GANDHI, DEEP RELIGIOUS PLURALISM, AND MULTICULTURALISM

I've advanced from tolerance to equal respect for all religions.

--M. K. Gandhi[1]

I've broadened my Hinduism by loving other religions as my own.

--M. K. Gandhi[2]

> [Gandhi's] doctrine of the equality of religions . . . did not move towards a single global religion, but enjoins us all to become better expressions of our own faith, being enriched in the process by influences from other faiths.
>
> --John Hick[3]

At first glance the religious philosophy of Mohandas K. Gandhi appears to be version of the perennial philosophy, the main proponent of which was Aldous Huxley. In his book *The Perennial Philosophy*, Huxley proposed that at the core of the world's religions is an undifferentiated Godhead, variously named *atman-brahman* in Hinduism, the *dharmakāya* of Mahāyāna Buddhism, the nameless *dao* in Daosim, the *en sof* of Jewish mysticism, and the *bloss nit* in Meister Eckhardt's medieval German. The individual gods of these religious traditions are mere appearances erupting from a divine ground of being. In essence, Huxley anointed the mystics of world history as the true priests and prophets of the world's religions. In his book *The Fifth Dimension* John Hick re-affirms the perennial philosophy with his statement that the Christian mystics discovered something similar to *atman* or the Buddha nature at the center of their being.[4]

With regard to the issue of religious pluralism and the current preference for equal respect for all religions, it is clear that Huxley's view carries with it a definite bias for Hinduism, Buddhism, and Daoism. Of the major Asian religious texts excerpted in *The Perennial Philosophy*, Confucian, Sikh, and Shinto writings are conspicuous by their absence, although Huxley could have excerpted passages referring to *nirankar*, the Sikh equivalent of *nirguṇa brahman*. For many centuries there have been many Hindu teachers, epitomized in the pandit in Ronald Eyre's film *The Long Search*, who declares that "everyone is a Hindu." More subtle but just as religiously imperialistic is Karl Rahner's concept of the "anonymous Christian," which one writer describes as "non-Christians who end up in heaven" after having "received the grace of Christ without their realising it."[5]

In this paper I will re-evaluate Gandhi's position on religious pluralism in light of recent work on the subject. In the first section I will expand on David R. Griffin's critique of Hick's theory of religious pluralism. Griffin contends that Hick's view contains an inherent bias for some Asian religions and that it does not offer a sufficient grounding for ethics. In the second section I examine Sharada Sugirtharajah's proposal that Gandhi's views are substantially similar to Hick's. Although I think there are some instructive similarities, I will point out some significant differences. In the third section I will summarize Griffin's theory of "deep" or "complementary" religious pluralism, and, although I find Gandhi open to most aspects of this view--particularly John B. Cobb's concept of mutual transformation--Gandhi leaves the ontology-based theories of Griffin and Hick with his doctrine that Truth is God, which I discuss in the fourth section.

In her paper Sugirtharajah raises some issues surrounding postmodernism, so in the fifth and concluding section I argue that Gandhi's views actually go beyond religious pluralism to a "constructive postmodern" multiculturalism that embraces both the sacred and

the secular. When Gandhi moves from God is Truth to Truth is God with the expressed intention of including atheists and humanists, he has taken us beyond religious pluralism. For Hick saints are those who "align themselves" with the Real and stand as "outward and visible signs of the Transcendent,"[6] but for Gandhi saints, secular or sacred, would be those who speak the truth by acting nonviolently.

I

In *Deep Religious Pluralism* David R. Griffin describes John Hick's position as inclusive and "identist."[7] Griffin believes Hick is an identist because he believes that the major religions have the same object of worship and the same goal for human salvation. Hick calls the ultimate object the "Real" and the religious goal is to move from selfishness to a selfless union with the Real. Like the Advaita Vedāntist *nirguṇa Brahman* and the Mahāyānist *śūnyatā*, Hick's Real is a transcendent reality without any qualities at all. It is not a No-thing that is all things as the immanent *dao* or *saguṇa brahman* are, but it is a No-thing with no qualities at all. The following is a statement that Hick repeats several times: "It cannot be said to be one or many, person or thing, substance or process, good or evil, purposive or non-purposive. None of the concrete descriptions that apply within the realm of human experience can apply literally to the unexperienceable ground of that realm."[8]

As we shall see, Hick, no matter how hard he tries, cannot remove the bias found in the fact that Hick's Real matches the Hindu and Buddhist theories of ultimate reality mentioned above. To be fair, in one passage Hick does attribute the inspiration for his choice of the word Real to both the Sanskrit *sat* and the Qur'anic Arabic *al-haqq*,[9] but this word, usually translated as "truth" or "reality," is always found in conjunction with moral qualities that Hick would excluded from the Real.

Griffin also believes that Hick's position is unacceptable as a theory of religious pluralism because it excludes some major religions. For example, Confucians do not have a single object of worship (certainly not Confucius); indeed, it is more accurate to say that Confucians do not worship per se but model themselves on and conform to the regularities of heaven. Equally important, Confucians do not believe that total selflessness is a realistic or even a proper goal. The Confucians offered a robust critique of the Mohists, who embraced a proto-utilitarian view that the self must always be sacrificed for the greatest good for the greatest number. Arguably more attuned to human nature, Mencius proposed a doctrine of graded love that began with family members, then friends and community, and finally, and quite presciently, all sentient beings.

It is also significant to point out that the transcultural Golden Rule is not based on selflessness; rather, it requires that one uses one's self as a model for acting towards others. Hick himself explains that the Golden Rule is "commonly expressed in the principle of valuing others as we value ourselves, and treating them accordingly."[10] Consummate scholar that he is, Hick gives us, in this same passage, the most comprehensive list of references to the Golden Rule in the world religions. If this positively self-centered moral principle is so foundational, then this conflicts with Hick's proposal that universal salvation consists in selfless union with the Real. In one passage Hick changes his ethical imperative to "a new centering on the Real,"[11] so this may allow him to include Confucianism and other views that do not require giving up of the self. In none of the Confucian schools, however, is heaven (*tian*, lit. sky) a transcendent reality, but a fully differentiated immanent reality rich in content and regularities, from which sages would model their actions.

The Buddha himself worshipped no gods and some Buddhists believe that ultimate reality is "empty," which is obviously not an object of worship. The Pāli texts offer no theory

of ultimate reality and therefore a Buddhism based on them cannot come under Hick's rubric of the Real. In *Questions that Tend Not to Edification*, the Buddha rejects all metaphysical speculation about the beginning of the cosmos, the nature of the soul, and the destination of the saint. Hick's Real would be the first hypothesis to fall to Buddhist dialectical attack, especially in the hands of someone as adept as Nāgārjuna.

