵ We cannot deny the present state of affairs, but neither can we deny the other side of the coin. Every single day, in the world, millions of acts of love and compassion are exchanged and positive, successful actions are carried out, testifying to people’s faith in humanity.¹⁵⁶

Would it not be good to keep this faith alive by creating a stronger and visible connection with those who, like us, are working towards peace? If technology can help us do so, we shall use it. We call this “Technology for Life”.

.....
civilisation based on Ahimsa and Truth, this book is today extremely relevant. To facilitate its comprehension, consult *Gandhi’s “Hind Swaraj”, a Fresh Look* by Gandhian activist Kanti Shah and ‘*Hind Swaraj’ and Other Writings*, a centenary edition edited by Anthony J. Parel. See also Antonino Drago’s article “A Gandhian Criticism of Modern Science” in *Exploring Hind Swaraj*, edited by M.P. Mathai and John Moolakkattu. For an historical analysis, see M. K. Gandhi, *M.K. Gandhi’s Hind Swaraj. A Critical Edition*, annotated and edited by Suresh Sharma and Tridip Suhrud.

152. In *Las cuatro plagas* (The four scourges), published at the end of the 1950s, in the footsteps of Mahatma Gandhi, Lanza del Vasto envisaged through “the three temptations of the machine” the following crippling relationship between human and machine:

“‘I’m going to save you time’, says the machine subtly, and since the man surrenders to the seductive invitation, all the time of his life is devoured by haste. ‘I’m going to save you the bother’, he promises, and it’s enough for the man to enter the complex trap of colossal industries. ‘I’m going to give you well-being’ (who would resist such kindness?), and immediately there appears polluted air, cloudy views, noise and bustle; traffic and worry; tons of scrap and canned food; skyscrapers and the kitchen industry, and the universal deflagration to put an end to the overflow...” (page 36)

153. *The Internet Is Not the Answer* by Andrew Keen responds to this question by retracing the Internet’s path from the 1960s with a socio-economical analysis that transmits useful skills for the rebuilding of a better society. In this regard, the collection of philosophical inquiries in *Infoesfera* (Infosphere) opens new horizons for a suitable future for cyberspace. On page 66, Xicoténcatl Martínez Ruiz states: "The concern for the value we give to the future is animated by a prior development, a kind of ethical structure and consciousness that precede the development of the aptitudes and actions of the subject. There may lie the basis of an altruism for life online. The result is the common benefit. I can say that the humanistic and integral aspect to approach our technological tools—without forgetting that they are that, tools—is a linguistic and semantic recovery of consciousness when inhabiting the sphere. The language does not matter but rather its character shared with humanity, therefore the term and practical implication of ethos, key in the history of thought, is essential not only to value the future but to inhabit the world without falling into the paradox of being tools of our tools”.

154. The culture of fear that is permeating our life spreads hate and indifference to the detriment of others. In turn, this hate generates more hate and indifference. Among many aspects of the human condition, Zygmunt Bauman and Leonidas Donskis examine this vicious circle of “liquid modernity” in which we lose sense of the solid truths that form the basis of ethics. See *Moral Blindness: The Loss of Sensitivity in Liquid Modernity*.

155. It seems that the excess of information hasn’t reduced the cost of ignorance. On the contrary, this condition of “informed ignorance” induces Internet users to search spaces of darkness accompanied by an interplay of virtual and real. An anecdotal overview is given by Michela Marzano in *La muerte como espectáculo* (Death as spectacle).

156. Some stories of “awakening in service”, examples of the heart’s beauty, are shared on the ecosystem of ServiceSpace and on other websites such as DailyGood, Awakin.org, KindSpring, Moved By Love, Karma Kitchen, KarmaTube, Conversations.org, and Laddership Circles. Yes! magazine offers positive, inspiring online journalism. See the Bibliography for links.

