



THE SOUNDS OF SATYAGRAHA:

MAHATMA GANDHI'S USE OF

SUNG-PRAYERS AND RITUAL

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For My Mother, Lila,

My First Teacher

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCING THE *ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI*

The life and work of Mohandas K. Gandhi have been, it would seem, examined quite thoroughly by every academic discipline, with Gandhi's public and personal lives having been placed beneath the microscopes of diverse and diverging theoretical perspectives, and with his actions having been viewed and analyzed from every conceivable angle. So, it is with healthy amounts of both respect and fear that I take up the examination of the present topic. The topic, not so easily captured beneath the lens of a microscope, is that of Gandhi's use of music and sung-prayers during the time of India's struggle for independence, during the time of *satyagraha* (*satya = truth; agraha = strongly grasping*).

These sung-prayers are found in a volume entitled *Ashram Bhajanavali*. This collection of chanted prayers used by the Indian *satyagraha* community, was and is sometimes referred to as a hymnal or a hymn-book. However, the collection was and is much more than what the term "hymnal" might imply to most, both in the scope of its contents and in its importance as another tool with which to understand the developments of Gandhi's non-violent, *satyagraha* community.

Gandhi's use of music, chant, and sound has been largely unrecognized, if at all, and when mentioned, it has been sorely under-thematized. Thus, a very important aspect of the *satyagraha* movement has been missed, "written off," or "viewed" as insignificant musical entertainment. While Gandhi's *satyagraha* encompassed vast social and political change, it was heavily grounded in devotional principles, and ultimately, those devotional principles were undergirt by a repertoire of sung-prayers found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Highly-developed theologies concerning the divinity of sound have been part of India's development and self-definition for millenia, and this understanding of sound and/or music as a

Thing Divine played, as well, a very important role in Gandhi's ability to accomplish his goals of national organization and change. While this has remained unrecognized in western estimation, we will see, in the course of this work, that Gandhi's "political" and "religious" aspirations were grounded in his utilization of ritual and sung-prayers. We will hear how the *Ashram Bhajanavali* sung-prayers, resounding from India's depths, struck such a correspondence of inspiration with Gandhi's followers, and why India responded so strongly to his call.

Woven into the discussion will be a consideration of the phenomenon of sound itself. India has a long tradition of regarding sound (music, chant, *mantra*, and the phenomenon of sound) as a pathway to connect with, comprehend, and manifest divinity.

'The primary aesthetic criterion for the evaluation of an Indian music performance is...the strength of the [devotional] message conveyed through it. Thus, insight into and comprehension of the prevalence of the devotional aspect at the core of Indian music is the key to the understanding of this unique and many-shaped tradition' (Thielemann 1998, p.116).

This elemental reality has been largely missed by academia. Even in western musical circles, where a certain acknowledgement of music's divine character has been acknowledged, there has remained a predominance of seeing music as servant to theology: '...worship is wonderfully served by music' (Blackwell 1999, p.23). From this perspective, music (sound, *mantra*, chant) has been consigned to the rank of "second-class citizen."

As a result of this limited perspective, the significance which Gandhi placed on the regularity of group sung-prayer meetings (the chanting of holy scriptures and singing of devotional songs) has been overlooked in current scholarship. While some attention has been paid to the historical tradition of *bhajan* (hymn) singing in India as a political tool connected with social critique and unrest (see, e.g.,

Lorenzen, D.L. 1987 in K. Schomer & W.H. McLeod, Eds. 1987, *The Sants*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, pp. 281-303 and Lorenzen (1995), this view of *bhajan* singing can not be readily applied to Gandhi and the *satyagraha* movement. Gandhi's use of sung-prayers went beyond that of a purely political tool, and it can not, therefore, be viewed so singularly.

The present examination will begin by looking at the the social, cultural, and historical context in India prior to the time of Gandhi's reform efforts. Many Indian reformers had been working to open a public space for dialogue wherein Hinduism itself was being examined and defined, along with a growing dialogue concerning independence from Britain. It will then present a brief overview of the development of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, followed by a more detailed consideration of the contents of the 1947 edition of the *Bhajanavali*. The significance of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* for Gandhi will be established from the primary literature of and secondary literature in which Gandhi specifically mentioned the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, its use, and its development. This consideration of the *Bhajanavali* will be placed, then, within the ritual framework provided by the work of Roy Rappaport. Finally, these observations will be supplemented by the fieldwork completed with Shri Karunamayee, a spiritual musician who, as a tradition-bearer, continues to teach the content and history of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* at the present time.

As this presentation progresses, it will become obvious that the *Ashram Bhajanavali* constituted more than what it has previously been assessed to be. The contents of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* reflected the daily life of the Gandhi *ashrams* [retreat houses] as well as the evolution of Gandhi's belief system. The chanting of these prayer-songs was for the *satyagraha* community and for India, a living, sounding resource of strength and inspiration. It was an active spiritual practice grounded in an honouring of sacred sound more than four thousand years old. The prayer-songs came from many religious traditions, primarily Hindu, but non-Hindu

as well. The collection upheld the religious/musical traditions of chanting ancient Sanskrit scriptures, as well as including the devotional singing in native Indian languages, the simpler practices of *Ram-dhun* (short repetitive pieces sung to God) and the chanting of *Ramanama* (chanting the name of *Rama*). Gandhi himself had been shaped by religious as well as musical influences that would form the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, and concomitantly, the prayer-songs of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* continued to shape his life, along with millions of others'.

This work will develop a broader framework from which to perceive the very central role that sung-prayers and hymn-singing (or chanting) played in Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement, as well as their universal importance for Indian society. It will be seen that the sung-prayers were a stabilizing element in the early development of *satyagraha*. They evolved into regularized rituals for Gandhi's independence movement, and it will be seen that these sung-prayers were foundational to the work of *satyagraha*. Gandhi and his closest colleagues shaped a national social movement informed by the deeper desire to raise India's spiritual consciousness. Undergirding the *svaraj* (home-rule) movement were the ancient inspirations and time-honored practices of sung-prayers and chanting. They provided the regular rhythms of daily life; they sustained the ebb and flow of ordinary time. They provided a sung vocabulary of shared belief and story-telling. The prayer-songs brought the participants of ritual into the presence of the Divine, and they prepared people to live and act in non-violent ways, despite the possible consequence of personal injury or death. The prayer-songs also created ritual space and periods of extra-ordinary time that joined the *satyagraha* community together. The same prayer-songs, in turn, joined the community to the nation.

METHODOLOGY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

In *Beyond Phenomenology*, Gavin Flood (1999) called for an approach to Religious Studies that would be both dialogical, yet reflexive. In interactions which

are often cross-cultural, the dialogical interaction can not presume that one culture (that of the participant-observer) can make blanket statements or pronouncements concerning the other's culture (that of the informant's), as the "outsider" to a culture can not truly know what the reality of that culture's "insider" is. This kind of research model combines 'the study of living traditions through the interaction of situated observer and people...and in the study of texts which itself is a form of interaction' (Flood 1999, p.145). This is the approach followed in this presentation of the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, as interaction occurs herein with Shri Karunamayee as cultural and historical informant, as well as with primary and secondary sources that focus on Gandhi's use of the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, and with the *Ashram Bhajnavali* itself.

The *Ashram Bhajnavali* is a text, which was an evolving entity at the center of Gandhi's *satyagraha* community. As such, it can be studied as a religious text of that community. Flood goes further to define "religion" itself as referring 'par excellence, to forms of human practice communally arrived at which are constrained by a text or group of texts set aside and regarded as sacred. ...The faith traditions of the world which refer back to their life-forming and life-giving texts are thus the primary 'objects' of Religious Studies' (Flood, G., 2006. Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions. *JAAR*, 74(1), p. 52). While the *Ashram Bhajnavali* is a combination of texts, the details of which will be described in these chapters, it is precisely that type of text about which Flood has spoken, in that it 'has a 'voice' from the past that is complex in its formation -- perhaps being the totality of authorial voices that have composed it -- and enlivened by the present communities who set the text aside, breathe life into it through their reading or reception, and enact it' (Flood, G., 2006. Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions. *JAAR*, 74(1), p. 53). Within the *Bhajnavali* there are representations from several different traditions. Those sung-prayers represent several 'voices' from the past and function in 'authorial' fashions for the *satyagraha*

community. The daily praying of these sung-prayers from the *Bhajanavali* (which had been set aside as sacred) did 'breath life' into those prayers and, thus, enabled the community through its 'reception' to 'enact' what were the the guidelines for behavior and the religious inspiration behind Gandhi's *satyagraha*. The *Bhajanavali*, in the sung-prayers specifically chosen for *satyagraha*'s purpose of non-violent non-cooperation provided that 'blueprint for how people should live their lives (...prohibitions, injunctions, and stories to live by)' (Flood, G., 2006. Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions. *JAAR*, 74(1), p. 52).

In approaching the *Ashram Bhajanavali* (which has almost, but not quite, become silent), we are also approaching an historical text from the past. Just as Flood has encouraged a dialogical approach to text, in which the objects of study are allowed a self-representation, so William Pinch (2006, p.ix) has referred to history as 'a conversation with the past...which could not take place if we could not hear voices of those who have gone before us'. As such, the many quotations and excerpts from M.K. Gandhi's writings allow Gandhi to speak for himself in a more direct manner to us, his readers. The attempt has been made, in presenting the historical development of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, to include as many quotations made by Gandhi himself which refer directly to the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and its contents, so as to clarify context and meaning for Gandhi and his followers. As Pinch (2006, p. 13) has written, in a hermeneutic of dialogue, 'it is appropriate to let the objects of study take a hand in our understanding of religion -- to become, for a time, subjects of their own representation'.

Likewise, the field work undertaken for this research project has been conducted in a similar vein. Again, Flood's (2006) definition of a Religious Studies that 'gives hospitality to traditions and their self-representation' has been active here. The primary informant for this piece has been Shri Karunamayee, a spiritual musician who continues to teach the repertoire of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. In order to illustrate her credibility as a witness to the *Bhajanavali* and its practices, those

interviews which were conducted with her that concerned her family background and her connection with Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement have been presented here in full, in her own words, as a tool for clearer presentation. Karen McCarthy Brown, while trained in the interpretive anthropological discipline of Clifford Geertz, has used a similar story-telling technique in her presentation of *Mama Lola*. While the current presentation of the teachings and stories of Shri Karunamayee in regard to Gandhi are not presented in such an informal a manner, they do act, as Brown (1991, p.14) indicated in her own work, as 'bridges' between people who have their own traditions of the 'web-spinning styles we call culture.' In this way, Shri Karunamayee's stories speak for themselves.

In a second section of interviews with Shri Karunamayee, which focussed specifically on the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, its context, contents, and usage, the questions that were asked are presented (as recorded) in my own voice. The answers that were given are presented (as recorded) in Shri Karunamayee's words, in order to present the reader with the clearer, fuller sound of her "voice" as a tradition-bearer, or carrier, of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* tradition. While remaining reflectively engaged with the academic questions being asked, this method does not assume the traditional participant-observer and informant, but rather an attitude of respect which is grounded in the methodological approaches to Religious Studies of both Flood and Pinch, and which allows 'people being studied to speak for themselves' (Brown 1991, p.14). It is an approach to Religious Studies that is that type of 'broad inquiry,' which, while offering a sufficiently thick description of the material, goes beyond that, not in order to judge or even to liberate, but to act as a bridge between cultures 'contributing to human self-understanding and the human good' (Flood, G., 2006. Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions. *JAAR*, 74(1), p.53).

While Edward Said's critique of the western, Euro-centric approach to "Oriental" studies (primarily of the Islamic culture) has been endorsed by Ron

Inden's perspective (in *Imagining India*) on how the West has also minimized and categorized the cultures and peoples of India for the sake of domination, some scholars are calling for an approach to East-West "understanding" that might reach beyond these criticisms which, in their own way, tend to confine and encase cross-cultural relationship. In *Beyond Orientalism*, Fred Dallmayr (1996, p. 86) has acknowledged that the Europeanization or westernization of the world has become a reality, which must be engaged, and not simply criticized or ignored:

'Under the relentless impact of globalism, indigenous cultures are increasingly pushed into a context of cross-cultural encounter or confrontation. ... In many third world societies -- bruised already by decades of colonial domination -- confrontation involves an intense questioning of self-identity, a process that often gives rise to a profound identity crisis' (Dallmayr 1996, p.135).

In this view, Indian and other non-western cultures must find their "own voice" in this continuing encounter. (Furthermore, it could be stated that the necessity for such an approach has increased, as witnessed by the more recent clashes of culture, global terrorism, and violence which have only intensified since the time of Dallmayr's writing the above.)

J.L. Mehta (1985) has contributed richly to the discourse of cross-cultural encounter, offering an array of provocative suggestions. He has, for instance, called for an East-West encounter that would entail a "letting-be" of the other. '...[I]n this time of common need, [we must] look for a hermeneutic that lets-be, a hermeneutics that does not turn the past, or the other, into a dream-image, an unreality...but lets them be, real, and speaking in their own right (Mehta 1985, p. 196). Mehta further suggests that Indian culture does indeed have a voice of its own:

'The Indian cultural tradition has retained its identity and continuity but has at no time *defined itself* in relation to the other, nor acknowledged the other in its unassimilable otherness, nor in

consequence occupied itself with the problem of relationship as it arises in any concrete encounter with the other. ... The other was allowed to live, mostly in peace, but without any effort at mutual dialogue and understanding' (Mehta 1985, pp.117-18).

Therefore, writes Mehta, whereas, in the past, Indian culture often allowed "the other" to exist in a kind of benign neglect, it is currently time for a new type of engagement within the field of Religious Studies, as

'...the free encounter with other traditions made both possible and necessary in today's planetary civilisation provides an unparalleled opportunity to reawaken, in Whitehead's words, the sense of vast alternatives...awaiting to overwhelm our safe little traditions, which was lost by the moderns' (Mehta 1985, p.124).

Such an approach, although possibly uncomfortable for all parties involved, also offers, for Mehta, the possibility of marvelous outcomes. For, it is precisely at this time that it is 'important and timely "to keep 'the rumor of angels' alive" and, in doing so, to grant a human abode to the sacred' (Dallmayr 1996, p.108).

In a similar vein, Wilhelm Halbfass (1988, p.442) has asserted:

'For Indians as well as Europeans, the "Europeanization of the earth" continues to be inescapable and irreversible. For this very reason, ancient Indian thought, in its unassimilable, non-actualizable, yet intensely meaningful distance and otherness, is *not* obsolete'.

It is not possible here, in this small space, to summarize either the entire academic discourse and history of the East-West dialogue (with its impetus to move beyond the Orientalism and colonialism of the past), or to do full justice to the impact that the work of Wilhelm Halbfass has had on this on-going engagement. Suffice it to say that, far more eloquently and completely than could be done here, Halbfass' *India and Europe* presents a comprehensive overview of the history and intricacies of that discourse, from Said to the present (1981). Subsequent to *India and Europe*, Halbfass produced *Tradition and Reflection*, a series of essays that 'deal with

indigenous Indian reflections on the sources, the structure and meaning of the Hindu tradition, ...based upon the premise that...reflections of...traditional Indian theorists are no less significant than the observations and paradigms of modern Western historians and social scientists' (Halbfass 1991, pp.16-17) when it comes to the realm of self-understanding. Franco and Preisendanz (1997) have presented a multi-faceted response and tribute to Halbfass's work in *Beyond Orientalism*, in which Halbfass himself has written:

'Certainly, we want to be 'beyond' European and Eurocentric claims to higher or absolute authority.... But do we want to be 'beyond the quiet and patient pursuit of understanding, which has also been part of the history of Indian and 'Oriental' studies? [We] may be able to find certain positive implications in some of the phenomena criticized by Said or Inden....

In this sense, we may want to be not only beyond Orientalism, but also beyond the critique of Orientalism' (Halbfass in Franco and Preisendanz, 1997, pp. 22-23).

In this kind of engagement, there exists an openness to the other, in 'which both partners are potentially transformed (without necessarily entailing an ultimate convergence)' (Dallmayr 1996, p.120). This kind of engagement, parallel to that presented by Flood, is and will be one which may use new methods of encounter, which may not always be fully formulated, and which may not always be cut-and-dried. For, as Halbfass admitted himself, from a similarly open and surprisingly candid stance in regards to his own methodology, a certain openness to approach may even be expected at times: 'At the end, we do not have a well-defined method, and perhaps not even a definite perspective, of our exploration of the Indian texts and teachings. Our procedure will be eclectic' (Halbfass, W, 1996. *On Being and What There Is*. In F. Dallmayr, ed. *Beyond Orientalism: Essays on Cross-Cultural Encounter*. Albany, NY:SUNY Press).

So it is that we have attempted to proceed with this presentation of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

'[W]e understand the text not by transposing ourselves into the mind of the author but by sharing the meaning of what he says and allowing for the possibility of its being true' (Mehta 1985, p.130).

This kind of open approach to "text, person, or tradition" has been attempted in this investigation of Gandhi's use of sung-prayers and the place of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* in the *satyagraha* community. As the research for this project began, there were no expectations of this text or of its ritual importance for Gandhi's life-work. The research could have proven to be sadly disappointing or happily surprising. The text (*Ashram Bhajanavali*), the persons (M.K. Gandhi and Shri Karunamayee), and their traditions have hopefully been presented in a way in which they speak for themselves, each with an individual "claim to be valid."

METHODOLOGY AND RITUAL STUDIES

In her book *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, Catherine Bell presents a comprehensive overview of ritual theory and ritual theorists, beginning with the statement that '...ritual is both activity and the fusion of thought and activity (Bell 1992, p.31). She covers those who are advocates of performance theory, those who view ritual as a text to be deciphered, and remarks that in the post-colonial era, most indigenous cultures have now been affected to such an extent by modern and post-modern western worlds that it is no longer possible for the old paradigm of a "superior" culture to analyze an "inferior" culture's rituals without help from the latter. Sperber has referred to this as a "form of 'cognitive apartheid' (Bell 1992, p.66, note 145) in this new era of cultural blending and "relativism."

In *Natural Symbols*, Mary Douglas presents ritual primarily as communication, regarding "how the preservation of the group involves a drive to coordinate all levels of experience and expression by correlating the body with

society and the cosmos" (Bell 1992, p.97). Edmund Leach also "argues that we engage in rituals in order to transmit collective messages to ourselves" (Bell 1992, p.73). Jonathan Z. Smith views ritual as a way to demonstrate how things should be, as opposed to the way they currently are. Burrige has focussed on ritual and the social body, with ritual's power and ability to transform and socialize that body. The environment of ritual has been proclaimed as a most important element, and 'the importance of ritual environment has been elaborated before.... Mircea Eliade, for example, found ritual inseparable from the delineator of a sacred place and the "regeneration of time"' (Bell 1992, p.99). Elsewhere, Eliade has proclaimed that the purpose of ritual is to move us from "profane time" to "sacred time." Victor Turner has also focussed on the speciality of the creation of "ritualized space."

Bourdieu claims that ritual manipulates relationships in such a way that it puts the participant in trust with what one can not see (the point of "faith"). There are theorists who see ritual only as a power relationship 'in order [for one group] to dominate (shift or nuance) others' (Bell 1992, p.107). Bloch, for instance feels ritual 'catches people up in its own terms,' in a kind of self-promoting propaganda machine. As for Foucault, the whole point of ritual is 'to structure the possible field of action of others' (Bell 1992, p.200).

Other theorists have come close, or produced additions to these theories already enumerated, but it is not possible in this space to cover all ritual theorists. Bell ends her overview, interestingly, with the words of Durkheim, who, felt simply that 'the believer who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who sees new truth of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man who is *stronger*. He feels within him more force, either to endure the trials of existence, or to conquer them' (Bell 1992, p.217).

For another very comprehensive survey of ritual, major theoretical perspectives, in an historical overview, along with a consideration of ritual's role in

society and societal organization, and ritual as cultural communication, see Catherine Bell (1997) *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*.

So the question arises, which of these ritual theorists' work is most appropriate with which to engage Gandhi's uses of ritual? Humphrey and Laidlaw (2004) have written a marvelous description of Jain rituals, *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual*, but the often complex and sometimes confusing elements of the Jain ceremonies (*pujas*) are, as was mentioned above, a far cry from Gandhi's simply rituals.

However, Humphrey and Laidlaw, who agree with Bell that most ritual theorists are anthropologists, have very astutely pointed out '...that anthropology has signally neglected the analysis of liturgical ritual in general, and in particular has neglected religious acts of worship, those plain and featureless rituals which offer few handles for virtuosity in symbolic interpretation and yet are so important to people's religious life' (Humphrey & Laidlaw 2004, p.80).

The sung-prayer meetings that were initiated in the early days of *satyagraha* are exactly those kinds of "plain and featureless" rituals which Humphrey and Laidlaw have highlighted. So, it is to the work of a liturgical ritualist that we turn, in order to best understand Gandhi. Therefore, the theory and framework of Roy A. Rappaport (1999) in his *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* will be utilized in this work to establish clearly that the *Ashram Bhajanaivali* was liturgically foundational for Gandhi's *satyagraha* community.

For the purposes of this study, we will be relying primarily on the methodology and categories of definition presented by Roy A. Rappaport (1999) in *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*. This choice is premised on Rappaport's work as a scholar of liturgical ritual, and on this author's estimation of Rappaport's work as being the most appropriate of any single approach to ritual in regards to its usefulness in describing and analyzing Gandhi's *Ashram Bhajanaivali*. A detailed presentation of Rappaport's schema and definitions of ritual will follow,

presented in Chapters Three and Four. These criteria, in that presentation, will be utilized to engage the *Ashram Bhajnavali* in a critical analysis of its historical development, a review of its contents, and its context within several ritual settings.

TOWARDS THE DEFINITION OF A FEW TERMS

Assuming the reader to possess at least a fundamental grasp of the complexities of the term "Hinduism," two more recently published sources are hereby suggested as helpful to the reader: 1) *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism* (Flood, G., ed 2003) wherein the subject is presented in kaleidoscopic completeness, from theoretical issues and considerations of text and tradition, to histories of systematic thought and sociopolitical issues that relate to the contemporary world; and 2) as well as David Smith's *Hinduism and Modernity: Religion in the Modern World* (Smith 2003) which gives clear oversight to history, Indian philosophies and literature, as well as articulating the problems and challenges facing Hinduism in modernity and the India of today.

Similarly, mention of several sources in the Gandhian literature would be fitting. First of all, is *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (1971), which was published by the Indian government, has been a large support to this work. As far as biographies are concerned D.G. Tendulkar's *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, in eight volumes (1960-1963), is considered primary, followed by Pyarelal and Sushila Nayar's *Mahatma Gandhi*, in ten volumes. Mention should also be made of Gandhi's own *An Autobiography* (1957), and Homer Jack's *The Gandhi Reader* (1956), as a shorter compilation and overview of texts. In the area of psychological analysis Erik Erikson has written *Gandhi's Truth: On the Origin of Militant Non-violence* (1969), and Gene Sharp has written *Gandhi Faces the Storm* (1961), describing Gandhi's inner turmoil surrounding the India-Pakistan division.

Nirmal Kumar Bose, as an anthropologist, has produced three books on Gandhi: *Selections from Gandhi* (1934), an anthology of Gandhian thought; *Studies in Gandhism* (1940), which concentrates on non-violent practice and theory; and *My Days with Gandhi* (1953), which consists of his memoirs while travelling with Gandhi in Noakhali.

In the area of politics and history, helpful sources are: Ravinder Kumar's *Essays on Gandhian Politics: The Rowlatt Satyagraha* (1971); Judith M. Brown's *Gandhi's Rise to Power: Indian Politics 1915-1922* (1972) and her *Gandhi and Civil Disobedience: The Mahatma in Indian Politics, 1928-1934* (1977); moving to a later time period is Frances G. Hutchinson's *India's Revolution: Gandhi and the Quit India Movement* (1973), and then Leonard Mosley's *The Last Days of the British Raj* (1961).

In the area of morals, philosophy, and politics, Raghavan N. Iyer has written *The Moral and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi* (1973), Mark Juergensmeyer has written *Fighting with Gandhi* (1984), which concerns Gandhi's views and theories of social conflict, and Bhiku Parekh has produced *Gandhi's Political Philosophy* (1989). Helpful sources that consider Gandhi's religious views are Margaret Chatterjee's *Gandhi and the Challenge of Religious Diversity* (2005), and J.T.F. Jordens' *Gandhi's Religion: A Homespun Shawl* (1998), and K.L. Seshagiri Rao's *Mahatma Gandhi and Comparative Religion*, (1978).

With regard to evaluating Gandhi's overall contributions and success, John Hick and Lamont Hempel have written *The Significance of Gandhi for Today* (1999), while Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph have produced *Postmodern Gandhi and Other Essays* (1967). See also Fred Dallmayr's "Gandhi as Mediator between East and West," in *Margins of Political Discourse* (1989, pp.22-38). Chapter Nine in Hugh Tinker's *Reorientation* is entitled "Magnificent Failure? The Gandhian Ideal in India" (1965). And, finally, Ved Mehta's *Mahatma Gandhi and His Apostles* (1977) covers a variety of topics, while attempting to demythologize Gandhi.

The complex figure of Mohandas Gandhi has been examined to such an extent that the question might be raised as to whether Gandhi was simply one of those geniuses of human history in whom scholars find what they desire most to find. From the beginnings of his career within his own country, Gandhi was continually sought out by hundreds of thousands of fellow Indians for *darshan* [a blessing given through the sense of seeing] while at the same time, fellow reformists often disagreed with his methodologies, and some, such as B.R. Ambedkar, even viewed him as an elitist fake.

Beyond his own country, epithets for Gandhi have ranged from that by Winston Churchill, who esteemed him as a "half-naked fakir," to estimations by Alfred Einstein as being one of the greatest men to have walked the earth and by Reinhold Niebuhr as being the quintessential *homo religiosus*. Modern researchers have found in Gandhi figures in concert with their own interests, such as William Pinch, who in *Warrior Ascetics and Indian Empires* recognizes in Gandhi shades of the eighteenth-century "warrior ascetic," and Philip Lutgendorf (1991), who identifies Gandhi as a *katha-vacak* [story-teller] of the sixteenth-century *Ramcaritmanas* (Tulsidas's Hindi version of the *Ramayana*). Depending upon time and continent, Gandhi has been viewed in a myriad different ways, revered by some, disrespected by others. Works by Ashis Nandy and others have sought to raise his reputation from the ashes (Dallmayr 1989, pp.22-38), while 'Gandhi's postmodernism has become increasingly visible and relevant on the Indian and world stage. He has become a pre-eminant voice for civil society and against the modern state' (Rudolph & Rudolph 2006, p.34). Having been at the center of a British-Indian discourse, "[e]ach of these Gandhis, the anti-imperialist, the guru, the *mahatma*, and the fraud, [has also] provided text and context for a roughly chronological examination of Gandhi's meaning in and for America" (Rudolph & Rudolph 2006, p.93) in Charles Chatfield's research, *The Americanization of Gandhi: Images of the Mahatma* (1976). It is my hope that in this work, through the

examination of the sung-prayers of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, their development, and their ritual usages, to add yet another perspective to the ever-evolving comprehension of the multi-dimensional figure of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

Religion and Politics

The many and varied approaches to Gandhi's life-work have, in many respects, reflect the current complexities of academic discourse. Studies of one aspect or another of Gandhi's life have resulted in at least one continuing debate, that of whether Gandhi acted primarily from either a political agenda or a religious agenda. It has been clarified by Peter van der Veer (van der Veer, P., 1995. *The Politics of Devotion to Rama*. In D. Lorenzen, ed. *Bhakti Religion in North India: Community Identity and Political Action*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1995, pp. 288-305) that "[p]oliticalization" and "depoliticalization" of something called "religion" are notions that belong to a discourse of modernity ...developed in the European Enlightenment, which assigns religious faiths to the private domain as a matter of personal beliefs without political consequences" (van der Veer 1995, p.288), so the very question of whether Gandhi acted "religiously" or "politically" is suspect.

Furthermore, coming to a definition of "religion" presents an equally complex discourse. Asad (1993, p.27) has warned against a definition that "essentializes" any distinct differences between religion and politics, as it places religion and politics in differing realms of power, and it is based in the western post-Reformation view: 'The attempt to understand Muslim [or any other] traditions by insisting that in them religion and politics (two essences modern society tries to keep conceptually and practically apart) are coupled must, in my view, lead to failure. At its most dubious, such attempts encourage us to take up an a priori position in which religious discourse in the political arena is seen as a disguise

for political power'. Additionally, Timothy Fitzgerald (2000, pp.8-9) sees "religion" even more strongly along this same vein, summarizing it as a product invented in Europe 'along with western individuals, law courts, free markets, and educational systems. "Religion" was part of the complex process of establishing...capitalist and individualist values', something to which M.K. Gandhi would have been greatly opposed. Therefore, for the sake of clarity as well as for a more particularized understanding of these terms, we will focus here upon what Gandhi himself considered to be "religion," and upon what Gandhi himself considered to be "politics."

Gandhi was greatly influenced by the nationalist Gopal Krishna Gokhale's political agenda and aspirations, who wrote:

'Our problem is, indeed, an enormously difficult one. ... Endless divisions and sub-divisions in the country, the bulk of the population ignorant, and clinging, with a tenacity of which only those who are of them can have an adequate conception, to old modes of thought and sentiment, which are averse to all change and do not understand change, seventy millions of Mohammedans more or less hostile to national aspirations, and all power lodged in the hands of a fleeting body of foreign officials most of whom generally represent...Tory principles at their worst Out of this mass an India has to be evolved, strong, free, united, democratic and qualified generally to take her proper place among the nations of the world' (Hoyland, paper 2003, p.183).

Dedicated to Gokhale and these aspirations, Gandhi voiced his agreement with Gokhale's further estimation that India needed a process of "character-building," in which 'it was necessary to spiritualise the political life of the country' (Gandhi 1998, p.6).

Following Gokhale's death, at the unveiling of Gokhale's portrait at Bangalore in 1915, Gandhi memorialized him in this manner:

'Mr. Gokhale taught me that the dream of every Indian, who claims to love his country, should be to act in the political field, should be not to glorify in language, but to spiritualize the political life of the country, and the political institutions of the country. He inspired my life and is still inspiring; and in that I wish to purify myself and spiritualize myself '(CW-e, 14, #372, p.438).

When analyzing Gandhi's use of the word "politics" as found in the *Collected Works*, we see that early on Gandhi applied the word "politics" to what he called the "national institutions": 'Politics are part of our being; we ought to study our national institutions (Jack 1956, p.144). These institutions were the court systems, the school systems, and business establishment to the extent that government intervention and taxation were involved. However, he did not feel that those institutions should or could stand on their own: '[p]olitics divorced from religion has no meaning (Jack 1956, p.144). The great work of character-building which he had in mind was connected to his use of the term "religion:" '[n]o work done by any man, however great, will really prosper unless it has a distinct religious backing (Jack 1956, p.137). From the very beginnings of *satyagraha*, Gandhi was convinced that social or political change in India would only be achieved through "religious" means.

Gandhi claimed himself to use the term "religion" in a non-sectarian manner, defining it 'in its broadest sense, meaning thereby self-realization or knowledge of self (Jack 1956, p.14). Further, he referred to "religion" as something beyond intellectual understanding or the rote observance of ritual; it was something not 'grasped by the brain, but a heart grasp (Jack 1956, p.137). It was a matter of consciousness-raising at the national level, which involved principles of religious awareness: [f]irst we want to realize our religious consciousness, and immediately [when] we have done that the whole department of life is open to us....'(Jack 1956, p.144).

This approach was further evidenced as the non-violent activities of non-cooperation grew. 'A man who has realized his manhood, who fears only God, will fear no one else' (Jack 1956, p.113). With this awareness of being ruled only by God (in whichever name or form), Gandhi felt that religion and politics fell into proper alignment. Those who felt that man-made laws were unjust or "un-Godly" could protest those laws out of respect for a deeper religious law -- however, only through non-violent means. Nothing but a non-violent course of action could reflect the full development of a truly evolved consciousness: 'Wherein is courage required -- in blowing others to pieces from behind a cannon, or with a smiling face to approach a cannon and be blown to pieces? (Jack 1956, p.114).

The deeper religious law to which Gandhi was dedicated, he referred to as *satya* (truth). It was a principle, which, for him, was undeniably connected to deeper religious conceptions in India's past. 'Deluded by modern western civilization, we have forgotten our ancient civilization and worship the might of arms' (*CW-e*, 16, #5, p.11). India had, in his opinion, abandoned its religious identity, succumbing to the materialism of the West. As he felt 'India was pre-eminently the land of religion, [it] was the first and the last duty of Indians to maintain it as such (*CW*, 15, #209, p. 281). Gandhi spoke often of establishing a fairly-run, well-organized democratic society in which the leaders, and the King, in particular, took their orders and guidance from even the most lowly in the land. He referred to this as "*Ramrajya*," and it hearkened back to a time told of in the *Ramayana* when such a "lordly kingdom" or "Kingdom of God" existed. In this regard, he estimated western civilization to be "the reverse of civilization," sometimes referring to it as "*Ravanarajya*" (the kingdom of Ravana, the demon king in the *Ramayana*). He considered the West to be inferior in its law courts and its schools -- in short, inferior in those "national institutions" that he deemed to be "political:" We want our own ancient schools and courts to be restored (Jack 1956, p.118).

In support of these claims, Gandhi asked the West to look to its own Christian scriptures as support for his vision and 'abandon your so-called civilization' (Jack 1956, p.118), while he asked India to do the same: 'If we take recourse to *satyagraha*, we can conquer our conqueror the English, make them bow before our tremendous soul-force [*satyagraha*] and the issue will be of benefit to the whole world (*CW-e*,16, #5, p.11).

It might be argued that it was necessary to adopt the methods and instruments of western civilization to meet the material forces of that civilization. But the forces born of spirituality, the bedrock of Indian civilization, were more than a match for material forces.... They should draw their strength from the soul, from God. If they adhered to that path, *swarajya* [self-rule] which they were aspiring to and working for would become their handmaid (Speech at Allahabad on Education, Ancient and Modern, 23-12-1916, *CW-e*, 15, #209, p.281).

While many national leaders disagreed with Gandhi concerning the amount of emphasis he placed on religious definitions as the foundation for societal change (e.g., Jawaharlal Nehru), this continued to be Gandhi's outlook as he developed *satyagraha* throughout India. In his campaign to shape identity through religious means, the advice he gave to relatives and followers was often punctuated by religious references to scriptural prayers and laced with quotations from hymns. It was not unusual for Gandhi to suggest chanting prayers or singing *bhajans* as part of his counsel.

'[F]or Gandhi [sung-]prayer provided entry into a power house available at all times. It was here, in the citadel of Truth, as he saw it, that the counter force to big battalions was generated. The cave of the heart was not a place of retreat, but where batteries were charged and the inner voice prompted the next step' (Chatterjee 1983, pp140-41).

For Gandhi, "religion" and "politics" were two sides of the same coin. 'I do not believe that religion has nothing to do with politics. The latter divorced from

religion is like a corpse only fit to be buried' (Speech on Swadeshi at Missionary Conference, Madras, Feb. 14, 1916) (*CW-e*, 15, #127, p.160).

Theology and Creed

The terms "theology" and "creed" will be employed herein in their customary western usage, although we are looking at a man, Mohandas Gandhi, raised as a Vaishnava Hindu, the bulk of whose work was situated in India. Francis Clooney (2003) has made the very salient point that the Enlightenment use of the term "theology" as a perjorative term for what was at the time esteemed to be "less-than" the revered pursuit of "philosophy" is currently out-moded, and that theology, as "the study of God" applies cross-culturally, and certainly for much of Hinduism.

'...excluding 'theology' is not a service to Indian thought. Rather, such a denigration reads a problem indigenous to European history into an Indian context where religious commitments have so often been deeply intertwined with the most rigorous reasoning; even a richer sense of philosophy seems inadequate to the spiritual and religious values at stake; differences aside, 'theology' remains a most viable and useful term (Clooney 2003, pp.448-9).

Likewise, the term "creed," indicative of what one believes, will be similarly utilized to refer to the same in an Indian context.

Hymns, Poetry, and Sung-Prayers

In an introduction to her work on Tamil hymns, *The Embodiment of Bhakti*, Karen Prentiss (1999) relates a short history of the *bhakti* (devotion) movement across India, while focussing on the regional tradition of Tamil *Shiva-bhakti* as a neglected tradition. Prentiss (1999, p.5) writes: 'In focusing on a regional tradition of bhakti, I join many contemporary scholars in the study of bhakti in regional-language poetry'. While tracing the Tamil tradition from its earliest chanted

compositions in the seventh century to the fourteenth century, a time of written texts, Prentiss alternately refers to these works as "hymns" at some points and as "poems" at others. While a fuller appraisal of the *bhakti* movement scholarship will be introduced in Chapter Two, what is of significance here, which must be remembered, is that these pieces of text were "hymns," which used "poetry." It must be re-called that these texts were (and are) sung.

Another important distinction that must be made is that while these texts are "hymns" and "poetry," they are also referred to as "prayers" in the Gandhian literature that concerns those texts when they are included in the *Ashram Bhajnavali*. The vast majority of "prayer" in India is not spoken. It is sung or chanted. Unlike "prayer" in the West, wherein the general connotation is either that of silent thought or of spoken utterance, "prayer" throughout India's history has been a sung medium. "Recitation" has generally meant material that was sung or chanted with tone. This is an important distinction to mark, as singing or chanting affects the human body and psyche in different ways than that of simple speech, a fact which will be detailed more fully in Chapter Five. Due to this distinction, the term "sung-prayer" will be used throughout this work, as opposed to the term "prayer" (unless, the reference is clearly only to speech), as a reminder to the reader that "sung" is an important qualifier. "Sung-prayer" refers comprehensively to all genres found within the *Ashram Bhajnavali*.

Bhajan, Kirtan, and Ram-dhun

The term *bhajan*, as it appears in the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, is often translated with the English word "hymn." The term *kirtan* is not used in the *Ashram Bhajnavali*. However, the terms "*bhajan*" and "*kirtan*" are often interchanged as co-terminous in common parlance, when they are actually, in finer usage, slightly different genres. So, an attempt to refine what these terms mean, at least in regard

to those pieces included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, will allow more clarity in this matter.

In *Hindustani Music*, Raja (2005, p.361) gives the following definition:

'*Bhajana*: the word derives from the Sanskrit verb *bhaja* = to serve/to worship. A *bhajana* is a song based on devotional poetry, and owes its influence to the literary flowering triggered off by the *bhakti* movement. These songs were originally performed in the temples, and moved from there to people's homes as solo or choral expressions. They are composed typically in folk tunes, or based on a handful of classical *rāgas*. The advent of the gramophone record gave a tremendous boost to their popularity and standardization in rendering. The infusion of classicism into their rendition, and their adoption as repertoire for the concert platform is a 20th-century phenomenon. In the latter context, the *bhajana* has steadily replaced, and displaced, the *thumar* and *ṭappā* genres'.

In addition, Ashok Ranade (1992, p.18) presents this definition:

'It may be recalled that the all-encompassing devotional movement sweeping over the country from the eighth century gave music a place of importance. The result was a burgeoning of song, dance and drama. A number of song-types crystallized into musical structures of immense variety, according to the regional genius and linguistic-literary traditions. When such song-types are employed (with or without ritualistic context) as items in musico-devotional acts they can be brought under the generic term *bhajan*'.

Edward O. Henry (1988, p.140) has made the observation that 'the *bhajana* has many forms', indicating that the term has several different usages, both as a general denominator and as a particular denominator of a specific variety, based on regional practices. In Henry's own fieldwork with Bhojpuri-speaking people, he mentions one type of *bhajan* that appears to be most indicative of the type of *bhajan* included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Henry has classified his musical study into music that is participatory and music that is non-participatory. He refers to a specific type of non-participatory music sung by musical mendicants, who 'would come into the village and sing 'bhajans,' sitting on doorsteps of richer houses, leave the village with food, clothing, [and] pots' (Henry 1974, p.162). These songs were

longer songs, often by Kabir; they were sometimes ten or eleven lines long, sometimes thirteen or fourteen lines long (Henry 1974, p.162).

'The songs of the mendicants refer to a kind of religion which differs from ecstatic devotionism...and from the essentially ritualistic religion which pervades village life. ...[They] derive from the Sufi-influenced North Indian bhakti movements...No doubt the mendicants who ply the villages today transmit this variety of religion in the same way it has been transmitted for four or five hundred years' (Henry 1974, p.176).

This type of *bhajan* was a kind of "non-participatory music...in which the performers were largely soloists" (Henry 1974, p.182), ... [and in which 't]hese didactic and reverent songs, provide a moral setting conducive to charitable donations ' (Henry 1974, p.246).

The *bhajans* included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* are largely this type of *bhajan*. While refrains are common for choral chanting, the pieces are, for the most part, longer and fall into that category of non-participatory music related more closely to the "larger" classical tradition of which Carol Babiracki (1991) speaks. M. K. Gandhi himself mentioned that it was the usual practice for Narayan Moresh Khare (the music director) to sing the *bhajans* during the sung-prayers, as they demanded more musical expertise. If Khare were not present, or someone who could sing a *bhajan* properly, they would resort to singing the simpler form of *Ram-dhun*.

Kirtana is another term that carries many meanings. In general, it connotes a shorter form than a *bhajan*, with its form, again, being dependent upon regional differences. In *Hindustanti Music*, Raja (2005, p.378) gives the following definition:

'*Kiirtana*: *Kiirtana* is the verb associated with the Sanskrit abstract noun *k rti* = glory/praise. A *kiirtana* is a song sung in praise of, or dedicated to the glory of someone, principally God. In thematic content, the *kiirtana* is similar to the *bhajana*, the distinction between them often being no more than semantic. *Kiirtanas* are, generally, shorter forms of poetry than *bhajans*'.

It is important to take note of Raja's defining *kirtan* as being generally shorter verses with fewer lines. This corresponds with Henry's descriptions of *kirtan* as being participatory: '[k]irtan refers to devotional music sung in groups... [c]hant-like and extremely repetitious' (Henry 1988, p.139). Henry investigated further a type of *kirtan* referred to as *harikirtan*: "[t]he music most often referred to in Eastern Uttar Pradesh as *hariikiirtan* ... is a sub-division of the class of music called *bhajan*, the general term for religious song that can also mean 'any sort of audible worship' (Bharati 1961: p.277)" (Henry, p.150) [Bharati here having used the term *bhajan* in its generic sense]. 'Harikirtans are antiphonal in form, with short, simple stanzas continuously repeated, e.g. *hari krishna hari krishna, krishna krishna hari hari*, one of the most common, and *je sia ram je je sia ram* -- 'Hail Sita-Ram, hail hail Sita-Ram!' Each harikirtan lasts from ten to fifteen minutes. Dholak [drum], ghal [cymbal] and hand clapping accompany the singing, and there is occasionally a harmonium' (Henry 1974, pp.151-52).

Dimock (1968) has written of the *kirtan* practices in Bengal, being in that area primarily *Krishnite*: "[k]irtana can be of three varieties: dancing and singing of religious lyrics which celebrate the story of Krishna, repetitive singing the names of the deity, and street processions with singing and dancing" (Dimock 1968, p.220). This is the same, repetitive practice of '*Sankirtana*, ...the term used in the Gaudiya tradition to refer to the public chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra. By extension, the term came to be used in ISKCON to also refer to the distribution of books and soliciting of donations that accompanied this public chanting' (Deadwyler 2004, p.355, note 2). This simpler type of ecstatic chanting was later transplanted by ISKCON, '[b]eginning in 1968, [when] Srila Prabhupada instituted the practice *Hare Nama*' [chanting Hari's name] into western airports and public spaces, wherein "a group of devotees [would go] out in public to chant and preach...selling products to the public for money' (Rochford, 2004, p.274).

When investigating the forms he found in his fieldwork in India, Henry has written: 'Those that sing *harikirtan* believe that, as an expression of *bhakt* ('devotion') *harikirtan* is one way in which salvation-release from the cycle of rebirth and/or union with the absolute can be obtained. ... The prefix *hari* can be an epithet of Vishnu, Siva, Ram, Krishna, or Indra. ...[K]irtan in this area are usually addressed to Ram and Krishna, incarnations of Vishnu (although I did record one addressed to Hanuman, a deity currently very popular in the Varanasi region) (Henry 1974, p.154). He further described the characteristics of *harikirtan*: "... *harikirtan* consists of a series of cycles, each beginning at a slow tempo and moderate volume and accelerating to the verge of frenzy (Henry 1974, p.155).... *Harikirtan* is...extremely repetitious, imprecisely articulated, unembellished and heavily rhythmic" (Henry 1974, p.237).

It is of interest that in the *Ashram Bhajnavali* Gandhi did not refer to *kirtan*. Further, when the *Collected Works* were consulted, Gandhi used the term *bhajan* frequently, whereas the term *kirtan* was seldom used. When Gandhi referred to *kirtan* it was generally in response to someone who had first used the term with him. He referred, on a few occasions, to the encouraging of "*bhajan* parties or *kirtan* parties," with the use of "or" suggesting that they were, for him, separate genres. Therefore, it will be argued here that those shorter, more rhythmic pieces, which might be termed as *kirtan* by some, were referred to by Gandhi as *Ram-dhun*, regardless of the deity being addressed. This corresponds with the shorter, simpler, and more repetitive nature of those pieces designated as *Ram-dhun* in the *Ashram Bhajnavali*.

Ram-dhun is sung prayer, and once more, the aptness of the term "sung-prayer" must be noted, as "sung-prayer" refers comprehensively to all genres found within the *Ashram Bhajnavali*.

TEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Translations found herein are those of M.K. Gandhi himself, unless otherwise noted. Diacritical marks are avoided, except in direct quotations, such as from the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, or when quoting another author who has used diacritical marks. Due to computer limitations, the Sanskrit vowel long i will be represented by “ii”. Therefore, from one citation to the next, the spellings will not always be consistent. For the most part, quotations herein from the *Collected Works of Gandhi* correspond to the digital numbering (in 98 volumes as opposed to the printed 90 volumes) in English. Use of the digital indexing has greatly facilitated the tracing of individual terms, and quotations. The digital files are referred to as *CW-e*. Any references to the original, printed *Collected Works of Gandhi* are referred to simply as *CW*. Transliterations are generally mine.

SETTING THE SCENE: PRE-GANDHI CONTEXT

Before lauching into either a description of the *Ashram Bhajnavali* or into Gandhi's *satyagraha* campaigns, it is important to remember that much of the new awareness for nation-building was fermenting in India during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, while Gandhi was, for the most part, out of the country. In 1888, he was in England obtaining a law degree; in 1891-93, he practiced law (not very successfully) in Bombay and Rajkot; in 1893 he went to South Africa and was there roughly eight years; he then returned to India in 1901 and 1902, during which time he travelled extensively around India, and attended the Indian National Congress. However, in 1902, he returned to South Africa and remained there until 1915.

It goes without saying that Gandhi was not the first reformer in India. Upon his return from South Africa, he was to witness the fruits of many social and religious reformers whose work had indeed been initiated before he left India, but which had blossomed during the time he was away.

Ronald Inden has written that Vincent Smith (1848-1920), an Indian Civil Servant, claims to have written India's first history concerning events prior to the 12th-century Muslim conquests (Inden 2000, p.7). Smith's surmise was that India was, and probably always had been, composed of people who were lazy, disorganized, and who constituted a "deficient body politic" unable to rule itself without some firm hand of authority. Hegel had described India as living in a dream state of imagination and ecstasy (Inden 2000, p.7). Others had described India with degrading images of being feminine, with Hinduism being compared to an amorphous sponge or to an irrational, irritating jungle. Smith focussed on the phenomenon of the caste-system as an especially-effective instrument to bind and restrain India within these so-called degenerative social patterns.

'Apart from caste itself, perhaps the most important attribute in Smith's representation of India as a deficient body politic was world-ordering rationality. The metaphor of society as a machine [which he used and which was prevalent at the time] presupposed the notion of a unitary reason with the will or capability of knowing and maintaining the system that Smith saw as synonymous with order itself. He alleged that Indian civilization had not ever possessed the political order that flows from rationality....Just as the man of practical reason was the rational master and maker of the machine and just as God was the one cause of the universe, so the British would become the bearers of rationality in relation to India that they would make over into a machine of a body politic' (Inden 2000, p.17).

When speaking of capabilities to act or not to act in terms of 'human agency', Inden makes it clear that 'from the standpoint of agency, we could say that colonialism consisted quite precisely of the attempt to make previously autonomous (or more autonomous) agents into instruments...and patients," by which and through whom they could dominate and rule India' (Inden 2000, p. 23). He also makes the point that while the rulers obviously wished to rule, the ruled have at times both expressed complicity in the relationship, while also having drives to push against

being ruled. Through these complex actions of human agency, rulers and the ruled shape each other. 'They make and remake one another through a dialectical process in changing situations' (Inden 2000, p.2).

Rather than being separate and detached entities, the ruled and the rulers are actually 'composed of entities that overlap' (Inden 2000, p.25), according to R.G. Collingwood. In either dialectical processes (those moving from opposite directions into agreement) or eristical processes (in which each attempts to triumph over the other), the rulers and the ruled have an impact on each other, and are, thus, both changed in the process.

This type of interaction is what Ronald Inden focusses on in such eloquent detail in *Imagining India*, which brought him to state that: '...the Euro-American Selves and Indian Others have...dialectically constituted one another. Once one realizes the truth of this, he or she will begin to see that India has played a part in the making nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe (and America) much greater than the 'we' of scholarship, journalism, and officialdom would normally wish to allow' (Inden 2000, p.3). For, by describing certain aspects of Indian culture in pejorative, disdainful, and elitist ways, we have projected parts of ourselves in exaggerated forms onto the Indian sub-continent. With the return of those projections, both India and the West had at least two hundred years of dialectical intercourse before Mohandas K. Gandhi even entered the picture.

The East India Company, having traded in India since the early seventeenth century, had, traditionally, not been overly involved in the arena of Indian politics; their primary goal was trade. 'From the 1780s onwards, however, the power of the company was gradually curtailed by the state' (Zavos 2000, p.24), and with the Indian Rebellion of 1857 having been squelched by the British, the outcome was to transfer all governmental and political power from the East India Company to the British Crown. The new relationship, as described to the Indian people, gave 'an impression of representation, justice, and benevolence' (Zavos 2000, p.35), between

the Rulers and the ruled and furthermore, the Queen, though herself a Christian, promised that the Christian religion would not be imposed upon the Indian peoples.

This, however, was not the way things would proceed, as the English people seemed to be under the "rational spell" of evangelicalism. In England, '[e]vangelical revival starts conventionally with John Wesley in the first half of the eighteenth century, but there was an important second wave in the 1790s that lasted into the nineteenth century' (van der Veer 2001, p.34). The British people had begun to protest the East India Company's tradition of supporting and sustaining the Hindu temples, and they pressured the government to allow and encourage Christian missionary work in India. 'Effeminacy, indolence, deceitfulness, the closed nature of the village economy: all these images were projected as elemental features of a drifting changeless society [that was] the degeneracy of Hinduism' (Zavos 2000, p.30).

Britain saw itself as the superior, rational saviour of a degraded India. The missionaries zealously took on the task of cleaning up India as "the white man's burdon." So, despite the official policy of "hands-off" in regards to Indian religion, British religious organizations became quite actively involved in evangelizing and converting, especially lower-caste Indians. Along with this came 'the abolition of *sati* (widow immolation) by the British in 1829. *Sati* was perhaps the most definite sign of Hindu depravity and Christian moral superiority evangelicals could get' (van der Veer 2001, p.43).

As the evangelizations grew stronger and the anti-Hindu polemic increased, and as governmental policies reinforced these movements, the Hindu population, whether dreaming or not, awoke to the fact that their religion was under siege and being attacked. Thus, "a great number of organizations emerged in South India in the 1820s and 1830s to resist the missionary onslaught" (van der Veer 2001, p.21).

Concerning these Indian organizations which were formed in response to Christian evangelization, Peter van der Veer (2001, pp.67-8) has suggested that

'[t]here were at least three possible intellectual responses to the Christian attack on Hinduism. One was to see Christianity as one instance of universal religion and to combine elements of Christianity and Hinduism into a common rational religion with strong deist tendencies.... A second approach was much more aggressive by repudiating Christianity and showing the failures and problems of Christian thought, preferably in the Bible itself. ... A third possibility [was] argued that Christianity was simply a lesser form of the universal spirituality found in all religions, but at the highest level only in Vedantic Hinduism'.

Just as the British were arguing strongly for Christianity and for its definitions and responsibilities within the forming of their own nation-state, the attack on Hinduism and its ensuing responses allowed India to create a public space in which to discuss, define, and debate what Hinduism truly was. These kinds of dialectical encounters, manifested here for the first time, were also "instrumental in creation [of] a modern public space on which [a] nation-state could be built" in India (van der Veer 2001, p.28).

The waves of Indian reaction against Christian evangelization have been referred to as "the Indian Renaissance," and organizations manifested themselves around the country. The man sometimes referred to as "the father of the Bengal Renaissance" was Rammohan Roy (1772-1833), and he, in particular, wrote strongly against the practice of *sati*, being largely responsible for convincing the British government to abolish the practice. "Rammonhan rejected the practice [of *sati*] on the basis of his reading [and, importantly, on *his* reading, and not a Brahmin's reading] of Hindu scripture. He distinguished authoritative sources (such as the Vedas) from other sources" (van der Veer 2001, p.44). Rammohan was a rational universalist, influenced by western Unitarianism and deism, as well as being dedicated to social reform. In 1828, (corresponding to van der Veer's first classification of response against Christian evangelism -- to see Christianity as one instance of universal religion and to combine elements of Christianity and

Hinduism into a common rational religion with strong deist tendencies), Rammonhan Roy founded the Brahma Samaj. It was "a small movement propagating a deist and universalist kind of religion, based, however, on Hindu sources and especially the Upanishads and philosophical commentaries on the Upanishads (together known as Vedanta)" (van der Veer 2001, p.44-45).

Roy believed that it was the prerogative of all people to have access to the sacred scriptures, such as the Vedas, and was strongly opposed to the many deceptions and superstitions perpetrated so often by Brahman priests upon simple yet devout people. He was equally opposed to idol worship, both for its "irrationality," as well as for the Brahmanic conduit through which it was generally delivered.

'Reason and ethics are central concepts for Roy. Because of reason, the doctrine of karma and reincarnation should be rejected, but also because of reason the theology surrounding Jesus, such as the doctrine of atonement and the trinity, should also be rejected as irrational. Reason, rather than revelation, leads to the discovery of universal ethical codes, whereas dogmas lead to irrationality and unethical behaviour. The adoption of a purified, rational and ethical religion -- the essential qualities of Hinduism according to Roy -- would be the transformation of Indian society (Flood 1996, pp.252-53).

Following Roy's death, two leaders came to take charge of the Brahma Samaj, first, Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905), father of the well-known poet Rabindranath Tagore, and, second, Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884). Over time, however, a split would occur between them.

The Brahma Samaj "was modelled on Christian reform movements and met regularly for religious services. During these services passages would be read from the Upanishads, sermons delivered, and hymns sung" (Flood 1996, p.253). Four Brahma students had been sent from Calcutta to Benares, each assigned to study one of the Vedas and bring back their knowledge. When they returned in 1850, the outcome resulted in the Samaj giving up its belief in the inerrancy of the Vedas

altogether (Farquhar 1915, p.41). 'Yet the Upanishads did not cease to be the chief scripture of the society; for just at this crisis, Debendra compiled a series of extracts from Hindu literature, the bulk of them being from the Upanishads, for use in public worship and private devotion. This volume is called *Brahma Dharma*, i.e. Brahma Religion' (Farquhar n.d., p.41), in which monism was tantamount.

Sen, Tagore's junior, however, had been even more influenced by Christianity. Sen broke with the Brahmo Samaj in 1866 "to form the Brahma Samaj of India, and invited all Brahmans throughout the country to join it" (Farquhar 1915, p. 46). Sen compiled a devotional manual with quotations for the Brahma Samaj; in a move to address the tensions of East and West, it contained texts from Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Chinese, Islamic and Christian scriptural sources. The manual, entitled *Shlokasangraha* was apparently not well-received, and never gained the success of Tagore's *Brahma Dharma*.

Among some of Sen's other attempts to merge world religions in this new society

'...he adopted a number of new practices which were meant to deepen and strengthen the religious life of the Samaj. The sources of new methods were the Vishnuism of Chaitanya, which was traditional in his own family, with Christianity, which was now influencing him so deeply. He began to use the old Vishnuite word *bhakti*...[he introduced] the instruments used from the old sect, and [began] *sankirtana*, the enthusiastic singing in chorus...dancing and singing praise to God, with flags flying and drums beating' (Farquhar n.d., p.47).

Sen died in 1884, leaving no leadership to follow him (Farquhar n.d., p.69).

In keeping with van der Veer's analysis of how India reacted to Christian evangelism (the second category being that of a strong reaction against Christianity), we move to the very powerful movement initiated by Dayananda Sarasvati (1824-1883). While Dayananda had been 'initiated in the order of the Shaivite Dashanamis, a prestigious ascetic order that only allowed Brahmans to take the ascetic vows' (van der Veer 2001, p. 49), he became disillusioned, left the

temple in Gujarat, and became a wandering mendicant. When he met his guru Virjananda Sarasvati, the encounter was such that it changed Dayananda's life and direction to becoming a reformer of Hinduism based on ancient Vedic precepts.

Dayananda established the Arya Samaj (Noble Society) in 1875 in Bombay. He advocated a return to the use of only the four Vedas (of which Max Mueller had just provided a complete edition of the Rig Veda), as they were the original source of revelation, with all other scriptures having been layered upon them, and thus, having ultimately obscured them.

'He provided his own Sanskrit commentaries to these texts, in which he sought to show that all the scientific knowledge of the West was, in fact, already present in the Vedic revelation. He spoke of the Vedic teachings of telecommunications, about the constructions of ships and aircraft...the importance given to science and its appropriation is, of course, extremely significant. Vedic religion was a universal, rational, religion of the Aryan people. It was the cradle of all human civilization' (van der Veer 2001, p.50).

Interestingly, in his desire to present the Vedas as being a monotheistic revelation, "he obscured the reference to many gods in the Vedic hymns.... He wanted to get rid of the Hindu pantheon and the practice of image worship" (van der Veer 2001, p.50).

It is also an interesting addition to this story, that in 1879 Madame Helena Blavatsky and Col. Henry Steel Olcott, Theosophists, arrived in Bombay. They had planned to join with the Arya Samaj, until they met Swami Dayananda in person. Dayananda had not been aware of the extent to which their beliefs were based on "spiritualism," a way of psychically contacting the dead, and other exotic practices, practices which, as advocates, they were advertising as having originated in "the East." Dayananda broke off the expected connection with them, and Blavatsky and Olcott began to be questioned as frauds.

'Crucial to both Theosophists and Hindus was the issue of authenticity, of genuine religion as against 'fake,' unauthentic religions. Theosophists had to defend themselves constantly against the charge that they were inauthentic frauds, but many Hindus as well did not accept Dayananda as authentic. He was painted as a reformist with dangerous modern ideas that threatened ancient Hinduism. In fact, his opponents were seen as defending the caste system as well as *Sanatana Dharma*, authentic, unchanging 'eternal religion.' This opposition was organized by the nineteenth-century precursor of the present day Viswa Hindu Parishad, the Bharat Dharma Mahamandal, founded in 1887 by Din Dayalu Sharma. It is worth noting that one of the founding members of this stronghold of Hindu orthodoxy was Colonel Olcott, the Theosophist' (van der Veer 2001, p.57).

While Dayananda's disdain for image worship, "the dominant form in popular Hinduism," did not help to advance his cause, he took on many social problems as a reformer. He wanted to revive the original four *varnas*, or classes, (priests, warriors, traders, and servants) to provide positions for people based on merit and inclination, rather than on birth. He wanted reforms for women: marriage by choice, the abolition of child-marriage, equal education for women, and widow-remarriage. He founded a number of schools, *gurukulas*, especially in the Punjab, in which the Aryan culture was taught, including Sanskrit (as India's great sacred language) and Hindi (which Dayananda wanted to become India's national language).

Dayananda's primary work concerning the Aryan practices, was *Satyartha Prakash* (*The Light of Truth*), and chapter thirteen was a scathing diatribe against Christianity. A strong voice against Christianity, he was also a strong political voice, advocating that Indians return to the ancient Vedic practices in all areas of their lives. Openly opposed to the Brahminic and British controls over society, his advocacy for change in the political arena was a large presence for Hindu nationalism in a public space which was, by now, growing and contemplating how to proceed toward being its own nation-state.

Towards the end of his life, one of Dayananda's last campaigns was for Cow Protection against Muslim and British meat-eaters, an issue that would greatly enliven the political debates and enlarge the growing public sphere. Swami Dayananda died in 1883, and his work was carried on by Swami Shraddhananda.

Other reformers continued to appear. Through a deeply spiritual encounter with Paramahansa Ramakrishna (1836-1886 - a mystic devoted to the goddess Kali), Narendranath Datta took the name of Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902). He became an ascetic, and continued to spread the teachings of his guru, though in more rational terms. Vivekananda attended the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, where his message of love and caring for all was extremely popular.

His teachings would equate with the third group of van der Veer's scheme of how Hindus reacted to Christian evangelism, as he 'argued that Christianity was simply a lesser form of the universal spirituality found in all religions, but at the highest level only in Vedantic Hinduism. Christianity had been much corrupted by materialism, indeed to the extent that it had lost its spiritual value (van der Veer 2001, p.68). Vivekanda's vision of a Neo-Vedanta 'is partly to blame for the commonly held belief that the East is spiritual while the West is materialistic. He was convinced of the spiritual superiority of the East, while acknowledging the material, technological and scientific superiority of the West. This dichotomy has tended to reinforce the image of India as the West's 'other'...' (Flood 1996, p.258).

Vivekananda founded the Vedanta Society in 1895 in New York, and then returned the same year to India to found the Ramakrishna Mission. The mission trained monks to be sent out for the purpose of propagating education, social work and reform, and caring for the sick. Vivekananda's vision placed great emphasis on "*karma* yoga, the yoga of action or good works, and there are colleges, high schools and hospitals run by the Ramakrishna Mission throughout India" (Flood 1996, p.258.)

During the late nineteenth century, many public organizations interested in political representation were also born. Two of the most important of these were the Sarvajanik Sabha and the Indian Association. "The Sarvajanik Sabha was established in Poona in 1870 with a significant membership.... This criterion meant that the Sabha had a tangible representative base...by 1871, the Sabha could confidently claim to represent the view of some 17,000 citizens of Poona. ...the government kept a close watch on the Sabha and subjected it to mild harrassment during the 1870s " (Zavos 2000, p.69).

The Indian Association was established in 1876 in Calcutta, with its purpose being to represent the views of the educated middle class community and inspire them with a living interest in public affairs. ...organizations similar to the Indian Association were formed at 'Lahore, Meerut, Allahabad, Cawnpore and Lucknow. Thus a network of organizations was started, and the foundations were well and truly laid...for united and concerted action among our representative men, over an area extending from Calcutta to Lahore' (A. Banerjea 1963 p.44 in Zavos 2000, pp.69-70).

In 1885, the Indian National Congress was formed. It is now understood to have been a process of negotiation, rather than "the work solely of an individual Englishman (A.O. Hume) hoping to provide a 'safety valve' for volatile political aspirations" (Zavos 2000, p.69). Two of the most significant organizations to join what would be the Indian National Congress were the Sarvajanik Sabha and the Indian Association. "It was these organizations which did much to establish the Maharashtra-Bengal axis that characterized the Congress in its early phase" (Zavos 2000, p.69)

In Maharashtra, nationalist B.G. Tilak was working during the 1890s. While he has been criticized as an elitist, John Zavos has written that Tilak's importance lay in "his exploration of new methods of political representation in the public space of colonial India...[He] challeged the accepted discursive structure of how a public organization should operate;" (Zavos 2000, p.72).

In both the Ganapati festival in Poona in 1894, where Tilak restructured the celebration so as to be newly focussed at the local, community level, and in his attempt to raise money to renovate the Shivaji memorial, Tilak's objective had been to motivate non-elite members of the community.

'The fund--raising principle is articulated here as a means of raising levels of consciousness; its significance lies not so much in achieving of the objective, as in the educative and consciousness-raising functions of individual commitment. As with the Ganapati movement, the emphasis was on mobilizing interest and support for elite-led nationalism in non-elite sectors of the population, and so reifying the idea of a nationalist constituency.... '(Zavos 2000, p.73).

In 1873, Jotirao Phule established the Satyashodak Samaj (Truth Seeking Society) 'to promote low caste consciousness and increase awareness of Brahman oppression...[with] access to education for low castes and to opposed certain customs and practices associatd with low castes, such as liquor drinking and meat-eating' (Zavos 2000, p.78).

There were also activists whose principles and methodologies were not so peaceful, nor so charitable. V.D. Savarka (1883-1966) had vowed to the goddess Durga when he was 15 that 'he would drive the British out of India. He became known as 'the Hero' on account of his terrorist activities' (Smith 2003, p.187). Savarkar published *Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* in 1923, and his concepts of Hinduism had little to do with religion, but, rather, with a strong concept of nationhood, which he felt had always existed in India: 'During the course of the last 5,000 years of continuous growth and consolidation, this gigantic Octopus of Hindudom has clutched and crushed within the formidable grip of its mighty arms a number of Shakasthans, Hunasthans [kingdoms set up by invaders in India]'. Addressing himself to Muslims, he continued, 'the Marathas swallowed and gulped down your very empire entirely and altogether before it knew what was happening' (Savarkar n.d., n.p. in Smith 2003, p.187).

The image of a crushing, devouring, many-armed octopus is quite a strong image -- a far cry from the western images which had been offered to India of feminity, of dreaming, or that of a feeble, pliable sponge. Savarkar continued to propagate his militant brand of nationalism and to travel around India, as President of the Hindu Mahasabha (All-India Assemby) 'mobilizing opposition to Congress and Muslim leaders' (Savarkar n.d., n.p. in Smith 2003, p.187).

Later, K.B. Hedgewar, who had originally been influenced by Savarkar's strong personality and writings, left the Hindu Mahasabha to establish the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, National Volunteer Corps) in 1925. The RSS groups wore military uniforms, and were dedicated to Hanuman (the athletic monkey-god devoted to Rama). Nathuram Godse had been an activist with the RSS; however, he left that organization to join up with Hindu Mahasabha. Godse founded a newspaper for the Hindu Mahasabha, entitled *Agrani*, and originally Godse and his colleagues were pro-Gandhi. Eventually, however, they felt Gandhi had catered to Muslim and other minorities, and that due to his insistence on Hindu-Muslim cooperation, Gandhi had also helped to cause the unspeakable violence on both sides of the Pakistan-India partition. Nathuram Godse assassinated Mohandas Gandhi on January 30, 1948.

So, the climate in India to which Gandhi returned in 1915 was one of a ripening national dialogue wherein the definitions, prescriptions, and constrictions of Hinduism were being argued and, and concomitantly, being formed. A public space had opened up in which nationalistic discussions were taking place. Annie Besant had come to India in 1893, regarding herself as Hindu, and by the 'second decade of the twentieth century Besant had fully entered India nationalist politics' (van der Veer 2001, p.77), actually becoming President of the Indian National Congress in 1917.

However, while Gandhi was "out-of-country," he had not failed to consider most deeply how his experiences in South Africa could aid India in becoming free of British rule, and to establish *svaraj*-- India's own home rule.

'One of the most clear-sighted and pure formulations of the idea [of *svaraj* or self-rule] was penned by Gandhi during the later phase of his South African period. Titled *Hind Swaraj* - translated as Indian Home Rule the booklet was written on board an ocean liner that carried him back from London to South Africa in November of 1909.

...At the time his booklet was published, there was already an ongoing home rule movement on the subcontinent, sponsored in part by the Indian National Congress.....(Dallmayr 2006, p.105)

Annie Besant, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Mohammad Ali Jinnah were all simultaneously, from 1916 to 1918, creating Home Rule Leagues, which were campaigning across India, and advocating for national Indian self-government.

GANDHI'S RETURN TO INDIA AND HIS VIEW OF SVARAJ

Gandhi returned to India in 1915, and established his first Indian *ashram*, naming it *Satyagraha* [clinging to the Truth]. While in South Africa, he had been corresponding with G.K. Gokhale, a moderate member of the Congress, and when Gandhi arrived in India, Gokhale 'advised him to spend his first year with 'ears open and his mouth shut.' Gandhi travelled a great deal but did not always heed Gokhale's advice (Jack 1956, p.128). With the protest activities of South Africa behind him, he was not one to remain uninvolved. The *ashram* became involved in weaving, carpentry, sanitation construction, agriculture, dairy, and cattle raising. He began speaking out against untouchability, about Cow Protection, and aware that the peasantry was the key to change, based on experience in South Africa, he started political mobilizations, e.g., with the peasants in Kheda (Zavos 2000, p.129). The *ashram* became leaders for social change, women's and widow's rights, vegetarianism, and non-violence resistance.

Like other individuals and political organizations, Gandhi began speaking out about national independence, or home-rule. Gandhi's ideas were, however, different from the other approaches being taken. Obviously, his campaigns were built on the two well-known principles of *satya* (Truth) and *ahimsa* (non-violence). Furthermore, his over-all strategy was known as *satyagraha* [*satya* = Truth; *agraha* = grasping; clinging], which was by no means a passive type of resistance, but one in which one was prepared to suffer one's self as opposed to cause harm or violence to another.

Gandhi's concept was, literally, one of an involvement of the self (*sva*) -- a more personal interpretation of *swaraj* [*sva* meaning the personal self and *raj* meaning rule] (Parel 2000, p.1). Many people and parties used the term *swaraj*, but for Gandhi it was a complex concept. He used the term in several different ways, and Anthony J. Parel has outlined four distinct ways in which Gandhi utilized the term *swaraj*: 1) national independence, 'by which he means collective freedom from alien rule. The enjoyment of sovereign independence is a basic need' (Parel 2000, p.4); 2) political freedom of the individual, which for Gandhi meant both the assurance of "rights" plus the complement of "duty", or *dharma*;

'The modern Western theory of human nature on which rights are based presupposes that humans are basically bodily creatures, led by their imagination, appetites, aversions, and instrumental reason. They are not by nature social beings. They are radical individualists, distrustful of one another. Rights are the means by which they can protect their individual interests from the interference of others. ...

Gandhi's defense of freedoms and rights is based on his view of human nature, which he borrows from Indian sources. Humans are body-soul composites. They are by nature social beings. ...As for epistemology, Gandhi assumes that humans live by truths established by empiricism, reason, and spiritual insights. Here he relies on the epistemology and the anthropology underlying the Bhagavad Gita' (Parel 2000, p.9).

Therefore, for Gandhi, duty came before rights -- for a simple demanding of rights, without an accompanying sense of duty, would lead to political anarchy;

3) economic freedom for the individual, by which 'Gandhi meant freedom from poverty,' meaning 'the availability of the necessities of life (decent food, clothing, and dwelling), the ability to enjoy the fruit's of one's toils, and the opportunity for growth as an individual' (*Ibid.*, 12). Opposed to the abuse and destruction that machinery and the Industrial Revolution could cause to the human soul, Gandhi proposed the use of the spinning wheel. This was, indeed, a machine, but one which the human being could be in control of, rather than vice versa. It was simple, and available to the poorest of the poor in order to be trained and to make a living. 'Its practical economic uses...did not extend beyond the 1920s and 1930s' (Parel 2000, p.15), but as a symbol of self-reliance and self-ingenuity, the spinning wheel remains a powerful symbol even today; 4) self-rule, by which Gandhi meant 'the process of removing the internal obstacles to freedom. When achieved it is nothing more than spiritual freedom' (Parel 2000, p.15). Gandhi felt there could be no national liberty without internal self-rule and his ideas came from the ancient Hindu scriptures, especially from Bhagavad Gita II:54-72, which described "the person of steady wisdom" the *sthitha-prajna*.

He also formed a set of vows based on Patanjali's *Yogasutra* II:30 [the *yamas*]: *ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya*, and *aparigraha* (non-violence, truth, non-stealing, chastity, and non-possessiveness). To these five ancient vows, he added six modern virtues: *swadeshi* (concern for what pertains to one's own country), removal of untouchability, bodily labor, control of the palate, fearlessness, and respect for all religions (Parel 2000, p.16). Without the practice of self-knowledge built upon a deeper consciousness, Gandhi felt national freedom was futile. Gandhi was determined to achieve self-rule himself, and for this purpose he participated in sung-prayers twice a day.

So, as Parel has said, Gandhi's concept of *swaraj*, unlike others around him, who interpreted it simply as national freedom from Britain, was a complex one.

'[H]e drew from both Indian and Western sources. From the Indian sources he derived the all-important notion of self-rule. Almost all of the classical systems of Indian philosophy -- the Vedanta and the Yoga systems, for example -- deal with the ways and means of attaining self-rule, known also as self-realization, or *moksha*. No matter how strongly committed he was to political and economic freedoms, he never lost sight of the fact that humans, by their destiny, also have the duty to strive for self-rule. ...

Western sources supplied Gandhi with the starting points of his notions of independence and political and economic freedoms. ...His training in London as a lawyer and his later readings and activities both in South Africa and India made him a staunch advocate of national as well as individual freedoms' (Parel 2000, pp.1-2).

For, Gandhi, however, they were all of one piece. External *swaraj* for the nation was nothing without the internal *swaraj* of the individual.

Gandhi also spoke of *svaraj* often in terms of *Ramrajya*, as his idealized vision for India.

'To understand this, one must recognize that *Ramrajya* to [Gandhi] did not signify a Hindu state at all. He saw in Lord Rama a votary of truth and justice. During Rama's legendary reign there was equality for all, there were no rich and no poor, no one with power and no one helpless. This is nothing Hindu about this concept. ...[Gandhi] used the term *Ramrajya* because it was one that a vast majority of the Indian population, including Muslims and Christians, understood and appreciated' (Arun Gandhi, Gandhi's grandson, in Gandhi 2000, p. 11).

So, while Gandhi, at this time, agreed with the summation that the West was soaked in materialism, and that the East was a spiritual lighthouse for the world ('...the forces born of spirituality, the bedrock of Indian civilization, were more than a match for material forces.... They should draw their strength from the soul, from

God. If they adhered to that path, *swarajya* [self-rule] which they were aspiring to and working for would be their handmaid' (23-12-1916,

CW-e, 15, #209, p.281), he held a strong conviction that it was his duty to instruct and reform the Indian people along those spiritual lines. His approach, as will be shown herein, was quite different from many other reformers around him. 'The Arya Samaj movement lost its momentum after Gandhi arrived on the political scene, and many erstwhile Arya Samajists embraced the Gandhian movement' (Hardiman 2007). (See also Shri Karunamayee's comments herein, p.352, for a parallel report concerning her own family.)

Gandhi began recruiting people for his *Satyagraha Ashram*, wherein he would train them in the principles of *swaraj*. Most importantly, one of the first things he did at the *ashram* was to establish twice-daily prayer meetings, using the sung-prayers that are now found in the *Ashram Bhajnavali* as educational and training devices.

This consideration of the *Ashram Bhajnavali* can not be "all things" to "all fields." It is an attempt to place the *Ashram Bhajnavali* in its original context within Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement, to examine its development, and to elucidate its contents and usage. Chapter Two will consist of an historical overview of the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, along with a descriptive summary of the sung-prayer materials found within it. (An analysis of ritual practices presented in Chapters Three through Five will also provide additional information regarding historical context and development.)

Chapters Three, Four, and Five will examine in more detail how the *Ashram Bhajnavali* was used in ritual contexts, and how these sung-prayers supported Gandhi's vision of *swaraj* and the nation's work for social change. Chapter Three will discuss the use of these sung-prayers in ritual prayer meetings that occurred twice daily. Chapter Four will look at additional ways in which these songs were used by Gandhi and the *satyagraha* community to achieve their purposes, as the

movement grew into a national initiative. Chapter Five will consider how it is that sung-prayer, being specifically sung and chanted (rather than read or spoken), had a significant appeal and power for the nation of India and the *satyagraha* communities. By placing this collection in its historical, social, and ritual contexts, the extent to which these sung-prayers affected and shaped Gandhi's teaching of *swaraj* in India will become clear.

Chapter Six will consider the life and work of one spiritual musician, Shri Karunamayee Abrol, who teaches the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, its melodies, its history, and its significance for *satyagraha*. Shri Karunamayee's family were freedom fighters, and, as a child, she sang for Mahatma Gandhi, receiving his blessing. Shri Karunamayee represents a living tradition, inspired by childhood experiences and her respect for Gandhi as a *sant*. Her recollections of family stories told from the days of India's freedom-fighting era, her direct connection to Gandhi, along with her presence at *satyagraha* events and the evening prayer meetings in Delhi, have resulted in a deep devotion to the songs of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. The chanting of these sung-prayers has been her own daily devotional ritual for decades, and she teaches this literature from both a grounded musical knowledge and direct historical experience. The melodies she uses are those she heard as a child at the evening prayer meetings. She is a link to Gandhi, a "tradition-bearer" for the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and *satyagraha*.