When Huxley describes the perennial philosophy as including the belief in an "eternal Self,"[12] he is leaving out not only the Buddha but also Confucius and Zhuangzi, major thinkers in the world religions. In the Pāli texts the *anatta* (Sk. anātman) doctrine simply means no substantial *atman*; it does not reject the idea of a self altogether. Indeed, the famous nun's poem in *Questions of Milinda* uses the term *jīva* (empirical self) and approximates a Humean bundle theory of the self. Although Mahāyāna Buddhism certainly supports Hick's hypothesis that the giving up of the self is required for salvation, I have argued that the Pāli texts could very well support a Buddhist virtue ethics that preserves an integral *jīva* self.[13] When the Buddha reached *nirvaṇa* while still within in his body, his *jīva*, while free from attachment, was still present as the functioning of the five *skandhas*.

Hick's Real has no personal qualities, so the hundreds of millions of personal theists who claim a personal relationship with God appear to be decidedly short changed. Hick admits that the gods are "penultimate rather than ultimate realities, divine phenomena rather than the divine noumenon itself."[14] In *An Interpretation of Religion* Hick offers a distinctively Buberian view of the origin of persons, personal relations, and personal gods. Rejecting the Aristotelian-Boethian tradition that defined both human and divine persons as rational beings, Hick contends, quite correctly I believe, the persons come into being by virtue of their relations with each other. Hick elaborates: "Personality is not only essentially

inter-personal but as a corollary essential historical, having its concrete character within and as part of a particular unique stream of events . . . ."[15]

Reiterating his central point, Hick reminds us that "the Real *an sich* is not a greater self or a divine dispositional system,"[16] and that divine personalities come out of unique streams of historical experiences with the Real. But unlike human persons and much like Buber's concept of God as *Mitmenschlichkeit*, Hick proposes, adding a definite Freudian allusion, that "the gods are formed in interaction with their worshippers" as "ideal projections of the character of those worshippers and manifestations of the Real."[17] If, however, the Real has no personal qualities, it is difficult to see how the Real contributes anything to the appearance of personal deities. The clear implication is that they are interpersonal, historical, cultural creations of different peoples around the world. Even more so than human persons, a god's existence, using Hick's apt phrase, "remains a gift of human society."[18] In the same passage Hick states that God is "formed in interaction with . . . worshippers." This means that God appears as the "between" in Buber's I-Thou dialogue; God is authentic "with-other-people-ness" (*Mitmenschlichkeit*). Hick's analysis of persons is brilliant and well reasoned, but most personal theists would find this doctrine of God totally unsatisfactory.

Griffin finds passages in Hick's writings where he identifies the Real, without qualification, with *nirguṇa Brahman* and *śūnyatā*. Hick states that “the infinite God must pass out into sheer mystery. . . and is in this limitless transcendence *nirguṇa*”; and if *śūnyatā* is understood as "referring to the ultimate reality beyond the scope of all concepts, knowable only in its manifestations, then it is indeed equivalent to what . . . we are calling the Real."[19] The divine qualities of the Abrahamic faiths are not found in the Real, but Advaita Vedānta's and Śūnyavada Buddhism's lack of attributes match the Real perfectly. Huxley's and Hick's

preference for some Hindu and Buddhist schools undermines the strict equality of religions that contemporary proponents of religious pluralism require.

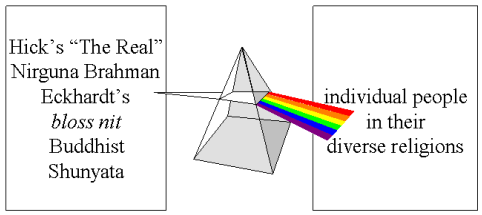
Hick's Real does not have any moral qualities either, so Griffin maintains that Hick cannot give ethics a sufficient grounding. Hick claims that living ethically is living "in earthly alignment with Real,"[20] but the Real, devoid of moral qualities, cannot offer any ethical guidance or any foundation for value at all. Hick claims that through "divine commands" or "intuited truths," saints have been able to discern "utterly basic principles" such as "it is evil to cause suffering," but without moral content the Real cannot be the source of any ethical law. Although the Real does not contain the "love and justice" of the Christian God, Hick still insists that these qualities are nevertheless "manifestations of the Real."[21] In the same paragraph Hick maintains that the Real is "rich in content," but this is *saguṇa brahman* not the neither/nor dialectic of *neti, neti* that produces the concept of *brahman* without content. Richness implies distinctions and contrasts, but *nirguṇa brahman* and *śūnyatā* have neither.

Similar to his theory of the construction of divine personalities, Hick must also agree that moral qualities are also the creations of human communities. In *An Interpretation of Religion* this is precisely what Hick himself believes: "The moral attractive possibility, in my view, is to see morality as a function of human nature," whose "inherently social nature . . . has given rise to both law and to morality."[22] Hick's views could be used to support the ethical naturalism that is the basis for the Gandhian virtue ethics I propose in the last section. Furthermore, if the Real has no moral qualities, it appears that he has set himself up for an Ockamistic excision of the Real as an unnecessary explainer. When Hick states that the Real is a source of "information" that is transformed in religious experience,[23] one can, once again, ask how an undifferentiated, quality-less reality can be a datum for any knowledge. Through

the ages mystics have repeatedly told us that, apart from unalloyed bliss and union, there is literally nothing to say about the Godhead.

In the *Fifth Dimension* Hick states that the "*nirguṇa/saguṇa* distinction is analogous to the Kantian distinction between noumenon and phenomenon when applied to religion," but I am not sure if this is entirely helpful.[24] Kant's noumenon is not divine or even the ground of Being in the traditional sense. (In a 1988 article Hick does give the quality "divinity" to "an ultimate transcendent divine reality,"[25] and he commits that same error as the Vedāntists, who could not resist, as Hick himself says, giving some qualities to the Transcendent.) Hick explains that he uses Kant to avoid the dangers of relativism, and Kant's noumenon offers a necessary basis for objectivity. But if the basic qualities of the personal and the moral are not in the Real then they must be constructed, as Hick essentially admits with regard to the idea of a personal deity. In *Fifth Dimension* Hick explains that the Doctrine of the Trinity, Allah as "merciful and gracious," Viṣṇu and Śiva are forms "human awareness of the Real [that] has been given by human consciousness."[26] It is not clear, if personal deities are essentially human creations, that Hick has offered sufficient objective grounding to avoid an unacceptable relativism among the world religions.

Prism analogy for Huxley/Hick



Prism symbolizes ignorance
of the unity of all religions

In his book *A Christian Theology of Religions: A Rainbow of Faiths* Hick uses the analogy of refracted light to explain the relationship between the various religions and the Real.[27] With this in mind I have constructed the graphic on the left to represent the identist" or Huxley/Hick view of religious pluralism. (In the third section I will offer a Gandhian version of the prism analogy.) White light symbolizes Hick's Real as it is refracted

through a prism to produce a rainbow of colors--the religions of the world and their individual devotees. In *The Fifth Dimension* Hick states that it is sin, false consciousness, or ignorance (*advidya*) that causes the refraction.[28] If we take the prism away, the illusion of plurality is removed and the "singular" (Hick's word) nature of the Real is made manifest. When the phenomenal world disappears, then the noumenon stands in its full undifferentiated form. What now becomes evident, however, is that Griffin appears to be correct in his charge that Hick's may not be a theory of religious pluralism at all.