Technology for Life is a constructive work to facilitate the creation of a Sarvodaya social order by strengthening the connection among micro-constructive social realities already in action. Along these lines, the constructive work intends to produce a cohesive force in an organised order that can accelerate, expand and multiply synergies for the development of Sarvodaya and consequently the retrieval of the World Mandala.¹⁵⁷

This constructive work consists of the creation of a neo-systemic “World Mapping for Sarvodaya”. Any like-minded individuals will be able to add to the map their constructive works and activities that resonate with the culture of peace and nonviolence. This larger visibility, in turn, allows others to know about such activities and serves as a concrete platform for inviting people to be involved in their work, to participate as volunteers and develop collaborations with other like-minded colleagues. Each dot added to the map strengthens the process of communication and action for the spreading of Ahimsa in the world. Hence, the World Mapping for Sarvodaya becomes the interface of a Mandala of Ahimsa, or a Gandhian Mandala.¹⁵⁸

The implementation of neo-systemic visual maps based on bioregional geographic parametres to hyper-localise constructive efforts even at the watershed level is to be developed in collaboration with other cultures of the planet.¹⁵⁹ The creation of a digital application to connect these geographies defined by deserts, mountains, forests, jungles, rivers, and so on¹⁶⁰ opens up the spirit of Sarvodaya to the world and to an amplified inclusive participation in an experimental planetary observatory for peace and nonviolence.

.....
157. “Technology for Life” was a topic of discussion during the last years of Narayan Desai, which is why the name of this constructive work is dedicated to his memory and wish for Sarvodaya.

158. The basic contents structure of the World Mapping for Sarvodaya is reflected in the backbone of the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi, consisting of three main axes: community unity, constructive works implementation and Satyagraha.

159. This intention resonates with that of other constructive proposals. One example is that of One Flag In Space (<http://www.oneflaginspace.org>), fostered by the Blue Marble Space Institute of Science (<https://www.bmsis.org/>), to promote a flag carrying the “Blue Marble” image as a symbol of international unity. It is a symbol that anyone, anywhere in the world can relate to, regardless of the part of the planet where they live, their ethnic origin or religious beliefs. The Blue Marble, taken in 1972, is among the first complete colour photographs of Earth taken from space by humans. (The very first full disk black-and-white image of Earth from geostationary orbit can be credited to NASA’s Application Technology Satellite spacecraft, back in December of 1966. It also captured the first full disk colour photo of Earth, on November 10, 1967.)

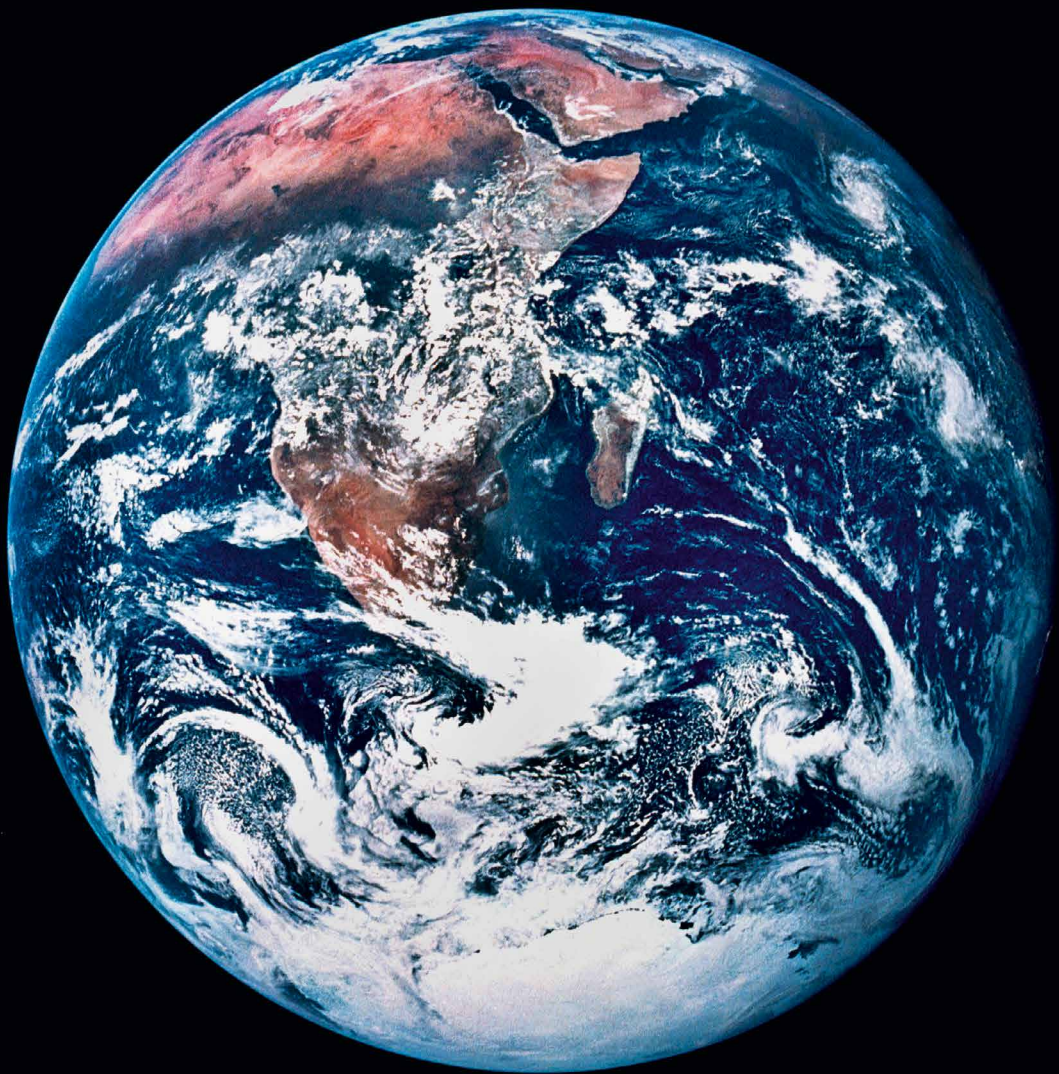
160. This modality evokes Adriano Olivetti, who in the years following World War II proposed, as an answer to oppression and dictatorship, the regeneration of society through a system of self-ruled communities, envisaging that: "La natura, il paesaggio, i monti, i laghi e il mare creano con i nostri fratelli i limiti della nostra Comunità” (Nature, landscape, mountains, lakes and seas create with our brothers the limits of our community), page 34, *Il cammino della Comunità* (The road of the community).