Chapter Seven will consider the post-Colonial situation of India today, along with some reflections concerning Gandhi's possible on-going contributions to the current situation, with a final summary of our thesis.

**CHAPTER TWO. THE ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI:
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS**

This chapter consists of an historical overview of Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement along with a descriptive summary of the sung-prayer materials found within the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. (An analysis of ritual practice presented in Chapters Three through Five will also provide additional information regarding historical context and development.) This collection of chanted prayers used by the Indian *satyagraha* community, was and is sometimes referred to, in an unintentionally misinforming manner, as a hymnal or a hymn-book. However, the collection was and is much more than what the term "hymnal" might imply to many, both in the scope of its contents and in its importance as another tool with which to understand the developments of Gandhi's *satyagraha* community. The materials found in the 1947 edition of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* reflect a practice that developed over almost forty years, reaching from the beginning of Gandhi's human rights campaigns to the end of his career.

The *Ashram Bhajanavali* materials, which consist of over 240 pages, represent what was an active and evolving religious practice. They cover time periods that span the earliest *satyagraha* campaigns in South Africa and continue into India after 1915, during the Indian *satyagraha* movement. They reach through the period of Gandhi's having been asked by his devotee Mirabehn to translate the then-sung repertoire into English (while he was in Yeravda Prison in 1930), and into the later decades of Gandhi's career during the mid-1930s and 1940s when international visitors and new ashramites from around the globe became the inspiration for the contribution of chants from various religious traditions.

These developments, examined within the context of their own growth, need to be at least cursorily described and outlined historically for the reader, as such an examination has not been completed in detail elsewhere (to my knowledge). The

Ashram Bhajanavali may have been viewed by some as useless, peripheral music to be nonchalantly written off as ephemeral and unimportant, or patently dismissed as too generic or too "whichever" one might want to use to dismiss music and chant as an important resource for understanding the religious depths of a movement as profound as Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement. However, this material is both literally and substantially more than simple hymns (or *bhajans*). A review of the developments of these sung-prayers provides a deeper understanding of Gandhi's religious life and mission as directed by those sung-prayer meetings, as well as a glimpse into the *Satyagraha Ashram* life and the ritual rhythms that supported the purpose and strength of that community.

OVERVIEW OF HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

South Africa: 1893 to 1914

The *Satyagraha* movement was initiated in South Africa as Gandhi and fellow Indians (both Hindu and Muslim) struggled against the South African government in a bid for their human rights. The mode of "attack" was originally referred to with the English words "passive resistance," but was then modified to an Indian term *satyagraha*, which was meant to connote an active force. 'Truth (*satya*) implies love and firmness (*agraha*) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force (Jack, p.65).

While in South Africa, Gandhi established Phoenix Farm (Durban) in 1904, and Tolstoy Farm (Johannesburg) in 1910, experiments in religious and communal living which would provide the foundation for a more organized program of *satyagraha* later on in India. Gandhi wrote of these earlier Farms that 'congregational prayer in the evening played a large part in our lives' (Gandhi 1998, p.29). The 'congregational prayer' that he mentions would have been chanted prayer, the singing of hymns or *bhajans*. When recalling Tolstoy Farm specifically, he wrote:

'After the evening meal we had prayers at seven or half past seven. At prayers we sang *bhajans* and sometimes had readings from the *Ramayana* or books on Islam. The *bhajans* were in English, Hindi and Gujarati. Sometimes we had one *bhajan* from each of the three languages, and sometimes only one. Everyone retired at 9 o'clock' (*CW-e*, 34, p.203).

A memoire of Prabhudas Gandhi's [the nephew of Maganlal Gandhi and son of Chhaganlal Gandhi, Gandhi's cousin] describes what took place at the Phoenix Settlement:

'In 1906, that is two years after the settlement was founded, less than half the boys in the Phoenix School were Hindus. Before the evening meal Gandhi would recite a verse from the *Gita* and explain the meaning in Gujarati. Prabhudas' mother, Kashibehn, had a good voice and would sing *bhajans*. Gandhi was always partial to such music,.... There is also mention of an 'organ,' probably a harmonium. The format of scripture reading, short commentary on a text, and *bhajans* seems to have become the 'order of service' from these early days onwards' (Chatterjee 2005, p.126).

In 1908, Gandhi was arrested and jailed for being an Indian in South Africa who had not registered with the government as part of the "Black Act." In an attempt to compromise with the government, Gandhi volunteered to be the first Indian to register voluntarily, in return for the government's repeal of the Black Act. Following his release from jail, while on his way to the Registration Office, he received the first attempt on his life from a business colleague, a Muslim Indian, who attacked him physically. This was the famous occasion upon which Gandhi often remarked concerning his use of music as a mendicant: 'I am so fond of music that once, while I was in [S. Africa] and ailing from a bruise on my upper lip, I felt greatly soothed as the daughter of a friend of mine sang the song, 'Lead, Kindly Light' at my request' (*CW-e*, 27, #5, Feb. 2, 1924, p.4.)

During the civil rights marches, it was also common for informal *bhajan* (or hymn) singing to occur. As the *satyagraha* movement grew and 'challenged the powerful government of the Transvaal, [their] only weapon was a faith in the righteousness of their own cause and in God' (Jack, p.79), as they challenged the government by crossing the Transvaal border into Natal without permits. Gandhi wrote this of the third *satyagraha* campaign, or Great March of 1913, illustrating the extent to which religious conviction underpinned the thousands of pilgrims' action:

'The next day (6th Nov. 1913) at the appointed stroke of the hour (6:30 [AM]) we offered [sung-]prayers and commenced the march in the name of God" (*GR*, 88). He also wrote that, having crossed into the Transvaal, the pilgrims marched peacefully until 5:00 in the evening, at which time, they spread themselves in the open air. Some were talking while others were singing *bhajans*' (Jack, p.90).

As a result of this march, Gandhi was arrested three times in four days, and was then sentenced to nine months in prison. He remained in jail until December 18, when, under pressure from England, he was released and negotiations were initiated between the Indians and the South African government. The Indian Relief Act was passed in South Africa in July of 1914, and Gandhi returned home to India that same month.

India: 1915 to 1930

As we saw in Chapter One, Gandhi was not the only reformer in India in the early twentieth century. 'The entry of M.K. Gandhi into Indian politics towards the end of the second decade of the twentieth century must be seen in the context of the developing radical trend in elite-led nationalism over the previous twenty-five years' (Zavos 2000, p.128).

Gandhi's first *ashram* [retreat; hermitage] in India took the name *Satyagraha Ashram* and was instituted in 1915 with 25 people

'[i]n a rented bungalow at Kochrab, a small village near Ahmedabad, in his Gujarati-speaking section of India. Because of an outbreak of plague, this ashram was removed to Sabarmati, across the river of that name from Ahmedabad' (Jack, p.136).

In his article "Satyagraha Ashram" (printed in *Young India* in 1928), Gandhi looked back on 13 years of practice to describe *Satyagraha's* purpose as a '*prayerful* and scientific experiment' [emphasis added] (Gandhi 1998, p.15). Sung-prayer, as a regular event of the community was instituted by Gandhi in the very beginning of the ashram. He wrote: "If insistence on truth constitutes the root of the Ashram, [sung]-prayer is the principal feeder of that root" (AO, 36). It was established that the *ashram* community would participate daily in sung-prayer about 4.15 or 4.20 AM every morning, and sung-prayer at 7.00 PM every evening.

In his "History of the Satyagraha Ashram," Gandhi described the practice of the morning sung-prayers: 'At the morning prayer we first recite the *shlokas* (Sanskrit verses) printed in *Ashram Bhajanavali* (hymnal), and then sing one *bhajan* (hymn) followed by *Ramdhun* (repetition of Ramanama [the name of Rama]) and *Gitapath* (recitation of the *Bhagavad Gita*)'(Gandhi, 1998, p.38). This was a short liturgy of sung-prayers to be chanted every morning, and which lasted, at that time, about half an hour. He made no mention of a sermon.

Morning

1. *Shlokas*
2. *Bhajan*
3. *Ramdhun*
4. *Gitapatha*

In his *Ashram Observances* (1998) Gandhi has described twice the evening sung-prayer meetings and those sung-prayers that were chanted at the evening meetings. Initially, he stated 'In the evening we have recitation of the last 19 verses of the second chapter of the *Gita*, one *bhajan* and *Ramdhun* and then read some portion of a sacred book' (Gandhi 1998, p.38); he then offered further elaboration:

'At the evening prayer we recite the last 19 verses of the second chapter of the *Gita* as well as sing a hymn and repeat *Ramanama*. These verses describe the characteristics of the *sthitaprajna* (the man of stable understanding), which a satyagrahi too must acquire, and are recited in order that he may constantly bear them in mind' (Gandhi 1998, p. 40).

This was also a short liturgy to be chanted every evening, also lasting for about half an hour. Again, no mention was made of a sermon.

Evening

1. *Sthitaprajna-lakshana* (*Bhagavad Gita* II: 54-72)
2. *Bhajan*
3. *Ramdhun*
4. Reading: "some spiritual book"

Early Ashram Practices and Sung-Prayers

'The chief activity in the Ashram at this time [1915] was teaching Sanskrit, Hindi and Tamil to the old as well as the young, who also received some general education' (Gandhi 1998, p.30). Gandhi felt it crucial for the community to learn as many Indian languages as possible (so as not to be always forced to speak English during gatherings), including the ancient language of Sanskrit, which would give the community access to the spiritual foundations of Indian scripture.

'The time for morning worship was as a matter of experiment fixed at 4, 5, 6, and 7 a.m., one after another. But on account of my persistently strong attitude on the subject, it has been fixed at last at 4.20 a.m. With the first bell at 4 everyone rises from bed and after a wash reaches the prayer ground about 4.20' (Gandhi 1998, p.37).

Attendance at daily sung-prayers was expected and was mentioned under the category of "Worship":

'The social (as distinguished from the individual) activities of the Ashram commence every day with the congregational morning worship at 4.15 to 4.45 and close with the evening prayer at 7 to 7.30. All inmates are expected to attend the worship. This worship has been

conceived as an aid to self purification and dedication of one's all to God' (Gandhi 1998, p.18).

An excerpt from that article outlines the daily rhythms of the ashram:

'DAILY ROUTINE		
a.m.	4	Rising from bed
"	<u>4-15 to 4-45</u>	Morning prayer
"	5-00 to 6-10	Bath, exercise, study
"	6-10- to 6-30	Breakfast
"	6-30 to 7	Women's prayer class
"	7 to 10-30	Body labour, education and sanitation
"	10-45 to 11-15	Dinner
"	11-15 to 12	Rest
"	12 to 4-30 p.m.	Body labour, including classes
p.m.	4-30 to 5-30	Recreation
"	5-30 to 6-00	Supper
"	6 to 7	Recreation
"	<u>7 to 7-30</u>	Common Worship
"	7-30 to 9	Recreation
"	9	Retiring bell' (emphasis added) (Gandhi 1998, p. 27).

Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar

The *shlokas*, or Sanskrit verses, were chosen by Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar "(born. 1885), [and] popularly known as Kakasaheb, a co-worker of Gandhiji since 1915" (CW-e, 55, #548, Note 3, p.477). Before 1915, Shri Kaka Kalelkar had been at *Shantiniketan*, Tagore's ashram in Calcutta.

Tagore gave permission for Kalelkar to leave *Shantiniketan* and to live with Gandhi. 'Kaka taught the children how to recite the [Sanskrit] verses repeated in prayer. Some of these verses were omitted in the Ashram prayer in order to save time. Such is the history of the verses recited at the morning prayer all these days' (Gandhi 1998, p.38) (emphasis added).

Kalelkar's addition of shlokas from the scriptures added an element of traditional, historical Hinduism to the singing of the *bhajans*, thereby expanding the

small ritual into a new form. "Indeed singing hymns was the only item of the prayers in South Africa. The *shlokas* were added in India" (*Gandhi 1998*, p.39).

Narayan Moreshwar Khare

It was eventually decided that a professional singing teacher was needed to teach music at the ashram, and

'One such was found in Narayan Moreshwar Khare, a pupil of Pandit Vishnu Digambar [the great music reformer], whom the master kindly sent to the Ashram. Pandit Khare gave us full satisfaction and is now a full member of the Ashram. He made hymn-singing interesting, and the *Ashram Bhajanavali* (hymnal) which is now read by thousands was in the main compiled by him. He introduced *Ramdhun*, the third item of our prayers (*Gandhi*, p.40).

The Gita

The fourth item of sung-prayer mentioned by Gandhi were the verses recited from the *Bhagavad Gita*, which had furnished the *ashram* with guidelines for living since its inception:

'It has provided us with a test with which to determine the correctness or otherwise of ideas and courses of conduct in question. Therefore we wished that all Ashramites should understand the meaning of the *Gita* and if possible commit it to memory. If this last was not possible, we wished that they should at least read the original Sanskrit with correct pronunciation. With this end in view we began to recite part of the *Gita* every day. We would recite a few verses every day and continue the recitation until we had learnt them by heart' (*Gandhi 1998*, p. 40).

From there, every morning, the *Ashram* went on to practice a regular, continuous cycle of successively chanting all the books of the *Gita*, first in two-week cycles and then in weekly cycles (with several chapters being chanted per day). However, very evening, they always chanted only the verses from *Gita* Chapter II, 54-72.

'Hindus being in an overwhelming majority in the Ashram, the verses must be selected from the sacred books of the Hindus...[but] there were occasions on which Imam Saheb [Khare] recited verses from the Koran. Muslim and Christian hymns are often sung' (Gandhi 1998, p.38).

As can be discovered from a perusal of the *Collected Works*, Gandhi made many written references to those hymns or *bhajans* that moved him, and to those religious writings that he felt to be foundational to his work. The religious writings mentioned in his memoirs were myriad; they spanned decades, and reflected Gandhi's personal and evolving spiritual quest, as well as his expansive search for knowledge. Yet, out of all the *Gita* verses Gandhi could have chosen, as witnessed in the above statement concerning the importance for *satyagraha* for the *sthitaprajna*, it is clear that Gandhi included in the *ashram's* daily sung-prayers those verses concerning self-control, or individual *svaraj*, that he deemed to be quintessentially important enough to be repeated daily, studied, and personally absorbed by those in the *satyagraha* movement.

Those religious sung-prayers and *shlokas* that Shri Kaka Kalelkar chose for the *Bhajanavali* would have been those that Gandhi felt to be most foundational, instructive, and supportive to the purposes of the *ashram*. Likewise, those *bhajans*, while being compiled by Narayan Moreshwar Khare, would have been those that Gandhi approved of as being reflective of the values of the *satyagraha* movement. Some of the words in the *bhajans* that had been chosen were actually changed on occasion, so as to reflect more correctly the community's values. (See Shri Karunamayee comments herein, pp.364-65).

By combining several collections of sung-prayers within the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, both Sanskrit *shlokas* and prakrit *bhajans*, Gandhi demonstrated his equally-deep admiration for both the sung-prayers found in religious scriptures and the sung-prayers found in the villages of the common people. From the early days of the *ashram* he wrote the following, while travelling through the villages:

'Last evening, two *bhajan* parties came to see me. Their musical instruments must be worth some 5 or 10 rupees. These included drums, cymbals, *kartals*, and one single-stringed *tamboor*. With these, they produced music which was all sweetness. ... I said to one of them: "Friend, you are enjoying yourselves thoroughly." He replied: "Well, what else should we do? We prefer to pass our time in *bhajans* and *kirtans* rather than just gossip' (*CW-e*,17, #140, pp.160-61, July 29, 1918)

The choosing of materials that represented a diversity of traditions from the Sanskrit *shlokas* of 'the educated classes' to the *bhajans* of the village peoples, and their setting, juxtaposed within very simple daily recitations, or liturgies, reflected Gandhi's beliefs of human equality, simple worship, and practice put into action that guided the *ashram* in its mission and desired behaviors.

'Ever since the Ashram was founded, not a single day has passed to my knowledge without this worship' (Gandhi 1998, p.36) of sung-prayers. An observation concerning *Satyagraha Ashram's* early practices of sung-prayer from that early time was made by an ashramite, Rajendra Prasad: 'We did not have congregational prayers then as we used to have later, wherever we happened to be with Mahatmaji' (Jack, p.153). Rajendra Prasad's comment provides significant insight into the fact that the regular chanting of [sung]-prayers initiated at *Satyagraha Ashram* continued to grow, gaining an increased importance, and, subsequently, became an established, sustaining structure of the community.

Not only were additional items added to the prayers, but, the popularity of the sung-prayers grew as the *Satyagraha movement* grew to be the foundation of a national initiative. The prayer-songs provided the regular, rhythmic impetus of daily chanting, prayer, and meditation that served as a sort of sonic energy, fueling the inner flames of resource and inspiration that propelled the expanding *svaraj* movement forward. Gandhi wrote: 'Ashram rules were observed at first with some laxity, but the observance has become stricter from day to day' (Gandhi 1998, p.31).

Gandhi was in his early forties as he established that first Indian ashram and became involved in his many non-co-operation, or *satyagraha*, projects.

In 1917, a year when the ashram was moved to a new location near the Sabarmati River, Gandhi became involved with a *satyagraha* campaign in favor of releasing peasants who worked in the indigo fields of Champaran from paying taxes to the British on their own product. A year later, he successfully negotiated a settlement between the mill-workers and mill-owners of Ahmedabad, by a three-day fast. Under the pressure of what was his first fast in Indian, the mill-owners gave into a settlement. In the same year, Gandhi led a successful *satyagraha* campaign for the peasants in Kheda. Gandhi realized in 1919, however, that India was not as ready for non-violent confrontation as he had hoped, as a *hartal* (boycott) which he had called for against oppressive measures contained in the British Rowlatt Act, broke out in violence, with a school teacher in *Amritsar* being killed. This resulted in the British retaliation of rounding up and ambushing thousands of Indians in an enclosed area called *Jallianwalla Bagh*. With only one way out of the enclosure, four hundred Indians were massacred and twelve hundred were injured. '[T]he Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, though it was exceptional in the history of the British raj, became a byword for British brutality' (Mehta 1976, p.141). This was a defining moment for Gandhi, as he understood just how difficult *satyagraha*'s task would be. Yet he blamed himself for having "miscalculated the forces of evil in Indian society, and...had summoned his people to *satyagraha* before they were ready for it" (Mehta 1976, p.141).

Among the many campaigns of the 1920s, was the boycotting of British yard goods. In 1921, Gandhi initiated the opening of the first store to sell homespun cotton cloth (*khadi*), as well as coordinated the first burning of British and foreign cloth in Bombay. It was during this time that he gave up British attire altogether, to don only a cotton *dhoti* (loincloth) from then on.

In 1922, he was arrested on charges of sedition, and sentenced to six years in Yeravda Jail. From there, in 1923, he wrote some of his autobiography and *Satyagraha in South Africa*.

After an attack of appendicitis, he was released early from jail in 1924, the year of his 21-day "Great Fast," which was meant to quell fighting and act as penance for Muslim-Hindu violence which was occurring. 1925 was noteworthy, as he fasted not for a political or social cause, but due to transgressions committed by his own ashramites. As their leader, he felt it was from his short-comings that their transgressions had occurred. This was, thus, another one of his fasts meant as an act of expiation for others' actions, meant to demonstrate the true meaning of *svaraj*. At the end of the decade, in 1929, he was again arrested for burning foreign cloth in Calcutta. The decade had been filled with *satyagraha* campaigns, travelling, negotiations, imprisonments, violence, and fasting. However, as Gandhi wrote, there was a history attached to almost every *shloka* and every selected *bhajan* (*CW-e*. 81, #742, p.487). As "experiments" came and went, the sung-prayers were the bedrock of the *satyagraha* community.

1930

1930 brought what would be Gandhi's next most dangerous *satyagraha* campaign, following the *khadi* programs, the Salt March to Dandi.

The 1930 Salt March

Gandhi was sixty one, when he focussed on the unfairness of the salt tax, which had been fixed by the British on the Indian people. Salt was free -- it came from the sea. But only the British had been allowed to refine it, and then sell it back to India. On March 12, 1930, Gandhi and 79 colleagues marched from the Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi on the western sea coast, a distance of roughly two hundred miles. The planned civil disobedience, an intentional breaking of the law, was to entail Gandhi's picking up "illegal" salt from the shoreline. The famous 24-

day march was initiated with the chanting of the 'hymn' "*Vaishnava jana*" (Jack 1956, p.246) found in the *Ashram Bhajana vali* (*A.Bhaj.* 1947, #102, p.156) .

On route to Dandi, the march was followed closely by national correspondents, as well as by journalists from the international community. Gandhi gave several speeches along the way, continuing to instruct the marchers in the basic tenets of non-violence: 'I repeat that ours is a sacred pilgrimage, and self-examination and self-purification are essentials which we cannot do without' (*CW-e*, 48, #482, p.450). For Gandhi, self-examination and self-purification came through the avenue of sung-prayer.

Gandhi also continued the twice-daily sung-prayers during the march; he spoke of the love for an enemy which had been described in one of the *bhajans*:

'You have just heard Panditji [Khare] sing that the path of love is like a flame. A *satyagrahi*'s path is the path of love, not one of enmity. It should be the ambition of a *satyagrahi* to win over even the most hard-hearted of enemies through love.

How can one demonstrate that there is nothing but love underlying civil disobedience? Pritam the singer must have had a direct experience of this, as a result of which this *bhajan* poured forth from his heart ["*Harino marga*" - "The Godward way is for the brave not for the cowardly" (*A.Bhaj.* 1947, #117, p.170).

...This band of *satyagrahis* which has set out is not staging a play; its effect will not be merely temporary; even through death, it will prove true to its pledge -- if death becomes necessary.

Not only should there be no anger within one's heart at the time of death, but on the contrary, one should feel and pray: "May good befall him who kills me!" (a quote from another hymn). When anyone meets death in such a manner, I would call it a *satyagrahi*'s death and only in such a death would the dying person be considered to have been true to his pledge' (*CW-e*, 48, #481, pp.446-47). (emphasis added)

The group arrived at Dandi on April 5th, where Gandhi announced: 'God willing, I expect with my companions to commence actual Civil Disobedience... tomorrow morning. April 6th has been to us since the ...Jallianwala massacre a time

of sacramental remembrance. We therefore commence it with [sung]-prayer and fasting' (Jack 1956, p.239).

The next morning was begun with sung-prayers.

'Soon after [sung-]prayers, Mr. Gandhi with his volunteers proceeded exactly at 6 in the morning for a bath in the sea. A large crowd accompanied the party. Gandhi was walking at a slow pace in grave solemnity and entered the water of the sea amidst loud cries of 'Mahatma Gandhi-ki-jai' '(Jack 1956, p.239).

As they walked back from their bath, Gandhiji bent down, breaking the law, and picked up the salt that lay there on the open shore. In one significant gesture, Gandhiji raised up a handful of salt, and the whole world knew what it meant. Gandhi was not arrested on that day; he returned to an encampment near the sea. But, it was as if a dam had been broken -- thousands of people throughout the country started to refine their own salt. As a result, thousands were then arrested, beaten, and jailed, all across the country.

Twenty-five hundred volunteers marched in one non-violent protest, as Webb Miller, a correspondent for the United Press wrote:

'the Gandhi men halted 100 yards from the British.... A column of men advanced from the crowd ... and approached the barbed-wire stockade...At a word of command, scores of native police rushed upon the marchers and rained blows upon their heads using [5-foot clubs with steel tips]. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. They went down like ten-pins. From where I stood, I heard the sickening whacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls....

Then another column formed, while their leaders pleaded with them to retain their self-control. They marched slowly towards the police, everyone knowing that within a few minutes he would be beaten, perhaps killed....

Group after group walked forward, or sat down, whereupon they were beaten or kicked senseless. By 11:00 AM, when the temperature hit 116 degrees and the march was called off, 320 were badly injured, 2 (with no medical help) had died' (Jack 1956, 248-53).

After many other non-cooperation leaders -- including Nehru and the mayor of Calcutta -- had been arrested for encouraging the "illegal" manufacture of salt by the Indian people, Gandhi himself was arrested in the middle of the night on May 5th, 1930. A newspaper of the time, reported:

'Near the cottage of reeds is a plain cot out in the open, under the blue canopy of the Indian sky. Not far from the cot on one side there is a young man sleeping on the ground; on the other side of the cot is a young Indian lady (stopping over for the day) sleeping on the ground. Farther away both to the right and to the left are mango trees under which are sleeping groups of young men. Still farther away in the background is a modest school building in front of which about forty men, young and old, are sleeping. It is 12:45 A.M' (Jack 1956, p.244).

Two English police officers with guns and more than thirty Indian police officers with rifles entered the encampment by surprise and awakened Gandhi on his cot. Gandhi asked for permission to brush his teeth before being arrested, and he was given permission to do so. During the time of Gandhi's brushing his teeth, a bell was rung and the entire encampment awoke, surrounding the arresting officers. An article reads:

'Mahatma Gandhi (surrounded by his loyal band of Satyagrahists, i.e., Civil Resisters) [pronounced]: 'Punditji, please recite the hymn describing the qualities of a Vaishnava. ...

The Mahatma stands up, his eyes closed, his head bent in mute reverence, while Pundit Khare recites the hymn. At the end of the hymn Punditji leads the congregational worship in which all, including the thirty odd Indian policemen, participate. The two English officers are standing stiffly, watch in hand, during the singing of the Vaishnava hymn.

Pundit Khare (seated on the ground, mono-string musical instrument in hand): 'Oh Rama! Lord of the Dynasty of Raghus! Thou, an ideal king, an ideal husband of the ideal wife Sita, Thou art verily the Redeemer of the fallen and the sinful!' [*"Ragupati Raghava," Ashram Bhajanavali*, 234].

The congregation repeats this verse each time after Punditji sings it. The joyous chanting purifies the countryside -- white clouds are seen hovering overhead' (Jack 1956, p.246).

At 1:10 p.m., Gandhi was taken into custody and transported to jail, having been described as being "tranquility-incarnate" (Jack 1956, p.247). Between the time of the officers' arrival and the time of Gandhi's leaving (a space of just under half-an-hour) the entire community had gathered and had participated in a *chronos*-stopping community ritual, with sung-prayers from the *Ashram Bhajanaivali*. They had provided Gandhi (and themselves) with the energy and inspiration that the secure regularity of the *Bhajanaivali*'s twice-daily sung-prayers had always provided them. Most significantly, because Gandhi stood on the brink of being incarcerated for an indefinite amount of time, these deeply-revered prayers were expressed in an intentional way. They were offered as eternal, sonic "fuel for the journey" beyond his arrest. 'Truth, immortality and eternity may merge and be grasped in liturgy's moment' (Rappaport 1999, p.232).

Gandhi used these sung-prayers, as he had once stated, as "training" for non-violence. and as instruction regarding a "true Vaishnava." With the *satyagrahis* having sung-prayers and meditation as part of their daily routine, it was hoped that these tools would override the natural, human reaction to violence, and that they would help to control the reaction of striking back when violence became the order of the day.

Gandhi's Translations of 1930

On May 6th, 1930, having just been transported to Yeravda Central Prison for his actions at Dandi, Gandhi began to translate the then-sung pieces of the *Ashram Bhajanaivali* into English. The request for the translations had come from Madeleine Slade, an ashramite and devotee, and daughter of a British admiral, who was also called Mirabehn by Gandhi, after the princess-poetess Mirabai. He translated generally one song each day, until December 15 of that year, when 253 items had been completed.

The pieces translated at that time are described thusly in a footnote to their presentation in the *Collected Works*:

'*Ashram Bhajanavali* is a collection of devotional songs which formed part of the morning and evening prayers at Gandhiji's ashrams. They were in various languages and taken from various sources, some of them obscure, but all fairly popular in the Hindu religious tradition. ... The version reproduced here is taken from a photostat of the original work in Gandhiji's hand (*CW-e*, 50, #458, p.323, note 1).

This rather bland description is fair enough. However, it gives the reader neither a full and clear picture of the collection's contents nor an impression of the importance of the collection itself.

By examining available correspondence which Gandhi had written to Mirabehn before and during his imprisonment, it is possible to place this collection more clearly within its historical context, as he worked to translate these often-chanted verses so that Mirabehn could understand them. A first and second letter written to Mirabehn before the arrest illustrate Gandhi's usual habit of fitting in his continuous letter-writing whenever and wherever he could during the day, often early in the mornings: 'I hate writing letters in pencil. But I am writing this whilst I am waiting at the prayer ground for the others to come. It is just nearing 4.20. (*CW-e*, 49, #155, p.150, Letter to Mirabehn, April 21, 1930). A second letter was written subsequently while travelling, in order to continue regular contact: 'Now these lines whilst I am in the train' (*CW-e*, 49, #217, p.215, Letter to Mirabehn, April 29, 1930).

As outlined above, Gandhi was arrested on May 5, and was not permitted to send any correspondence until May 12: 'Yours is the first letter I take up to write from the jail and that on a silence day' (*CW-e* Vol. 49, #277, p. 274, Letter to Mirabehn, from Yeravda Prison, May 12, 1930). (Every Monday was a "silence" or a "maun" day for Gandhi.) Although this May 12 letter makes no mention of translations, a second letter from the prison refers to his having begun the project: 'I think I told you last time that I had started translating the verses and hymns in the

hymn book. I am nearing the end of the morning verses' (*CW-e*, 49, #289, p.286, Letter to Mirabehn, May 18, 1930). He continued to translate the Sanskrit *shlokas* during May, June, and July: 'My translation of one verse per day from the prayer book continues. I wish I could do more. But the spinning and carding [of cotton on the *charkha*] won't leave me any more time (*CW-e*, 49, #299, p.295, Letter to Mirabehn, May 25, 1930).

Gandhi's correspondence from this time also provides information concerning the importance of the sung-prayers to his life while imprisoned:

'I think very little about things outside. I am so busy with work [spinning, etc.] that I get no time to think about them. I fix my eyes on the central teaching of the *Gita*, and so enjoy peace of mind. If I did not do that, though I am supplied newspapers, reading about all that happens would have made it difficult for me to experience peace. The prayers twice a day and the daily reading of the *Gita* have proved a great support to me ' (*CW-e*, 49, #303, p.288, May 26, 1930).
(emphasis added)

On July 7, 1930, Gandhi began to translate the *bhajans* (hymns) which were composed in various local languages. During that time Mirabehn had written to him asking for a translation also of the *Bhagavad Gita*;

'In translating the hymns for you I have given myself much joy. ... I did the 10th hymn today. The verses [Sanskrit *ślokas*] took me a long time. The hymn [sic] I am doing one per day. And I have still nearly 170 to do! There is not much likelihood of my reaching the *Gita* just yet (*CW-e*, 49, #444, p.399, Letter to Mirabehn, July 28, 1930).

The *bhajan* translating continued throughout the summer and fall: 'We [Gandhi and Kaka Kalelkar, also imprisoned with Gandhi] pray regularly every day' (*CW-e*, 50, #27, p.17, Sept. 1, 1930).

In December 1930, Gandhi was nearing the end of the translation project:

'In another ten days I shall have finished the translation of the *Bhajanavali*. It has given me such a joy. I am not satisfied with the performance. Save for the fact that it is an act of love, it has no other merit -- certainly no literary merit. But it will help you to know the meaning of the *bhajans* and that was all I aimed at (*CW-e*, 50, #433, p.305, Letter to Mirabehn, Dec. 8, 1930).

Those items which Gandhi translated for Mirabehn consist of:

#	Item - <i>Collected Works</i> Vol. 50, #458
1 - 3	Three verses concerning the early morning (pratah) from the <i>Bhagavat Padacarya</i> by <i>Adi Shankaracarya</i>
4 - 17	Verses to various gods and goddessess from a variety of sources
18 - 52	Verses from the <i>Upanishads</i>
52	<i>Bhagavata Purana</i> 12.13.1, which would become the opening verse for the Evening Prayers (nothing in #458 is specifically signified as "Evening Prayers")
53 - 55	School Prayers
56-62	Women's Prayers
63 - 67	<i>Dwadashapanjarika-[Stotra]</i>
68 - 72	<i>Pandavagita</i>
77 - 253	BHAJANS 77 - 178 <i>Hindustani</i> 179 - 203 <i>Marathi</i> 204 - 207 <i>Bangali</i> 208 - 253 <i>Gujarati</i>

Gandhi, for obvious reasons, did not include any of the English hymns, nor were any *Gita* verses included, as Mirabehn had already requested of Gandhi a translation of the *Gita*, which would be one of his next translation projects. In addition to items used for morning sung-prayers (#1-#52), sections of School Prayers

and Women's Prayers had been added. These prayers would have been sung at other times of the day, according to the ashram's schedule of work and study. Verses from the *Bhagavata Purana*, *Dwadashapanjarika*, and the *Pandavagita* were also included.

Gandhi noted that the last *bhajan* was finished on December 15, and he wrote of the entire collection:

'I have in general given the literal translation of *Bhajanavali*. Now it is up to Mirabehn. I do not consider the translation worth publishing. It cannot even be published while I am in jail. How can I choose from the *bhajans*? Different *bhajans* appeal on different occasions. We might say that all are well liked. But I do wish to drop a few in the new edition. In 'Who is not devoted to Rama and Vaidehi' I take Rama to mean *Daridranaryana* [Vishnu as "God of the Poor"] and it is our duty to forsake the company of one who does not serve *Daridranarayana*. Non-co-operation emanates from that' (*CW-e*, 50, #464, pp.411-12, Dec. 17, 1930).

This letter is interesting in a number of ways. First, it is an indication that Gandhi did not conceive of the collection as a closed collection or as some kind of completed "canon." He referred to the fact that different *bhajans* were appropriate for different occasions, their needing to be chosen for each occasion, and he referred to the fact that for the next printed edition (in whatever form it was to be printed), he wished to leave out a few pieces. It is, furthermore, also clear from this letter (and it is only one example of hundreds available) that Gandhi was continuing to shape, define, and explain the *satyagraha* movement in terms of what he found to be "of Truth" within these verses.

The Navajivan Trust printing press was confiscated and dismantled by the British government when Gandhi was jailed in 1930 following the Dandi Salt march. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* had been printed up and circulated in various ways for use during worship, but in 1930, when the press was dismantled, that publishing stopped. Gandhi referred in a letter to Narayan M. Khare, dated

February 8, 1932, that he wished to "offer some suggestions" for a new version of the *Bhajanavali* before it was re-published. Printing, however, by Navajivan Trust was unable to be resumed until 1933, when Kakasaheb Kalelkar and Mahadev Desai (Gandhi's personal secretary) were released from prison (Gandhi being again incarcerated as a result of incidents in 1932 and 1933).

Songs from Prison: Translations of Indian Lyrics Made in Jail by M.K. Gandhi, Adapted for the Press by John S. Hoyland, was published by George Allan and Unwin Limited in London in 1934. Also included was this description of the material being presented:

'The translation was made by Mr. Gandhi during his imprisonment in Yeravda Jail, Poona, in 1930, the original matter being taken partly from the Upanishads and other Sanskrit scriptures, and partly from the poets of the *Bhakti* school of thought and devotion. Where the source is not otherwise shown, it may generally be taken to be an ancient Sanskrit poem.

In preparing Mr. Gandhi's translation for publication in the West, it has been thought best to omit certain material, chiefly Indian names and symbolism. A metrical form has been adopted, and alterations made in phraseology, etc. The blame for possible errors must fall on me and not on Mr. Gandhi' (Hoyland 1934, p.9).

In regards to this statement concerning the "omission" of some materials, and in spite of Mr. Hoyland's excellent intention to donate all proceeds from (as stated in) the book to 'Mr. Gandhi's work for the removal of Untouchability in India,' it was noted in a footnote to the *Ashram Bhajanavali* in the *Collected Works*, that '...in order to make the poems acceptable to English readers Hoyland omitted a great deal, 'chiefly Indian names and symbols,' but also much else so that at places it is difficult to recognize the original in the adaptation' (*CW-e*, 50, #458, p.323, note 1).

1930 to 1942

After being released from prison, 1931 was a year of travelling, to London for the second Round Table Conference, where Gandhi lodged in the London slums, broadcast over the radio to America, travelled to Switzerland, meeting with Romain Rolland, and to Italy, meeting with Mussolini. In 1932, he was arrested in Bombay and imprisoned again in Yeravda Prison. During this stay he conducted his six-day "Epic Fast" against the British move to grant untouchables their own political electorate. 1933 brought several fasts against the institution of untouchability, and involvement with the cause and the plight of the untouchables. In 1934, three attempts were made against Gandhi's life. In 1936, having donated *Sabarmati Ashram* to a center for the upliftment of untouchables, Gandhi established a new ashram near Warda in 1936 (later, in 1940, to be called Sevagram). In 1937, he travelled south to Travancore on a campaign for the removal of oppression against the untouchables. It was on this trip that *Ishopanishad* I.1 became so important to him, and it was added as the first element to the morning and evening prayers.

Satyagraha campaigns and civil non-co-operation continued until 1942, when the Indian Congress finally passed the "Quit India" resolution. This was a national *satyagraha* campaign, and Gandhi was to be its leader. Gandhi's ability to mobilize the "common people" and the younger people of India had changed the Indian Nation Congress from a body of elitists, concentrated in the larger cities, into a political body of 15 million that reached out across India into all smaller, local venues -- into the 900,000 towns and villages of the nation's poor and disenfranchised.

The sung-prayers, known at one time only to ashramites, had continued to be sung twice-daily, and to be used during dangerous times of fasting and marching. "Ever since the Ashram was founded, not a single day has passed to my knowledge without this worship" (Jack, p.36) of sung-prayers. The *Ashram Bhajanavali*

continued to support Gandhi and his training of *svaraj* as the movement burgeoned into a national initiative.

1942 to 1947

In 1942, Gandhi wrote:

'The Ashram prayer has become very popular. Its development has been spontaneous. The *Ashram Bhajnavali* (Hymn Book) has gone into several editions and is increasingly in demand. The birth and growth of this prayer has not been artificial. There is a history attached to almost every *shloka* and every selected *bhajan*. The *Bhajnavali* contains among others *bhajans* from Muslim Sufis and Fakirs, from Guru Nanak, and from the Christian Hymnary. Every religion seems to have found a natural setting in the prayer book' (*CW-e*, 81, #742, p.487, The Ashram Prayer, Sevagram, Feb. 2, 1942). (emphasis added)

Directly after the Quit India movement was launched, Gandhi and many Congress leaders were arrested. There were protests and *satyagraha* campaigns all throughout the country. Gandhi began a correspondence with the Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, and on February 10, 1944, he started a 21-day fast to end stalled negotiations between the Viceroy and Indian leaders. Kasturbai, Gandhi's wife, died while in prison, as did Mahadev Desai, Gandhi's private secretary. With Gandhi's own health declining, he was finally released in 1944, and conducted significant negotiations with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League concerning Muslim-Hindu unity.

His final years were devoted to solving Muslim-Hindu violence. In November 1946, he took a four-month tour through East Bengal to attempt to lessen the rioting there. In 1947, he toured Bihar to quell Hindu-Muslim tensions there. He participated in talks with the Viceroy and Jinnah regarding the division of Pakistan and India. He fasted to quiet riots in Calcutta; he visited Delhi to stop the rioting between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs.

The last three to four years of his life were devoted to communal unity, and in every village and town, every city he visited, he chanted morning and evening prayers from the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. He explained to crowd after crowd (some times as many as one hundred thousand people) what were in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* prayers, and he encouraged everyone to take up the daily ritual of these prayers and continue chanting them even after he had left their area.

In the *Collected Works*, an entry can be found from 9 December 1945 which reported the events of a prayer meeting at Sodepur in western Bengal which had been held that day. After thanking the congregation for their prayerful attitude and their punctuality in commencing on time, Gandhi explained to the crowd what the individual sung-prayer units had been: a Buddhist mantra, followed by a Sanskrit *shloka* to Mother Earth, a prayer from the *Qur'an*, a verse from the *Zend-Avesta*, and finally a *bhajan*. Gandhi explained that the *bhajan* selection could change depending upon time and circumstance, and as they were in Bengal, Bengali songs had been included in the sung-prayers. Further, the article reported on Gandhi's stated "desire to get all the prayers included in a booklet with their meanings given in Hindustani. He wished it to be printed both in Devanagari and Urdu scripts and, if possible, in Bengali, too" (CW-e, 89, #28, pp.15-16).

He often spoke to the current conflicts using anecdotes and verses from the *Ashram Bhajanavali* to teach right conduct and to bolster non-violence. Using quotations for the Upanishads, from Guru Nanak, Mirabai, and Kabir, etc., he sought to teach non-violence. See Chapter Four for a fuller explication of these practices.

1947

In 1947, a revision of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* was published. This was the fullest compilation yet (as seen from the verses just mentioned above). About one year before he was killed, Gandhi himself wrote the preface to this edition,

apologizing for his short-comings as compared to Narayan Moreshwar Khare, who would have normally compiled the edition, but who had died in 1938. This edition had been expanded from the time of 1930, with more scriptures, and verses from other religions, having been added to the morning and evening prayers. As Gandhi wrote, the growth of the *Bhajanavali* had not been a calculated one, but a very organic process, with 'a history [story] attached to almost every *shloka* and every selected *bhajan*' (*CW-e*, 81, #742, p.487).

It is to this 1947 edition that we will give the most attention here. Although every verse can not be translated as part of this work, chosen selections will hopefully give the reader an idea of the contents of the edition, along with the stories concerning how each of the additions came to be added. Please see Appendix A for a listing of all the singer-saints identified, as well as a presentation of the 1947 publication's contents as compared to the contents of Gandhi's 1930 English translations found in the *Collected Works*. The two collections differ in certain respects, such as size, selections chosen, as well as the selections' numberings and pagination. The transliterations presented here from the 1947 edition are mine; the translations of these selections have been made by M.K. Gandhi himself, as found in the *Collected Works*.

ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI (1947) - DESCRIPTION OF CONTENTS

Preface

The preface to the 1947 edition was written on Feb. 8, 1947, by Mohandas Gandhi himself:

'It is with sadness that I write this preface to the new edition of *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Its compiler was the late Shri Khare Shastri (Note 1 = Narayan Moreshwar Khare, who died on February 6, 1938). I do not feel myself equal to the task. But this much I can say that the primary aim of the collection was to sustain right conduct. Let it also be remembered that it has brought together a group of people who for years have been reciting these hymns with great devotion. And, thirdly, it has not restricted

itself to any particular sect or religion. Gems available from all places have been collected. Therefore many Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others, recite from it with pleasure and derive whatever moral sustenance they can.

Shri Kishorelal Mashruwala [essayist and close associate of Gandhi who lived at Sevagram] has taken great pains to translate the Sanskrit verses.' (emphasis added)

Prasadpur, February 8, 1947

M.K. GANDHI
(CW-e, 93, #536, p.382)

For the sake of space and efficiency, when quoting a verse from the *Ashram Bhajanavali* digital version (CW-e) from Volume 50, we will dispense with using #458, (which is the number of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* within Volume 50, CW-e). We will, however, note first the page number of the piece and second the number of the piece on that page. All other references will include the number of the piece within its given volume.

Nityapatha

The first verse set forth in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* is entitled the "*Nityapatha*" [*nitya* in Sanskrit means always, eternal; *patha* means recitation], as it was intended to be sung at the beginning of every prayer meeting, regardless of whether it was morning or evening prayer. Prefaced in the published edition by the invocation "*Hari OM*" [honor to the God Hari], the *Nityapatha* consists of the opening verse of the *Isha Upanishad*, I.1:

'*Īśāvāsyam idam sarvam
yat kiñca jagatyām jagat
tena tyaktena bhuñjiithā(:)
mā ḡrdhaḥ kasyasvid dhanam*' (*Ashram Bhajanavali* (hereafter *A.Bhaj.*),
p.2.

'God the Creator and Ruler pervades every atom, ever so tiny, in the universe, and therefore seeing that it is all God's and God pervades everything, we have to surrender everything and renounce everything in His favour and eat or enjoy or use just what His gives from day to day. The verse closes by saying: 'Do not covet anybody's riches' (MKG's translations, CW-e, 70, p.345, #357, 1937).

It, however, had not always been the first verse sung at the morning prayers. This verse was originally added as the first element to the sung-prayers during the Harijan (untouchable) tour through Travancore that took place from January 12 though 21, 1937.

'The *Ishavasya* gripped me during my Harijan tour of Travancore. All my speeches invariably included the first verse of this Upanishad: 'All that is pervaded by God. It all belongs to Him, therefore nothing belongs to you. But in a way it is yours too. But why get caught up in the argument? Renounce all, and all is yours. Nothing will remain in your hands if you regard anything as yours.' This was the note with which I concluded my Travancore tour and I felt that I had come by a treasure' (CW-e, 85, p.277, #449, Jan. 10, 1945).

Gandhi held this verse to be of the utmost importance to his religious understanding and he has been quoted as regarding this verse as the highest summation of all spiritual truth. 'I consider [this verse] to be the bedrock of Hinduism without which Hinduism is nothing and with which Hinduism need not be anything else. ...There is nothing so satisfying and beautiful in all the scriptures of the world as this *mantra* and it enunciates a universal truth applicable to all' (CW-e, 70, p.346, #357, January, 1937).

Pratah Smaranam (Morning Prayers)

Next follow three verses by *Adi Shankaracarya*, all of which speak of praise offered to the Infinite in the time of the early morning dawn, *pratah*.

*'prātaḥ smarāmi hṛdi saṃsphurad ātma-tattvam
sat-cit-sukham paramahaṃsa-gatim turiyam
yat svapna-jāgara-suṣuptam avaiti nityam
tad brahma niṣkalam aham na ca bhūta-saṅghaḥ'* (A.Bhaj., p.2, #1)

'Early in the morning I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge) and *sukham*

(bliss), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculat Brahma which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements -- earth, water, space, light and air' (*CW-e, 50, p.323, #1*).

*'prātar bhajāmi manaso vacasām agamyam
vāco vibhānti nikhilā yad anugraheṇa
yan 'neti neti' vacanair nigamā avocus
tam deva-devam ajam acyutam āhur agryam'* (*A.Bhaj., p.4 #2*).

'In the early morning, I worship Him who is beyond the reach of thought and speech and yet by whose grace all spech is possible. I worship Him whom the Vedas describe as *neti neti* (not this, not this). Him they, the sages, have called God of gods, the unborn, the unfallen, the sourse of all' (*CW-e, 50, p.323, #2*).

*'prātar namāmi tamasaḥ param arka-varṇam
pūrṇam sanātana-padam puruṣottamākhyam
yasmin idam jagad aśeṣam aśeṣa-mūrtau
rajjvām bhujāṅgama iva pratibhāsitam vai'* (*A.Bhaj., p.4, #3*).

'In the early morning I bow to Him who is beyond darkness, who is like the sun, who is perfect, ancient, called Purushottama, (the best among men) and in whom (through the veil of darkness) we fancy the whole universe as appearing even as (in darkness) we image a rope to be a snake' (*CW-e, 50, p.324, #3*).

Although the translating of the collection was finished December 15, 1930, Gandhi sent a correction of the first verse to Mirabehn on December 20, 1930:

'I am sorry that the very first verse needed correcting. The more I think, the more clearly I see the meaning. ... I perceived that it was the very best thought with which to commence the day. It is a solemn declaration that we are not the changeful bodies which require sleep, etc., but deep down, we are the Being, the witness pervading the countless bodies. The first part is the recalling to mind the presence of the vital principle and the second part is the affirmation that we are that vital principle. The description of that Being, the Brahman, is also quite apposite. It *is*, nothing else *is (sat)*, it is all knowledge or light

(*chit*), and naturally, therefore, it is all bliss (*sukham*) or the word generally used is *anand*. The rest is simple' (*CW-e*, 50, #476, p.419, Letter to Mirabehn, Dec. 20, 1930).

A couple years later, Gandhi expressed reservations about the first verse of the morning, but on considering things more deeply, felt it was the appropriate prayer with which to begin the day as a *satyagrahi*.

'Our reason certainly tells us that we are not this physical body, but are the witness who dwells in it. The stanza describes this witness, and then the seeker asserts that he is that witness -- the Brahman. ... By so doing, one becomes that on which one daily meditates. We may, therefore, daily recite that stanza with humility and firm aspiration and keep in mind our assertion in all our actions' (*CW-e*, 56, #158, p.129).

These three chants, sung in alignment with the rising of the sun and the breaking of the dawn were, for years (at least until 1937), the opening verses of the *satyagraha* community's morning prayers.

Following these morning verses come several sung-prayers dedicated to a variety of dieties. Over the thirty to forty years that Gandhi's followers sang these prayers, he was continually questioned as to why certain prayers should be included, with the often-stated intention of the questioner having been to exclude certain sung-prayers from the collection. This was especially true for this section of sung-prayers to various dieties, which he defended as being representative of the many and varied religious sects and forms of worship found throughout India.

The section begins with a *prithivi vandana*, a prayer to Mother Earth. (For clarity's sake, titles, such as "*prithivi vandana*," have been added here, whereas the chants printed in the original were not marked with such identifications.)

[*Prithivi Vandana*]

'*samudra-vasane devi parvata-stana-mañḍale*

viṣṇu-patni namas tubhyam pāda-sparśam kṣamasva me' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.4, #4)

O! Goddess Earth with the ocean for thy garment, mountains of
for they breathe, thou consort of Vishnu (the Preserver), I bow to thee;
forgive the touch of my feet.

NOTE: Bowing to the earth, we learn to be humble as the earth
which supports the beings that tread upon it. Earth therefore is rightly
the consort of the Preserver' (CW-e, 50, p.324, #4).

When called upon to defend the inclusion of this song in the collection, Gandhi
stated:

'The Earth bears our burden but does not hurt us;.... According to
modern discoveries, she is hanging in space without support. If she were
to get angry with us and stray ever so slightly from her path, we would
instantly perish. For crores of years, however, the Earth has been
rotating in her orbit and has sustained our life. This is the utmost limit
of humility. We have sprung from this earth and to that shall we return
(CW-e, 53, #87, p.79, July 20, 1931).

Gandhi would also later use this *shloka*, which garnered respect for Mother Earth,
to teach proper hygiene (such as not spitting, and proper toileting procedures) as
well as to propagate certain natural cures (CW-e, 90, #379, p.310, April 24, 1946).

Chants to the goddess *Sarasvati*, goddess of learning, music, and Sanskrit, as
well as to the elephant-god *Ganesha* were also included:

[*Sarasvati Arcana*]

'*Yā kundendu-tuṣāra-hāra-dhavalā*

Yā śubhra-vastrāvṛtā

Yā v nā-varadaṇḍa-maṇḍita-karā

Yā śveta-padmāsanā

Yā brahmā-'cyuta-śaṅkara-prabhṛtibhir devaiḥ sadā-vanditā

Sā mām pātu sarasvatii bhagavatii niḥśeṣa-jāḍyāpahā' (A.Bhaj., p.6, #5).

'May the Goddess Saraswati (of learning), the destroyer
completely of black ignorance, protect me. She who is white as the
mogra flower or the moon and a garland of snow, who has worn
white robes, whose hands are adorned with the beautiful bamboo
of her *veena* (a kind of violin), who is seated on a white lotus and
who is always adored by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and the other gods
(CW-e, 50, p.324, #5).

[*Ganapati Vandana*]

'*vakra-tuṇḍa mahākāya sūrya-koṭi-sama-prabha
nirvighnam kuru me deva śubha-kāryeṣu sarvadā*' (*A.Bhaj.*, p. 6, #6).

'O God with a curved mouth, big body refulgent like ten million
suns, keep me ever free from harm whilst doing beneficent acts.

NOTE: This is addressed to God represented by the mystic letter
'ॐ'. Mark its curved mouth and big body. Its mystic splendor has
been sung by the Upanishads' (*CW-e*, 50, p.324, #6).

When, on one occasion, an ashramite objected to the inclusion of these songs as
representating an out-lived mode of image worship linked to superstitious belief,
and thus inconsistent with "Truth," Gandhi's reply included a defense of India's
historical traditions which had for centuries used various images to portray
particular aspects of deity:

'Sarasvati and Ganesh are not independent entities. They are all
descriptive names of God. Devoted poets have given a local habitation
and a name to His countless attributes. ...The[se] *shlokas* which I have
been reciting every day for the last fifteen years give me peace and
hold good for me. In them I find beauty as well as poetry. Learned
men tell many stories about Sarasvati, Ganesh and the like, which have
their own use' (Jack 1956, p.39).

Gandhi called then for an *ad hoc* committee (the names of whom he did not
mention in the citation) to examine the question of excluding these verses from the
Ashram Bhajanavali. As the collection was inclusive of so many traditions and
religions, the committee decided that "the *shlokas* should remain as they were, for
every possible selection would be viewed with disfavour by someone or other"
(Gandhi 1998, p.39).

The final *shlokas* [verse] of this section might appear to be addressed directly
to anyone who might question whether one prayer or another should be excluded
based upon the superiority of one deity over another. The first chant is devoted to

the *guru* who exists within, yet beyond, the three manifestations of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva:

[*Guru Vandana*]

'*Gurur brahmā gurur viṣṇur gurur devo maheśvaraḥ*
Guruḥ sākṣāt parabrahma tasmai śriigurave namaḥ (A.Bhaj., p.6, #7).

'Guru (teacher) is Brahma, he is Vishnu, he is Mahadev, he is the great *Brahman* itself. I bow to that guru' (CW-e, 50, p.325, #7).

While Gandhi defended the worship of various deities, over the years of questioning, he by-and-large disparaged the practice of devoting one's self to a human teacher who promised complete fulfillment and spiritual enlightenment: 'Such a guru is a rarity, at least nowadays. The best thing is to think of God Himself as one's guru...' (CW-e, 50, p.325, #7, Note).

The next chant is a *Vishnu stuti* [verse] from the Introduction to the *Vishnu Sahasranama* [Thousand Names of Vishnu] (in the *Shanti Parva* of the *Mahabharata*):

[*Vishnu stuti*]

'*śāntākāram bhujaga-śayanam padma-nābham sureśam*
viśvādhāram gagana-sadṛśam megha-varṇam śubhāṅgam
lakṣmii-kāntam kamala-nayanam yogibhir dhyāna-gamyam
vānde viṣṇum bhava-bhaya-haram sarva-lokaika-nātham' (A.Bhaj., p.8, #8).

'I bow to Vishnu, who is peace incarnate, who lies on a snaky bed, from whose navel grows the lotus, who is the supreme lord of gods, who sustains the universe, who is like unto the sky, who has the colour of clouds, whose body is blissful, who is the lord of Lakshmi (goddess of good fortune), who has lotus-like eyes, who is knowable by the yogis through meditation, who dispels the fear of the wheel of birth and death and who is the sole Ruler of all the worlds' (CW-e, 50, p.325, #8).

This is followed by a *Shiva stuti* from the *Shiva-manasa Puja* of *Adi Shankaracarya*:

[*Shiva stuti*]

'kara- caraṇa-kṛtam vāk-kāyajam karmajam vā
śravaṇa-nayanaJam vā mānasam vā 'parādham
vihitam avihitam vā sarvam etat kṣamasva
jaya jaya karuṇābdhe śriimahādeva śambho' (A.Bhaj., p.8, #9).

'Forgive, O merciful and blessed Mahadev [name of Shiva], all those sins of mine, of commission or omission, mental or actual and whether done through the hands or the feet, the speech, the ears or the eyes. Let Thy will be done' (CW-e, 50, pp.325-6, #9).

Following the inclusion of prayers addressed to both Vishnu and Shiva, whose worship has been interpreted as stemming from adversarial traditions, come two *shlokas* that speak of a universal vision for religion. The first is a description of the community's aspiration for freedom from sorrow and suffering for all "breathing beings" or "*praninam*." The second is a prayer that calls for universal well-being and right relationship among all beings, in all times and places.

[Universal Aspiration for Relief from Pain] *Bhagavata* IX.21.12
'na tvaham kāmaye rājyam na svargam nāpunarbhavam
kāmaye duḥkha-taptānām prāṇinām ārti-nāśanam' (A.Bhaj., p.8, #10).

'I desire neither earthly kingdom nor paradise, no, not even release from birth and death. I desire only the release of afflicted life from misery' (CW-e, 50, p.326, #10).

[Universal Well-Being] "The Mangala [Auspicious] Mantra"
'svasti prajābhyaḥ paripālayantām
nyāyena mārgena mahiim mahiisāḥ
go-brāhmanebhyaḥ śubham astu nityam
lokāḥ samastāḥ sukhino bhavantu' (A.Bhaj., p.10, #11).

'Blessed be the people; may the rulers protect their kingdoms by just means, may it be always well with the cow and the Brahman; may

all the peoples be happy.

1 Note by Gandhiji: Cow = agriculture

2 Note by Gandhiji: Brahman = education' (CW-e, 50, p.326, #11).

These two *shlokas*, calling for universal beneficence and active concern in regard to the dissolution of pain and suffering for all, are followed by four verses that could be called "*namaskara mantras*," or verses of honoring. They are four of five verses from the *Brahma Stotram* of the *Mahanirvana Tantra*, and refer to an eternal, *nirguna* (without attributes) Being, Brahman, which exists beyond name and form. The verses encourage the hearer to conceive of this Being as the ultimate, eternal reality, responsible for all means of description, but which, lies ultimately beyond description.

[*Namaskara mantras* 1 through 4]

Namaste sate te jagat-kāraṇāya

Namaste cite sarva-lokāśrayāya

Namo 'dvaita-tattvāya mukti-pradāya

Namo brahmaṇe vyāpine śāśvatāya' (A.Bhaj., p.10, #12).

'I bow to Thee the *sat* (see first verse) the cause of the universe, I bow to Thee the *chit* (1st verse), the refuge of the world, I bow to Thee the one without a second, the giver of salvation, I bow to Thee the Brahman, the all-pervading, the eternal' (CW-e, 50, p.326, #12).

Tvam ekam śaraṇyam tvam ekam vareṇyam

tvam ekam jagat-pālakam sva-prakāśam

Tvam ekam jagat-kartṛ-pāṭṛ-prahartṛ

tvam ekam param niścalam nirvikalpam' (A.Bhaj., p.10, #13).

'Thou are the only refuge, Thou art the only one to be desired, Thou art the sole protector of the universe, Thou art self-revealed, Thou art the sole creator, preserver, and destroyer of the universe, Thou alone art supreme, immovable, unchangeable' (CW-e, 50, p.326, #13).

*'Bhayānām bhayam bhīṣanam bhīṣaṇānām
gatiḥ prāninām pāvanam pāvanānām
mahocāiḥ padānām niyanṭṛ tvam ekam
pareṣām param rakṣaṇam rakṣaṇānām'* (A.Bhaj., p.12, #14).

Of all the fears, Thou art the chief, of all that is terrible Thou art the most terrible, Thou art the motion of all life, Thou art the holy of holies, Thou art the sole regulator of the mightiest places, Thou art the greatest among the great. Thou art the chief among all protections.' (CW-e, 50, p.327, #14).

*'Vayam tvām smarāmo vayam tvām bhajāmo
vayam tvām jagat-sākṣi-rūpam namāmaḥ
sad ekam nidhānam nirālbham iisam
bhavāmbhodhi-potam śaraṇyam vrajāmaḥ'* (A.Bhaj., p.12, #15).

'We think of Thee, we worship Thee, we bow to Thee as the witness of this universe, we seek refuge in Thee the *sat*, our only support, yet Thyself needing none, the ruler, the barque in the midst of this ocean of endless birth and death' (CW-e, 50, p.327, #15).

These four verses close the section of verses designated specifically for Morning Prayer, while other elements found within the compilation would have been used to complete the standard "order-of-service" for the morning sung-prayer meetings.

Ekadasha Vrata (The Eleven Vows)

The next section printed in the *Ashram Bhajana-vali* is entitled *Ekadasha Vrata*, or The Eleven Vows (A.Bhaj.,p,14.). This section was chanted during both Morning and Evening Prayers, and it represented the core values of the *satyagraha* community and the life vows which āshramites had taken and were expected to uphold: *ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacarya, asangraha, sharirashrama, asvada, sarvatra bhayavarjana, sarvadharmasamanatva, svadeshi, and sparshabhavana.*

'In a manner akin to Aristotelian ethics, pursuit of soteriological paths demands steady practice and habituation; again in an Aristotelian vein, such practice revolves around the nurturing of a set

of virtues -- which Gandhi reformulated under the rubric of 'vows' Steadied or braced by the practice of vows, cultivation of freedom emerges as a kind of venture of journey...' (Parel 2000, p.111).

As early as July 1914, Gandhi had written to one of his devotees: 'Remain firm in the vows you have taken. Cling to them like a fanatic. You will then...conquer the world and become master of yourself; you will also achieve India's freedom. In other words, one single key ensures victory of every kind, such is the path we follow. This ancient path is indescribably easy and also difficult' (*CW-e*, 14, p.278-9, #220).

In February of 1915, he wrote: 'Truthfulness, *brahmacharya*, non-violence, non-stealing and non-hoarding, these five rules of life are obligatory on all aspirants. Everyone should be an aspirant. A man's character, therefore, is to be built on the foundation of these disciplines' (*CW-e*, 14, #294, p.355). In March of the same year, he wrote: 'I am absolutely clear in my mind that India's deliverance and ours will be achieved through the observance of these vows' (*CW-e*, 14, #325, p.383). These first five of the eleven vows were essentially the five *yamas* of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutra* (*YS* II:30): *ahimsa* (non-hurtfulness or non-violence); *satya* (truth); *asteya* (non-stealing or non-thieving); *brahmacharya* (acting or moving in *brahman*); and *aparigraha* (non-possessiveness) or, in this case, *asangraha* (non-grasping). Patanjali states that these disciplines (which have to do with the relationships established between the self and the world) are universal. They are 'the great vow, universal, regardless of the circumstances of one's life-state, place or time of birth' (*Yoga-sutra* II:31).

As *ahimsa* and *satya* were the two primary tenets of *satyagraha*, they emphasized the equality of all people (the truth of not harming), regardless of caste distinction. Further, Gandhi requested that the ashramites keep no possessions which might become a source of conflict or theft. He also requested no one to accept payment for any services rendered, as this could be interpreted as stealing

(both of these vows became issues on occasion in the ashram, concerning which Gandhi had to give oral and written correction to the community). Similarly, for Gandhi and his *satyagraha* experiment, *brahmacarya* meant sexual celibacy, with marriage being discouraged, at least during the early years of the ashram community (this also led to a number of conversations, written concerns, and advisements over the years).

The final six vows were connected to those specifically-identified purposes and teachings of the *satyagraha* movement. 'The addition of the six new modern virtues to the five traditional ones was part of Gandhi's innovative strategy' (Parel 2000, p.17). *Sharirashrama* referred to body-labor, or using the body to perform what, for some, was considered menial work or manual labor, but which, for Gandhi, was an important part of his campaign to change the economy, allowing Indians to perform any and all self-sustaining work, thereby acquiring a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence. It also included the directive that each individual was to complete those daily tasks, which servants might have performed, for him or herself, as well as participate in the every-day maintenance of the *ashram* facilities. *Asvada* taught detachment from the sense of taste (*svad*), encouraging the use of ingredients that were simple, with no extra spices being added to food, and proportions that were appropriate for one day's consumption, discouraging the intake of more food than what one needed to sustain life (with no intake of meat or alcohol). *Sarvatra bhayavarjana* referred to fearless or the removal of fear wherever the *satyagrahis* went, as well as the freedom to travel everywhere (*sarvatra*) including untouchables' quarters, and even beyond India's borders, without the traditional sanctions applied by some sects within Hinduism which forbade foreign travel. 'A seeker after Truth must give up the fear of parents, caste, Government, robbers, etc., and he must not be frightened by poverty or death' (Jack 1956, p.18). *Sarvadharmasamanatva* was an attestation to the respect given to each and every person's life-path with its particular elements of belief, as all paths

were considered to be equal (*samanatva*). *Svadeshi* means being interested in one's own country, and especially referred to the program of making, buying, and trading items that were made locally, or "in one's own country," such as the manufacture and sale of cotton goods which were hand-made in India. Finally, *sparshabhavana* reminded all listeners that the *satyagraha* community held a strong commitment to the feeling or emotion of "touchability," or, in other words, to the acceptance of all castes as being "touchable" (*sparsha*); no one was considered as un-touchable.

This section is completed with the sentence: *Vinamra vratanishthase ye ekadasha sevya hai* -- "With humility, we are established in the keeping of these eleven vows." So this sentence was, in a way, a re-taking of these community vows and principles with every chanting. 'A vow is a purely religious act which cannot be taken in a fit of passion' (*CW-e*, 17, # 368, p.400). Repeated as a positive statement of belief chanted during each sung-prayer meeting (at least twice a day), this was a reminder to each member of the community as to what the true meaning of *svaraj* was, and a catalyst to each member to continue with humility to incorporate these words into the activities of his or her daily life.

Prayers from the Qur'an

The next section of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* is a group of sacred verses from various religious traditions. It begins with verses from the *Qur'an*. The first is entitled a *panaha* or a refuge, an invocation, and is from the *Qur'anic* Chapter 16, verse 98. The second quotation is *Al Fatiha*, or "The Opening" chapter of the *Qur'an*, which consists of seven verses naming God's attributes and seeking God's help and guidance. The third quotation consists of the four *Qur'anic* verses of Chapter 112 "The Purity," which emphasize Allah's being One God.

[Invocation for Refuge] (*Qur'an* 16:98 - *An-Nahl* / The Bee)

'aAAoothu biAllahi mina alshshaytani alrrajeemi' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.14)

'Take refuge in Allah from Satan the accursed' (CW-e, 81, p.488, #742, MKG's translations).

Al Fatiha (Qur'ān I:1-7 - The Opening)

*'Bismi Allāhi alrrahmāni alrraheemi
Alḥamdu lilāhi rabbi alAAalameena
Alrrahmāni alrraheemi
Maliki yaumi alddeeni
Iyyaka naAAudu waiyyaka nastaAAyeenu
Ihdina alssirata almustaqeema
Sirata allatheena anAAamta AAalayhim
Ghari almaghdoobi AAalayhim walā alddalleena ammeen'* (A.Bhaj., p.16)

'Praise be to God,
The Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds,
Most Gracious, most Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgment,
Thee do we worship
And Thine aid we seek.
Show us the straight way,
The way of those on whom
Thou has bestowed Thy Grace,
Those whose (portion) is not wrath
And who go not astray' (CW-e, 81, p.488, #742).

Al Ikhlas (Qur'an 112:1-4 - The Purity)

*'Bismi Allāhi alrrahmāni alrraheemi
Qul huwa Allāhu aḥadun
Allāhu alssamadu
Lam yalid walam yooladu
Walam yakun lahu kufuwan aḥadun'* (A.Bhaj., p.18)

'Say: He is God, the one and only
God, the Eternal, Absolute,
He begetteth not nor is He begotten,
And there is none like unto Him' (CW-e, 81, p.488, #742).

The verses from the *Qur'an* were chosen by Raihana Tyabji, a devout Muslim and the daughter of Congress leader Abbas Tyabji. Her family was close to Gandhi and she visited the *Sevagram Ashram* on occasion:

'She used to sing daily as well as recite beautiful verses from the Koran. I asked her to teach some verses to any of the inmates who could learn them, and she gladly did so. Like so many who come here she had become one of us. ... I am confident that my Hinduism and that of the other Ashram Hindus has grown thereby. There should be in us an equal reverence for all religions' (*CW-e*, 81, #742, p.488).

In the last two or three years of Gandhi's life, when the open public prayer meetings were attended by thousands of people, the inclusion of these Muslim prayers became an on-going source of friction, being objected to by some Hindu participants. However, Gandhi insisted that they remain and be sung during the prayer meetings, asking those who objected to either leave or remain silent during the chanting of the *Qur'an* prayers. "Gandhi made a further recommendation on many an occasion, that the participant who had reservations should offer the prayer that each be granted the light needed by him or her, for human needs were various, even though human beings belonged to the same species" (Chatterjee 2005, pp.136-37). The inclusion of these prayers in the prayer meetings was considered by Gandhi to be an open sign of active solidarity with the Muslim communities.

Following the verses from the *Qur'an* is a piece entitled a "Zoroastrian Gatha." The verse is Yasna 34.15; it is the last verse of a section of verses concerning Zarathushtra's dedication to his mission.

Zarathushtrian Gāthā (*Yasna 34.15*)

*'mzdā at moi vahishtā
 srvashcā shyaothanācā vaocā
 tātū vohu manangha
 ashācā ishudem stūto
 kshamākā kshrathrā ahūrā ferashem
 vasnā haithyem da ahūm'* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.20)

'Hence, O Mazda, declare to me the noblest doctrines and finest acts by which I may, in truth, fulfil my earnest desire for Thy praise, achieving it through the Good Mind and the Divine Law. O living God, through Thy Power and at Thy Will, clothe us with the true and regenerated life of the spirit' (Bode and Nanavutty 1952, p.70).

The Zoroastrian verse was added to the *ashram's* sung-prayer repertoire after *Zend Avesta* verses had been chanted by Dr. M.D.D. Gilder, a Parsi (who had been Minister of Health and Excise in the Government of Bombay from 1937 to 1939), when Gandhi broke his 21-day fast in March of 1943. Dr. Gilder also chanted Zoroastrian verses during the funeral services for Gandhi's wife, Kasturbai, in February of 1944 at Aga Khan's Palace, where she, Gandhi, and Dr. Gilder were all imprisoned at the time of her death (Jack 1956, p.415).

The section of chants from various world religions is concluded with a "Buddhist *Mantra*," a chant utilized by Nichiren Buddhists and considered by many to be the highest summation of the Buddha's teaching.

Buddhist *Mantra*

'*nam myoho renge kyo*' (A.Bhaj., p.20)

'I submit myself to the Hokekyo Sutra --
(-- the so-called Lotus Sutra of the Nichiren sect of Buddhism' (Jack 1956, p.507, note 8).

This chant was introduced to the *satyagraha* community in 1935 or 1936 by monk, Sadhu Keshav (or Rev. G. Haishao), who had come from his Buddhist community in Japan to live with Gandhi. At a prayer meeting in Srirampur,

'Gandhiji explained the meaning of the first *mantra* recited in the Ashram prayers: Namyo Horenge Kyo. Its purport is, "Salutation to the Enlightened Ones." [The monk] had come to India with the

object of mastering the secrets of the religion which had its origin in India. The monk had a sweet nature and [e]very morning he used to walk around the Ashram grounds for full one hour, while beating upon a drum and reciting the above *mantra* in a deep musical voice which sent a thrill into all those who heard him. He used to recite it at the prayer meeting' (CW-e, 93, #106, p.82).

Sadhu Keshav remained with Gandhi for several years, until he was arrested due to the outbreak of World War II and taken from the *ashram* in 1942. Gandhi reported:

'He took leave of me after reciting his favourite *mantra* and left his drum with me. ... Since then, in spite of his absence, our morning and evening worship has commenced with the *mantra*. For me it is a constant reminder of Sadhu Keshav's purity and single-eyed devotion. Indeed its efficacy lies in that sacred memory' (CW-e, 81, #742, p.487).

Sayankalaki Prathana (Evening Prayers)

Subsequent to the prayers chanted in various religions (represented by Islam, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism) is a major section of the *Ashram Bhajanāvali* entitled "Prayers for Evening Time." This sections does not begin with the above-mentioned Buddhist chant, as the practice of using that chant to begin evening prayer (just mentioned above) was relatively late in the history of the *Ashram Bhajanāvali*. Evening prayer began for years with the chanting of this Sanskrit hymn from the *Bhagavata Purana* 12.13.1.

'yam brahmā-varuṇendra-rudra-marutaḥ stuvanti divyaiḥ stavair
vedaiḥ sāṅga-pada-kramopaniṣadair gāyanti yam sāmagaḥ
dhyānāvasthita-tad-gatena manasā pashyanti yam yogino
yasyāntam na viduḥ surāsuragaṇā devāya tasmai namaḥ'
(A.Bhaj., p22).

'I bow to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra and the Maruts adore with divine hymns, of whom the Vedic singers sing in the Vedas with the *angas*, the *padas*, the *kramas*, and the Upanishads, whom the yogis see in their meditations with minds fixed on Him and whose end the *devas* and the *asuras* do not see'(CW-e, 50, p.336, #52).

This is followed then by the last nineteen verses of Chapter 2 of the *Bhagavad Gita* (vss. 54-72), which describe in detail the attributes of a person solidly grounded in insight or wisdom (*sthita-prajna*). These verses have often been referred to as Gandhi's favorite lines of the *Gita*, and while he quoted widely and often from various sections of *Gita* when speaking or writing advice, it was this section that was determined for the *satyagrahis* (or anyone in attendance) to hear each night during the evening prayers. To provide further insight into the content of Gandhi's evening prayers, as well as provide a reminder of which out of hundreds of *Gita* verses could have been chosen, a few verses are included here: Translation -- and comments below

'*Arjuna uvāca*: Arjuna said:

- (54) *sthitaprajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhisthasya keśava
sthitadhīḥ kim prabhāṣeta kim āsiita vrajeta kim* (A.Bhaj., p.22, #1).

'What, O Keshava [Fine-Haired One, a name for Krishna], is the mark of the man whose understanding is secure, whose mind is fixed in concentration? How does he talk? How move?'

(CW-e, 46, p.178, #154).

'Śr Bhagavān uvāca: The Lord said:

- (55) '*prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān
ātmanyevātamanā tuṣṭaḥ sthitaprajñastadocyate*' (A.Bhaj., p.22, #2).

'When a man puts away, O Partha [son of Pṛthā (Kunt), a name of Arjuna], all the cravings that arise in the mind and finds comfort for himself only from atman, then he is called the man of secure understanding' (CW-e, 46, p.178, #154).

- (66) '*nāsti buddhir ayuktasya na cāyuktasya bhāvanā
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham*' (A.Bhaj., p. 28, #13).

'The undisciplined man has neither understanding nor devotion;

for him who has no devotion there is no peace, and for him who has no peace, whence happiness?' (*CW-e*, 46, p.179. #154).

(71) '*vihāya kāmān yaḥ sarvān pumāñścarati niḥsprhaḥ
nirmamo nirahañkāraḥ sa śāntim adhigacchati*' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.30, #18).

'The man who sheds all longing and moves without concern, free from the sense of 'I' and 'Mine' - he attains peace' (*CW-e*, 46, p.179, #154).

(72) '*eṣā brāhmī stitiḥ pārtha nainām prāpya vimuhyati
stitvā 'syām antakāle 'pi brahma-nirvāṇam ṛcchati*' (*A.Bhaj.*, p. 30, #19).

'This is the state, O Partha, of the man who rests in Brahman, having attained to it, he is not deluded. He who abides in this state even at the hour of death passes into oneness with Brahman' (*CW-e* 46, p.179, #154).

These verses presented here are five of the 19 *Gita* verses that were a fixed part of the *ashram* worship services, chanted regularly at each evening sung-prayer meeting. However, they are indicative of the kind of verse that Gandhi chose to use for training his followers in self-control and *svaraj*, that individual freedom which could only truly lead to national freedom and control.

Vidya-Mandiraki Prarthana (School Prayers)

While the *Satyagraha Ashram* was being formed as an experiment in truth and non-violence, experiments were also being conducted in regards to education. Nationally, many Indian children had ceased attending British schools to attend locally-taught Indian schools. After several periods of trial-and-error, a school was also established for the children of the *Satyagraha Ashram*. Writing in 1932, some time later, Gandhi summarized those elements of education which he held to be most important (Gandhi 1998, pp.69-71). These included: 1) boys and girls, being educated together until they were eight years of age, should both learn reading and

then writing; processes of learning should be playful with subjects being fully explained as taught, and not forced on the children; children should learn Hindi-Urdu as the national language; the Hindu children should also learn Sanskrit, while the Muslim children should also learn Arabic; 2) in a second stage of education (ages 9 to 16), the children should be taught geography, world history, astronomy, botany, arithmetic, algebra, and geometry; every child, boy or girl, should be taught to cook and to sew; children should also work during this period at a craft or labor that would support the āshram financially; boys should be taught their parents' vocations so as to be able to continue a family trade if possible; and 3) in the final stage (ages 16 to 25), children should continue their education according to their wishes and identified aptitudes. Five prayers are included under the heading *Vidya-Mandiraki Prarthana* (School Prayers).

The first, often referred to as the "Teacher-Student" Prayer is from the *Taittiriya Upanishad*, appearing at 2.1.1 and 3.5.1:

'OM *saha nāvavatu*
saha nau bhunaktu
saha viiryam karavāvahai
tejasvi nāvadhītam astu
mā vidviṣāvahai
 OM *śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ*' (A.Bhaj., p.32).

'Om! may God protect us, may He support us, may we make joint progress, may our studies be fruitful, may we never harbour ill will against one another. Om *shanti, shanti, shanti*' (CW-e, 50, p.337, #53).