II

In her paper "Gandhi and Hick on Religious Pluralism: Some Resonances," Sharada Sugirtharajah proposes that Gandhi's Truth is equivalent to Hick's Real. She states that "neither denied the notion and experience of Truth as personal but [they] were equally keen to acknowledge the experience of it as nonpersonal and did not confine Truth to either of these categories. Gandhi and Hick would have no difficulty in acknowledging that they are referring to the one single higher or transcendent Reality, for both see religions as varying responses to the one Truth/Real."[29] Later in my analysis I will find some problems with identifying Gandhi's Truth with Hick's Real.

Sugirtharajah has found good confirmation of Gandhi's belief in transcendent religion in this passage: “It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one’s very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which even purifies.”[30] Here is a similar statement: "Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the universe. . . .This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. It harmonizes

them and gives them reality."[31] The last phrase may indicate that Gandhi agrees with Hick's idea that all religions have a connection with ultimate reality.

The passages above are related to Gandhi's affirmation that he is a *sanatana* Hindu, which is usually assumed to be identical to *sanatanadharma*, which Wilhelm Halbfass defines as "the eternal religion, the religion in or behind all religions, a kind of 'metareligion.'"[32] This type of Hinduism of course is the basis for the declaration that "Everyone is a Hindu," and it is just as triumphalist and "hierarchically inclusive" (Sugirtharajah's apt phrase) as Christian imperialism.

In several passages Gandhi appears to take this "hard" view of *sanatana* Hinduism. First, following the lead of so many other Hindus, Gandhi envelopes Jainism and Buddhism into Hinduism. Here is a particularly egregious example of the swallowing up of Buddhism: "What Hinduism did not assimilate of what passes as Buddhism today was not an essential part of the Buddha's life and his teachings."[33] Second, this passage demonstrates that Gandhi is being hierarchically inclusive towards Christianity: "I do want you to become a better Christian by assimilating all that may be good in Hinduism that you may not find . . . in Christian teaching."[34] Third, in this statement Gandhi proclaims the total triumph of *sanatanadharma*: "What of substance is contained in any other religion is always to be found in Hinduism. And what is not contained in it is insubstantial or unnecessary."[35]

In his other statements about being a *sanatana* Hindu, Gandhi is less hierarchically inclusive. Responding to the many Hindus who saw him as a traitor to their faith, primarily because he rejected the caste system and the doctrine of untouchability in addition to being too friendly with Muslims, Gandhi admits that his religion does appear to be "a conglomeration." He states that his is a "faith based on the broadest possible toleration" that "finds room" for "Christian, Islamic, and Zoroastrian teaching."[36]

In his article "Gandhi and Religious Pluralism,"[37] J. F. T. Jordens argues that by 1930 Gandhi had left his triumphalist period and tolerance for religions (but still claiming that Hinduism was the "most tolerant")[38] to a position of equal respect, and, as I will argue in the third section, a mutual transformation of religions proposed by John B. Cobb. This significant move is found in the following statements: "I have, of course, always believed in the principle of religious tolerance. But I have even gone further. I have advanced from tolerance to equal respect for all religions"; and "I've broadened my Hinduism by loving other religions as my own."[39] It should be pointed out that Gandhi was inspired by the example set by the Christian Charlie Andrews to make this transition.

Returning to the statement above about Hinduism as a transcendent religion quoted by Sugirtharajah, it is crucial to note that Gandhi does not speak of a transcendent reality. In the quotation I added to Sugirtharajah's, the religion that transcends all the others deals with the "the moral government of the universe," which Hick's Real cannot do if it has no moral qualities or will. It is on these two major points that Hick and Gandhi differ significantly.

There are far too many scholars who carelessly identify Advaita Vedānta as Gandhi's philosophical home, and this is one more example of the unfortunate tendency of Indian scholars to obscure the rich and diverse tradition of Vedāntist philosophy. It is far more accurate to say that he is closest to the neo-Vedāntist school of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, and Aurobindo.[40] Hick and Śaṅkara believe that the Real is *nirguṇa brahman*, a transcendent reality with no qualities, but the neo-Vedantists follow other Vedāntist schools that understand ultimate reality as immanent and as created by *śākti*, Īśvara, or Viṣṇu. (Gandhi preferred personal deity is Rāma.) The neo-Vedāntists still preserve the concept of *nirguṇa brahman*, so it appears as if they are positing two ultimate realities. I will address this putative logical problem in the next section.

The neo-Vedāntists and Gandhi are pantheists, but for Śaṅkara the world is definitely not identical with God: *nirguṇa brahman* is not divine and neither is Hick's Real. In my research of Gandhi's writings I have found only one statement that describes Hick's transcendent Real: "God vanishes and we have only *neti, neti*," but this is preceded by this pantheistic affirmation: "God, ourselves, and all objects in the universe are in essence one reality."[41] It is significant to note that Huxley, although he appears not to appreciate the difference, chooses his excerpts assuming that Hindus, Mahāyāna Buddhists, Daoists, and Abrahamic mystics are all speaking about an *immanent* divine reality, not a *transcendent* reality without qualities. It is only the former that can have the richness that Hick describes to the latter.

Many more passages could be cited in support of Gandhi's pantheism and immanentism, but I choose this one because of its relevance to religious pluralism: "The chief value of Hinduism lies in holding the actual belief that all life . . . one, i.e., all life coming from the One universal source, call it Allah, God or Parameshwara."[42] The analogies Gandhi uses to describe God's relationship to the world are ones that point to pantheism not Śaṅkara's transcendental monism, or if John White's critique of Śaṅkara is correct, a transcendental dualism.[43] Here is a statement that definitely confirms his pantheism: "In this ocean of life, we are little drops. My doctrine means that I must identify myself with life. . . . that I must share the majesty of life in the presence of God. The sum-total of this life is God."[44] For Śaṅkara and Hick the Real and *nirguṇa brahman* are not living things, so Gandhi remains on the phenomenal plane and throughout all his writings he never leaves it.

When Gandhi refers to Advaita Vedānta it is clear that he does not understand it, as Hick confirms, in a "technical, philosophical" sense.[45] Gandhi says that he

believes in the "rock-bottom doctrine of Advaita," but he describes it very loosely as the belief in "the essential unity of man," "all men are born equal," and all "have the same soul."[46] When he says that he is an *advaitin* and *dvaitin* at the same time,[47] he appears to be completely confused; but to be charitable, he is simply affirming the Neo-Vedāntist belief in the full reality of the world with individual selves and individual things in that world. As Margaret Chatterjee has so aptly stated: "Gandhi had no truck with the *māyā* doctrine . . . We are not called to a higher state of consciousness where the mesh of *māyā* will disappear."[48]

Sugirtharajah rightly points out that both Hick and Gandhi view salvation as a move from ego-centered existence to selfless fusion with the Real, or as Gandhi was fond of saying: "reducing oneself to zero."[49] Sugirtharajah is also quite correct to point out that Gandhi and Hick focus on religious practices rather than cognitive belief in their approach to the world religions. She is also right to maintain that the test of a true religion for both Gandhi and Hick is its fruits, defined as its moral achievements. She quotes Hick as follows: "The test is whether these visions lead to the better, and ultimately the limitlessly better, quality of existence which they promise."[50]

Drawing on what I have already argued above, I have the following responses to Sugirtharajah's points. First, Gandhi's self dissolves into an immanent reality rich in qualities rather than Hick's Real with no qualities. Second, this dissolution of self stands in real tension with Gandhi's view strong individualism discussed below. Third, Hick's view does require an initial cognitive belief, even though it is by way of negation, in a transcendent Real just as Kant's critical philosophy could not go forward without the belief in the noumenon. Fourth, as we have seen, no moral "alignment" (Hick's word) with the Real is possible if it does not have any moral qualities.