The idea of Technology for Life then is about minimising exacerbated use of technology purely oriented towards “consumeristic comfort” and, instead, learning to direct technology towards the recovery of traditional knowledge and the re-establishment of balance within us, with others and with nature.¹⁶¹ Use of Technology for Life aligns with the framework of Ahimsa for Sarvodaya to create a concrete inclusive web of interdependence, interconnectedness and oneness.¹⁶²

“One of the most widely known photographs of Earth, this image was taken >
by the crew of the final Apollo mission as the crew made its way to the Moon.
Dubbed the ‘Blue Marble’, Earth is revealed as both a vast planet home to
billions of creatures and a beautiful orb capable of fitting into the pocket of
the universe” (NASA website: <https://www.nasa.gov/image-feature/apollo-17-blue-marble>). It is an example of how technology can help us foster planetary
consciousness by visualising the five-elements World Mandala.

161. It’s about reconnecting head-heart-hands by going back to the conceptual origins of technology. As Robert G. Jahn and Brenda J. Dunne note in *Consciousness and the Source of Reality: The PEAR Odyssey* (page 22): “The ancient Greek term *technē* (art or craft) stems from the same root as the word *technology*, and until the late 18th century art was a term used to describe both highly skilled and sublime practices. Thus technology, the advanced use of tools, and the creation of things like houses, sculptures, poems or music, were conceptually connected throughout most of human history”.

162. To connect with the Sarvodaya mapping pilot project, please refer to page 54 of this manual.



Communication: Modes of Cooperation

The communication of the two operational stages of Reconciliation through Ahimsa and Ahimsa for Sarvodaya and their ongoing development via Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala are ideally achieved through three basic modes of cooperation.

The first one adopts the criteria of “one-to-one” communication. Constructors of Ahimsa carry out the basic work of educational diffusion by spreading the message by word of mouth or by inviting others to participate in the local peace process. Sometimes they are asked by groups, communities, institutions, schools, universities or related movements to share their experience and the principles of the living Mandala. This form of synergistic training implies effort and flexibility to respond to the invitations, contribute to facilitating and encouraging interactions and collaborations, and foster trust among participants.