The second is *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* verse 1.3.28:

'OM *asato mā sad gamaya*
tamaso mā jyotir gamaya
mṛtyor mā 'mṛtam gamaya' (A.Bhaj., p.32).

'Om! From untruth lead me unto truth, from darkness lead me unto light, from death lead me unto life everlasting' (CW-e, 50, p.337, #54).

The third prayer speaks of God as the energy that enlivens a "sleeping voice" and enervates all the human spheres of acting, walking, hearing, and breathing. It is from the *Shrimad Bhagavatam*, verse 4.9.6, when Dhruva (a young prince devoted to Vishnu) has just been exalted by a visionary experience of the divine Narayana. The examples of Dhruva were often recounted to children as examples of faithfulness, dedication, fortitude, and bravery.

*'yo'ntaḥ praviśya mama vācam imām prasuptām
sañjivayatakhila-śākti-dharaḥ svadhamnā
anyāśca hasta-caraṇa-śravaṇa-tvagādiin
prāṇān namo bhagavate puruṣāya tubhyam'* (A.Bhaj., #32).

'I bow to thee, O God, who being almighty and have entered my heart, give by His power life to the silent tongue, the hands, feet, ears, skin and other members of the body' (CW-e, 50, p.327, #55).

The fourth prayer considers of what true value and real wealth consist, and a note from Gandhi concerning its importance to the *ashram* community indicates that, over time, this prayer also took an exalted position of being chanted last during the later morning prayer meetings: 'Realising our littleness during this time span of life, we close every morning prayer with the recitation of this verse' (Gandhi 1999, p.34):

*'vipado naiva vipadaḥ sampado naiva sampadaḥ
vipad vismaraṇam viṣṇoḥ sampan nārāyaṇasmṛtiḥ'* (A.Bhaj., 32)

'That which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think of Him is prosperity' (CW-e, 50, p.327, #16).

Likewise, the final chant of this section, which speaks of honoring the truly-divine found in any religious tradition, is a clear statement of *sarvadharmi-samanatva* and a core value of the *ashram* community.

'viṣṇur vā tripurāntako bhavatu vā brahmā surendro'tha vā
bhānur vā śaśa lakṣaṇo'tha bhagavān buddho'tha siddho'tha vā
rāga-dveṣa-viṣārti-moha-rahitaḥ sattvānukampodyato
yaḥ sarveḥ saha samskr̥to guṇaguṇais tasmai namaḥ sarvadā' (A.Bhaj., p.34).

'Let him be whosoever he may be whether Vishnu or Mahadev, Brahma or Indra, Sun or Moon, Lord Buddha or Mahavir, obeisance be ever only to him who is free from the poisonous effect of desire and anger, who is filled with compassion for all life and who is purified by a perfectly virtuous life' (CW-e, 50, p.327, #17).

Strivargaki Prartana (Women's Class Prayers)

Experiments were also conducted in regards to adult education in the midst of *ashram* activities and programs. Again, after some trial-and-error, the *ashram* settled into a routine, which included a prayer class for women. The Women's Prayer Class, as printed in a copy of the "Daily Routine," was scheduled to be held at 6:30 to 7:00 in the morning, following Morning Prayers and breakfast, although a note attached alludes to the fact that the routine could be changed when necessary (Gandhi 1998, p.27). The Sanskrit verses for the Women's Class included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* start with three verses that embody Queen Draupadi's call for help to Krishna as Emancipator when she was about to be disgraced by the Kauravas. Krishna came to her aid, providing an endless *sari*.

'Govinda Dvārikāvāsin Kṛṣṇa Gopījanapriya
Kauraveḥ paribhūtām mām kim na jānāsi Keśava' (A.Bhaj., p.36, #1.)

'O Govind, dweller of Dwarika [city of Krishna], Krishna, Thou beloved of the Gopis, O Keshav, dost Thou not know that the Kauravas have surrounded me?' (CW-e, 50, p.337, #56A).

*'He Nātha He Rāmānātha Vrajanāthārtināśana
Kauravārṇava-magnām mām uddharasva Janārdana'* (A.Bhaj., p.36, #2).

O Lord, Thou Lord of Lakshmi, protector of Vraja [the land of Krishna], deliverer from affliction, O Janardana [name of Vishnu], save me [from] the ocean of misery in the shape of the Kauravas' (CW-e, 50, p.337, #56B).

*Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Mahāyogin Viśvātman Viśvabhāvana
prapannām pāhi Govinda Kurumadhye 'vasiidatiim'* (A.Bhaj., p. 36, #3).

O Krishna, Thou great Yogi, soul and Protector of the universe, O Govind, deliver me lying hopeless in the midst of the Kauravas and seeking thy support' (CW-e, 50, p.337, #56C).

These verses are followed by seven short summations concerning ethical behavior, pithy statements of proper conduct which would be fitting for a woman *satyagrahi*. Gandhi, on many occasions, encouraged not only the women of the ashram, but the women of India, to set examples for the country, through new initiatives of participation in public activities that ranged from speaking for women's equality and marching in the *satyagraha* protests, to teaching children proper conduct, to public campaigns that were carried out door-to-door to disparage the use of alcohol and the wearing of foreign-made clothes.

'Ramarajya can come about only when there is likelihood of a Sita arising....We never say Rama-Sita but Sita-Rama, not Krishna-Radha, but Radha-Krishna. ...The reason why we think of Sita's name first is that, without virtuous women, there can be no virtuous men. ...as long as the women of India do not take part in public life, there can be no salvation for the country. As long as women...do not come into public life and purify it, we are not likely to attain *Ramarajya* or swaraj.

Even if we did, I would have no use for that kind of swaraj to which such women have not made their full contribution' (*CW-e*, 30, #57, p.108 - Speech at Women's Conference, Sojitra, Jan. 16,1925).

Women were, in many ways, the foundation of Gandhi's movement, and they were encouraged to be so.

*'dharmam carata, mā 'dharmam; satyam vadata, nānṛtam
diirgham paśyata, mā hrsvam; param paśyata, mā'param'* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.36, #4).

'Act righteously, never unrighteously; speak truth, never untruth;
look far ahead, never shortsightedly; look above; never below'
(*CW-e*, 50, p.338, #57).

*ahimsā satyam asteyam sāucam indriya-nigraha:
etam sāmāsikam dharmam cāturvarṇye 'braviin manuḥ* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.36, #5).

Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, purity, and self-control, these, said Manu,
are the common duty of all the four divisions (*CW-e*, 50, p.338, #58).

*'ahimsā satyam asteyam akāma-krodha-lobhatā
bhūta-priya-hitehā ca dharmo'yam sārva varṇikah'* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.38, #6).

'Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, freedom from passion, anger, and greed
wishing the well-being and good of all that lives is the duty common
to all the divisions' (*CW-e*, 50, p.338, #59).

*'vidvadbhiḥ sevitaḥ sadbhir nityam adveṣa-rāgibhiḥ
hṛdayenābhyanujñāto yo dharmas tam nibhodhata* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.38, #7).

'Understand that to be religion [*sic*] which the wise, the good
and those that are free from likes and dislikes follow and
which is felt in the heart' (*CW-e*, 50, p.338, #60).

*'śrūyatām dharmasarvasvam, śrutvā cāuvāvadhāryatām
ātmanaḥ pratikulāni pareṣām na samācaret'* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.38, #8).

'Listen to the essence of religion and assimilate it through the heart: one should never do to others which one would not wish done to oneself' (CW-e, 50, p.338, #61A).

*'ślokārdhena pravakṣayāmi yaduktam granthakoṭibhiḥ
paropakāraḥ puṇyāya pāpāya parapiḍanam'* (A.Bhaj., p.38, #9).

'That which has been said in countless books I shall say in half a verse: service of others is virtue, injury to others is sin' (CW-e, 50, p.338, #61B).

*'āditya-candravanilo'nalaśca
dyaur bhūmir āpo hṛdayam yamaśca
ahaśca rātirśca ubhe ca sandhye
dharmo'pi jānāti narasya vṛttam'* (A.Bhaj., p.38, #10).

'The sun, the moon, the wind, the fire, the sky, the earth, the waters, the heart, the god of judgment, the day, the night, the evening, the morning and dharma itself are witnesses to man's actions, i.e., he can conceal nothing' (CW-e, 50, p.339, #62).

The fourth verse of these seven is referred to by Gandhi as having come from an unidentified book by Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruva (a Sanskrit scholar and man of letters): " I have taken as my guide [for the judgment about goodness or badness] the *śloka* cited by Anandshankarbhai in his book.... I do not even know from where he has quoted the *śloka*. It appealed to me instantly and sank into my heart, and I, therefore, got it included in the women's prayer" (CW-e, 87, #567, p. 335).

The final verse of the Women's Class Prayers is another prayer chanted to Krishna, this time in the form of World-Teacher, who is able to inspire those who formerly could neither walk nor talk. However, with Krishna's help, they are able to transcend seemingly impossible difficulties, and to find their voices, with which to speak out.

'*mukam karoti vācālam, paṅgum laṅghayate girim
yatkrpā tam aham devam Kṛṣṇam vande jagadgurum*' (A.Bhaji., p.38, #11).

'I honor that God Krishna, World-Teacher, by whose grace the lame can cross mountains and the silent can form speech' (Not in CW-e; my translation).

The prayer, through identification, is an appropriate one, encouraging the women of *satyagraha* to speak out and to be active.

The final section of the compilation of Sanskrit *shlokas* found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* reflects the practice of concluding the Evening Prayers with "some portion of a sacred book" (Gandhi, 1998, p.38). As the closing reading of "some portion of a sacred book" was a fixed, yet undesignated, portion of the evening service, these readings could always, if need be, serve the purpose of concluding the evening prayer time. These four sections consist of excerpts from the *Upanishads*, the *Pandava Gita*, the *Mukundamala*, and the *Dvadasha-Manjarika Stotram*.

Upanishat-Smaranam (Upanishad Recitation)

While admitting that clear dating is difficult, Olivelle places the *Brihadaranyaka* and *Chandogya* as the two earliest *Upanishads*, likely from the 7th to 6th centuries BCE, the *Taittiriya*, *Aitareya*, and the *Kaushitaki* as being from the 6th to 5th centuries BCE. He dates the *Kena*, *Katha*, *Isha*, *Shvetashvatara*, and *Mundaka* from the last few centuries BCE. Finally, he dates the *Prashna* and *Mandukya* as being from the beginning of the Common Era (Olivelle 1998, pp.12-13). The *Upanishad* section of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* does not include material from the four Vedic *samhitas* (*Rig*, *Sama*, *Yajur*, or *Atharva*). "The oldest Vedic text, the Rig Veda (RV) is composed in archaic, highly stylized poetical Sanskrit" (Witzel 2003, p.69). During Gandhi's era (and continuing even into the present),

there were a number of groups and individuals who were attempting through vehement argument to decipher the earliest of the Vedic Sanskrit, and Gandhi was desirous of remaining clear of the fray.

Gandhi began translating the *Ashram Bhajanavali* in prison (1930), and he continued to study Sanskrit and Sanskrit texts while incarcerated in later times. In a letter to S.D. Satavlekar (a reknown Sanskrit scholar), July 19, 1932, he wrote:

'Now I am reading Swadhaya Samhita by Vaidikmuni Hariprasadj. But I find great difficulty in reading the Vedic hymns. You are acquainted with my knowledge of Sanskrit, it is only of the most elementary order, and as regards Vedic Sanskrit it is almost nil. I know this much, that Vedic hymns have been interpreted in several ways by different scholars -- by Sanatanis in one way, by Arya Samajists in another and by Western scholars in yet another. Even among the Sanatanis I find differences of opinion. All Arya Samajists too are not agreed upon the same meaning. ... Is there any work available from which I may learn the rudiments of Vedic grammar and does a collection exist containing different annotations by various scholars?' (CW-e, 56, #202, pp.217-18, July 19, 1932).

Gandhi had always been assiduously careful not to become embroiled in textual debate with Brahmin priests, and he chose to know for himself what the Vedic texts might say: 'In short, what should a man like myself do when confronted with interpreting correctly the Vedic *mantra*? I have not faith enough in any sect to accept their interpretation as gospel truth' (CW-e, 56, #202, pp.217-18, July 19, 1932). He wrote again to Kaka Kalelkar in 1945:

'We do not wish to enter into controversy over the Vedas. The compositions that are today accepted as the Vedas are full of unresolved doubts. Not all the writings have come down to us. Even from among those which have, no one knows what is genuine and what is not. As regards their interpretation, sheer confusion prevails. Hence the judgment about goodness or badness can come only from a purified conscience' (CW-e, 87, #567, p.334).

Gandhi and Kalelkar were, however, comfortable including some of the works known as *Vedanta* (the end of the *Vedas*), as each of the *Upanishads* was

connected as a continuing ancillary in the traditions of one of the *Samhitas*. "The so-called Middle Up.s (Īśā, Kaṭha, Kena, Praśna, Muṇḍa, Māṇḍukya, Śvetāśvatara, Mahānārāyana, etc., are no longer composed in prose but in verse and are heavily influenced by the post-Vedic (Epic) language" (Witzel 2003, p.86). See Olivelle (1998), page 9 for a chart of "The Upanishads with the Vedic Corpus," along with Witzel (2003), pages 100-01 for "A Synopsis of the Vedic Texts."

Hume has traced the philosophical developments of the *Upanishads*, with their many dialogues and discussions regarding what life is, what the human purpose might be, and above all, what the Ultimate is. Hume remarks that the Upanishads 'are no homogenous products, but that they are compilations from different sources recording the 'guess at truth' of the early Indians...but underlying all their expatiation, apparent inconsistencies, and unordered matter there is a general basis of a developing monism....' (Hume 1995, p.9). He goes on to elucidate that the concept of establishing a universal ground is "the groundwork of the Vedanta," (Hume 1995, p.13). Finally after centuries of wrestling with the conceptions of *Brahman* and *Atman* as world-grounds, "[t]heir essential oneness as aspects of the same great Being was at first only hinted at but [then] later explicitly stated - Reality is One. Diversity and manifoldness are only an appearance" (Hume 1995, p.36).

In spite of the overall stance of Reality being One, there are Upanishads which admit of the *Samkhya*, or dualistic, philosophy. 'Whereas the Advaita [monistic] tradition emphasizes the non-difference (*abheda*) between the self and the absolute, [the dualist] insists on their complete distinction' (Flood 1996, p.5). The majority of the selections in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* are monistic, but Gandhi "flirts" with *Samkhya* philosophy by including the *Katha* quotations. However, those *Upanishads*, the *Maitri*, and the *Shvetashvatara*, that are 'strongly Samkhyan' (Hume 1995, p.9) are not included at all in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

'On this issue, the Indian Vedantic tradition offers a rich profusion of alternative solutions -- ranging from radical monism and non-dualism (*advaita*) over qualified nondualism to radical dualism (*dvaita*). Fully cognizant of this profusion, Gandhi can reasonably be assumed to have adopted a flexible or experimental course...' (Parel 2000, p.110). Gandhi's flexibility in this regard is demonstrated by his own statements: 'I believe in the rock-bottom doctrine of Advaita and my interpretation of Advaita excludes totally any idea of superiority at any state whatsoever. I believe implicitly that all men are born equal' (Parel 2000, p.116, note 11), and, 'I am an Advaitist and yet I can support Dvaitism (dualism)' (*CW*, 64, p.141).

The section of *Upanishad* verses consists of a full ten pages, with each Sanskrit page being faced with a Hindi translation on the opposite page. There are 14 verses from the *Mundakopanishad*, 12 verses from the *Kathopanishad*, two verses each from the *Ishopanishad*, the *Taittiriyaopanishad*, and the *Chandogyopanishad*, one from the *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, and the section ends with one verse from the great epic, the *Mahabharata*. They are presented here in the order in which they appear in the *Bhajanavali*, and the translations are Gandhi's own from the *Collected Works*.

It should come as no surprise that the *Upanishadic* section would begin with the famous verse concerning the light of truth, or *satya*, and be followed by the equally well-known verse concerned with remaining on the right path, the verse which ends the *Ishopanishad*.

***Iśa* 15**

*'hiraṇmayena pātreṇa satyasyāpihitam mukham
tat tvam Pūṣan ! apāvṛṇu satya-dharmāya dr̥ṣṭaye'* (*A.Bhaj.*, p.40, #1).

'The face of truth is covered by a golden lid.
O God, remove it, so that I may see the true light' (*CW-e*, 50,
p.328, #18).

Īśa 18

'agne naya supathā rāye asmān
 viśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān
 yuyodhyasmajjuhurāṇam eno
 bhūyiṣṭhām te nama uktim vidhema' (A.Bhaj., p.40, #2).

'O God, the Knower of all the ways, lead us along the right path so as to enable us to reach the goal; wrestle with our dark sins; we make obeisance to Thee again and again' (CW-e, 50, p.328, #19).

In general, the verses found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* do not reflect the many and long philosophical discussions of the *Upanishads*. They are often common sense advice, must shorter in nature.

Kaṭha 1.2.2

'śreyaśca preyaśca manuṣyam etaḥ
 tau sampriitya vivinakti dhiiraḥ
 śreyo hi dhiiro 'bhipreyaso vṛniite
 preyo mando yogakṣemād vṛniite' (A.Bhaj., p.40, #3)

'Both that which is good and that which is pleasing face man. A wise man will discriminate and will certainly prefer the good to the pleasing whereas the foolish one will prefer the pleasing thinking it to be profitable' (CW-e, 50, p.328, #20).

With the many verses chosen from the *Katha Upanishad*, both the mystical syllable OM is and the possibility of *samkhya* are both touched upon. Out of the four verses during which Death explains to *Naciketas* that OM is "the way," only one verse is included, 1.2.15.

Kaṭha 1.2.15

'sarve vedā yatpadam āmananti
 tapānsi sarvāṇi ca yad vadanti
 yad icchanto brahmacaryam caranti
 tat te padam saṅgrahena braviimi om ityeta' (A.Bhaj., p.42, #4).

'I shall tell thee in one word that state which all the Vedas establish, to which all the austerities are dedicated and desiring which devotees observe *brahmacharya*. It is Om' (CW-e, 50, p.328, #21).

While the next four verses concentrate on the control which reason should exert over the senses, a subject which Gandhi preached about continually, the verses themselves sit in between other material that is *samkhyan* in nature (3:10-13, for instance), although not printed in the *Bhajanavali*. The minute definitions and gradations of philosophy are less important than the actual, concrete control over the senses and their desires. (This theme comes up also during the Evening Prayers in the Gita Chapter II, 54-72).

***Kaṭha* 1.3.3&4**

'ātmānam rathinam viddhi śariiram ratham eva tu

buddhim tu sāritham viddhi mana: pragraham eva ca"

"indriyāṇii hayān āhur viṣayāns teṣu gocarān

ātmendriyamanoyuktam bhoktetyāhur maniiṣiṇaḥ' (A.Bhaj., p.42, #5&6).

'Regard the soul as the warrior, body as his chariot, reason as the charioteer, mind as the reins; they call senses horses, sense-objects meadows; wise men have said that the soul acts through the mind and the senses' (CW-e,50, p.329, #24).

***Kaṭha* 1.3.3.9**

'vijñānasārathir yas tu mana:pragrahavān naraḥ

so'dhvanaḥ pāram āpnoti tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam'(A.Bhaj., p.42, #7).

'He whose reason is like an experienced charioteer and whose mind is under control like the reins crosses over safely and safely comes to the journey's end, the excellent abode of Vishnu' (CW-e, 50, p.330, #25).

***Kaṭha* 1.3.14**

'uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata

kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā

durgam pathas tat kavayo vadanti' (A.Bhaj., p.44, #8).

'Awake, arise, and learn wisdom from the wise. The sages say to traverse this way (through life) is as difficult as it is to walk along the edge of a razor' (CW-e, 50, p.330, #26).

The next four verses are definitely monistic, and they paint the picture of of the same (divine) fire, same (divine) wind, same (divine) sun indwelling every being (*sarva-bhuta*), and the wise man knows that the many are really only One.

Kaṭha 5.9

*'agnir yathaiko bhuvanam praviṣṭo
rūpam rūpam pratirūpo babhuva
ekas tathā sarva-bhūtāntarātmā
rūpam rūpam pratirūpo bahiś ca'* (A.Bhaj., p.44, #9).

'Even as fire though always the same assumes different forms as it passes through different media, so does the indwelling spirit, though essentially always the same, appear different passing through different media' (CW-e, 50, p.330, #27).

Kaṭha 5.10

*'vāyur yathaiko bhuvanam praviṣṭo
rūpam rūpam pratirūpo babhuva
ekas tathā sarva-bhūtāntarātmā
rūpam rūpam pratirūpo bahiś ca'* (A.Bhaj., p.44, #10).

'Even as the air though always the same assumes different forms as it passes through different media so does the indwelling spirit, though essentially always the same, appear different passing through different media' (CW-e, 50, p.330, #28).

Kaṭha 5.11

*'sūryo yathā sarvalokasya cakṣur
na lipyate cākṣuṣair bāhyadoṣaiḥ
ekas tathā sarvabhūtāntarātmā
na lipyate lokaduḥkhena bāhyaḥ'* (A.Bhaj., p.46, #11).

'Even as the sun which gives light to all the eyes remains unaffected by the external defects of these eyes so is the oversoul dwelling in all that lives not affected by the external woes of mankind' (CW-e 50, p.331, #29).

Kaṭha 5.12

*'eko vaṣīi sarvabhūtāntarātmā
 ekam rūpam bahudhā yaḥ karoti
 tam ātmastham ye'nupaśyanti dhiirās
 teṣām sukham śāśvatam netareṣām'* (A.Bhaj., p.46, #12).

'Those wise men alone, not others, attain eternal happiness who feel dwelling in themselves that one all-controlling power which pervades all life and though one appears as many' (CW-e, 50, p.331, #30).

In fact, it is only those who realize the Changeless within the changing who can reach true happiness, and especially those who realize the Changless within themselves.

Kaṭha 5.13

*'nityo'nityānām cetanaś cetanānām
 eko bahunām yo vidadhāti kāmān
 tam ātmastham ye'nupaśyanti dhiirās
 teṣām sāntiḥ śāśvatii netareṣām'* (A.Bhaj., p.46, #13)

'Those wise men alone, not others, attain eternal peace who feel dwelling in themselves that God who is the permanent essence among the impermanent, who is the life in all that lives and who though one fulfills the desires of many' (CW-e, 50, p.331, #31).

Kaṭha 5.15

*'na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra-tārakam
 nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto'yam agniḥ
 tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvam
 tasya bhāsā sarvam idam vibhāti'* (A.Bhaj., p.48, #14).

'The sun does not carry its light there, nor the moon, nor the stars, not even lightning can penetrate there, how then can this fire? All of them derive their light from It and all this (universe) is lighted by Its splendor' (CW-e, 50, p.329, #22).

Probably the most interesting aspect of the *Upanishads* chosen for the *Bhajanavali* is the fact the greatest number of verses from one *Upanishad* were taken from the *Mundaka Upanishad*. "The *Muṇḍaka Upanisad* does not form part

of a larger Vedic text, although tradition ascribes it to the *Atharvaveda*...[it is] a later *Upanisad* [and is] by default ascribed to the *Atharvaveda*... (Olivelle 1998, p.434). It is, in fact, not included in Witzel's "A Synopsis of Vedic Texts" (Witzel 2003, 101). Furthermore, the *Atharvaveda* 'incorporates rituals from healing and magic'(Witzel 2003, p.8), while at the same time 'engag[ing] in a direct and frontal attack against both Vedic ritualism and the Vedic texts that embody the ritual tradition (Olivelle 1998, p.434).

The verses in the *Bhajanavali* do not include spells or magic rituals, but as the terms "*yati*, probably in the sense of ascetic (*MuU* 3.1.5; 3.2.6) and *samnyasa*, in the sense of ascetic renunciation (*MuU* 3.2.6)" appear, Olivelle is of the opinion that this Upanishad was 'composed by and/or intended for...ascetics (Olivelle 1998, p.434). All of Olivelle's citations, which he uses to define the *Mundaka*'s unique character, are included in the printed verses of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

The *Mundaka* "establishes a clear distinction between a lower class of religious documents, the old vedic texts and ancillary literature, and a higher class consisting of texts that teach the imperishable *brahman* and contain the knowledge passed down in a tradition reaching back to *Brahman* (here as God himself). It is this higher knowledge that *MuU* refers to as 'Vedānta' (3.2.6), one of the earliest recorded use [sic]of this significant term (Olivelle 1998, p.434).

Verses 1.2.11-13 are situated within a discussion of the differences between that higher and lower knowledge, and use the common image of the right student who with "due reverence and calm of mind" approaches the truly knowledgeable sage with firewood in hand. The implication of finding a teacher of real truth, versus following the false prophet of an untrustworthy brahminic lineage is quite clear here, and would have been in harmony with Gandhi's teachings regarding *satyagraha*.

Muṇḍaka 1.2.11

'*tapaḥ śraddhe ye hyupavasantyarāṇye
 śāntā vidvāṅso bhaikṣacaryo carantaḥ
 suryadvāreṇa te virajāḥ prayānti
 yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavyayātmā'* (A.Bhaj., p.48, #15).

Those knowing ones who with austerities and faith live the forest life in peace begging for their food becoming sinless enter through the sunny gate that abode where dwells that well-known immortal changeless Being' (CW-e, 50, p.329, #23).

Muṇḍaka 1.2.12

'*par kṣaya lokān karmacitān
 brāhmaṇo nirvedam āyān 'nāstyakṛtaḥ kṛtena'
 tad vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
 samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭam'* (A.Bhaj., p.48, #16).

Having realised (the impermanence of) the status to be obtained by works, a Brahmin should cultivate detachment. Stability cannot come from activity. To know that he should reverently approach a teacher who knows the Vedas and is intent on God' (CW-e, 50, p.331, #32).

Muṇḍaka 1.2.13

'*tasmai sa vidvān upasannāya samyak
 praśānta-cittāya śamānvitāya
 yenākṣaram puruṣam veda satyam
 provāca tām tattvato brahmavidyām* (A.Bhaj., p.50, #17).

'To him thus come with due reverence, calm of mind brought under control the wise teacher imparts divine knowledge whereby one really knows that permanent Being who is truth incarnate' (CW-e, 50, p.332, #33).

Mundaka verses 2.2.3 mark the beginning of the great analogy of OM, and the Bhajanavali verses pick up at 2.2.4:

Muṇḍaka 2.2.4

*'praṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā, brahma tal lakṣyam ucyate
apramattena veddhavyam, śaravat tanmayo bhavet'* (A.Bhaj., p.50, #18).

Pranav (Om) is the bow, the spirit is the arrow and Brahm[an] is the target; therefore one must shoot unerringly so that the spirit becomes one with Brahm[an] like the arrow (with the target)' (CW-e, 50, p.332, #34).

The intervening verses are not included, but in 2.2.8, the heart's knots are broken and all disbelief is vanished.

Muṇḍaka 2.2.8

*bhidyate hṛdayagranthiḥ chidyante sarvasamśayāḥ
kṣiyyante cāsyā karmāṇi tasmin dr̥ṣṭe parāpare* (A.Bhaj., p.50, #19).

'When one realizes Godhead one's heart is rid of difficulties, doubts vanish and works do not bind' (CW-e, 50, p.332, #35).

In this state, it is then realized that Brahman truly is everywhere, and that Reality is One.

Muṇḍaka 2.2.11

*'brahmaivedam amṛtam purastād brahma
paścād brahma dikṣiṇataś cottareṇa
adhaś cordhvam ca prasṛtam brahmaivedam
viśvam idam variṣṭham'* (A.Bhaj., p.50, #20).

'This eternal Brahm[an] is before and behind, is in the right and the left, is below and above, pervades everywhere, is the universe, is above all' (CW-e, 50, p.332, #36).

While *Mundaka 3* begins with the famous image of the two birds sitting on the same tree, this well-known image is ignored for the *Bhajanavali*, and verse 3.1.5 is the first verse to be printed with its emphasis on "truth, *tapas* (austerity), true knowledge and *brahmacharya*.

Muṇḍaka 3.1.5

'satyena labhyas tapasā hyeṣa ātmā
 samyagjñānena brahmacaryeṇa nityam
 antaḥ śar re jyotir-mayo hi śubhro
 yam paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣiṇadoṣāḥ' (A.Bhaj., p.52, #21).

'Self-realization comes always through truth, *tapas* (austerity), true knowledge and *brahmacharya*. Seekers who have become free from sins realize the immaculate refulgent spirit within themselves' (CW-e, 50, p.333, #37).

The first line of verse 3.1.6, *Satyam eva jayate*, will be recognized as the current national motto of India.

Muṇḍaka 3.1.6

'satyam eva jayate nānṛtam
 satyena panthā vitato divayānaḥ
 yenākramanti ṛṣayo hyāptakāmā
 yatra tat satyasya paramam nidhānam' (A. Bhaj., p.52, #22).

'Truth alone triumphs, never untruth. That way which the sages whose purpose is fulfilled traverse, which is the way of the gods and where is the great abode of truth opens (for us) through truth' (CW-e, 50, p.333, #38).

Verses 3.2.3 through 3.2.9 instruct that only *brahman* chooses the student of such a rarified life, and that it is never a result of false teachers. This must be experienced in the heart, and as such, 3.2.5 and 6 teach that those real seers and ascetics, those knowers, who have attained *brahman* will become immortal at the time of death.

Muṇḍaka 3.2.3

nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
 na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
 yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
 tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām (A.Bhaj., p.52, #23).

This spirit is not attainable by the Vedic study or by feats of intellect or by attending discourses. It is attainable only by him who attains it. It reveals itself to such a one' (CW-e, 50, p.333, #39).

Muṇḍaka 3.2.4

'nāyam ātmā balah nena labhyo
na ca pramādāt tapaso vāpyaliṅgāt
etair upāyair yatate yastu vidnāns
tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma' (A.Bhaj., p.52, #24)

This realization is not possible for the weak or the indolent or those who resort to unmeaning austerities. But the soul of the wise man who remedies these defects enters the abode of Brahm[an]' (CW-e, 50, p.333, #40).

Muṇḍaka 3.2.5

'samprāpyainam ṛsayo jñāna-trptāḥ
kṛtātmāno viitarāgāḥ praśāntāḥ
te sarvagam sarvataḥ prāpya dhiirā
yuktātmānaḥ sarvam evāviśānti' (A.Bhaj., p.54, #25).

'The sages having found satisfaction in knowledge, being purified being free from desires, being at peace with themselves and with their souls equipoised, realize the universal spirit and pervade all' (CW, 44, p.396).

Muṇḍaka 3.2.6

'vedānta-vijñāna-suniścitarthāḥ
sanyāsa-yogād yatayaḥ śuddha-sattvāḥ
te brahma-lokeṣu parāntakāle
parāmṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve' (A.Bhaj., p.54, #26).

'All those who have well understood the meaning of life through Vedant and science, whose hearts are purified through sannyasa, being intent on the immortal, on death enter *Brahmaloka* and become free' (CW-e, 50, p.334, #42).

Verse 3.2.8 uses the familiar analogy of the rivers flowing into the ocean to describe the knower, who, beyond name and form, flows into *brahman/purusha*.

Muṇḍaka 3.2.8

"*yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre
astam gacchanti nāmarūpe vihāya
tathā vidnān nāmarūpād vimuktaḥ
parātparam puruṣam upaiti divyam*" (A.Bhaj., p.54, #27).

'Just as rivers rushing towards the sea leave their names and forms and merge in the sea, even so do wise men leave their names and forms and merge in the paramount divine Being'
(CW-e Vol. 50, p.334, #43).

Verse 3.2.9 teaches that the one who enters thus, or who knows *brahman*, becomes *brahman*, becoming immortal.

Muṇḍaka 3.2.9

"*sa yo ha vai tat paramam brahmaveda brahamaiva bhavati
nāsyābrahmavit kule bhavati
tarati śokam tarati pāpmānam
guhāgranthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati*" (A.Bhaj., p.54, #28).

He who knows that great Brahm[an] I becomes it. In his family no one ignorant of Brahm[an] is possible. He passes grief and sin. He becomes free from the bonds of the heart and becomes immortal'
(CW-e, 50, p.334, #44).

The final words of the *Mundaka* original, which refer to "[s]o long as they have duly performed the head-vow [*śirovrata*]" (Olivelle 1998, p.455) are not included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, as this would have indicated participation in and obedience to some particular brahminic lineage, which Gandhi and the *satyagrahis* would not have recognized nor encouraged.

The *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* belongs to an older layer of the Indic texts, and Verse 2.8 constitutes the opening words of a passage describing *ananda*-bliss, described also as "the way a dead person attains *brahman*" (Olivelle 1998, p.289). The entire litany, which follows in the original, which recites the progression of human bliss to the bliss of *brahman*, is not printed in the *Asham*

Bhajanavali. However, verse 2.9 emphasizes that "one who knows the bliss of *brahman* is never afraid" and does not agonize any longer over whether "right" and "wrong" have been committed. Taittiriya verses 2.9 and 2.8 are reversed in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

Taittiriya 2.9

'yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha
 ānandam brahmano vidvān na bibheti kutaścana
 etam hi vāva na tapati 'kim aham sādhu nākaravam
 kim aham pāpam akaravam' iti' (A.Bhaj., p.56, #29)

'He who knows that Brahm[an] which not reaching both speech and mind return, fears nothing. He does not burn thinking, "Why have I not done this good thing? Why have I committed that sin?" (CW-e, 50, p.335, #45).

Taittiriya 2.8

'yuvā syāt sādhu yuvā dyāyakaḥ āśiṣṭhodṛḍhiṣṭho baliṣṭhaḥ
 tasyeyam pṛthivī sarvā vittasya pūrṇa syāt' (A.Bhaj., p.56, #30).

'A young man should have character, should be studious, full of hope, determination and strength. For him all this earth should be full of riches '(CW-e, 50, p. 335, #46).

The *Chandogya* and *Brihadaranyaka Upanishads* are "very composite in character, [including] sayings, philosophic disquisitions", (Hume 1995, p.7), compilations, and collections, etc. Verse 7.8.1 falls roughly one third of the way through a long dialogue between Narada (a divine sage) and Sanatkumara (one of the four sons of Brahma) concerning the perceptions of *brahman*. 7.8.1 accentuates the attribute of strength within the liturgy of perceptual relationships (the rest of which are not printed in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*). Gandhi translates this as "soul-force," the words he often used as the English equivalent for *satyagraha*.

Chāndogya 7.8.1

"balam vāva vijñānād bhūyaḥ
 'api ha śatam vijñānavatām eko balavān ākampayate

sa yadā balii bhavati
athotthāttā bhavati
uttiṣṭhan paricaritā bhavati
paricaran upasattā bhavati
upasiidan dṛṣṭā bhavati
śrotā bhavati
mantā bhavati
boddhā bhavati
kartā bhavati
vijñātā bhavati'

(A.Bhaj., p.56, #31).

'Soul-force is superior even to science, for one man having soul-force will shake one hundred learned men. When one has that force he is ready to go to a teacher, he serves him, then he becomes fit to sit near him, he ponders over what he has heard; he becomes wise, he does his duty, he has experience. The earth keeps its place through that force, the heavens retain their place through it, the mountains, the gods, mankind, the brute creation, birds, grass, plants, game, insects, moths, ants, etc., all life are sustained by that force. Therefore cultivate that force' (CW-e, 50, p.336, #48).

Bṛhadāraṇyaka 6.3.6

'madhuvātā ṛtāyate
madhu kṣaranti sindhavaḥ
mādhviir naḥ santvoṣadhiiḥ
madhu naktam upoṣasaḥ
madhumat pārthivam rajaḥ
madhu dyaur astu naḥ pitā
madhumān no vanaspatiḥ
madhmān astu sūryaḥ'

(A.Bhaj., p.58, #32).

'May the winds, the waters, the plant life, the evening and the dawn, the dust of the earth, the heavenly vault which is like father, the trees, the sun and the cows be a blessing to us' (CW-e, 50, p. 336. #49).

Verses 6.3.6 appear in the original context of a ritual for the man who has decided to "attain greatness" (*mahatprapyami*). 6.3.6 are verses concerning the drinking of a prepared mixture and which, in the original, are enclosed within the famous verses of the *Gayatri mantra*. The earlier *Gayatri* verses, interestingly, are omitted from Gandhi's translation of this well-known prayer, as well as are the references

to honey omitted, which may have been associated with the ancient uses of *soma* (the drink of the gods, and the nectar of immortality). Gandhi chose the word "blessing," rather than "honey," for his English audience. The *Bṛihadaranyaka Upanishad*

'constitutes the concluding section of the voluminous *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* of the White *Yajurveda*. ... On linguistic and other grounds, there is general agreement that the *Bṛhadāranyaka* as a whole, is the oldest of the *Upaniṣads*, even though individual passages in it may be younger than those of others, especially those of the *Chāndogya*' (Olivelle 1998, pp.29-30).

Chandogya verse 1.1.10 follows a description concerning the mystical syllable OM, making the statement that both those who know, and those who do not know, its essence, chant this syllable.

Chāndogya 1.1.10

'*yadeva vidyayā karoti śraddhayopaniṣadā
tadeva viiryavattaram bhavati*' (A.Bhaj., p.58, #33)

Gandhi, however, translates:

'Work done with knowledge and faith and in a prayerful spirit becomes most effective strength' (*CW-e*, 50, p.336, #51).

Interestingly, the final verse in this section does not come from the Upanishads, but from the closing verses of the *Mahabharata*.

Bharat Savitri (closing moral of the *Mahabharata*)

'*na jātu kāmāt na bhayāt na lobhāt
dharmam tyajet jīvitasyāpi hetoḥ
dharmo nityaḥ sukhaduḥkhe tvanitye
jīvo nityo hetur asya tvanityaḥ*' (A.Bhaj., p.58, #34).

'One may not abandon one's faith for the satisfaction of a desire, or from fear or ambition, not even for saving one's life.'

Faith is permanent, happiness and unhappiness are fleeting things. The spirit is immortal, the result of its actions -- the body -- is evanescent' (*CW-e*, 50, p.336, #50).

In retrospect, regarding the verses chosen from the *Upanishads* for the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, it is possible to make a few comments. In a general way, a variety of verses were chosen. Some older verses were chosen; some new verses were chosen. However, for the most part, verses were chosen from the newer, later *Upanishads*, such as the *Katha*, *Mundaka*, and *Isha*, etc; while a few verses were also included from older sources such as the *Chandogya* and *Taittiriya*. However, in the *Chandogya* verse, references to the *Gayatri* mantra and "honey," ancient words of Vedic ritual, were removed from Gandhi's English translation for Mirabehn.

Similarly, the majority of texts speak of the Advaitic position of monism connected with the *Upanishads*. Yet, a few passing references to Samkhya have been noted. As Gandhi himself commented that even while he held his own monistic views, he would not begrudge others their differences.

The verses chosen do not engage in the often long and drawn-out debates one would expect from *Upanishadic* theosophizing. Generally, verses state clearly, e.g., the position concerning the oneness of Brahman, or the control necessary for a *satyagrahi* to exhibit non-violent constraint. The verses are practical in nature. Rather than becoming lost in philosophical detail, they are meant to instruct a rational approach to divinity and to controlling the senses in *svaraj*. Yet, at the same time, discussion concerning the mystical syllable OM is also included.

The text whose verses were utilized the most was that of the Manduka Upanishad, whose connection with the Vedic corpus has been questioned. It is a text, as Olivelle indicated, that may have been for an ascetic community, but Gandhi and the *satyagrahis* took a firm stance against the Hindu brahminic communities with their perceived pomp and circumstance, their misleading of congregations, and their corruption. This Upanishad speaks against Vedic misconduct and misuse, and at the same time advocates Brahman as "Truth."

Regarding the question of the extent to which eclecticism can be illustrated within the choosing of these verses, a key view to these verses would be that they include both old and new, however, primarily newer texts; they include differing philosophic points of view, but they are primarily monistic; they provide statements and advice against the brahminic traditions, but encourage the importance of the inner-most search for a connection with Brahman. The texts are practical and down-to-earth training, while some mystical philosophy, the syllable OM and the joinings with Brahman, are included.

While primary views are prevalent, differing or opposing views are also included -- but one would have to say that they are included "in moderation," into an already moderate program of sung-prayers meant to teach responsibility and self-control.

One *Upanishad*, however, was significant for Gandhi above all the rest -- the *Ishopanishad*. During his incarceration in the spring of 1923, Gandhi read (in various translations) the *Katha*, *Prakash*, *Kena*, *Isha*, *Manduka*, *Mandukya*, *Chandogya*, and *Brihadaranyaka Upanishads*, along with massive numbers of books on other religions, Islam, Zoroastrianism, the Bible, economists, philosophy of many genres, the *Gita*, and even James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*. While incarcerated, he daily recited the *Ishopanishad*: 'I used to recite that Upanishad every day in jail, trying to memorize the verses. ... There's no difference between its teachings and the *Gita*'s. What is present in it in the form of a seed has become a beautiful tree in the *Gita*' (CW-e, 64., #5, May 22, 1934, p. 4)

It was not until 1937, during his Harijan campaigns in Travancore that the first verse of the *Ishopanishad* became what seemed to him to be the very seed of Hinduism.

'Many of you, I think, know the *Ishopanishad*. I read it years ago with translation and commentary. I learnt it by heart in Yeravda Jail. But it did not then captivate me as it has done during the past few months, and I have now come to the final conclusion that if all the

Upanishads and all the others scriptures happened all of a sudden to be reduced to ashes and if only the first verse in the *Ishopanishad* were left intact in the memory of Hindus, Hinduism would live for ever' (CW-e,70, #327, Jan. 16, 1937, p.298).

He used this verse of many occasions to offer spiritual advice (see, e.g., CW-e, 70, #330; 78, #5; 86, #114; 89, #265; 89, #320; 91, #125; 92, #34; and 95, #50). *Ishopanishad* I.1 had become for him a "signature verse" for *satyagraha*.

Pandava-Gita

Next, ten selections from the *Pandava Gita* are included. The first line consists of a string of fourteen names of sages who should be remembered, and the other nine verses consist of one verse each from these sages: Kunti, Drona, Gandhari, Virata, Prahlada, Bharadvaja, Markandeya, Shaunaka, and Sanatkumara. These verses are devoted primarily to *Vishnu* and *Krishna*, and by way of example, we include here the last verse from this section.

Sanatkumara:

'*ākāśāt patitam toyam yathā gacchati sāgaram
sarva-deva-narmaskāraḥ Keśavam prati gacchati*' (A.Bhaj., p.62).

Even as the waters dropping from the heavens are receiving into the ocean, so is the worship of the different gods received unto Keshav [Krishna]' (CW-e, 50, p.340, #72).

Mukundamala

This *Rosary of Vishnu's Names* was written by *Kulashekhara*, one of the 12 Alvars of South India who were mystical poets and devotees of *Vishnu*. Of the 40 Sanskrit verses in the *Sri Mukundamala*, a total of 12 are included in the 1947 *Ashram Bhajanavali*, while only five had been included in the 1930 translations in the *Collected Works*. Two of those five are presented here.

'bhava-jaladhi-gatānām dvandva-vātāhatānām
suta-duhitṛ-kalatra-trāṇa-bhārāvṛtānām

viṣam-viṣaya-toye majjatām alpavānām
bhavati śaraṇam eko viṣnu-poto narāṇām' (A.Bhaj., p.66, #6).

'Vishnu becomes like a ship protecting men sailing on the ocean of birth and death, tossed to and fro as by the wind, by the pairs of opposites such as happiness and misery, borne down by the weight of guarding sons, daughters, wives, and the like and sinking in the storms of violent passions.'

(CW-e, 50, p. 342, #74)'

'namāmi Nārāyaṇa-pāda-paṅkajam
karomi Nārāyaṇa-pūjanam sadā
vadāmi Nārāyaṇa-nāma nirmalam
smarāmi Nārāyaṇa-tattvam avyayam (A.Bhaj., p.68, #11).)

'I touch the lotus feet of Narayana,
I worship Narayana always;
I take the holy name of Narayana,
I remember the changeless essence called
Narayana' (CW-e, 50, p.342, #76).

Dvadasha-Panjarika Stotra

These verses are from the *Hymn to Govinda*, also known as *Bhaja Govindam*, or the *Dvadashamanjarika-stotra*, by Shankara. It appears both as *Dvadashapanjarika* and *Dvadashamanarika*. Acarya Shankara, it is said, was walking along a street in Varanasi, one day accompanied by his disciples. He heard the sound of grammatical rules being recited by an old scholar. Taking pity on the scholar, he went up to him and advised him not to waste his time on grammar but to turn his mind to God in worship and adoration (*Hymns of Shankara*, 34). He composed "12 Verse Blossoms" on that occasion, and his disciples then each composed one additional verse in response, the group of which is known as the "14 Verse Blossoms." The two compilations are sometimes published in differing combinations (with some additional verses being added) as *Bhaja Govindam*. The verses in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* correspond to the 31 verses of *Bhaja Govindam* as follows: The first verse found here is #2; the second verse here is #29; the third

verse here is #26; the fourth verse here is #24; and the last verse is the fourth verse of *Bhaja Govindam*.

'mūḍha jahiihi dhanāgam-tṛṣṇām kuru sadabuddhim manasi vitṛṣṇām yallabhase nija-karmopāttam vittam tena vinodaya cittam' (A.Bhaj., p.70).

'O foolish one, give up the desire for amassing wealth, make thy mind pure and free from desire, satisfy thy mind with what thou may'st obtain through thy own labour' (CW-e, 50, p.339, #63).

'artham anartham bhāvaya nityam nāsti tataḥ sukha-lośaḥ satyam putrād api dhana-bhājām bhītiḥ sarvatraiṣā vihitā riitiḥ' (A.Bhaj., p.70).

'Always believe that wealth is illth. It is simple truth to say that there is no happiness coming from its possession. It is known to all that rich people fear even their own children' (CW-e, 50, p.339, #64).

'kāmaṁ krodham lobham moham tyaktvād 'tmānam bhāvaya ko'ham ātma-jñānavihiinā mūdhāḥ te pacyante naraka-nigūḍhāḥ' (A.Bhaj., p.70).

'Shun desire, anger, greed, possession and ask thyself 'who am I'. Those foolish ones who don't strive for self-realization go to perdition' (CW-e, 50, p.339, 65).

'tvayi mayi cānyatraiko viṣṇuḥ vyartha kupyasi sarve-sahiṣṇuḥ sarvasminnapi paśyātmānam sarvatrotsrja bhedājñānam' (A.Bhaj., p.70).

'In thee, me and others there is but one God who suffers us all; though art angered for nothing. See thyself in all and everywhere, give up thy ignorance in the shape of differentiation' (CW-e, 50, p.339, #66).

'nalinii-dala-gata salilam paralam tadvaj-jiivitam atiśaya-capalam vidhi vyādhyabhimāna-grastam lokam śoka-hatam ca samastam' (A.Bhaj., p.70).

'Like the precarious drops on a lotus lead this life is fleeting. Know this world to be full of disease, egotism and affliction' (CW-e, 50, p.340, #67).

The popular first verse and refrain of this hymn, which repeats "*Bhaja Govindam, bhaja Govindam, bhaja Govindam muḍhamate*, etc." is not published in the *Bhajanavali*.

Ramacarita-Manas

Selections in Hindi from another 'sacred book' are those from Tulsidas's *Ramacarita-Manas* and they make up the next section of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. They, like the section of *Upanishads*, cover ten pages. This is a piece that would have been deeply loved by those hearing or chanting it from the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and many would have known sections of it by heart. 'Tuls dās is praised and the Rāmcaritmānas embraced by people of multiple religious orientations, offering a point of meeting between members of divergent *sampradāys*, in line with the sympathetic and inclusivist nature of the text' (Martin 2003, p.192).

'Within his telling of the tale, Tulsidās seeks to cultivate deep devotion to Rāma but also to reconcile and integrate Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva devotion, *nirgun* and *sagun* perspectives, and *advaita* and *bhakti* religiosity. Situated within a vast stream of both Sanskrit and vernacular literature surrounding Rāma, Tulsidās is clearly influenced not only by Vālmiki's Rāmāyaṇa (though his Rām is thoroughly divine unlike Vālmiki's great but very human hero) and the South Indian telling of the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa or "Spiritual Rāmāyaṇa" (incorporating *advaita* ideals with Rām as seen as both an incarnation of Viśṇu and the personification of Ultimate Reality or Brahman and portraying only a shadow of Siitā rather than Siitā herself being abducted by the demon Rāvana) but also by the Kṛṣṇa tradition in his portrayal of Rām's childhood' (Martin 2003, quoting Lutgendorf and Richmond, in Flood 2003, p.192).

The selections are short, easy to repeat, and to remember. They range from simple, proverb-like statements that concern behavior to reminders and instruction as to what "true" religion is considered to be. The *caupai* and *doha* are the two primary meters found in the *Manas*. The *chaupai* is 'a two-line unit containing four

equal parts. Its individual lines are each known as an *ardhālii* (half) and comprise thirty-two 'beats'...[and e]ach *ardhālii* is divided in turn into two feet (*pad*) of sixteen beats...(Lutgendorf 1991, p.14). "A standard *dohā* has only 24 mātrās," which means that it "requires succinctness of expression" and the "rhythmic and rhyming qualities are such that the *dohā* is a verse form that has all the requirements for oral composition and memorization: strict end rhyme, division into smaller rhythmic units, and a close relationship between rhythmic units and units of meaning. It is thus not only brief, but also easy to remember" (Schomer 1987, p.63). The *pad* is also a simpler medium, reminiscent of the folk song.

The *Ramcaritmanas* was meant to be "...learned by heart [and] internalized to the degree that it can become self-performing within us" (Lutgendorf 1991, p.37). In his *Life of a Text: Performing the Ramcaritmanas of Tulsidas*, Philip Lutgendorf is quite clear in stating that these verses were to be sung, not read. "[T]he verbs commonly used are 'to recite' (*kathnā*), 'to tell' (*kahnā*), 'to sing or chant' (*ganā*), and 'to listen' (*sunnā*). These verbs occur especially in the concluding verses of each book, which are known as 'hearing the fruits' (*phalśrutī*). ...*Sundar kāṇḍ* concludes:

Singing the virtues of Raghunayak yields all blessings,
Reverently listening, one crosses the ocean of existence without a boat.
5.60' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.37).

Tulsidas recommended, within his text, the practice of chanting and memorizing his verses. Lutgendorf remarks that such an approach to chanted verse is

'found in many Hindu texts. They are not simply a convention, but a reflection of an ancient belief in the efficacy of hearing, reciting, and memorizing the sacred word -- a belief reflected in the traditional categories of literature, which are conceptualized not as read but rather as 'heard' (*śrutī*) and 'remembered' (*smṛti*)' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.37).

Lutgendorf further remarks, in a footnote, that he was fortunate to have a *Manas* teacher who

'encouraged me from the beginning to chant it aloud and taught me melodies to which each of its meters could be sung. I found my comprehension and appreciation of the text greatly enhanced by this practice. ... I am convinced that both recitation and memorization (however unpopular the latter may be with Western students and educators) are vital to the appreciation of poetry' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.37, note 95).

Gandhi has often been quoted as referring to the *Manas* as one of the greatest and most spiritual books ever written, and Gandhi's son, Devadas, helped to publish the English translation that we are using in this work:

'Recitation of verses from the *Ramayana* was part of the routine of our expanded family in South Africa. My father was fond of repeating them aloud to us. He particularly made us memorize *soratha* 1 and *chaupai* 2 [concerns the chanting of Rāmā Nāma] of the Invocation, *dohās* 20 to 26 of the Salutation to Rama, especially *dohā* 22, in Book I, and *chand* 13, in praise of Bharat, in Book II. A verse he often quoted is *dohā* 112 in Book I' (Devadas Gandhi, publisher's note, in Atkins 1954, p.ii).

Examples presented herein are given in the English translation of Rev. A. G. Atkins (1954), as the poetical style was written intentionally to be close to the original. Atkins wrote: 'I have tried to give varied metres somewhat comparable to those of Tulsidas, changing as he changes...also rhyme where he gives it, and language that is clear and simple in verse form' (Atkins 1954, p.vii).

'Helping others is sincere religion's high peak;
Chief of sins this -- the harm of another to seek;
(*Manas* Book VII: *Chaupai* 39; *A.Bhaj*, p.72; Atkins, p.1281)

'Scriptures new and old tell us -- a truth firmly fixed --
Good and evil, my lord are in ev'ry heart mixed;
When the good mind prevails, then true riches are found;

But when evil prevails, then for trouble we're bound.'

(*Manas Book V: Chaupai 40; A.Bhaj, p.72; Atkins, p.1011*)

'Like the cotton tree's fruit are the saint's blessed deeds,
Tho' austere, pure and helpful in manifold needs.'

(*Manas Book I: Chaupai 2; A.Bhaj, p.72; Atkins, p.5*)

'Well cov'ring all faults, even those most severe;
I honour the saints, those whom all men revere.'

(*Manas Book I: Chaupai 2; A.Bhaj, p.73; Atkins, p.5*)

'Like fish happy and safe where the water is deep,
Men fear naught if they trust God to guide them and keep.'

(*Manas Book IV: Chaupai 17; A.Bhaj, p.78; Atkin, p.939*)

'Ev'rywhere that one looks green grass covers the earth,
And the pathways now cannot be traced;
Just as in the disputes of false teachers and wranglers
The scriptural truths are effaced.'

(*Manas Book IV: Doha14; A.Bhaj, p.77; Atkins, p.936*)

Also included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* verses, as might be expected, are excerpts from the many sections of praise for *Rama*. The entire *Victory to Rama Stotram* appears, wherein *Shiva* gives homage to *Rama*, along with all the Vedas and all the gods, as part of *Rama's* enthronement (*A.Bhaj, pp.79-81; Atkins, p.1246*).

A most interesting selection is a lengthy excerpt from the battle between *Rama* and *Ravana*. As the two arch-enemies face each other down, *Rama* is outweighed militarily. *Vibhishan* (*Ravana's* brother) has just cried out to *Rama* in *Chaupai 80*: 'You've no chariot, Lord, not even shoes; then how cope With a foeman so strong, or for victory hope?' Lord *Rama* answers him with these verses chosen for the *Ashram Bhajanavali*:

'My friend, listen to me," said the All-Kindly One,
With a far diff'rent chariot is true vict'ry won!

On two wheels, many courage and patience, it plies;
Firm uprightness and truth are the banners it flies;

Strength, discretion, control, thought for others its horses;
Reins -- kindness and fairness -- hold them to their courses;

The charioteer -- worship to God ever yielding --
Restraint and content as his shield and sword wielding;

With wisdom's pow'r using alms-giving -- dread axe,
And with knowledge as bow, makes his deadly attacks;

In his quiver -- his own wholly pure, constant mind --
Many shafts -- temp'rance, fealty and such -- can he find;

In the best mail -- for godly men honour -- he's clad;
No equipment like this can for conquest be had;

He can never be conquered by foemen, my friend,
Who will on true religion [*dharmamaya*] for chariot depend.'

(*Manas* Book VI: *Chaupai* 80; *A.Bhaj*, pp.75-6; Atkins, pp.1146-7)

Rama's words are then completed, in the *doha* rhythm in Verse 77:

'Pay good heed and take courage, my friend with this chariot
A soldier can all overcome;
Yes, that great and invincible foe, birth on birth,
Must at last to this hero succumb.'

(*Manas* Book VI: *Doha*77; *A.Bhaj*, p.76; Atkins, p.1147)

These verses, as can be easily seen, would have paralleled Gandhi's own instructions concerning non-violent action, even unto death, when the *satyagrahis* were facing an enemy more heavily-armed. The image of a "chariot of faith," a "chariot of God," which transcends death, would have been also well-known to the *satyagrahis* from the *Gita*, wherein Kṛṣṇa taught Arjuna how to control the senses of life's chariot and place full awareness in Him. It would have resonated with the truth-bow of the sound of OM, "this weapon of *upanishad*," from the *Upaniashads*. It would have echoed from Valmiki's *Ramayaṇa*, and even from the *Rig Veda*, wherein poet-*rishis*, who used verse-constructed chariots of sung-prayer as

protection to ward off death, sang: "*brahma varma mamāntaram*" (my innermost coat-of-mail is sung-prayer" [RV VI.75.19]. These verses, sung in simple, easy-to-remember form would have been an effective, significant part of Gandhi's on-going instruction in non-violence and *svaraj*.

'Tulsiidās, too, was concerned with bridge-building and cultural conciliation, ... between Vaiṣṇava and Śāiva orientations, between nirguṇ and saguṇ Vaiṣṇava traditions, and between Advaitic intellectual philosophy and bhakti emotionalism' (Lutgendorf 1995, p.283, note 12). With special reference to the end of Gandhi's life, during which time Gandhi struggled with 'hope against hope' to re-instate non-violence, Devadas Gandhi wrote in his publisher's introduction to Atkins's translation: '...In his last years [,] the reading of the *Ramayana* was an indispensable part of Gandhiji's evening prayer service. The practice is now kept up at the Friday prayers at Rajghat in Delhi' (Atkins 1954, p.ii).

Bhajans

Gandhi translated 199 *bhajans* (or hymns) into English, which are found in the *Collected Works*. Fewer were published in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* (see Appendix A for a comparison).

The *bhajans* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* are by poet-saints from a long and rich tradition, including such famous writers as Kalidas, Tulsidas, Kabir, Mira, and Nanak, as well as many lesser figures.

'Then since all cannot understand Sanskrit we have a simple *bhajan* or hymn from one of our saints who devised this beautiful medium to convey to use the essence of Hinduism. We draw our *bhajans* from the exhaustless stores of Kabir, Tulsidas, Surdas, Nanak, Marabai, Tyagaraja, Tukaram, and other saints of India' (CW-e, 70, # 357, p.346).

Besides Gandhi himself, Narayan Moreshwar Khare was responsible for the choice of the *bhajans* included, and Khare chose the *raga* for each *bhajan* as it

appeared in the *Bhajanavali*. *Ragas* were keyed to a specific time of day or night. Khare was a musical protege of Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, the blind music master who revived Indian classical music and respect for the professional musician during the years 1900-1931. Paluskar had sent Khare to live and work at Gandhi's *ashram*. Khare accompanied Gandhi on the Salt March to Dandi; he directed the chanting in the dark of night just prior to Gandhi's being taken to jail as a result of that march (described above); and, he served time in prison confinement with Gandhi on more than one occasion. 'The songs -- and *bhajans* were always sung, there is almost no merely recited poetry in traditional India -- often end with a signature line identifying their author-composer' (Gandhi 1999, p.20).

Although many of the *bhajans* can be identified by the name of the author being printed in darker ink within the signature line, not every *bhajan* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* is identifiable as to authorship.

Not all singer-saints fall nicely within one category of either *sagun* (divinity described with aspects) or *nirgun* (divinity described without aspects), and those that do, not unoccasionally compose outside their genre. The Vaishnava traditions contain compositions to Vishnu, for both Krishna and Rama. It is a complex history, the complete scope and description of which falls outside the parameters of this study.

However, when we speak of these singer-saints, what can be said is that:

'we are talking about a single family of saints. It is usually referred to as the family of *bhakti*, a word that means passionate love for God Another term that is sometimes used to describe this family is *sant*, deriving from the Sanskrit verb 'to be.' This verb and its derivatives connote not only what is real but what is true; hence a *sant* is someone true or good as well as someone who incarnates what is essential about life. Though the etymology is unrelated, the English word 'saint' is often the best translation of *sant*; and the word *bhakta*, though it means 'devotee' or 'love of God,' can also be used in an honorific sense that makes it a rough Hindi analogue for 'saint.'

In medieval times both these terms were used...with no distinction as to theological leaning. In more recent days, however, a distinction has been made between *sants* and *bhaktas* to clarify the outlines of the two branches in the *bhakti* family they form. The *sants* are the clan that prefers to worship God 'without attributes' or 'without form'; they have a tendency to be critical of anyone who approaches God through icon and legend, as most Hindus do. Those who take the opposite, or 'with attributes,' position affirm that God has indeed entered history and taken form -- the form of an image in a temple -- to guide and aid earthly beings. Members of this clan are called either *bhaktas* or *Vaishnavas*, the latter term being appropriate because as a group they tend to worship one of the two major expressions of the high god Vishnu: his avatars Krishna and Ram.

School	[Sants] "without attributes" nirguṇa	[Bhaktas] "with attributes" saguṇa
Deity	nameless	Krishna Ram
[saints]	Ravidas Kabir Nanak	Surdas Mirabai Tulsidas'

(Hawley and Juergensmeyer 1988, pp.4-5)

Hawley and Juergensmeyer note that figures like Ravidas, Kabir, and Nanak were also influenced by the medieval Nath Yogis of northern India, an ascetic sect, who would have shaped their emphasis on 'interior religion' and their derision of hypocrisy (Hawley and Juergensmeyer 1988, p.5).

The above table appears simple enough. Hawley and Juergensmeyer, comparing *nirgun* and *sagun* expression as similar to the differences found within Protestant versus Catholic perspectives, comment that "they all inherited a single massive *bhakti* movement that had been gathering force in other parts of India for a millenium" (Hawley and Juergensmeyer 1988, p.5). However, while the table and analogy are helpful, things are not always so simple in practice. There were

different schools. For example, "[d]ifferent from the schools of Rāma-devotion which had an *advaitic* background and denounced forms and rituals, there were schools of Krishna-devotion of which Vallabhācārya was the inspiration" (Raghavan 1966, p.15). In addition, there were different traditions found within those different schools. Likewise, even the *nirgun* and *sagun* distinctions are not always clearly delineated, and there can be a good deal of internal borrowing within and between traditions.

'We can easily discern that there is not one essential meaning of the *bhakti* phenomenon with a set of easily identifiable social consequences. Rather, there are within one order, specializing in Rām bhakti, different religious orientations with different social consequences. To mention only one aspect, the establishment of image worship and temple ceremonies is often thought to be a crucial aspect of bhakti's openness to the lower classes. The contrary [may also be true]. *Nirgun* Rām and the Rām mantra may be considered to have inclusivist consequences, while the celebration of *sagun* Rām in images of Rāmachandra has exclusivist consequences' (van der Veer 1995, p.301).

So, while there may be one "family" of bhakti saints, it has a long lineage with many branches. It is not possible here to provide a full description and historical overview of the *bhakti* movement, or consequently, a full account of all the *bhajans* chosen for the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Only a few examples will be given below, along with short comments regarding their authors.

V. Raghavan (1966) has given a very detailed historical account of the *sants* in *The Great Integrators: The Saint Singers of India. The Songs of the Saints of India* by Hawley and Juergensmeyer focuses on six *sants* and their lives as being representative of the tradition, while Linda Hess's work on Kabir is most insightful (See Hess, "Kabir's Rough Rhetoric," and "Three Kabir Collections: A Comparative Study" in Karine Schomer and W.H. McLeod, Eds., *The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India*. Schomer and McLeod's work *The Sants: Studies in a Devotional Tradition of India* presents many excellent articles that

outline both the similarities and differences entwined within the various streams of tradition, and especially helpful are those by Charlotte Vaudeville on *Sant Mat*, Karine Schomer on the *Doha*, Lorenzen on the *Kabir-Panth*, and Zelliott on *Eknāth*. David Lorenzen's book *Bhakti Religion in North India*, and his own article therein concerning "The Historical Vicissitudes of Bhakti Religion" are very informative in discerning the many shades of movement and influences found within the ancient *bhakti* tradition. Suffice it here to quote simply: '[a] favorite Sanskrit passage personifies [the *bhakti* tradition] as a lovely woman who was born in the south (about the sixth century A.D.), gained strength and maturity in the middle regions of the west (from the twelfth century onward), grew decrepit, and was revived to experience her full flowering when she reached the north' (Hawley and Juergensmeyer 1988, p.6).

While descriptions of the characteristic topics addressed within traditions vary, there are characteristics of these *bhajans* that speak to their ready popularity - beyond the simpler verse forms and their vibrant musicality. The singer-saints who authored these *bhajans* were

'united in their commitment to the value of personal experience in religion. Therefore they questioned the *ex opere operata* ritualism characteristic of the sort of Hindu worship superintended by Brahmins, and they often criticized the caste conceits that went with it. Another consequence of their belief in the value of personal experience was their use of vernacular, regional languages as the appropriate expression of faith' (Hawley and Juergensmeyer 1988, p.6).

Although, there were also, of course, many examples of *sants* who were also *Brahmins*.

In geographical areas, where religious strife could be common, the *sants* also played an important role in lessening communal tensions. A 'most prominent feature in the [Hindi] area was the background of Hindu-Muslim relations; as a result, many of these saint-singers became the apostles of a synthesis and

rapprochement, aided by the common points in *advaita* and Sufism' (Raghavan 1966, p.15). Singer-saints in northern India and in the western Deccan chanted alternately and equally to *Allah, Ram, or Krishna*. '[W]herever there had been political and social stress and strain among the two communities [, t]he saints took a lead in relieving the tension and dissipating the notions of the exclusive nature of each other's faith' (Raghavan 1966, p.63).

Furthermore, '[t]he saints used the common symbols and things of day-to-day activities familiar to the people and harnessed them in a symbolic way to drive home moral, religious and spiritual ideas' (Raghavan 1966, p.22). Such familiar items as a piece of candy, or a snake -- a celestial tree or a great battle -- the metaphors of threads and weaving -- jewels and chariots were woven into the layers of song and were "as old as the Upanishads" (Raghavan 1966, p.22) -- or even older.

Finally, the so-called "common people" were familiar with, and gave the deepest love and respect to, the image of the Indian holy-man, the singer-saint, the *sadhu* or *rishi* of ancient days, the holy teacher and *guru* of the people. "The work of the saints shows also that the people of this country readily respond to them; any one who wants to move them should rise to saintly character. This was the secret of the success of Mahatma Gandhi and his mass movement" (Raghavan 1966, p.22). (emphasis added)

The *bhajans* found in the *Bhajanavali* represent a cross-section of regional traditions, many of which were also sung in different and varying areas of India as well. The Maharashtra songs of Tukaram, 'known as *Abhangs* (meaning: unbreakable ones' (Subramanian 1996, p.271), and Mirabai's *bhajans* "are sung by Carnatic musicians of South India" (Subramanian 1996, p.10). In fact, many songs of the *Bhajanavali*, like those of Kabir, or "the God-intoxicated songs of Meera have transcended regional barriers and are sung all over India" (Subramanian 1996, p.10). The examples that follow here are, by necessity, only a few of the

many *bhajans* chosen by Narayan Moreshwar Khare for the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. The 1947 edition includes 101 Hindustani *bhajans*, 40 Gujarati *bhajans*, 26 Marathi *bhajans*, ten Bangali *bhajans*, one Sindhi *bhajan*, and six English *bhajans*.

Hindustani Bhajan 1 (by Kabir)

Although, according to tradition, 'Kabir was one of twelve disciples of the Brahman Ramananda, ...'an intermediate position between the Saguna [personal or with attributes] and Nirguna Schools' (Lorenzen 1987, p.286). Kabir stood within a *sant* path in which his predecessors and followers were primarily non-Brahmans:

'For Kabir, and [the] nirguṇa saints as well, saguṇa worship implied worship of gods and avatars whose mythology was controlled by Brahmins and authoritatively codified in Sanskrit texts such as the Purānas. Given this situation, it is not surprising that an impersonal deity would be preferred in spite of the intellectual or psychological difficulties It (or He) presented' (Lorenzen 1987, p.286).

Kabir, further, was one of the *sant* poets who spoke to both Hindus and Muslims, often declaring that the only difference for the true believer of either faith lay only in the particular names chosen to address God. He was as at-home questioning Hindu Brahmins and *sadhus* as he was at berating Muslim *faqirs*.

'Kabir can be described as the most personal of all bhakti poets: not because he dwells on his private experience, exposes his own quivering heart; but because he gets very personal with us, his audience' (Hess 1987A, p.147). While Sur, Tulsi and Mira are usually addressing God, '[Kabir] is primarily addressing us,' and his vocative (and evocative) formula of *suno ho santo* 'Listen, oh saints!' 'is meant to shock, 'to engage, to wake people up, to affect them' (Hess 1987A, p.147). Engaging the listener in such a strong emotional manner, 'Kabir pounds away with questions, prods with riddles, stirs with challenges, shocks with insults, disorients with verbal feints. It seems that if one read him responsively one could hardly help getting red in the face, jumping around, squirming, searching, getting embarrassed, or shouting

back (Hess 1987B, p.148). Kabir's ability to describe the fraud and deceit uncovered in others, makes the reader often more comfortable in siding with Kabir as he makes fun of his poems' characters.

'But gradually something begins to gnaw at our consciousness. It occurs to us that pandits can wear other costumes beside the white *dhot* and rosary of *tuls* ... It is relatively easy to notice panditry in the universities, violence in government, greed in the market place, phoniness in religion. ... But Kabir's power is most tellingly revealed when his words reverberate in our own skulls, and we see the succession of disguises under which we live our daily lives '(Hess, 1987B, p.51).

Sādhō sahaja samādh bhalii

(*Rāg dhanāśrii, bhajan kahravā dhuname* - Last Quarter of the Day)

'Sādhō sahaja samādh bhalii
guru pratāp jā dinse jāgii
din din adhik calii

jahañ jahañ dolo so parikarmā
jo kuch karo so sevā
jab sovauñ tab karo daṇḍavath
pujo or na devā

kahāuñ so nām suno so sumiran
khāvañ piyo so pūjā
giraha ujāḍ ek sam lekho
bhāva miṭāvo dūjā

ānkh na mūndo kān na rūndho
tanik kaṣṭa nāhi dhāro
khule nain pahicāno hasi hasi
sundar rūp nihāro

sabad nirantarse man lāgā
malin vāsnā tyāgii
ūṭhat baiṭhat kabahuñ na chūṭe
aisii tārii lāgii

*kaha Kabiir yaha unmuni rahanii
so pargaṭ kari gāii
dukh-sukhse koi pare parampad
tehi pad rahā samāii'*

(A.Bhaj. p.111, #46).

'O good man, natural meditation (lekf/k) is best. Even since its manifestation by the grace of God, it has waxed. Wherever I wander, it is a circuit (round a temple), whatever I do is for service, wherever I lie down, it is my prostration (before God). I worship no other god but God. Whatever I utter, it is God's name, whatever I hear is a remembrance of God. My eating and drinking are *puja* (worship), whether a home is established or it is destroyed is the same thing to me; I do not allow any other feeling to possess me. I open my eyes and delight to see God and contemplate His beauty. My mind is ever intent on Him; all corrupt thought has left me. I am so much engrossed in the thought of Him that I think of Him whatever I am doing. Kabir says: This is the excellent life and I have sung of it; there is a state beyond misery and happiness, my mind is fixed on it' (CW-e, 50, p.358, #118).

Hindustani Bhajan 2 (by Nanak)

Guru Nanak (1460-1539) stood '...in the lineage of *nirguṇ* Hindu devotion ... advocated a *nirguṇ* devotion that focused on the importance of the Lord as guru and on the practice of the repetition of the Name of God. He was respected by both Hindus and Muslims' (Martin 2003, p.188). Nanak's hagiography is full of events that describe his unusual powers as a holy man and in his 'biographies it is reported that he had discussions with the most important progenitors of the Nath order, all the way back to the sage Goraknath and even the god Siva' (Hawley and Juergensmeyer 1988, p.71). Both Nanak and the Nathas taught a spiritual practice of hearing the 'unstruck sound' (*anahatha*) of Creation. 'For the Nathas this means a specific regimen of *hatha yoga*, whereas Nanak recommends a more encompassing approach that involves every aspect of life and requires no special yogic preparation' (Hawley & Juergensmeyer 1988, p.71). The last guru of the Sikh line was Guru Gobind Singh who died in 1708, after which time the *Adi Granth* (Primal Book) has been recognized to be the "teacher" of the Sikh community.

Sumarana kar le*(Rāg kauśiyā, tiin tāl - Early Morning)**("Kauns or Pahāri - any time," Shri Karunamayee)**'sumaran kar le mere manā
teri biti jāti umar, harinām binā (dhruva)**kup niir binu, dhenu chiir binu, dharatii peh binā
jāise taruvar falabina hiinā, taise prāñii harinām binā**deha nena bin, rain chandra bin, mandir diip binā
jāise paṇḍit ved bihiinā, taise prāñii harinām binā**kām krodha mad lobha nihāro chāṇḍa de ab santhajanā
kahe Nānakśā, sun bhagavantā yā jagame nahii kooi apanā'
(A.Bhaj., p.125, #61).*

‘O my soul, remember thy God, thy years are rolling by without His sacred name -- man without Harinama is even like a well without water or a cow without milk or a temple without light or a fruit tree without fruit or body without eyes or night without the moon, or the earth without rain or a pundit without a knowledge of the Vedas. O good man watch thy desire, anger, pride and ambition and give them up. Nanakshah says: O God there is no one to befriend save Thee’
(CW-e, 50, p.364, #138)

Hindustanti Bhajan 3 -- Mirabai

Although each and every singer-*sant* found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* cannot be addressed in a work of this size (see Appendix A for a listing of all those singer-*sants* who are identified), at least one piece of Mirabai's should be presented here. Mirabai, the princess, who abandoned her husband and home to follow her true Lord Krishna is one of the most famous of the *bhakti* singers. Her hagiographic exploits, and the poisonous attempts on her life are known from the northern end of India to its southern tip.

One question concerning Mirabai's work is that of authority and authenticity. John Stratton Hawley has identified the fact that there are really only five, possibly six, songs that can be attributed directly to Mirabai (Hawley 2005, p.3) as compared to the myriad number of songs that show up in later collections. So, as Hawley suggests, there have been "many Miras."

Regardless of this and of the difficulties of dating her work (from the early seventeenth century to the later eighteenth century), Mira's popularity is not at all in question. Her sung-prayers come from more of a folk idiom, simpler than most of the other *bhakti sants* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

"These are generally simple in format, involving a great deal of repetition, as one might expect in a round or a refrain, and they take up themes that belong typically to women. Mira's poetry too tends to be simple,... and it often mentions family tensions, or the emotions a bride might feel, or festivals confined to women" (Hawley & Juergensmeyer 1988, p.130).

Similarly, due to the subject matter, Mira's deep love for Krishna, and the intimacy with which she often speaks, she draws the listener into the world of Krishna and the *gopis*, for in the medium of the poem she has pulled herself into their world (*Ibid.*, 131). Just as in Greg Urban's description of how the "Indexical I" can become the "Projective I", especially while chanting songs directed to divinity (see Chapter Four, p. 207 for a full explication of Urban's analysis). Mira pulls the listener into the divine world of Krishna, and as a consort joined with him in divine love, the singing of the song also brings the singers themselves into the world of the Divine.

Mira's appeal is pan-Indian. Her stories are myriad, however, the details of the stories often vary from each other, or may differ strangely. See Parita Mukta's article "Upholding the Common Life" (1995) for a discussion of how there are even many presentations and descriptions of the "many Miras." Gandhi quoted Mira's

work and made reference to her deeply devoted love as often as he quoted the male singer-*sants*. However, as would be expected, in the selections chosen for the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, Mira is not the extreme ecstatic driven to madness by the sensualities of love, but is an exemplar of the deeply-devoted, but controlled, devotee -- an inspired, yet proper, *satyagrahi*.

- Pāyo jii maine Ram-ratan dhan** (Rāg tilak kāmōd - tiin tāl)
- 'Pāyo jii maine Ram-ratan dhan pāyo (dhruva)
Vastu amolik dii mere satguru,
kirapā kar apanāyo (1)
- Janam janamkii pūnjii pāii,
jagame sabhii khovāyo (2)
- Kharcai na khūṭāi, vako cor na lūṭai
dīn dīn badat savāyo (3)
- satkii nāv, khevaṭiyā satguru,
bhavsāgar tar āyo (4)
- Miirā ke prabhu giridhar nāgar
harakh harakh jas gāyo' (5) (*A.Bhaj.*, p.127, #64)

'I have obtained a jewel in the shape of Ramanama. The true guru gave me this priceless jewel and showed his great favour to me. I have obtained wealth for eternity, what though I have lost everything of this earth? This jewel cannot be used up by use nor can it be stolen by thieves. It increases greatly from day to day. In the vessel called truth with the true guru as the captain I have been able to cross the ocean of birth and death. Mira says: I have sung the praise of the Lord in great glee' (*CW-e*, 50, p.365, #141).

Gujarati Bhajan (by Narsi Mehta)

Narasinh Mehta, or Narasainyo, was the 15th-century mystic-poet who authored the famous *bhajan* concerning the faith of Prahlad. The example of

Prahlad was a common one for Gandhi: Gandhiji often spoke of him as an ideal satyagrahi (Gandhi 1998, p.7). Mehta also authored *Vaiṣṇava jana to*. 'That common ideal of the 'true Sant' who is also a 'true Vaishnava' is well exemplified by the often-quoted *pad* by the Gujarati poet Narsi Mehta, one of Mahatma Gandhi's most beloved hymns, which expresses in simple and moving words this lay ideal of sanctity (Vaudeville 1987, p.39). The hymn speaks of actively helping those who are suffering, and 'thanks to Mahatma Gandhi, is on the lips of everybody today' (Raghava 1966, p.43). Mahadev Dasai, Gandhi's personal secretary, wrote that this hymn 'is almost as life-breath to Gandhiji and is sung on all occasions when we are called upon to face sorrow and joy with equanimity' (Gandhi 1999, p.98).