Religious morality and laws based on it have one of the greatest contributions of the world's religions. (Even some critics of religion are willing to concede this.) A religion that is immoral is condemnable, but one that is amoral is also problematic. It seems reasonable then to bring the world's religions together under moral categories such as justice, nonviolence, tolerance, and compassion. This is precisely Gandhi's approach. Insisting that "there is no such thing as religion overriding morality," Gandhi states that "true religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other."[51] If Hick's transcendental Real cannot give any grounding for morality, then Gandhi and Hick must finally part ways.

While in London Gandhi was very much influenced by theosophical views of religious unity. He also read William Salter's book *Ethical Religion* and he observed that two of the most effective English moral reformers of the day were atheists. This fact convinced him that, no matter how much they resisted, Gandhi would include atheists in his view of authentic morality and religion. As he once said: "Even the atheists who have pretended to disbelieve in God have believed in truth."[52] Gandhi would also have to confess that these atheists developed their virtues from within their own natures, which once again supports the ethical naturalism of virtue ethics.

III

In order to conform to all the evidence of the world religions and be as inclusive as possible, Griffin makes a move that is methodologically necessary but perhaps logically questionable. Hick defends his concept of the Real because it is the "simplest hypothesis to account for the plurality of forms of religious experience and thought."[53] He continues by maintaining that "since there cannot be a plurality of ultimates, we affirm the true ultimacy of the Real by referring to it in the singular." As Hick's theory is neither adequate to the evidence of all the major religions nor consistent with regard to grounding of morality,

Griffin proposes that we must consider the possibility of plural ultimates, and he insists that no logical laws are violated in the process.

Griffin offers the philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead as a means to cover all the major aspects of the world religions as we know them. There are three ultimates in Whiteheadian metaphysics: God, creativity, and the cosmos. Whitehead assumes the eternity of the cosmos so that it does not lose its claim as an ultimate as does the Abrahamic cosmos that is created and destroyed. Unlike Hick's ontology of the Real, where gods and the cosmos are phenomena of derivative reality, Whitehead's God and cosmos have a reality of their own.

Here is a summary of how the major religions fit the Whiteheadian scheme:

- **Theistic Religions**: loving union with a personal God. Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Pure Land Buddhism, and Vaiṣṇava/Śaivite/Śākta theologies. Whitehead's God is the object of worship here.
- **Acosmic Religions**: impersonal ground of being. Focus on enlightenment and contemplation. Jainism, Theravada Buddhism, philosophical Daoism, and neo-Vedānta. Whitehead's principle of creativity is the ontological reference here.
- **Cosmic Religions**: Modeling cosmic order and thereby finding right relations with all beings. Indigenous religions, Shinto, religious Daoism, and Confucianism. The Whiteheadian reference is the cosmos, which is the result of God, creativity, and eternal objects interacting.

On the basis of Whitehead's philosophy and further insights from John B. Cobb, the preeminent Whiteheadian theologian, Cobb and Griffin offer a fully complementary or "deep" religious pluralism that attempts to do justice to the evidence of the world religions and also upholds a non-hierarchical equality of religions. It is significant that Hick recognizes the

indigenous religions (he calls them "primal") as prelapsarian expressions of the Real, which offer models of how fallen people might recenter themselves on the Real.[54] If this is correct, one might be tempted to say that these religions are better than the others.

I have placed neo-Vedānta in the acosmic category, but their personal theism could qualify them for the first category as well. Several scholars have demonstrated how the neo-Vedāntists, as well as the famous medieval Hindu theist Rāmānuja, fit the Whiteheadian framework. Whitehead himself was aware of the fact that his metaphysical speculation might well track with some Asian philosophical systems.[55] (It is significant to note that with regard to eschatology Hick once preferred Rāmānuja over Śaṅkara.)[56] In his work Delmar Langbauer shows that for Rāmānuja *nirguṇa brahman* and Īśvara are equally ultimate, but that the former is only an abstraction without the latter. As Griffin states: "Rāmānuja's position is similar to Whitehead's view, according to which creativity is eternally embodied in God";[57] and I may add, the cosmos is eternally embodied in the "consequent nature" of God. In his book *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism*, Griffin reports that one of Cobb's students Ernest L. Simmons has discovered the same relation between *nirguṇa brahman* and Īśvara in his dissertation on Aurobindo.[58]

One of the integral parts of deep religious pluralism is Cobb's concept of mutual transformation, which goes far beyond traditional liberal tolerance of passive respect at a distance. Cobb's position has been described as "fidelity to Christ with unqualified openness to other faiths."[59] One result of Gandhi's evolution from tolerance to equal respect for religions was his own view of mutual transformation, which I have already quoted: "I've broadened my Hinduism by loving other religions as my own."[60] It is significant to note that Vivekananda also anticipated this revolutionary idea: "The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor a Hindu or a Buddhist to become a Christian. But each must

assimilate the spirit of the others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth."[61] I have not reviewed Vivekananda's works on this issue, but here is strong support for equality of religions rather than the hierarchical view that Sugirtharajah attributes to him.

In his writings Gandhi switches back and forth between impersonal and personal ultimates, but his devotional life was centered on Rāma. Therefore, Gandhi could reside in either or both Whiteheadian categories. The worship of the Hindu Goddess has indigenous origins, and since Śākta theology is central to both Ramakrishna and Aurobindo, they could possibly find a home in the cosmic religions category. Gandhi praised women for exhibiting their *śākti* power and he was convinced that non-violence worked most effectively through this power. In my article "Was Gandhi a Tantric?" I show that even from his time in England Gandhi was interested in esoteric theories about male and female powers, and I conclude that Gandhi resides in an uneasy middle ground between right-handed and left-handed Tantricism.[62] For centuries the worship of the Hindu Goddess has been a form of personal theism, so I have to confess that my attempt to place Ramakrishna, Aurobindo, and Gandhi in the cosmic category is a stretch.

Gandhi did not foresee nor favor a single religion dominating the world, and he did not want people to convert to other faiths. Just as the Dalai Lama is now telling his non-Buddhist admirers, Gandhi insisted that people find value and spiritual sustenance in their own faith traditions. While each religion has truths, each also contains errors. Sugirtharajah is correct in claiming that Gandhi was especially keen to reject the doctrine of scriptural inerrancy and that humility must reign supreme in claiming definitive religious knowledge.