The second mode of cooperation consists of documenting the history of the peace process. Taking videos and photos has become customary in contemporary life, and the practice facilitates the documentation process so integral to recording the operational modalities of the experiment. However, in order to avoid an excessive and thoughtless use of these technologies it is advisable to assign this responsibility to volunteers identified specifically for this task.

The resultant material becomes an important knowledge base accessible to research by interested parties for future development of the peace processes and projects.

Furthermore, if the constructors of Ahimsa are constantly adding to the above knowledge base, the need to develop a logical framework will arise in the form of organised archives. This will offer easy access to regularly updated materials that range from basic administrative presentations and papers to video, pictures and general multimedia. With a solid archival foundation, in the next phase it will be possible to create a reliable digital format to facilitate communication at a local and worldwide level.

The third mode of cooperation implies the implementation of the second. Depending on requirements, different communication activities are developed in the course of multidisciplinary projects, on the Internet, in audiovisual form and in specialised print literature. On the one hand, this addresses the need to produce physical and nonphysical material for the dissemination of educational content, activities and plans of the peace movement. These creations result in platforms for dialogue and peace, documentary films, photo exhibits, social peace networks, media literacy training and thematic supporting books. On the other hand, this allows the creation of tools for the training

programmes and ultimately facilitates the spreading of the educational proposal.

As a final consideration we must foresee that, on the basis of the progression of the mandalic architecture, communication and its modes of cooperation will also change. Being the Mandala an “organic body of cosmic consciousness”, the continuous transformation inherent in it demands operational flexibility and adaptability to the necessities of the present moment. What remains firm is the faith in the people’s power to raise awareness, unite and organise themselves for the construction of a nonviolent society and the dismantling of unjust and anti-human structures.

SUMMARY

OraWorldMandala is an individual and collective practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala formulated to serve this cause of peace. Initially, the practice, under constant development through the joint efforts of peoples of different knowledge bases, consists of the visualisation—from micro to macro and vice versa—of the interdependence, resonance and synchronicity among the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and space) of a World Mandala. The World Mandala is a bright and harmonious planet that through the cycles of time navigates in the universe giving to its inhabitants the power to create rather than destroy.

This state of consciousness arises through motivation for the search for Truth and the comprehension that only Ahimsa—respect of all life forms—can channel the intention into constructive action. It is with this understanding that the transformation of the UN Action Programme for a Culture of Peace from institutional declaration of principles into life actions becomes an application of this universal aspiration, and a Mandala for Ahimsa takes shape as a world participatory theatre in which it is possible to act accordingly and trace together a spiral of regeneration of the human consciousness. From macro to micro, the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi represents the “Ahimsa action guide” for local transformation adopted by constructors of Ahimsa with the awareness that, since we are all composed of the five elements, we all belong to the same World Mandala.

Therefore, the first step of community unity presented in the Constructive Programme of Mahatma Gandhi is taken through the co-creation of peace actions that culminate in Mandala representations to reaffirm the state of oneness generated in the process through the awareness of the interdependence, resonance and synchronicity among the five elements. These Mandala peace actions, developed in communities as individual and collective practices of Ahimsa, imply reconciliation with the self, with nature and with others. For that very reason this OraWorldMandala stage is called “Reconciliation through Ahimsa”.

As indicated in the Constructive Programme, the development of constructive works via community unity is especially oriented to the building of Sarvodaya, a new social order for the upliftment of all. At this stage, the understanding of the ArtScience of Mandala is integrated into the transformative actions of constructors of Ahimsa together with their communities. And, if the time comes to struggle against injustice, the spirit of oneness drives the establishment of Satyagraha Mandalas for direct action, a shared expression of the insistence on Truth. Hence, the second stage of OraWorldMandala is denominated “Ahimsa for Sarvodaya”, a path of Ahimsa (and Truth) that leads to social change through the rebuilding of human respect for nature and the overcoming of internal and external conflicts.