Vaiṣṇava jana to

(*Rāga khamāja - tāla dhumālii* - 1st Quarter of the Night)

*'Vaiṣṇava jana to tene khaḥiie, je piīḍa parāii jāṇe re
paraduḥkhe upakāra kare toye, mana abhimāna na āṇe re (dhruva)*

*sakala lokamām sahune vande, nindā na kare kenii re
vāca kācha mana niścala rākhe, dhana dhana janani tenii re (1)*

*samadṛṣṭi ne tṛṣṇā tyāgii, parastrii jene mātā re
jihvā thakii asatya na bole, paradhana nava jhāle hātha re (2)*

*moha māyā vyāpe nahi jene, dṛḍha vairāgya jenā manamām re
rāmanāmasuṃ tālii lāgii, sakala tīratha tenā tanamām re (3)*

*vaṇalobhii ne kapaṭarahita che, kāma krodha nivāryā re
bhaṇe Narasaiṇyo tenum darasana karatām, kula ekotera tāryām re' (4)
(A.Bhaj., p.156 , #102)*

'He is a Vaishnava who identifies himself with others' sorrows and in doing has no pride about him. Such a one respects every one and speaks ill of none. He controls his speech, his passions and his thoughts. May his mother be blessed. His is equidispensed towards all, has no desires, regards another's wife as his mother, always speaks the truth and does not touch other people's property. He labours

neither under infatuation nor delusion and withdraws his mind from worldly things; he is intent on Ramanama; his body is his sacred shrine for pilgrimage; he is no miser and is free from cunning and he has conquered passions and anger. Narasaiyo says: His presence purifies his surroundings' (CW-e, 50, p.376, #178).

Marathi bhajan (by Eknath)

Shri Eknath Maharaj, one of the four major figures in the seven hundred year old bhakti tradition of Maharashtra, was a link figure in many ways (1533-1599 = 'most commonly accepted dates') ... [H]e revitalized the *bhakti* tradition which had begun in the thirteenth century, preparing the way for the greatest of the Sant poets, Tukaram, in the seventeenth [.,]served as a link to *bhakti* in northern India by including Kabir and Raidas in his listing of Sants as if they were an intrinsic part of his own tradition,[and was] a bridge between the Sanskritic tradition and the non-Sanskritized lower classes, for Eknath was a proper Brahman scholar who lived in the orthodox center of Paithan, and yet he not only translated Sanskrit devotional material into Marathi but also wrote songs and poems clearly intended for the ears and the minds of the lowly' (Zelliot 1987, p.91).

Many of his works are in 'the personae of Untouchables, passing Muslim fakirs, acrobats and travelling entertainers, religious personages from unorthodox sects, prostitutes and unhapy womean -- a wide sweep of the non-Sanskritic world around Eknath' (Zelliot 1987, p.91) While he used common, everyday objects from common, everyday life as analogies and metaphors for religious description and commentary, he 'also translated and commented upon the eleventh *skandha* of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa.... It is typical of Maharashtrian bhakti that Eknath chose the stern morality of the eleventh *skandha* over the erotic devotion of Krishna and the *gopis* in the tenth book of that Purāṇa which was so important to Bengali *bhakti* and to Vallabhacharya' (Zelliot 1987, p.94).

Janardan was Eknath's guru, and his works often end, as does this selection, 'with the signature *Ekā-Janārdan*, as if he were inseparable from his guru' (Zelliot 1987, p.96). In a celebration of the ordinary, using examples and metaphors to

which everyone could easily relate, he cries forth his joy to God in the typified manner of what some have claimed to be the 'democratic spirit [stemming] from the bhakti movement;" thus, he inclusively links "all the cultures in the varied world around him in a great devotional circle of belief' (Zelliot 1987, p.109).

Te mana niṣṭhura kām kele (Rag pūrvii - tiin tāl)

'Te mana niṣṭhur kā kele, je pūrṇ dayene bharale

Gajendrāce hākesrise, dhāuniyā āle

Prahlādācyā bhāvārṭhāsii, stambhii guragurale

Pāñcāliicyā karuṇā-vacane kalavalunii āle

Ekā Janārdanii pūrṇ kṛpene niśidini padii Ramale' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.209, #165).

'O God, Thou Who art known to be an ocean of mercy, why has Thou hardened Thy heart? For on the elephant's scream of prayer Thou ranst to his assistance; for the devotion of Prahlad Thou roaredst in the fiery pillar; for the piteous appeal of Draupadi Thy heart melted. Eknath says: By the grace of guru Janardana my mindis intent upon the feet of God' (*CW-e*, 50, p.377, #181).

Bangali Bhajan (Anonymous)

'At the end of the 19th century, Bengal saw a revival of Vaiṣṇavism inspired by the Caitanya [Kṛṣṇaite] devotional current. While reformist movements like Brāhmo Samāj and Ārya Samāj scorned this tradition, several historical personalities illustrate the opposite tendency' (Colas 2003, p.265).

Within the Vallabha tradition, '[t]heir songs (*k rtanas*) form part of the disinterested service rendered to the god, called *seva*[,] collective praise of the god before his image' (Colas 2003, p.265). This type of worship is characteristic of Vallabha's *Puṣṭimārga*, built around the notion of Srikrishna's grace, [and] it is to be distinguished from the *maryādamārga*, considered [by Kṛṣṇaites] as inferior... (Colas 2003, p.265)

Though Vaishnava sung-prayers, dedicated to both Rama and Krishna were obviously included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, sung as part of Gandhi's prayer meetings, there would have been no images or idols present, as any idol or image was considered, from the beginning of *satyagraha*, as potentially offensive to worshippers from different traditions.

Antara mama

(*Rāga bhairavii, tāl dādarā* - after sunrise or
rāga āsāvarii, druta eka tāla -1st Quarter of the day]

'antara mama vikasita karo antaratara he
nirmala karo ujjala karo sundara karo he (dhruva)

jāgrata karo udyata karo nirbhaya karo he
maṅgala karo niralasa niḥsaṅsaya karo he (antara-dhruva)

yukta karo he sabāra saṅge mukta karo he bandha
sañcāra karo sakala karme śānta tomāra chanda (antara-dhruva)

carāṇa-padme mama citta niṣpandita karo he
nandita karo nandita karo nandita karo he' (antara-dhruva)
(*A.Bhaj.*, p.212, #168).

'O Thou Dweller in my heart, open it out, purify it, make it bright and beautiful, awaken it, prepare it, make it fearless, make it a blessing to others, rid it of laziness, free it from doubt, unite it with all, destroy its bondage, let Thy peaceful music pervade all its works; make my heart fixed on They holy lotus feet and make it full of joy, full of joy, full of joy' (CW-e, 50, p.383, #204).

Sindhi Bhajana

'Tera makan Allah'

This is the house of Allah.

English Bhajana

While English hymns were not included in the 1930 translations for Mirabehn, a list of six English hymns, or *bhajans*, were included in the published *Ashram Bhajanaivali* is as follows:

'Take My Life and Let It Be'

'Lead, Kindly Light' (or 'Pillar of Cloud')

'When the Mists Have Rolled in Splendour'

'Nearer, My God to Thee'

'Rock of Ages'

'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross'

"'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross' and 'Pillar of the Cloud' (also referred to often as 'Lead, Kindly Light') were among Gandhi's favorite hymns' (Gandhi 1999, p.142).

'**When I Survey the Wondrous Cross**' was authored by Isaac Watts in 1707, with the "Hamburg" tune taken from an unidentified Gregorian chant having been added by Lowell Mason in 1824 (Osbeck 1982, pp.278-9). The scripture reference is to Galatians 6:14: 'But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world was crucified to me, and I to the world' (RSV). 'The lyric ... is referred to frequently in Gandhi's writing on prayer. It was sung in private services, at Gandhi's request, as he ended rigorous fasts in 1924 and 1948' (Gandhi 1999, p.143).

'When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast
Save in the Cross of Christ, my God;

All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His Blood.

See, from His Head, His Hands, His Feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet?
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small.
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.

To Christ, Who won for sinners grace
By bitter grief and anguish sore,
Be praise from all the ransomed race,
For ever and for evermore.' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.227, #184).

'Lead, Kindly Light, or 'The Pillar of Cloud', was written by John Henry Newman (1801-90), leader of the Tractarian and Oxford movements. The composer was John B. Dykes (1823-76), using the tune "*Lux Benigna*" ("kindly light") (Osbeck 1982, p.150). The scripture reference is Exodus 13:21-22:

'And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night; the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from the people' (RSV).

When Newman was 32 (in 1833), he was in Italy in hopes of regaining physical and spiritual health, when he contracted Sicilian fever. During a strenuous ship journey home, 'he penned these words pleading for guidance,' as the Israelites had once done. While the hymn poignantly paints a picture of Newman's own struggles with spiritual despair, it is a point of interest to note that this hymn is often used at funerals. 'Twelve years after writing this hymn text Newman broke completely

with the Anglican Church and became a leader in the Roman Catholic Church
(*Osbeck 1982, p.150*).

'Lead, kindly light, amid th'encircling gloom
 Lead thou me on:
 The night is dark, and I am far from home,
 Lead though me on.
 Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
 The distant scene, one step enough for me.
 I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou
 Shouldst lead me on;
 I loved to choose and see my path; but now
 Lead thou me on.
 I loved the garish day, and spite of fears,
 Pride ruled my will: remember not past years.
 So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it still
 Will lead me on.
 O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
 The night is gone;
 And with the morn those angel faces smile,
 Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.222, #180).

In September of 1915 Gandhi wrote concerning a Gujarati translation of this hymn, which had been sent to him by an acquaintance. He was not pleased with the wording "*Dayāmayii jyoti*":

'I want to have its spirit conveyed in our language. We do not have an expression corresponding to *Dayāmay Jyoti* {and these words} do not convey the same sense as in 'one step enough for me' [the Gujarāti read: "hope of one little step"]. It should not be difficult for us to find from among our literary works an expression parallel to Newman's thought' (*CW-e*, 15, #52, p.44).

Note 5 of this citation indicates that [s]ubsequently, *Premal Jyoti Taro Dākhavi*, Narasimhrao Divetia's Gujarati translation...came to be accepted' (*CW-e*, 15, #52, p.44).

From the correspondence surrounding 'Lead, Kingly Light,' it can be seen the extent to which Gandhi went to obtain a faithful translation of this hymn into Gujarati, as can be seen the extent to which this hymn moved him. At a Christian missionary conference, he defended his right to express his devotion: 'I yield to no Christian in the strength of devotion with which I sing, 'Lead, kindly Light' and several other inspired hymns of a similar nature' (*CW-e*, 15, #127, p.160, Feb. 14, 1916). *Premal Jyoti*, the Gujarati version, appears in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* on page 191, while Lead, Kindly Light appears on page 222.

Gandhi wrote of this hymn in December 1920: 'As for the 'Kindly Light,' I get a vision of it in the temple of my heart whenever [it] is radiant with perfect self-control and the vision invariably gives me the experience of transcendent peace (*CW-e*, 22, #86, p.161, December, 1920).

'Take My Life and Let It Be' was written by Frances Ridley Havergal (1836-79). Although she was often of ill health during childhood, her evangelical interests began early, reading the Bible at age four, and composing verses at age seven (Osbeck 1982, p.239). 'Take My Life and Let It Be' is based on her story of converting some ten people in whose house she was staying. Furthermore, the words 'Take my silver and my gold' [were] not lightly stated, ...[as in A]ugust 1878, Miss Havergal wrote to a friend,

'The Lord has shown me another little step, and of course, I have taken it with extreme delight. 'Take my silver and my gold' now means shipping off all my ornaments to the church Missionary House, including a jewel cabinet that is really fit for a countess ... I don't think I ever packed a box with such pleasure' (Osbeck 1982,p. 240).

'Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord! to Thee;
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of Thy love.

Take my moments and my days,
 Let them flow in ceaseless praise.
 Take my feet, and let them be
 Swift and beautiful for Thee.
 Take my voice, and let me sing
 Always, only for my King;
 Take my lips, and let them be
 Filled with messages from Thee.
 Take my silver and my gold;
 Not a mite would I withhold.
 Take my intellect, and use
 Every power as Thou shalt choose.
 Take my will, and make it Thine;
 It shall be no longer mine.
 Take my heart; it is Thine own;
 It shall be Thy Royal Throne.
 Take my love; My Lord, I pour
 At Thy feet its treasure-store.
 Take myself, and I will be
 Ever, only, all for Thee.' (A.Bhaj., p.221, #179).

'When the Mists Have Rolled Away' was written by Annie H. Barker in 1883 (*Songs and Music*, 230), while the melody was composed by Ira D. Sankey. Both were well-known and respected hymn-writers of that time. The scriptural reference is I Corinthians 13:12: 'For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood' (RSV).

'When the mists have rolled in splendour
 From the beauty of the hills,
 And the sunlight falls in gladness
 On the rivers and the rills,
 We recall our Father's promise
 In the rainbow of the spray;
 We shall know each other better
 When the mists have rolled away.

CHORUS: We shall know, as we are known;
 Nevermore to walk alone,
 In the dawning of the morning
 Of that bright and happy day;
 We shall know each other better,
 When the mists have rolled away.

Oft we tread the path before us
 With a weary, burdened heart;
 Oft we toil amid the shadows,
 And our fields are far apart;
 But the Savior's "Come, ye blessed",
 All our labor will repay,
 When we gather in the morning
 Where the mists have rolled away.

We shall come with joy and gladness,
 We shall gather round the Throne;
 Face to face with those that love us,
 We shall know as we are known;
 And the song of our redemption
 Shall resound through endless day.
 When the shadows have departed
 And the mists have rolled away' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.223, #182).

'**Nearer My God, to Thee**' was authored by Sarah Flower Adams (1805-48) (Osbeck 1982, p.169). The scriptural reference is to Genesis 28:10-22, Jacob's dream of the ascending and descending angels.

Adams' Unitarian pastor had asked Sarah and her musician sister, Eliza, for a rendition of this story, and the result was this hymn. 'The hymn was sometimes criticized since there is no reference to the person or work of Christ throughout the text. ...[h]owever, the hymn is found in nearly every published hymnal and has won its way into the hearts of believers around the world with its many translations into other languages' (Osbeck 1982, p.170).

The hymn was known to be the favorite of American President William McKinley, and he was heard to utter its phrases as he took his last breaths. It was

used regularly and often at memorial and funeral services. "There is also the well-known account of the ill-fated ship, *The Titanic*, as it plunged into the icy waters of the Atlantic in 1912, sending 1500 people into eternity while the ship's band played the strains of this hymn" (Osbeck 1982, p.171), until their own lives were overtaken.

'Near, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee!
 E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me,
 Still all my song shall be --
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.
 Though like the wanderer (the sun gone down.)
 Darkness be over me -- my rest a stone;
 Yet in my dreams I'd be
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.
 Then let the way appear steps up to heaven.
 All that Thou sendest me in mercy given;
 Angels to beckon me
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.
 Then with my waking thoughts bright with
 Thy praise,
 Out of my stony griefs **Beth-el** I'll raise;
 So by my woes to be
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee.
 Or if on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
 Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upwards I fly,
 Still all my song shall be,
 Nearer, my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee' (*A.Bhaj.*, p.225, #182).

'**Rock of Ages**,' one of the best-known and popular hymns in English was written by Augustus M. Toplady (1740-78), with the American composer Thomas Hastings (1784-1872) providing the beloved melody in 1830. The verses are suggestive of I Corinthians 10: 1, 4:

'I want you to know, brethren, that our fathers were all under the same cloud, and all passed through the sea, ... and all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ' (RSV).

In his *101 Hymn Stories*, Kenneth W. Osbeck (1982) describes the hymn as portraying certain tensions between the author's Calvinistic electionism ('...an act of the Divine Will exercising itself on creatures, among which it chooses some in preference to others' (Cross 1985, p.450) and the Wesleys' Arminian views ('The Arminians insisted that the Divine sovereignty was compatible with a real free-will in man; that Jesus Christ died for all men and not only for the elect...') (Cross 1985, p.90). Regardless of this underlying theological tension, the hymn has been one of the most popular hymns to have been written, and, says Osbeck, 'God in His Providence has chosen to preserve this hymn for the past two hundred years so that congregations of believers of both Calvinistic and Arminian theological persuasion can sing this hymn with spiritual profit and blessing' (Osbeck 1982, p.218).

'Rock of ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee;
 Let the Water and the Blood
 From Thy riven Side which flowed,
 Be of sin the double cure,
 Cleanse me from its guilt and power.
 Not the labour of my hands
 Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
 Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my fears for ever flow,
 All for sin could not atone,
 Thou must save, and thou alone.
 Nothing in my hand I bring,
 Simply to Thy Cross I cling:
 Naked, come to Thee for dress,
 Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
 Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
 Wash me, Saviour, or I die.
 While I draw this fleeting breath,
 When my eyelids close in death,
 When I soar through tracts unknown,
 See Thee on Thy Judgement Throne;
 Rock of ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in Thee' (*A.Bhaji*, p.226, #183).

In summary, all of the English hymns found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* were well-known, well-loved, and popular hymns of the time. They emphasized themes of devotion to God, singleness of heart, "truth," and poverty, with which Gandhi and his vision of *satyagraha* would have resonated.

Rashtra Gita

Four "patriotic songs" follow the English hymns.

Vande Mataram

'Mother, I bow to you' was originally written as a longer poem by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in 1876, as it appeared in his novel *Ananda Matha*. "The Mother' invoked in the poem is the goddess Durga, who is identified with her 'seventy million' children' (Prabhu 1966, p.18). '*Vande Mataram*' was originally set to music by Jadunath Bhattacharya, and it was the rallying cry against British oppression. As it became a song capable of rousing crowds into tremendous fervour, it was banned by the British from being chanted in public gatherings, and people were imprisoned for disobeying the ban. It was a slogan of the Indian independence movement, and the first version on the Indian flag included the words 'Vande Mataram' in Devanagari script. It was the unofficial national anthem, until Rabindranath Tagore objected to its not being able to represent both Muslims and Hindus with its many images of the Hindu goddess Durga as Mother India.

'In order to divest the song of its sectarian character and to make it applicable to the whole of India instead of only Bengal, attempts were made [by the Indian Congress] to confine the recitation to the first two stanzas only. With the official adoption of D.R. Tagore's song 'Jana-gana-mana' as the National Anthem in January, 1950' (Prabhu 1966, p.18).

Over the years, *Vande Mataram* has been set to new music several times, and still continues to be deeply venerated as the "national song," as opposed to being

the official "national anthem." The first two stanzas follow are those adopted by the Congress in 1905:

Vande Mātaram (*Raga Kafi - Tal dipcandi*)

'*sujalā sufalā malayaja-sh talā śasya-śyāmalā Mātaram |
śubhra-jyotsna-pulakita-yāmanii fulla-kusumita-druma-dala-shobhinii
suhāsinii sumadhura-bhashinii sukhadā varadā Mātaram*" || -- *Vande ..(dhruva)*
(*A.Bhaj.*, p.229)

'Mother, I bow to thee! Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with orchard gleams, Cool with thy winds of delight,
Green fields weaving Mother of might, Mother free.

Glory of moonlight dreams, Over thy branches and lordly streams,
Clad in my blossoming trees, Mother, giver of ease,
Laughing low and sweet! Mother I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low! Mother, to thee I bow'
(Tagore's, translation, Prabhu 1966, p.18).

Jana Gana Mana

'Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people,' text and music, were written by Rabindranath Tagore in 1911. 'Jana-Gana-Mana' is the first of what was a five-stanza poem. While it was sung, and ostensibly composed, for the visit of King George V in 1911, Tagore intimated to J.B. Yeats and others that it had, in actuality, been written for an eternal being, 'the Lord of Destiny' and 'Perennial Guide' of India (see Dr. Monish R. Chatterjee, *Tagore and Jana Gana Mana*, www.homepages.udayton.edu/~chattemr/janaganamana.html). It was 'associated with the struggle for Indian freedom, and was sung in the Constituent Assembly at its historic midnight session on the 14th August, 1947. On the 24th January [1950], it was adopted by the Constituent Assembly as India's National Anthem' (Prabhu 1996, p.xiii).

Jana Gana Mana (*Raga korasa - tal dhumali*)

'*JanaGanaManaAdhināyaka, Jaya He Bhārata-Bhāgyavidhātā
 Punjab-Sindhu-Gujarāta-Marāthā, Drāvida-Utkala-Banga
 Vindhya-Himācala-Yamunā-Gangā Ucchhala-Jaladhitaranga
 Tava Śubha Nāme Jāge, Tava Śubha Āśīśa Māge
 Gāhe Tava Jaya Gāthā.
 JanaGana-Mangaladāyaka, Jaya He! Bhārata-Bhāgyavidhātā
 Jaya He! Jaya He! (Jaya He!)
 Jaya Jaya Jaya, Jaya He!' (A.Bhaj., p. 229)*

'Thou are the ruler of the minds of all people,
 dispenser of India's destiny.
 Thy name rouses the hearts of Punjab, Sindh, Gujarat, the Maratha
 country,
 in the Dravida country, Utkala (Orissa) and Bengal;
 It echoes in the hills of the Vindhyas and Himalayas,
 it mingles in the rhapsodies of the pure waters Jamuna and the Ganges.
 They chant only thy name,
 they seek only thy blessings,
 They sing only thy praise.
 The saving of all people waits in thy hand,
 thou dispenser of India's destiny.
 Victory, Victory, Victory, Victory to thee'
 (Tagore's Translation)

Ayi Bhuvana-Mana-Mohinii

This song is identified by Alain Danielou, in his catalogue of Indian Music, under Chapter V, "The Songs of Rabindranath Tagore," as having been written in Bengali by Rabindranath Tagore (Danielou 1952, p.139).

'Modern songs play an important part in the musical life of India. Some of the songs follow traditional types and are sung by very good singers. Most of them, however, are disfigured by the unsuited orchestral accompaniment, which film and recording companies usually impose on the artists (Danielou 1952, p.133).

Danielou lists 'Ayi Bhuvana mana mohini' as being presented by Hemanta Mukherjee, a famous and highly-respected Bengali singer, with the accompaniment

of an orchestra behind him. It praises the enchanting Goddess of the world, and the first verse of three is include in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

Ayi Bhuvana-Mana-Mohinii (*Raga bhupali - tiin tal*)

'Ayi bhuvana-mana-mohinii!
Ayi nirmala sūryā-karojjvala dharaṇii!
Janaka-jananii-jananii!

Niila-Sindhu-jala-dhauta-caraṇatala, Anila-vikampita-śyāmala-añcala,
Ambara-cumbita-bhāla-himācala, Shubhra-tuṣāra-kiriiṭinii!' (*A.Bhaj.*, p. 231)

'Peerless, alluring enchantress of the Earth!
Pure, serene, sun-drenched-ageless Mother of all.
Feet awash in the blue waters of *Sindhu*,
Verdant *anchal* swaying gently in the breeze --
Mighty *Himachal*, your vast forehead
Peaks capped in virgin snow, lofty and majestic
Rising to kiss the sky!'

(Translation, Dr. Monish R. Chatterjee,
University of Dayton)

Sare jahan se achcha

The last patriotic song included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* is '*Sare jahan se achcha*,' written, unlike the other selections, in Urdu. It was composed by Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal in 1905/06. 'This was one of [his] earliest and best known...patriotic songs' (Prabhu 1966, p.39), and it celebrates the harmony that can be found among people of differing religious traditions. At that time he 'used to stress his descent from the line of Hindu Kashmiri Pandits, [writing also] "*Mazhab nahi sikhaataa aapas mein bair rakhana*' ('religion does not teach us mutual animosity') (*The Tribune India*, May 28, 2006). This was a song which Mohandas Gandhi often sang himself while undergoing imprisonment.

Iqbal, however, later in his life, underwent an extreme transformation, and he became one of the first people to encourage a separate Muslim nation-state, advocating for this cause at the annual conference of the All India Muslim League in 1930.

'As Iqbal advanced in age and his commitment to the Islamic cause deepened, his partiality for a common composite culture receded. Only his Islamic identity became important to him. His metamorphosis was so complete that instead of his earlier evocation *Hindi hain Hum vatan hia Hindostan hamara* (We are Indian and India is our motherland) he now wrote *Muslim hain hum, vatan hai sara jahan hamara*, (We are Muslims and the entire world belongs to us). Instead of the other non-Muslim Indians now non-Indian Muslims, the Arabs and the Persians became his new brethren, merely because they were Muslims' (*The Tribune India*, May 28, 2006).

The popular patriotic song was included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, regardless of Iqbal's turnings.

Sāre jahānse accha (Rāga miśra p lu - tāl dhumāl)

'Sāre jahānse accha hindostān hamārā
ham bulbule hai uski, ye bostan hamārā

ghurbātme ho agar ham, rahta hai dil vatanme
samjho vahi hame bhi, dil ho jahā hamārā

parbat vaha sab se uncā, hamsāya āsmankā
vaha santari hamārā, vaha pasban hamārā

godī me kheltihe jiski hazāro nadiyā
gulśan hai jinke damse, raśke-jinā hamārā

āe ab, raude, gangā, vaha din he yād tujhko
utarā tere kināre, jab kārvā hamārā

mazahab nahii sikātā āpas me bayr rakhnā
hindi hai ham, vatan hai hindostān hamārā (emphasis added)

yunānomirrorūma, sab mit gaye jahānse
ab tak magar hai bāqi, nāmoniśā hamārā

kuch bāt he keh hastii, mitthii nahii hamārii
sadiyo rahā he duśman, doe-zamān hamārā

Iqbal koi maharam, apnā nahii jahā me
malūm kya kisiiko, darde-nihān hamārā' (*A.Bhaj*, p.232).

'Our India is the finest Country on this planet earth
This is our garden above, we are nightingales of mirth

Though in foreign lands we may reside, with our motherland
our hearts abide
Our spirit remains with thee, where our hearts exist

That mountain most high; neighbor to the skies
It is our sentinel; it is our protector

A thousand rivers play in its lap,
Gardens they sustain, the envy of the heavens is ours

O water of the mighty flow of the Ganga, do you remember the day
When on your banks, our caravan had landed

Faith does not teach us to harbour grudges between us
We are all Indians and India is our homeland

Greece, Egypt and Rome are lost, now only memories
But our civilization remains; it has stood the test of time

Something is in us, that preserves us, that keeps us ever-smiling
Though the fates and chances of the world have ever tried to break us

Iqbal! Is there no soul that could
Understand the pain in thy heart?' (Trans., Prabhu 1966).

Ramdhun

The final section of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* consists of three pages of *dhun*, very short devotional verses, which for the most part, simply repeat the names of

various gods and goddesses continuously. *Ramdhun* became a regular part of the *ashram* prayers after Narayan Moreshwar Khare became a full member of the *ashram*: '...Khare, a pupil of Pandit Vishnu Digambar, whom the master kindly sent to the Ashram...made hymn-singing interesting, and the *Ashram Bhajanavali* ...which is now [1932] read by thousands was in the main compiled by him. He introduced *Ramdhun*, the third item of our prayers' (Gandhi 1998, p.40).

In 1937, during his travels to Travancore, Gandhi explained the meaning and contents of the sung-prayers many times to congregation after congregation. He would explicate the Sanskrit verses, explain the context of the *bhajan(s)*, and then comment: 'But there are others who cannot understand even these simple *bhajans*, and so to direct their attention Godward we simply repeat the name of Rama' (CW-e, 70, # 357, p. 345). Later, in 1946, when as many as one hundred thousand people could gather for the evening prayer meetings, Gandhi wrote:

The singing of Ramadhun is the most important part of congregational prayer. The millions may find it difficult to correctly recite and understand the Gita verses and the Arabic and Zen Avesta prayers, but everybody can join in chanting Ramanama or God's name. It is as simple as it is effective. ...Anything that millions can do together becomes charged with a unique power (Gandhi 2000, p.98).

The single example of *Ramdhun* presented here was one of Gandhi's favorites. Shri Karunamayee has reported that the melody (raga) was composed by Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, the national music reformer who had sent Narayan Moreshwar Khare to work with and serve Gandhi.

Raghupati Rāghava Rājā Rām (Rāga khamāja - tāla karavahā)

'Raghupati Rāghava Rājā Rām Patitapāvana Siitā-Rām

Siitā-Rām Siitā-Rām bhaja pyāre tū Siitā-Rām

Īśvara Allāh tere nām -- sabako sanmati de Bhagavān' (A.Bhaj., p.234).

'O Lord of the Raghus, Born of the Raghus, King, All-pervading,
 Redeemers-of-the-fallen, Sita-Ram!
 Sita-Ram! Sita-Ram! O, you dear one, praise Sita-Ram!
 Ishvara! Allah! These are your names. Grant, O Lord, discernment of
 a good mind to all!' (my translation)

Raghupati Raghava, based on a 17th-century sung-prayer by Ramdas, a
 Marathi devotee of Rama,

'[t]he origin of Ramdhun is shrouded in legend. According to the
 legend that he preferred it was composed by the great Hindu poet
 Tulsidas (1532-1623). While on a pilgrimage visiting the Vishnu temple
 of Dakore, Northern India, Tulsidas was moved to bargain with Vishnu.
 Until Vishnu revealed himself as Rama he would not bow his head in
 prayer. His wish was promptly granted: Rama appeared in his mind
 with his wife Sita, and three of their devotees. Hence, explains Gandhi,
 "Ramdhun, meaning intoxication with God [Ram]' (Parel 2006, p.167).

Raghupati Rāghava was chanted during the Dandi Salt March in 1930, and
 '[t]here were, and are, several versions of Ramdhun in vogue. The version that
 Gandhi used had an ecumenical flavor to it. The third line read that the Ishwar of
 the Hindus and the Allah of the Muslims were one and the same' (Parel 2006,
 p.168). Later, Gandhi made specific reference to his grand-niece, Manu, having
 been with him on the Noakhali tour for Hindu-Muslim unity in the spring of 1947:
 'During that tour she found a melodious tune. Of course she has not composed it. It is
 more true to say that God prompted her to say: 'Ishvar Allah tere nam sabko
 sanmati de Bhagawan.' In a speech given at the Inter-Asian Relations Conference
 on April 2, 1947, Gandhi declared: 'I am not postponing the prayer out of fear. If
 anybody wants to stop me once I have started the prayers I shall not stop even if I
 am killed. And you will see I shall be reciting *Rama Rahim* and *Krishna Karim*
 when I breathe my last' (*CW-e*, 94, #226, p.219). Further, in a footnote to this
 speech as published in the *Collected Works*, there is additional confirmation of
 Gandhi's attempts to make this *Ramdhun* better reflect the desired Hindu-Muslim

unity in that 'according to the source after his return from Noakhali, Gandhiji replaced the refrain *Bhaj man pyare Sitaram* by *Bhaj man pyare Rama Rahim, bhaj man pyare Krishna Karim*' (CW-e. 94, #226, p.219).

Although the majority of the *Dhuns* are sung to Rama and Krishna, the final two are directed to Lord Shiva.

The Ashram Bhajanavali concludes with an alphabetical index of the *bhajans* included therein.

After 1947

In 1971, Gandhi's translation of 253 items into English was published as *Ashram Bhajanavali* by the Government of India as part of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (Vol. XLIV, pp. 386-465).

In 1999, one hundred and eight of Gandhi's English translations have been published by in *Book of Prayers*. It includes a forward by his grandson, Arun Gandhi. The translations are Gandhi's own from the Collected Works, and although the format of the book suggests a book of unsung poetry, the book is a fitting tribute to the life and work of Mohandas K. Gandhi. Michael N. Nagler's Introduction is especially evocative of the *satyagraha* movement and the significance that the sung-prayers of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* held for that movement.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to summarize for the reader the texts and materials contained in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. It is hoped that sufficient amounts of each "genre" in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* have been presented and described completely enough to serve as an indication of what the complete book contains, and up-coming chapters will reveal where its importance lies.

This chapter outlined for the reader the historical developments of the *satyagraha* movement alongside the development of the *Bhajanavali*, from its nascent beginnings in South Africa, to the addition of Sanskrit *shlokas*, *Ramdhun*,

and other materials in India. The very simple liturgies of 1917 were described; an overview of materials translated into English in 1930 for Mirabeen was given; and finally a more complete presentation and analysis of the 1947 edition was presented, indicating the additional of verses which had been added along the way.

As Gandhi had said, 'if Truth were the root of the ashram, then [sung]-prayer was the primary nourishment for that root' (Gandhi 1998, p.36). The *Ashram Bhajanavali* was intended as spiritual nourishment for the *satyagraha* community as each individual strove to achieve *svaraj*. It included a formula for daily activities, sung-prayers for the ashram children, sung-prayers for the ashram women, and sung-prayers designated for morning and evening. Verses were included from the traditional *Vedanta*, as well as chants to various gods and goddesses. Sections of *Ramcaritmanas*, *Mukundamala*, etc., represented sung-prayers from the widely-varying regions of India. The *bhajans* also represented the many regional traditions. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* can be seen first of all as pan-Indian, as well as "ecumenical" and inter-religious in its overall content.

A few comments should be made concerning the *Bhajanavali's* eclecticism, and its particular "inter-religious" presentation. One might be tempted to ask whether the *Ashram Bhajanavali* was based upon some kind of Christian prayer book or hymnal. The prayer books of many Christian denominations contain very intricate liturgies, longer services, responses between minister and congregation, and the hymnals are very often set up as to the liturgical season. So, in this first instance, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* really does not resemble Christian examples, as there is no "set service" of a longer, call-and-response type. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* designates morning and evening prayers, which many Christian denominations do as well. However, many Hindu and Jain prayers are often chanted at the auspicious, sacred times of *sandhya*, 1) when the night turns to day, and 2) when day turns to night. So the fact that Gandhi chose to have sung-prayers

during the important periods of *sandhya* can not be said to be a strictly Christian practice.

Another possible Christian connection, one which would be at least "twice removed," so to speak, could be the service books of the *Brahmo Samaj*. As was mentioned in Chapter One, the Brahmo Samaj "was modelled on Christian reform movements and met regularly for services. During these services passages would be read from the *Upanishads*, sermons delivered and hymns sung" (Flood 1996, 253). Here, again, there is not an exact likeness. Gandhi did not include sermons in his short daily liturgies during the time of his middle career, and it was not until the end of his career that he would "sermonize" following the prayer meetings, in an attempt to connect the prayers with current events.

Debendranath Tagore had compiled a group of Hindu texts, mostly *Upanishads*, called *Brahma Dharma*, which was to be used for public and private worship. So, there is some correspondence to the *Ashram Bhajanavali* here. Sen had also collected in an organized, intentional manner texts from Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, Chinese, Islamic and Christian scriptures, entitled *Shlokasangraha*. So, there would be correspondence to the *Ashram Bhajanavali* with these texts. However, Gandhi's *Ashram Bhajanavali* was completely of his own making (along with Khare and Kalelkar); it was his own original collection.

Gandhi's eclecticism was not some sterile plan to include equally and/or scientifically every sect and religion according to some type of pre-determined program or grid. One may feel a certain imbalance within the collection, as they do not represent all religions or all sects within one religion. It is not a handbook of world religions, although he spoke and wrote often of the *satyagraha* vow of *sarvadharmasamanatva*, the respect for all religious paths. As such, Gandhi was open to all who came into his path, and people joined the ashram and were involved in *svadeshi* from religions other than Hinduism. In this process, certain verses from those other religions were added as a result of contact with those certain people.

This was not a general eclecticism, chosen by committee to represent all facets of all world religions. It was a specific eclecticism that was particular to Gandhi and to events and life of *satyagraha*. "Its development has been spontaneous...there is a history [story] attached to almost every shloka and every selected bhajan" (CW-e, 81, #742, p. 487). The *shlokas* chosen largely by Kaka Kalelkar were largely *Vedanta*, while other chants were included as well for *Ganesh*, *Sarasvati*, *Vaishnavite* verses for *Rama* and *Krishna*, some *Shaivaite* for *Shiva*. The *bhajans* were chosen in collaboration with Narayan Moresh Khare, and were those which were most appropriate for the *satyagraha* ideals. A devotee who visited Sevagram Ashram, Gandhi's place of residence during the mid-30s to mid-40s remarked:

'Prayer meetings had been a ritual with Bapu for almost forty years. The prayers were drawn from many religions, and generally followed an established order. In fact, when I was there we had our own prayer book, the Ashram Bhajanavali, which was revised every now and again to include a new prayer or a new hymn' (Mehta 1985, p.8).

The later inter-religious additions came from people close to Gandhi: Raihana Tyabji, friend and daughter of Abbas Tyabji (leader of Congress), offered the Islamic verses; Dr. M.D.D. Gilder, offered the Zoroastrian prayers having chanted them at Gandhi's wife, Mirabai's, funeral; Keshav, the Buddhist monk, introduced the Buddhist chant. Gandhi's favorite Christian prayers had been gathered along the way, during his many encounters and discussions with Christians, as far back as 'Lead, Kindly Light,' sung by a young friend when he had been hurt and attacked in South Africa. The Indian patriotic songs of independence were included as all of India was singing them.

Speaking to a questioner concerning the Ashram Bhajanavli, Gandhi replied: '...the ashram prayer is a hotchpot of something Eastern and something Western. As I have no prejudice against taking anything good from the West or against giving up

anything in the East, there is an unconscious blending of the two' (Gandhi 2000, p.144). It was an organic process, which evolved over forty years, and yet, an organic process which resulted in a book of sung-prayers, and an expressed experience of devotion, that was eclectic and inclusive in nature. 'Every religion seems to have found a natural setting in the prayer book' (*CW-e*, 81, #742, p.487). (Had that organic process been allowed to be continued, sung-prayers from other traditions would have been added. Just prior to Gandhi's assassination, appropriate Sikh prayers were being considered).

Furthermore, as seen from this chapter's summary, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* can not be judged as a simple hymnal; it was hymnal, prayer book, and community guide altogether. As the preface to the 1947 edition stated, 'The primary aim of the collection was to sustain right conduct;' beyond that, 'it has brought together a group of people who for years have been reciting these hymns with great devotion' (*CW-e*, 93, #536, p. 382) (emphasis added). As the *satyagraha* movement grew, and as its principles of *svaraj* were being enacted, the values of the *Gita*, of the *Upanishads*, of the *Ramcaritmanas*, the *bhajans*, etc., were all meant to teach the ashramites that "right conduct" which would bring about *svaraj*, or *Ramrajya*. They, in turn, would teach that non-violence to the nation. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* held the seeds of the movement; the sung-prayers were the foundation of Gandhi's reforms for India. As Gandhi finished the preface, he wrote: '...it has not restricted itself to any particular sect or religion. Gems available from all places have been collected. Therefore many Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others, recite from it with pleasure and derive whatever moral sustenance they can' (*CW-e*, 93, #536, p. 382)

In recognizing the eclecticism of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, one further question might be asked regarding to what extent Gandhi was raised a Vaishnava (a worshipper of Vishnu, often in the form of either Rama or Krishna), and whether he remained so. Gandhi was born in Porbandar, Gujarat. 'Gujarat was open not only to trade and commerce but to currents of thought and cultures from

many sources, Arabs and Sindhis, Muslims and Jains, to mention only a few.

...Those engaged in trading tended to be attracted to Jainism, and Gandhi was of this community, the Vaishyas. As for the Muslims, they too were highly diversified. As a Vaishnava, Gandhi was in no way debarred from deep interest in the other religious followings to be found around him...' (Chatterjee 2005, pp.18-19).

'Karamchand [Gandhi's father], Putlibai [Gandhi's mother], and their children lived in the old family house in Porbandar, which had extended ... from a one-story affair to a three-story structure. The house was wedged between two temples' (Mehta 1976, p.73). 'The family belonged to the Vallabhacharya [Krishnaite] *sampradaya* or sect. But, in addition to going to the *haveli* or Vaishnava temple, young Mohandas would also accompany his mother to the Pranami temple which contained copies of both the *Koran* and the Puranas, but had no images of gods and goddesses' (Chatterjee 2005, p.40). Putlibai was, 'a member of [this] local ascetic, orthodox offshoot of the Vaishnava sect, which was, however, strongly influenced by Islam in that it emphasized direct communion with God. ... She liked to spin' (Mehta, Mahatma, 74). Those Hindus and Muslims who worshipped in this open way also prayed and ate together (Chatterjee 2000, p.116), so Gandhi was exposed from an early age to many other faiths, and especially to Islam and Jainism. His father was also a man interested in many religions, and people of varied religious backgrounds were often at the housing engaging in religiously diverse conversations with Gandhi's father. 'Jainism and Sufism were no less prevalent in Gujarat, and visitors to [his father's] residence came from a variety of communities' (Chatterjee 2000, p.40).

Gandhi wrote later that he was not much interested in religion when he was young: 'Being born in the Vaishnava faith, I had often to go to the *Haveli*. But it never appealed to me. I did not like its glitter and pomp. And I heard rumors of immorality being practised there, and lost all interest in it. Hence I could gain nothing from *Haveli* (Jack 1956, p. 5)

In her work *Gandhi and the Challenge of Religious Diversity*, Margaret Chatterjee writes that

[Gandhi] was brought up in a part of India which was largely Vaishnava in faith, Dwarka being the legendary capital of the kingdom which Krishna was said to have ruled. It so happens that Gandhi was more drawn to the hero of the epic *Ramayana*, Rama, in Tulsidas' version of it, which he would hear recited at home.... (Chatterjee 2000, p.40).

Furthermore, Chatterjee feels that

Gandhi was attracted to Tulsidas' portrayal of the kingly figure of Rama [because] Gandhi sees in him a paradigm, an ideal, a good brother and a man faithful to his people. By contrast he reacts unfavourably to the 'tinsel' atmosphere in the *haveli*, at the same time learning to respect different manifestations of human religious imagination. It is likely that he may have seen in the character of Rama, again as presented by Tulsidas, an austerity which fitted in with his own intimations of the deity, and his own temperament (Chatterjee 2000, p.55).

(Please see additional comments along these lines as noted in my interviews with Sri Karunamayee found on pages 362 to 364 herein. See also David Smith's article, "On the Periphery of Krishna," in which he states that, in general, "...Krishna, or at least images of Krishna, played little part in either the Indian Independence movement or Hindu nationalism," and that Gandhi was put off by the excesses of Vallabhite Krishnaism (Smith, Periphery, 42).

Chatterjee continues to outline the many and diverse religious influences which came into Gandhi's life and which did affect him. While a student in London he encountered "evangelical Christians, theosophists, vegetarians, secular thinkers of various backgrounds" and "[e]ven though temple-going was of little importance to him, he attended Christian places of worship, made an attempt to study the Bible, and also learnt more about his own religion" (*Ibid.*, 22 and 19-20). The same held true for him while in Africa,

being introduced to evangelical Christians, Anglicans, and Quakers.

Furthermore, all during this time his "spiritual advisor," Raychandbhai [a devout Jain jewel merchant from Bombay] was advising him as how to delve more deeply into Hinduism.

Gandhi was attracted to Kabir, and to Sufism; "of all the reformers directly before Gandhi, he "was especially impressed by Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna" (Chatterjee, 304).

Ethical morality was at the core of Gandhi's interests. "...[H]e tended to the view that an ethical orientation was of more moment than profession of belief in a set of doctrines. Guiding him to this position were many trends of thought" (*Ibid*, 232). In *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Tolstoy "details the way in which Christians, individuals, states and institutions, justify war and perpetrate violence" (Chatterjee, 243). In Tolstoy, Gandhi found a fellow soul who was as outraged at the superficiality of Christians as Gandhi was outraged at how Untouchables were treated by Hindus. "The Tolstoyan elements all centred on practice, for neither Gandhi nor Tolstoy followed the mystics' path which formed a considerable part of their respective heritages" (*Ibid.*, 246). Likewise, Gandhi was influenced by the ethics of John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, in which Ruskin "makes a critical study of modern civilization and pleads passionately for new social values" more humane to all of humankind (Rao, 6). Gandhi wrote: "Ruskin [and] *Unto This Last* transformed me overnight from a lawyer and city dweller into a rustic living away from Durban on a farm, three miles from the nearest railway station" (*Ibid.*, 7).

Furthermore, it was the ethical orientation of Jesus Christ with which Gandhi identified. After attending many and diverse Christian church services, from high Anglican, with music, incense, candles, and bells, to Baptist house meetings where prayers were held on the knees with no hymn-singing, Gandhi had formed a picture of Jesus as an ethical man

who went about doing good; who was interested in healing the sick, as Gandhi himself was; who was much misunderstood; suffered without protest, and was put to death unjustly. ... He mixed with different kinds of people, some of whom were looked down on by others; did not make a distinction between 'us' and 'them'; and could hold his own in any debate with those who tried to trip him up on matters concerning his own Jewish heritage. These were admirable qualities, worthy of emulation by any devotee of Truth, and there was nothing therein to set up barriers between one human being and another. Jesus remained a Jew, and Gandhi remained a Hindu (Chatterjee, 227-28).

The following three chapters will examine in more detail how the *Ashram Bhajanavali* was used in ritual contexts, and how these sung-prayers supported Gandhi's vision of *svaraj*. Chapter Three will discuss the use of these sung-prayers in ritual prayer meetings that occurred twice a day. Chapter Four will look at other ways in which these songs were used by Gandhi and the *satyagraha* community to achieve their purposes as the movement grew into a national initiative. Chapter Five will consider Gandhi's esteem for music, and how it was that this sung-prayer repertoire, being specifically sung and chanted (rather than being read or spoken) had a significant appeal and power for the the nation of India and the *satyagraha* communities. By placing this collection more deeply into its historical and social contexts, and by analyzing its purposes against the backdrop of ritual, the extent to which these sung-prayers shaped Gandhi's non-violent campaigns will become clear.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY OF ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI

1905 - South Africa - *bhajans*

1915 - India - Sanskrit *shlokas* added to *bhajans*

Morning

1. *Shlokas*
2. *Bhajan*
3. *Ramdhun*
4. *Gitapatha*

Evening

1. *Sthitaprajna-lakshana* (*Gita* II: 54-72)
2. *Bhajan*
3. *Ramdhun*
4. Reading: "some spiritual book"

1927 - Evening prayer established at 7:00 PM ("never forget again," *Prayer*, 84)

1928 - Morning prayer = 4:15 to 4:45 AM (Eleven vows described in "Satyagraha Ashram," *Young India*, 1928)

1930 - Translation for Mirabeau, May to December, while in Yeravda Central Prison

1932 - Morning prayer = 4:20 AM ("History of Satyagraha Ashram," written from Yeravda Central Prison)

1932 - *Ishopanishad* (Yeravda Prison, July 19, 1932: "I am now memorizing *Ishopanishad*")

1933 - *Al Fatehah* - "included in the Ashram worship," (*Prayer*, 141-2) by Raihāna "while Sadhu Keshav still with us" (1935-41)

1934 - John S. Hoyland published *Songs from Prison* ("barely recognizable")

1937 - *Ishopanishad* - added during Harijan tour throughout Travancore, January 1937

1942 - Buddhist chant became opening prayer (in 1935, Sadhu Keshav sang early mornings; 1942, Sadhu Keshav arrested due to WW II)

- in "Ashram Prayer" article, Gandhi stated popularity of *Ashram Bhajanaivali*: "Every religion seems to have found a natural setting in the prayer book"

1943 - Zoroastrian chant became part of repertoire - Parsi verses sung by Dr. Gilder at break of 21-day fast at Aga Khan Palace

1944 - February: Gandhi's wife, Kasturbai, dies in Aga Khan Palace - selections from *Ashram Bhajanavali* inserted in formal funeral ceremony

1945 - Gandhi speaks publically of his desire for all the prayers to be included in a booklet and published in Devanagari, Urdu, and Bengali

1947

Morning

Evening

- | | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 1. | Buddhist mantra (p.20) | Buddhist mantra (p.20) |
| 2. | 2 minutes silence | 2 minutes silence |
| 3. | <i>Ishavasyam</i> (p. 2) | <i>Ishavasyam</i> (p. 2) |
| 4. | <i>Pratah Smarana & Shlokas</i> (pp. 2-13) | <i>Yam Brahma & Sthitaprajna-lakshana</i> (<i>Gita</i> II: 54-72)(p. 22-30) |
| 5. | 11 Vows (p. 14) | 11 Vows (p. 14) |
| 6. | <i>Qur'an</i> verses (pp. 14-18) | <i>Qur'an</i> verses (pp. 14-18) |
| 7. | Zoroastrian <i>gatha</i> | Zoroastrian <i>gatha</i> |
| 8. | <i>Bhajan</i> | <i>Bhajan</i> |
| 9. | <i>Ramdhun</i> (p. 234) | <i>Ramdhun</i> (p. 234) |
| 10. | <i>Gitapatha</i> | Reading: "some spiritual book" |

1971 - *Ashram Bhajanavali* published by the Government of India as part of *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* (CW Vol. XLIV, pp. 386-465; CW-e, Vol. 50, #458, pp. 323-406.)

1999 - *Book of Prayers*, John Strohmeier, Editor

CHAPTER THREE. RITUAL: TWICE-DAILY SUNG-PRAYERS

The whites were fully armed. It was clear that if the Indians were to come into their own [in South Africa], they must forge a weapon which would be different from and infinitely superior to the force which the white settlers commanded.... It was then that I introduced congregational[sung]-prayer in Phoenix and Tolstoy Farm as a means for training....

-- Mohandas K. Gandhi (*Prayer*, 98)

As Gandhi worked to reform religious and social practices in India through non-violent means, he spoke out against rituals of a rote and superstitious nature, as well as those priests who took advantage of the poor and the uneducated. 'Gandhi had little sympathy for ritual observances, although an objective observer might find in his prayer meetings a unique kind of ritual which did not require a building, involve any expenditure, or bring in priests or pastors '(Chatterjee 2005, p.124-5). As was illustrated in Chapter Two, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* contains a wide range of materials which functioned as the foundation of *satyagraha*'s training; it contains elements of ritual and ceremony, theology and creed, as well as teaching and training for *svaraj*. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* is a proverbial "window" onto the community's ritual activities. An in-depth understanding of this collection's importance, within its *sitz im leben*, will provide a true perception of its place beneath India's independence movement.

The twice-daily rituals that are described in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* are truly not like other rituals, whether Eastern or Western. They are neither as complex as the ancient Vedic ceremonies, which required many instruments, several priests to chant the sung-prayers (often at the same time), sometimes requiring animal sacrifice, and, especially in the case of the *ashvamedha* (horse sacrifice), could last up to a year. Nor were they as complex as the many more modern *puja* (worship) ceremonies, in which images of the god could be washed

with milk and with water, dressed with clothes and/or garlands, with food offerings and flowers having been given by the participants to be returned as *prasad* (blessing from the god) at the end of the ceremony; nor like those *pujas* in which many images are offered for blessing while the priest chants ancient *mantras* [words of power] while water is being poured over the objects, with candles burning, or lamps be encircled. The Hindu and Jain ceremonies can be quite complex, involving special instruments, flowers, images, candles, lights, prescribed ways of walking, with one or more presiding priests, and they can be quite lengthy. (See Witzel (2003) "Vedas and Upanishads," and Mahoney (1998) *The Artful Universe*, for introductions to the complexities of Vedic ritual; see Fuller (1992) *The Camphor Flame*, for a comprehensive look at the complexities of *puja*, and Humphrey and Laidlaw (2004) *The Archetypal Actions of Ritual*, for a comprehensive look at the complexities of Jain ritual.)

Gandhi's rituals were not like these at all. Nor were they as simple as the silent Quaker meeting, nor as simple as sitting Buddhist meditation. He did, however, desire a sung-prayer meeting that was relatively simple, that anyone could attend, that involved no special instruments -- not even food or candles -- no priests and no images (so as not to offend anyone). The meetings were held in the open, under "God's sky," and, originally, there was no heightened platform which might signal the "specialness" of those who sat upon it. (Later the use of platforms became necessary as thousand and thousands of people began to attend the sung-prayer meetings.) The simple liturgy he designed, and how it grew over time, will be described in this chapter.

As was mentioned above, the choice of Roy Rappaport's approach, used in juxtaposition with Gandhi's ritual practices, comes from a respect for his work as a liturgical ritualist (of which, as Humphrey and Laidlaw noted, there has been a dearth in the field of anthropology), along with his clear, concise, and detailed analysis of elements such as the "plain and featureless variety." Rappaport's

detailed analysis, which covers: 1) what are the features of ritual; 2) how does ritual function; and, 3) what are the outcomes of ritual, provides a roadmap or a template with which to examine religious ritual in any context, however it is especially helpful in the *satyagraha* context. Even with the simplest of rituals (which Gandhi's were), Rappaport's explications prove helpful. Furthermore, the concerns of most of the ritual theorists mentioned earlier in Chapter One have been incorporated somewhere within Rappaport's schema.

THE FEATURES OF RITUAL

We will begin with what Rappaport has to say about what ritual is. Ritual consists of 'a structure, that is, a more or less enduring set of relations in a number of general but variable features' (Rappaport 1999, p.3). In Chapter 2, we looked at the history and development of the sung-prayer meetings as they grew from 1905 through 1944. It is evident that even as elements were added, over time, the twice-daily ritual of chanted material remained 'more or less enduring,' and that the relationship between segments remained relatively intact within their established structure.

Encoding by Others than Performers

Rappaport then goes further to present a definition of ritual as 'the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers' (Rappaport, p.24). The morning and evening sung-prayers adhered to an established, and largely invariant, order of chanted elements. These elements had been chosen by founding members of the *Satyagraha Ashram*: Kaka Kalelkar had chosen the Sanskrit *shlokas*; Narayan Moreshwar Khare had chosen the *bhajans* (hymns) and added the *Ramdhun* selections. Gandhi held the on-going, decision-making power over all selections, as well as the *Gita* verses and their cycles of recitation. As the *bhajans* were musically more demanding, Khare or one of his students often sang the *bhajans*, and Kalelkar

often chanted the Sanskrit verses. However, with time and circumstances continually changing, assignments for chanting could change as well. *Ashram* inmates might be travelling, or they might be imprisoned. Thus, while specific elements were not always sung by the same person, the elements remained the same and were "not entirely encoded by the performers."

Decorous Formality

Rappaport's second defining feature of ritual consists of 'decorous formality,' and he states that '[b]ehavior in ritual tends to be punctilious and repetitive' (Rappaport, p.33). During attendance at Gandhi's sung-prayer meetings, respectful and specific modes of behavior were expected. Gandhi wrote that, especially for the morning prayers, one should never move directly from bed to the prayer grounds. One should brush one's teeth and

.resolve to remain awake and alert. In the meeting we should not sit close to one another, should sit erect like a walking-stick, breathing slowly, and if we can speak the words correctly. ... Even if a person does not know Sanskrit, he should learn the meanings of each verse and meditate over it. (Gandhi 2000, p.145).

Evidenced here is the expectation of respectful awareness and participation, not unlike Humphrey and Laidlaw's intentionally adopted 'ritual stance' (Humphrey and Laidlaw 2004, p.94), in which participants in the ritual are aware that the acts of ritual are other than the normal daily activities. Further, participants' exhibition of respectful participation was a function of their own actively-chosen 'ritual commitment.' For Rappaport, 'formality' and 'decorum' are not necessarily the same thing, but, in Gandhi's case, respectful and contained 'decorum' were both prescribed.

Rappaport continues: 'Rituals are performed in specific contexts, that is they are regularly repeated at times established by clock, calendar, biological rhythm,

ontogeny, physical condition, or defined social circumstance, and they occur in special places as well' (Rappaport 1999, p.33). With regard to this feature of ritual, the sung-prayer meetings were repeated 'by the clock' -- two times a day, every day, for the length of half an hour. 'The time for morning worship was a matter of experiment fixed at 4, 5, 6, and 7 am, one after another. But on account of my persistently strong attitude on the subject', wrote Gandhi, 'it has been fixed at 4.20 am. With the first bell at 4 everyone rises from bed and after a wash reaches the prayer ground by 4.20' (Gandhi 1998, p.37). The time of evening sung-prayers was set at 7:00 PM.

Gandhi's use of ritual activities in 'special places' will be considered further on in this chapter, while ritual activities as found in 'defined social circumstance' (such as fasting and non-violent marching) will be discussed separately in Chapter 4.

It is with this feature of 'formality' that Rappaport raises the question of terminology for those individual elements that can be found within any given ritual. In Rappaport's definition, Gandhi's sung-prayer meetings would be sufficiently elaborate to include what may be called a 'liturgy' or 'liturgical orders': 'more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances of some duration repeated in specified contexts' (Rappaport 1999, p.35). And the term 'liturgical orders' can 'refer not only to individual rituals, but to the more or less invariant sequences of rituals that make up cycles and other series as well' (Rappaport 1999, 169). As mentioned above, *satyagraha's* sung-prayer meetings were not elaborate concatenations consisting of innumerable elements. However, even though simple combinations of a few items arranged in a specific and invariant manner, they do qualify as 'liturgy' or 'liturgical orders'.

Invariance

The third feature in Rappaport's ritual schema is 'invariance.' He defines this as meaning 'conformity to form,' with the qualifier 'more or less,' since, although the majority of ritual consists of liturgical orders that are pre-arranged and that remain consistently repeated as such over time, there are always circumstances which may have an impact on that order. Ritual can change over time, and 'there are possibilities for, and even demands for, variation within the most invariant of liturgical orders' (Rappaport 1999, p.37). However, the consistent repetition of invariable, or fixed, liturgical elements is a normative feature of ritual, coinciding precisely with the method of chanting both morning and evening sung-prayers of the *satyagraha* community.

The order of the chanted liturgical elements of the *satyagraha* community always remained the same. In other words, the order of the elements as executed was always fixed, or 'invariable'. However, the content within each element could change depending upon whether it was morning or night, as, e.g., early in the movement, the Sanskrit *shlokas* were always recited as the first element in the morning, while the *Gita* II:54-72 verses were always the first element recited at night.

The liturgical orders for morning and evening prayers (in the early years) began with a very simple order. In the morning, 1) Sanskrit *shlokas* were chanted, 2) a *bhajan* or hymn was sung, 3) *Ramdhun*, or the chanting of God's name was sung, and 4) a segment of the *Bhagavad Gita* was chanted. In the evening, 1) verses 54-72 of *Bhagavad Gita* II were chanted, 2) a *bhajan* or hymn was sung, 3) *Ramdhun* was chanted, and 4) a 'portion' of a sacred book was read or chanted (for which, if needed, portions of the *Upanishads*, the *Pandava-Gita*, the *Dvadasha-Panjarika Stotra*, and the *Ramcharitmānas* were included in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*). If reduced to liturgical elements only, then the liturgical order of this

"Early" version of this very simple liturgy, would be outlined as follows:

<u>EARLY</u>	
MORNING	EVENING
1. Invariable	1. Invariable
2. Invariable	2. Invariable
3. Invariable	3. Invariable
4. Invariable	4. Invariable

As can easily be deduced, with eight elements as individual indicators, there are eight elements of invariability, or 100 percent invariability.

When these ten elements are reduced further to liturgical elements and the variability or invariability of their contents, then these simply liturgies would be outlined as follows:

<u>EARLY</u>					
MORNING			EVENING		
	<u>Element</u>	<u>Content</u>		<u>Element</u>	<u>Content</u>
1.	Invariable	Invariable	1.	Invariable	Invariable
2.	Invariable	Variable	2.	Invariable	Variable
3.	Invariable	Variable	3.	Invariable	Variable
4.	Invariable	Variable	4.	Invariable	Variable

Even here, it can be seen, that the majority of the elements found in the sung-prayer meetings were of the 'invariable' or fixed type. Each of the individual elements was still invariable, and in each case, the first element of both morning and evening rituals was always the same (although different from each other). The second element, that of singing a *bhajan*, was always the same, although the hymn could change, and according to Gandhi, sometimes Christian and Muslim hymns were sung (Gandhi 1998, p38). Element 3 was always the same, although, like the

bhajan, the choice of *Ramdhun* could change (several possibilities are printed in the *Ashram Bhajanaivali* on pages 231-33). Due to the chosen and musical natures of Elements 2 and 3, these elements would vary depending upon the length of the verses of the *bhajan* chosen and upon the number of verses taken, and likely would have provided the most variance, as someone would have had to choose them. Element 4 was always the same, but, like Element 1, the contents of the elements differed and were variable, being verses chosen from the *Gita* in the morning and a portion of a "sacred book" being chosen in the evening.

Out of 16 indicators, 10 are 'invariable', which represents 62.5%, and out of 16 indicators 6 are 'variable', representing 37.5%. Each sung-prayer meeting lasted half an hour (theoretically), and depending upon the songs or 'variable' parts chosen, the 'variable' elements, although they only made up 37.5% of the entire content of the ritual, may have held more weight within the whole ritual based upon time duration, which is not something that can be grasped for certain. However, as the majority of indicators would be considered 'invariable', and as the order of the elements did not change whether it was morning or evening, the sung-prayer meetings of the *Satyagraha* community, fall unquestionably within Rappaport's definition of 'invariance' as a defining feature of ritual.

As Rappaport has indicated, rituals can change somewhat over time, and in Chapter Two, some of the changes that took place from the period between 1915 (the time of the early sung-prayer meetings) and 1944 (when the daily rituals had reached their final, more-or-less concrete forms) were addressed. The new items that were added along the way consisted of: 1) a Buddhist *mantra*; 2) two minutes of silence; 3) *Ishopanishad* I.1; 4) The Eleven Vows; 5) a Zoroastrian *gatha*, and 6) verses from the *Qur'an*. By this time, as based on the order suggested in the *Ashram Bhajanaival* and other readings, each ritual had expanded to a liturgical order of ten elements. If reduced to liturgical elements, then the liturgical order of these ten Late elements would be outlined as follows:

LATE

MORNING

1. Invariable
2. Invariable
3. Invariable
4. Invariable
5. Invariable
6. Invariable
7. Invariable
8. Invariable
9. Invariable
10. Invariable

EVENING

1. Invariable
2. Invariable
3. Invariable
4. Invariable
5. Invariable
6. Invariable
7. Invariable
8. Invariable
9. Invariable
10. Invariable

As with the simpler liturgical order of the earlier sung-prayer meetings, the invariability of the over-all ritual remains at 100%.

When these ten elements are reduced further to liturgical elements and the variability or invariability of their contents, then these later liturgies would be outlined as follows:

LATE

MORNING

	<u>Element</u>	<u>Content</u>	
1.	Invariable	Invariable	<u>S</u>
2.	Invariable	Invariable	<u>S</u>
3.	Invariable	Invariable	<u>S</u>
4.	Invariable	Invariable	
5.	Invariable	Invariable	<u>S</u>
6.	Invariable	Invariable	<u>S</u>
7.	Invariable	Invariable	<u>S</u>
8.	Invariable	Variable	
9.	Invariable	Variable	
10.	Invariable	Variable	

EVENING

	<u>Element</u>	<u>Content</u>
1.	Invariable	Invariable
2.	Invariable	Invariable
3.	Invariable	Invariable
4.	Invariable	Invariable
5.	Invariable	Invariable
6.	Invariable	Invariable
7.	Invariable	Invariable
8.	Invariable	Variable
9.	Invariable	Variable
10.	Invariable	Variable

With 40 indicators now in play within the later sung-prayer meetings, 34 indicators are 'invariable', representing 85%, and the same six indicators have

remained 'variable', representing 15%. The "S" in the above table (placed between Morning and Evening prayers) indicates those liturgical elements that were exactly the Same for both prayer sessions. Six elements were now repeated at both the morning and the evening prayers, thus being heard twice a day, representing 60% of the number of elements of each prayer meeting. As before, the 'invariable' elements could affect the songs chosen and number of verses taken. In order for all the added 'invariable' elements to be included in each prayer session, the length of time for the *bhajans* and *Ramdhun* (variable elements) would necessarily have needed to have been shortened, if the time duration for both morning and evening sung-prayers were to remain at half an hour.

From these admittedly elementary calculations, it is possible to make a few observations. In the early sung-prayer meetings, there would seem to have been more variability with the *bhajan*, *Ramdhun*, and *Gita* sections in the morning and the *bhajan*, *Ramdhun* and sacred-book sections of the evening being "variable" elements whose content had to be chosen. It is also possible to see that, based on the amount of time it would take to chant the Sanskrit elements in each liturgy, there may have been an attempt to balance the chanting of Sanskrit portions (*shlokas* in the morning, and *Gita* II:54-72 in the evening) with the singing of the *bhajans* in local Indian languages.

With the addition of six 'invariable' elements (from roughly 1932 to 1944) to both morning and evening liturgies, the number of fixed items in each sung-prayer meeting was increased. This would have meant an increase in 'invariability' over time. It very likely also meant a decrease in the amount of *bhajan* and *Ramdhun* singing, in order to accommodate the new items and still keep the duration of the [sung]-prayers to half an hour.

As mentioned above, the new items that were added consisted of: 1) a Buddhist *mantra*; 2) two minutes of silence; 3) *Ishopanishad* I.1; 4) The Eleven Vows; 5) a Zoroastrian *gatha*, and 6) verses from the *Qur'an*. These indicate

Gandhi's on-going desire to portray within the sung-prayer meetings one of the community's eleven vows, that of *sarvadharmasamanatva*, respect for all religious traditions. With the addition of these elements, although they were short, the amount of time allotted for more typically Hindu material (*bhajan* singing, for example, even though Christian hymns could have also been chosen) would have been necessarily shorter. Furthermore, replacement by the newer representatives -- Buddhist, Zoroastrian, and *Qur'anic* verses -- was 'invariable'. The tensions which these additional materials produced for some participants at the public evening prayer meetings were confronted several times by Gandhi both in his public addresses and in his personal correspondence. He responded negatively to requests to remove the *Qur'anic* verses from the prayers, indicating that the continued inclusion of these prayers was an important message of solidarity with the Islamic community. Later on, when violence between Hindu and Islamic communities had erupted, Gandhi would cancel public prayers or conduct silent meetings, rather than agree to the requests to discontinue the *Qur'anic* prayers.

Performance and Participation

As a fourth feature of ritual, Rappaport considers 'performance'. As opposed to summarizing, agreeing, or disagreeing with the many theories that concern ritual as theatre, spectacle, or even sporting event, Rappaport makes the simple distinction that '[u]nless there is a performance there is no ritual' (Rappaport 1999, p.37). The only way that '[I]iturgical orders are realized - made into *res* - is through the medium of performance (Rappaport 1999, p.37). This also demands participation on the part of those involved, which is an active participation by a congregation as opposed to the relatively passive observation of an audience. 'The defining relationship of the members of a congregation to the event for which they are present is *participation*' (Rappaport 1999, p.39).

To become lost in the analysis of analogy, says Rappaport, is to miss the distinction between ritual and other types of 'performance,' such as drama or a

sporting event. In a very astute article, "Understanding Politics through Performance in India," John Zavos (2007) has written that much political display in India is actually performance, in the genre of acting. He speaks of "performative politics, with its ritualized inflections," and refers to *satyagraha* as a kind of "morality play" for the people (Zavos 2007, pp.148 & 150). However, we can not agree with his assessment in Gandhi's case. Gandhi was not involved with "performative politics with ritualized inflections." He was involved directly in ritual.

Theatrical performances consist of 'play-acting'; sporting events, no matter how seriously regarded or ingrained in societal identity, are still, by definition, 'games.' Ritual, on the other hand -- in its performance -- is 'real'. Regardless of the amount of empty pageantry or spectacle involved, religious ritual is a performance of specific actions which, at least for the performing agents and congregation, are not about 'playing' at something.

There is no question that the *satyagraha* community functioned 'in deadly earnest' (Caroline Bell has, in fact, referred to Gandhi's community as having been 'in deadly earnest' in an unfortunate juxtaposition of Gandhi's actions alongside those of Hitler's (Bell 1997, p.162)). The twice-daily sung-prayers were 'performed' as part of its very serious (even life-threatening) preparation for non-violent confrontation. Gandhi, more than once remarked that '[t]he struggle on which we embarked...was no mere play-acting'(CW-e, 26, 1923, p.339) and that '[t]he inmates of the Ashram are doing real work and not merely play-acting....' (CW-e, 55, 1932, p.83), or presenting some morality play.

Perhaps the one item from among these sung-prayers that most closely relates to this understanding of 'performance' and 'participation' was the chanted element of the Eleven Vows. For those who joined Gandhi as *satyagrahis*, the Eleven Vows were taken in order to become part of that religious community, and they were expected to be lived out, literally. As the movement grew, and the

community began to influence people who did not actually become members of the *ashram*, these vows offered goals and guidelines for personal conduct, social behavior, and religious morality that were in accordance with Gandhi's vision for the country. The Eleven Vows were chanted twice a day at the sung-prayer meetings:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1) Truth | (<i>satya</i>) |
| 2) Non-Violence | (<i>ahimsa</i>) |
| 3) Non-Thieving | (<i>asteya</i>) |
| 4) Sexual abstinence | (<i>brahmacarya</i>) |
| 5) Non-possessing | (<i>asangraha</i>) |
| 6) Manual labor | (<i>sharirashrama</i>) |
| 7) Diet restraint | (<i>asvada</i>) |
| 8) Fearlessness | (<i>sarvatra bhayavarjana</i>) |
| 9) Equality of religions | (<i>sarvadharmasamanatva</i>) |
| 10) Home rule (cotton production
and local industry) | (<i>svadeshi</i>) |
| 11) 'Touchability' (rejection of
caste and class distinctions) | (<i>sparshabhavana</i>) |

along with the final proclamation (carrying the power of a vow re-instituted) that declared the promise of active service. The *satyagrahists* were actively participating in a vow to live out of these values by acting upon them, by manifesting them in real life and in real time -- in other words, by 'performing' them in the ritual and making them *res*, beyond the ritual. (Of course, as Rappaport understandingly points out, to vow, or '...to pledge is to undertake an obligation, but it is one thing to undertake an obligation now and another to fulfill it in the future' (Rappaport 1999, p.57).

In the formative years of *Satyagraha Ashram*, the 'Eleven Vows' were referred to variously as 'observances,' 'vows,' and/or 'doctrines'. In the era of 1915-

16, the number of vows, when referred to, numbered between five and nine, and the items themselves fluctuated. However, in a letter from early 1919, Gandhi refers to 'the *ekadashi*' in a manner indicating that by then the vows had coalesced into the fixed number of eleven items (*CW-e*, 17, #257, p.268).

The Eleven Vows were not mentioned by Gandhi as a distinct liturgical element in his description in the early sung-prayers (*History of the Satyagraha Ashram*, 1932), nor were they numbered among the items translated into English for Mirabehn in 1930 (entitled *Ashram Bhajanaaval* in the Collected Works). They are, however, listed as a separate liturgical element in the table of contents and the suggested ordering of the sung-prayers in the published *Ashram Bhajanaaval* which, for the purposes of this analysis, has been termed the "Late" version. Therefore, The Eleven Vows are not listed as a separate item in the "Early" version of the sung-prayers, while they are listed as a separate item in the "Late" version.

Non-Physical Efficacy (Formality-2)

Related to the feature of 'performance' is Rappaport's second definition of 'formality', a term which he feels is so all-encompassing that it actually carries many meanings. 'Formality-2' (my term) or 'Non-Physical Efficacy' has to do with the fact that although ritual is 'performed', it does not define or expect its outcome in any kind of material efficacy. 'That ritual is 'in earnest' does not mean that the formal action of ritual is instrumental in any ordinary sense' (Rappaport 1999, p.46). The efficacy of ritual comes not from what is 'seen' (the patent, the ordinary) but from what is 'unseen' (the hidden, the occult, a "higher power," "the gods").

The connections made by individuals participating in ritual are not achieved through physical efficacy; the forces of ritual are not those 'of the spear.' Gandhi did not physically coerce people to act as they did, and the extent to which they lived out the principles of *satyagraha* depended upon the degree to which they honored their own commitments. While attendance at a sung-prayer meeting signalled 'acceptance' of the values found there, there was no assurance in the ritual

itself that individuals would act accordingly. This was especially true for Gandhi's desire to teach and instill non-violence as a way of responding to violence, especially once violence had been perpetrated by an opposing party.

In this regard, says Rappaport, 'Formality 2' or 'Non-Physical Efficacy' depends on ritual as a type of 'communication'. While much has been written about ritual as communication, Rappaport takes his lead from a number of scholars in the fields of linguistic philosophy, anthropology, communication and cybernetics to say that 'communication includes not only simple 'saying,' but also the sorts of 'doing,' in which the efficacious principle is informative rather than powerful' (Rappaport, p.51).

This distinction between 'saying' and 'doing' in communication is an important one, especially in light of Rappaport's definition of 'power'. Disagreeing with Foucault, Rappaport suggests that the word 'power' be used only for 'energy transactions, those measurable in such units as ergs, horsepower, watts, etc.' and in the social and political realms be limited to 'men and resources available' (Rappaport 1999, p.473, note 13). He suggests that the term 'power' be reserved for matter and energy, with the term 'authority' representing an agent in a communication network 'from which directives flow'. Directives are not always communicated as a command. They are often presented as information. Thus, '[a]uthorities may stand...because they are powerful, but also because they are knowledgeable, convincing, wealthy, sacred, or sanctified' (Rappaport 1999, p.473, note 13).

The 'doing' that occurred at the sung-prayer meetings was an avenue to communicating information beyond that which was simply being 'said.' The attitude of respect, the cultivating of an inner quiet, control over one's own natural violent tendencies if attacked -- these were all modes of behavior which Gandhi sought to communicate, especially at prayer meetings, by acts of 'doing'. Similarly, Gandhi encouraged the wearing of only cotton cloth; he and the *satyāgrahis* wore only

khadi, locally-spun, which was especially obvious during the public sung-prayer meetings. Over time, people would, while sitting quietly and respectfully, wear *khadi* or "Gandhi caps" to the public prayer meetings (even if they did not always wear *khadi* at home). What they were 'doing' was transmitting a message back to Gandhi in regards to their "acceptance" of his "authority." The efficacy of this exchange during ritual, this communication did not come from physical power or coercion but from an exchange of 'doing' beyond what was 'said' in an exchange of information and meaningfulness. Rappaport makes the very important point that 'the transmitters of ritual's messages are always among their most important receivers' (Rappaport 1999, p.51).

Self-Referential and Canonical Streams of Information

With regard to what is 'said' in ritual, Rappaport distinguishes between two types of messages, or 'streams' of information: 1) the self-referential; and 2) the canonical. The 'self-referential' refers to those messages which groups and/or individuals transmit 'concerning their own current physical, psychic or social states to themselves and to other participants' (Rappaport 1999, p.52). However, this is not the sum-total of the messages present in ritual. There are messages which 'although transmitted by the participants are not encoded by them. They are found by the participants already encoded in the liturgy. Since these messages are not encoded by the performers, and since they tend toward invariance' (Rappaport 1999, p.52), they are not messages that *in themselves* are about the current situation. These messages are understood by Rappaport as 'canonical', and he gives the example of the *Shema* a Hebrew proclamation of faith that has been said unchanged for 3,000 years, and which has been uttered by innumerable performers over the centuries. Due to its 'durability and invariance', the *Shema* is 'canonical'.

Self-referential messages connect with the present, the here-and-now, 'the immediate, the particular and the vital aspects of events'. while canonical messages refer to 'the general, enduring, or even eternal aspects of *universal orders*'

(Rappaport 1999, p.53). Rappaport makes a very significant distinction in his differentiation in that, whereas the canonical stream of material is located within the invariant elements of a liturgical order, the self-referential stream of material is located in whatever has been 'allowed or demanded' in the variant elements of a liturgical order.

With regard to the sung-prayer meetings of *satyagraha*, we have already seen how few of the ritual elements were variant, and thus, possibly self-referential, and how many of the ritual elements were invariant, thus carrying the stream of canonical material. Furthermore, we have seen that the number of self-referential elements actually decreased over time, while, conversely, the number of canonical elements increased.

Here it will be most helpful to begin with an investigation of the canonical and self-referential elements of the Early version of the sung-prayers first, and then move to the Late version.

EARLY

Canonical

AM

Sanskrit *Shlokas*

PM

Gita II:54-72

Self-Referential

Bhajan

Ramdhun

Gitapatha

Bhajan

Ramdhun

Sacred Book: *Upanishads, Pandava-Gita Mukunda-Mala, Dvadasha Panjarika, Ramcaritmanas*

In the Early morning sung-prayers, those items that could be considered canonical were the Sanskrit *shlokas* in the morning and the *Gita* II:54-72 in the evening. The *shlokas* included sung-prayers to a number of deities or Ultimate

Reality, including *Sarasvati*, *Ganesha*, *Brahman*, *Shiva*, and *Vishnu*. The *Gita* verses described the person who was *stitha-prajna*: free from attachment, in control of senses and the mind; grounded through meditation in wisdom and insight. These verses were not encoded by the performers, were invariable, and referenced deities who were enduring and universal.