The claim that all religions are one in the divine fatherhood of the Abrahamic religions (as the Rev. John Henry Barrows did at the 1893 World Parliament of Religions), or

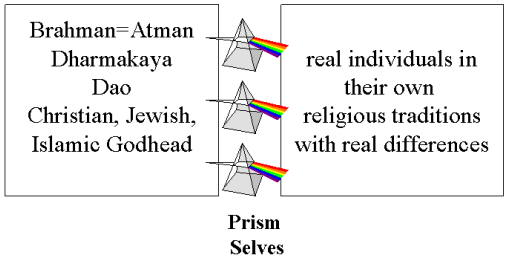
one in Huxley's impersonal Godhead, or one in Hick's the Real could be analogized as a mountain peak that all spiritual pilgrims ascend. But mountain fortresses have always been places of dominance and oppression, so this could be viewed as an image of religious imperialism. The mature Gandhi's reach is horizontal not vertical; it is egalitarian and not hierarchical.

Gandhi also envisions the world's religions as individual branches (the leaves being their devotees) of a single tree.[63] (Jordens claims that Gandhi left behind the drops in the ocean metaphor,[64] and I would argue that he did so to preserve the integrity of individuals.) One can enrich this image by adding that the tree has many roots for its nourishment in the soil. The fact that Gandhi said that the individual leaves stood for individual human faces demonstrates that he is interested in preserving both human uniqueness and religious diversity.

Gandhi spent a lot of time spinning cotton thread, so it is natural that he also appealed to weaving metaphors. He once quoted a medieval Indian poet as follows: "Even as the thread spins out so be your life. Do what you may, and receive the grace of Hari [Vaishnava God]."[65] If one imagines a myriad of colored threads becoming the warp and weave of the fabric of life and God as a master weaver, we have metaphor that not only combines unity and particularity but also individual initiative, which was essential for Gandhi. As Gandhi states: "the individual is the one supreme consideration"; and "if the individual ceases to count, what is left of society?"[66]

I have already introduced the prism analogy for the Huxley/Hick view of religious plurality (or lack thereof), and now with Gandhi's affirmation of the individual foremost in mind and his own use of refracted light analogy,[67] I present the revised prism analogy. Rather than standing for the ignorance of unity, I propose that there are as many prisms as there are individuals each refracting the white light of the Godhead and each producing a fully differentiated world, one in which both individuals and their religious preserve their rich variety and differences. Using once again the tree analogy, Gandhi once said: "Just as a tree had a million leaves similarly though God was one, there were as many religions as there were men and women though they were rooted in one God."[68]

Revised prism analogy



John Ruskin's book *Unto This Last* profoundly influenced Gandhi, and Ruskin once said that "the purest minds are those that love colors the most."[69] In order to make the prism selves unique we would have to conceive of them as fractured in a certain way so that the world refracted is different for every single self. And even though the prism selves can turn to the Godhead in mystical union, they still, as Gandhi insists, preserve their individuality as they return to the fully differentiated and real world. The many prism selves become billions if we take Gandhi at his word that there are just as many religions as there are individuals.

I offer this diagram as a model for understanding deep religious pluralism. I believe that it images the possibility of genuine religious dialogue in which religions preserve their own identities, but, also have the possibility of complementing and enriching each other through Cobb's mutual transformation. One disadvantage of the graphic, however, is that it

does not indicate the possibility of plural ultimates that Griffin believes is essential to a fully complementary pluralism that does justice to all the evidence of the world religions.

IV

Gandhi was fond of claiming that the two statements "God is Truth" and "Truth is God" are convertible. He came to prefer the latter over the former because there is far less dispute about the existence of truth than about the existence of God. Proclaiming “Truth is God” also avoids the destructive ways in which personal gods have been used to wage wars and further national goals. Truth is God also opens a door to atheists, who, as we have seen, Gandhi was eager to include. If I were an atheist, however, I would be bothered by the clear implication that truth is divine. I assume that in response a Gandhian have to turn to some Tillichian notion of a non-sacred object of "ultimate concern." It would seem that atheist would only be satisfied when every implication of divinity is removed. Atheists are definitely not going to find any comfort in statements such as: "For in his boundless love God permits the atheist to live"; or God "is even the atheism of the atheist."[70]

Most commentators explicate Gandhi's concept of truth as an ontology in which the Sanskrit *sat* (being) is correlated with its etymological partner *satya* (truth). Sugirtharajah quotes one passage where Gandhi does make this connection, but he does not, as was his wont, dwell on metaphysics; rather, he chooses to move on to the ethical implications of Truth is God. For him there are two paths to truth: the first is through love, compassion, and non-violence; the second, in most cases connected to the first, is through personal experiments of a generally scientific nature. Truth can be "found by diligent search and meticulous observance of the well-known and well-tried rules of search."[71] This is not an

ontological theory of truth, but an epistemological position that Gandhi turns into a personal and ethical search for truth.

Applying the scientific method to his personal life, Gandhi conducted what he called "experiments in truth." Gandhi believed that truth is a virtue, the virtue of being true to one's self. One can do this only be constantly testing one's self in many different situations. It is truly significant that Gandhi insists that *sanatanadharma*, usually assumed to be tested by Vedic authority, must now "be placed before the world" and it must be "acceptable to reason and the heart."[72] (As we shall see shortly, Gandhi's experiential approach to *dharma* is actually closer to the *śāstras*.) To find truth people should rely on their consciences, the "still, small voices" within them. The quest for truth will not succeed if one is not spiritually prepared. In order to prevent the appeal to false conscience, the person must follow the utmost discipline and have a pure heart.

While Gandhi believed that Truth is absolute, he followed the Jains in holding that individual views of it will always be "relative, many-sided, and plural."[73] Their most famous parable is the story of the five blind women and the elephant. By grabbing on to one part of the elephant, each woman would know something true about the animal but that truth would only be partial. Gandhi once said that "I very much like this [Jain] doctrine of the many-sidedness of reality. It is this doctrine that has taught me to judge a Muslim from his own standpoint and a Christian from his. Formerly I used to resent the ignorance of my opponents. Today I can love them because I am gifted with the eye to see myself as others see me and vice versa."[74] Here is yet another example Gandhi's mutual transformation in his encounters with other faith traditions and proof of his deep religious pluralism.

One of the most insightful commentators on Gandhi is D. K. Bedekar, and I believe that he has captured the essence of Gandhi's way of relating finite truths to eternal Truth:

> He unmistakably refers to the finite truth which can be grasped by a finite mind, and boldly asserts that we, as finite human beings, must chart our voyage with this compass, as our only guide. Here Gandhi appears a humble seeker of human truth, as distinguished from eternal Truth sought by ancient seeks of Moksha, Nirvana or the eternal Bliss of Brahma-jnana.[75]

This truth is not an object of worship, and it is definitely not a reference to a Hick's Real or Śaṅkara's *nirguṇa brahman* without qualities. This is also means that search for human truths within the finite world is not necessarily a religious task. Furthermore, it means that we must clearly distinguish between eternal Truth (with an uppercase "T") and finite truths (with a lower case "t"). Sugirtharajah is correct to say that the "distinctiveness of Gandhi's approach to religious pluralism lies in his emphasis on *ahiṃsās* as the means to Truth," [76] but I would this change Truth to lower case finite truths discovered by unique and finite individuals and cultures in the world.