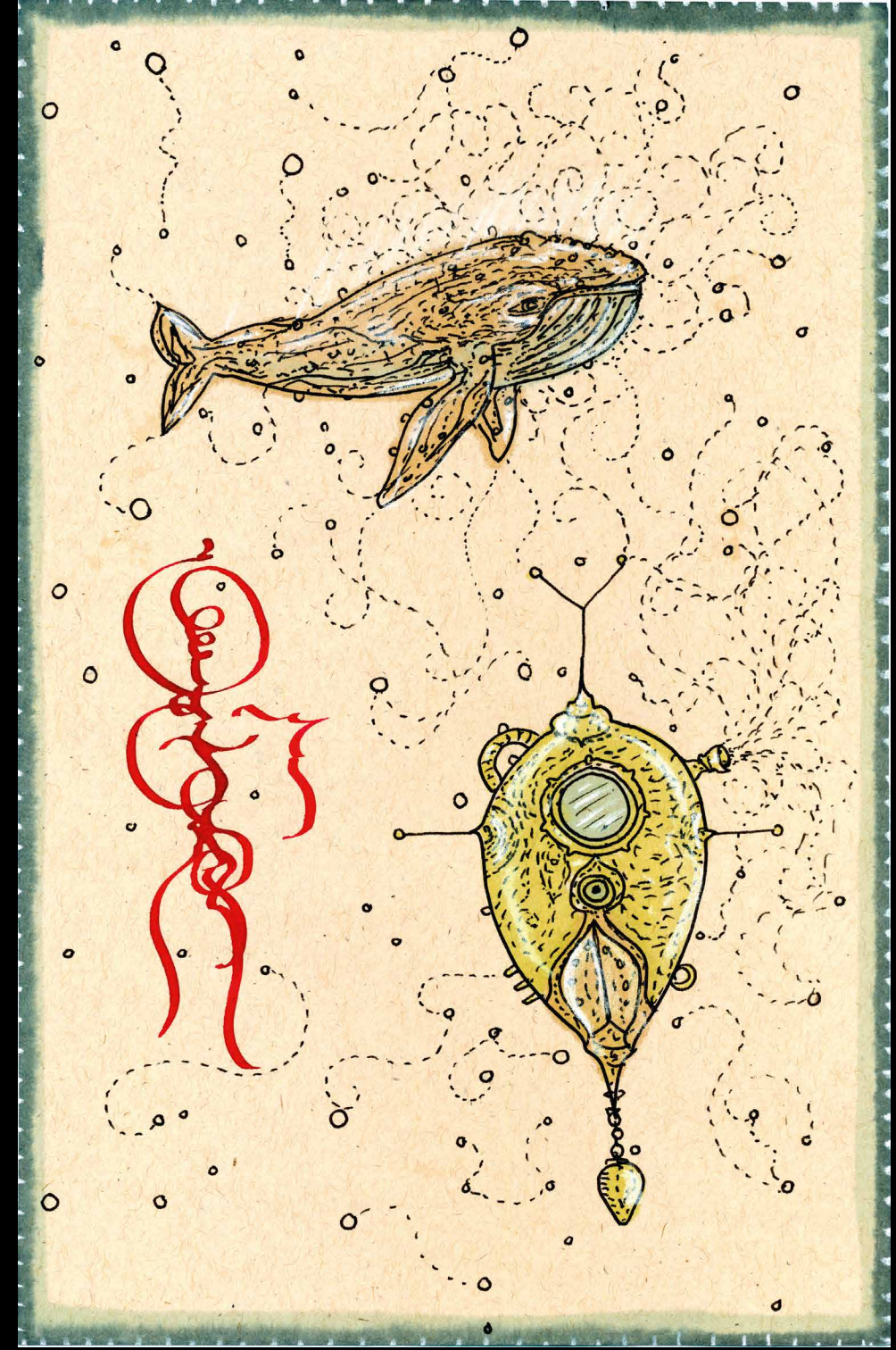
In order to visualise the reconstruction of a society of peace and justice through the conquest of self, technology is utilised to generate a World Mapping for Sarvodaya, progressively co-created by peace workers, building up a cohesive force to unify our struggles for life and systematically reflect the local constructive works that are constantly taking place around the planet. In this way the individual and collective OraWorldMandala practice for Ahimsa through the ArtScience of Mandala elicits the transformative action of envisaging a world participatory theatre for a culture of peace and Ahimsa, a World Mandala of interdependence, resonance and synchronicity among the five elements from which everything originates and everything returns. The OraWorldMandala practice thereby becomes the brush of our regenerated human consciousness that paints the world map to offer to the Earth and the cosmos our commitment to peace.