What might be termed as self-referential segments, those that might be chosen, or that referenced the immediacy of people's lives, were: 1) the *bhajan*, 2) *Ramdhun*, and 3) a selection from the *Gita*. The *bhajans* were hymns, which, though they often addressed a certain set of topics (see Chapter 2 on the description of *bhajans*), as well as some canonical content, could have had a more direct connection to the daily events of the *satyagrahis*, depending upon the daily situation. Additionally, they were sung in local Indian languages. This would have also been true for the *Ramdhun* selections, for, whereas the subject matter of *Ramdhun* may have been related to the tales of *Rama* or other deities, the individual chants and melodies from different areas could have varied by region, circumstance, or favored choice.

In the Early evening sung-prayers, the canonical element is the chanting of *Gita* II:54-72, and the self-referential elements include: 1) the *bhajan*, 2) *Ramdhun*, and 3) a portion of a sacred book. The choices of sacred books printed in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* consisted of: 1) selections from the *Upanishads*, devotional verses concerning *Brahman*; 2) the *Pandava-Gita*; 3) the *Mukunda-Mala*, a rosary of devotional hymns to *Vishnu*; 4) the *Dvadasha-Manjarika*, devotion to the Lord in the name of *Govinda*; and 5) the *Ramcaritmanas*, Tulsidas' devotional verses in Hindi concerning the tales of *Rama*.

Out of four liturgical elements in the morning, one element was canonical, representing 25%, while three elements were self-referential, representing 75%. Likewise, of the four liturgical elements in the evening, one was canonical, representing 25%, and three were self-referential, representing 75%. Out of the

entire number of eight liturgical elements found in the sung-prayers, two were canonical, or 25%, while six were self-referential, or 75%.

Let us look now at the Late version of the sung-prayers:

LATE

Canonical

Self-Referential

AM

Buddhist *Mantra*
2-minutes Silence
*Ishopanishad*I.1
Sanskrit *Shlokas*

Eleven Vows

Qur'an verses
Zoroastrian verses

Bhajan
Ramdhun

Gitapatha

PM

Buddhist *Mantra*
2-minutes Silence
Ishopanishad I.1
*Gita*II:54-72

Eleven Vows

Qur'an verses
Zoroastrian verses

Bhajan
Ramdhun
Sacred Book: *Upanishads, Pandava-Gita, Mukunda-Mala, Dvadasha-Panjarika, Ramcaritmānas*

As mentioned above, the number of invariable elements in the sung-prayer liturgy increased over time, with the result that, in the Late version, the contents of seven out of ten elements in the morning, and the contents of six out of ten elements

in the evening, could be considered canonical. Furthermore, those same seven elements were chanted in exactly the same order twice a day.

The *Gitapatha* selection in the morning could originally have been considered as self-referential early on, as it was a chosen element. Depending upon the passage, it could have easily related in greater or lesser degrees to the *satyagrahis* and their individual lives. However, it was decided that everyone should memorize the *Gita*, or if that were not possible '...that they should at least read the original Sanskrit with correct pronunciation' (Gandhi 1998, p.40). So, a specified portion of the *Gita* began to be read every day in an on-going cycle. As the ashramites became more fluent in the chanting of Sanskrit, more chapters were covered each day and a regular cycle of repeating the entire *Gita* over a number of days, which would be known in advance, as *parayan*, was established. So, whereas, the *Gitapatha* appeared in the Early version as variable and self-referential, it appears here in the Late version as invariable and canonical.

Out of ten liturgical elements in the morning prayers, seven were canonical, representing 70%, and three were self-referential, representing 30%. Out of ten liturgical elements in the evening prayers, six were canonical, representing 60%, with four being self-referential, which represents 40%. In looking at the overall number of liturgical elements that constituted both morning and evening prayers, there were 20 elements, with 13 canonical elements or 65%, and seven self-referential elements, or 35%.

To summarize this analysis, using Rappaport's terms, it is possible to see that all the elements of the sung-prayer liturgy were invariable, in that each element was categorically included in every prayer meeting. However, upon closer examination of the content of each element, we can see that the content itself was some times variable and sometimes invariable. Likewise, those elements that were invariably canonical in nature (universal, enduring), while those that were variable or self-chosen were more self-referential (relating to the here-and-now) in

character. Content sung or chanted in the early prayers was: 1) divided more equally between that which was invariable and variable -- 62.5% invariable and 37.5% variable; and 2) originally, the self-referential material outweighed the canonical -- 75% to 25%. Over time, however, with the increase of added elements from various world religions: 1) the number of invariable elements was *increased* from 62.5% to 85%, while the variable materials *decreased* from 37.5% to 15%; and 2) with the addition of the new materials, the amount of self-referential (referring to the here-and-now) materials *decreased* from 75% to 35%, while the canonical (referring to the universal, the enduring, the everlasting) materials *increased* from 25% to 65%.

EARLY Sung-Prayers LATE Sung-prayers

Invariable	62.5%	Invariable	85%	+	22.5 %-points
Variable	37.5%	Variable	15%	-	22.5 %-points

Canonical	25%	Canonical	65%	+	40 %-points
Self-referential	75%	Self-referential	35%	-	40 %-points

Rappaport's distinction between canonical and self-referential as separate streams of communication in no way precludes their inter-dependence upon each other. For, while 'acts and substances' relate to the

'present[,] the words of liturgy can connect that which is present to the past, or even to the beginning of time, and to the future, or even to time's end. In their invariance itself the words of liturgy implicitly assimilate the current event into an ancient or ageless category of events, something that speechless gesture or mortal substance of expendable objects alone cannot' (Rappaport 1999, p.152).

But the encounter that takes place between the participant and the canonical ritual elements places the two streams of communication in direct engagement with, even dependence upon, each other.

'By participating in a ritual a performer reaches out of his private self, so to speak, into a public canonical order to grasp the category that he then imposes upon his private processes. ...Without canon, ritual's self-referential messages would be meaningless or even non-existent as such. ...[and without a self-referential message] canon would be without force, or even nonsensical' (Rappaport 1999, 106).

Communication

The understanding that these two information-carrying streams are dependent upon each other brings us into an intermediate area that essentially serves to move our consideration from what the features of ritual are (or, what ritual is) to how ritual functions. This intermediate area is 'communication', and it is both a feature of ritual, as well as a function of what it does. Again, so much scholarship has been undertaken in the area of communication (including Rappaport's own complex discussion), that for the sake of clarity we will remain focussed on basic propositions that compose Rappaport's theory.

Ultimate Sacred Postulates

One of the primary types of information that is communicated through religious ritual is what Rappaport calls Ultimate Sacred Postulates. Such statements are claims which are assented to and accepted by participants of the ritual. Ultimate Sacred Postulates 'can be falsified neither logically nor empirically' and 'can be verified neither objectively nor logically. And yet they are taken to be unquestionable' (Rappaport 1999, p.281). Such expressions, e.g., "The Lord Our God the Lord is One," are known in many religions. They are formally creedal statements, "cosmological axioms" concerning how the universe and its relationships are constituted (Rappaport 1999, p.277), and they are known to be specifically

expressive of and particularly identified with the specific religion that expresses them.

In regard to the sung-prayer meetings, *Ishopanishad* I.1 could be considered as an Ultimate Sacred Postulate of *satyagraha*. The first half of the verse, at least, is in accord with Rappaport's definition of an Ultimate Sacred Postulate: "Everything here is the garment/the indwelling of the Lord, whatever moves in the world(s);" ("*Īśāvasyam idam sarvam; yat kiñca jagatyām jagat*"). The second half flows from the first: "By letting go of everything, enjoy everything; but covet not anyone else's treasure" ("*Tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā; mā ḡrdhaḥ kasyasvid dhanam*").

Gandhi made many statements concerning this verse, and was known to feel that should all the scriptures of India be lost, the retrieval of this one verse would serve to summarize the whole tradition and revive it again. It was added as the opening chant to every sung-prayer meeting in 1937, and as an Ultimate Sacred Postulate, it stood at the head of the liturgical orders from 1937 until 1944, when it was superseded at that time by the Buddhist *mantra* and two minutes of silence. It still remains in the published *Ashram Bhajanavalas* the first printed item, "*nityapatha*," and as the third element in the suggested liturgical orders (*krama*) for morning and evening prayers (as a matter of note, it is actually published as item number two, however the two minutes of silence, listed before it, is counted as a separate liturgical element. So this makes it, by default, the third, and not the second, liturgical element in this schema). As a final comment concerning Ultimate Sacred Postulates, Rappaport observes them to be '...the most invariant of elements in more or less invariant orders' (Rappaport 1999, p.328). The twice-daily chanting of "*Īśāvasyam idam sarvam*" fits well with this description of an Ultimate Sacred Postulate.

Acceptance

Another of the primary communications transmitted and received in the information exchange of religious ritual is that of 'acceptance.' Each individual

transmits information not only to others, but even to oneself: 'The accepting self must be palpable to others as well as to itself since acceptance is neither more nor less, necessarily, than a public act on the self's part' (Rappaport 1999, p.146).

Acceptance may not necessarily imply belief, as 'belief is an inner state unknowable subjectively (*Rappaport 1999, p.119*). However, 'acceptance' may very likely imply active belief along with a personal choice. Rappaport's understanding of 'acceptance' is strongly grounded in personal choice, closely aligned to Humphrey and Laidlaw's concept of a freely-chosen 'ritual stance'.

Rappaport's understanding of 'acceptance' is grounded in the view that the individual's physical body is a 'non-discursive meta message' that indicates to self and others his or her 'commitment of the living self' to the information that is transmitted in the ritual (Rappaport 1999, p.146). 'It is the visible, present, living substance -- bone, blood, gut and muscle -- that is being 'put on the line'...that constitutes the accepting agent' (Rappaport 1999, p.146). In Gandhi's case, where people were preparing in the sung-prayer meetings to put their lives literally "on the line" in non-violent non-cooperation, this definition of 'acceptance' is certainly apt and rings true for the *satyagraha* community.

Levels of Meaning

In his discussion of communication and information, Rappaport distinguishes between three levels of meaning. Without delving into the "meanings of meaning" (as they are, and have been, legion), he defines three layers of information that indicate meaningfulness which figure strongly in his ritual theory. 'Low-order meaning' is 'meaning...in its simple, everyday semantic sense' (*Rappaport 1999, p.70*). He makes the point that 'low-order'"meaning is that which is very likely considered to be "information" in Information Theory, and that it is 'grounded in distinction' (*Rappaport 1999, p.70*). Being able to distinguish between one substance and another gives them both a 'low-order meaning; in straight-forward language.

The information of 'middle-order meaning' enters at the level of attempting to decrease the myriad number of distinctions, which have had to have been made in the process of distinguishing things, in order to find 'similarities, hidden beneath the surfaces of apparently distinctive phenomena' (Rappaport 1999, p.71). This kind of meaning is more important than that of mere distinction, because, when such similarities, or hidden correspondences, are 'illuminated or discovered, [they] strike us with the force of revelation (Rappaport 1999, p.71). 'Middle-order meaning' is often expressed in metaphor, 'for every term that participates in a metaphor is transformed into more than itself, into an icon of other things as well' (Rappaport 1999, p.71). Poetry, art, and even ritual, rely heavily on the metaphor, as its 'connotative resonance' frequently has the ability to move the emotions in a deeper and more powerful way than simple speech can.

'High-order meaning' is 'grounded in identity or unity, the radical identification or unification of self with other' (Rappaport 1999, p.71). It is a result of experience, not the result of an intellectual process.

'It may be experienced through art, or in the acts of love, but is, perhaps, most often felt in ritual and other religious devotions. High-order meaning seems to be experienced in intensities ranging from the mere intimation of being emotionally moved...to those deep numinous experiences called 'mystical.' Those who have known it in its more intense forms may refer to it by such obscure phrases as "The Experience of Being" or Being-Itself '(Rappaport 1999, p.71).

'High-order meaning' may begin with 'low-order meaning' or 'middle-order meaning,' but reaches beyond 1) the distinctions of discourse, and 2) the metaphors of similarity. Although ultimately meaningful to the person for whom it has meaning, words can fall away, can be transcended into the '*unio mystica*, the experience of unification with another, or others, or the cosmos, or the divine' (Rappaport 1999, p.71. The key to 'high-order meaning' is participation, 'and we

have already noted that participation is a *sine qua non* of ritual (Rappaport 1999, p.71).

These three levels of meaning and their relevance to the *satyagraha* community will be considered more fully in the up-coming discussion of how ritual functions.

Ritual Space

Rappaport makes several statements concerning the relationship between the performance of ritual and its surroundings, indicating that this relationship is part of the larger meta-message of information that is also being delivered. He makes reference to ritual as being occasionally performed in "special" places, or charged spaces that may add to the emotional response of participants. Thus, the ritual space may also be itself part of the communication of information that transpires between transmitters and receivers. While Gandhi may have appeared to have been openly anti-ritualistic in his acerbic statements about empty gesture in the Brahmanic tradition, his own choice of ritual space and situation most likely transmitted meta-messages of its own.

In the first place, everyone sat on the ground (until later when the crowds became so large that a platform might have been needed, or participants would stand, sit in trees, etc., to be able to see), in a gesture indicating that everyone was socially on a "level playing field." As an indicator of the prayers being open to all -- the poor, women, men, all religions, untouchables -- everyone sat on the ground with no hierarchical seating.

'...we had to take a decision on certain questions. Where should the prayers be offered? Should we erect a temple or meet in the open air? Then again, should we raise a platform or sit in the sands or the dust? Should there be any images? At last we decided to sit on the sands under the canopy of the sky and not to install any image. Poverty is an Ashram observance. The Ashram exists in order to serve the starving millions.... It receives with open arms all who are willing to keep the rules '(Gandhi 1998, p.37).

As a sign of openness to all, it was intentionally decided not to construct a building with walls that could confine, but, for the ashram's worship space, 'the sky must suffice for the roof and the [four] quarters for walls and pillars' (Gandhi 1998, p.37). It was also decided, at first, not to build even a platform, as its size might preclude some from sitting upon it and a large platform was financially prohibitive.

'Experience has shown the soundness of the decision not to build a house or even a platform. People from outside also attend the Ashram prayers, so that at times the multitude present cannot be accommodated on the biggest of platforms.

Again as the Ashram prayers are being increasingly imitated elsewhere, the sky-roofed temple has proved its utility. Morning and evening prayers are held wherever I go. Then there is such large attendance, especially in the evening, that prayers are possible only on open grounds. And if I had been in the habit of worshipping in a prayer hall only, I might perhaps never have thought of public prayers during my tours' (Gandhi 1998, p. 38).

In this format, the ritual space of *satyagraha* was highly moveable. While the elements of the liturgical orders were firmly fixed, the space for those rituals could be extremely flexible. The ritual space might remain unmoved for months at a time, however it might then be moved for a week, followed by being moved to another spot for a week, and yet another spot for two days. During the times of Gandhi's heaviest travel, the ritual space could be moved as often as twice a day.

Likewise, it was decided that should *ashram* inmates have wanted to house images of any kind in their own rooms, that would have been allowed. However, no images were to be displayed during the public sung-prayer meetings: '...all religions are accorded equal respect in the Ashram. Followers of all faiths are welcome there; they may or may not believe in the worship of images. No image is kept at the congregational worship of the Ashram in order to avoid hurting anybody's feelings' (Gandhi 1998, p.38).

It might be possible to see Gandhi himself as a kind of image. Seated as the center of the ritual space, he would have been the focal point around which events revolved, regardless of whether he was planning to speak or not. As the center of the space, sitting in the simplicity of only a *doti* and perhaps a *khadi* shawl, he himself would have been the embodiment of meta-messages, messages consistent with the *ashram's* goals of not living by western standards, messages that were being transmitted to everyone around him.

Thus, there is a certain irony found in the examination of Gandhi's use of what Rappaport and others call the "specialness" of ritual space. With everyone seated in the open, situated in an illustration of social parity, with no religious images present out of religious respect, with an intentionality towards *no* hierarchy, and with no bricks-and-mortar of a regular meeting place, the "specialness" of the *satyagraha* ritual space can be seen to have resided in its being intentionally "non-special," "a-typical," "all-inclusive," and "highly moveable."

With the several discussions of Ultimate Sacred Postulates, Acceptance, Levels of Meaningfulness and Ritual Space, we come to the end of our consideration of 'communication' as being both a feature of what ritual is, as well as being an important component of what ritual does. In similar fashion, it is through communication that we move, in an integrative manner, into the next consideration of how ritual does what it does, or how ritual functions.

HOW RITUAL FUNCTIONS

In this consideration of how ritual functions, we will continue to utilize Rappaport's framework of analysis, while introducing additional information and formulations gathered from other researchers, to examine and evaluate how the ritual activities, whose texts are found within the *Ashram Bhajanaival*, functioned in the *satyagraha* community. For the first part of this analysis, we will concentrate in this chapter on the twice-daily chanting of the sung-prayers in this chapter. We will then move, in Chapter Four, to discussion of additional uses of the *Ashram*

Bhajanavali, beginning with those in which the *Bhajanavali* materials functioned as a ritual frame, or "ceremonial," for Gandhi's fasts and the country's non-violent protests.

Communitas

One of the principle ways that ritual functions is that it creates a state in which participants experience a sense of *communitas*. This is not a simple awareness of being in community together; Rappaport uses the term as Victor Turner (1969) did to indicate a state in which participants may be released from the restraints of everyday rationality into a state of awareness which Rudolph Otto (1923) would have referred to as "the numinous" (Otto 1923, p.219).

Both Victor and Edith Turner were intrigued by a 'collective element' that they had observed during various kinds of congregational prayer, which they coined (from Paul Goodman's work with teenage initiation) as *communitas*, meaning 'fellowship, or friendship,... love between many, a form of the 'social' of a different order from the 'social' implied in the 'socializing' that children are supposed to undergo' (E.Turner 2006, p.xxiii). For the Turners, this *communitas* was not 'society-governed,' but was an experience of 'visionary harmony,' in which

'All are equal, the experience is right here on the spot, and everyone is a full person and a friend. And they remember such occasions because the *communitas* is so palpable. *Communitas* strains toward including everybody in the world.... ...one can no longer treat another human being as an object, because each soul is too much part of other people's souls '(E.Turner 2006, pp.158-59).

'Trance and less profound alterations of consciousness are frequent concomitants of ritual participation' (E.Turner 2006, pp.158-59). We will consider the features of "trance" more deeply in the next section. However, it is an important distinction to make here that, while psychiatrists may interpret the features of these numinous states as *symptoms* of dis-association, Rappaport clearly distinguishes

them as processes of *re*-association (Rappaport 1999, p.220). The key to the re-associated states found in ritual participation is that of reunion -- with self, and/or with others, and/or with the universe (Rappaport 1999, p.220).

'One of the fundamental properties of *communitas* is the blurring of distinction between self and other... [this seems] to extend the self-unification characteristic of numinous experience...beyond the self to the congregation or even to the world as a whole' (Rappaport 1999, p.380).

With the regularity of repeated rituals, or the rhythmic repetition found within rituals themselves, individuals bond easily with each other. 'When a group conducts itself in conformity to a rhythmic tempo of organic frequency, ...it may seem to be an organism to the organisms composing it and they each may seem to themselves to be its cells' (Rappaport 1999, pp.225-6).

The concept of rhythm is a primary component of *communitas*, whether considering the sequential rhythms of the ritual order itself, or elements of rhythm and cadence provided within that order: '...the rhythms of the order reach in two directions at once -- into each participant's physiology on the one hand and outward to encompass all of the participants on the other' (Rappaport 1999, p.228). This bi-modal process can 'affect the consciousness of performers' (Rappaport 1999, p.257), transforming separate individuals into a bonded, cohesive group and ushering them into the numinous experiences of union and re-union associated with *communitas*. As the separateness of an individual self blends into a hidden recognition of similarity found with others in the context of ritual order, the participants do not simply communicate to each other about that order but commune with each other within it (Rappaport 1999, p.220).

Along these lines, Gandhi wrote:

'Congregational prayer is a means for establishing the essential human unity through common worship. Mass singing of Ramadhun and

the beating of *tal* are its outward expression. If they are not a mechanical performance but are an echo of the inner unison, as they should be, they generate a power and an atmosphere of sweetness and fragrance which has only to be seen to be realized' (Gandhi 2000, p.98).

While Gandhi encouraged private prayer and meditation, he encouraged congregation sung-prayer even more strongly. During his endless travels across India, he continued to teach the principles of the *satyagraha* community with the tools found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*:

'I for one tell you that when I am alone I do have my prayer, but I do feel very lonely without a congregation to share the prayer with me. I knew and even now know very few of you, but the fact that I had the evening prayers with you was enough for me.
... Please, therefore, keep up the prayer. You can form your own congregations in your own places, and as a last resource one's family can become one's congregation.... Do meet every evening at this hour, learn a few hymns, learn the Gita...' (Gandhi 2000, p.99).

Hidden Similarities Discovered

While *communitas* is a binding process between formerly dissimilar objects which occurs, in varying degrees, between the individual and the group, there is another transformational process that occurs on another level, which Rappaport has designated as a 'middle-order level' occurrence. In this process, which involves the discovery of similarities, the performer (or participant) and performance merge.

'[There is] a fusion of the sender-transmitter with the message being sent and transmitted. In conforming to the order to which this performance [or participation] gives life the performer becomes indistinguishable from that order for the time being. He *realizes*, makes real...that order (Rappaport 1999, p.284).

While Rappaport has demonstrated clearly that ritual is not simply theatre, he uses 'performer' (*L.*, to accomplish through) as a term to apply to any of the participants in a ritual, regardless of their roles or actions in said ritual. His

'performer' is a 'participant. No distinction is made between "priest" or "chief of ceremonies," as leaders, and "the congregation " "or laity" as followers, in terms of their all being "performers." As participating agents, all 'performers' are able to engage in the process of merging with 'the performance'.

The "I" of Discourse

Greg Urban has addressed this process of the mergibility of the 'performer' with the materials of 'performance' from the perspective of semiotics in his work concerning the 'I of discourse'. However, as his work assumes a separation between actor/narrator and audience that does not exist in Rappaport's understanding of ritual, it should be noted that the assumption of this difference will be disregarded here, and Urban's use of the terms 'self,' 'actor,' and 'narrator' will be understood to apply, in the ritual context, to any and all who are participating.

Urban speaks of several sub-states that any individual or 'self' can assume when engaging in discourse, using the pronoun 'I.' The 'I of discourse', depending upon the situation, can be the 'indexical I' of everyday existence as an individual simply talks about his or her own everyday situation. However, an individual can engage in the state of an 'anaphoric I' when reporting what someone else has said by direct quotation, in a kind of role-playing. The 'anaphoric I' takes on some of the characteristics of the 'reported self' during the reporting of what was said. In storytelling and in single-narrator myth-telling, the narrating individual can take on a state of the 'de-quotative I' as the 'indexical I' shifts into incorporating some of the vocal characteristics, etc., of the characters in the story. In the situation of acting, the 'indexical I' fully takes on the character of someone else, and it is understood that 'the theatrical I' is speaking (as convincingly as s/he can) as that someone else. The everyday "indexical I" is hidden from view while the 'theatrical I' merges with the character being acted out to become another 'self' in the theatrical performance.

The final state that Urban describes is that of the 'projective I', which can occur in narrative, and especially in origin myth-telling. While narrating a creation myth, or myth of origin, the narrator may be in the position of using the pronoun 'I' that is the 'I' of the original creator. Thus, the 'indexical I' shifts most radically to drop the everyday self and take on the persona of the Original Being, or a 'non-ordinary self'. This deep merging of an individual self into an Ultimate Self can result in degrees of trance, or trance-like states, as the 'projective I' comes alive in the narrator.

'In the period of the actual performance, therefore, the speaker/narrator assumes the "self" of the original ancestor. He comes as close as possible, through this projective means, to assuming an identity as "I" of an ancestral figure, and of thus subjectively embodying the continuity of culture' (Urban & Lee 1989, p.45).

The degrees to which the 'indexical I' move into the states of either the 'de-quotative I', the 'theatrical I', or the 'projective I' correspond to the degrees of ritual participation which Rappaport's ritual 'performer' undertakes as s/he gradually merges with the performance'.

Not all of the materials found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* are composed (and thus chanted) using the first pronoun 'I', but a few of the Sanskrit selections are, as well as quite a number of the *bhajans*. For instance, what would have been chanted first thing every morning in the earliest days of *satyāgraha* (before *Ishopanishad* I.1 was added as the first element, quite some time later) was this verse from the *Bhagavat Padacarya* by *Adi Shankaracarya*:

'Early in the morning I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge) and *sukham* (bliss), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculat Brahma which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements -- earth, water, space, light and air'
(*CW-e*, 50, p. 323, #1).

The remembrance is of *brahman*, and the chanter, speaking as *brahman* in the 'projective I' of discourse, reminds him or herself that s/he is *brahman*, and not just a physical body. The *shloka* itself encourages a shift of identification from the 'indexical I' to the 'projective I', and just as the night's darkness would be giving way to the light of day, at 4.20 in the early dawn, the *satyagraha* 'performer' would merge with the 'performance' of this sung-prayer liturgy as s/he sang, as *brahman*, concerning the enervating energy (*sansphurad*) sustaining his or her own heart (*hridi*). Facilitating the discovery of these hidden similarities, finding these hidden correspondences, Rappaport states, is one of the most powerful ways that ritual functions.

Another example, from the Women's Class Prayers, are the verses of Queen Draupadi wherein she calls out directly to Krishna for help as she is surrounded by Kaurava enemies:

'O Krishna, Thou great Yogi, soul and Protector of the universe,
O Govind, deliver me lying hopeless in the midst of the Kauravas and
seeking thy support' (*CW-e*, 50, p.337, #56C).

In teaching this song, Sri Karunamayee (see Chapter 6) has noted that the women of *satyagraha* would have identified with the "me" of the chant who needed protection and the "I" who was suffering so much, at that time, under British domination. "It was a woman's cry for help in the face of degradation. It could also be any woman's cry for help -- even now!" (Shri Karunamayee). The woman singing this prayer would have merged into Draupadi, as she called with Draupadi (someone known to have received divine help) to Krishna, performer becoming one with the sung performance.

In the *Mukundamala*, a *Rosary of Vishnu's Names* written by *Kulashekhara*, there are powerfully moving verses that call for protection of the speaker at the time of death. The 'indexical I' of the performer, while chanting this song, may have identified with the original singer, merging into the 'projective I' to identify

him or herself with these words at the time of his or her own death. Again, the performer would have merged with the performance.

In one verse, found in the 1947 edition, the chanter asks to be allowed direct entry into the protective cage of *Krishna's* lotus feet. For, at the time of the suddenness of one's last breath (*prana-prayana-samaye*), when all the *doshas* [*kāpha-vata-pita* - elements of the body] have converged to block the singer's throat (*kanthavarodhana*), how will the chanter be able to sing *Krishna's* name (*vidhau smaranam kutas te*) as a means of release?

*'Kṛṣṇa! tvadiiya pada-paṅkaja-pañjarāntam
adyaiva me viśatu mānasa-rājahaṃsaḥ
prāṇa-prayāna-samaye kāpha-vāta-pitaiḥ
kaṅṭhāvarodhana vidhau smaraṇam kutas te'* (A.Bhaj., p.66, #5)

Lord Kṛṣṇa, may the swan of my mind enter today itself
into the interior of the cage of your lotus-feet. At the time of drawing
the final breath when I will be affected in my throat by the humours
phlegm, wind and bile, where is the scope for remembering you?
(*Maha Subhashita Samgraha VI, p. 2961*)

If the chanter has moved, through the chanting of these verses from Urban's 'indexical I' to the 'projective I' of trance, then s/he may have reached a strong enough identification with the numinous realm within the safety of *Krishna's* cage to be able to face even death without fear, and with the calmness of non-violence.

The section of *Ramcharitmānas* selections is one of the longer sections of excerpted material in the *Ashram Bhajanaval* (about equal in length with the *Upanishads* section). Many of the *Mānas* excerpts do not utilize the first person pronoun 'I', but at least one very effective selection speaks the words of Rama himself, focussing on the spiritual weapons with which he is armed, as he enters into battle with Ravana:

'The charioteer -- worship to God ever yielding --
 Restraint and content as his shield and sword wielding;

With wisdom's pow'r using alms-giving -- dread axe,
 And with knowledge as bow, makes his deadly attacks;

In his quiver -- his own wholly pure, constant mind --
 Many shafts -- temp'rance, fealty and such -- can he find;

In the best mail -- for godly men honour -- he's clad;
 No equipment like this can for conquest be had;

He can never be conquered by foemen, my friend,
 Who will on true religion [*dharmamaya*] for chariot depend'
 (Atkins' translation).

Philip Lutgendorf has described the *Manas*, Tulsidas' Hindi reinterpretation of the *Ramayana*, as having been written

'...in the light of the *bhakti* (devotional) movement, which effected the transformation of the epic's protagonist from an earthly prince with godlike qualities of heroism, compassion, and justice, to a full-fledged divinity -- or rather, *the* divinity; for in North India today the word *Rām* is the most commonly used nonsectarian designation for the Supreme Being' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.4).

So, in this case, the performer, moves from the 'indexical I' to the 'de-quotational I' of an ancestral figure (the tales of Lord Rama would have also been recalled), as well as to the 'projective I' of the Ultimate Creator. While the *Ashram Bhajanavali* holds in its many selections various excerpts from the stories of both the *Ramayana* and the *Manas*, Gandhi regularly explained his use of the term "*Ram*" as referring to the Ultimate Being.

The *bhajans* section is by far the longest section of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, and quite a few sections are poetic creations that use the first-person pronoun or its grammatical cases. From Mirabai is heard:

'My mind is fixed on the guru's feet. I am ill at ease without those feet. Everything else is like a mirage, a dream. The ocean of birth and death has dried down and I have no anxiety about crossing it. Mira says: O my God, now is my inner sight opened' (*CW-e*, 50, p.366, #147, MKG's translation).

From Surdas is heard:

'Now is the thing known all over. Eternal devotion to God cannot be kept secret from anyone. That beautiful face is ever before my eyes. ...I am filled with that love. It is inseparable even as milk and water are. Surdas says: God who knows the hearts of us all knew the hearts of the gopis' (*CW-e*, 50, p. 356, #111, MKG's translation).

And, as a final example, many of Tulsidas' sung-prayers pour forth from the first-person perspective of the the original poet:

'In the Kaliyuga Ramanama is the all-yielding tree. It is the destroyer of scorching miseries caused by bad times, pauperism, etc. ... Tulsi says: I am able to live in the world peacefully by the power of the name. I have no anxiety whether I live or die' (*CW-e*, 50, p.350, #97, MKG's translation).

The *bhajans* tell the ancestral stories of *Rama* and *Krishna*; they refer sometimes with respect, and sometimes with disrespect, to the sanctity of the *Vedas*; they reference the *Upanishads*, and they relay the many stories of the renouncer *sants*. The stories tell what the ancestors used as weapons -- often sung-prayers and faith. All of these provide "ancestral examples," in which the *bhajans* shift frequently back and forth between pronouns and pronounal usage within the same piece. Along with this shifting, the chanter likewise transits, back and forth between Urban's 'indexical I' of the everyday to the 'de-quotational I' of reminiscent story-telling, from the 'theatrical I' of occasionally assuming theatrical character to the

'projective I' of trance, who while revealing both the voice of ancestral figures concomitantly uncovers the words of the One Speaking Ultimate Truth.

An important distinction must be made here in regard to the use of the terms "trance" and "possession." They are frequently misunderstood and used as interchangeable synonyms. They are, however, quite separate states of consciousness, although they can be combined, and in certain cases, be entered one from the other. In *Music and Trance: A Theory of the Relations between Music and Possession*, Gilbert Rouget conducts a very detailed study of the differences between the state of "trance" and that of "possession." The "trance" is a self-chosen and self-induced state of consciousness, in which the individual remains in control of consciousness. It is "conducted" by the individual, and Rouget gives the example of the true shaman, who through a sound-induced trance (as with the Ostyak and Vogul peoples of western Siberia, who use no hallucinagens) executes his or her journey to other worlds to perform the expected shamanistic duties (Rouget 1985, p.22). "Possession," on the other hand, is other-induced; the individual allows a force from the outside to overtake his or her own consciousness, and is, thus, no longer in charge of the events that take place.

For the most part, Urban uses the term "trance" in accordance with Rouget's definition, referring to even the most extreme occurrences of the 'projective I' as being trance. This is, I think, correct and the term "trance," rather than that of "possession," and should also be applied to those altered states of consciousness that the *satyagrahis* may have experienced during such times when, in Rappaport's terms, the 'performers' merged with the 'performance'.

The objective of the sung-prayers was not to lose control under the influence of outside forces, but to keep control through a total merging with the Ultimate, in order to 1) keep the senses under control, and to 2) restrain one's self. As the second chapter of the *Gita* reads:

'But the disciplined soul, moving among sense-objects with the senses weaned from likes and dislikes and brought under the control of *atman*, attains peace of mind' (II.64 - *CW-e*, 56, 179, MKG's translation).

Only then is *ahimsa*, or non-violence, even theoretically possible under the worst of circumstances.

Let us continue with the discussion of discovering hidden similarities. In his discussion of *communitas*, Rappaport identified that the phenomenon of the rhythms of the liturgical order reached both inwards to the individual and outwards to the group (Rappaport 1999, p.228), which had an effect on the creation of *communitas*. This merging of the biological physicality of the individual with the surrounding environment also holds true in the discussion of the performer merging with the performance (or the 'indexical I' transiting into the 'projective I.' to use Urban's terminology). A great deal of work has been conducted in the last thirty years in the area of neurophysiology to explain these ritual phenomena, but Rappaport reports that "this important work has largely been ignored by cultural anthropologists" (Rappaport 1999, p.227). In *Ritual and Religion* (1999), he mentioned particularly the work of Eugene d'Aquili, Charles Laughlin, John McManus, and Barbara Lex.

Extraordinary States of Consciousness

A significant work by Drs. Eugene d'Aquili and Andrew Newberg, entitled *The Mystical Mind: Probing the Biology of Religious Experience*, has clearly illustrated the biological components of ritual activities. In the search for the biological foundations of the experience of "experiencing God," Newberg and d'Aquili have proposed that both the human search for God and the human desire to experience God are part of human cognitive functioning. Using SPECT (Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography) technology, or brain-imaging, they have been able to observe what transpires in the brains of Buddhist monks who are in

states of deep meditation and in the brains of Cistercian sisters who are in deep states of contemplative prayer.

Much of what transpires in the brain takes place in the orientation association area, that area that receives information from the outside world, generating a sense of time and space. During meditation, when the eyes are closed and senses are directed inwards, there is a cutting off of incoming stimulae, known as 'deafferentation'. During this process of deafferentation, with no input from the outside world, the result is a sensation of no time and no space, or the sensation of infinite time and infinite space (similar to the process of *pratyahara* in Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutra* (Skt. *prati* = back, reverse; *ahara* = getting, going to fetch) or the *Gita's* descriptions of the reigning in of the senses).

The orientation association area is also responsible for creating a distinction between self and other, and with the process of deafferentation occurring in deep states of meditation or prayer, this distinction is blurred, and a state of "being one with the universe" can occur (see n.a., 2001. Searching for the God Within. *Newsweek*, 29 Jan. 29 p. 59). This quieting of activity in the orientation association area of the brain can be seen, documented, and reported through the use of brain-imaging technology. (John Bowker has also published findings concerning how what he calls 'conductive properties...lead from [a] perceived object to [a] set of events within' the human brain that is organically conditioned. He focusses upon the role of the amygdala during the brain's reception of incoming emotional stimulae, especially fear, and how the amygdala regulates the body's immediate physical response as well as the reasoning involved which governs precisely how to respond to that fear' (Bowker 2005, p. 44).

Newberg and d'Aquili state that the extra-ordinary states of consciousness, which they have investigated, can be enhanced by rhythm and ritual, and they have identified five extra-ordinary states of consciousness (d'Aquili and Newberg, 25-6) that can arise as a result of this stimulation:

1. First, there is a Hyperquiescent State (connected with the parasympathetic nervous system, or 'that part of the autonomic nervous system whose nerves originate in the mid-brain, the hind-brain, and the sacral area of the spinal cord and whose functions include the constriction of the eyes, the slowing of the heartbeat, and the stimulation of certain digestive glands' (*Webster's Dictionary*), which is a state of extraordinary relaxation, like normal sleep. It also can occur during periods of deep meditation 'accompanied by heightened alertness and vigilance' (*Webster's Dictionary*). It is described as oceanic tranquility, or bliss, and it occurs during "slow" rituals, such as chanting, prayer, or even ordinary religious services. It is associated with *Upacara samadhi* in Buddhist psychology.

2. Second, there is a Hyperarousal State (connected with the sympathetic nervous system, or 'that part of the autonomic nervous system whose nerves originate in the lumbar and thoracic regions of the spinal cord and whose functions include the innervation of smooth muscles, heart muscle, and glands' (*Webster's Dictionary*), which is a state of continuous motor activity, accompanied by arousal and excitation in which there is a keen alertness and concentration. This is experienced in "rapid" rituals, such as Sufi dancing or Native American drumming, and is similar to the state induced by long-distance running or swimming.

3. The third state is the Hyperquiescent State with Eruption of the Arousal System, a combination of the above two, in that the Hyperquiescent State is so intensified that a "spillover" occurs from the Hyperarousal system. "This experience is usually accompanied by the sense of a tremendous release of energy, ...and has been called *Appana samadhi* in Buddhist psychology" (*Ibid.*).

4. The fourth, Hyperarousal State with Eruption of the Quiescent State, is also a combination of the first two, however the "spillover" is a result of the two systems acting in reverse: "...a meditator may experience a discharge of the quiescent system in the midst of a hyperarousal state as a consequence of enhanced

concentration or of arousal drivers such as rapid and intense rhythmic stimuli" (Ibid). This may occur, e.g., in Sufi dancing or in marathon running.

5. The fifth extra-ordinary state identified can occur when both the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems reach ultimate saturation at the same time. Here, the ultimate experience can be a complete disappearance of boundaries between objects, a sense of the absence of time, and the elimination of the self-other dichotomy. This is the *unio mystica* or mystical union of the western mystics (which Rappaport views as part of "higher-order meaning"), the realization of *atman* and *brahman* in the *Upanishads*, the *nirvana* (Skt., extinguished) of Buddhism, and the *nirbija samadhi* or *kaivalyam* of Patanjali. Newberg and D'Aquili refer to this occurrence as AUB -- Absolute Unitary Being. (John Bowker argues similarly that '[t]here are conducive properties that lie within Scripture and within the worlds that humans inhabit which evoke and sustain [a] union with God' (Bowker 2005, p.133).

For Newberg and d'Aquili, varying degrees of these extra-ordinary states can occur during religious practices, and the occurrence of AUB, or Absolute Unitary Being, is far from being a strange or 'diagnosable' state, but a function of the human cognitive system and its biological make-up: '...repetitive auditory and visual stimuli can drive neuronal rhythms in the brain and eventually produce an intensely pleasurable, ineffable experience...' (d'Aquili & Newberg, p.89). These pleasurable experiences are desirable and human beings want to repeat them. Even the simple gestures of ritual, such as bowing and making the gesture of *namaskār*, or genuflecting and forming the sign of the cross, are all ritual gestures that register pleasure within the brain. They provide signals of symmetry, solidity and locatedness-in-space to the brain and the central nervous system in their need for location, balance, and equilibrium. These simple gestures provide fundamental biological information and pleasure that enhance the success of ritual.

Those ritual gestures, among others, that may have lent support to the functioning of *satyagraha* rituals include:

1. Sitting in a meditative posture: Gandhi had instructed the *satyagrahis* to sit with the spine erect during sung-prayer. Using this information, along with examining photographs of the time, it is possible to surmise that the *satyagrahis* were being encouraged to sit in the position of *sukhasana*, a position in which the feet are folded inwards, the spine is held erect, and the body is held in a kind of triangular configuration of relationship, which gives the body stable support. This would have relayed biological signals of balance and stability to the brain.

2. Bowing and exhibiting the *namaskar* gesture: Bowing of the head, which actually involves movement from the top of the head to the bottom of the spine, consists of a trajectory of the head being lowered forward and then brought back upright. With this gesture the central nervous system will be effected, spinal fluid will flow forward and then backwards in the physical body, and the centrality of the body and its parts will be emphasized. This is a process of imbalance being followed by a process of balance. The bringing together of the two hands, in a prayerful position, over the heart, is another centralizing gesture, that would send biological signals of equilibrium to the brain. This is a gesture that would have been used many times during any sung-prayer meeting.

3. Ritual hand gestures: Gandhi was known to have conducted rhythmic sections of the sung-prayer meetings with his hands, and to have signalled points of ritual *seque* (transition) through the use of hand signals. If, during that conducting and signalling, there were additional *mudras* or gestures of blessing, these, too, would have provided non-verbal communication and signals of safety and security to the brain, furthering the mechanisms through which ritual functions.

4. Hand clapping: Gandhi encouraged the crowds of people who came to the public prayer meetings, especially later in his career, to listen attentively to the prayers and to participate in the singing of the *bhajan* and *Ramdhun* by clapping

their hands. Gandhi instructed the crowd as '[a]s they went on clapping their hands they got absorbed in the prayer. They knew soldiers were so trained that they were disciplined and learnt to work together.... They were also soldiers of freedom.... They were to maintain discipline and that was why he had introduced the practice of clapping hands while praying' (*CW-e*, 89, #245, p.168-9, Sodepur, 4 January, 1946).

D'Aquili and Newberg's five extra-ordinary states of consciousness give support to the use of the term "trance" or "trance-like," as opposed to "possession," when referring to the extra-ordinary state that the *satyagrahis* may have undergone when "merging with the performance" of ritual. It seems most likely that in deep prayer and meditation, as encouraged by Gandhi, the experience would have been that of the Hyperquiescent type. Perhaps during long and arduous marches on foot, there may have been some occurrences of the Hyperarousal type, but this is not a state associated with meditation and sung-prayer. States 3 and 4, of mixed type, may have been experienced at various points, perhaps when repetitive drumming might have been introduced during a Hyperquiescent period. And yet, the fifth state, that of Absolute Unitary Being, would seem to have been Gandhi's goal in sung-prayer. He wrote:

'In heartfelt prayer the worshipper's attention is concentrated on the object of worship so much so that he is not conscious of anything else besides. The worshipper has well been compared to a lover. The lover forgets the whole world and even himself in the presence of the beloved. The identification of the worshipper with God should be closer still' (Gandhi 1998, p.42).

It may never be possible to establish with certainty how the performers of *satyagraha* merged with the rituals of sung-prayer. However, with d'Aquili and Newberg's ability to look into the human brain and to record, in visual sequences, the differences that transpire within the brains of individuals moving into deep

contemplation and meditation, it is possible at present for science to view Urban's 'indexical I' as s/he moves into the 'projective I' of trance and to discover the hidden similarities with Rappaport's 'performer' as s/he merges with the 'others' in ritual. Foremost, Rappaport says '[t]he revelation of the hidden oneness of all things and of one's participation in such a great oneness may be the core meaning of *communitas*' (Rappaport 1999, p.381).

Frequency of Recurrence

Rappaport considers the variable of how frequently a ritual is repeated to be a component of evaluating how ritual functions. Some rituals (those that follow the seasons, or that occur only once annually) naturally do not occur with great frequency. But those rituals that do occur on a regular basis, Rappaport compares to the repetitive process of 'the revolving drum of a printing press. As the press imprints an apparently invariant message upon the paper passing through it, so a liturgical order imprints apparently invariant messages upon individual lives and upon society... (Rappaport 1999, p.233). This continuous imprinting can, over time, have a transforming effect on the participants: '...frequent rituals may be important in the sublimation of denial or more or less continuous psychological and physiological processes and in coping with hostile social conditions' (Rappaport 1999, p.203).

The *satyagraha* community, as we know, met for sung-prayer twice a day for over thirty years. Gandhi was himself "fixed" on the conviction that in order for *satyagraha* to be successful, these frequent rituals were necessary: 'If insistence on truth constitutes the root of the ashram, [sung]-prayer is the principle feeder of that root (Gandhi 1998, p.36); '...the idea is to make our hearts prayerful' (Gandhi 1998, p.42). When challenged by ashramites who felt that reciting the same prayers every day would become mechanical, Gandhi countered:

'We our selves are machines, and if we believe God to be our mover, we must behave like machines in His hands. If the sun and other bodies did not act like machines, the universe would come to a standstill. ...The point is not whether the contents of the prayer are always the same or differ from day to day. ... It all depends upon the spirit behind the recitation' (Gandhi 1998, p.41).

Rappaport raises the example of the high recurrence of rituals in the Orthodox Jewish liturgy, with the explanation that the *Halakha* instructs participants to live every moment in accordance with the mandates of God. 'The 'Halakhic Man' attempts to bring divine order into the world of the everyday, and to maintain it in the everyday world in face of daily vicissitudes. Such strenuous spiritual and moral exertion may well call for the psychic reinforcement of frequent ritual' (Rappaport 1999, p.203). There is most certainly a parallel between the 'Halakhic Man' and the *satyagrahis* in the desire to bring all facets of life in line with the tenets of their beliefs and with the mandates of a higher power. The *satyagrahis* were also devoted to living out their vows with such 'strenuous spiritual and moral exertion,' while the twice-daily sung-prayers were the frequently-repeated ritual vehicle that provided the 'psychic reinforcement' needed.

Gandhi spoke and wrote continuously, that, while the goal of *satyagraha* was to exhibit and live out the values of non-violence and truth (to be the change you wish to see), the ultimate goal was service to others -- service to the poor, to the untouchables, service to the country -- with the object of creating a new society informed by religious principles of divine justice and equality. The society he envisioned was not based on western political models (which, early on, he referred to as "*Ravana-raj*"), but on a vision of Ram-raj, a kind of revival of a lost Indian utopia, in which the divine, Ram, ruled with fairness and in service to all. Gandhi wrote of aligning the individual, through prayer, with this ideal; as the individual became more aligned with the Divine, a time would '...come when he or she will think every thought with God as witness and as its Master. This will be a state in

which one will have reduced oneself to a cipher. Such a person, who lives constantly in the sight of God, will every moment feel Rama dwelling in his heart' (*CW-e*, 56, #181. p. 202, July 1932). To be able to function as "ciphers" of *Ramarajya* was a component of Gandhi's motivation for *satyāgraha*, and, as such, the community would have been acting in ways similar to the Halakhic ideal of bringing the divine into the everyday world.

While it was noted earlier that *satyagrahis* may have participated in certain aspects of trance-like states, it should be also be noted, in connection with the discussion of ritual frequency, that Gandhi's focus was on service and the bringing of the divine into the everyday. Trance-like states, for their own sake, would not have been the aim, but may have functioned as a support for the goals. Rappaport quotes Rabbi Joseph B. Soleveitchik (1983. *Halakic Man*. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, p.203) in asserting that the mystic tries to escape from the everyday world, into the divine, while the Halakhic, inversely, attempts to bring the divine into the present (Soleveitchik 1983, p,203. Significantly, in this regard, mystical (or "non-ordinary") states require a longer length of time, whereas '...liturgical orders which attempt to bring the divine into everyday life may favor brief but frequent rituals' (Soleveitchik, p.204). Gandhi and the *satyagrahis*, based on the evidence of the frequency of the sung-prayer rituals, would appear to have acted in ways consistent with Halakhic observance, in that, while mystical or trance-like states probably occurred, they served the purpose of bringing the divine into the everyday world.

Divine Order Enacted

For Rappaport, one of the most significant functions of ritual is that it constitutes, for the participants, a vehicle for manifesting Divine Order into the secular world. Similarly, Mircea Eliade, in *Patterns of Comparative Religion*, has written that the very 'purpose of ... ritual is to abolish profane time and to situate

[us] in an eternal setting.' For Rappaport, this meeting of the mundane and the eternal is a two-way movement. 'The eternal is made vital as the living - the quick - participate in, become part of, the never-changing order. And as the eternal is made vital, so the vital may seem to be made eternal (Rappaport 1999, p.230). As the two 'worlds' merge, the ritual participants enter a state that can be described as a-historical. Furthermore, myth is very often the focus of this a-historical 'time-out-of-time':

'That which occurs in ritual's intervals is not historical, but happening once, is timeless, and to participate in a canon is to escape from time's flow into 'what is, in fact, often regarded as the unbounded, the infinite, the limitless,' the everlasting, the unambiguously moral, the absolutely true and the immortally vital' (Rappaport 1999, p.234).

At least twice a day, the *satyagrahis* had the opportunity to hear, in sung-prayer, the magical tales of Rama and the mythology of the ancient rule of order, *Ramrajya*. Those tales were declared in the *Manas*, which was meant to be '...learned by heart [and] internalized to the degree that it can become self-performing within us' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.37), and the mythology of *Ramraj* was such that '...under Ramraj the adherence of Ram's subjects to dharma produced a state of heaven on earth....'(Lutgendorf 1995, p.265 in Lorenzen 1995), in other words, Divine Order Enacted.

The songs of 'heaven on earth,' as heard in the sung-prayers, and especially in the *bhajans*, which were so often filled with stories of Ram's reign, would have easily transported the *satyagrahis* to that divine place, and transformed them into participants in the long chain of *sants*, change-agents for the heavenly realm of *Ramrajya*. In the *bhajans*, there is a feeling of all the saints belong in one large *satsang* ['gathering of the true'] which extends beyond ordinary time.

In this alignment with the Divine Order, Rappaport writes that words, or in this case sung-prayers, perform a highly specialized function

'Whereas acts and substances represent substantially that which is present, the words of liturgy can connect that which is present to the past, or even the beginning of time, and to the future, or even to time's end. ...[Words] implicitly assimilate the current event into an ancient or ageless category of events, something that speechless gesture or mortal substance of expendable objects alone cannot' (Rappaport 1999, p.152).

Further, in cultures wherein it is the belief that 'the Word has established the natural world' (Rappaport 1999, p.152), it is that act of creation that participants encounter in the midst of ritual, wherein the original act of creation is repeated. This concept will be addressed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Whether participants in ritual understand every item in the rite, or the meanings and sub-meanings of every act performed is not important. The most important meaning of ritual is certainty. Quoting Anthony Wallace, Rappaport writes that regardless of whatever meanings or messages participants receive, ritual has '...always one other message, which is implicit rather than explicit. This is the message of organization...of orderliness raised to an extraordinary degree... [to intimate] a world in which chaos is being, or is to be, replaced by order' (Wallace 1966, p.238 in Rappaport 1999, 285-6). During the observance of the ritual, 'the performer becomes indistinguishable from the order for the time being. He *realizes*, makes real, makes into a *res*, that order, providing it with the substance of his own breath and body as it reciprocally invests him with its own form' (Rappaport 1999, p.284). Thus, in this Divine Enactment, in the immortal words of T. S. Eliot, "You are the Music, while the Music lasts."

Rappaport also makes the observation that the more *invariable* the canon of the ritual, the more 'changeless' and 'certain' are its messages. This is significant in light of the descriptions of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* presented earlier in this chapter, as it was seen that the twice-daily ritual observations, even when first instituted by Gandhi, were largely invariable. Furthermore, they became even

more invariable with the passing of time. Regular repetitions broadcast the messages of unchanging certainty.

Thus, with certainty attained via Divine Order Enacted, having begun from the lower-order arena of semantics, and having passed through the identification of previously-hidden correspondences and similarities, the ritual process culminates in its ultimate goal, which is to transport the participants beyond the two lower levels of meaning and transcend into that higher arena of realization and action, that High Order Meaning, which Rappaport calls Divine Order Enacted.

OUTCOME OF RITUAL

The final section in this analysis and comparison composed of juxtaposing Rappaport's ritual theory alongside of Gandhi's use of sung-prayers during the time of *satyagraha* concentrates on the consequences and effects, or the outcome', of ritual participation. The individual will be considered first, and then, the community.

Outcome for the Individual

'State of Grace'

The outcome of ritual for participants can, and often does, result in what Rappaport terms 'a state of grace' (Rappaport, p.383). This is a psychological state in which "non-discursive feelings, emotions, and presentiments grasp, envelop, or pervade the objects of discursive thought" (Rappaport, p.384). This is similar to Gandhi's own description regarding his definition of "true religion," in that it was not of the mind, but "grasped by the heart." In this 'state of grace,' the "[w]ill is replaced by enthusiasm that does not simply suppress those drives but brings their energies into the service of the divine"(Rappaport, p.383).

In 1916, Gandhi wrote of *satyagraha*, or "soul force," "...I have felt during the whole of my public life that what we need, what any nation needs, but we perhaps of all the nations of the world need just now, is nothing else and nothing less than

character-building' (Gandhi 1998, p.5). (Unless otherwise noted, the quotations included below, utilized to correlate with Rappaport's ritual schema, are Gandhi's own words.) Furthermore, that character-building called for extra-ordinary strengths and qualities. '*Satyagraha* is not physical force. A *satyagrahi* does not inflict pain on the adversary ... never resorts to firearms. ... *Satyagraha* is pure soul-force [and] the soul is informed with knowledge. In it burns the flame of love. If someone gives us pain through ignorance, we shall win him through love. (CW-e, 16, #5, p.10).

Extra-Ordinary Feats

'In the state of grace, individuals can reach new heights of conduct' (Rappaport 1999, p.383), and they can perform extra-ordinary feats beyond their normal, ordinary capacities. The rituals of sung-prayer were meant to be *mantric* recitations (words of power) and preparation for extra-ordinary self-purification: 'When we speak aloud at prayer time, our speech is addressed not to God but to ourselves, and is intended to shake off our torpor (Gandhi 1998, p.42). In this purified state, or Rappaport's state of grace, ordinary people would be able to imitate the strength of a Jesus Christ: 'The *tapasya* [self-discipline] of Jesus Christ, boundless though it was, was not sufficient for Europe's need. Europe has disapproved Christ... Many Christs will have to offer themselves as sacrifice at the terrible altar of Europe...' (CW-e, 16, #5, p.13); or to exhibit the truth-telling of a Prahlad:

'...he was preparing to die without caring to return the blows that he had received from his father... Not only that: he would not in any way even parry the blows. ...if he had died in the midst of torture, he would still have adhered to Truth. That is the Truth that I would like us to follow ' (Gandhi 1998, p.7).

Overcoming Fear

'That which is learned in ritual may thus override, displace or radically transform understandings, habits, or even elements of personality and character laid down in early childhood' (Rappaport 1999, p.390). The verses from the *Bhagavad Gita*, heard daily, encouraged the *satyagrahis* to overcome the human, instinctual forces of *raga* and *dvesha*, along with any possible fears and inhibitions learned in childhood: 'I found, throughout my wanderings in India, that India, educated India, is seized with a paralyzing fear... [y]ou find, in Bhagavad Gita, fearlessness is declared as the first essential quality of a Brahmin. We fear consequences, and therefore we are afraid to tell the truth' (Gandhi 1998, pp.11-12). Early in the *satyagraha* movement, Gandhi encouraged fearless action:

'And we have got a superstitious veneration for our family traditions and for the members of our family. You say, 'My parents will die if I tell them that I, at least, can no longer partake of this crime [untouchability]'. I say that Prahlad never considered that his father would die if he pronounced the sacred syllables of the name of Vishnu. On the contrary, he made the whole of that household ring, from one corner to another, by repeating that name even in the sacred presence of his father' (Gandhi 1998, p.13).

Ritual repetition of *Gita* passages encouraged the overcoming of fear and feared consequences; the daily sung-prayer rituals were intended to unite the *satyagrahis* with an awareness of the Divine, through Divine Order Enacted, in which they could achieve the courage to overcome much, and perform more. Later, in 1938, while instructing a crowd during a Gandhi Seva Sangh meeting, Gandhi spoke about the physical and emotional manifestations of fear:

'There is a lot of cowardice in me. I talk of satyagraha, no doubt. ... I reached Bombay (in 1921) when the riots were raging. Stones were being hurled. I wanted to save myself from the melee, but what could I do? I was the leader of the non-cooperation movement. ... At heart, I wished someone had asked me to stay at home;... When I reached there

the people were in a frenzy.... I saw mounted policemen advancing towards us. ...My heart trembled.... There was heavy fighting in the area. My heart was thumping. I do not know how high the blood-pressure rose. I have spoken of my own cowardice. But those who were brandishing knives and sticks turned out to be no braver' (*CW-e*, 73, #42, p.54).

After speaking frankly about his own reactions of fear and panic that had to be overcome, Gandhi then referred to the resources of faith, as sung about in a particular *bhajan*:

Your knowledge will grow with your *sadhana*. ... God has assured us that when we realize our weakness and take refuge in Him, He is with us. The *bhajan* "Rama is the strength of the weak," is not a versification of some music teacher; it is a factual statement by someone who had experienced it (*CW-e*, 73, #42, p.55).

Transcending Time and Space

Rappaport goes further to say that '...liturgical orders are usually concerned with more than the order of the world of here and now. They also proclaim an order that transcends time, an ultimate or absolute order of which the temporal order is merely a contingent part' (Rappaport 1999, p.382). In considering why it was that Gandhi took so much time in prayer "in the middle of a revolution," Arun Gandhi quoted the experience of Eknath Easwaran as he encountered Mohandas Gandhi in the midst of an evening sung-prayer meeting:

'The sun had set when we got back [from his regular evening walk]. Hurricane lanterns were lit; Gandhi settled down at the base of a neem tree as ashramites and the rest of us huddled in. Some hymns were sung, then Gandhi's secretary began reciting the second chapter of the...Bhagavad Gita. Then it happened. ...

Gandhi's eyes closed; his body went stock still; it seemed as though centuries had rolled away and I was seeing the Buddha in a living person. I saw what we had almost forgotten was possible in the modern world: a man who had conquered himself to the extent that some force greater than a human being...moved through him and affected everyone (Gandhi 1999, pp.14-15).

With this ability to transcend time, through sung-prayer and meditation, Gandhi then, had the ability to affect others. One of the most important 'outcomes' of that 'state of grace' granted to Gandhi was his extra-ordinary capacity to connect so deeply with those immediately around him, and with the nation: 'Gandhi had the power to shake India, in part, because he drew on resources within himself that are not normally accessible. And that access happened, among other occasions, at the high point of these prayer meetings (Gandhi 1999, p.15).

In heartfelt prayer the worshipper's attention is concentrated on the object of worship so much so that he is not conscious of anything else besides. The worshipper has well been compared to a lover. The lover forgets the whole world and even himself in the presence of the beloved. The identification of the worshipper with God should be closer still. It comes only after much striving, self-suffering (*tapas*) and self-discipline (Gandhi 1998, p. 42).

The extraordinary ability that Gandhi possessed to influence others, especially during these periods of ritual, along with his capacity to transcend time and place and unite people in *communitas* '...is [a profound] clue to the power of the prayer meetings, and their significance to the intense struggle whirling around that quiet ashram' (Gandhi 1999, p.15).

The closing words of the *Gita* Chapter II, which in the above scenario had been chanted by Gandhi's secretary, read as follows:

This is the divine state, Arjuna.
Having attained this, he is not deluded;
Fixed in it, even at the hour of death,
He reaches the bliss of God.

(W. Sargeant, p.157)

'Even Unto Death'

'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. We recite daily the last 19 verses of Chapter II of the Gita in order that we may get the strength to live in this manner. We shall find in them what we seek only if they fill our very hearts' (*CW-e*, 55, #529, p. 437).

The final outcome of ritual to be considered here is integral to Rappaport's 'state of grace', in which individuals are able to perform feats they would not normally be able to perform, and in which it is possible for individuals to overcome learned, instinctive reactions, such as fear. Gandhi's training and preparation for the *satyagrahis* entailed self-control, within an awareness of the transcendence and bliss of deity, that could sustain an individual's non-violent behavior 'even unto death'. Rappaport references the use of the Buddhist confession of faith for Buddhists at the time of death, the *Shemā* being repeated at the time of dying for devout Jews, and the *Kalimat al Shahada* as verses chanted by faithful Muslims while dying (Rappaport 1999, p.333). Beyond the *Liturgies for the Dying*, chants such as the *Ave Maria* are intoned by Roman Catholics, and the Navaho, among many other Native American tribes, conduct particularly ornate sung ceremonials at the time of dying. "Song provides a road for the departed soul to travel on" (Hale 1995, p.104). The practice of chanting sacred verse as preparation for death, and the chanting or listening to sacred verse during the time of dying is recognized as a universal religious practice (Snodgrass 2002, pp.78-83). Gandhi used the sung-prayers and the chanting of God's name (*Ramanama*) to equip the *satyagrahis* with fearlessness: 'This is a universal experience. Psychologists also believe that man becomes what he thinks...repetition of God's names wipes out one's sins' (*CW-e*, 56, #285, p.283).

As first presented in Chapter Two, Gandhi's use of the *Ashram Bhajana*'s sung-prayers prepared people for suffering 'unto death': 'The Indians of South Africa believed that Truth was their object... They put up with all the suffering that this persistence implied. With the conviction that Truth is not to be renounced, even unto death, they shed the fear of death' (*CW-e*, 16, #5, p.10). The training extended, eventually, beyond the *ashram* community to the nation. Following the arrest of Gandhi and many others subsequent to the 1930 Dandi Salt March, a correspondent for the United Press wrote concerning the 2500 volunteers who continued protestations:

'From where I stood, I heard the sickening whacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls.... Then another column formed, while their leaders pleaded with them to retain their self-control. They marched slowly towards the police. Although everyone knew that within a few minutes he would be beaten down, perhaps killed, I could detect no signs of wavering or or fear' (Jack 1956, p.250).

While this was a silent march, surely the participants would have been using whatever inner resources they could summon. Those resources, with many most likely having been taken from the daily sung-prayers -- the words of the *Gita*, the stories of *Prahlad*, the victories of *Rama*, or the chidings of Kabir -- would have helped to maintain a state of self-control, as their leaders encouraged the participants to uphold their vows of non-violence.

The *satyagraha* actions were meant to be instruction for the nation. Many of Gandhi's attempts to ameliorate difficult social or political situations also involved his use of ritualized fasting, often undertaken with so deep an intent as to be denominated with the words 'even unto death'. An examination of these events will be considered in Chapter Four, wherein Rappaport's parameters of ritual conduct and activity will again be applied to situations beyond the twice-daily sung-prayer

rituals which also utilized the contents of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* as supportive ritual.

The final example of 'Even unto Death' to be included in this section is the often-quoted, although perhaps apocryphal, description of Gandhi's last chant. It is of special interest to notice that in Pyarelal's account (Gandhi's private secretary), Gandhi was on his way to the evening sung-prayer meeting on January 30, 1948. Though still weakened from a recently-completed fast 'even unto death,' his grand-niece, Manu, [at least in Pyarelal's account] was carrying his copy of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*:

'As Gandhiji passed through the cordoned lane through the prayer congregation, he took his hands off the shoulders of the two girls to answer the *namaskars* of the prayer congregation. All of a sudden some one from the crowd roughly elbowed his way into the cordon from the right. Little Manu, tried to stop the intruder...causing the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and Babu's spittoon and *mala*, which she was carrying in her hands, to fall down. As she stooped down to pick up the scattered things, he planted himself in front of Babu at less than point blank range. ... Three shots rang out in quick succession. ... The last words he uttered were 'Rama, Rama' (by Pyarelal in Gandhi 2000, pp169-70).

Outcome for the Community

Individual participants, having partaken of a ritual process, experience (in more or less degree) that sense of a 'state of grace,' in which they are able to act and perform in ways that are stronger than normal. In doing so, they have an effect on their community through the setting in motion of various kinds of chain reaction. Rappaport has outlined this inter-active relationship between participants and community in a diagram entitled *Cybernetics of the Holy* (Rappaport 1999, p.431). In effect, the diagram outlines a series of interactions that are interrelated through a series of events. 'Ritual participants' agree to participate in 'formal acceptance' of 'numinous belief', which is expressed as 'ultimate sacred postulates'. The 'ultimate sacred postulates' are regularized or 'sanctified' by a 'regulatory hierarchy', The

hierarchy regulates modes of belief and action, such as 'cosmological axioms', 'ritual prescriptions', 'taboos', 'commandments', higher and lower 'authorities', 'pledges and testimony'. etc. In the diagram, then, these modes of belief and action have an effect on 'social and economic conditions'. which, in turn, affect 'community well-being'. In short, the ritual participant, having followed the schema of these interactions has accepted the ritual of Divine Order Enacted, and in a 'state of grace' is strengthened as s/he leaves the ritual arena, fortified by the particular beliefs of that ritual, to return again 'out into the world' with the purpose of transformation.

The extent to which the participants interact in prescribed ways with the community-at-large can cause change and desired results. Mahatma Gandhi stated from the very beginning of his career, that he instituted congregational sung-prayers, which eventually grew into the rituals found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, for the purpose of training and creating non-violent interaction for the well-being of the community and *svaraj*. He conceived of these sung-prayers as a kind of protective but non-violent weapon: '...if the Indians were to come into their own, they must forge a weapon which would be different from and infinitely superior to the force which the [whites] commanded in such ample measure' (Gandhi 2000, p.98).

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

More than a simple hymnal, the *Bhajanavali* was a book of community ritual. It was that kind of religious text that Flood describes as having '...a 'voice from the past that is complex in its formation -- perhaps being the totality of authorial voices that have composed it -- and enlivened by the present communities who set the text aside [as sacred], breathe life into it through their reading or reception, and enact it', and it provides 'the blueprint for how people should live their lives (...prohibitions, injunctions, and stories to live by, (Flood, 206, p.53). The extent to

which the *Ashram Bhajanaval* influenced the *satyagraha* ashramites was illustrated, in that the twice-daily sung-prayer rituals were specifically constructed from materials found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

By utilizing those essential categories which Rappaport has determined to be necessary to define and describe what constitutes ritual, this chapter is the first of three to examine in detail the extent to which the *Ashram Bhajanavali* was the source of ritual practice for the *satyagraha* activities. A detailed overview of the *Bhajanavali*'s development afforded perspective as to how the daily sung-prayers were originally more informal, variable, and self-referential (to use Rappaport's terminology), and how they became more formalized, invariable, and canonical over time.

While this chapter served to describe the ways in which the sung-prayers supported the *satyagraha* community in the capacity of twice-daily prayer meetings, the next chapter will focus on how the *Ashram Bhajanavali* provided Gandhi with inspiration and support in the form of "occasional services," those rituals which were determined by his goals and purposes in accordance with the needs of circumstance, as well as those that provided inspiration for the many and diverse areas of *satyagraha*'s growth.

CHAPTER FOUR. RITUALS BEYOND THE TWICE-DAILY SUNG-PRAYERS

Had Gandhi gone by train or automobile to make salt, the effect would have been considerable. But to walk for twenty-four days and rivet the attention of all India, to trek across a countryside saying, 'Watch, I am about to give a signal to the nation,' and then to pick up a pinch of salt in publicized defiance of the mighty government and thus become a criminal, that required imagination, dignity, and the sense of showmanship of a great artist.

-- Louis Fischer
The Life of Mahatma Gandhi

While Louis Fischer may have meant to portray great respect for Mohandas Gandhi in his use of the words "imagination" and "dignity," he missed the mark in referring to "the showmanship of a great artist." Gandhi, as was noted earlier in Chapter Three, was indeed not play-acting. The participation in which Gandhi engaged was not that of a morality play, not that of performance art, not that of an artist. Gandhi's participation took place in the real world, conducted as part of a ritual process that he willingly undertook during dangerous circumstances, and for which he prepared at least twice a day with sung-prayers. Gandhi was not an artist, but rather a consummate liturgist, a deeply religious ritualist. As such, he prepared continually to offer the ultimate sacrifice, and he did move India with great "imagination" and "dignity" through ritual.

When searching the *Collected Works*, we can ascertain Gandhi's attitudes concerning ritual. 'Ritual is often a help to worship. Prayer is the intensest longing of the soul and is indispensable to our evolution' (*CW-e*, 25, #2, p.5). However, he wrote: 'The soul force I am speaking of does not consist in outward ritual like temple-going, etc.' (*CW-e*, 10, #52, p. 71). What Gandhi objected to was "meaningless ritual" (*CW-e* Vol. 33, #126, p.228), something observed as 'merely a ritual' (*CW-e*, 32, #228, p. 364), people '[w]ho merely go through the ritual of worship' (*CW-e*, 60, #114,

p.91) without the experience of it being 'heart-felt.' 'In a country like India anyone who goes about with his eyes and ears open can see for himself the superstitions and the rituals' (CW-e, 42, #152, p.131). When speaking of the *shraddha* ceremony, in which a son chants certain *mantras* for his father who has died, Gandhi wrote: 'To merely repeat the letter of the scriptures is to destroy their very soul' (CW-e, 41, #67, p.58). He spoke out often concerning the corruption of brahmin priests: "These days most of the temples are lifeless" (CW-e, 61, #32, p.37). "There were, besides the sadhus, many widows who spent their time in temples and idle ritual" (CW-e, 18, #104, p.121).

'Nowadays ostentation, false pride and the desire to enjoy oneself have crept into it and it has become part of wroship. ... Hence Narasinh Mehta has sung:

What if one has put on a caste mark or worn a string of *tulsi* beads [seeds of the holy basil plant]? What if one counts one's beads and repeats the name of God? All these are merely tricks to earn one's living' (CW-e, 43, #448, p. 353-4).

Gandhi pronounced: 'I take pride in calling myself a Hindu, but I am no dogmatic, ritual-bound Hindu' (CW-e, 21, #157, p. 272), and he was not adverse to creating his own new forms of simplified ritual. 'I am strongly opposed to sacrifice as it is currently interpreted. I consider it a sin to throw ghee [clarified butter] into the sacrificial fire in our age. Sacrifice really means an act of service' (CW-e, 90, #374, p.307).

While presiding over the marriage between a man and woman from the Sabarmati Ashram, he asked: 'Why should we not introduce an improved ritual? ... Only the barest ritual as sanctioned by religious usage will take place' (CW-e, 34, #75, p.338). Furthermore, as he made his rounds among the villages, he felt that with his new rituals, such as the twice-daily sung-prayers, he could renew the temples and bring them to life again: 'The foundation-

stone can be laid of the new kinds of temples suggested by me for the villages' (CW-e, 61, #32, p.37).

So it is evident that Gandhi was not anti-ritual. He was very much concerned with ritual. However, he was concerned with those rituals that involved not just ear-hearing, but heart-hearing, in simple rituals that moved "the heart," and he did not appreciate worship that was filled with the pomp and circumstance, to which he had always objected since his childhood.

Gandhi also used the word "*yajna*" quite frequently, a word that is often translated as "ritual. In its original context, '[y]ajna refer[red] to the sacrificial rites of the early Vedic times, and they are speculated upon in the *Brahmanas*. In the latter they became the carriers of cosmic powers, which were brought to bear whenever the *yajna* was properly executed according to the rules' (Jordens 1998, p.198).

However, at least by the time of the 1930s, Gandhi wrote:

'*Yajna*' means an act directed to the welfare of others, done without desiring any return for it, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature. 'Act' here must be taken in its widest sense, and includes thought and word, as well as deed. 'Others' embraces not only humanity, but all life. Therefore, and also from the standpoint of ahimsa, it is not a *yajna* to sacrifice lower animals even with a view to serving humanity....' (CW-e, 50, #230, p.160).

'The Vedic ritual lays down countless ceremonies and rites with a view to attaining merit and heaven. These, divorced as they are from the essence of the Vedas and short-live in their result, are worthless (CW-e, 46, #154, p.177). The point of *yajna*, for Gandhi, was service to humankind, and the benefit of *yajna* was self-purification.

He referred to the twice-daily sung-prayers as *yajna*. 'Dedication to duty is [sung]-prayer...[and] the performance of *yajna* [has] a great bearing on the soul and we regard it as a speciality of the Ashram life that we expect

the inmates to be very particular in this regard' (*CW-e* 47, #148, p.133). He referred to body-labor, 'labouring enough for one's food' (Gandhi 1998, p.52) as *yajna*. '[A]lthough in a sense every activity in the Ashram is of the nature of *yajna*, it is compulsory for all to spin for at least one hour in the name of God incarnated as the Poor (Daridranarayana)' (Gandhi 1998, p.52). He referred to the spinning of *khadi* (cotton) as a "sacrifice" and as a "*mahayajna*" (great-*yagna*). '[T]he *yajna* of spinning enjoys pride of place among all forms of service' (*CW-e*, 41, #81, p.67).

Yajna became over time many things to Gandhi. The burning of foreign cloth, clothes and caps in Bombay was *yajna* (*CW-e*, 24, #31, p. 52). He referred to *svaraj* itself and the *satyagraha* movement as *yajna*, often equating all three : '...a holy *yajna* is going on throughout the country' (*CW-e*, 27, #199, p.184); '...the great *yajna* which is in progress in our country' (*CW-e*, 27, #199, p.383); '...the *satyagrahi* starts a *yajna* on behalf of the whole country and offers himself as an oblation' (*CW-e*, 27, #327, p.383). Gandhi's *yajnas*, were enacted for service. He considered that that service would lead the individual to *svaraj* (self-rule) and *moksha* (freedom), and at the same time bring about *Ramrajya*, or the kingdom of God of earth, to India, and to the world.

The word *yajna* was expanded and used for many actions and many situations. Gandhi also used the word *yajna* to refer to those dangerous public rituals in which he was either undertaking non-co-operation or fasting. On the march to Dandi, '[h]e considered his offer of Civil Disobedience as a great Yagna' (Jack 1956, p.239). He considered his fasts as *yajna*. Concerning his last fast, undertaken for peace between India and Pakistan, he wrote: 'Where there is perfect peace in Delhi there will be peace all over India. I have no wish to live if I cannot see peace established all around me in India as well as in Pakistan. This is the meaning of this *yajna*' (*CW*, 90, p. 435).

Gandhi used the word "*yajna*" to be interchangeable with many things - from *svaraj*, *satyagraha*, and non-cooperation campaigns to the spinning of *khadi*, the offering of sung-prayers, and service performed for others. As with so many other words, he used "*yajna*" and "ritual" interchangeably. In a speech at a Bombay Prayer Meeting in the 1932, he instructed those present: '...I may be taken away any moment. I hope you will continue to have prayer regularly morning and evening. Let it become a daily obligatory ritual for you. Continue this ritual and you will shed lustre not only on your city but on our country (*CW-e*, 54, #220, p. 365).

The primary focus of Chapter Three was to establish the use of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* as the foundational ritual source for the *satyagraha* movement. Using a summary of Rappaport's theory as applied to Gandhi's independence movement, it was established that *satyagraha* was premised on and supported by materials found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Those materials were included in the sung-prayer meetings, at what Rappaport has called a level of Low Order Meaning, in the form of chants. Those particular chants were diverse in their theological approaches, and this would have added weight to their overall purpose of engaging participants in a Middle Order level of meaning, wherein hidden similarities could be discovered and perceived. Finally, in the use of these rituals, Gandhi's ability to bring participants into a state of experiencing the Divine, or of Enacting Divine Order (in Rappaport's terminology) was profoundly effective.

The current chapter will examine additional, equally-profound ways in which Gandhi utilized the materials found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* to create specialized rituals, beyond those of the twice-daily sung-prayer meetings. The chapter will then expand, proffering an investigation into the many ways that Gandhi also used those materials to provide spiritual advice to family and followers, to build community and national support, create communal and

international solidarity, and even inspire the instructive content of his public speeches.

RITUAL (YAJNA) FOR DANGEROUS TIMES

While looking at the twice-daily sung-prayers, it was noted that Rappaport expressed the strong probability that the purpose of frequently-performed, shorter rituals was to influence behavior: '...the frequency of rituals could be related to the extent to which liturgical orders are, as it were, called upon both to guide or govern daily behavior and to penetrate to, and thus to shape and maintain 'proper' cognitive and affective bases for that behavior (Rappaport 1999, p.202). On the other hand, as this chapter examines the use of rituals in other contexts, it should be noted that Rappaport purports the purpose of longer rituals to

'...be related to an intention to work deep psychic transformations or to maintain those previously effected.... ...the longer a ritual continues the fuller can be the development of the peculiar characteristics of time out of time... This further suggests that the length of rituals could be related to the profundity of the transformations, social, cognitive or affective, to be effected in them' (Rappaport 1999, p.202).

These longer rituals, in which Gandhi engaged, included fasts and non-violent marches. Both were equally dangerous to his physical well-being, and possibly life-threatening. Gandhi viewed these actions as ritual, as *yajna*, and he framed each of these dangerous acts on either side with sung-prayers from the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. The rituals were begun with sung-prayers; and, they were closed with sung-prayers.