Bedekar proposes that Gandhi should have given up his uneasy association with Vedānta, and in my work on Gandhi I have gone further to suggest that a nonsubstantial, dynamic Buddhist self makes the change from violence to non-violence more intelligible. The *atman* self is incapable of changing from one state to another. It also cannot carry *karma*, so it cannot be a seat of moral responsibility. I have also argued that the Buddha and Gandhi shared a pragmatic view of non-violence, which is view much more suitable to the pluralities and contingencies of contemporary world culture.

V

In my book *The Virtue of Non-Violence: from Gautama to Gandhi,*[77] I argue that Gandhi's thought that can be seen as a form of the constructive postmodern thought inspired by Whitehead and explicated by Griffin and Cobb. Gandhi follows postmodernists in dissolving modernist distinctions between the inner/outer, private/public, religion/state, means/ends, rights/duties, and values/facts. Gandhi cannot be allied with the French postmodernists, the only school to which Hick and Sugirtharajah refer, because he does not believe in the decentering and fragmentation of the self, nor does he wish to deconstruct history, reality, or God. Gandhi creatively combined elements of premodernist and modernist thinking in same way that constructive postmodernists do today.

I choose to frame the issues of modernism and postmodernism conceptually, not in terms of chronology. Modernism has been described as a movement from *mythos* to *logos*, but this replacement of myth by logic has been going on for at least 2,500 years. Almost simultaneously in India, China, and Greece, the strict separation of fact and value, science and religion was proposed by the Lokāyata materialists, the Greek atomists, and the Chinese Mohists. These philosophies remained minority positions, but it is nevertheless essential to note that the seeds for modernist philosophy are very old.

Modernism is a form of thought that loves to dichtomize. It separates subjects from objects, the inner from the outer, the private from the public, fact from value, individuals from their communities, rights from responsibilities, procedural justice from the good, and religion from science. (Making these distinctions has great advantages but also, as postmodern critics have shown, profound liabilities as well.) If we are value creators and fully embodied selves, both in a body of flesh and feelings and in the body of society, then it is indisputable that our “inner” flows into the “outer” and vice versa. For political philosophy

it means that there must a closer connection between personal and civic virtues. Although Gandhi's philosophy is marred by an unnecessary Manicheanism that opposes good and evil/mind and body, his focus on the virtues of truth, nonviolence, and compassion and an implicit notion of a "process" self are compatible with a constructive postmodern virtue ethics.

Constructive postmodernists wish to reestablish the premodern harmony of humans, society, and the sacred without losing the integrity of the individual, the possibility of meaning, and the intrinsic value of nature. They believe that French deconstructionists are throwing out the proverbial baby with the bath water. The latter wish to reject not only the modern worldview but any worldview whatsoever. Constructive postmodernists want to preserve the concept of worldview and propose to reconstruct one that avoids the liabilities of both premodernism and modernism. Proving my point that these terms must be defined conceptually and not historically, I have discovered constructive postmodern positions in Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism.[78]

Another significant aspect of modernist thinking is its tendency to essentialize and to universalize. In his classic work *The Meaning and End of Religion*, Wilfred Cantwell Smith demonstrates that traditional faiths did not define themselves under the category of a universal term we now call "religion." Hick's interlocutor "Phil" in *A Christian Theology of Religions* is quite correct in asserting that under the rubric of a universal religion modernist thinkers forced "the complex and variegated [religious] world into a single conceptual scheme."[79] Hick's doctrine of the Real might very well be one of these schemes, drawing as it does on Kant, a major figures in modern philosophy.

In the concluding essay in *Deep Religious Pluralism* Cobb registers his dissatisfaction with the category "religion" and how the imposition of attributes that a worldview must have

to be a religion has bedeviled theories of religious pluralism. The first problem, epitomized in the Rev. Barrows' mention of "divine fatherhood" at 1893 World Parliament of Religions, is the tendency to religious imperialism where sincere but unmindful attempts at inclusion end up excluding. As I have argued, Hick's sincere attempt to address this by positing the Real, with direct equivalences in Hinduism and Buddhism, has not solved the problem of bias.

Even if the problem of bias is solved, Cobb believes that the universalizing effect of the category of religion results in a depreciation of the distinctive characteristics of each individual faith tradition. Appealing to Whitehead's three ultimates is a way that Griffin attempts to deal this problem, but even this does not bring out the richness and diversity of these traditions that only a phenomenological approach would do. Yet another problem that Cobb discerns is "the strong tendency, when an essence of religion is sought, to emphasize the sacred"[80] and to exclude the secular, sometimes seen as fallen, unclean, or otherwise unworthy. I will show how Gandhians might address this problem below.

One exception to Cantwell Smith's thesis that "religion" is a modernist invention might be the concept of *sanatanadharma* in which the Hindu faith was assumed to contain the eternal essence of truth. With regard to this point Jeffery Long states: "If [*dharma*] must be identified with the term 'religion,' it would mean something like 'religion as such,' the eternal ideal or "Platonic form' of religion, in which all particular instances of religion participate . . ."[81] Finding this essentialized *dharma* previous to any accepted chronology of the "beginning of the modern period" demonstrates once again that the term "modernism" must be defined conceptually rather than historically.

If one looks closely at the actual use of the term *dharma* in major Hindu texts, we find something very different from a universal form of religion. In the *Vanaparva* of the *Mahābhārata* King Nahuṣa asks Yudhiṣ-hira what *dharma* is, and he defines it not as

universal law, but as the virtues of truthfulness, generosity, forgiveness, goodness, kindness, self-control, and compassion.[82] Āpastamba's *Dharmasūtra* begins: "And we shall explain the accepted customary laws, the authority for which rests on the acceptance by those who know the law and on the Vedas"; and "he should model his conduct after that which is unanimously approved in all regions by Āryas who have been properly trained."[83] Paul Häcker contends that this text "is the most concrete and most precise definition of the Hindu concept of *dharma* that I know," describing it as "radically empirical" and as conceivable only through experience.[84] Although he may not have known it in a scholarly sense, Gandhi's finding truth by personally testing it is significant. If we describe it as reintegrating a premodern notion of *dharma* for use the in the contemporary world, then Gandhi has offered us a constructively postmodern *dharma* morality.[85] In the same way that Hindu texts allow us to reject an essentializing ontology of *dharma*, Gandhi can be seen as moving beyond a neo-Vedānist ontology to a virtue ethics based on truth, nonviolence, and compassion.