Perhaps launching adrift is nowadays the most sensible way to rekindle our destiny, to reencounter our path in the world: An offering of the self to return to the womb of Ahimsa and learn how to learn from other manifestations of life.¹⁶³

Whale and Monad >

¹⁶³. This reflection arose from an interchange of ideas between the Nature Expression and Resonance Research Laboratory and the OraWorldMandala.



EPILOGUE

As you read these final lines, the spacecraft *Voyager 1* is exploring interstellar space. *Voyager 2* is on its course to Sirius, which it may reach in 296,000 years.¹⁶⁴ They both travel along a path to enhance humanity’s dream of peace and galactic unity, while Valia Balkanska serenades.¹⁶⁵ Who will decipher the Voyager Golden Records installed on the exterior of the spaceships to share sounds and images selected to represent life on Earth? “The Cosmos is all that is, was and ever will be”.¹⁶⁶ Carl Sagan’s words echo among billion of stars and galaxies. Each of us is a small universe of the Cosmic Mandala. As long as human life is on Earth, there will be Voyagers who carry the dreams of new generations.

But while we look at distant inhospitable planets to realise those dreams,¹⁶⁷ we still have a chance to rebuild here on our Earth a world of peace and justice based on the conquest of the self. We are constituent particles of nature, the same that the cosmos is made of. Lakota wisdom reminds us that “what is on earth is in the stars, and what is in the stars is on earth”.¹⁶⁸ The child inside us knows this, instinctively, in its innocent heart of Truth.¹⁶⁹ When we reconnect with our inner wisdom free from conceptual judgement, the heart’s force is restored and fear gives way to hope.

Peace can be utopia or reality. The choice is ours, right now, here on Earth.

164. For more information on the Voyager journeys, see the NASA website: <http://voyager.jpl.nasa.gov/mission/interstellar.html>. To read about NASA’s approach to space exploration, see *Space Chronicles: Facing the Ultimate Frontier* by the popular astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson. In-depth exploration of the Voyager missions is available in *Murmurs of Earth. The Voyager Interstellar Record* by Carl Sagan.

165. To listen to Valia Balkanska: *The Golden Record. Greetings and Sounds of the Earth*, Audio CD.

166. For space exploration, read *Cosmos* by Carl Sagan.

167. On the occasion of NASA’s 50th anniversary, Professor Stephen Hawking gave an historical lecture on “Why We Should Go into Space”: https://www.nasa.gov/pdf/223968main_HAWKING.pdf. Recent analysis (2016) is shared via Science Alert at <http://www.sciencealert.com/stephen-hawking-says-a-planetary-disaster-on-earth-is-a-near-certainty> and via the BBC at <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-35344664>.

168. This reference appears in the Introduction to *Lakota Star Knowledge: Studies in Lakota Stellar Theology*, co-written by the Lakota people and Ronald Goodman.

169. From Latin: *innocens*, “that does not harm”.



“It is part of our nature to love and to be honest. It is part of our nature to long to know more, and to continue to learn. Our knowledge of the world continues to grow... Here, on the edge of what we know, in contact with the ocean of the unknown, shines the mystery and the beauty of the world. And it’s breathtaking”.

—Carlo Rovelli¹⁷⁰

170. *Seven Brief Lessons on Physics*, from the chapter “In Closing: Ourselves”.

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AUTHOR’S NOTE

In closing, I will try to retrace some steps of the OraWorldMandala process with people who have indelibly marked them. A few have been already mentioned in the initial credits and I extend my deep appreciation and gratitude to them; in other cases they will appear in the Expression of Gratitude section. A complete elaboration of our heart’s oceanic circles will probably need a book written by all. I hope this can be considered as an invitation to be shared.