As the *ashram's* sung-prayers moved beyond the walls of the *ashram* to accompany Gandhi's widening *satyagraha* into a national initiative, certain sung-prayers from the *Ashram Bhajanavali* came to be associated with the deeply serious and dangerous actions of the community. What provided the regular

rhythms of the *ashram's* routine also supported the Indian civil disobedience movement. In these new rituals, certain songs came to be regarded as special, or as ultra-sacred in the cultic life of the *satyagraha* community. They also became ultra-sacred to the nation. They were a sonic means by which Gandhi could communicate with the country as a whole. They were a means of joining the entire nation to *satyagraha's* religious purposes.

Fasting

Gandhi's "Great Fast" was undertaken for 21 days in 1924 in Delhi. Its stated purpose was to serve as penance for Hindu-Muslim riots which had occurred, and to further Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi used verses from the *Gita* to sustain himself during the fast. '...when I heard portions of the original [*Bhagavad Gita*] read by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya during my 21 days' fast, I wished I had heard it in my childhood from such a devotee as he is....'(Jack 1956, p.235). The *bhajan Vaisṇava jana* was sung as Gandhi ended his twenty-one day fast" (Gandhi 1999, p.98), as well as "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (Gandhi 1999, p.143).

Gandhi was incarcerated in 1932, at a time when a draft for a possible Indian constitution was proposed. The draft included a provision for a separate electorate to be established for untouchables. Strongly opposed to this, Gandhi announced that he would carry out a fast "unto death" while still in jail. In preparation for this fast, he wrote to:

'At prayer-time this morning, we sang 'Vaishnava jana.'" Mahadev read the *Gita* from 6.30 to 8.00. Vallabhbai and Mahadev are fasting today. When the fast commenced at noon, the following *bhajan* which Raihanabehn often sings was sung:

Awake, O traveller, it is morning now.
It is no longer night, that you still sleep.
He who sleeps will lose.
He who is awake will gain. [*Ashram Bhajanavali* # 92]

If you have got the complete *bhajan* there, Panditji [Khare] should sing it to you all. If you have not got it, I will send it from here' (*CW-e*, 57, #158, p. 94).

Pyarelal, Gandhi's last private secretary, later wrote about the event in his work *The Epic Fast*:

'The fateful 20th of September arrived at last. He rose early in the small hours of the morning as usual and had his favorite "Vaishnava Jana" sung at the morning prayer, with its haunting refrain: 'He alone is the true Vaishnava, who knows and feels for another's woe.' ... From 6:30 to 8:00 AM he had the Gita recited to him by one of his companions. He had his last meal of lemon juice and honey. The fateful hour approached. The little group prepared themselves for the ordeal by singing a beautiful song [*bhajan*] sent to Gandhiji by Shrimati Raihanaben...:

'O Traveller, arise, it is dawn,
Where is the night that thou still sleepest?'

The jail bell at last struck twelve...[and] Gandhiji's 'tussle with God' had commenced' (Jack 1956, p.282).

Those incarcerated with him, including his wife, Kasturba, cared for him physically, continuing to observe the sung-prayer rituals of the *satyagraha* community. 'The morning and evening prayer appointments were kept punctiliously as ever, Gandhiji always sitting up in his bed for prayer, and the hum of the spinning wheel did not cease even for a single day during the fast' (Jack 1956, p.286).

Six days later, when Gandhi's health was showing signs of deterioration, Rabindranath Tagore, poet, friend and adversary, visited from Calcutta:

'Gandhiji,...on whom music has always a very soothing effect when he is experiencing physical suffering, suggested to Col. Doyle [the Inspector General of Prisons] that he should be allowed to have some music as music to him was a medical necessity. This permission was accorded to him. Again on the evening of the 27th and 28th, he had

some of his favorite devotional hymns sung to him to the accompaniment of instrumental music by some friends who came specially from the city for this purpose' (Jack 1956, p.285).

Coincidentally, on that sixth day, after what would become known as the Yeravda Pact (allowing for no separate untouchable electorate) had been solidly agreed to by all parties concerned, Gandhi broke his "Epic Fast":

'An impressive ceremony...was held at 5:15 pm in the Yeravda Prison.... The yard was freshly sprinkled over with water, Gandhiji lay on his cot... Before him were assembled...in all about 200 persons. The Poet [Tagore] led the prayer by singing a Bengali hymn from Gitanjali [a collection of Tagore's song]. This was followed by the reciting of some Sanskrit verses by Parchure Shastri, a fellow prisoner from the leper yard of the Yeravda Prison. Then was sung, all joining, Gandhiji's favorite hymn, 'The Vaishnava Jana.' When it was finished, Shrimati Kasturba [Gandhi's wife] handed him the orange juice and Gandhi broke his fast. Simultaneously with it, fruit and sweets were distributed to all present' (Jack 1956, p.292).

The following day, Gandhi released this statement to the press:

'The fast undertaken in the name of God was broken in the presence of Gurudev [Tagore], and Parachure Shastri, the leper prisoner and a learned pandit, seated opposite each other, and in the company of loving and loved ones who had gathered round me. The breaking was preceded by the Poet singing one of his Bengali hymns, then *mantras* from the Upanishads by Parachure Shastri, and then my favourite hymn 'Vaishnava Jana' (CW-e, 57, #201, p.123).

In the days that followed the fast, Gandhi wrote letters regarding his health to his devotees. By October 1st, he wrote to Mirabehn that he was recovering well, and was feeling strong: 'And so I continue to *hum*, 'God is great and merciful' (CW-e, 57, #243, p143; emphasis added). He wrote also to Raihana Tyabji [see p. 91 herein], who, apparently, had made her disappointment known to Gandhi

concerning the fact that, although he had used a *bhajan* she had sent to him in order to begin the fast, he had not used a *bhajan* that she had herself composed.

'This is the first Urdu letter I am writing after the fast. Your *bhajans* are very good. What does it matter if the *bhajan* which was sung when I commenced the fast was not yours? After all, it was a fine *bhajan* which you yourself had sent. Of course I would have felt much happier if it had been yours. But never mind. When God grants me another opportunity for undertaking a fast, I should like to have a *bhajan* composed by you. Compose one right now' (*CW-e*, 57, #249, p.146).

In May of 1933, Gandhi began a second fast for the purpose of placing the plight of the untouchables before the nation. Later in August of that year, following another fast for the plight of the untouchables, during which time Gandhi became ill and was removed to Sassoon Hospital for medical reasons, he wrote to Raihana's father, Abbah Tyabji: 'Well, many strange things have happened in my life, but this discharge is the strangest. However, there it is and I must take it as it comes.... God will clear the way for me.... I shall regain my strength, lost during the eight days.... Tell [Raihana] that I entered upon my fast with the *bhajan* she sent to me' (*CW-e*, 61, #410, p.333).

Following his release from prison in May 1944, Gandhi became directly involved once more in the attempts to quell violence that had escalated between Muslims and Hindus. Travelling from village to village, he lived alternately among Muslims and among Hindus, with the central message of each sung-prayer meeting being focussed upon peaceful co-existence between the communities. He travelled to Bihar, to Delhi, and to Calcutta. Following an attempt on his life, Gandhi proclaimed that he would fast-to-the-death for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity in September 1946. Subsequently, having procured his desired promise for the cessation of violence from the local community leaders of Calcutta, he broke his fast after three days: 'Before breaking the fast Gandhiji according to his usual

practice had prayer recited: 'When life is dry and parched up, Descend Thou in a shower of mercy' followed by *Ramadhun*....'(Jack 1956, p.450).

From Bihar and Calcutta, Gandhi than moved his attentions again to Delhi in 1947, where tensions and violence were high. In January 1948, he continued to conduct the sung-prayer meetings, especially well-attended in the evenings, while residing at Birla House. He began what would be his final fast on January 13, 1948, for the sake of Hindu-Muslim-and-Sikh unity. 'The first day of the fast he walked to the evening prayer meeting and conducted services as usual (Jack 1956, p.452), and on the second day he 'addressed the worshippers after the hymns and holy scriptures had been chanted' (Beck, p. 454). On the third and fourth days, too weak to walk, he spoke to the crowds via microphone from his bed. Finally, on January 18th, over one hundred representatives from the Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh communities met in Gandhi's room at Birla House to testify to him of their having signed an agreement (written in both Persian and *Devanagari* scripts as Gandhi had requested [Beck 1956, p.458]) intended to secure peaceful co-existence in Delhi. One member of each delegation was also required by Gandhi to pledge to the additional vow of being committed to bringing about peaceful resolutions to the violence that had erupted following the India-Pakistan division.

'Gandhiji then expressed his readiness to break the fast, which was done with the usual ceremony of prayer at which texts from the Japanese, Muslim and Parsi scriptures were recited followed by the *mantra*:

'Lead me from untruth to truth,
From darkness to light,
From death to immortality.' [Ashram Bhajanavali, p. 32]

A Hindustani hymn and the Christian hymn, 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,' were sung by the girl inmates of the Ashram followed by *Ramadhun*. The glass of fruit juice was handed by Maulanasaheb [a Muslim journalist] and Gandhiji broke the fast after fruit was distributed to and partaken by all present' (Beck 1956, p.462).

An account of this event also appeared in the January 25th edition of *Harijan*, which reported that Gandhi declared 'I shall break my fast. Let God's will prevail. You will be witness today', after which came 'recitation from the Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Parsi scriptures, and singing of a Christian hymn, a *bhajan* and *Ramdhun*. Abul Kalam Azad [a Muslim political leader] offered a glass of juice to Gandhiji who broke his fast at 12.15 p.m' (CW-e, 98, #255, p.257).

Weak from the fast, Gandhi was carried by his supporters to the prayer grounds for a time. When, on January 20th, a bomb was thrown in an attempt on his life, he addressed the people, asking them to forgive the perpetrator rather than incite more violence. As he regained his health following the fast, he began once again to lead the sung-prayers. On the evening of January 30th, Gandhi was walking on his own with assistance. He was on his way to lead the evening sung-prayers, when he was shot three times by Nathuram Vinayak Godse, a 35-year-old Brahmin, publisher of a Hindu Mahasabha weekly in Poona (*Beck 1956, p.509*). In Pyarelal's version of those final events, Gandhi's copy of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, which was being carried for him to the prayer grounds, dropped to the ground during the fatal attack.

Journalistic accounts, memoirs, and Gandhi's personal correspondence make it possible to identify the extent to which the *Bhajanavali* sung-prayers, used in specialized ritual settings, were so deeply meaningful and sustaining to Gandhi. It is also possible to determine the extent to which they supported the *satyagraha* movement. The descriptions of the breaking of Gandhi's last fast, for instance, is a clear illustration of their importance (in their later, more formalized form), with texts being chanted from several religions, followed by a *shloka* from the *Upanishads* (*Asato ma*), a Hindustani *bhajan*, the Christian hymn "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," and ending with *Ramdhun* chanting. These prayer-songs were offered during a specialized time, that liminal time of ritual, which marked the end of a dangerous fast. They were written about and published in the press; they were

shared and conversed on throughout the country. They were known to the nation of India to be of special significance, as they were associated with Gandhi, and all of these items were found in the published collections of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

The 1930 Salt March

As non-violent non-cooperation grew throughout India, Gandhi focussed on the unfairness of the salt taxes imposed by the British on the Indian people as an emblem of the injustice of British rule. On March 12, 1930, Gandhi and 79 colleagues marched from the *Satyagraha Ashram* to Dandi on the western sea coast, a distance of roughly 200 miles.

A full description of this march was given in Chapter Two, so we will not repeat a full account here, except to take note again of the fact that Gandhi used sung-prayers to frame his ritual acts.

The march began with a sung-prayer ritual that included the *bhajan* "*Vaishnava jana*," and all along the way Gandhi continued the twice-daily prayers, making reference to singer-saints, e.g. Pritam and his hymn "Harinam marga" (The Godward way is for the brave not for the cowardly - *Ashram Bhajanavali* #117, p. 170). On April 6th, before the actual trek to the sea, the day was begun with sung-prayers, noted as 'more than usually solemn' (Beck 1956, p.239).

Though not arrested that day, Gandhi was arrested in the middle of the night on May 5th, and the *satyagraha* community surrounded him with song, with the "*Vaishnava* hymn" and with *Raghupati Raghava*, before he was arrested and imprisoned.

Each unit of this great "yajna" was begun with sung-prayer and each unit was ended with sung-prayer.

RITUALS OF TRANSITION

Since the *satyagraha* community had begun as a "prayerful experiment" concerned with living out of religious and spiritual principles, Gandhi was, in effect, the spiritual leader of that community. His religious guidance was evidenced throughout the entire community, and the materials with which he taught and cajoled came very often from the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. He also provided the preparation of new rituals, and presided at weddings and funerals.

Kasturbai's Funeral

Gandhi's wife, Kasturbai, had survived two heart attacks while in prison, but in January 1944, she became seriously ill and Gandhi requested from the prison authorities that Kanu Gandhi, their grand-nephew, be able to stay with her to care for her: 'In case Kanu Gandhi cannot stay here during the patient's illness, he should be allowed to visit her for about an hour daily so that he can sing her some *bhajans* and also do some little nursing' (CW-e, 83, #277, p.440). In a follow-up letter to a government official, Gandhi also asked for permission for an Ayurvedic physician to be allowed to visit: 'The patient shows no signs of recovery and night-nursing is becoming more and more exacting. Kanu Gandhi is an ideal nurse, having nursed the patient before. And what is more, he can soothe her by giving her instrumental music and by singing *bhajans*. I request early relief to relieve the existing pressure. The matter may be treated as very urgent' (CW-e, 84, #1, p.1). Kasturbai's condition worsened, as her youngest son described:

'Then at about 3 P.M. she sent for me and told me that she was going. ... Never did her articulation sound clearer, or her words appear choicer to me. Almost immediately after this she joined her hands together, sat up unaided and with her head bowed low she prayed for several minutes in the loudest tone she could manage.

"God my Refuge, Thy Mercy I crave."

That is how I would translate into English the winged words which went up from her again and again' (Beck 1956, pp.412-13).

Approximately three hours later, Kasturbai called for Gandhi himself, who '...leaned her against his shoulder and tried to give her what comfort he could. ... The entire group stood in a semi-circle and chanted the favorite prayer which they had been used to [sing] so long in her company' (Beck 1956, p.412).

Kasturbai's cremation rites were performed the next day. She had been a devout Vallabhaite Hindu all her life, and a priest was summoned to perform the funeral ceremonies. However, once her body had been placed on the funeral pyre in preparation for burning, Gandhi interrupted the traditional services of the Hindu priest to interject a liturgy that was more in harmony with the *satyagraha* community. 'Recitations from the Koran, the Bhagavadgita and the Bible were made, and some of the members of the *ashram* sang in chorus a few *bhajans*. Dr. M.D.D. Gilder recited a passage from the Zoroastrian sacred texts while Mirabehn recited a Psalm. The services over, Mahatma Gandhi directed the priest to continue... (Beck 1956, p.415). The funeral pyre was lit, as those present sang the chant "*Govinda, Govinda, Govinda*" (Beck 1956, p.415). The ritual of the sprinkling of Kasturbai's bones was completed by Gandhi in Aga Khan Palace (where they were incarcerated), and her son Devadas, who was not imprisoned, took most of her ashes to be deposited in the Indrayani River.

It is significant that, while Gandhi did honor Kasturbai's wishes for traditional Hindu funeral ceremonies, he obviously felt it equally important to supplement those proceedings with the ashram's rituals. The traditional Hindu services were interrupted by M.K. Gandhi himself and the ashram's prayer-songs from the *Ashram Bhajnavali* were interjected in a poignant service-within-the-service that marked her identity with *satyagraha*; then her body was returned to the Hindu priest for completion of the traditional rites.

Kasturbai's funeral was not the only funeral at which Gandhi had presided. In 1942, he had coordinated services for Jamnalal Bajaj [an independence fighter, industrialist, and philanthropist]:

'Thousands of people converged on Gopuri to bid farewell to the body. After the cremation Vinoba [Bhave, successor to Gandhi] recited the full text of the *Ishavasyopanishad* in his sweet voice. Then I asked him to recite Chapter XII from the Gita...he recited the 9th....I asked him to recite an *abhanga* [Marathi type of hymn]. He recited one from Tukaram [a Marathi singer-poet]. Lastly I requested him to sing 'Vaishvanajana.' He then sang this *bhajan* too. Parachure Shastri had of course arrived there. He recited hymns from the Vedas, and, at my request, explained their gist to the assembly. The hymns selected conveyed, as was proper, the most solemn thoughts' (CW-e, 82., #12, pp.9-10).

Here, again, it is possible to identify favourite ritual elements from the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, the chanting of Sanskrit, reciting the Gita, the singing of song, in this case, an *abhanga* by Tukaram, and 'Vaishnava jana.'

Marriage Ceremony

Gandhi was also asked to officiate at a marriage ceremony in 1945. However, he had very clear ideas about how a *satyagraha* ceremony should be conducted, and how it should be different from traditional Hindu rites. He wrote to D.B. Kalelkar to discuss his preferences, as Kalelkar was to participate as well: 'What I require is this. I want the rites to be the simplest and in Hindustani, omitting Sanskrit shlokas and mantras. For conducting it anybody will do. What we do in this case will apply to all future occasions. I think this covers all points' (CW-e, 87, #550, p.323). Gandhi also wrote the bride-and-groom-to-be, instructing them concerning what their preparation must entail, prior to the wedding, or he would not consent to marry them:

'Now for your preparation for tomorrow:

- (1) Both should fast till the marriage tie is formed, fruits may be taken.
- (2) You will both read 12th Chapter of *Gita* and contemplate its meaning.
- (3) Each will clean up separate plots of ground with measure.
- (4) Each will tend cows in the Goshala.
- (5) Each will clean up the well side.

(6) Each will clean a closet well.

(7) Each will spin daily and do all these with the intention so far as possible of carrying out these *yajnas* daily' (*CW-e*, 87, #635, p.374).

For the wedding ceremony, Gandhi began with a *bhajan*:

'Now I shall recite a *bhajan* thanking God. All of you should listen to it carefully (*Bhajan 'Aaj milkar geet gao* ["We gather today to sing this song"]).

Q. Are both of you composed?

A. (Both to say:) Yes.

Q. Have you performed the seven *yajnas* as described to you yesterday?

A. Yes.

Q. I hope that you know that this relationship is not for sexual gratification or enjoyment.

A. Yes.

Q. Are you entering the *Grihastha Ashram* [the householder phase of life] in a spirit of duty, dedication and sacrifice?

A. Yes.

Q. And therefore you will not obstruct each other in his or her work of service, but assist each other?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you be always loyal to each other in thought, word and deed?

A. Yes.

Q. Will you try your best not to have children till India wins independence?

A. Yes.

Q. You do approve the idea of inter-dining and inter-marrying with the so-called untouchable, don't you?

A. Yes.

Q. You do believe that men and woman have equal rights?

A. Yes.

Q. Both of you are friends and neither is a slave to the other. Isn't that correct also?

A. Yes.

Q. You understand, don't you, that the seven *yajnas* mentioned in the second question are in place of the *saptapadi* [a primary part of the Hindu marriage ceremony, in which the couple circumambulates a fire in seven steps]?

A. Yes.

Now by this yarn spun by me I bind you in union. You should preserve the yarn-garland carefully and should resolve that you will never break this union. Bear in mind the religious ceremony and pray to

omnipotent God to help you in the fulfilment of the vows you have just taken. Now we shall all together sing the *Ramdhun* '(CW-e, 87, Appendix IX, "Marriage Rites," pp. 439-40).

As part of this short wedding ceremony, 'Lakshmibehn [a woman ashramite] sang the women's prayer...with the utmost devotion, beginning with the *shloka* "*Shantakaram*" ["Vishnu Stuti," *Ashram Bhajanavali*, 8]. After the ceremony was over, she also sang the *bhajan* "Vaishnava Jana'.

COMMUNITAS

In Chapter Three, it was noted that one of the primary qualities that Rappaport defined as being constitutive of ritual is ritual's ability to create *communitas*, in which participants may be released from the restraints of everyday rationality into a state of awareness which Rudolph Otto (1923) would have referred to as 'the numinous' (Rappaport 1999, p.219).

One of the fundamental properties of *communitas* is the blurring of distinction between self and other... [this seems] to extend the self-unification characteristic of numinous experience...beyond the self to the congregation or even to the world as a whole (Rappaport 1999, p.380).

It was also mentioned that the concept of rhythm is a primary component of *communitas*, whether considering the sequential rhythms of the ritual order itself, or elements of rhythm and cadence provided within that order. As the separateness of an individual self blends into a hidden recognition of similarity found with others in the context of ritual order, the participants do not simply communicate to each other about that order but commune with each other within it (Rappaport 1999, p.220).

Gandhi travelled extensively throughout India, and he regularly used the sung-prayer meetings as a forum to increase *satyagraha*'s sense of *communitas*.

Satyagraha Communitas

Ashram Administration and Organization

Gandhi was arrested on Jan. 4, 1932, along with more than 30,000 other political prisoners, and was jailed again in Yeravda Prison. Letters from that time in the *Collected Works* show that Gandhi remained actively involved in shaping the life of the *ashram*, including the sung prayers, and he referred frequently to the *Ashram Bhajnavali*. He wrote often to his colleagues at the *ashram*, and received visits when possible. It should be remembered that the Yeravda Prison and the Sabarmati Ashram were actually not that far apart in distance. Kaka Kalelkar described the *ashram*: 'Gandhiji chose a very interesting, not to say an intriguing, spot for his Ashram. To the north are the walls of Sabarmati prison; to the south lies the Dudheshwar cremation ground' (Kalelkar 1961, p.v), and that, during the time of Kalelkar's imprisonment, 'prisoners had climbed the [neem] tree morning and evening to cut twigs to be used as tooth-brushes. Some used to climb just to get a glimpse of the world outside the jail walls. 'There is your Ashram' (Kalelkar 1961, p.9). It was possible to see the prison from the *ashram*, and if, one were willing to take risks, to see the *ashram* from the prison.

Gandhi was concerned with the most minute inner workings of the *ashram*, and wrote continuously to everyone. He wrote to Narandas Gandhi, a Gandhi cousin and secretary of the ashram in charge during Gandhi's imprisonment, who had been receiving complaints from the ashramites concerning his leadership: 'We have in the Ashram a *bhajan* about "Nindakababa. I would not say that it is a very good one. That is, the author has not treated the detractor with generosity. But the lesson which it teaches is right. Anyway, whether you are calm or upset, I shall not feel worried if I regularly hear from you' (*CW-e*, 60, #543, p.458).

Gandhi wrote to his wife, Kasturbai Gandhi, also in charge of many activities during his absence:

'Mother *Gita*, therefore, advises us to seek solitude.... I hope you remember the *bhajan* "Friends of the body are selfish, one and all; they will refuse to accompany one at the end."... One who cultivates solitude will never be unhappy anywhere, for he sees only Vishnu in all places. ...All of you have got, unsought, an opportunity to do so. Try and cultivate it' (*CW-e*, 63, #25, pp.28-29).

Desiring to be in touch with everyone, he wrote further to Kasturbai:

'Do not feel nervous, any of you. All the verses in the section of women's prayer were purposely selected. The very first verse teaches us a great deal. The last three verses of the *Gita* which have been included sum up the whole prayer. They are like the *kalasha* on the top of a temple which adds lustre to the temple and completes its beauty. I hope the verses in this prayer are recited every morning with careful attention to their meaning' (*CW-e*, 49, #283, p.280).

Gandhi responded to the tensions of community life using stories and morals from the *bhajans*:

'Do not get disheartened by the burdon of the kitchen. Ask for whatever help you require, but do not give up in despair...God always helps those who work steadfastly in this manner. That is the lesson to be learnt in the story of Gajendramoksha and in the *bhajan* about the male and female tortoise. (Note 1 - The story of an elephant who, being caught by a crocodile, was rescued by Vishnu. Note 2 - A devotional song by Bhoja Bhagat [a medieval mystical poet] narrates the story of a male and female tortoise saved by their faith in God)' (*CW-e*, 47, #471, pp. 408-09).

If ashramites had personality difficulties with each other, Gandhi would address them: 'Why should we feel hurt if somebody speaks ill of us? Learn from someone the *bhajan* "My detractor is my benefactor." Its central idea is that anybody who speaks ill of us serves us by doing so. Continue to write to me' (*CW-e*, 59, #118, p.84); 'What Sushila [a female ashramite, possibly Gandhi's personal physician] says is correct. You needn't thank her for any help she may give. It would be strange if she did not help. We used to sing a *bhajan* in Phoenix, one line in which ran: "A

true lover's love is that which expects no thanks or return for courtesy shown' (CW-e. 72, #542, p.414).

Gandhi held a special concern for the children of the ashram: '...I have no wings and still I fly every day and come to you, for in my mind I am in your midst... You can fly with your minds and feel that you are with me' (CW-e, 49, #281, p.279). With the ashram building being located so closely to the prison, Gandhi attempted to remain in contact with the children and involved in their education. He wrote an article for the Children's Magazine at the ashram school: "The path of truth is for the brave alone, never for a coward.' I realize the significance of this poem more and more as days pass. I also feel that it is not for grown-ups only to put the idea of this verse into practice; children and students, too, can do so' (CW-e, 21, #1, p. 1). The *bhajan* quoted by Gandhi for the children's consideration was *Harinam margache* by Pritamdas, found as *Ashram Bhajanavali* #117 and as the CW-e #224.

When Gandhi had been sentenced and incarcerated earlier in 1922, Kaka Kalelkar had requested that he write a children's primer on Hinduism while he was in jail, with the intention of possibly publishing it for national distribution. Gandhi agreed to write such a primer, however, he prefaced it with a note for the teachers who were to use it, indicating that he saw the primer as "an experiment," and asked for feedback and revisions. The extent to which *bhajan* singing and sung-prayer figure in this guide to children's education is entertaining as well as informative for our purposes.

'What Is a Hindu?

Lesson 1: Morning

'Get up my child, it is morning.'

'I still feel sleepy.'

'Look, your sister is up; you, too, should get up and brush your teeth; and then say your prayers. It is past four. Don't you hear the birds singing? Your sister Shanta has started singing a *bhajan*.'

Lesson 2: Brushing the Teeth

'Have you cleaned your teeth? Let me see your teeth. They look yellow. I You have not brushed them properly. The tongue, too, is not clean. You have not taken enough care to remove the coating. What stick did you use?'

'It was from the *babul* tree.'

'Why did you not use one from the *neem* tree?'

'It is rather bitter.'

'What if it is? The mouth feels fresh afterwards. You will come to like the bitterness when you get used to it.'

Lesson 3: Preparing for the "*Bhajans*"

We should not go to the *bhajan* without cleaning ourselves first.

Rheum in the eyes marks one as dirty. Our bodies and minds should be clean when singing *bhajans* to God. During prayers, one should sit erect with crossed legs and folded hands. We should not talk with anyone, nor look at anyone. We do not see God, but He sees us.

I see you even when you are asleep, being awake myself, but you do not see me. Likewise, may it not be that God sees us, even if we do not see Him?

Lesson 4: The "Bhajan"

'Dear, very dear to me is the name of Dada Rama, [Note 2 - grandfather]

Little use have I for all learning else;

Dear, very dear to me is the name of Dada Rama.

Father dear, show your love for me

Have sweet songs about Govind written on my slate;

For dear, dear to me is the name of Dada Rama

All I wish to hear is stories and songs about Shri Rama,

Of Him do I constantly think, and on Him meditate;

For dear, dear to me is the name of Dada Rama.'

-- Kalidas Vasavada

(CW-e, 26, #172, pp.389-94)

Gandhi wrote regularly to the children of the ashram and continued to teach them through examples found in scripture, *bhajan*, and story: 'We should live as He may ordain and feel happy in doing so. This is why we sing that *bhajan* by Narasinh Mehta: 'Take to heart neither happiness nor suffering; they are ordained for this body from its very birth' (CW-e, 54, #281, p.406).

Having been imprisoned several different times while working on various translations, Gandhi corresponded with colleagues regarding translations and the usage of sung-prayers. He wrote to Narayan Moresh Khare: 'Please incorporate this correction if you have not done so and ask everyone else to do it in their own copies. We ought to get our Hindi *bhajans* revised with the help of some Hindi expert' (*CW-e*, 47, #414, pp.364-5). With regard to the practice of *Ramdhun*, he wrote to Mirabehn first, asking her to change the rhythmic refrains in part of the chanting: 'The rapid repetition of *Ramanama* in a new assembly is undoubtedly good. For very rapid repetition, mere, *Ram, Ram, Ram Ram Ram...*is often used. If it is done with proper cadence, the effect is ecstatic. Yes, we get up at 3.40. The prayer at 4 and 7.30' (*CW-e*, 56, #46, p.40). Subsequently, he wrote to Narandas Gandhi about ten days later, as if to check on whether his suggestion had been taken up or not, and then he wrote as well to Narayan M. Khare for help in establishing the new practice:

'I have suggested to Mirabehn that if, instead of repeating the refrain *Raghupati Raghava Rajaram*, etc., only *Ram Ram Ram...*is repeated in ascending and descending notes, then the refrain could be taken up briskly and it would be very good for the newcomers. But who will teach her this? If you have anybody in view in Bombay please write to him to go and teach her. Have you followed?' (*CW-e*, 56, #89, p.79).

When Maganbhai Desai, a devoted disciple, wrote to Gandhi, disappointed with the government's administrative decision to re-claim and confiscate certain buildings, Gandhi responded: 'Let them acquire it if they want to. After all does it not belong to them? Remember what the poet said in the *bhajan* : 'It is useless to sorrow over what God ordains.' ... 'You may enjoy things only after renouncing them, etc.' [*Ishopanishad*I.1] (*CW-e*, 84, #94, p.77).

As a final, but not exhaustive, example, when an ashramite wrote to Gandhi concerning a resolution made by the Congress Working Committee that might

result in a negative impact upon the *ashram*, Gandhi's consolation came in the form of *bhajans*: 'Why are you afraid? ... Do you remember the *bhajan* beginning: 'When will the matchless time....?' Think over the lines : 'Wandering alone on the cremation ground.' The Committee could not have adopted any other course. Everyone has to face this problem' (*CW-e*, 78, #440, p.360).

"Spiritual Advice" from Bapu

Gandhi's giving of consolation went beyond the every-day concerns of administering the organization of a functioning ashram. As the central religious guide for the *ashram*, he also provided his family and followers with what could be termed "spiritual advice" and/or "religious guidance." Using the teachings of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and the stories of the *bhajans* he provided emotional support in many areas.

The subject of bereavement was often addressed by Gandhi. Consolation for grief was offered to his son, Harilal, following his wife's death: 'Two paths branch out from where you stand now. You have to decide which you will take. There is a *bhajan* we often sing in the Ashram; its first line runs: *Nirbalke bala Rama*' (Note 2 - Refrain of Surdas' famous hymn 'He is the help of the helpless, the strength of the weak') (*CW-e*, 17, #237, p.248). To Amrit Kaur, an *ashramite*, he wrote: 'Mathuri sang a *bhajan* last evening in her magnificent voice. The substance, is, man is after pleasure or happiness but it ever flies from him. Why will he not appreciate the fact that substantial pleasure or happiness comes through grief or unhappiness? Cheer up and pass on all your troubles to Him -- the Rock of Ages' (*CW-e*, 81, #484, p.274). To Mirabehn, who was grieving the loss of a friend, he wrote regarding God's will and the use of prayer, illustrated with reference to a familiar *bhajan*:

'We must learn the art of never grieving over death no matter when and to whom it comes. ... How shall we know [God's] will? By prayer and right living. Indeed, prayer should mean right living. There is a *bhajan* we sing every day before the Ramayana commences whose

refrain is "Prayer has been never known to have failed anybody" (*CW-e*, 69, # 9, p.9).

Gandhi gave advice to those who wrote to him concerning emotional issues, such as depression and sadness: 'Time will do its work. Where you see pitch darkness today, you will see light tomorrow. 'Premal Jyoti' [Kindly Light] seems to me to be the only *bhajan* which truthfully describes this condition of mind' (*CW-e*, 55, #384, p.318); from jail, he wrote, 'Ba [Kasturbai, his wife] told me that you were melancholy. How is that? One who studies *Gita* cannot have melancholia. How can one be melancholy who is daily in meditation with God and believes that He resides in the heart? Drive out melancholia' (*CW*, 49, #311, p.302). He offered relief from worrying: 'Don't burden your mind with worries. ... Meditate over the hymn *Premal Jyoti*' (Note 2 - A Gujarati rendering, by Narasinhrao Divetia, of Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light.") (*CW*, 50, #457, p.322); and, when Manu, his grand-niece, became anxious and concerned over family events, Gandhi prescribed sung-prayers: 'Do you pray [chant?] daily? Do you sing *bhajans* (hymns)? If you have not been doing either, start doing both' (*CW-e*, 55, #261, p.220).

The *satyagrahis*' struggle to overcome ingrained, past habits and to live together in a "prayerful experiment." may have also, from time to time, resulted in religious questioning and spiritual doubts, as he wrote often to sustain people in their work:

'Why then have you no faith? Offer up your venture wholly as sacrifice to the Lord and resolve to run it in His name. ... 'We have heard of none who loved the Lord and whose honour He did not uphold.' We sang this *bhajan* at the time of the evening prayer today. ... Do not dismiss all this as mere philosophizing, but try to act upon it' (*CW-e*, 55, #241, p.206);

'The brave never run away from a battle; fight against lust and anger, pride and greed.' Only yesterday I was trying to translate this *bhajan*. I then felt its beauty more powerfully than I had done before.

For us that is the only real battle. If we fight on, we are bound to win in the end '(CW-e, 50, #31, p.22) [*bhajan* is by Kabir, *Shura sangrama*, *Ashram Bhajanavali* #52, p. 118];

'May you live long and render selfless service. Remember a noble verse which our people often recite:

'That which goes by the name of adversity is not such;
nor is that prosperity which goes by that name.
To forget God is adversity;
ever to think of him is prosperity.' [*Ashram Bhajanavali*, School Prayers, p. 32]' (CW-e, 55, #507, p.420).

Those who came to live in Gandhi's *ashrams* were individuals whom Gandhi felt to be strong enough and capable enough to carry out the rigorous life-style and mission of the *ashram*. He oversaw their religious development for a period of time before they entered *satyagraha* and he continued to monitor their on-going progress:

'Think only about your work, and remain 'calm and untroubled in the face of unhappiness' and 'free from attachment in happiness.' You do, remember, don't you, that we recite this verse every day? Also, remember Mirabai's *bhajan* 'I shall dance singing the glory of my Hari' '(CW-e, 54, #202, p.343);

'I got your letter. You have some subtle pride in you. That is what is hurting you. We bow to Mother Earth every morning and pray for her forgiveness for touching her with our feet. ... [*Ashram Bhajanavali*, p. 4] Those who wish to kick us or insult us should be welcome to do so; such is the humility which non-violence implies. Cultivate it and you will be able to dance with joy. ... Do so and roar like a lioness. 'Never to give up, even though we may die.' We used to sing this *bhajan* formerly' (CW-e. 53, #87, p.79);

'The type of *tapas* [self-discipline]you are practising is described by the author of the Gita as *tamasi* [dark]*tapas*....I think it would be better if you gave up this unnatural effort completely. Reflect over the *bhajan* given below: 'O good man! Natural communion is best....Kabir says That is a state to be silently enjoyed but I have dared to sing about it. It is a

state beyond misery and bliss, I am merged in it' ["*Sadho Sahaja Samadh Bhal*," *Ashram Bhajanavali*, # 43, 111; *CW-e* #118] (*CW-e*, 61, #229, p.178).

Men and women were expected to live as equals in the *ashram*, and Gandhi often called on the women to be a larger part of the change and initiative that *satyagraha* struggled to enact: 'We should learn to adopt towards women the same liberal attitude that we do towards men. Will not Lord Krishna protect our honour? We sing a *bhajan* which says that He will. Let us show that faith in our actions' (*CW-e*, 50, #32, p.22). 'Patience is learnt through long effort. The secret of regarding sorrow as joy is learnt by leaving everything to God. It is for this very reason that those three verses (Note 2 - Containing Draupadi's prayer to Lord Krishna when she was being disrobed by the Kauravas) have been included in the prayer for women. I hope you do remember these verses. Through effort, one can learn to bear suffering' (*CW-e*, 55, #546, p.477).

Though early in *satyagraha*'s history, Gandhi discouraged marriage between *ashramites*, eventually, there were married couples in the *ashram* who also received Gandhi's spiritual direction:

'Now you should recognize the lack of self-control in you both, live humbly as an ordinary married couple, and practise only such self-control outwardly as you can do mentally as well. Think over the meaning of the *bhajan*: 'Unless the mind is free from desire, renunciation cannot endure' (*CW-e*, 52, #519, p.385).

Advice grounded in the wisdom of the sung-prayers was similarly offered often in areas other than emotional support. The sung-prayers were recommended for a number of physical ailments as well -- from insomnia, to fever, to disease:

'...if you cannot concentrate on Ramanama [chanting God's name], go on repeating any Sanskrit stanza or *bhajan* which you like, and you will most probably get sleep. I assume that in other respects your health is good' (*CW-e*, 56, #241, p.252);

'In your difficulties Girish's (his son) fever is a great calamity indeed. It is difficult to understand so many relapses. As an antidote, I am sending the whole *bhajan* from which I had sent one line to Lilavati [an ashramite, probably Girish's mother]. To me that *bhajan* has given great comfort' (CW-e, 73, #508, p.383);

'Do not think about your disease. Why should anyone who has fallen in love with God worry about disease or anything else? Do you know the *bhajan*: 'I will go dance now, singing praises of God?'

(CW-e, 54, #355, p.456);

'Write daily until you are well. Remember God and recite the following *bhajan*' [Note 1 - 'I dedicate myself to that name, the two letters of which bring salvation to all. The Lord Rama of Tulsidas is like a cloud showering mercy, while all other gods need gratification.']...and repeat Ramanama' (CW-e, 73, #417, p.330).

It is possible to ascertain, to a certain, extent, some of Gandhi's favorite texts for teaching and training, by surveying the *Collected Works* (digital) from Volume 49 (April 1930) about the time he was beginning to translate the *Ashram Bhajanavali* through Volume 98 (digital), at the end of his career. By direct name, he mentioned better-known singer-saints found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* the following number of times: Tulsidas - 118; Narasinh Mehta- 17; Mirabai - 15; Kabir - 13; Nanak - 12; Surdas - 12; Ramdas - 11; Tagore - 10; Pritam - 10; Akha - 7; Dadu - 2; Kalidas -1; Namdev - 1; Eknath - 0; Ravidas - 0; Tukaram -0. He mentioned lesser-known singer-saints the following number of times: Braj Kishore, Premanand, Keshavlal, and Dhiro were each quoted once; Nazir was mentioned twice; all others (Khalus, Nityananda, Sahajram, Nandadas, Nidhiramji, Haridas, Jasvant, Brahmanand, Kanhar, Premsakhi, Rasik, Anandghan, Vidhuband, Mad Mansur, Giridhar, Amrit, Shivdini, Sohira, Daya Vitthal, Dayaram, Nishkulanand, Muktanand, Dhano, Narbho, Bhojo, Bapu, Premaldas, Nirant, Ranchhod, Rajchand) were not quoted directly by name. Obviously, these numbers represent only those instances in which Gandhi directly named a singer-saint, but it is not surprising,

upon reading the primary and secondary sources, that among his favorites were Kabir, Nanak, Mirabai, Surdas, Narasinh Mehta, and Tulsidas.

Ramanama

The chanting of *Ramanama* (or the two syllables *Ra-ma*) was advised and encouraged in selections found throughout the whole of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, and especially in the *bhajans*. In Vandana Mataji's lists of "Hindu Saints Who Loved the Name," she has listed many of the poet-saints found in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* -- Shankaracarya of Kerala; Namadev, Eknath, Tukaram, Ramdas from Maharashtra; the North-Indian poet-saints Kabir, Mirabai, Surdas, and Tulsidas; and, from Gujarat, Narsi Mehta (Sister Vandana Mataji 1995, pp.192-221). She has also listed Mahatma Gandhi among the "saints of our own time" who loved and encouraged the use of chanting God's name (Sister Vandana Mataji, p.224).

In his autobiography, Gandhi indicated that he learned to chant *Ramanama*, as taught to him by his childhood nurse, as a means to relieve his anxieties and worries concerning ghosts. Gandhi's later references to *Ramanama* as a religious practice, varied over time, as did other elements of his experimental living. However, in 1928, in typically independent fashion, he published in *Navajivan* his own definition of Ramanama:

'I am a votary of Ramanama and the *dwadashamantra* [Gayatri mantra] but my worship is not blind. For anyone who is truthful, Ramanama is like a ship. But I do not believe that anyone who repeats Ramanama hypocritically is saved by it. ... Anyone believing that Ramanama would calm his passions is rewarded by repeating it and is saved' (*CW-e*, 42, #8, pp.5-6).

He continued to advise repetition of *Ramanama* when giving religious advice to family and followers. In 1932, he wrote:

'This is how repetition of God's names wipes out one's sins. ... One who repeats God's name daily with faith will never grow tired of doing so, and, therefore, the name which he repeats with his lips to start with sinks ultimately into his heart, and purifies him. This is a universal experience. Psychologists also believe that man becomes what he thinks' (*CW-e*, 56, #285, p.283);

and, in 1934, he wrote to Kasturbai Gandhi:

'If you do not remember the *bhajan* 'The Name is my support, Your Name is my support,' look it up. ... Tulsidasji has sung a great deal of the Name. ... If we inscribe in our hearts the name of God which has such power, there can be no doubt that we shall cross this sea of life and reach the other shore. ... That is why the poet wrote and sang that song: 'My only support is Rama's name,' all else is false. 'All friends of the body are selfish and will refuse to accompany us at the end.' If we have learnt to repeat Ramanama, it alone will go with us' (*CW-e*, 63, #211, p.198).

As Gandhi campaigned for Hindu-Muslim unity, he was often asked by journalists how he was using the divine name of Rama. His replies always indicated a universal context, in which Rama was simply one of God's names, which he used to refer to God: 'Rama is not known by only a thousand names. His names are innumerable, and He is the same whether we call Him Allah, Khuda, Rahim, Razaak, the Bread-giver, or any name that comes from the heart of a true devotee' (*CW-e*, 81, #742, p.489).

Later in his career, Gandhi began to refer to *Ramanama* as "medicine" as he increasingly became intensely focussed on nature-cures. See Joseph Alter's work entitled *Gandhi's Body*, for accounts of how strictly Gandhi had experimented throughout his life with the physical and mental aspects of maintaining his own state of health, as part and parcel of a *svadeshi* policy that encouraged not only material independence from the British, but also encouraged the freedom of being self sufficient from and independent of British medical controls over the country's physical health and welfare. However, in his later life, even as he championed the nature cures of Louis Kuhne (a German proponent of nature cures) (Alter 2000,

p.38), Gandhi came to rely on the inner practice of silently chanting (*japa*) the name of Rama as a medicine that provided a "cure" beyond all cures.

While speaking at a sung-prayer meeting in New Delhi on May 24, 1946, Gandhi responded to questions concerning his then-practice of *Ramanama*.

'He reiterated Rama whose name he prescribed as the infallible remedy for all ills was neither the historical Rama nor the Rama of those who used the name as a charm or black magic. Rama whose name he prescribed as a cure-all was God ...[p. 29]

Nor is Ramanama meant to be taken only when the doctors and *vaidyas* have failed. It is meant to enable one to do without them altogether. For a believer in Ramanama it is the first as well as the last remedy [p. 30]'(*CW-e*, 91, #35, pp.29-30).

During the subsequent night's speech, he agreed with the questioner who continued to press him further in regards to a definition, responding that he thought '[t]he Ramanama bank in Benares and wearing clothes printed with Ramanama" constituted superstition' (*CW-e*, 91, #38, p. 32).

According to J.T.F. Jordens, this perspective of *Ramanama* as unfailing medicine represented a shift in belief for Gandhi as of that point in time (Jordens 1998, p.181). After about 1946, Gandhi referred frequently to chanting the name as part of his nature cures, refusing to take penicillin for physical ailments that plagued him, and vehemently claiming that his great-niece Manu would not have had any physical pains if she were only to chant *Ramanama* (she was later operated on for acute appendicitis). Although Gandhi refused to admit that his use of *Ramanama* was in any way superstitious, the staunchness of his belief in its efficacy became increasingly stronger, almost irrational, towards the end of his life. He reported to Manu on several occasions, especially following the bombing attempt on his life in 1948, that he wanted to die with the prayers of *Ramanama* on his lips. While the story of his final moments of chanting "*He Ram*" may be apocryphal,

even controversial for some, his colleagues and many historians did allow him the portrayal that he had offered that prayer as his final utterance.

Ramanama has had a long history in India, and continues in active use throughout the country today (see Lamb's work on the *Ramnamis* in the region of Central India, and Henry's work on chanting the name in eastern U.P. and western Bihar) in many styles and with different intents. For many traditions it has been considered to be salvation-rendering. 'Whatever the ideology, chanting or singing results in a changed state of consciousness which practitioners value' (Henry 1974, p.143). For Mohandas Gandhi, what was taught to him in childhood as protection against ghosts came to be an important component of his religious life, providing focus and calm, and perhaps even a desired salvation at the time of his death. Gandhi taught his family and followers out of the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, and the practice of *Ramanama* was continuously recommended therein.

Gandhi once wrote that the *satyagraha* movement in India had taken longer to develop than he had originally imagined (Jack 1956, p.187), and that the discipline of the *ashram* only became more fully established over time (Gandhi 1998, p.31). However, as seen in the above-presented accounts of fasts undertaken, marches conducted, advice and guidance given by Gandhi after the establishment of the *Satyagraha Ashram*, it is obvious that the *Ashram Bhajnavali* served perpetually to undergird the activities of the growing *satyāgraha* movement. The *Nityapatha* was *Ishopanishad* I.1, the first selection of the published editions of *Ashram Bhajnavali*. The Chapter II *Gita* verses, known to be Gandhi's favorite verses, were recited at every evening prayer meeting. The *Asato ma* verse from the *Brihadaranyakopanishad* came to be associated with times of highly significant ritual. The *Vaishnava jana bhajan* was known as one of Gandhi's most favorite prayer-songs, along with the chanting of *Raghupati Raghava* as part of *Ramdhun*. Both of these had been chanted immediately prior to Gandhi's arrest in 1930, and they were published items of the *Ashram Bhajnavali*. *Satyagraha* communities

across the nation regularly utilized the same sung-prayers as a form of *communitas*, and the nation came to know them in this way as well. His favorite Christian hymns were "Lead, Kindly Light" and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

National *Communitas*

***Bhajan* Parties Organized**

As early as 1920, Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement began to expand with the help of music and *bhajan* parties, which were established by the *satyagrahis* in many communities, one after another. Gandhi recommended the formation of these *bhajan* circles as a way for people to resist the use of mob-law in an article entitled "Democracy vs. Mobocracy":

'We must then evolve order out of chaos. And I have no doubt that the best and the speediest method is to introduce the people's law instead of mob-law. One great stumbling block is that we have neglected music. Music means rhythm, order. Its effect is electrical. It immediately soothes' (*CW-e*, 21, #145, p.247).

The same year, he published public instructions concerning what a true Vaishnava was:

'A true *Vaishnava* is he, Who is moved by others' sufferings;
Who helps people in distress, And feels no pride for having done so.'
[*Ashram Bhajanavali*, p.156] ... This means that a man who has no love in him is no *Vaishnava*. [O]ne does not become a *Vaishnava* simply by studying the Vedas, by following the rules of varnashram [the traditional four groups of society], by wearing a string of basil seeds or the *tilak* mark [a mark of blessing on the forehead]. Even a hypocrite may wear a string of beads or put the *tilak* mark or study the Vedas or keep repeating Rama's name with his lips' (*CW-e*, 22, #40, p.55).

Gandhi used the words of this *bhajan* to impress upon India the need for reformation in regard to the oppression of the untouchables: '[t]his poem, which formed part of the daily prayers at the Ashram, appealed to Gandhiji as a perfect expression of his own ideal of life and seems to have had a powerful impact on him'

(*CW-e*, 22, #40; see "To 'Vaishnavas', pp.55-58, which consists of Gandhi's defense of a resolution that denied the barring of *antyajas* [untouchable] from any public place).

During the 1920s, *satyagraha* continued to expand and to use *bhajans* as a way to counter what Gandhi regarded as self-degrading habits. At a speech at a Cultivators' Meeting in 1921, Gandhi urged: 'Get rid of your addictions and learn self-control. Pray to God as you get up in the morning..., [do not engage in] foul language or singing filthy songs. In the late evening, sing *bhajans*' (*CW-e*, 23, #19, p.52). In January of 1922, he addressed the Congress, as musicians from all parts of India participated. It ended in the convening by Vishnu Digamber Shastri of the first All-India Musical Conference whose object is to popularize music in national assemblies and organize *bhajan mandalis* [hymn circles] (*CW-e*, 25, #186, p.381). In encouraging the *satyagraha* workers to work harder in assisting the indigent poor, he wrote: 'Persuade the Dharala brothers and sisters [in this instance, this may refer to a region of India] to take up some [honest] work. [See to it that they] give up drinking and addiction to opium and other vices, that their children get education and the grown-ups learn *bhajans*' (*CW-e*, 27, # 341, p.420).

By the mid-1920s, Gandhi was convinced of the power of music to change consciousness. In October 1924, he wrote to Naryan Moresh Khare, the ashram music instructor:

'Bhai Panditji, I am writing to you on the last day of my fast. I have gradually come to look upon music as a means of spiritual development. Please try your best to see that all of us sing our *bhajans* with a correct understanding of the sense. Inmates of the Ashram do not yet become one with the songs they recite' (*CW-e*, 29, # 193, p.237, 7 October, 1924).

In a speech at a villagers' meeting in Pudupalayam, on March 21, 1925, he spoke:

'It gives me very great pleasure to be able to meet you all in this out-of-the-way place, and on seeing the musical instruments here, I wished to hear some of your songs in your own natural way. I know that songs play an import part in the development of national life. ...when you get a real, good song full of devotion and fervour, it ennobles. Such are some of our old songs all over India. In days of old, we had our own string instruments.... I wish that we could revert to the stringed instruments' (*CW-e*, 30, #266, p.458).

Likewise, he spoke in the same year, at Karadi: 'I feel therefore happy that just now you are all sitting quietly. I liked the children playing cymbals while chanting the name of God. Only those who have attended *bhajan* parties know the charm of cymbals; and I know it very well' (*CW-e*, 31, #92, p.159).

As the decade closed, there was continued effort to expand the use of the *bhajan* circles. Thanks to Shri Jaydayalji Goenka, an attempt is nowadays being made to create a spirit of devotion in the Marwari society. With this object in view *bhajan* groups have been formed.... (Note 1 - Institutions for *bhajans*) (*CW-e*, 42, #8, pp.5-6 in *Navajivan* 6 May 1928). 'The work amongst the depressed classes admits development. The Ashram is running a free night school for them. There is also a school where both touchables and untouchables receive instruction. *Bhajan* parties are organized amongst them' (*CW-e*, 46, #11, p.14, in *Young India*, 16 May, 1929).

Gandhi continued to encourage sung-prayer meetings. the manufacture and use of *khadi*, and *bhajan* singing during the 1930s.

'Prabhat Pheris [early-morning song processions] were resumed this morning. About fifty members assembled.... Gandhiji addressed the processionists from a balcony. He said that they should finish their daily rounds before sunrise, singing selected songs of prayer and devotion to God and the Motherland. He said no objectionable songs, inconsistent with the Congress creed, should be sung' (*CW-e*, 52, #431, p.312).

Concern for education and social reform continued with the establishment of *bhajan* circles among the untouchables: 'I should like you or Ghanshyamdas [an

ashramite] to see the members of the Delhi Municipality about the quarters of Harijans in Delhi. They must be improved'; (*CW*, 62, #347, p.299, 19 December, 1933); 'I do not believe in propaganda through pamphlets or in costly buildings. A Bhajan Mandiram [building for singing] is good. But you should be satisfied with an unpretentious humble building' (*CW-e*, 66, # 188, p.142, Mysore, 30 January, 1935). When, asked, in 1936, about the mass conversion of the "Harijans" in the South of India, and whether or not his *Seva Sangh* [welfare organization] might send some "*bhajan* parties to travel from *cheri* to *cheri* [slum to slum] singing *bhajans* and giving *kathas* [stories]," Gandhi responded:

'Whilst parties could be sent from the North, there is no need for the South to depend on the North. The South has its inexhaustible treasures of religious songs and it should be the easiest thing to organize *bhajan* parties from the province itself. I have heard soul-stirring *bhajans* of Tyagaraja [singer-saint]...' (*CW-e*, 68, #391, pp.318-19).

The establishment of the *bhajan* work all across India had perhaps become so much second nature, a way of life generated by Gandhi over two decades, that in January of 1940, he wrote a veritable formulaic response to Prabhavati, a female ashramite, who had written to him concerning how to establish new contacts at Sevagram:

'As to your question how you should work there, the answer is simple enough. If you get even one or two women who will spin willingly and sincerely, you should labour for them as best as you can. You should also go from door to door selling as much khadi as possible. Get a few women together and form a *bhajan* party, and teach them how to read and write. Go among the poor women also and spread literacy among them. Go to the Harijan quarters and meet the women there. Thus you can widen the sphere of your work as much as you wish provided your health remains good enough. By and by other women also will join you' (*CW-e*, 77, #279, p.236).

Hindu-Muslim Solidarity

Rappaport's definition of *communitas* has been discussed at some length above as one aspect of the sung-prayers that lay behind *satyagraha*'s development. It was especially significant to Gandhi in his desire to form good relations and solidarity with the Muslim communities of India.

Following the establishment of chanting a Christian prayer every Friday night in 1932 (see below), Gandhi suggested that the *ashram* sing an Islamic prayer one day a week as well. Gandhi was imprisoned at that time, and when several ashramites wrote to him to object to his suggestion of singing one Muslim *bhajan* on an appointed day every week, he returned a letter to Narandas Gandhi. Fully outlining his reasons for the institution of such a practice, he gave his permission to the community to decide themselves what they wanted to do in the matter. He then went on to choose which *bhajan* (should they want to choose one) they might use:

'And if you decide to select a *bhajan*, '*Hai bahare bagh*' [*A.Bhaj.*, # 99] is certainly the best.... It was introduced [in South Africa] at the suggestion of a pure-hearted Muslim youth. That youth then passed away, so that for us the song has more in it than its literal meaning. The song was so dear to that youth that, when he came to the line "*Yad kar tu ay Nazir kabronke roz*" (Note 3 - 'Nazir! Remember the day of death') he used to substitute his name, Hasan, for Nazir's. ... To me he was another son, and we sang that song not once but several times in Phoenix. ... The choice of this *bhajan* is therefore excellent' (*CW-e*, 56, #67, p.60).

The chanting of this *bhajan* was obviously instated, as Gandhi responded to questions written by Mary Barr in 1934 concerning the extent to which universal prayers were chanted at the ashram's sung-prayer meetings:

'The utmost we have been able to attain in this direction is that we have Mussalman hymns or *bhajans* as also Christian. You may perhaps know that every Friday we have a rendering of 'Lead, Kindly Light' in the Ashram and every Thursday we have a very popular Islamic *bhajan*.

The *Ashram Bhajanavali* contains several *bhajans* from Mussalman sources and you will find also a selection of Christian hymns. On certain occasions we have Christian and Mussalman prayers. ...the ashrams are not theosophical organizations, but they are organizations which have equal regard for all the religions' (*CW-e,65, #13, 17 September 1934, p.17*).

Between 1933 to 1934, Gandhi asked Raihana Tyabji to instruct those at the ashram interested in learning Islamic prayers, and eventually verses from the *Qur'an* were added to the daily sung-prayers. Those verses later became controversial for some Hindus who would attend the massive prayer meetings in Delhi, especially following the horrendous violence suffered by both Hindu and Muslim communities. Gandhi, however, would not allow the removal of the Islamic prayers from the established order of the ritual.

Inter-religious and International *Communitas*

Christian Fellowship

In May of 1932, Gandhi was incarcerated in Yeravda Central Prison, when he received a suggestion for inter-religious solidarity and fellowship from the Rev. Verrier Elwin. Elwin wanted to coordinate the singing of a hymn every Friday night at an appointed time, to be sung by those imprisoned with Gandhi and by those who were his supporters outside the prison, wherever they might be, nationally or internationally. Elwin, who was soon to leave the area, wanted to establish a specific time at which everyone would, with the acute awareness of doing so, sing the same hymn, thus creating a long-distance bond of *communitas*.

'As soon as I read your suggestion I had no hesitation in endorsing it, but I was debating as to the choice of the hymn. It could either be 'Lead Kindly Light' or 'When I Survey the Wondrous Cross' or 'Take My life and Let It Be' .

[We will take up] the Gujarati version of 'Lead Kindly Light.' ...So you may take it that we shall be here singing this hymn at 7.40 every

Friday evening with the knowledge that you at least will be joining us wherever you are, whether the suggestion is taken up or not by the other friends. ... I shall be asking Narandas to sing this *bhajan* on Fridays at the Ashram prayer which during summer months always begins at 7.30' (CW-e, 55, #514, pp.425-6, 27 May, 1932).

So the chanting of 'Lead, Kindly Light' was established to be sung in its Gujarati version by those in prison and at the ashram, while it was sung in the English original by Rev. Elwin and Christian congregates whomever joined him for a Friday night service.

As was mentioned in Chapter Two, Gandhi had been consumed with obtaining a proper translation of this hymn. He went to some lengths to find the right translator. He was eventually satisfied with the translation by Narasinhrao B. Divatia, who visited Gandhi for a religious observance in October of 1932:

'I am writing this after the morning prayer at 4 o'clock. I got both your letters. All three of us will join you at 8:30 today in performing the *shraddha* on the tenth day. Instead of praying silently, we will sing your translation of 'Lead Kindly Light' [*Premal Jyoti* - *ĀBhaj*# 137] ...

You will like this story about '*Premal Jyoti*.' ... It is now sung by friends in America, Europe, India and other countries on every Friday at 7.30 p.m. We here, the inmates of the Ashram at Sabarmati and some other people, sing '*Premal Jyoti*' at the evening prayer on Fridays. Thus the life which you have poured into this *bhajan* is increasing in its power' (CW-e, 57, #427, p.236).

Europe

As the movement continued its growth, Gandhi travelled both nationally and internationally, with the ritual of twice-daily sung-prayers remaining in tact. Recollections of his travelling to England to attend the 1931 Round Table Conference, which focussed on the possibility of India's independence, gave evidence of Gandhi's having strictly kept the routine of sung-prayers:

'Out of the memories that crowd [those] days, it is difficult to make a selection. Some stand out. The evening prayers when the

room would be crowded with people eager to learn more about this man's way of life. The early mornings when Mr. Gandhi arrived, ...you felt as though a torchlike 'something' had come into the house (Jack 1956, p.261).

Further evidence came from Romain Rolland's sister who wrote of Gandhi's visit to them in Switzerland, while returning home from the Round Table Conference (December 1931):

'Evenings, at seven o'clock, prayers were held in the first floor salon. With lights lowered, the Indians seated on the carpet, and the little assembly of the faithful grouped about, there was a suite of three beautiful chants -- the first an extract from the Gita, the second an ancient hymn on the Sanskrit texts which Gandhi had translated, and the third a canticle of Rama and Sita, intoned by the warm, grave voice of Mira' (Jack 1956, p.383).

She wrote further concerning Gandhi's appreciation of music: 'He is very sensitive to the religious chants of his country, which somewhat resemble the most beautiful of our Gregorian melodies, and he has worked to assemble them' Jack 1956, p.384). Her reference was obviously to the labor with which Gandhi had culled through, chosen, and assembled the sung-prayers of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

America

When the Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman (African-American minister and civil rights advocate in America) and his wife visited Gandhi in 1936, one topic of discussion was *ahimsa* and its definition. Elsewhere, Gandhi had objected to the mis-conception that *ahimsa* was some kind of passive resistance, as *ahimsa* was in fact '...much more active than violent resistance. It is direct, ceaseless, but three-fourths invisible and only one-fourth visible' (an interestingly familiar Vedic image), (Jack 1956, p.30). When Dr. Thurman questioned Gandhi as to whether any idea of material possession was accepted in *ahimsa*, he answered "Yes. It possesses

nothing, therefore it possesses everything," (a direct quotation of the *Ishopanishad* I.1 verse, the "*Nityapatha*," which had for years opened each sung-prayer meeting and which is still the first printed selection in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*). The visit ended with Mrs. Thurman's singing two Africa-American spirituals, "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" and "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder," about which Mahadav Desai, Gandhi's secretary, wrote: "...[the] last suited the guests and hosts equally, as it gave expression to the deep-seated hope and aspiration in the breast of every oppressed community to climb higher and higher until the goal was won" (Jack 1956, p.316).

In 1947, Gandhi was visited by Dr. William Stuart Nelson, another American civil rights activist from America, who had come to India to work with the Friends Service Unit, aiding refugees devastated by Hindu-Muslim violence in Noakhali.

'By way of introduction Gandhiji said that he felt very happy that Prof. Nelson had thus shared in the prayer (Note 3 - He attended the prayer and recited Isaac Watt's famous hymn 'Our [sic] God, our help in ages past.'). While in detention at the Aga Khan Palace, Mirabehn used to sing this hymn to him in her rich, sonorous voice. He then paraphrased the meaning of the first three verses and said that the sentiment expressed in it was the same as found in the... *bhajan* sung last evening. There was the same reliance upon God, who was the source of all strength and real safety could lie only when we placed our reliance wholly on God. ,, This was a lesson which all of us in Noakhali sorely needed to learn' (*CW-e*, 93, #129, p.96, Speech at Prayer Meeting in Srirampur, 3 December 1946, in *Harijan*, 5 January 1947).

Dr. Nelson would return to the United States to become, along with Dr. Howard Thurman and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a primary leader in the civil rights movement in America and an initiator of academic courses on the history and practice of non-violence.

Universal Appeal

The *communitas* for which Gandhi strove never-endingly can be easily identified in each of the scenarios outlined above, wherein sung-prayer was used to foster respect and understanding between communities and among individuals. Gandhi's appeal was an appeal to the acknowledgement of a kind of human and divine universality. While travelling in Srinagar, he defended the use of sung-prayers from 'other communities,' such as the Qur'anic, Parsi, and Buddhist prayers: 'I am of the opinion that the addition[s] enriched the prayer. It reached the hearts of a larger audience than before. It certainly showed Hinduism in its broad and tolerant aspect' (*CW-e*, 96, #270, p.190).

In defense of including sung-prayers from other religions, 'Gandhiji related the story of how the Ashram prayer had taken its present shape', from its beginnings in 1915, through the later additions, to the then-present day, proclaiming: 'The prayer which has thus taken shape can, on no account, be considered as belonging to any single community or religion. It is of universal appeal; and no one, whatever his denomination may be, should have hesitation in sharing it' (*CW-e*, 94, #94, p.76).

SUNG PRAYERS AND PUBLIC TEXTS: THE FINAL YEARS

Sung-Prayer Meetings throughout India

Gandhi's travels around India entailed using the sung-prayers in his attempts to produce spiritual awakening: 'When I was in Travancore, offering prayers in the presence of huge assemblies, pin-drop silence prevailed. A divine silence pervaded the atmosphere....a religious revival such as the one in Travancore has got to be brought about through the length and breadth of India' (*CW-e*, 70, 22 January 1937, #360, p349). While in Travancore, Mahadev Desai reported that 'whenever we happened to be near a temple in the evening, we used to have our evening prayer in the temple precincts. Gandhiji explained everywhere in brief the meaning of

various parts of the prayer' (CW-e, 70, #357, p.345). Gandhi would encourage the use of sung-prayer to the crowds who attended:

'Ever since my return to India we have had, in our Ashram and wherever I have gone, prayers about this time every evening (*Ibid.*), ...

I shall now say a few words about the prayer recited...the last nineteen verses of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*...a *bhajan* from old saints...Sanskrit...recitation of Tulsidas's *Ramayana*...[etc.]...

If prayers are offered both in the morning and evening, you will soon find that a time will come when you will be disgusted if you omit to offer prayers' (CW-e,70, #360, p.349).

He then encouraged the groups with whom he met to continue meeting for the sung-prayers after his departure: 'Please, therefore, keep up the prayer. You can form your own congregations in your own places, and as a last resource one's family can become one's congregation.... Do meet every evening at this hour, learn a few hymns, learn the Gita...' (Gandhi 2000, p.99).

In addition to being able to create *communitas*, the sung-prayers were also suggested as a measure to control the huge crowds which were beginning to form. When in 1931, a woman had been trampled to death at a large women's meeting at Ahmedabad, Gandhi set down rules regarding how to organize and facilitate large meetings. The rules included how to shape exactly where and how the crowds could move, how the dais was to be constructed and the approach to it: '#14. If there is a large attendance and people arrive long before the hour of the meeting, there should be arrangement for *Ramdhun* (repetition *en masse* by the meeting of God's name) and for preliminary lectures' (CW-e, 51, #313, p.251).

Bhajans: The Texts for Gandhi's Public Discourse

Philip Lutgendorf has suggested, in *The Life of a Text*, that '[t]o the well-known personae of Gandhi the lawyer, political organizer, and wandering holy man should perhaps be added that of Gandhi the *kathā-vācak*, who used *Mānas* verse as

proof texts (*pramāṇ*) to buttress political arguments' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.379). While 'Gandhi often explained his own political activities by referring to the Ramayan narrative' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.379), it must be remembered here that Gandhi's political and religious worlds were not separate. He used the *Ramcaritmanas* as guidelines for religious behavior and conduct, and as often as he used the *Manas*, he used the *bhajans* and *shlokas* found in the *Ashram Bhajnavali* to serve as texts for his public speeches following the sung-prayer meetings during the latter part of his life.

During the final years of Gandhi's travels, he continued to teach and recommend sung-prayers. Furthermore, as the violence between Hindus and Muslims increased he began to speak directly to the crowds following the prayer meetings. In Rappaport's terminology, the texts of those speeches, often taken from the *bhajan* that had just been sung, were related in "self-referential" ways to the events of the day. During his final years, Gandhi began to end every sung-prayer meeting with comments concerning the immediate, "self-referential," events of the day, as coordinated with the *bhajan* texts. Gandhi once remarked, 'I have no hand in choosing the *bhajans* that are sung these days [, but] often the *bhajan* that is sung fits the occasion (*CW-e*, 95, #270, pp.292). So many references found in the *Collected Works* stand as evidence to this, that we shall proceed by year in order to examine how Gandhi used these *bhajan* texts as primary content in his public speeches.

1945

The Bombay Chronicle spoke of Gandhi's visit to Bombay:

"The speaker [Gandhi] then alluded to the evening *bhajan* sung at the prayer. Its burden was that the way to God was for the valiant, not for the timid. But God was not to be reached by slaves. Therefore the *bhajan* was also for those who wanted to throw off their slavery' (*CW-e*,86, #304, p.166).

Rappaport has identified the significance of rhythm in the creation of ritual and within the context of the ritual setting. Gandhi continually referred to the rhythm of the *bhajans* as an analogy for an organized, free India. Along those lines, he encouraged people to clap and keep time with the music. From Mahishadal, he instructed:

'If we can conduct ourselves unitedly as we have done in maintaining the rhythm of the *bhajan* sung, then whatever injury is inflicted on us and however wronged we may be as the result of the visitation of Nature or policy of the State, we will be the master of the situation and keep our head unbent. ...

When they kept rhythm by a movement of the hands, the feeling of such a movement came from within. In other words their hearts were attuned to the outside movements. That was exactly the thing prerequisite to the attainment of salvation' (*CW-e*, 89, #164, p.109).

From a steamer travelling from Mahishadal to Contal, Bengal, Gandhi wrote:

'Yesterday we had a Bengali *bhajan*. Daily in the evenings a Bengali *bhajan* is sung here and that is only proper. The first line of the *bhajan* was: "Lord, save me from weakness even when I am assailed by doubts." That destroy is, destroy every doubt in my mind. Your vow is a hard one. You have taken it by your own free will. You will not be able to keep it without God's grace' (*CW-e*, 89, #193, pp.129-30).

1946

The following year, Gandhi continued to travel and to recommend the use of sung-prayers, instructing the nation as to how to live out of the principles of *satyagraha* as found in the texts of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. In January it was written:

'He had been on a pilgrimate to Midnapore....At prayer-time the gathering went up to about a lakh of people. ... Every one of them was quite peaceful and none disturbed the orderliness. ...

Gandhiji said that Ramanama was so attractive that it could absorb man's whole thought and self into it. That was why he had asked them to clap their hands rhythmically when taking Ramanama. ... They knew

soldiers were so trained that they were disciplined and learnt to work together. ...They were also soldiers of freedom. ... They were to maintain discipline and that was why he had introduced the practice of clapping hands while praying.

Explaining the *bhajan* sung at the prayer.... One who was devoted to God did not feel despair; he went on knocking at heaven's door for entrance to the kingdom of God' (CW-e, 89, #245, p.168-9).

From Saulkuchi, Gandhi asked the people to keep time, for the women to join in as well, and to keep peace in the meeting (CW-e, 89, #287, p.206). From Sodepur, in mid-January, he reported that

'[h]is tours had produced good results. He hoped that they would stick to the system of congregational prayer.

Exhorting them to sing the name of God in chorus and to keep tune with all heart, ...their hearts would be purified and they would get new strength....

Referring to the day's *bhajan*, Gandhiji said that [it]... aptly taught them to remember God who was their eternal friend. ...in the prayer song of the day they had found such things which would be of great value in their everyday life. They should take the teachings of the song to heart' (CW-e, 89, #364, pp.257-8).

He often called upon the congregation's need to maintain serenity, so as to be able to put non-violence into action:

'Dwelling upon the necessity of congregational prayer, Gandhiji hoped that people on return to their homes would conduct such prayer in the company of the members of the family and children. ...[theatres and cinemas were of little benefit]...Comparing the benefit of congregational prayer with what little historical knowledge a dramatic performance could offer, Gandhiji said that the former was many thousand times more beneficial. ...Mothers were...appealed to [to] introduce God and divinity to their children and to introduce *bhajan* song....' (CW-e, 89, #367, pp.259-60).

From Sodepur as well, he reprimanded the nation for violence that had occurred at Chittagong:

'Government must be alive to their duties regarding these two incidents [of violent attacks] but at the same time the people should not forget theirs. The *bhajan* sung at the prayer on Monday (*Antar mama vikasita karo*) [*Ashram Bhajanāvali* # 212] indicated the way. It was a prayer to open our hearts. ...

At Chittagong, the people...did not play their part as preached in the *bhajan*. The *bhajan* wanted to make us firm, active and fearless. Gandhji felt sure that if the people could rely on these qualities, the Chittagong incident could not have taken place. If people could sing the *bhajan* as they did in the prayer, why could they not act according to its message, he asked' (*CW-e*, 89, #352, p.249).

Travelling to Madras at the end of January, Gandhi again stressed the need for silence and decorum during the prayers: 'Addressing the gathering, Gandhji called for silence, observing that unless they kept silence, they would not be able to hear him. As there was no appreciable reduction in the noise coming from the fringes of the vast gathering, Mahatmaji called for *bhajan*. ... According to the report, 'Two women sang *Raghupati Raghava Rajaram* and the audience joined in the chorus, making time with their hands' (*CW-e*, 89, #426, p.320).

Gandhi referred to the faithful prayers of Draupadi, which had just been heard in the *bhajan*, and asked an undisciplined section of the congregation '[i]f they could not behave well even during *bhajan*, how would they behave when India got freedom?' (*CW-e*, 89, #415, p.309-10). Two evenings later, he explained 'the *bhajan* of Guru Nanak which was just sung' (*CW-e*, 89, #428, p.323), had asked the listeners an important question, why go to the forest when God is within you? On the following night, Gandhi referred again to the *bhajan* of the evening:

'Taking for his theme the text of the *bhajan* sung -- 'With the grace of the Lord, everything can be achieved' -- [Gandhi said that] reform would come, but "[o]nly when people were saturated with Rama and *Gurukripa* -- God's grace -- as the song went. ... Gurukripa was the greatest and most valuable help one could have. ... When His grace filled one's being, nothing was impossible for one to achieve' (*CW-e*, 89, #433, p.327).

In Bombay in March, 'Gandhiji explained a certain *bhajan* -- God's path is that of a brave man. ... People ought to be prepared to uphold truth and non-violence at all costs, even at the cost of death, ... as was stated in the *bhajan*... Gandhiji exhorted the audience to pray to God so that He may grant them strength and determination to die in the cause of the country' (CW-e, 90, #100, p.75).

In April from New Delhi, 'Gandhiji dwelt at length on the potency of mass prayers. He ... paid a tribute to the people of Assam, who, in their thousands, joined in the music at his daily prayers and responded to the rhythm of the Ramdhun.... He emphasized that Rama, Allah and God are the same [, h]e invited the people belonging to all faiths to join his prayers [, and h]e congratulated the huge gathering on maintaining pin-drop silence throughout the prayers' (CW-e, 90, #240, p.183). He asked that people pay attention 'to the need for discipline and sit in regular rows instead of in a disorderly and haphazard fashion' (CW-e, 90, #368, p.304), and referred to Surdas' *bhajan*, '*Sabase unchi prem sagai*,' [Ashram *Bhajanavali* #33] as an appropriate example of "love or ahimsa" (CW-e, 91, #31, p.26).

Later in October of the same year, still in New Delhi, Gandhi again rebuked the nation for having inflicted violence on one another in Bengal: 'Gandhiji referred again to the tragic happenings in Noakhali and Tipperah districts.... The fair name of Bengal was being tarnished..., the home of Gurudev, whose *bhajan* they had just heard. The hymn asked God to make the devotee pure of heart and fearless' (CW-e, 92, #501, pp.344-45).

Attempting to curb the communal violence which was increasing, Gandhi used the *bhajans* at the prayer meetings in attempts to change people's behaviors toward one another: 'Commenting on the Marathi *bhajan* sung by Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, ... [Gandhi explained that i]n the *bhajan* Tukaram makes the devotee say that he would prefer blindness to visions which could enable

him to harbour evil thoughts. Similarly, he would prefer deafness to hearing evil speech (*CW-e*, 92, #562, p.388). Encouraging people to remain convinced of their commitment to non-violence, Gandhi referred to a song by Rabindranath Tagore, "Ekla Chalo Re," in which '[t]he burdon of the song, commented Gandhiji, was that the devotee should have the strength to walk alone in the face of difficulties however great. If he realized that God was ever with him, he would not feel lonely. The *bhajan* was not meant for evil-doers. They could not walk alone' (*CW-e*, 92, #593, pp.412-13). The song, originally written in Bengali, began: '*Jodi tor dak soone deu na asse, Tobe ekla chalo re, Ekla chalo ekla chalo ekla chalo re.*' 'If they answer not to thy call, walk alone. Walk alone, walk alone, walk alone'.

In November of 1946, Gandhi spoke in Dattapar about the violence between Hindus and Muslims: 'In the *bhajan* that was sung the poet has likened God to the philosopher's stone. The proverbial philosopher's stone is said to turn iron into gold. ... God purifies the soul [in the same way] (*CW-e*, 93, #14, p.17). He continued to call for that kind of 'purity,' which would result in Hindu-Muslim unity, and to defend the use of Muslim and Buddhist prayers during the prayer-meetings: 'Gandhiji explained the meaning of the first mantra recited in the Ashram prayer: *Namyō Ho renge Kyo*. Its purport is, "Salutation to the Enlightened Ones' (*CW-e*, 93, #106, p.82).

In December of 1946, at a prayer meeting in Sirampur,

'Speaking after prayer, Gandhiji chose as his theme the story referred to in the *bhajan* which had just been sung. The chief of the elephants had gone for a drink to the river when he was caught hold of by an alligator. A furious struggle ensued, but in spite of his strength, the elephant was dropped into deeper waters. When he was on the point of being drowned, the elephant realized that his huge strength was of no avail, and he prayed to God for succour. God, the help of the helpless, came to his rescue and saved him from the jaws of death' (*CW-e*, 93, #123, p.92).

1947

In 1947, the number of times that Gandhi referred to the evening's *bhajan* as the text chosen for his public speech after the prayer meeting continued at a regular pace, and at times, that rhythm increased significantly. Just as that rhythm quickened, so will the rhythm of this examination in the on-going use of *bhajans*. Rather than attempt to place quotations together and order them as per correlated usage, this section will proceed not on a yearly basis, but on a monthly basis.

Communal tensions continued to increase between Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims. Gandhi used the sentiments of the *shlokas*, while attempting to quell communal tensions. When a crowd of people at a prayer meeting during April in New Delhi had forcefully removed a Hindu attendee who had protested against the use of Islamic prayers, Gandhi responded: 'You threw him out by force. What is the point in offering prayers by resorting to force? The young man was in a rage and in his anger was talking wild things. ... The *shlokas* just recited by this girl say that when a man broods on objects of the senses...he is caught up in craving...then he is possessed by wrath which leads to stupifaction' (Note 1 - *Bhagavadgita* II, 62 and 63) [*Ashram Bhajanavali* p. 26]. Gandhi then informed the congregation that if even one person protested the chanting of the Islamic prayers, that he would discontinue the daily prayer meetings: 'Because I am a believer in such [a tolerant] India and such a [tolerant] Pakistan, I would recite *Auz-o-Billahi* [*Ashram Bhajanavali* p. 14] even while I recite the *Gayatri* and the *Gita*' (*CW-e*, 94, #237, pp.239-42).