When Gandhi writes about society as a whole, he usually speaks in pantheistic or organic holistic language that sounds strongly communitarian. This type of political philosophy is found in his belief that India should be ruled from its villages and not from a central government in New Delhi. Gandhi's communitarianism could be seen as a constructive postmodern adaptation of a premodern South Asian model of governance. In medieval Sri Lanka Stanley Tambiah explains: "The polities modeled on mandala-type patterning had central royal domains surrounded by satellite principalities and provinces replicating the center on a smaller scale and at the margins had even more autonomous tributary principalities."[86] Tambiah gives this type of polity the engaging name "pulsating galactic polities," and he believes that this form of political organization is better at integrating minorities and respecting their autonomy. A polity such as this would serve as a

political basis for deep religious pluralism, or now in the secular framework of Gandhi's search for finite truths, a deep multiculturalism.

On the other hand, Gandhi's strong emphasis on individuals and their moral obligation to experiment with truth regardless of their peers sounds libertarian or more broadly liberal. In another article I have chosen the term "reformed liberalism" as means to bring these sometimes conflicting elements of Gandhi's thought together.[87] Classical liberalism, with a goal of moral and spiritual neutrality that can easily be perceived as indifference or even hostility, has led many people to a corrosive religious fundamentalism. A reformed liberalism would embrace Gandhi's and King's fusion of religion and political action, recognizing the supreme value of religious visions that are inclusive rather than exclusive.

While the communitarian Gandhi speaks of "ever-widening, never ascending" circles of cooperation with power centered in village republics,[88] a liberal internationalist Gandhi proposes that these circles are ever ascending in a "world federation of free nations," which would provide for "the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples, and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all."[89] This sharing of resources indicates much stronger economic cooperation than United Nations, and is more in line with contemporary World Federalists. In the same statement Gandhi also agrees with the World Federalists with their call for total national disarmament: "national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary, and a world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression." Generally, Gandhi's negative views of the United Nations (except for UNESCO)[90] have been read through a communitarian lens, but these passages indicate that he may have thought that the authority of United Nations was not

strong enough. Gandhi concludes this article from *The Bombay Chronicle* stating that "the demand for Indian independence is in no way selfish. Its nationalism spells internationalism."

Driven by his discovery that even though Truth is God all human truths are finite and fallible, Gandhi would support a multiculturalism that calls for equal respect for all of Tambiah's "pulsating galactic polities." This pluralistic, multicultural vision would be based on the utmost respect for various cultural ensembles of virtues. The tension between the virtues of pride and humility or different ideas of modesty stand as instructive examples of how Asian and European cultures differ. Even though I believe that the virtues of axiological priority, moral rules, abstracted as they are from the virtues, still have normative force. This means that international pressure can be brought to bear on people who do not honor human rights whose practices offend basic human sensibilities. Honor killings and female genital mutilation come to mind as prime examples such practices that would be banned.

In this essay we have seen that two major doctrines of religious pluralism rely on speculative theories of reality: Hick's ontology of the Real and Whitehead's ontology of three equiprimordial realities of cosmos, creativity and God. Quite apart from the philosophical disagreements, which we all must respectfully honor, Hick recognizes Cobb's doctrine of mutual transformation in Gandhi: "[Gandhi's] doctrine of the equality of religions . . . did not move towards a single global religion, but enjoins us all to become better expressions of our own faith, being enriched in the process by influences from other faiths."[91] In yet another convergent move Hick rejects the idea of one global religion based on a common worship of the Real in favor of "interfaith dialogue with some degree of mutual transformation in which each enriches and is enriched by the other."[92] Knowing how Gandhi always put aside speculative thinking in favor of ethical, spiritual, and political *praxis*, we should not be surprised that he offers us a view of religious and cultural reconciliation that has few

philosophical strings attached. This fact should make the Gandhian model the most promising solution to the immense problems that we face in the world today.

In closing we must note that Gandhi credited his best Christian friend Charlie Andrews as one who inspired his mature views on religious pluralism. It is, therefore, significant to reiterate the fact that Gandhi's words that have chosen to conclude this essay resonate beautifully with those of the contemporary Christian John Cobb. Here is Gandhi's benediction at the International Fellowship of Religions held at the Sabarmati Ashram in January, 1928.

> We can only pray, if we are Hindus, not that a Christian should become a Hindu, or if we are Muslims, not that a Hindu or a Christian should become a Muslim, nor should we even secretly pray that anyone should be converted, but our inmost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Christian a better Christian.[93]

Endnotes

[1]Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (New Delhi: Government of India Publications, 1959), vol. 93, p. 64.

[2]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 35, p. 462.

[3]John Hick, *The Fifth Dimension: An Exploration of the Spiritual Realm* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1999), p. 204.

[4]Ibid., p. 132.

[5]Norman Wong Cheong Sau, "Karl Rahner's Concept of the 'Anonymous Christian':An Inclusivist View of Religions," *Church and Society* 4:1, p. 3. PDF web version at <www.ttc.edu.sg/csca/CS/2001-Apr/Norman Wong.pdf>.

[6]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 175.

[7]David Ray Griffin, ed., *Deep Religious Pluralism* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), pp. 3-6; 24-29.

[8]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Responses to the Transcendent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 246. See the same statement in *A Christian Theology of Religions: A Rainbow of Faiths* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), p. 27.

[9]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 9.

[10]Hick, "Religious Pluralism and Salvation" in *The Philosophical Challenge of Religious Diversity*, eds. Philip L. Quinn and Kevin Meeker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 56. Reprinted from *Faith and Philosophy* 5 (October, 1988), pp. 365-77.

[11]Hick, *A Christian Theology of Religions*, p. 107.

[12]Aldous Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944), p. 1.

[13]Nicholas F. Gier, *The Virtue of Non-Violence: From Gautama to Gandhi* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004), pp. 73-78.

[14]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, p.255.

[15]Ibid., p. 265.

[16]Ibid., p. 266.

[17]Ibid. Hick mentions Buber's concept of *Mitmenschlichkeit* on p. 326.

[18]Ibid., p. 146.

[19]Cited in Griffin, *Deep Religious Pluralism*, p. 61; Hick, "Towards a Philosophy of Religious Pluralism," p. 133; *An Interpretation of Religion*, p. 292. Griffin also finds the Real=*śūnyatā* equivalenc in Hick's *A Christian Theology of Religions* (pp. 60-61). In the *Fifth Dimension* Hick states that *śūnyatā* is identical to Kant's noumenon and therefore the same as his Real (p. 95).

[20]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, p. 312.

[21]Ibid., p. 247.

[22]Ibid., p. 97.

[23]Ibid., p. 244.

[24]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 92. When pressed by an imaginary interlocutor "Phil" about his use of Kant, Hick admits that Kant would not use the term "noumenon" in this way (*A Christian Theology of Religions,* p. 46).

[25]Hick, "Religious Pluralism and Salvation," p. 59.

[26]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 10.

[27]Hick, *A Christian Theology of Religions*, pp. ix-x.

[28]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 6.

[29]Sharada Sugirtharajah, "Gandhi and Hick on Religious Pluralism: Some Resonances," forthcoming in *International Journal of Gandhi Studies* 1 (2012), p. 29. Cited from the typescript.