The realization of the three-dimensional Mandala art installation of Universal Love and Compassion could not have been possible without the *Chenrezig* Buddha statue from the film *Kundun* by Martin Scorsese. It was Dante Ferretti, scenographer of the movie, who recommended that I travel to Morocco where the movie was filmed and invite the film’s executive producer Souhel Ben Barka to collaborate on the project. I thank both of them whose generous support manifested in the donation of the statue to the OraWorldMandala matrix. Fifteen years later, I in turn donated the statue to the Istituto Lama Tzong Khapa in Pomaia, **●***Italy. My thanks go to Licia Arienti, Roberto Rovere and Paola Fini who hosted the statue in their factories, as well as to Jacopo Giulini and Beba Stoppani who preserved the statue for many years before it reached its final destination. I also would like to thank Fabrizio Deotto who helped overcome obstacles with dedication and commitment. The Buddha statue travelled from Ouarzazate to Milan and became the centre of the *Chenrezig* Mandala offered to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The art installation was also represented by a Mandala symbol designed by master artist Michelangelo Pistoletto who offered his precious cooperation to this peace experiment. Gratitude to him, to his wife Maria as well as to all the people who have given their support to the project.

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It should be mentioned that the Mandala peace offerings at the Cerro Quemado opened the doors of action to the

Monument to Gandhi in Mexico City and the proposal of nonviolence on specifically October 2, which traditionally commemorates the tragic historical events of 1968 in **O***Mexico while in **O***India the day celebrates the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. I owe profound appreciation and respect to Raúl Álvarez Garín for introducing new horizons to the people of **O***Mexico by inviting all citizens to pay tribute on this day to Mahatma Gandhi, regardless of their ethnic origins, religious beliefs, worldviews or cultural backgrounds. Deep appreciation goes also to Félix Hernández Gamundi, Carolina Verduzco, Alejandro Álvarez Béjar and all of the members of the 68 Committee who supported this educational initiative.

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This manual is a humble tribute, however small, to the immense contribution of Mahatma Gandhi who tried to spin our individual and collective Ahimsa for Sarvodaya on the planet.



Sonia Bassezatto Deotto is a social artist dedicated to promoting peace and reconciliation. In 1999 she came to India to research on the Mandala concept. Its outcome was OraWorldMandala, a peace project to visualize the planet as a "World Mandala" and to connect its different continents through creative expressions. In 2004, as a research fellow at Gujarat Vidyapith, the university founded by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, she integrated Ahimsa (Nonviolence) with art, in collaboration with twelve religious communities of Ahmedabad. This was her turning point to incorporate action into the OraWorldMandala and transform it into a global movement for creative Ahimsa.

Sonia Deotto constantly strives to connect India with Mexico – while experimenting at the antipodes with the tenets of Gandhian philosophy, truth, non-violence and interdependence that also reflect the nature of Mandala. She is actively involved with different social movements of India, Italy, Mexico and United States. She is founder director of the OraWorldMandala Extension Programme in Mexico of Gujarat Vidyapith, and founder coordinator of Mahatma Gandhi Chair Mexico, an inter-institutional initiative developed with fifteen educational institutions of the country.

Sonia Deotto is recipient of 2019 Jamnalal Bajaj Award for Promoting Gandhian Values Outside India by bringing people together across regions and religions and using her artistic skills to create and represent the commonness of humanity.

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"The methodology of OraWorldMandala is mandalic. The principal deity housed in the centre is Ahimsa, a practical expression of universal love and compassion. It would be encircled by peace and harmony among all living and nonliving beings. M.K. Gandhi's Constructive Programme has served as the guide to draw circles in the periphery at various levels. Universal harmony reflected by "unity in diversity" is the core effort... The rich manual is a guide and also a document that contains a detailed account of the evolution of the participatory action research, its implementation in India and Mexico, and the Proposed Method that emerged through its application."

Sudarshan Iyengar
Former Vice-Chancellor
Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad

"Through its practical focus, this publication breaks with the condition of something to be stored away, like an object: it becomes a manual for life. Dictated by the rhythms of the heart, by the full experience of silence and aesthetic pleasure, its words, images and evocations capture the sounds of the Earth, of the full stillness of peace, and construct a Mandala, one impregnated with the exemplary actions of a human being like Gandhi. This aroma fills the path and the method so that others may re-create the force of truth, an aroma so powerful that it can construct a nonviolent society."

Xicoténcatl Martínez Ruiz
Research Professor, National Autonomous University of Mexico