During that same month, Gandhi spoke on Tagore's *bhajan* "*Ekla chalo re*: "It is of great significance to you as to all of us today. The essence of the *bhajan* is that even in the darkest hour we may not lose hope and faith. ... Hindus and Muslims might take to the law of the jungle, but they ought to remember that they are not invertebrate animals but men standing erect' (*CW-e*, 94, #275, p.280). With his radical adherence to non-violence in the midst of egregious atrocities which had occurred, Gandhi spoke: 'I was warned that I would be killed. But I tell you that

even if all of you try to protect me you will not be able to save me from death. Even doctors and hakims would be of no avail. Even Hakim Lukman, quoted in today's *bhajan* [Note 1 - *Hai bahara bagh* by Nazir Akbarabadi] says in despair that the grandeur of life is only transitory. Why then should we try to run away from death? We ought to face death with courage' (*CW-e*, 94, #282, p.289). Furthermore, he continued to attempt to bridge the growing gulf between Hindus and Muslims by referring to Ramanama and appealing to Hinduism's history of the acceptance of others' religions: '...[t]he *bhajan* by Tulsidas is about two syllables Ra and ma. It is...wrong to quarrel with anyone over the names -- Rama or Rahim. For, whether we say Rama or Rahim, Krishna or Karim, God or Allah, we mean the One God... Let me warn you,...if you let the fact of the Hindu majority turn your head and attempt to eliminate other people, Hinduism is not going to benefit in any way. On the contrary, it [will] perish' (*CW-e*, 94, #404, p.401).

In May of 1947, an article appeared in *Bhangi Nivas* from New Delhi, in which Gandhi once more made mention of Tagore's *Ekla Chalo re*:

'Maybe, I am growing old and becoming senile. I am, therefore, left all alone to plead for my line of thinking. Gurudev's [Tagore] *bhajan* -- *Ekla Chalo re* is my only consolation. Now my only wish is to sacrifice myself in this effort. If nothing else, God will at least grant me this wish.

Remember, if you divide India today, tomorrow provinces and states will be fragmented into smaller parts. And thus Rajputana, Gujarat, Bihar, Delhi, Maharashtra and the Punjab also will follow suit. We might escape its consequences because we are on the brink of death but generations to come will curse us at every step for the kind of *swaraj* we shall have bequeathed to them' (*CW-e*, 95, #15, pp.13-14).

At a public prayer meeting, held the same month, objections came again concerning the inclusion of Islamic prayers. Gandhi requested that everyone remain seated in silence before the next day's prayers: '...from tomorrow I shall begin the prayer with *Auz-o-Billahi* and the prayer [will] be carried on if there is

no obstruction from anyone. Otherwise, you will all sit in silence and pray in your hearts, and go back peacefully' (*CW-e*, 94, #16, p.14).

When Gandhi travelled to Calcutta in May, he explained a Tagore hymn, which had been offered, with the images of *Asato ma* [*Ashram Bhajanavali*, p. 32] from the *Upanishads*: 'The purpose of the hymn was that God should take them from darkness unto light, from untruth unto truth and from misery unto bliss indefinable' (*CW-e*, 95, #37, p.52). While in Calcutta, exhausted and disappointed with the turn of political events, he referred again to the sentiment of walking alone:

'But now I do not feel that I can be of any use to any one. Perhaps my mind is growing weak! Still, instead of taking rest at such a critical juncture I would rather "do or die." I wish to die in harness, with the name of Rama on my lips. My faith in this *yajna* is growing so strong that I feel God will grant me this wish. I am the lone adherent of my views today. But Gurudev's *bhajan Ekla chalo re* sustains me' (*CW-e*, 95, #64, p.76).

When Gandhi returned to New Delhi, in June he received another request not to read from the *Qur'an*, to which he replied:

'In the *bhajan*, the gopi says that hearing the flute she wants to go to the forest. But the *bhajan* is not meant only for women. We are all like gopis before God. God by Himself is neither male nor female. For Him there is no distinction of status, no distinction of birth. He can be described only as 'not this, not this.' God resides in the forest that is the heart and His flute is the voice within. We do not have to go to desolate forests. We have to hear the divine music that goes on in our own hearts. When each one of us starts hearing that sweet music, all would be well in India.

We heard this *bhajan* at an opportune moment' (*CW-e*, #200, p.220-21).

Two weeks later, on June 17, Gandhi spoke out against the proposed India/Pakistan partition:

'Today's *bhajan* says that in the company of the good one forgets the notions of self and others and no one is an enemy or a stranger. This indeed is the need of the hour. But everyone coming to me says, 'However much you may shout, the separation is going to endure.' ...I shall continue to say that what has happened has happened; only it should not be sealed and made permanent' (*CW-e*, 95, #270, pp.292-93).

At the opening of a prayer meeting in early July, Gandhi spoke: 'You will have understood the *bhajan* that has been sung. It was composed by Tukdoji Maharaj of the Central Provinces. ...It says that Rama is accessible to one who has suffered loss of home and property, the loss of friends and companions or suffers from bodily disease' (*CW-e*, 95, #370, p.378). A few days later, he addressed the crowd concerning recent events: 'You have heard the *bhajan*. It says that it makes one laugh to think that a fish in water should remain thirsty. We are in the world of God and we do not know God. It is our ill-luck, for God is always with us. As nails are not apart from fingers, God is not apart from us. If a nail gets broken it causes pain; similarly when one breaks from God, it is painful. India today is in pain' (*CW-e*, 95, #390, p.392). The *Hindustani Times* of July 10 'reported that Ganhiji began by referring to the *bhajan* which described love as the highest thing in the world -- the best unifying force. Yudhishtira performed the *yajna* because he wished to become the servant of his people through love -- in other words ahimsa' (*CW-e*, 96, #30, p.19).

In mid-July, Gandhi declared that "[t]he *bhajan* just sung is very much to the point, for we are today in great distress. ... To whom shall we go for help? Nawaharlal Nehru?...Sardar Patel? ...this *bhajan* says that when we are in distress we...go to God" (*CW-e* Vol. 96, #116, p. 78). On July 23, a note was passed forward to Gandhi before the prayers which asked whether or not Gandhi had ever 'seen God face to face.' Gandhi admitted that he had not, but that he did hold 'undying faith' in God:

'The *bhajan* sung during the prayers described the way to see God face to face. The poet asked the aspirant to shed anger and desire and to be indifferent to praise or blame if he expected to reach the blessed state. Gandhiji compared nirvana to Ramarajya or the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. The dream of Ramarajya was far from realization. How could it happen when they had all along been nursing violence in their hearts under the garb of non-violence?' (*CW-e*, 96, #178, p.120).

In September, following the granting of independence to India, along with the partitioning of India and Pakistan, someone at the prayer meeting again objected to the *Al Fateha* being chanted as part of the prayers. So the prayers were not held that day (*CW-e*, 96, #508, p.400), and the next day Gandhi instructed the congregation, telling them that 'people who object to certain verses being read should abstain from attending the prayer meetings. All prayers should be able to be recited' (*CW-e*, 96, #517, p.407). Violence towards and from the Sikhs had also become a part of his daily speeches: 'The *bhajan* which you heard today applies well to the present situation. We can all describe ourselves today as 'wrecked boats.' ...There is so much anger in the hearts of both the Hindus and the Muslims, that we would not let the Muslims live in Delhi. The Hindus and the Sikhs have been driven out of Pakistan' (*CW-e*, 96, #528, p.417). Gandhi encouraged the congregation to find the similarities in their religious roots: 'If I had the time I would have narrated so many things from the Hindu *bhajans* and *kirtans* that you would wonder whether the religious sentiment depicted here belonged to Hinduism or Sikhism; (*CW-e*, 97, #5, p.4). By the end of September, Gandhi reflected his disappointment with the violence and the warring which had broken out on all sides: 'Brothers and Sisters, It seems to me that we have all become savages. Both Hindus and Muslims have turned savage. Who can determine who has committed more crimes and who has committed less?' (*CW-e*, 97, #16, p.15).

In October, he acknowledged his deep despair: 'There is a *bhajan* which says that hope springs from unending despair. This is true. It is a poetic expression. We

desire to have a glimpse of hope concealed in the deepest despair' (*CW-e*, #67, p.81); and he began to repeat more often his reliance on Ramanama: 'What I am doing today is in the name of God. I trust Him. ... The *bhajan* which the girl sang a moment ago says that one should repeat Ramanama. One should forget desire, anger, attachment, infatuation, but never forget Ramanama because He is one's sole refuge. It is for one to sing the *bhajan* and meditate on it' (*CW-e*, 97, #86, pp.103-04).

'Ramanama is the greatest medicine.... Like the arrow of Rama which never failed to hit the target, this medicine too never fails. But one must be patient. ...My faith is much deeper now. The times have changed but I have not. Prayer has an effect on those who listen to it in good faith. ... If God wants something done through me He will keep me alive, otherwise He will kill me by this cough' (*CW-e*,97, #86, p.103).

In late October, he referred to a *bhajan* that concerned the love of the *chakor* bird for the moon [*Ashram Bhajanavali*, # 151] (*CW-e*, 97, #97, p.114), as money and blankets were collected for both untouchables and refugees.

'It is a great shock for a person, who has been dreaming of freedom from his childhood days and who strove hard to achieve it, that when freedom came, this poison has come along with it. This pains me very much. .. "Let those who will, praise; and those who will, blame" -- that is what we heard in the *bhajan* [*Ashram Bhajanavali* # 159] today' (*CW-e*,97, # 138, p.151).

Then referencing a Kabir piece, he again praised Ramanama: "The inner meaning of the *bhajan* is as Kabir says: 'While you possess elephants and horses and wealth worth crores, my only possession is the name of Murari [Krishna]. ...The *bhajan* only shows the greatness of Ramanama' (*CW-e*, 97, #170, p.183).

The principles of dying for a just cause were also found in the *bhajans*:

'This is the substance of the melodious *bhajan* we have heard today. I shall dance with joy even if everybody in Kashmir has to die

in defending this land. There would be no sorrow in my heart. The world would go on as usual. All this is the play of God. But we have always to make the effort and that consists in dying while doing the right thing' (*CW-e*, 97, #170, p.186).

On October 31, Shri Dilip Kumar Roy, a celebrated singer from Aurobindo's ashram at Pondicherry visited Gandhi during the day, and sang for him two national songs, 'the *Bande Mataram* and Iqbal's the *Sare Jehanman Achcha*' (*Delhi Diary*, 121) [*Ashram Bhajanavali*, p. 232]. That evening Roy offered the *bhajan*, after which, Gandhi explained:

'The *bhajan* says that we should make our heart like a temple and install love in it. So this also teaches us non-violence. The composer of this *bhajan* asks man why he should behave like a foolish and ignorant man. He says that if one can light the lamp of live even if only in the temple of one's heart, one will have won the goal of one's life. After that he will see light and brightness in the whole world. There will be no darkness anywhere. Similar miraculous power is to be found in truth and non-violence' (*CW-e*, 97, #177, p.195).

On November 1, another objection was raised regarding the recitation of the Islamic prayers. However, after the congregation agreed to render no violence to the objector, and the objector agreed to render silence, the prayer meeting was held. The following day Gandhi remarked about the nature of the sung-prayers:

'The prayer was all inclusive. God was known by many names. In the last analysis the names were as many as human beings. It was rightly said that even animals, birds and stones adored God. They would find in the *Bhajanavali* a hymn by a Muslim saint which said the chirp of birds in the morning and evening signified that they adored their Maker. There was no sense in objecting to any part of the prayer because it was selected from the *Quran* or from any other scripture' (*Delhi Diary*, 129-30).

Requests began to be made for Sikh scriptures to be included in the prayer

meetings. Gandhi reminded the congregation that there were *bhajans* from the *Granthaheb* included in the *Bhajanavali* (CW-e, 97, # 204, p.229), and he spoke of receiving a letter from a Sikh friend, who 'appreciate[d] the spirit of tolerance in the prayer', although, he also felt that the addition of Sikh scriptures would be very helpful to the Sikh community. Gandhi informed the congregation that the two of them would meet and choose some appropriate passages (CW-e, 97, #235, p.259).

In November, still in New Delhi, Gandhi referred to one evening's *bhajan* by Miirabai" [*Mhane chakar rakhoji* - Note 1, CW-e, 97, p.274] remarking 'that all their ills would be over if like Mirabai they became servants of God and God alone" (Delhi Diary, p.158). Then, as November 12 was Diwali, Gandhi referenced the celebration only with the sadness that 'there is no Ramarajya in India. ... For, God alone can illumine our souls and only that light is real light. The *bhajan* [Note 2 - 'Light thy heart and sweep out from there evil thoughts and anger' - *Ashram Bhajanavali* # 251] that was sung today emphasizes the poet's desire.... Today thousands are in distress. Can you, everyone of you, lay your hand on your heart and say that every sufferer, whether Hindu, Sikh or Muslim, is your own brother or sister?' (CW-e, #272, p.297).

Two nights later, Gandhi once again 'took the *bhajan* of the evening as the text for his discourse' (*Delhi Diary*, p.169), and expounded on his memories of how that *bhajan* had sustained him during his 21-day fast:

'... this *bhajan* (Note 5 - *Or nahim kachu kāmāke* - 'I depend solely on my Rama, all others are of no avail,' a *bhajan* by Tulsidas) [*Ashram Bhajanāvali*, p. 93] had captured me. ... I would like to mention only one thing in this connection, and it is that I survived for 21 days not because of an amount of water I used to drink, or the orange juice which I took for some days, or the extraordinary medical care, but because I had installed in my heart God whom I call Rama' (CW-e, 97, #283).

Several evenings throughout November, Gandhi referred to the evening's *bhajan* as the texts for his discourse. On November 16, he referenced Mirabai's *bhajan* in which love of God for her was everything (*CW-e*, 97, #299, p.330), and, when on November 23, the radio personnel complained to him that his post-prayer-meeting speeches were extending beyond the allotted 15-minute time frame, Gandhi apologized, but explained that 'he could not always observe the rule for his main purpose was to reach the hearts of the audience that was physically before him. The radio came next' (*Delhi Diary*, pp.199-200).

On December 4, Gandhi returned to the Sikh question, hoping to convince the congregation that the Sikhs should not be viewed as outsiders: 'Who was Guru Nanak, if not a Hindu? The *Guru Granth* was full of the teachings of the *Vedas*. Hinduism was like a mighty ocean which received and absorbed all religious truths' (*Delhi Diary*, p.234); and, he re-embarked on his campaign of Muslim-Hindu communal unity, using especially the first verses of the *Ishopanishad*:

'You may ask why in that case Muslims indulge in such barbarous behavior. ... Where are the Hindus who conduct themselves according to the *Gayatri*?

We recite from *Ishopanishad*, 'All things are pervaded by the Lord,'.... Let the Hindus but conduct themselves according to this one single *mantra*. ... And yet we do not keep our hearts clean. It is a painful thing'(*CW-e*, 98, #24, pp.30-31).

On the evening of December 31, Gandhi read from a letter sent by a woman who expressed her appreciation for the broadcasting of his evening speeches, however, she was disappointed that the 'hymns and bhajans' were not broadcast. She suggested that, at least on occasion, the sung-prayers might be broadcast over the radio as well as the speeches. Gandhi agreed: 'I do think the *bhajans* sung here, however badly sung they may be, should be relayed' (*CW-e*, 98, #148, pp.149-50).

1948

Gandhi began 1948 by addressing the January 1st evening prayer meeting: 'Today is New Year's Day according to the English calendar. I am happy to see such a large number of people gathered here' (*CW-e*, 98, #155, p.153). He then admonished the crowd for taking so long to take their seats while the radio broadcast was underway. He did not refer to any *bhajan* sung, but 'hoped that the gathering would be even larger in the future, if all who attended would come in a prayerful mood, for prayer was the food of the spirit. He hoped that those present would not only maintain silence, but would carry *shanti* [peace] with them to their homes' (*Delhi Diary*, p.303). On January 2, he commented that 'although the *bhajan* that evening had been sung well, it was actually a *bhajan* meant for the morning' (*CW-e*, 98, #162, p.160).

On January 13, Gandhi began a fast for communal unity between Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus. He was able to walk to the prayer grounds that evening, at which the *bhajan* sung was *Ekla chalo re*:

'The song these girls sang was composed by Gurudev. We sang it during our tours in Noakhali. A man walking alone calls to others to come and join him. But if no one comes and it is dark, the Poet says, the man should walk alone because God is already with him. I asked the girls especially to sing this song which is in Bengali... Hindus and Sikhs should cultivate this attitude if they are true to their religions' (*CW-e*, 98, #239, p.226).

He also announced that he would not be attending the prayer meetings, as he would be fasting, but at least one of "the girls," Abha or Manu, would be there to sing the prayers. Although Gandhi was able to attend the meeting on January 14, on the 15th, he spoke two paragraphs of a speech to the congregation via a microphone, and the rest of the speech was read to the congregation by Sushila Nayyar, his physician (*CW-e* #247, 98, p.236). On the 16th, Gandhi spoke to the congregation from his bed over a microphone; on the 17th he spoke over the microphone for

about three minutes (CW-e., 98, #253, p.248) while the rest of his speech was read to the congregation.

On the 18th, following the signing of a promise of communal unity between the Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus in Delhi, Gandhi broke his fast with sung-prayers, which included Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Parsi scriptures, the singing of a Christian hymn, a *bhajan*, and *Ramdhun*.

Following January 13, no *bhajan* seems to have been mentioned during his fast. The regular rhythms of taking a hymn for the text of his public speech appear to have been broken. After Gandhi broke his fast, he was still weak. He was carried in a chair to the prayer grounds. On January 20, he was still being carried, but his voice was weak and the microphone was not working. He spoke only a short time. During that time, a bomb was exploded.

On January 21, again carried to the prayer ground, Gandhi apologized for being late, and he addressed the congregation concerning the bombing. Although he did not allude to any *bhajan*, he proclaimed: 'I want to go on uttering Ramanama even if there should be shooting taking place all around me (CW-e, 98, #282, p.283).

Consequent to the bomb explosion, Gandhi was still not well, recovering from the fast, violence was increasing, and many conversations circled around the possibility that there would be more attempts made on Gandhi's life. On January 22, he walked to the prayer ground for the first time since ending the fast. On January 23, he quoted Tulsidas to mark Subhas Bose's [a militant independence fighter] birthday: 'Subhas Babu was a votary of violence while I am a devotee of ahimsa. But what does it matter?... 'The Lord has created this world full of lifeless and living things and virtues and vices. The wise like the swan take the milk of virtue and leave out the waste of water' (CW-e, 98, #293, p.293). Gandhi also had a "frank" talk with his grand-niece, Manu, regarding what he considered the *yajna* of her

remaining with him, as he knew it was possible there would be other attempts to kill him, and she was always in close proximity to him.

Following the last fast and the bomb scare, the regular rhythm of quoting from the *bhajans* appears to have stopped. Questions naturally arise regarding possible reasons for that. Was the routine simply interrupted? Concerned with Gandhi's welfare, were other items considered as more important for inclusion in the speeches? Had the radio personnel convinced Gandhi to keep his remarks confined to only a 15-minute span of time? Where were the musicians who had been coming to the prayers for so long? Were they still present?

Gandhi had been considering the possibility of leaving Delhi to travel to Wardha for 12 days, but did not know when he would leave. On January 29: 'As you say there is complete confusion. I am likely to leave here on the 2nd. It will be decided tomorrow' (*CW-e*, 98, #318, p.325). At the prayer meeting that evening, Gandhi reported: 'Of the things I wish to tell you, I have chosen six for today, for I must finish in 15 minutes. ... I note that we are beginning a little late, which is wrong. Sushila has gone to Bahawalpur, to see the refugees still stranded there," and he made one reference to the *Gita* which regarded not eating until after having offered *yajna*' (*CW-e*, # 326, pp. 330-32). He then worked very late on the night of January 29th in order to complete a draft of the Constitution for Congress.

His correspondence from the 29th had been voluminous, and on January 30, Gandhi had many visitors. When two visitors from Kathiawar arrived and asked to see him, Gandhi had replied: 'Tell them I shall talk with them during my walk after the prayers, if I am alive' (*CW-e*, #334, p.339). Gandhi had prepared what he would talk about at the evening prayer speech. It concerned a rumor that was circulating concerning the possibility of a political rift between Congress President Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Patel, the Deputy Prime Minister. A possible negotiation concerning any rift was apparently what kept Gandhi in New Delhi, and both Nehru and Patel had appointments to visit him that day. Sardar Patel was to see him at

4.00 before the prayers, and Nehru was scheduled to meet with him at 7.00 following the prayers. It was the meeting with Sardar that caused Gandhi to be late for the sung-prayers that day, but a scheduled meeting for negotiations with Nehru had been the results of that meeting.

In Manu Gandhi's account of Gandhi's last walk to the prayer grounds, on January 30, she mentions that, in the skirmish that occurred, she dropped Gandhi's prayer *mala* [rosary], his spittoon, and her notebook. However, in Pyarelal's account, it was Gandhi's copy of the *Ashram Bhajnavali* that was dropped. As the rhythms of the community had been interrupted, so had Gandhi's health and routine been changed. His pattern of regularly taking the *bhajan* as his text for evening discourse seems to have lapsed with his health. However this would have possibly been an evening of renewed strength. Therefore, the question must be asked. If Pyarelal's, the secretary's, account is true and consistent with events, and the *Bhajanāvali* was being carried to the prayer grounds with him that evening, which *bhajan* might Gandhi have used as his text that evening in the context of speaking publically concerning any rifts between Nehru and Patel?

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

The purpose of this chapter has been to survey and encapsulate the various ways in which Gandhi and his *satyagraha* community participated in ritual, beyond the twice-daily sung-prayers which were described in the previous chapter. Rappaport's schema of ritual, its features and its ways of functioning, have been taken into account during the present survey. However, by way of summary, a few words need to be added in regard to how the evidence of this chapter's contents correlates with Rappaport's theory and structure.

First, beyond the regularized use of twice-daily sung-prayers, Gandhi used ritual to surround those events that could be termed "dangerous" (such as fasting or

public marches) with sung-prayers. While short, twice-daily rituals would have helped, in Rappaport's terms, to shape and form developing behaviors, the longer rituals of the fasts and marches would have had a deeper psychological, longer-lasting, and transformative effect on Gandhi and those around him. Gandhi also performed other rituals within the community, such as marriages and funerals.

Second, Rappaport has written that one of ritual's most significant aspects is its ability to bind people together, to harmonize differences, to meld them into the Middle Order of Meaning of *communitas*. Materials presented in this chapter serve to illustrate the extent to which Gandhi used the ritual materials from the *Bhajanavali* to create that sense of *communitas*, first within the *satyagraha* community (on both organizational and personal levels), then within the nation (Hindu, Muslim and Sikh), and eventually within the world.

Third, "self-referentiality" is that aspect of ritual which Rappaport has defined as related to the present time, the ordinary, the every-day events of common life. As Gandhi often used whichever *bhajan* was sung at the evening prayer meetings as his text on which to expound when speaking to the congregation, the nation, and the world. In this, the "self referential" material, based on the content of the sung-prayers, increased. It was observed in Chapter Three, that the twice-sung daily prayers had over time become more formalized and less self-referential. It was specifically mentioned that, with the additions of material from other religions considered to be canonical, there would have been less time for the singing of *bhajans* (a more self-referential element of the ritual). This would have remained the case, except for the fact that, later in his career, Gandhi began speaking about the prayers after the prayers. On his tours around India, he encouraged the use of these sung-prayers, upon which he felt the need to comment and to give instruction. He engaged in the process of connecting the sung-prayers, the *shlokas*, the *Gita*, and the *bhajans*, to people's every-day life experiences and current events, encouraging them in meditational practices and non-violent modes

of living. Therefore, with the addition of the public speeches about the prayers, the two strands of canonical and self-referential materials intertwined within the sung-prayers became more equally represented.

Finally, in summary, it must be said that whereas, if Lutgendorf's comments concerning Gandhi's having had the persona of a *katha-vacak* [story-teller] of the *Manas* are true, then Nagler's comments regarding Gandhi's use of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* are equally true. Having placed these sung-prayers within the context of their daily usage, in their *sitz im leben*, it is with the close of this chapter, that the extent to which these prayer-songs were central to Gandhi's life and work can be recognized. The breadth, width, and depth of their usage affected all areas of Gandhi's interaction with the world, as evidenced above in the many ways in which he acted out of them. Nagler has suggested (*BP*, 23) that just in the way St. Augustine lived out of the Psalms, so Gandhi lived out of these sung-prayers. In further refinement of Nagler's observation that the Psalms were the "grammar" of Augustine's "mind," it must be asserted (to use an analogy in harmony with Rappaport's rarified High Level of Divine Order Enacted) that the sung-prayers of the *Ashram Bhajanāvali* were the "life-song" of Gandhi's "heart."

CHAPTER FIVE. GANDHI, MUSIC, SUNG PRAYER, AND RITUAL

I can recall occasions when a hymn sank deep into me though the same thing expressed in prose had failed to touch me.

-- Mohandas K. Gandhi

GANDHI AND THE POWER OF MUSIC

It is in this chapter that supportive evidence from the fields of musicology, phenomenology, and neurophysiology will be offered to support Rappaport's understanding of ritual in the context of Gandian *satyagraha*, and grasp how and why Gandhi's use of the sung-prayers was so effective. We will begin with a discussion of Gandhi and music.

As with his many other "experiments" meant to form and reform the nation of Indian, to which he was deeply devoted, Gandhi loved music. 'The art form that appealed to him most was music, especially religious music' (Parel 2006, p.166). Anthony J. Parel has even noted that, while Gandhi was deeply involved in establishing the All-India Music Conferences, musical festivals, and establishing music schools, "[p]erhaps Gandhi's great contribution to religious music was the compilation, with the help of Khare, of the *Ashram Hymnal...*" (Parel 2006, p.166.)

The music that Gandhi would have heard while growing up in Gujarat would have been quite eclectic. As described above, his home town of Porbandar was culturally diverse. He would have been exposed to the simple Vaishnava melodies to Krishna "within the household" and at one temple his mother attended; these, however, would be difficult to trace at this point (individual correspondence with ethnomusicologist, Meilu Ho; see Meilu Ho 2006, *The Liturgical Music of the Pusti Marg of India*, for an indepth study of more modern musicians in Braj). However, as Gandhi's mother also attended the Pranami Temple, Gandhi would have been hearing the Qur'an, as well as possibly Sufi songs. His father had always invited musicians and philosophers of diverse backgrounds to their home, and as his father

grew close to death, Gandhi would have heard the Gita being chanted to his father, as well as the chanting of the *Ramcaritmanas* by pandit Ladha Maharaj of Bileshvar, a great devotee of Rama, and of whom it was said he had cured himself of leprosy by chanting the *Manas*.

Gandhi's regard for music was multi-faceted. He himself was not a trained musician; however, he was aware of how music affected him, and how it affected others: 'Music has given me peace. I can remember occasions when music instantly tranquilized my mind when I was greatly agitated over something. Music has helped me to overcome anger (*CW-e*, 43, #322, p.256). On many occasions, he used music as soothing medicine while fasting, or when ill: I am so fond of music that once, while I was in [S. Africa] and ailing from a bruise on my upper lip, I felt greatly soothed as the daughter of a friend of mine sang the song, 'Lead, Kindly Light' at my request (*CW-e*, 27, #5, p.4, 2 February 1924, p. 4.) He once wrote an ailing colleague: 'Half your medicine will be Raihana's music....' (*CW-e*, 80, #806, p.466), and at the time of Kasturbai's (his wife's) dying while she was in prison, he requested of the prison officials that Kanu Gandhi (younger son of Narandas Gandhi), be allowed to visit her, for some light nursing duties, but primarily, for the purpose of singing *bhajans* to her which would provide comfort and soothing (*CW-e*, 83, #277, p.440).

Gandhi did not claim to know music, but he held deep respect for its powers: 'When I hear Gita verses melodiously recited I never grow weary of hearing and the more I hear the deeper sinks the meaning into my heart. Melodious recitations of the Ramayana which I heard in my childhood left on me an impression which years have not obliterated or weakened' (*CW-e*, 43, #322, p.256). 'I can recall occasions when a hymn sank deep into me though the same thing expressed in prose had failed to touch me. I also found that the meaning of hymns...burns itself on my mind when they have been properly sung (*CW-e*, 43, #322, p.256).

He recommended continually that ashramites and his devotees study music (*CW-e*, 57, #16, p.11). He commented on more than one occasion that music and sung-prayers should be taught to children when they were very young, for those were the early years when impressions could shape their character for the good. The ideal primary school, he felt, should teach children music, but even when children could be only home-schooled by their mothers, Gandhi felt a good education could be had at home, as

'[the mother] will not tolerate it if the children do not sing in chorus and in a sweet voice national songs, devotional songs, etc. She will teach them to sing in rhythm. If she is a good teacher, she places a one-string instrument in their hands, [and] gives them cymbals' (*CW-e* Vol. 46, #68, p. 79).

Music Produces Synchronized, Non-Violent Behavior

Gandhi felt adamantly that music and sung-prayer would move India towards *swaraj*. 'Why I cannot even conceive of an evolution of the religious life of India without music' (*CW-e*, 27, #5, p.5, 1925). He was not referring, however, to any kind of music; he was specifically referring to music whose purpose was to uplift people. 'There is no harm in attending a music or dance performance, provided there is nothing obscene in it (*CW-e*, 66, #583, p.391).

He referred early on to music's abilities to organize people and to support civilized behaviors:

'[Music] exercises a powerful influence over us. We do not realize this vividly enough, otherwise we would have done everything possible to teach music to our boys and girls....Harmonious music has the power to soothe the anguish of the soul. At times, we find restlessness in a large gathering. This can be arrested and calmed if a national song is sung by all. That hundreds of boys may sing a poem full of courage and the spirit of adventure and bravery and be inspired with the spirit of adventure and bravery and be inspired with the spirit of heroism is no commonplace fact. We have an example of the power of music in the fact that boatmen and other labourers raise, in unison,

the cry of *Harahar* and *Allabeli* and this helps them in their work. I have seen English friends trying to fight cold by singing songs.

...Just as a trained singer never sings out of tune or at the wrong time, even so one who has learnt classical music will not go in for street music. Music must get a place in our efforts at popular awakening (emphasis added)' (*CW-e*, 16, #37, p.92, 1917)

He was especially interested in music's ability to bring about regulated, calming behavior.

'Where there is discord and everyone striking his own tune, there is bad government or anarchy. Work for swaraj fails to appeal to us because we have no music in us. When we have millions of people singing in harmony or taking God's name in unison, making one music, we shall have taken the first step to svaraj' (*CW-e*, 34, #184, p.436).

He mentioned one incident in which a crowd of people were beoming negatively, racially motivated toward a foreigner who had entered their midst. There happened to be a musician in the crowd, and '[h]e discoursed sweet music which soon had its effect. The ire on their faces...began to vanish; their hearts were softened' (*CW-e*, 36, #387, p.340).

'India is today quickly passing through the mob-law state. We must then evolve order out of chaos. And I have no doubt that the best and the speediest method is to introduce the people's law instead of mob-law.

One great stumbling block is that we have neglected music. Music means rhythm, order. Its effect is electrical. It immediately soothes. I have seen, in European countries, a resourceful superintendent of police by starting a popular song controlling the mischievous tendencies of mobs' (*CW-e*, 21, 1920, p.247).

Gandhi was interested in the discipline that especially rhythm, could provide, along with the coordinated, synchronized movements of large groups of people which music could induce, as illustrated in this speech he later delivered at a Boy Scouts' Rally:

'The object of mass drill is to enable large bodies of people to perform any movement rhythmically and swiftly and with absolute precision. ... There is a silent music in disciplined movement of masses of men and women. ... There is a rhythm and music in drill that makes action effortless and eliminates fatigue. If the whole nation of 300 millions could be drilled so as to move together and act together and if necessary die together as one man, we should attain independence without striking a blow and set an example of a peaceful revolution for the whole world to emulate (emphasis added)' (CW-e, 74, #454, 1938, p.341).

Sung-Prayers Produce Synchronized Non-Violent Reaction

The same principles of synchronized non-violence were of interest to Gandhi from the beginning of the time of instituting daily sung-prayers to the time of nationally emanating and advocating the practice:

'Music brings sweetness to the individual and to the social life of the people. Even as pranayama [breath-control] is necessary for the regulation of breath, so is music for disciplining the breath. Dissemination of the knowledge of music among the people will greatly help in controlling and stopping the noise which is a usual feature of public meetings in this country. Music pacifies anger and its judicious use is highly helpful in leading a man to the vision of God' (CW-e 42, #206, p.187, 1928).

Gandhi equated *swaraj* with harmony, musical harmony, sung-prayer harmony: 'The prevalent discord of today is an indication of our sad plight. There can be no *swaraj* where there is no harmony, no music' (CW-e,34, #184, p.436, 1926). This analogy of harmony became, over time, an important signifier to Gandhi of *swaraj*, of *Ramarajya*. Each person participating, whether in an *ashram*, house, or village was perceived as "one" joining "the many" in harmony. The perception was returned in kind. Gandhi's *ashram* experiments were affecting the nation. Sung-prayers had become a synchronized, harmonizing program of *swaraj*. The nation knew when and where Gandhi was praying, and

whether they joined him in every evening prayer, or even morning prayer, the nation was attuning itself in harmony with Gandhi's education and guidance.

'If we can conduct ourselves unitedly as we have done in maintaining the rhythm of the *bhajan* sung, then whatever injury is inflicted on us and however wronged we may be as the result of the visitation of Nature of polity of the State, we will be the master of the situation and keep our head unbent' (*CW-e*, 89, #164, p.109).

Gandhi was also interested in the quality of music and its substance to linger, to remain with the listener for long periods of time. While he felt that the only "real" music was that "which uplifts the soul" (*CW-e*, 86, #269, p.143), he was also concerned that the *Gita* or *Manas* sections recited during prayers would not simply be "uplifting" at the time chanted, but that they would inspire non-violent actions at later times when called on for support.

'It is not only the music, but the substance that has been haunting me the whole day. You do not come to prayer to listen to music, or to admire this man's or that man's voice, but in order that you may carry with you for the day something from what you hear to guide and inspire you in all your actions' (*CW-e*, 41, #123, p.102).

He was more interested in the sung-prayers than in music per se. '...music at the time of prayers is a form of enjoyment, for the experience of sweetness is a pleasure. But we wish to learn renunciation through this enjoyment (*CW-e*, 48, #381, p.368. The music of the sung-prayers was not entertainment.

Music was meant for service (*CW-e*, 98, #421, p.381), and as training for the *satyagrahis*. The content of the sung-prayers were to be taken in, learned, and lived:

'I have already referred to [music's] ordinary meaning above, but its deeper meaning is that our whole life should be sweet and musical like a song. It goes without saying that life cannot be made like that with the practice of virtues such as truth, honesty, etc. To make life musical means to make it one with God, to merge it in Him.

He who has not rid himself of *raga* [desire] and *dwesha* [hatred], i.e. likes and dislikes, who has not tasted of the joy of service, cannot have any understanding of celestial music. A study of music, which does not take account of this deeper aspect of this divine art, has little or no value for me '(CW-e, 42, #306, p.188).

Gandhi explained many times the purpose of prayer in almost the same language in which he spoke about this spiritual music. The purpose of both music and sung-prayer was self-purification and union with the Divine.

'Prayer saves you from impure thoughts; that is no small benefit of prayer. But that is only the first step. It is not that while praying one has to remain absorbed only in the meaning of the prayer for, when one is really absorbed in the prayer, one is not conscious of its meaning. In that state, we are aware only of God. Language is an obstacle at the time. I am unable to describe this state of mind. The purpose of prayer is to be single-minded in devotion. The purpose of collective prayer is to be single-minded in devotion collectively and the individual has to lose himself in the group. The individual loses himself or herself in the group and the group loses itself in God' (CW-e, 45, #164, p.175, 1929).

In a way similar to Rappaport's description of the ritual participant moving through the low-level order of meaning of the ritual, into the middle-level order of meaning in which similarities discovered mitigate the use of language as a helpful qualifier, the participants moves into "being one" with the group, and eventually the group moves in *communitas* to "being one" with God. While Rappaport describes the process in terms of orders of meaning, and Gandhi uses the meditational terms of "single-minded devotion" and the experience of "losing" oneself in God, taken from the *Gita*, the *Yoga-Sutra*, or another Hindu scripture, the results would appear to be very much the same.

Spiritual Development

Over time, Gandhi came to see music, and especially the singing of the prayers as a means for spiritual development. In 1924, he wrote to Narayan M. Khare, the *ashram's* music director, concerning his awareness of the spiritual elements of music: 'Bhai Panditji, ... I have gradually come to look upon music as a means of spiritual development. Please try your best to see that all of us sing our *bhajans* with a correct understanding of the sense. Inmates of the Ashram do not yet become one with the songs they recite' (*CW-e*, 29, #193, p.237). Furthermore as *satyagraha* gained national strength, Gandhi's followers organized *bhajan* parties to educate more and more people.

In regards to Gandhi's perception of music as being multi-faceted, he spoke often of inner music or Divine music. Along the lines of Hazrat Inayat Khan, the great musician who brought *The Music of Life*, as well as an understanding of music as a spiritual manifestation of celestial harmony, to the West, Gandhi elaborated on Divine music and on the hearing of the celestial spheres. In 1929, wrote: "Divine music is going on all the time where God is and we can only imagine what it is like. Collective prayer is a rationally inexplicable attempt to join in that music, and he who joins in that music is for ever in a state of bliss" (*CW-e*, 45, #164, p.175). In 1936, while describing meditational processes, he wrote, "...beyond the perception of the sense-organs.... I experience every moment the presence of the *atman* (soul) and there I occasionally catch the echoes of the divine music within. With effort you, too, can hear the music if you wish. It is not the music that another can help one hear" (*CW-e*. 69, 1936, p.210). '[I]f you attune yourself to the divine nightly manifestations, you will hear the soft and soothing music of the spheres' (*CW-e*, 77, #324, p.272, 1940).

The perception of this celestial music was connected with the act of "losing" one's self in God. 'We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves from the senses. The divine music is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud

senses drown out the delicate music which is unlike and infinitely superior to anything we can perceive or hear with our senses' (*CW-e*, 69, #143, p. 127).

As taught in yogic meditation, through the process of *pratyahara* (drawing in of the senses), these sounds may manifest themselves in the heart, and Gandhi proclaimed: 'Music does not proceed from the throat alone' (*CW-e*, 90, #298, 243). 'Such worship or prayer is no flight of eloquency; it is no lip-homage. It springs from the heart. If, therefore, we achieve that purity of the heart when it is 'emptied of all but love,' if we keep all the chords in proper tune, they 'trembling pass in music out of sight' (Gandhi 2000, p.60).

Many of the *bhajans* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* speak of this kind of experience of celestial music, and offer stories of the poet-sages who, hearing this music, leave their homes to live spiritually-inspired, mendicant lives. The story of Princess Mirabai following the sounds of Krishna's beloved flute, which Gandhi quoted often, is an obvious example. 'In the *bhajan*, the *gopi* says that hearing the flute she wants to go to the forest...We are all *gopis* before God...God resides in the forest that is the heart and His flute is the voice within. We do not have to go to desolate forests. We have to hear the divine music that goes on in our own hearts. When each of us starts hearing that sweet music, all will be well with India' (emphasis added) (*CW-e*, 95, #200, Speech at Prayer Meeting, June 6, 1947, pp.229-21). (Only a few days earlier, it had become clear that Pakistan would split from India in the move for independence.)

Gandhi had also, with assistance from Khare and Kalelkar, over a period of time collected those pieces into the *Ashram Bhajanavali* from various religious traditions that would have been representative of this Divine music, as Divine music would speak to all. 'True music lifts up people. There is no place in it for communal differences and hostility' (*CW-e*, 86, #291, p.155).

The Music of the Charkha

A further illustration of the "multi-faceted" perception which Gandhi held for music were his continual references to the "music" of the *charkha*, the small spinning wheel which he so respected: 'The music of the spinning wheel is superior to any I know; for it is the music that finally clothes the naked (*CW-e*, 17, #339, p.369). Gandhi encouraged all of India to take up the spinning of cotton, in order to make home-spun material and be freed from dependence on British cloth. ...[w]hat I want is the music of the *charkha* should be heard in every home and no cloth except khadi [cotton] should be seen (*CW-e*, 98, #20, p.26). This was, for him, one of the primary answers which would enable India to break free of England's material hold on India.

Gandhi spent months searching for the proper equipment, old equipment which had been lost or lain forgotten, in order to reconstruct the correct ways of processing cotton. He was convinced that reviving the instruments and teaching India to spin would be the equivalent of financial resurrection.

The production of home-made cloth would allow financial freedom, but Gandhi often referred to this in ways other than financial or commercial. 'Take to spinning. The music of the wheel will be as a balm to your soul. I believe that the yarn we spin is capable of mending the broken warp and woof of our lives. The charkha is the symbol of non-violence on which all life, if it is to be real life must be based' (*CW-e* Vol. 94, #287, p. 291). He spoke of the *charka* as a mendicant: "Music of a well-running wheel or wheels was most soothing for the mind and the spirit" ' (*CW-e*, 92, #604, p.419); '...the music of the wheel is an aid to contemplation' (*CW-e*, 75, #370, p.414).

He spoke of the *charkha* as a social leveler: 'The music of the charkha murmurs sweetly that we are all one, born to be equal sharers in the good of the earth with no one higher or wealthier' (*CW-e*, 92, #326, p.225) and

'when India has monotonously worked away turning out swaraj, she will have produced a thing of beauty which will last for ever' (*CW-e*, 24, #66, pp.111-12). It was a symbol of India, of Indian independence, and of the Indian hearth regained:

'A Christian lady writes:... 'The spinning wheel will give India work, and give the little ones the morsel of food they are caring for. And to the music of the spinning-wheel the women will sing their beautiful songs, tell their stories of old, and the beauty and the contentment of simple homelife will be renewed' (*CW-e*, 23, #157, p.346).

For Gandhi, the *charkha* was the equivalent of *swaraj*, the way to accomplish *swaraj*, and he praised its sound almost as if it were one of the highly-regarded, ancient Indian instruments of the past: 'It gives sweeter music and is more profitable than the execrable [abominable] harmonium, concertina, and the accordion' (instruments which had all been imported into India, and were as such, "foreigners," enemies of *swaraj*) (*CW-e*, 21, #46, p.72).

For Gandhi's seventy-eighth birthday (which would turn out to be his last), All-India Radio broadcast a special program dedicated to the celebration of his birthday. When asked if he would like to listen to the radio, he answered in the negative. '[H]e preferred *rentio* (spinning wheel) to radio. The hum of the spinning-wheel was sweeter. He heard in it the 'still sad music of humanity' ' (*CW-e*, 97, App.1, p.475).

Musical Instruments

The musical instruments that are mentioned in the *Collected Works* and other secondary sources as being possibilities for accompaniment to the sung-prayers are the *ekatarā* (or *ektar* - a one-stringed instrument), the *tamboora* (a 4-stringed drone), *zanz* (finger cymbals), *pakhaj* (a kind of drum), drums, *kartals* (a two-piece rhythm instrument able to be held in one hand and clapped together), and the harmonium (a small instrument similar to the portative reed organ, which sits on the

ground, with bellows pumped by hand). The *vina* and *sitar*, more elaborate stringed instruments, were also mentioned.

Instrumental accompaniment was not always assured, as the *satyagrahis* travelled, and they were also oftentimes imprisoned. If instruments were available, they were used (and others than those mentioned were no doubt also used), but the prayers were sung regardless of musical accompaniment being available or not.

One visitor to Sevagram Ashram during the mid-30s and 40s wrote about the experience of sung-prayers there: 'Then we sang a lot of hymns, keeping time with tiny metal finger cymbals or by clapping our hands. Bapu had a thin, uncertain singing voice, which was never quite in tune with the others. One of his favorite hymns was the Christian hymn 'Lead, Kindly Light,' but neither he nor anyone else ever mastered the tune' (Mehta 1976, p.9).

Although there are mentions of one person or another playing the harmonium or taking lessons, Gandhi was not a supporter of the harmonium. It was an instrument which had been brought into India from the West, and he did not feel it was aligned with the purposes of *svaraj*. Nor did he approve of the brass band, another import from the West, although popular at Indian ceremonial events.

Throughout his career, he fought for the use of India's own instruments, while discouraging the use of the harmonium. As early as 1918, while visiting a remote village, where the native instruments would have still been more prevalent, he wrote:

'When I entered Palaj [a small town in Gujarat] I noticed that there was no band there but instead there were the *zanz* (1 = cymbals) and the *pakhaj* (2 = tabor/drum). Hearing them, I remembered my childhood days. The feelings of devotion they express, their sweetness and their art, I do not find in the band. The band is a foreign thing; the *zanz* and the *pakhaj* are our own. The band is an imitation, a novelty. They are ancient. The band may sound pleasant to the English and others, but it certainly does not to me. Our ancestors invented an instrument that suited our country; for us, too, it is the only thing. In our religious ceremonies, both instrumental and vocal music find a place. Our native tunes have the

power to elevate people from their fallen state; the band has no such power. Why should we, then, give up simple, beautiful and sweet things as the *zanz* and the *pakhaj*?

The difference between the band and the *zanz-pakhaj* is the difference between modern and ancient ways. If our struggle is the same kind of thing as this band, it will come to nought. Just as the *zanz-pakhaj* suggest a number of ideas, our struggle also has beautiful truths underlying it. If you grasp them clearly, we shall get wonderful results out of them' (*CW-e*, 16, #309, p.451, Speech at Sunuv, 22 April 1918).

Concerning the harmonium, when asked what instruments should be taken up in order to learn music, he replied: 'Harmonium is only a stage away from the concertina. I should give them the *vina* and the *sita* [sic = *sitar*]. These are cheap, national and infinitely superior to the harmonium' (*CW-e*, 17, #87, p.111, 2 July 1918,). His primary objection to the harmonium was that it was an imported instrument, and even those instruments whose parts were sent from the West and then assembled in India did not represent a national instrument worthy of *swadeshi*. 'The new meaning of *swadeshi* was not that they should put together the several parts of an article, say a watch or harmonium, imported from abroad and label it as *swadeshi*, but their *swadeshi* now consisted of every part being made in India (*CW-e*, 32, #149, p.224, 31 July 1925).

In regard to musical instruments, Gandhi was in agreement with Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy, an eminent art-historian, who held the harmonium in great distain, not only as an instrument unrepresentative of *svadeshi*, but also for the extent to which the harmonium destroyed the refinements of Indian music.

'Such [vocal] effects, so intimately dependent, in the degree and manner of their expression, upon the musician's individual mood and powers, cannot be written down, and so it is that an Indian air, set down upon the staff and picked out note by note on a piano or harmonium becomes the most thin and jejune sort of music that can be imagined, and many have abandoned in despair all such attempts at record'

(Coomaraswamy 1909, p.177).

'...the employment of the piano or harmonium prove fatal to the delicacy and purity of Indian music, because of the limitation to exact and mechanically limited ranges of notes; and the harmonium especially from its destructive effect upon the quality of the voice and fatal effects on individual taste and refinement' (Coomaraswamy 1909, pp.173-74).

Again, in 1925, when speaking at the Villagers' Meeting in Pudupalayam [Tamil Nadu], Gandhi praised the use of national instruments, expressing a desire to return to the use of the older stringed instruments:

'Friends, [i]t gives me great pleasure to be able to meet you all in this out-of-the-way place, and on seeing the musical instruments here, I wished to hear some of your songs in your own natural way. I know that songs play an important part in the development of national life. But there is song and song and there is all the difference between different varieties. There is song that ennobles and there is song that degrades; and when you get a real, good song full of devotion and fervour, it ennobles. Such are some of our old songs all over India. In days of old, we had our own string instruments, but today the harmonium has displaced those noble instruments. I wish that we could revert to the stringed instruments. They produce a deeper melody and so far as I am concerned they have a far more soothing effect on me than a harmonium' (CW-e, 30, #266, p.458, 21 March 1925- emphasis added).

Involved in conferences, and Congress meetings, Gandhi had to clarify to others in charge what the true meaning of *swadeshi* meant: "We had come to bestow the name of 'swadeshi' on those musical instruments or clocks whose parts had all been imported but which had been assembled here. We now know that practical and widespread swadeshi means hand-woven khadi made of hand-spun yarn" (CW-e, 32, #172, to Chairmen of Meetings, August 9, 1925, p. 277), thus, once more establishing that the harmonium was not "*swadeshi*." Again, when planning for an exhibition in 1930, which was to include a display of musical instruments, he insisted:

'Nothing but swadeshi goods should be admitted. Only that may be called swadeshi which is wholly made in India by indigenous skill and for predominantly Indian shareholders where the concern is controlled by a company. Thus a harmonium whose parts are imported and only put together in India is in no sense swadeshi, nor is cloth woven from foreign yarn swadeshi....' (*CW-e*, 45, #230, 16 January 1930, p.233).

He continued the battle as he received news in 1934 that the Congressional sessions were to include both a cinema and a brass band. Asking whether the Congress were being turned into a circus, he wrote to object to such modern changes: 'But only traditional instruments should be used in such a programme. I can see no room at all for a band' (*CW-e*, 64, #461, p.389, 4 September 1934). Gandhi felt that the harmonium had overtaken Indian music. 'Indian music of the best type is a decaying art for want of encouragement. We little know the wonderful results that the simple musical instruments of India yield' (*CW-e*, 25, #44, p.108). He felt strongly enough about this to become personally involved in collecting older, national instruments, which were being overtaken by the 'execrable harmonium': 'I have collected some village instruments which you will see. They are no more to be found' (*CW-e*, 70, #124, 23 November 23, 1936, p.110).

When asked about her remembrances of Gandhi's sung-prayer meetings which she attended in Delhi, Shri Karunamayee replied that she recalled the tamboora(s) being used most often, but very seldom the harmonium (see Chapter 6).

THE POWER OF SUNG RITUAL

As will be recalled, Rappaport has established that '[o]ne of the fundamental properties of *communitas* is the blurring of distinction between self and other... [This seems] to extend the self-unification characteristic of numinous experience...beyond the self to the congregation or even to the world as a whole' (Rappaport 1999, p.380). In ritual participation, one's perceptions of things

previously judged to be separate and distinct, can change as hidden similarities are discovered. 'The revelation of the hidden oneness of all things of one's participation in such a great oneness may be the core message of *communitas*' (Rappaport, p.381). '...[A]s a social group moves as a coordinated whole into the temporal region of the organic, members may sense that they are, for the nonce, bound together as tightly as the parts of a single animal. Under such conditions the existence of a larger being of which participants are parts may become palpable to each of them as each of them gives up his or her separate identity for the time being' (Rappaport 1999, p.225). At the same time, those streams of information being received during ritual participation can serve to connect participants to the future, as well as to the past, in a process that Rappaport has termed Divine Order Enacted: "That which occurs in ritual's intervals is not historical, but happening once, is timeless, and to participate in a canon is to escape from time's flow into 'what is, in fact, often regarded as the unbounded, the infinite, the limitless,' the everlasting, the unambiguously moral, the absolutely true and the immortally vital" (Rappaport 1999, p.234).

Rappaport and the Power of Sung Ritual

Rappaport expands at several junctures on these principles, noting that within the ritual context, the use of music or chanting can provide an even stronger experience of *communitas*: 'To sing or dance in concert or in unison with others...is, literally, to act as part of a larger entity, to participate in it; ...[The] everyday self dissolves in *communitas* of participation...[and] the larger entity becomes palpable' (Rappaport 1999, p.404). In other words, physical boundaries are dissolved more easily with song, and the medium itself is palpably experienced in the participant's physical body.

'The members of the congregation may experience the Ultimate Sacred Postulates not only through their ears and eyes, but coming out

of their own bodies in song, or forcing entry into their bodies through the beat of drums.... The self-unification of participation in ritual is more comprehensive than that of aesthetic contemplation, for it embraces the somatic as well as mental process, and thus may bring the acts and sensations of the body into the mind's computations' (Rappaport 1999, p.388).

Chanting allows the physical sensations of the body to meld with the meaning of the words in a way that deepens the process of comprehension, integration, and retention. In the process of experiencing Rappaport's Middle Order Meaning, especially through music, 'alterations of consciousness are not 'mere Dionysic ends'...[but function] in the service of the integration of consciousness and unconsciousness' (Rappaport 1999, p.388). Likewise, additional *gravitas* is awarded the words of ritual when music magnifies them.

Ultimately, then, this chanting, this sung-prayer format enables a deeper and more immediate experience of entering into the realm of High Order Meaning, of entering into the realm of the Divine. 'To sing with others, to move as they move in the performance of ritual, is not merely to symbolize union. It is *in and of itself* to reunite in the reproduction of a larger order' (Rappaport 1999, p.220). This corresponds to bringing Heaven to earth, to Enacting the Divine Order, to manifesting divinity, to uniting *Brahman* [The Ultimate; God] with *srishti* [creation]. This is no doubt the insight of Mohandas Gandhi as he wrote to his grand-niece Manu in September of 1947: '[a] *bhajan* is not an exercise in singing; it should make us one with God' (*CW-e*, 96, #505, p.398).

The Power of Sound In Ritual Participation

Gilbert Rouget has addressed the powers and the influence that sound and music have on ritual participants in his book *Music and Trance*. Rouget incorporates John Cage's estimation that "everything is music," and uses the term "music" in a very broad context, not as art, but "in its most empirical and broadest sense

...extending from the most discreet rustling sounds...to a tiny iron bell...to the most elementary monody...from the linearity of a simple motif produced by clapping hands...to the most complex vocal polyphonies" (Rouget 1985, p.63). Rouget breaks down how music is experienced by human beings into four categories:

"physiologically, psychologically, affectively, and esthetically" (Rouget 1985, p.119).

1. Physiological: Music is experienced physiologically by both the ear and by the entire body. "A music vibration is something palpable" (Rouget 1985, p.120). The human body is capable of absorbing vibrations of many different frequencies. "To bathe in music' is not just a metaphor. ...The candle flames flickering in churches at the sound of the organ provided Louis Roger (1748) with one of the observations on which he began constructing his theory of the effects of music on the human body' (Rouget 1985, p.120). As vibrations move through the physical body, certain frequencies will effect, to greater or lesser extent, different parts of the body. 'We are feeling ourselves sing...head, thorax, abdomen.... Music is thus simultaneously an animation of things and a palpitation of the being. ...it produces a sensorial modification in the awareness of being ' (Rouget 1985, p.120). Furthermore, through a process of entrainment, perhaps a "...drumbeat's tempo may approximate that of the heart beat...[, thus] entrain their breaths and heart rhythms, and thus seem to unify the congregations's separate members into a single larger, living being" (Rappaport 1999, p.227).

2. Psychological: The psychology of sound relates directly to cognition of the individual who is aware of being a living being who is situated in space. "[T]he sound of music defines the space in which I am situated as a space inhabited by men, and at the same time, it situates me within this space in some particular manner" (Rouget 1985, p.121). This corresponds to the directionality mentioned by Rappaport: '...the rhythms of the order reach in two directions at once -- into each participant's physiology [or even psychology] on the one hand and outward to

encompass all of the participants on the other" (Rappaport 1999, p.228). It corresponds as well to Greg Urban's theory regarding the awareness of the psychological shifting that can occur from the "Indexical I" of ordinary life to the "Projective I" of ritual and origin myth-telling.

3. Affective: Music affects our emotions. 'Nothing is more laden with emotional associations than music, nothing is more capable of recreating emotions that engage one's entire sensibility. It induces the individual into a state in which both his inward feelings and his relations with the outer world are dominated by affectivity (Rouget 1985, p.123). This may cause 'upheaval...in the structure of consciousness' (Rouget 1985, p.123.), or it may place a person in a state of transport, being taken by the triggering of memories to some other point in time. Music strongly affects and triggers the recollection of memory.

4. Esthetic: '[w]hen it is a success, music creates the feeling of total adhesion of the self to what is happening' (Rouget 1985, p.123). This could be likened to the experience of Divine Order Enacted, or at least "Divine Order Recognized," as it '...brings about a transformation in the structure of consciousness' (Rouget 1985, p.123). Gandhi continually encouraged those who attended his prayer-meetings to clap, and to join in rhythm with each, becoming, as it were, all of one body and all of one mind. 'When a group conducts itself in conformity to a rhythmic tempo of organic frequency, for instance that of drumming [or clapping], it may seem to be an organism to the organisms composing it and they each may seem to themselves to be its cells' (Rappaport 1999, pp.225-26).

Rouget ends his survey concerning the powers that music holds for ritual participants by alluding to the fact that '[m]usic has often been thought of as endowed with the mysterious power of triggering possession, and the musicians of possession as the withholders of some mysterious knowledge that enables them to manipulate this power. There is no truth whatsoever in this assumption' (Rouget 1985, p.325). Denying that there is any mystery involved, Rouget explains music's

power with straight-forward candor: '[Music] is the only language that speaks, simultaneously, if I may so put it, to the head and the legs' (Rouget 1985, p.325). Music has complex abilities to engage both the body along with the mind, to touch simultaneously the head and the heart, to enliven the imagination while transforming consciousness, and in the coordinated influences of all these forces of vibration as manifested in community, music has the powerfully innate ability to facilitate communion with the Divine.

Rappaport has written that in attempting to understand the complexities of the physical effects of ritual, and/or the physical effects of music, the emerging medical field of neurophysiology has been largely ignored by scholars in the field of religious studies (Rappaport 1999, p.227). This has been a detriment to the religious studies field, and Rappaport endorses the work of scholars such as Eugene d'Aquili, Charles D. Laughlin, J. McManus, and Barbara Lex who address the questions of how ritual affects the human being through the knowledge revealed in series of brain-mappings:

'The non-dominant (usually the right) cerebral hemisphere seems to become predominant in the ritual condition... In contrast to the left hemisphere, in which speech, linear analytic thought, and the sense of duration are mainly located, the specializations of the right hemisphere include spatial and tonal perception, pattern recognition 'including those constituting emotion and other states in the internal milieu,' and holistic and synthetic comprehension. The linguistic ability of the right hemisphere is limited and it is devoid of a temporal sense' (Rappaport 1999, pp.228-29).

The right hemisphere has also been identified as the hemisphere that predominates during musical functioning; the left hemisphere has been identified with 'speech, linear analytic thought.' When the two hemispheres come together to function during the participation of sung ritual: 'The cognitive effect of the simultaneous functioning of the...left hemisphere and the right is...a sense of the unification of opposites, of harmony of the universe, of Oneness with the other members of the

congregation, and even of Oneness of the self with God. The numinous and the holy are thus rooted in the organic depths of human being' (Rappaport 1999, pp.229-30).

A Phenomenology of Sound

Very similar conclusions concerning the significance of sound have been formulated by Don Ihde. Ihde argues further that sound, as compared to sight, has historically been under-valued in western culture. He has expressed his opinion that part of this modern-day misconception be traced back to the "age of the lens" in Galileo's time, a period when science became overly exhilarated by the myriad new microcosmic and macrocosmic worlds that were being observed, for the first time, through the agency of the microscope and the telescope (Postphenomenology 1993, p.88).

Through a series of retrospections in his work *Listening and Voice: A Phenomenology*, Ihde (1976) traces the western bias of placing sight over sound back to The Greeks. Citing Heidegger's analysis of what sight meant to the Greeks, Ihde states: Greek thinking itself emerges as the process of allowing Being to 'show forth' as the 'shining' of *physis*, of the 'manifestation' of Being as a 'clearing' all of which recalls the vibrant vision of Being (Ihde 1976, p.6). Deeper analysis reveals this to be a way of "knowing" (Ihde 1976, p.7), that has predominated in the development of western thought and in the western psyche. The result is an unidentified prejudice of "visualism" in western consciousness. The sense of sight, being as it is based in light, has been consistently identified as the metaphor for "knowing" or for knowledge, which can be seen in the use of such signifiers as "the light of reason" or "en-lightenment" (see, e.g. Arthur Zajonc, 1993, *Catching the Light: The Entwined History of Light and Mind*).

Furthermore, Ihde continues, for both Plato and Democritus, 'the ultimately real was beyond sense, and thus...sense was diminished' (Ihde 1976, p.9) in that the Greeks questioned whether or not the ultimate Idea of the Good (e.g., in Plato's

case), considered only recognizable through the intelligence of the mind, could be truly perceived by the senses. This distrust of the senses has continued to dominate the western psyche to the present time in such a way that not only has there been "a reduction to vision" but a "reduction of vision." "The reduction of vision is one which ultimately separates sense from significance, which arises out of doubt over perception itself. Its retrospective result, however, is to diminish the richness of every sense' (Ihde 1976, p.9).

In the attempt to un-seat the deeply rooted hierarchy of sight over sound, as well as to relieve the lingering distrust of experience or "knowing" as able to be delivered through the bodily senses (especially sound), Ihde explicates a phenomenology of sound and listening, an "ontology of the auditory," that provides an alternative paradigm to visualism. This is especially helpful, as many religious cultures have recognized that "although God may hide himself from the eyes, he reveals himself in word which is also an event in spite of the invisibility of his being" (Ihde 1976, p.14). As some cultures are more comfortable with the concept of the "invisibility" than others, either in terms of conceptualization, active description and theorizing, or even deep belief in what cannot be defined by the eye, Ihde's phenomenology of sound provides a helpful baseline from which to proceed.

Ihde begins with an examination of the field of vision. He analyzes the field of vision as consisting of: i) a central field of clarity, referred to as a focal core; ii) a fringe area around that central focus, which is less focussed but still observable; iii) the limit of what can be seen, the horizon; and iv) what is beyond the horizon, what is unseen. From the personal stance of reflective awareness, Ihde writes: 'It is 'I' who does the focussing; it is to 'me' that the fringe appears as background, as the not-specifically-attended-to; and it is 'I' who detects the strange boundedness and finitude of the visual field which raises the question of the World which lies 'beyond' the finitude of 'my' opening to the World (Ihde 1976, pp.39-40).

Ihde then moves from the visual field to the auditory field, finding a "field shape" for which he uses Parmenides' descriptions of 'Being as a 'whole,' 'without end,' 'one,' 'continuous' and 'homogenous or filled within the limits,'" with the limits being "complete on every side, like the mass of a well-rounded sphere (Ihde 1976, p.80) as its defining characteristics. This three-dimensional field is different from the visual in terms of reflective awareness as well, in that it is not as restricted in its forward-aiming orientation: 'as a field-shape I may hear all around me, or as a field-shape, sound surrounds me in my embodied positionality.... My auditory field and my auditory focussing is not isomorphic with visual field and focus, it is omnidirectional, [and] 'exceeds' that of the field-shape of sight' (Ihde 1976, pp. 74-75).

By way of deeper analysis, Ihde enumerates the several ways in which the sound field differs from the sight field. First, the auditory field is a "global" experience, as sounds are perceived from all directions, and they are perceived not only by the ears, but by the bones of the body, the organs of the body, and even the skin of the body (see the work of Alfred Tomatis for the skin as an extension of the ear). Sounds are felt in the body, while the organ of hearing is also the foundation for the body's sense of balance, its awareness of positionality in space, and its responsiveness to gravity.

Second, due to the fact that the field is omni-directional, when the field of hearing is filled, 'I suddenly find myself immersed in sound which surrounds me. The music is even so penetrating that my whole body reverberates, and I may find myself absorbed to such a degree that the usual distinction between sense of inner and outer is virtually obliterated (Ihde 1976, p.75). It is this quality of being able to penetrate into one's physical body that gives the sound field its power to overwhelm, to the extent that "what disappears...is the sense of the separate and discrete 'individuals'.... The surrounding, penetrating quality of sound maximizes larger unities than individuals as such" (Ihde 1976, p.77).

Third, the ability of sound to "in-vade" (Latin, *vadere* "to go, hasten, rush") the physical body results in its having often been given the connotation of being a kind of "command" in its surroundability.

In this, the sound field has the ability to "enliven" the body. 'To listen is to be dramatically engaged in a bodily listening which 'participates' in the movement of the music...in a call to dance [literally and figurately]. What occurs...is clearly anti-Cartesian. It is my subject-body, my experiencing body, which is engaged, and no longer is it a case of deistic distance of 'mind' to 'body' ' (Ihde 1976, p.158). In this way, sound, especially, music, encourages actual bodily participation.

Upon further examination, Ihde finds that the sound field also gives the ability to hear and to "know" or "recognize" things that are beyond the flat outlines of the visual plane. It is possible to hear the surface of something and know what it is made of (wood or metal, e.g.); it is possible to hear the shape of something as it moves across a surface (square or circle, e.g.). With a depth of hearing and the phenomenon of echo, it is possible even to hear into the interior of things, which allows one to know what is "hidden" beyond the visual outline-bodies of the silent objects in the visual field. '...it is with the hearing of interiors that the possibilities of listening begin to open the way to those aspects which lie at the horizons of all visualist thinking...[therein] making present the invisible' (Ihde 1976, p.70).

The horizon (end, or limit) of the visual field is a spatial limit; the visual horizon is spatial in character and 'rounded in shape' (Ihde 1976, p.109). What lies beyond the visual horizon is simply perceived of as "absence or emptiness." However, in the auditory field, which is omni-directional as well as continuous (you can not close your ears, the way you can close your eyes), the horizon reaches beyond the spatial limit of the visual. Attention in the auditory field does not focus on a "leading edge" or "trailing edge" of the visual field, but on an "open" attention (Ihde 1976, p.102), where focus is "expanded" (Ihde 1976, p.102). The auditory horizon is such that it extends beyond the visual limit. Due to its surrounding-ness,

and the fact that it "in-vades" the body, the limit of the auditory field is "not detected primarily in spatiality. But a horizon is discernible temporally" (Ihde 1976, p.109).

'How far does the sound extend? ...where is its threshold? Music does not extend indefinitely [and] an auditory horizon as a temporal boundary does begin to show itself. Sound reveals time' (Ihde 1976, pp.102-3).

The horizon of hearing has an intersection, or an interface, with non-hearing (silence), similar to that found in the visual field's horizon of body-outline. However, the auditory interface includes silence as both boundary as well as indicator of what is "beyond"; the interface adheres both to what is heard in the present, while serving as boundary for what is hidden.

Ihde again draws on Heidegger's definition of Being, however, to explain the horizon of listening: 'Being, which is that which comes-into-presence, that which is (already) gathered is the given. But at the horizon one may note the giving, the e-venting, the point at which 'there is given' into what is present' (Ihde 1976, pp. 102-3).

This is to describe the act of listening at the horizon of hearing to be practically synonymous with human Being. Sounds are "given," not manipulated, and they are situated in the midst of the bodily presence of the human being as direct experiential e-vents. Sounds "come unbidden into presence, and humankind, in listening, is let in on this e-venting.... (Ihde 1976, pp. 102-3). For Ihde, the horizon of hearing would appear to be as mysterious as the life process itself, or at least worthy of similar description. The horizon, the point from which things are given, "continually recedes from me, and if I seek for sounds and the voices of things, I cannot force them into presence in the way in which I may fix them within the region of central [visual] presence. I must await their coming, for sounds are given" (Ihde 1976, p.109).

Ihde's concept of hearing at the horizon is analogous to life itself -- *Audio ergo sum* -- and his phenomenology provides an avenue to understand sound as different from, and, in many ways, superior to, sight. It un-seats the hierarchy of sight over sound, giving a baseline for, and a roadmap of, an awareness of the world in which sound is as honored a way of knowing as is sight. This, while correlating with the thoughts of both Rappaport and Rouget, also harmonizes well with M.K. Gandhi's sentiment that '[a] *bhajan* is not an exercise in singing; it should make us one with God' (*CW-e*, 96, #505, p.398).

THE POWER OF SOUND IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Particulars concerning how sound can so deeply effect the mental, somatic, and religious functioning of the human being, as outlined in the theories of Rappaport, Rouget, and Ihde, hold much in common, and they can also be recognized cross-culturally. However, as we move to investigate the *sitz im leben* of the *Ashram Bhajnavali* and its usage within the cultural setting of Gandhi's India, we will not find the same prejudice of sight over sound which Ihde has suggested dominates in the West. Gandhi's regard for chant and music demonstrated a deep respect for sound and music as a religious phenomena, and he considered it a means of spiritual development. His respect was founded on at least 4,000 years of Indian respect for sound, *not* as entertainment, but as a direct path to, or experience of, the realm of divinity (in whatever name or form) and the raising of consciousness. To perceive the sacrality of the world through the phenomenon of sound has been much more prevalent in India than in the West, and the "horizon of hearing" has actually functioned as inspiration for understanding the unseen, hidden world of "the gods," who have been considered, from the very earliest of India's beginnings, to be knowable through their sounding presence.

What lay beyond the "horizon of sound" was not considered forbidden territory to the *rishis* (*sage/poets*) of the Rig Vedic period, as they did not consider listening as a secondary sense. Indeed, communication at and beyond the "horizon of hearing" provided an entire world of worship, exchange, understanding, and contact. The *rishis* of the *Rig Veda* chanted (sang, recited) their communications with the gods, and sound was not secondary to ritual. Chant formulated the ritual, to the extent that if there were no sound, there was no ritual. 'The ritual was a *resonant* performance. Its vibrations resonated to the depths of human and divine reality, and attuned the human to the divine...and in the process it bestowed welfare and the promise of immortality to the beneficiaries of the ritual' (Lipner 1994, p.33).

The Sound Sacrifice

The extent to which sound was the central and necessary element in the ritual of Vedic India inspired the work of Marius Schneider, musical ethnologist and contributor of "Primitive Music" to *The New Oxford History of Music*. 'The oldest text, the Rigveda, must have been more or less contemporary with the Mitanni texts of northern Syria/Iraq (1450-1350 BCE)' (Witzel 2003, p.68), and consisted of 1,028 songs of praise. The material of the other three Vedas, Yajur, Atharva, and Sāma, being all later works, will not be addressed here, as for this discussion we are interested in the earliest layers of the Indic tradition.

For Schneider, the ritual in which the earliest *rishis* of the *Rig Veda* engaged took place in the somatic interiors of the chanter, and it 'was primarily a spiritual and vocal process.... It is ultimately a sound sacrifice, a song by which man surrenders his word, which is his innermost substance' (Schneider 1989b, p.37). The significance lies in the alignment of the singer who offers a "praise song" from the depths, or cave, or cavity of his own being, to the deity being addressed. '...[W]e must realize," wrote Schneider, 'that song, according to the ancient concept, did not

accompany the sacrifice, but in fact formed the core of the ritual process (Schneider 1989b, p.37).

Furthermore, Schneider has provided evidence that is contrary to the often-held misconception that early Vedic sacrifice was conducted purely for material gains (see, e.g., Thielemann 1998, p.118). The sacred singer or *rishi* reached into his inner recesses and offered up the same "primordial and acoustic energy of creation" which had created him. The connection, reaching out in all directions, was made through bone resonance, bone conduction, the breath, and the mechanistic apparatus of the mouth. Heaven in his upper jaw, and earth in his lower jaw, were, thus, caused to be joined by the singing of a praise song. The sound sacrifice, produced in the mouth and felt throughout the body, linked both worlds, as the words and melodies were woven in the singer's mouth between the upper and lower jaws (worlds), with the tongue functioning as shuttle. The chant allowed the "primordial waters" to flow again: "What then are these primordial waters? Nothing other than the rhythms of flowing time.... The so-called primordial waters are only the acoustic expressions of flowing time" (Schneider 1989b, p.46).

Writing in harmony with (but well before) Ihde's conception of temporality as the "horizon of hearing," Schneider demonstrated how, through song, the praise singer connected to the original rhythms of time, the order of *rita*, in a continuum that joined past, present, and future:

'Ritual recalls the primordial world not only by means of the voice but by extolling it in song or speech with the concrete or mute actions of the present time. This permits the ritual to suffuse the earthly with the divine, the purely physiological with acoustic spirituality, and transforms the untrue into the musical truth that is closest in the primordial act of creation' (Schneider 1989b, p.47).

This is Rappaport's Divine Order Enacted. Rappaport has observed that throughout many ancient religious cultures, this conception of the Divine Order was

shared: "...we see...a conception bearing a strong resemblance to Ma'at, Rita, Asha and Logos. [They represent] a true, moral, eternal, harmonious, encompassing, unitary order. It is natural, but it may be violated by inappropriate behavior. It must be maintained through appropriate acts, especially the performance of rituals" (Rappaport 1999, p.363). He has further remarked that "[g]losses provided for Rta are reminiscent of those for Asha and Ma'at: 'Law of the universe,' 'unity of nature,' 'cosmic law or order,' 'universal and eternal law,' 'order,' 'right,' 'truth' (Rappaport 1999, p.359). In the case of *rita*, it was both "truth" and "order" (Rappaport 1999, p.360).

Rita, the ordered and fixed march of temporal action proper to the gods and to the world, was sung by the *rishi*, thereby joining, while continuously creating, that truest of progressions. Through the harmonic properties of music and the structure of measured sound, the contradictions and misperceptions of this world merged into hidden unity: "The blatant contradiction vanishes when the concept of space is suppressed. In the world of sound, dualism becomes amalgamated resonance, and in rhythm it becomes flowing time" (Schneider 1989b, p.48). The truth of this initial sounding in the ritual was then 'shown forth' (made visual) by an action of the body, which was secondarily seen, or illustrated, after the hearing, in the ritual.

This practice of vocal weaving was often referred to in the earliest layers of the *Rig Veda*. In a hymn to Varuna (one of the oldest Vedic gods connected with order and ethics), one poet asked for protection during the up-coming ceremony: "Let not my thread, while I weave song, be severed" (*RV*II.28.5); and another, younger poet, possibly on his way to a ritual ceremony for the first time, fretted "I know not either warp or woof, I know not the web they weave when moving to the contest," while praying for inspiration from Agni, the god of fire (*RV*VI.9.2). These earliest *Rig Vedic* texts locate these sacred and sonic processes in the earliest layers of India's past, and situate them as part-and-parcel of that original, creative impetus which was to spin out a long and infinitely-complex song.

Schneider noted that as the singer of the sacrifice connected the singer with the origin of creation, so the singer continued the original creation for the well-being of one's community. "A sound sacrifice is accomplished by a singer who surrenders his breath and individuality in order to bring expression to an impersonal empty form and pushes his own personality into the background in order to make himself the sounding board of a higher principle" (Schneider 1989a, p.75). The warp and woof, fixed within the mouth, aided by the shuttle of the tongue, and the elongation of the breath, allowed the sounds of the chant to grow: "the ritual song borne on the breath was considered as that moist breath or warmth whose power allows everything to grow and flourish" (Schneider 1989a, p.59).

brahman

This 'power' that "allows everything to grow and flourish" was brahman. In *Notes on Brahman*, Jan Gonda suggested that it may not now be possible to recreate, with any accurate chronology, how the word brahman evolved over the millenia. Originally, it was a sound of the the ritual, such as a sung-prayer or a praise, or, it may have originally referred to the sung-ritual itself. Gonda defined the word brahman as being derived from the verbal root *br̥h* (Gonda 1950, p.3). Monier-Williams agreed with this derivation, whereupon he translated brahman (Monier-Williams 1999, p.737) as "lit. 'growth,' 'expansion,' 'evolution,' 'development,' 'swelling of the spirit or soul'... 'pious effusion or utterance, outpouring of the heart in worshipping the gods, prayer,' as his first (typically earliest) entry. The root *brih* (Monier-Williams 1999, p.735) is defined as 'to be thick, grow great or strong, increase'. Surya Kanta, in *A Practical Vedic Dictionary*, also gives *brih* as the verbal root ('make big,' 'what makes great'), and for the word brahman, gives a Hindi translation of 'gita, stotra' and an English translation of 'song of praise, prayer' (Suryakanta 1981, 493).

At its core, the chanted *brahman* was an invocation; it was a way of vocally attracting the gods and securing their attention. (In this section concerning *brahman*, Griffith's translation of the *Rig Veda* has been chosen, and his selection of diacritical marks has been maintained when inside a direct quotation.)

To the Vishvadevas (the All-Gods) [RVX,61,1] a *brahman* was created 'with might', and for the Maruts (the Winds) [RVI,165,4] 'sweet hymns' were chanted. In a sacred ceremony for the Ashvins (the Heavenly Physicians) (RVI,47,2), the Kanvas (family of rishi Kanva, who wrote several Vedic hymns) 'sen[t] the prayer' asking that their call be heard. It was said of Indra (one of the oldest Vedic gods, who, among other things, fought against demonic forces and vanquished the demon Vritra) [RVVII,28,2] that his might reached out in response to the invocation, thereby guarding the rishis.