[30]Gandhi, *The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi,* ed. Shriman Narayan (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1969), vol. 6, p.263.

[31]N. K. Bose, ed., *Selections from Gandhi* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1948), p. 224.

[32]Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 52.

[33]Gandhi, *Young India* 9 (November 24, 1927), p. 392. "It can be said, in India at any rate, Hinduism and Buddhism were but one, and that even today the fundamental principles of both are identical" (*Hindu Dharma* [Delhi: Orient Paperbacks, 1978], p. 34).

[34]Gandhi's *Collected Works*, vol. 37, p. 224. In the same passage Gandhi adds that there is the possibility of mutual assimilation: "My remaining [a Hindu] does not prevent me from assimilating all that is good and noble in Christianity, Islam, and other faiths of the world." Belief in Satan is one doctrine that he would like to add (*Collected Works*, vol. 28, p. 194), which I believe is unfortunate because Gandhi's Manicheanism between good and evil and mind and body is one of the least attractive aspects of his religious philosophy.

[35]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 28, p. 194.

[36]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 35, pp. 254-55; *Young India* 9 (December 27, 1927), p. 426.

[37]J. F. T. Jordens, "Gandhi and Religious Pluralism" in *Modern Indian Responses to Religious Pluralism*, ed. Harold G. Coward (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1987), pp. 3-17.

[38]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 23, p. 485; cf. vol. 35, p. 166.

[39]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 93, p. 64; *Collected Works*, vol. 35, p. 462.

[40]Glyn Richards makes the best case in "Gandhi's Concept of Truth and the *Advaita* Tradition," *Religious Studies* 22:1 (March 196), pp. 1-14.

[41]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 32, p. 218.

[42]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 70, p. 181; *Harijan* 4(December 26, 1936), p. 365.

[43]See John D. White, "God and the World from the Viewpoint of Advaita Vedānta: A Critical Assessment," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 30:2 (June, 1981), pp. 185-193.

[44]Gandhi, *The Collected Works*, vol. 54, p. 38.

[45]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 194.

[46]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 35, p. 1.

[47]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 29, p. 411.

[48]Margaret Chatterjee, *Gandhi's Religious Thought* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1983), pp. 134, 104. I have found only two references to *māyā*--"we are *not*, He alone *Is*--but in the second statement he belittles the doctrine as "a babbling of imperfect humanity" (*Young India* 7 [March 5, 1925], p. 81; *Harajin* 3 [September 7, 1935], pp. 233-34).

[49]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 46, p. 29.

[50]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, p. 462.

[51]Excerpted in Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*, p. 223.

[52]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 65, p. 44.

[53]Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion*, p. 248.

[54]Hick, *A Christian Theology of Religions*, p. 110.

[55]Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, eds. David R. Griffin and Donald W. Sherburne (New York: Free Press, 1978), p. 7. Whitehead observed that the Asians made "process ultimate" and the Europeans made "fact ultimate" (ibid.). What is significant is that the American pragmatists sided with the Asians on this issue.

[56]*A Christian Theology of Religions*, p. 72.

[57]Griffin, *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 279.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Quoted by Marjorie Suchocki, "In Search of Justice: Religious Pluralism from a Feminist Perspective," quoted in *Deep Religious Pluralism*, p. 60.

[60]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 35, p. 462.

[61]Vivekananda's final address at the 1983 World Parliament of Religions found in *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* at <www. .ramakrishnavivekananda.info/vivekananda/volume_1/ vol_1_frame.htm>

[62]"Was Gandhi a Tantric?" *Gandhi Marg* 29:1 (April-June, 2007), pp. 21-36.

[63]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 93, p. 64; *Harijan* 11 (March 16, 1947), p. 63.

[64]Jordens, "Gandhi and Religious Pluralism," p. 11-12.

[65]Cited in *Towards Understanding Gandhi*, ed. D. K. Bedekar (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1975), p. 81.

[66]Quoted in Jayantanuja Bandyopadhyaya, *Social and Political Thought of Mahātma Gandhi* (Bombay: Allied Publishers, 1969), p. 72; *Harijan* 9 (February 1, 1942), p. 27.

[67]"What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction" (quoted in Nair Pyarelal, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase* [Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1958], vol. 2, p. 784).

[68]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 94, p. 18; *Harijan* 11 (March 16, 1947), p. 63. "In reality there are as many religions as there are individuals" (*Selections from Gandhi*, p. 224).

[69]John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, vol. 2 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1979), p. 145.

[70]Gandhi, *Young India* 7 (March 5, 1925), p. 81.

[71]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 65, pp. 44; *Harijan* 2 (September 21, 1934).

[72]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 56, p. 278.

[73]Cited in Raghavan Iyer, ed., *The Moral and Political Writings of Mahatma Gandhi* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), vol. 2, p. 176.

[74]Gandhi, *Young India* 8 (January 21, 1926), p. 30.

[75]D. K. Bedekar, *Towards Understanding Gandhi,* ed. R. Gawande (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1975), pp. 117, 119.

[76]Sugirtharajah, p. 26.

[77]Gier, *The Virtue of Non-Violence*, passim. The first four paragraphs of this section are adapted from this book.

[78]Gier, *Spiritual Titanism*: Indian, Chinese, and Western Perspectives (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000), chapters 2, 10, and 11.

[79]Hick, *A Christian Theology of Religions*, p. 40.

[80]John B. Cobb Jr., "Some Whiteheadian Assumptions about Religion and Pluralism," *Deep Religious Pluralism*, p. 244.

[81]Jeffery Long, "Anekanta Vedanta: Hindu Religious Pluralism," *Deep Religious Pluralism*, p. 148.

[82] *The Collected Essays of Bimal Krishna Matilal: Ethics and Epics*, ed. Jonardon Ganeri (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002) p. 54.

[83] *The Dharmasūtras: The Law Codes of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasiā-ha*, trans. Patrick Olivelle (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 1.1.1, p. 7.

[84]Paul Häcker, "Dharma im Hinduismus," *Zeitschrift für Missionwissenschaft und Relgionswissenschaft* 49 (1965), p. 99.

[85]For more see my "*Dharma* Morality as Virtue Ethics," forthcoming in *Indian Ethics*, vol. 2, eds. Purusottama Bilimoria and Joseph Prabuhu (Springer, 2012).

[86]Stanley J. Tambiah, *Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics, and Violence in Sri Lankā* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 175.

[87]Gier, "Non-Violence as a Civic Virtue: Gandhi as a Reformed Liberal," *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 7 (2003), pp. 75-98. This paragraph and the next are adapted from this article.

[88]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 91, p. 326.

[89]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 86, p. 190. This comes from a statement of the Congress Party on August 8, 1942, which Gandhi reaffirms by quoting it in an article in the *Bombay Chronicle* (April 18, 1945).

[90]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 96, p. 341; *Collected Works*, vol. 95, p. 28.

[91]Hick, *The Fifth Dimension*, p. 204.

[92]Hick, *A Christian Theology of Religions*, p. 123.

[93]Gandhi, *Collected Works*, vol. 35, p. 461.