It was the poet-sages' desire that the gods should 'reach out' to the invocation, that the chanting should be heard -- for having heard the poet's call, the gods were then invited to come as a guest to the sacred ceremony: '[u]rged by the holy singer, sped by song, come, Indra, to the prayers ...' [RVI,3,5]; Indra is petitioned and invited: 'Come, thou most potent Indra, ... come to hear the songs, the prayer, the hymns of praise' [RVVIII,33,13]; The more songs sung, the more libations poured, the more attention the gods paid. 'To you hath been assigned the fairest ornament, the hymn of praise...' [RVIV,36,7].

The mode of connection or communication between the singer, the song, and the gods was an intriguing one. The singer was described as sending forth his or her sung-prayers which flew forth into the celestial regions: '...birdlike he chants the holy prayer' [RVII,5,3]. The prayers, having been woven in the mouth, were described as sonic vehicles that moved out from the singer, and they were referred to as chariots: 'Most pleasing to the Aśvins be these prayers...which we have fashioned' [RVV,73,10]. Indra was also the Lord of Bay Horses, and his chariot was guided by two great steeds.

In the hymns to Indra, the prayers were sent out as sonic vehicles to be heard by both Indra and his horses. Indra was asked to yoke his two horses to his chariot through the sung-prayer, and that would convey him to the human ceremony: 'O Indra, let thy long-maned Bays, yoked by prayer bring thee hitherward...' [RV VIII, 17,2].

'I will send for my songs in flow unceasing, like water
from the ocean's depth to Indra.
Who to his car on both its sides securely hath fixed
the earth and heaven as with an axle' (RV X,89,4).

The gods, especially Indra, were caught by prayer. Indra was 'stuck' or 'attached' to the enchanting nature of the hymns, lauds, and prayers. Yoked sonically by these sounds, he gladly guided his vehicle to the sacred ceremony of the humans.

The gods were invited to come to the ceremony and to sit on the sacred grass, where more sung-prayers were fashioned or designed. The *barhis* (Sanskrit verbal root also *brih*) grass was the special seat of the gods, and as the gods were invoked and invited to come take their regal places on the sacred grass, items were offered to them during the ceremonies. Food was offered: 'Hero, enjoy the offered cake' [RV VIII, 41,3]. Holy drink was poured: 'In our libation take delight' [RV I,3,6] 'O Vṛtra-slayer, from the libation poured at noon, drink of the Soma juice [nectar of immortality], thou blameless Thunderer' [RV VIII,37,1]. Songs and sung-prayers were chanted. With the connection having been extended through prayer, and with the god's acceptance of the invitation, then the singer shared the highest songs of praise: 'Now, Agni, will we [recite] to thee...our precious, much-availing prayer' [RV I,75,2]. The sung-prayers were considered as nourishing as any food and drink, and, in Agni's case, were with care poured directly into the fire, the god's mouth: 'Accept our loudest-sounding hymn, food most delightful to the Gods, Pouring our offerings in thy mouth' [RV I,75,1].

This pathway of prayer was reciprocal. What was given as a musical offering, was returned in some form of blessing. The chanter enlivened the gods with song; and when the gods visited, they, in turn, enlivened the singers and their community. The sung prayers of the pathways were known to be ancient: '[s]ung...with prayer prayed by our fathers' [*RV VII,33,4*]. Indra, Lover of Song, had received endless praises: 'Laud him a thousand all at once, shout twenty forth the hymn of praise; hundreds have sung aloud to him, to Indra hath the prayer been raised, lauding his own imperial sway' [*RVI,80,9*]. It was in the hundreds or the thousands (in other words, an eternal "numberless number") of songs, that Indra joined together to meet with his singers. In chanting these prayer-songs, as of old, they -- Atharvan (said to have authored the Atharva Veda, a priest connected with fire and soma), Manu (Father of all), and Dadhyach (Atharvan's son), and many others -- became united with Indra [*RVI,80,16*]. In the prayer-songs, Indra was at home; he was nourished and strengthened, while lauded. As the refrain of *RVI, 80* continuously reminded the singers, Indra came thus, singing his own sovereignty -- '*arcann anu svarājyam*'. Through the repeated songs, Indra sang his own existence and kept it going through sung-prayer -- *arcann anu svarājyam* (Griffith has poetically translated "lauding thine own imperial sway"). Any possible connection between Indra's *svarajyam* and Gandhi's sung-prayers of *svaraj* is no idle question.

Selina Thielemann (1998) has written about the *mantras* of the Rig Veda: 'This process of transformation of transcendental into phenomenal realities [and vice versa] requires a medium of such quality as to permeate both the transcendental and the phenomenal realms. Sound is the medium that inherits this quality: it is non-material, hence transcendental, yet conceivable by the senses, hence phenomenal (Thielemann 1998, p.119). William K. Mahoney has written similarly about this sung-prayer exchange, describing it as being a creative process of imagination that bridged the worlds of sound and sight. In the early *Rig Vedic* verses it was the *rishis*' voices that were heard, connecting with the *rita* through a

sound practice of their own making. 'It was the visionary poet who heard that sublime Word and saw that sublime form, and thus aligned himself with the structure and movement of that universal, formative, and sustaining principle...' (Mahoney 1998, p.58).

While the *rishis* did offer hymns for their material benefit, they likewise offered them for purposes of insight and inspiration. 'Strengthened, the gods are expected to hand over to their devotees part of their abundance and to help them in case of need' (Gonda 1984 p.65), yet they also yearned for divine inspiration and intuition of expression: 'thus the members of the Gotama family have made thee, O Indra, by means of an excellent hymn of praise a support; do thou place into them vision [or inspiration] of complete elaboration'" (Gonda 1984, p.65).

In the Rig Vedic verses, the rishi was heard invoking the power of *brahman* -- '*brahma varma mamāntaram*' -- my innermost protective coat-of-mail is sung-prayer -- as safety even against death itself [RV VI,75,19]

However, in later Vedic texts, following a period of time in which a rift between heaven and earth had come to be perceived, it then became the priest who sang the sound sacrifice to reconcile the corrupted world with the original Divine. As the priests strove to keep the earlier musico-poetic traditions alive, the "sound sacrifice" became the "sound of the sacrifice." Distanced from the creative processes, the priests became keepers of tradition, guarding the sacred path. They were described as sitting next to the sacrifice: "They sit by the loom singing: 'Weave lengthwise! Weave crosswise!' They made the Sāman hymns their weaving shuttles' (Mahoney 1998, p.110). With the shifting focus to the worship of *Prajapati*, Lord of Creatures, whose body had been sacrificed and distributed throughout the material world, the purpose of ritual shifted from continuously creating to continuously re-building a "broken" world (Mahoney 1998, p.132). In the *Shatapatha Brahmana* (attached to the White *Yajur-Veda* and attributed to the *rishi Yajnavalkya*), the priests used the liturgical process of sacrifice to bring

Prajapati back to life: "Singing that divine poetry by means of their human voices as they kindled the ceremonial fire, the priest returned the vital 'breath' (*prāṇa*) to the exhausted Prajāpati...." (Mahoney 1998, p.135).

Whereas the *rishi* had once been personally been at the center of the sounding *rita*, the creator of sacred utterance, the priest became a protector and re-builder by holding on to and preserving the sacred verses. Thus, a shift occurred from the sage/poets, whose world of continual ability to create through sound enabled them to perceive and participate in *rita*, to a world in which the priests became keepers and guardians of those chants perceived to be able to re-harmonize a chaotic world. This harmony was a ritually re-constructed model (Mahoney 1998, p.134), one for which only the priests knew the appropriate sonic formulas. Thus, they became men of power.

Along with this shift, came a change in the usage of the word *brahman*. What originally signified either the songs or the sung-ritual itself came to signify something much more expansive.

'In what was to become one of the most important developments in Vedic thought, Vedic philosopher-priests were to regard the brahman, not only as the unifying power or link by which the actions performed in the sacred ceremony had effect on the world as a whole, but also...[as] the ontological ground of being itself...the universal Absolute' (Mahoney 1998, p.116).

In the earliest times, the *brahman* had been the 'nourishing song'. and the brahman had been 'the one who knew the nourishing songs'. Originally, the *brahman* had been utilized by the *rishi* as a direct means of interacting sonically with the gods. However, with the development of this change, the *brahman* became 'the one who knew the universal Absolute' as a part of the reparational ritual, and that 'one' had become the *brahmin* priest. For an ancient culture, which had originally perceived the created world to be the expression of a divine voice, any subsequent rifts

occurring between heaven and earth were to be remedied, again, by the process of sonic weaving, but now, sung only by the later Vedic priests. 'For the Indian, ritual praise singing is as important as living in the right state of being...' (Schneider 1989b, p.50), for, in effect, it was the singing that manifested, sustained, and effected a "right state" of existence within the sonic fabric of a sung world.

Upanishads and Later

The Upanishadic teachers expanded the postulation of *Brahman* to include '...the merging of all objective phenomena into a unitary world-ground' (Hume 1995, p.23). This 'single all encompassing monistic Being' (Hume 1995, p.32) was accessible outside the arena of external ritual, and outside the priestly control as well. 'No longer is worship or sacrifice or good conduct the requisite of religion in this life, or of salvation in the next. Knowledge secures the latter and disapproves of the former' (Hume 1995, p.53). *Brahman* could be reached through knowledge, and mental concentration or meditation. The priestly rituals were transmogrified into mental exercises conducted in such a way that the body of the individual, again, became the locus of the ritual ground.

As these changes occurred, however, the use of sound as the pathway to, or revealer of, *Brahman* remained, being identified with the sacred syllable OM, as signifier of the Sonic All. The equation of OM with *Brahman* is found throughout the extensive corpus of the *Upanishads*. (The translations are Olivelle's.)

'This whole world is nothing but OM.'

(*Chandogya Upanishad* 2.23.3, p. 198)

'*Brahman* is OM. This whole world is OM.'

(*Taittiriya Upanishad* 1.8.1, p. 296)

'The word that all the Vedas disclose;
 The word that all austerities proclaim;
 Seeking which people live student lives;
 That word now I will tell you in brief --
 It is OM!

For this alone is the syllable that's *brahman*!
 For this alone is the syllable that's supreme!
 When, indeed, one knows this syllable,
 he obtains his every wish.'

(*Katha Upanishad* 15-16, p. 384)

'The bow is OM, the arrow's the self,
 The targe is *brahman*, they say.

...

Put away other words, for this
 is the dike to the immortal.'

(*Mundaka Upanishad* 2.2.4-5, p. 447)

The salvific properties of the syllable OM are more fully outlined in the *Prashna Upanishad*, wherein it is stated:

He becomes released from evil, just like a snake
 from his slough. ...

By OM alone as the support
 Does a man who knows it attain
 that which is serene,
 beyond old age and death,
 free from fear, the supreme.'

(*Prashna Upanishad* 5.5 & 7, p. 468-70)

Two *Brahmans* were differentiated in the later *Maitri Upanishad*: one *Shabda-Brahman* (the lower, sounded *Brahman*); and *Brahman* (the higher, unsounded - *ashabda* Ultimate Reality). Here, too, the individual, described as a spider ascending by means of its thread [*tantu*, "woven"], could reach the salvific realm of Ultimate *Brahman* by crossing into it by means of the thread of *Shabda-*

Brahman (*Maitri Upanishad*. 6.22, Hume 437). *Shabda-Brahman* was the syllable OM and it was the pathway to *Brahman*.

Guy L. Beck has noted that this distinction between a 'Sound' and a 'non-Sound' *Brahman* is 'a characteristic that carries over into Hindu theism, wherein a personal deity is identified with the 'Higher,' non-Sound *Brahman*' (Beck 1993, p.45). Even in the *Maitri Upanishad*, *Brahman* had become equated with Vishnu.

'The Vedic and Upaniṣadic notions of sound are also forerunners of the many esoteric notions prevalent in the Yoga and Tantric methods for meditation on sacred sound, methods wherein Nāda-Brahman [God is Sound] has largely replaced Shabda-Brahman [God is Word] and the Vedic Vak as the essence of sound both in the cosmos (*ākāśa*) and within the human heart (*hrdayākāśa*)' (Beck 1993, p.46)

Andre Padoux has briefly address the features of Vedic *Vac* (goddess of voice, sound, speech, language) in his *Vāc: The Concept of the Word in Selected Hindu Tantras*, however has focussed largely on later Hindu Tantric texts. In these texts, generally, *Vac* is responsible for the creation of the cosmos:

'Manifestation, as it is born out of the Word and along with it, may thus be understood as a flashing forth which gradually becomes obfuscated. This occurs through a series of transformations and condensations of sound or phonic primal energy, which gradually brings forth (but in a never-ending process, for it takes place beyond time) the manifested universe, a process that takes place analogously in human beings, within whom sound (and then speech) will develop following a process corresponding to that of the cosmogony, and where the phonetic symbols appear as closely related to visual metaphors referring to the Word's aspect of light' (Padoux 1990, p.86).

In *Sonic Theology*, Beck outlines the later Hindu deistic traditions -- Shaivism, Vaishnavism, and Goddess worship -- with each tradition's conceptualization and usage of sacred sound. Each of these traditions strongly advocates the use of sound as a pathway to the divine. In regard to the Vaishnavite

forms of worship, which would have particularly influenced M.K. Gandhi, Beck states: 'Although many of the Vaishnava traditions exhibit [different uses of sacred sound], the distinguishing factor in Hindu theism, and this especially visible in Vaishnavism, is the presence of a male Supreme Being (Vishnu, Narayana, Krishna, Rama, etc.) who directs and oversees the functioning' (Beck 1993, p.172) of sacred sound, which has, by now, become a female subordinate to that male deity, often personified as his spouse.

Beck's overview and summary of the Vaishnava *sampradāyas* (traditions), in terms of the importance of sacred sound, is quite extensive and goes beyond the scope of this work. He focusses on the tradition of the Pancaratra (Vaishnava sacred texts), as he states that it holds authority for all of the many strands and schools of Vaishnavism throughout India (Beck 1993, p.173), and in these traditions, *Shabda-Brahman* and *Nada-Brahman* figure prominently: '...the presence of the sacred in Pancaratra is contained first and foremost in sound form... (Beck 1993, p.181).

Beck specifically addresses the *Bhagavata-Purana* with its emphasis on the syllable OM, as well as the creative potential of the Sanskrit alphabet. The *Bhagavata-Purana* is the most 'celebrated of the 18 Purānas (especially dedicated to the glorification of Vishṇu-Krishṇa, whose history is in the 10th book' (Monier-Williams 1999, p.751. 'The theoretical continuity of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa with the Upaniṣadic tradition of sacred sound is evident' (Monier-Williams 1999, p.185). In these texts the sounds of the *mantras* [words of power] chanted are the direct energy of Vishnu, in the form of Krishna (a divine form of Vishnu, or *avatara*), who is sent down to save Vishnu's followers. Special *mantras* were repeated over and over, in devotional love and respect (*bhakti*), and such repetition often involved the names Vishnu and/or Krishna, since *nama-japa* (repetition of the Name) was regarded as most effective in its salvific properties:

'In order to be effective, the *nāma-japa* must be undertaken with a name that God himself has revealed in the Scriptures. God is

identical with such a self-revealed name, God's *śabda*, and that lends power to the sound of the name itself. Repetition of the name is the most powerful remedy against all sins and faults' (Klostermaier, in Beck 1993, p.188).

Thielemann has written that the *Bhagavata Purana* advises congregational singing (*sankirtana*) as the preeminent path to overcome the evils of the *Kali Yuga* (the current time-cycle said to consist of darkness and ignorance) and that 'music and singing have been the principal mode of worship in the Vaiṣṇava tradition from its very beginnings (Thielemann 1998, p.92).

In Mohandas Gandhi's case, he had been taught a *Vaiṣṇava* form of *nama-japa* (name repetition), *Rama-nama*, the name of *Rama* or God, when he was a child in Gujarat, and as was noted in Chapter Four, he later developed the chanting of Rama's name as a religious practice. Gandhi encouraged the use of *Rama-nama*, as well as *Ramdhun*, in concert with many of the pieces of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* repertoire.

The Sants

Similarly, the later *Sants*, many of whose songs appear in the *Bhajanavali*, encouraged the chanting of their devotional works as the mechanism for their activation: 'Sur[Dās] does recommend good company (*satsaṅg*), but what he means by that has nothing to do with virtue of any sort. That company is made good by the simple fact that it provides the place where Hari's name is sung and heard. ...In Allahabad I the poet states that without the devotion (or singing) that is possible in the company of the Sants this body is useless" (Hawley 1987, p.203). The high quality of Nanak's songs has been judged as one reason why the Nanak-panth increased in popularity and size.

...these hymns provide a second evident reason for the early strength and subsequent growth of the Nanak-panth. The actual function of *Sant bāni* [style] is the provision of appropriate songs for communal singing (*k rtan*), a

corporate practice which serves to weld a group of disparate devotees into a society with a sense of common identity. This sense of identity will be encouraged or retarded by the nature of the materials which are used in such *k rtan* sessions. (McLeod 1987, p.231).

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have examined how it is that sung ritual provides a deeper experience of participation in ritual than that which is simply spoken or read. The ritual theories of Roy Rappaport have outlined the extent to which song within the ritual context increases the level of *communitas*, which, in turn, leads to the revealing of a High Order Level of Meaning, and Divine Order Enacted. The scientific work of neurobiologists such as d'Aquili and Newberg support these findings through the physical evidence found in brain-mapping, while Don Ihde's perceptions of a phenomenology of sound point to the unique qualities of physical vibration and the omni-presence experienced within the field of sound which exceed the field of sight. Both Ihde and Rouget have been referenced in detail as to how sound affects the body, how it is felt palpably as a sonic occurrence, and how it connects within the human being the various arenas of perception, cognition, and insight.

The work of Marius Schneider has suggested that due to these very personal, immediate, and powerfully-felt experiences within the sense of sounding, the early-Vedic seer who "sacrificed" his own true self (his sacred, sonic essence) through the offering of sung-prayer was an ancient sonic and iconic archetype central and formative in Indian culture, which continued for centuries encased in Indic scriptures.

Arthur Avalon has remarked in *Principles of Tantra* that in India *mantra* reigns from cradle to grave. Similarly, in his well-known publication *Understanding Mantras*, Harvey Alper has written that 'the history of the religious life of the Indian people might plausibly be read as a history of mantras' (Alper 1989, p.2).

Alper then presents a collection of essays that traces the path of early Vedic *mantra* as it manifests into latter practice, from *Ayurveda* and *Mimamsa*, *yoga* and *Tantra*, to the later philosophies of *Bhartrihari* and *Kshemaraja*. While this intricate array, which concerns the various and sundry ways in which *mantra* as sacred sound has been variously interpreted throughout India's history, lies beyond the scope of this study, Alper's work is an important compilation concerning the extent to which *mantra* as sung-prayer has been formative in India. Sung-prayer, which provides connection to the Divine, is an ancient and sacred mode of communication in India, whether we are considering the *brahman*, *ric*, and *saman* of the Vedic *rishi*, the sacred syllables of Upanishadic sages, the chants of Kashmiri Shaivism, the repetition of *Rama-nama*, or the *bhajans* of the Sikh *satsang*.

This chapter began with the many examples of the high degree to which Gandhi regarded music and sung-prayer: 'I can recall occasions when a hymn sank deep into me though the same thing expressed in prose had failed to touch me' (*CW-e*, 43, #322, p.256) He acknowledged to Narayan M. Khare: '..I have gradually come to look upon music as a means of spiritual development' (*CW-e*, 29, #193, p.237). He recognized and utilized the power of music and sung-prayer as he organized the ashram life and developed *satyagraha*. The extent to which the prayer-songs supported every aspect of Gandhi's life and teaching strongly supported and shaped the nation as it grew towards independence. Sung-prayers ritually marked significant and dangerous events; he proffered spiritual advice from, and took for his public texts from, the *shlokas* and *bhajans* of the *Bhajanavali*.

During his visit to Switzerland, Madeleine Rolland observed Gandhi's deep respect for the sung-prayers with which he always travelled: 'He is very sensitive to the religious chants of his country,...and he has worked to assemble them' (Jack 1956, p.384). Gandhi lived the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, and taught the *Ashram Bhajanavali* as a way of life. The tenets of *satyāgraha* were outlined in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, and they were sung.

Beck poses that the Hindu regard for sacred sound, both as religious path and as ultimate salvation, is a phenomenon that reaches beyond sectarian doctrine and dogma to act as a fundamental harmonizing principle within the multitude of Hindu traditions:

'...throughout the vast canvas of Indian history and soil the basic sacrality of sound has persisted, despite sectarian 'coloring.' ...Though it has undergone several metamorphoses over the centuries, it is clear that sacred sound in Hinduism regardless of its particular name or context, continues to operate in a mysterious way that is both central and soteriological. And the Hindu tradition -- both consciously and 'unconsciously' -- seeks this original centrum again and again to renew the very power that originally impelled it' (Beck 1993, p.212).

Mohandas Gandhi, before the time of Rouget's descriptions or Ihde's phenomenology of sound, was acutely aware of music's power to effect the human being, and conscious of how sung-prayers could form the human character. He used, in several ways (detailed in previous chapters), music and sung-prayers to train the people for non-violence and to build *svaraj*. 'Perhaps Gandhi's greatest contribution to religious music was the compilation, with the help of Khare, of the *Ashram Hymnal*...[whose] primary aim, according to the Preface of the edition of 1947, was to 'sustain right conduct' (Parel 2006, p.167). By participating in and drawing so deeply from his own traditions in order to shape a new, non-violent democratic state, Mohandas Gandhi and the *satyagraha* movement stood firmly established within the ancient and sacred traditions of India's sung-prayer rituals, out of which and to which he gave his own voice, and through which, he was heard so clearly.

CHAPTER SIX. SHRI KARUNAMAYEE

'What we sing now, they are the light
that was emitted thousands of years back.'

-- Shri Karunamayee

The *Ashram Bhajanavali* collection provides a window into the rituals of the *satyagraha* movement. Mohandas K. Gandhi led with the power of chanted prayer, a phenomenon that has yet to be fully acknowledged, while, simultaneously, memories of those who were present are fading, or have faded, into the silence of history. In this chapter, we will look at the life and work of one spiritual musician, Shri Karunamayee Abrol, who teaches the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, its melodies, its history, and its significance for *satyagraha*. Shri Karunamayee's family were freedom fighters, and, as a child, she sang for Mahatma Gandhi, receiving his blessing. She describes herself as having taken the path of sacred musicianship as opposed to a "worldly" life, yet, she has two Master's degrees, one in Music and one in Philosophy. She achieved noted secular success in Indian classical music. Her knowledge, which stems from personal experience and extensive musical training, provides additional information concerning *satyagraha*. Her teaching renders additional insight into the ritual practices of the time, and she is a tradition-bearer of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

Shri Karunamayee was born March 24, 1930 in Delhi. Her family consisted of artists and educators. Her father and mother were both active in the *Arya Samaj*, and she describes their home as having been quite similar to an *ashram*, in that people from various religious and social backgrounds visited continually, and her mother was always taking care of someone. There were many musicians in the family; music and ritual were regular elements in their family's daily life.

At six, before any formal musical training, she was composing and teaching music to older children in the neighborhood (Madireddi 2000, p.54). At 12, Shri

Karunamayee had what she has called a spiritual experience in which she heard the words: "I must have self-realization through music" (Madireddi 2000, 54), and she began musical training in 1943 with Pandit Vinay Chandra Maudgalya, Principal and Founder of the Gandharva Mahavidhalaya in New Delhi. She completed a six-year music course in two-and-a-half years, and completed the Bachelor's in Music before graduating from secondary school.

Many of Shri Karunamayee's extended family members were musicians who played often for the prayer meetings led by Mohandas K. Gandhi when he was in Delhi. Her older sister, at age 16, served almost three months in prison for civil disobedience. As Shri Karunamayee's musical career was only beginning, at about age 15, she herself sang for Mahatma Gandhi in 1945 during one of the evening prayer meetings at the Ramlila Grounds.

Shri Karunamayee has received many awards in music competition, consistently placing first for classical vocal music. In 1950, she began singing light and semi-classical music (*geet*, *bhajan* and *ghazal*) for All India Radio (*Ibid.*), where she was graded a Class A artist (Allekote, 1). With a strong urge continuing to draw her towards a religious life, she completed a Master's degree in Philosophy at the University of Delhi in 1952. Her mentor, Pandit Daya Shankar Mishra, encouraged her to continue looking for a musical *guru* [teacher] who could direct her in combining the two strands of music and spirituality.

At a concert of the Khadi Gramodyog Music Conference in 1953, Pandit Pran Nath, a vocalist of the *Kirana Gharana* ("a highly specialized style of north Indian classical vocal music," Jackson n.d., p.73) offered a rendition of *Rag Miyan-Ki-Malhar* (the *raga* of rain). At the end of the musical presentation, it did rain, while Shri Karunamayee recognized him as her musical *guru*.

'Pandit Pran Nath traces kirana style directly from Ustad Wahid Khan Sahib's teacher, Ustad Haider Baksh Khan Sahib, a disciple of the reknowned and unrivalled master of the vina and voice, Mian Bande Ali

Khan Sahib, through the legendary singer and saint, Gopal Nayak, and on back into time.

Gopal Nayak, who lived about seven hundred years ago, was a *drupad* singer of the *Govarhari Bani* (style) also known as *Krishna Bani*, or the style of Krishna. ...Gopal Nayak was a worshipper of Lord Krishna, but sometime after he was taken to Delhi [abducted by King Allaudhin Khilji in 1293 as part of the ransom for Devgiri], he came to be impressed by the Sufi saint Kwaja Moinuddin Chisti and his disciple Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia, and embraced Islam as well' (Young & Zazeela 1988, pp.2-3)

'The Chisti were the largest and most important mystical order of *silsilah/tariqa* among the South Asian Muslims in the early Sultanate period, i.e., the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They forged the first authentic specimen of South Asian or Indian Islam, and it was they who adopted a distinctive attitude to *sama*'... (Lawrence 1983, p.95). *Sama*' was the spiritual practice of chanting vocal music in an assembled congregation as a means of mystical experience with the Divine, which was discouraged by many sects within Islam. '[F]ar from being an embarrassment to the Chistis, ...*sama*' was aggressively defended as an essential component of the spiritual discipline or asceticism incumbent on all Sufis' (Lawrence 1983, p.95).

Shri Karunamayee studied intensively with Pandit Pran Nath until 1965, during which time she also completed her Master's of Music in 1960. In 1966, immediately following her resignation as the Head of the Music Department and Vice-Principal of the Vidyavati Mukundalal (Girls' College) in Ghaziabad, she was mysteriously inspired to visit the Shri Aurobindo Ashram in Delhi. The founder of this branch of the Aurobindo Ashram in Delhi was Shri Surendra Nath Jauhar, a friend of her father's. After some conversation, she asked Surendra Nath Jauhar if she could simply "sing one song" (as inspiration had guided her), and he finally agreed. Following her musical rendition, during which all listeners present were moved to tears, Surendra Nath Jauhar insisted she come to live at the ashram (see

Jauhar, Ed. (1993), *Surendra Nath Jauhar: His Life, Work, and Thought* for an historical account of their meeting, a source which also includes photographs of Shri Karunamayee). Following requests for another five songs, she agreed to his request and moved to the *ashram*.

Shri Karunamayee discontinued her music career in the secular world to provide music for the daily meditations in the meditation hall of the Delhi Aurobindo Ashram, as well as for spiritual events and celebrations. On February 21, 1967, with The Mother's blessings, she established the *Matri Kala Mandir* (Mother's Temple of Fine Arts). She sang only for the aspirants and initiates of the Shri Aurobindo Ashram for the next twenty years (although continuing to sing occasionally for All India Radio). She made her first appearance in the West, in Europe, Holland, Belgium, France, and America in 1987, following Surendra Nath Jauhar's death. Encouraged by many, including Pir Vilayat Khan, founder and then-head of the Sufi Order in the West and successor to Hazrat Inayat Khan, as well as Pandit Pran Nath, she has travelled regularly on what for her is her life's mission.

Shri Karunamayee is a spiritual musician, trained in classical music, and inspired by the devotional chants of Kabir and Mirabai among others. She teaches many religious repertoires, but for decades (since 1965, when her brother gave her a copy) her own daily *sadhana* has been the *Ashram Bhajanavali* of Gandhi's *satyagraha*. She continues now as the Music Director for musical seekers at the Matri Kala Mandir at Shri Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi, and she teaches in both India and the United States. She is a tradition-bearer of *svaraj* and of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

This writer met regularly with Shri Karunamayee over a period of six and a half years, from June 2000 through November 2006, and collected more than 40 hours of recorded interviews with her. Our many discussions concentrated not just on learning the music of the selections, but on the philosophy and/or theology of the pieces being considered, along with the ritual settings involved. Information from

the interviews conducted with Shri Karunamayee correlates with, and expands the understanding of the many topics outlined in this work, and she has shed additional and important light on the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. While Shri Karunamayee could have been an equally valuable informant regarding the life and history of Shri Aurobindo and the ashram that was established in Delhi (where she still lives), our conversations centered on Gandhi and the *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

The information concerning Shri Karunamayee's family background and her recollections of Gandhi have been directly transcribed in her own words. No changes have been made (with the exception of a very few words with the intent to clarify meaning), in order that the reader can more clearly hear her in her own voice. A second section in this chapter presents her comments given in answer to questions regarding the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, and her teaching in this section has been transcribed in a dialogue or interview format, in order for the reader to be more intimately included in that dialogue process. We begin with the transcription of her personal memories of direct experience during the *satyagraha* era.

FAMILY BACKGROUND

'In our family, we were eight brothers and sisters -- six sisters and two brothers. Our family was very deeply connected with Gandhiji and his movement. Yes, very, very much. In our family, it was a very strong atmosphere of Gandhiji and revolutionaries. There was a great pining for the freedom of India, and of high values, and of culture.'

Maternal Grandfather

'My [maternal] grandfather was an educationist, and his constant companions were the *Qur'an*, the Bible and the *Upanishads*. He was one of the pioneers and followers of Mahatma Gandhiji, and when [Gandhiji] declared in 1919 the *asarayog* (non-co-operation) movement in terms of national services, my grandfather left his job in the Punjab as Inspector of Schools for the British system. He just gave it up. The idea was we must boycott their educational system. So, national schools and national colleges were founded. It was in service to this ideal,

with an attitude without any grudge or grouse. 'All right - this is my service to my country, the Motherland.' He was the Head and Founder of the National School in Lahore, and then he founded the Sri Ram Ashram High School in Amritsar. He compiled and wrote songs and prayers for it, and it is now still running.

'He was a very dear friend of Hazrat Inayat Khan. My [maternal] grandmother was also. When they met, it was in the last phase of Murshid's [Khan's] life in Delhi. My grandfather started the school after Hazrat Inayat Khan's death, and then later he became in charge of the orphanage -- Arya Anathale Orphanage - - that exists even now in Delhi.

'My grandfather came from a Sikh family, Guru Nanak's [lineage], then turned towards *Arya Samaj*. He found that THIS message was even more progressive than Guru Nanak Sahab's and Guru Govind Singh Ji's. That was still related to a certain time, but this was the latest revival movement of the Vedic message. Swami Dayananda Sarasvati had started it, and it was taken up by Swami Shraddhananda.

'My grandfather [my Nanaji] and Swami Shraddhanandaji, they were very close with Murshid, who was a Muslim. But, in their eating, they did NOT keep any distinctions. They appreciated each other's good ways.

'He was *Arya Samaj*, Vedic, going to the source of Indian culture, that is the Vedas. And, my father was also. That was the Reformist movement. He was a universal being. So my mother inherited that atmosphere, and of course, only *khadi* was worn.'

Paternal Grandfather

'My paternal grandfather, however, was very orthodox, a *sanatani* Hindu from Riyasi in Jammu Kashmir state. We are *Kshatrias*. For everything, there was the sacrifice of a goat. He would take my father, as he was the eldest son, so naturally, he would take him, and many times, they would say 'if this happens...,' and prayers to Kali were given, in that manner. So, we were strong and came from fighters in the Hindu society, those who were to take care of the interests, take care of the protection of the society, from the ruling class. Even Dr. Karan Singh, we are from the same family tree.

'When my father decided that he would not eat meat -- he was only between 10 and 11 years of age -- that was a rebellion. He said 'I will not take meat.' My grandfather said, 'if you don't want to take meat, etc., then you can get out of my house.' So my father left the house, and from that age he learned to be on his own. In the course of time, he came to Delhi.

'At first my grandfather did not like my father's changing ways, and when my father took to Gandhiji's path and the revolutionary way, my grandfather was still wearing non-handmade cloth from Britain. My father was wearing only hand-made *khadi* of Gandhiji's movement. Eventually, even my grandfather said, 'now you

bring these clothes for me. I also want to wear these.' And, one time it even happened that the washerman didn't come and my grandmother could not wash at home, so she provided my grandfather with the old dress. But, my grandfather refused to wear it!

Paternal Grand-Father's Sister

'My grandfather's sister became a child widow, and she didn't experience the joys of life, which in a natural way she must have wanted.'

Father

'My father, having been expelled from his father's home for not eating meat, travelled around for a few years, and eventually came to Delhi. From the year of Gandhiji's work, when the civil disobedience started, my father was connected with the *Arya Samaj*, *Arya Kumar Sabha* and with Congress. So, he started wearing *khadi*. There was no cloth, no fabric coming in our home except for *khadi*.

'He came in contact with Gandhiji's movement, also. I can't quote exactly, but 1997 would have been my father's centenary, so when he came to Delhi, he might have been 16 or 17, very young. There, he came in contact with a very good circle of *Arya Samaj* and he started his own kind of life; he tried to be independent in business, a contractor.

'There was a very good man, a senior person, who had resources, money, well-established, but who was a very dynamic Congress man and a very dynamic *Arya Samaj* leader -- Lala Narayana Dutta. All these young people gathered around him, and he liked to support these young people because they were doing *Arya Kumar Sabha*. When there was a plague in Delhi, they came forward and looked after sick people, at the risk of their own lives. Because there were not too many families behind them to hold them back, they were free to do this work. So, Dutta was a good support. These young men wanted to stand on their own feet, and he would give them monetary support for being independent.

'Then Congress organized during that time the foreign cloth boycott -- that was Gandhiji's movement. And at that time, they organized a kind of court, also.

'My father, my mother's brother, and Surendra Chacha Ji (founder of the Shri Aurobindo Ashram in Delhi), they were all youngsters at that time, but they were under the direct influence of Swami Shraddhananda Ji and Hazrat Inayat Khan, the Congress culture, and Gandhiji, etc. All these movements, they're one. And, they all knew each other. They worked for the realization of the same ideals -- a classless society and women should have equal status, freedom for them, for education, good education for everyone. Women should have the right to remarriage, not just once if they're widowed early and their life's over, and no *pardha* (wearing veils, they

can't mix with men, all those restrictions), caste system, and you can't touch the food of untouchables, and mixing with all people.

'Later on, Surendra Nath Jauhar became the founder of the Shri Aurobindo Ashram. He was Sikh (Sikhandarla was his name), but he changed his name. Under the influence of Congress and the *Arya Samaj*, the reformist society, they did away with idol worship and they turned towards the Vedic founts, just as Swami Dayananda had founded that society.

'There was a youth force needed who could implement this in their lives. So they founded *Jat path tolak mandal*, "the society that breaks the caste system." Under the influence of that, they would marry out of the caste system, breaking the caste system, and with no dowry, and no *pardha* and with no show-off weddings. Just simple Vedic weddings with the fire ceremony, with Vedic *mantras*.

'That revival now is very common. But then, Swami Dayananda had selected, culled out, *mantras* from the Vedic rites of different sorts -- 16 *sanskars* and there was a complete re-thinking given to how we should live a life. Many of them came to the Indian National Movement, from *Arya Samaj*, *Arya Kumar Sabha*, and the spirit of sacrifice, character-building, austerity, asceticism, looking forward to higher ideals and bringing them into life, actually implementing them.

'So many boys from that generation came forward, and the result is what we see in the form of present-day society in India, where there is a lot of progressive outlook; so much of the old, stagnant material has been gotten rid of. Every society needs that kind of educating from time to time.

'One of my uncles was an absolute revolutionary, with Bhagat Singh and that movement, but that was a secret revolutionary party. That was of a HIGH risk, high life-risk. When my uncle was in prison, he underwent much torture.

'My father remained in a certain line of defense, too, but he had a big family, and he was a self-made man with no property to fall back on. So, he had to support the family. But, he supported many families of freedom fighters who were imprisoned or who took *satyagraha* as their path. Otherwise, their children would have died with no one to support them. He would take in those families and support them. It was a kind of silent service."

Mother

'My mother was one of those *Arya Samaj* girls of that generation. She did not go to a "girls' school," but to an *Arya Samaj* school called a "daughters' school," or *Arya putri path-shala*. People sent their daughters to study there, and my mother, when my grandfather moved to Delhi, came to study in Class II. But, there was no teacher for Class I. So, the Head Mistress requested that she teach the Class I. My mother might have been 6 or 7 years old, and she said: 'I got a little nervous.' My

grandfather said: 'What is there to be nervous about? That Class I you have already done. Go and teach it.' In those days, children were so accepting, obedient; if it were said by father, she would do it. My mother also; she took the job, and started teaching.

'Every Saturday, there also was the *Bala Samaj*, girls getting together to perform, reading or reciting *shlokas* or poems, story telling, singing songs -- a variety of things, folk dance also.'

Mother's Brother

'My mother's brother was also a great educationist; he took charge of *Shri Ram Ashram* High School, after my grandfather went to direct the orphanage. He was a principal, playwright, director, poet, and a very good artist. They would present plays about Hindu-Muslim unity. He wrote beautiful plays and staged them; an amateur dramatic club was founded, where professional film-makers would come and watch their presentations for three or four days at a time. He was also *khadi*.'

Childhood Home

'Our home had 'no walls.' Anybody could walk in from anywhere. It was like an *ashram*. We never thought of it as just our family. Many other children lived there too, because my father believed in this. They would stay in our home and go to school. There was a nationalist atmosphere and Gandhiji was our leader. That was the model for us. It was quite like an *ashram*. And my mother's father's home also. The school he started and the children, it was like a woven fabric. There was no barrier between family life and *ashram* life. So these things, we were saturated with them.

When Gandhiji was on a fast, the children in our family were not interested in food. Of course, children could not be starved, but many of us would go fasting. Nobody would care, and the parents would not force them to eat. There was a feeling that it was our *sadhana*, and parents encouraged the children to be aware of these things.

It was in our family. We grew up with a great ache in our heart, anguish in our hearts, as small children. Our Mother India, we used to think literally as if: 'She IS our Mother' and she is in shackles! As Shri Aurobhindo had said, 'a demon is sitting over her chest and drinking her life blood!' How can you tolerate that? For whole nights, we would not be able to sleep, pining for that freedom of our Mother, and crying 'when will it happen?'

My young brother, who was only four or five years old, was going to school one day, when the 1942 movement was going on. At that time, they would let go with lati charges and firing and all that -- processions were going on, and such

things. Every day he went to school, mother would button his shirt. But that day, he pulled it open, parting the buttons. She buttoned it again, and he unbuttoned it again. Three times he did this, and finally mother said 'What are you doing?' He said, 'Mati, I am opening it so that when the Britishers shoot, my chest will be open!'

'Our family atmosphere was full of that. He said, 'I am keeping it open so that the bullet should go directly here (points to her heart) without any hindrance.' He was a small child, of course, only four, he didn't know that the bullet could pierce through his shirt also!'

'So, we never missed the prayer meetings. Every day, when Gandhiji would be visiting Delhi, we eagerly looked forward to all his prayer meetings. As long as Gandhiji was there, we would go to the prayer meetings. My father and elder sister they would go even for the early morning prayers also. There was no transportation; they would leave very early in the morning, walking, carrying with them their *tambouras*. Later, the day Gandhiji was assassinated, the prayers were being held at Birla House. It was in January. (Recently, I offered prayers there, and Gandhiji's grandson came; Arun Gandhi brought his group there. It was very special.) So many people had heart attacks when Gandhiji was killed. My younger sister, she got such a high fever, we almost lost her. Because Gandhiji had said 'I will live for 125 years.'

'In later years, my father was very fond of having all the family around, having food together, and of course, for *sham*, evening prayers, we were together.

'There were good teachers coming to teach music to my elder brother and sister. We were a musical family. Music was always there. Music was my confidante, my constant companion, early. I did not have a systematic education in Sanskrit, but our family atmosphere was always resounding with Vedic *mantras*, *sandhya* and *havan mantras*. In my childhood for YEARS, it was our daily routine. We didn't know the meaning, but every child chanted. My father had a great love for music, so he would sing these *mantras* in the *rāgas* and you would follow, because the words were known and a melody you can always follow. By singing, every time, something would be awakened and opened."

SINGING FOR GANDHI

'While growing up, our family was in so many *satyagraha* processions, *prabhat pheris* (or *nagar kirtan*), when people go early in the morning and try to create awakening in the sleeping masses. So "sleep" is taken in a double sense. They are found sleeping at 4 o'clock early in the morning. At the same time, they

are sleeping to the truth of so many things that they should be aware of. This gives them a kind of shock, giving a new current of thinking that starts with that.

'My sister sang for Gandhiji several times. Early morning prayers were held in Banghi Colony. Gandhiji stayed there, when in Delhi, at the Bhangi Colony. They were sweepers. My sister and my father would attend the early morning prayers, which were at 4 o'clock. There was no transportation, so they would walk early in the morning to be there, and she would take *the tamboura* [a four-stringed drone instrument used for accompaniment]. She was firey, and she sang directly for him three times."

'I went to evening prayers that were held mostly in Ramlila Grounds. Huge lawns are there, and Gandhiji and the ashram family were there. There was a platform created where they would sit. There was a lot of grass. We sat on the grass. I have one memory from when I was very small. I saw him standing there like the trunk of a strong tree. Behind him were his grandchildren. It was like seeing Divine in action. It seemed like the *sanatanamparam*, the perennial path of the light.

'I sang once for Gandhiji, at the evening prayers, with my sister. I was about 15, after the end of the war. I don't remember the date, but it was a Monday. It was his *maun* day, Monday. On that day he would keep silence. We were told by the school principal (Pandit Vinay Chandra Maudgalya, or Bhaiji, the Universal Brother) that day we would sing in Bapuji's prayer meeting. It was at Ramlila Grounds in Delhi, and Bapuji was under that big tree. More than one *lakh* of people were there, one hundred thousand or more. But there was pin-drop silence, the sun was setting, and Bapuji was so strong (she indicates his sitting in silent meditation).

'We went, took our seats, and then we had the great privilege of singing at his prayer meeting. We sang *Sumiran kara le mere mana*, Guru Nanak's song. When we finished, the prayer meeting ended. We got up, and we did our *pranams* to Bapuji. (In our family, we never touched the feet of anybody. Girls were so respected, like *devis*, that when a girl was born it was announced '*devi ayi he!* -- a goddess has come into our home!' But nothing was announced for boys. Our feet were touched, but we never touched anyone's feet. So, we never touched Bapuji's feet.)

'We did *namaskar*, with all the reverence, and he was so doting. He could not speak, but he put his hands on our heads, and on our backs. He put his hands over our heads, and we received his blessings. There was a good, deep silence. It was a prayerful atmosphere, complete embodiment. Everything was merged in this point of prayer, where Gandhiji stood like a rock, like a *prakasha stambha* (pillar of

light), a body in the full spirit of prayer, but in deep humility. It was such a great experience.

'I have another remembrance from when I was older, maybe 17 or so. Bapuji was fasting. The prayers lasted about 45 minutes. The chanting would stop and then Gandhiji used to speak. Many people had suffered and were out of their homes. They were very upset. People had lost everything. They were so furious, and atrocities had not stopped -- the not-honouring of a 90-year old woman or a 9-months old girl. What to do? Cruel times. After the riots, more Muslims came. Not to all, but in Ramlila Grounds much more. That was a part of every day, prayers chanted from different traditions. In India, people never wanted to exclude any tradition. [Sung]-prayer meetings were part of the revolutionary movement.'

Shri Karunamayee teaches many musical repertoires. She is currently approaching her eighth decade of life, and she has been disseminating and recording these repertoires in order to preserve both her lineage and her distinctive style for the sake of posterity. With the younger people in India currently possessing great admiration for western lifestyles and music, she feels that fewer young people in India are interested in learning the repertoires she teaches. Our conversations focussed on her historical knowledge of Gandhi and the musical content of *Ashram Bhajana Vali*, which were woven together in her comments. This set of questions continues as part of this inquiry following her explanation that the sung-prayer meetings were an integral part of the Indian freedom movement.

INSIGHTS INTO THE *ASHRAM BHAJANA VALI*

CS: Could you refer, then, to these prayer-songs as "revolutionary"?

K: Revolutionary prayer-songs? Oh, yes! Gandhiji thought if the people are in harmony, then we can fight the struggle of independence with the rulers who had come to dominate us. Gandhiji's work seemed to be political work, but it was all based on the fealty of God, and the complete submission, and surrender to God.

CS: Why was this collection of sung-prayers such an important support to the *satyagraha* movement?

K: People, then, were looking forward, in a time of foreign rule. India had suffered a kind of domination, not for five or ten years, but for hundreds of years. So, for that society, the question arises (for you, or me, or anyone who is a seeker of truth), when there were realizations of such high order, like the *Vedic* and *Upanishadic* truths, the *Bhagavad Gita* and so many *Puranas*, so many scriptures, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and all the *samhitas* also, then, why is it that the old race had to be under subjugation? The question should arise. Was there any lack of comprehensiveness of truth realization? No.

So, on all levels, Gandhiji tried to go to the sources, and then he brought out the message that would directly charge the spirit and the soul of the people.

CS: Were the pieces he chose meant to be chanted? Were they sung?

K: Yes, singing is very important. Music is an inseparable part of the religious, spiritual teaching. It gives you a time when you carry the sound through vowels, which was, and is, done consciously and unconsciously. Those who can not carry the sound on certain pitches, they sustain the thought. Sustenance is very essential, in which SOUND helps a lot.

This is a very important quality and characteristic of *mantra*. It should reverberate again and again and again. *Ajapajapa* -- it happens. In spite of you, the *japa* is happening. So by singing, it becomes part and parcel of you. Because breath, pulsation, that sustains the life, and it has been a part of that life current this *mantra*. So that's why it goes into our very being. Singing is very, very important. For every *mantra*, it shares its secret. That is its message, and it becomes part of you by singing.

CS: Gandhi was, then, teaching political freedom through spiritual freedom, through singing?

K: Singing opens the whole thing -- especially with the pieces in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. All the thoughts, all the ideas, they unfold, and with that in my heart, my soul unfolds into maturity. This has been my mainstay for years -- besides going to Gandhiji's prayer meetings. When you take it up with your own initiative, and you do it daily, early in the morning, the rhythmic aspect gives you time to focus. The whole thing puts you into a state where you can really understand it. You look and say: "Ah, this is true! that is true!" The music opens the door so you can reach your OWN self. And, this is what the people felt!

CS: Do you feel Gandhiji used music in that way?

K: All of Gandhi's work depended upon prayers and it was SUNG prayer.

First, early in the morning. Then, later, for students, there was a different compilation of prayers in the *Vidhyamandir prartana*; then *Strivargaki* prayers for when the women would be together, with a special selection that would really inspire them for the lofty principles for which they had to be prepared, for the highest sacrifices also. Then, through evening prayers in which everybody joined, all the levels could be kept up.

All the attention, all the energies could be fused then through one channel to *satyagraha*. If *satyagraha* movements were to be started, within certain time frames, all the preparations had to be for THAT. (All the time, you have to keep your instrument in order, and then there comes an occasion when you give a performance. But behind that performance, there is ALL your *sadhana*.)

The ashram community provided the leadership for that unified action. If you see the hierarchy, the mouthpiece was Mahatma Gandhiji; then there were, as they say, lines of defense. The lines of *satyagraha* had to be there. If there was one ashramite living amongst the people in the far-distant communities, which were spread all over India, he was the torchlight for everyone there. His example was a living example of what Bapuji stood for, of his leadership.

Those ashrams prepared the people who changed the climate of the whole country, because there was the resistance against foreign rule. They had to set their personal model, their example, before the people -- what they stood for, how they should act. Even their slightest action, from the most minor to the most major, was subject to the eye of the common man. They tried to emulate Gandhiji with his spirit of 100% commitment.

CS: The sung-prayers in the *Ashram Bhajanavali* constituted the rituals and the daily ritual practice of *satyagraha*? Were they *yajna*?

K: Yes, of course, they were *yajna*. You see, the first *yajna* is performed here (she gestures to her heart). The flame being of light is right behind the heart, which pulsates. And Gandhiji sang, '*Prātah smarāmi* -- I remember that *ātma tattva*.' But, how many heart beats are taken consciously? The breaths which we take every minute and are sustained by Divine.

CS: This current edition of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* that I am holding is so small that it could fit easily in one's pocket. Just looking at this volume, it is so small, so silent, it could just as easily be passed over as not being of much import. But, when you work with this, and coordinate it with the primary and secondary sources concerning Gandhi, it becomes evident there was a great deal of sound and sung ritual in the *satyagraha* movement.

K: It is very, very important. Surely. Because as they did their work, it was not with bound volumes -- it was by direct vibration. That is why he could take the millions

with him. When he was marching in the 1920s and 1930s, millions of people's eyes followed him everywhere. And there is a *pranam* we say to him: 'Oh, million-eyed one.' He gave his message through SOUND -- and, through silence also.

CS: Out of all the scriptures available, why do you feel these were chosen?

K: First, (laughing) they couldn't take all the verses of all the scriptures. Second, these were taken to make a deep impression, which gave a great *sanskar* [shaping] to the people. After that, they emerged ready for the right action, for their lives, and for the nation also. It was for *sanskar* [shaping of an impression].

Gandhiji was dealing with the common people. He was their teacher, every day. He WAS a *rishi* [ancient holy man], but also a person down-to-earth trying to realize the highest ideals, the subtlest, to be within the reach of the common man. He had love for the most left-out or rejected one; he would not like to leave that one behind.

Gandhiji taught by everything he did. He was not only observed during the day time, but 24-hours a day. What is *ashram* life? We're under observation by our followers, so that *they* can follow that path, through and through, with transparency.

CS: As you consider the contents of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, do you see any general themes?

K: Yes. There are many, many verses written about the glory of God. But, Gandhiji was a very practical man, and these songs ask 'what should WE do?' These prayers ask: 'what is that by which WE can improve our own life quality? and not be lost in this thing and that thing?' Always, in these prayers, we are concentrating on the qualities of a balanced person.

WE are praying also. It is a double-edged sword. We are knowing on one side, telling ourselves through these words actually, what is the real quality of a balanced person, and asking 'how much of that do I have? where do I stand?' And, day after day, when this is part of my daily prayer, I ask this daily of myself. So, the message has gone inside, and now I start molding also myself, coming up to that standard. When I make it a part of MY prayer, then I am involving the help of God, which helps me evolve into a better consciousness and my dealings with others also. It is through this way.

And, when everybody was singing? I've seen a prayer meeting where there was one *lakh* of people, 100,000 people, who were seated in one place. And in such a situation, when these prayers are sung out, SUNG OUT, everybody is so attentive.

This is not just "ear-hearing;" it is hearing with the heart, hearing even around and through the back of the heart. Not only is there the the sound of pin-drop silence, but along with that, you hear your OWN heart beat. And with that, you hear the sound of these *mantras*, which are made of sound.

Music makes the sound very soothing, and, thus, it is sustained. It makes an impression, a very lasting impression, on the heart. And, there was the living presence of Mahatma Gandhiji, who embodied all these ideals in his life. Such a simple man, full of the spirit of truth and non-violence, for which he would lay out anything and everything as sacrifice. This all made a very, very lasting impression on one and all. One can't forget that experience.

They were all in a prayer mood. They were not in a politics mood. Although prayer was the preparation for politics.

CS: The use of some of these prayer-songs by Gandhiji and those immediately around him is documented in accounts of his fasting and in accounts of the national marches. Do you know whether songs, like "*Kṛṣṇa tvadiiya*," for example, would have been chanted by certain individuals during the *satyagraha* campaigns?

K: While growing up, I was in so many *satyagraha* processions, *prabat preris*, when people go early in the morning and try to create awakening in the sleeping masses. There were songs, and, with them, we went. Some slogans were there: *Vande Mataram*. These were songs that were dear to the people. Those were very dear songs of the people at that time, to awaken their spirit and to attune themselves to the work, and to get ready for suffering.

So, these songs were on the lips of the people. "*Kṛṣṇa tvadiiya*" would have been part of the prayer meetings, in which it is one couplet. It is the call of a person, asking that the 'the *rājahansa* of my mind' might find its place at the time of parting: 'I don't want to postpone it, but today, right now.' Yes, it was chanted in the prayer meetings. If someone were marching, hearing "*Kṛṣṇa tvadiiya*" from the *Mukundamala* in their heads, why not? Or the *Upanishads*?

There is a natural self-preserving instinct even in animals, so in human beings also. To overcome that instinct, there must be some counter-force that is a moral power -- it could be from the *Upanishads*; it could be from *Mukundamala* or some special verses from the *Qur'an* -- Christian, Buddhist, Zoroastrian, Sikh -- or *bhajans* which are given here, so many of them. Who can say which was the source of inspiration for whom?

But, with THESE verses, the work could be done.

CS: I've noticed that very often, in his English translation of these songs which he made for Mirabehn, Gandhi used the word 'God' instead of '*Ram*' which was in the original verse. Did Gandhi use the word '*Rām*' as the universal 'God'?

K: Yes, often '*Ram*' is the same as *Brahman*, God, the Universal Being.

CS: It has been written by Margaret Chatterjee that Gandhi was more a devotee of Rama's than of Krishna's. Why do you think that would be?

K: Shri Ram had given the society a moral, ethical model. There were different *avatars*, and at different stages of evolution. Divine guidance comes in different forms. The teacher appears in the classroom; the creation is like a classroom. The teacher comes and gives the lessons, sets the model. Everything is explained, and he lives the life: 'This is how it should be lived.' Then, he leaves the classroom, and the students are left to themselves to follow the lessons out! Within them, there can be some wiser people, some less wise; there are group leaders, and there are some naughty children who create difficulties (laughing), some cowards, some not so bright. So, from ages immemorial the game has been going on.

The teacher will return to the classroom to check the students' homework. However, the teacher (*Brahman*) won't remain in the classroom all the time; the students are left to themselves for times, to see how they will work it out. And, the lesson is always more and more advanced; it is given on more progressive lines. This is how the story in our day also goes.

So, there was a time when human beings didn't know how to relate well. But, look at Shri Ram. Ram is a representative of Divine. He fulfilled a boon given by his father to his stepmother. He kept up the representation of how to respect his parents and his wife. His father, Dasharatra, had three wives. But Ram set a law for himself: one wife. When Sita was in exile? Why? If he is a king then he has to be a model. If they don't respect him, then he's not a king.

This is called the role of an *avatar*. An *avatar* who knows what he is, is one with the *Brahmic* consciousness, and these *devatas* also, they are the laws of *dharma*. They are expressing the *dharma* of *Brahman*. So, there is no dichotomy. But they have to set a kind of ideal behavior for the common people to follow. And surely, to set a proper line of action in which there is security for children, and race also is to be considered, there's not too much selfishness or superficiality involved.

Ram is called *maryada purushottama* -- everything has its line, is well-spelled out. Tracks are laid down, and, for that, he paid heavily [Monier-Williams 1999, p,791, "*Maryada* -- one who sets marks or limits, an arbiter, umpire; the bounds or limits of morality and propriety, rule or custom, distinct law or definition, Mn, MBh"]. This is the character which Gandhiji could project before the people also, if they had to follow self-discipline and prepare their psyche for concentration.

Shri Krishna was also an *avatar*. But, Shri Krishna's behavior, if it were put into practice, would bring about anarchy. *Shri Krishna* is considered *lila purushottamama*. *Brahman* can play the *lila* through the life of Krishnaji. But, Ram depicts *maryada*.

Mohandas was Gandhiji's name, and it means one of *Krishna*'s names. But Gandhiji did not make Krishna the object for his day-to-day *dhun*. Ram-*dhun* was his choice, and he sang "*Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram*."

At that time, *maryada* was a very important value to be highlighted, to be placed in the very center of every Indian person. For Shri Ram, life was full of sacrifice. So people should be prepared. They were being PREPARED unconsciously for high sacrifices. For the path of non-violence, it is not an easy path. You can't be aggressive in any manner. If you have a weapon, there's a chance that the other person may have one also, so there's an equal balance. But, where you know you don't have any such device with you -- then what is it that will sustain you in your own moral power?

Only in the real Self, and confidence in the Truth, and in the sovereignty of the realm of the Self. And, you know that you are a person of Truth, so without any hatred or anger towards the other person, with *shanti* you go.

CS: So, were these prayer-songs meant by Gandhi as a form of meditation or as a form of excitement?

K: Not for excitement. It was for meditation. It was concentration on this, and trying to bring these values into life. It was very serious and meditative. It was very, very in-drawn. There are different types of music. If you are in ecstasy, *bhav samadhi*, that joy of meeting your beloved has an intensity, as in the Hare Krishna dancing and movement. Gandhi didn't use music in that way, but he would not have objected.

When we would go to the evening prayers, if they were at 5:30, we would go earlier than that. We would get settled by 5:00 -- privately, silently, deeply. It was serious and meditative. There would be only *pranams* [bowing] if anything. But no talk. And, after the singing of the prayers, Gandhiji would give a talk. What he said, those things were to be absorbed, and to be put into your life.

CS: In choosing stories of Ram, one could say that some theological decisions were made concerning what was chosen for the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Are there other instances of "theological choices" or "editing" that you've noticed in this collection?

K: Yes. Think of how much sensitive editing had to be done! What was the material to be presented?

1) Those hymns that have a theology of negativity or fear are not in the *Bhajanavali*, nor those that emphasize punishment (there is no punishment, no prize). Hymns that encourage only one isolated way, or that opinion that excludes all others, saying 'this is the only path,' are not in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Because all paths are respected equally. All the prayers are cosmic prayers. There is never 'this is the only way.' *Ved* means *jnan* it means ever-growing.

2) In Tulsidas' verse from *Ramcaritmanas*, there is a verse that originally ended with 'Blest the life that has service of brahmins upheld!' But in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, the song is sung not with the word *dvija* [twice-born; high born brahmin] but with *Haribhakti* [lover of God] instead. For Gandhiji, *brahman* consciousness was not a matter of birth. That verse had to be changed for *satyagraha*.

3) The hymn I sang for Gandhiji, "*Sumiran kara le*," was a *bhajan* by Guru Nanak. Nanak, in this song, gives so many beautiful similes to tell how life can be devoid of divine consciousness. But there are at least two verses left out in the *Bhajanavali* version. There was a time when woman was given a lesser place, so Nanak originally used the comparison, *nari purush bina*, a woman without a man, meaning that a woman without a man would be incomplete. But the *Bhajanavali* leaves that out. It's interesting. There's another very beautiful comparison that is also left out that connected with the 'woman' simile to balance it. Nanak said *panchi* (bird) *panka* (wings) *bina* (without) -- this was sacrificed along with *nari purush bina*.

Otherwise, *nari purush bina*, with that concept, how could women be taken out of the *pardha* and subjugated status? Gandhiji had to liberate women also, and it is whatever freedom we see for women in India today.

4) There is an equally powerful metaphor that used to be used in the treatment of this topic of depicting life devoid of divine consciousness. It is that of the *sati* or faithful wife who bravely mounts her husband's funeral pyre and never turns back. This wouldn't be included!

Bapuji released the laws that women should come forth. That *svadeshi*, the things made in the country must be given preference over things from other countries, even if they are very fine -- it's *svadeshi bhavana*. For that he used the women, and Ba herself, his wife. And, the women also came out of the *ashram*. Every *ashram* should have a teacher and a school, and the children should be raised according to these principles. For that, Gandhiji said they will do *satyagraha* -- it is a very honorable thing to do, in the society, in the family -- when she comes out of the home, she is exposed to outside things. There is a kind of loss to the family, but if she goes for a good cause, then the family feels proud of her. They feel she's participating in a kind of *yajna* and they feel that they are participating in a kind of national *yajna* for the liberation of the country.

Everybody felt a kind of vibration once there were women with them in *satyagraha*. Because, at that time, the English were ruling through the Indians. And the Indian men got a kind of shock: 'Oh, I'm raising my hand against a woman! It could be my wife, or my sister, or my daughter.' It would immediately give them a shock, and the women would say: 'All right, so do it.' With that one action, Gandhiji

was very wise. He implemented many, many lessons. And this is how women got a good chance for education also. They were not lacking in any manner. Children also learned to become more self dependent.

Now what is done in the name of women's liberation, it is not with a high consciousness, but with so much ego. Woman is losing respect for herself. She is the mother really -- she need not try to be like men. It doesn't mean 'might is right.' Men have their qualities, but woman has many of her own best qualities. Big business from the West and western culture have taken over and we now have no voice against it. And, how it has overshadowed so many good things of the East, I can not tell you. Families are losing their foundations, their values, and everything Bapuji was upholding.

CS: Were there people who helped Gandhi make these decisions, and helped put the *Ashram Bhajanavali* together?

K: Pandit Narayan Moreshwar Khare chose the *bhajans* for the publication and the *ragas* they were set in. Pandit Khare was a VERY good musician who helped resurrect music in India.

Pandit Khare was a disciple of Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. There was a time when Indian music had fallen into disarray, and even the most spiritual of *ragas* was being used and heard in places like brothels. The ancient understandings had been lost with the forced Islamic conversions. So, Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, who had a very good training, said 'we'll bring the volumes and lyrics from the *sants*, their writings and songs.' He composed new compositions. He started an ashram for music students, a *gurukul*, *Gandharva Mahavidyalaya*, he had a notation system and books written also, systematized. There are hundreds of music schools now, and there is a regular university of music. It was Pandit Shri Digambar only, when Congress sessions were held, who would go there and sing *Vande Mataram*.

Pandit Narayan Moreshwar Khare was his disciple (Digambar's); he was his direct disciple. He had the same attitude, strictness, everything with self-discipline. That was why he came to Gandhiji's ashram. Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar sent him to Mahatma Gandhiji from his *gurukul*.

In the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, there is a solid foundation of this classically-based tradition, because Khare was instrumental in selecting the texts of the songs, and the *ragas*, and he was living an ashramite's life. He was a regular ashramite. He was teaching this (she points to the *Ashram Bhajanavali*). It was part of their teaching.

Pandit Khare's picture was once on the front of one of the *Bhajanavali* editions. Like the cover that bears Mahatma Gandhiji's photograph now? At one time, there was an edition of this very *Bhajanavali* published with Pandit Khare's photograph on the front, with his *tamboura*. You could see Gandhiji is sitting close

to him, and they were all in meditation. He had just sung, and they had gone into meditation.

Pandit Khare would have set the *ragas*, and the meters for these *bhajans*. Look at the variety of *ragas* he has chosen (gesturing to *Ashram Bhajanavali*, p. 82). Number Two is in *Rag des*; Number Three is *rag sohal* (*rag sohani* in the Punjab); Number Four is *rag khamaj*; Number Five is in *rag paraj*; Number Six is in *Rag Kaushiya*; and, Number Seven is in *asavari or todi*. That's what we do. My way has been that I never sing the same words in the same *ragas* that I have already sung. But, for common singing, you have to pick one.

Pandit Khare would have helped choose the *Ramdhun* also. Gandhiji used to sing *Ramdhun* daily, and he would keep the *tal* also (by clapping). With *Ramdhun*, everybody would keep the *tal* and Gandhiji used to do that. You see in Gujarāt, there was a great tradition of singing and dancing to the word, and Gandhiji came from that.

CS: Do you see a pattern to the *ragas*?

K: Yes, we can see at what time these songs would have been sung, because *ragas* are sung at a particular time. Every *raga* has its time, except for some seasonal *ragas* and some *dhun*, like folk *dhuns*. But, they are connected with classical singing also, and they can be sung any time. But for *asavara*, *khamaj*, *sohani*-- they all have their TIMES. So, naturally, according to the time of prayer, he would have kept the *raga*. Or, when people would have gathered besides the prayer time.

These *bhajans* were *raga*-based. Khare was a very great musician, but also dedicated to the ideals laid down by Bapuji. Khare based those songs on *ragas*. *Ragas* have a very deep meaning. Every *raga* depicts one *rasa*; it has a presence, the deity. Every *swara*, every note of it, creates a very specific atmosphere in evoking that particular energy.

The different *Garanas* [traditions] have different melodies. Some are from Gujarat, or from Maharashtra, or from the Punjab. They use different melodies. Even folk people can be experts of given *ragas*. People will travel a long way to listen to someone who is an expert -- how much *ras*, how much depth, message, effectivity, how are the *tal* and *svar* blended.

CS: What instruments were used to accompany the sung-prayers?

K: I remember mainly tambouras, being played. My father and sister would leave very early in the mornings carrying their tambouras. But the harmonium was very seldom used.

CS: Who helped Gandhiji with choosing the Sankrit *shlokas* that comprise the first third of the collection?

K: Shri Kaka Saheb Kalelkar and Acarya Vinobhave helped choose the *shlokas*. They were sung on special occasions by all. Otherwise, they were sung by those like Kaka Sahab Kalelkar, a Sanskrit scholar, who would not be satisfied with any prayer meeting that didn't have a lot of *Upanishads*. He always chanted the *Ishopanishad*, Kaka Saheb did. He had made a very detailed study of it, and he was a musician. He had a very good ear for music. He had been with Gandhiji since the beginning.

Kaka Kalelkar helped make these selections. Each one is so beautiful. Gandhiji did a monumental work here, which will go for ages to humanity. And now, after how many years, Gandhiji passed on in 1948, and it is 2005 or 06 -- almost 50 years hence? Almost fifty years, and now the time has come also for this place to taste it.

I sang for Kaka Saheb, once, when he was much older. I sang to him one time, and he was very happy, thrilled, and he laughed. I sang to him and he started singing with me. It was so charming. We were all laughing. He was so open-hearted, like a child. These are memories I cherish, which give nourishment and sustenance.

CS: In the front portion of the *Bhajanavali*, in the Sanskrit *shlokas*, where Gandhiji and Kakaji included the *Upanishads*, why is there no actual *Rig Veda* verse?

K: Because the *Upanishads* are the fruits of the *Vedas*, and in the *Upanishads* there are the same verses. The same verses were taken, but discussed in the presence of the *guru* -- *upa-ni-shad* -- sitting in the presence of their peers. They were not different; they were the same.

These *Upanishads* are chosen from here and there. This is such unfailing medicine! A remedy for all the ills. And going with music, it can never fail you!

CS: When was the word *Allah*" added to *Raghupati Raghava*?

K: This is a tune that was set by Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. The first line only may have been sung then. But, when Gandhiji came on the scene, and he had the devotion to liberate Mother India, the Muslims felt separate. So Gandhiji added *Allah* to that *dhun*, so that both communities should feel a unity for one cause. It came with Gandhiji. We can't say when these words were given, but they were so that everybody would have right thinking, and could move in one direction.

CS: Gandhi's actions and the *satyagraha* movement have been scrutinized in such detail by so many people, so many scholars from both West and East. He was a complex man, and he has at times received so much criticism.

K: We are at times very, very cruel when we pass judgments on people who worked in such difficult conditions. After all, we have not received what THEY have received. So much they have done, that it needed about one hundred years at least. The achievements which they worked out in their period resulted in the state we are left with, and we should ask what are WE doing with that? This is how we should learn to compare their work when we are very harsh in passing judgements.

This I always feel -- the conditions then were really very, very, very difficult. In spite of that, different communities could come together AND India did attain its freedom, although it was a very heavy cost when the partition came.

Let's step back for a moment, and look at what Gandhiji had to do, and how long it took to prepare the *Ashram Bhajnavali*. When he published this, do you think that was the only time that it was manifested? No, no, no. Those prayers were with him during 21 years of preparation before hand! And then, they brought them to light. Even a small bottle of *ghi* takes a long time to make -- it's a long process. So you can imagine what it must have taken to churn out all this.

The *sadhana* that Gandhi waged has outweighed the lapses of so many of us. Still it was really his *sadhana*. But the fight is not over.

So many good things have happened. But, so many things of the culture are now also falling apart, decreasing. Everybody should have gone to the Vedas and moved forward. Now, in politics, in the constitution as formulated, India is a secular place. *Dharma* now has no place. So, if you are not left with *dharmā*, what are you left with?

This current situation is the work of politics. This is why you see so much confusion. Groupism and parties -- further and further away from the real values for which India stood. But inside, people still want to uphold these values, because that is our basic spring, and our natural *dharmā*.

CS: What is the difference between a text and a text which is sung?

K: Words are words, but when you sing them, then the real thing comes. The whole feeling flows through us; the whole content flows through us by singing. It becomes part of your blood stream. It is because those breaths are so conscious, so purposeful. They are carrying the life breath of that which they represent -- Life. So, Life starts flowing with the content, and that feeling, and all the centers of the body synchronize with that, and you become one with that. For instrumentalists, this can not happen -- that is something else -- it's like reading a very good book, but it's one translated from another language. When you sing, everything becomes alive.

You can have a full-size photograph of somebody and you can have somebody. This is the difference. You see every feature, every thing, but, they are different. Or, in a mirror, everything is there, but when you touch it, the nose, the cheeks, the ears -- they are flat! There is a difference between the appearance and the reality. When you touch a person and when you see them in a mirror, there's a

difference. And, even if you have a statue that shows a likeness to the person, there is still a difference. There is a degree of difference between a reflection in a mirror and a piece of sculpture. Yet, there is a greater degree of difference between either of those and the life of the person.

If you read something, it is someone else's. You may also identify with it mentally, but it is someone else's. When you sing, you are committing yourself. It is coming through you. Now it is your message. Every cell of your body expresses it, gets lit up by that message, because you are in attunement with that. Whatever you sing, you become that. There's a world of difference. And, then, when you come back to yourself, you ARE all that, yet you are somebody who transcends all that. You try to become that. You may not have reached it fully, BUT AT THAT TIME, YOU WERE THAT!

Indian music is very organic. It comes through you. This is very important, because you feel that it is coming through you. From you, and then through you. Guru Nanak's consciousness is not bound by his time. Guru Nanak's consciousness is now YOUR consciousness. It is in you now, and your body is an instrument of that. And you experience this in a fresh manner in this song, life, and breath. This is YOUR song now. When you sing it, you have to become it. It is more than even words from a pulpit. It's a very vital difference.

THE CURRENT MISSION OF A TRADITION-BEARER

The interviews with Shri Karunamayee which have been transcribed and presented above help to place the *Ashram Bhajanavali* within the social, religious, and political context of its time. Shri Karunamayee's reports of events that took place correspond with the written and published reports of the day, as evidenced in the *Collected Works* and in secondary materials presented in earlier chapters. By correlating these primary and secondary sources from Gandhi's era with the information provided by Shri Karunamayee, a better understanding of the *Ashram Bhajanavali's* significance for *satyagraha* has been achieved. Further, it has been established that Shri Karunamayee, as a living witness of *satyagraha*, is a tradition-bearer for Gandhi's *Bhajanavali* and the *satyagraha* movement.

Specifically, as a direct witness, her descriptions of how the sung-prayers affected people, how people were physically and spiritually moved, and how Gandhi used these pieces to educate the Indian populace to respond in coordinated,

non-violent ways are invaluable. Her reports indicate the extent to which this sung-prayer repertoire was used for meditative purposes. The sung-prayer material served as a focal point for concentration and self-control. As was mentioned in previous chapters, even the *Ramdhun* prayers were often utilized as crowd-control to quiet congregations before prayer, and as meditative device at the end of prayer.

Shri Karunamayee's attendance at actual events and her observations concerning direct participation in the evening prayer meetings present a clear picture of how Gandhi utilized these sung-prayers. Contrary to many westerners' prejudice that Indian music is defined by the lively dancing and singing of the Hare Krishna movement that occurred in this country in the 1970s, it should be noted here that Gandhi did not use music in this way. As Shri Karunamayee stated above, Gandhi's use of music was not for excitation, but was for meditation. As such, this usage would fall into the Hyperquiescent category of d'Aquili and Newberg's paradigm, a state connected with the parasympathetic nervous system, which is described as oceanic tranquility, or bliss, and it occurs during "slow" rituals, such as chanting, prayer, or even ordinary religious services (d'Aquili & Newberg 1999, p25). While the "Projective I" of the individual (in Urban's schematic) actively partakes in the hearing and singing of mythic remembrance, s/he would have been enabling a process similar to Rappaport's reference to the 'Halakhic man' who in frequent, daily rituals was directly involved in the manifestation of bringing Heaven to earth.

The continuity of Shri Karunamayee's lineage and mission does not end with Gandhi, or even with herself, as she states: '*Satyagraha* is not over. It is only partially completed. The *prarthana* [prayers], the sound, it is as if we see the stars only at this moment. But, what Gandhiji's work was, it was done in continuation. What we sing now, they are the light that was emitted thousands of years back.'

For several years, Shri Karunamayee has been teaching Indian vocal music in the United States, as well as in the Shri Aurobindo Ashram at Delhi. She has

become interested in passing on those teachings she has received, and the renditions of music that she remembers from the time of *satyagraha*.

'As it was done in the true *ashram*, these prayers, this small seedling is now being brought out. It was my prayer that these prayers will be sung! They must be heard! As you may have noticed, anybody can sing with them. It is so simple. It can become anybody's heart beat. It has the message; it is *mantra* also. We sing directly the song of it. This creates the survival of the world.'

Her mission, to create the survival of the world through Gandhi's counsel embodied in the *Bhajanavali*, has been focussed on the individual, on society, and on the world at-large. She has taught individuals through private lessons, as well as groups who have met in private homes and retreat centers.

'By singing [the *Ashram Bhajanavali*], it becomes part and parcel of your own being. Otherwise, these are just books, lying there -- stacks of them! But, somebody who is singing can use them. They fill life with hope, and when we cannot find any person to whom we can confide, or from whom we can take advice, this is a very living, burning counsel.'

She continues to understand her mission in the light (and sound) of ancient teachers, both Eastern and Western.

'This is a very important time in creation. WE are sitting together with some music. And music means the core of eternity of all creation. Why should these *mantras* be coming here now? Because there is need of them. The continuity of the light of the stars is penetrating more and more. The stars are not going to be put out, and we have more and more awareness. This is light to the world, like John and the Christ. This is light. People want to hear this.

The creation is not meant to be stagnant. It is an evolutionary march. The Veda is not a closed book. *Veda* means *jnana*, and it is ever-growing, ever-expanding.'

When asked whether this concept of sonic, vibratory expansion was connected with the Sanskrit verbal root *brih*, Shri Karunamayee answered in the affirmative: 'Yes, it is growing, ever-moving, ever-brewing.'

This chapter has presented Shri Karunamayee's stories, recollections, and teachings both as evidence of how these prayer songs were utilized, and as evidence of their significant power during Gandhi's *satyagraha*. Gandhi lived and taught through the power of sung-prayer rituals. Ritual has the power to move people together. Sung-prayer has the power to bring people together toward unified actions. In his early writings, Gandhi declared that what he did, he did not just for India, but for the help of the whole world. He would most assuredly endorse and support Shri Karunamayee's current mission of bringing the *Bhajanavali* to new singers in order to sustain the world's continuing creation, as he would no doubt have agreed with her dedication to the principle that: 'What we sing now, they are the light that was emitted thousands of years back' (Shri Karunamayee).

Shri Karunamayee Abrol's Family Tree

Maternal Grandfather

Acharya Sunder Singh-Ji

-Sikh; friends w/ Hazrat Inayat Khan and Swami Shraddhananda

Arya Samaj

-left job as Inspector of Schools to start National School and founded

Sri Ram Ashram High School, Amritsar

-ran *Arya Anath-Alaya* Orphanage, Delhi

Paternal Grandfather

Lala Jagat-Ram-Ji

-Kshatriya from Riyasi, Jammu Kashmir (same lineage as Dr. -became Karan Singh)

-expelled his son for not eating meat, then followed him into

Khadi movement

Paternal Great-Aunt

-child widow

Mother

Shrimati Shanta Devi

-attended *Arya Samaj Putri Path-Shala* School, Chawri Bazar, Delhi

-at 7, began to teach

-married outside of caste; no bride-dowry

-house like ashram

Maternal Uncle

Dhruv Dev

-revolutionary with Bhagat Singh

Maternal Uncle

Vir Dev or "Vir"

-ran *Shri Ram* H.S. following Sunder Singh-Ji

-principal, wrote plays on Hindu-Muslim unity, current Reformist subjects produced

Father

Mahashaya Krishna Chandra-Ji

-at 10, expelled by father for refusing to eat meat

-at 16, went to Delhi (ca.1913)

-follower of Gandhi from beginning, 1919

-*Arya Samaj*, *Arya Kumar Sabha*, Congress, *Khadi* movement, and

"Society that Breaks the Caste System"

- met Shrimati Shanta Devi and Surendranath Jauhar (see below) in Delhi
- married outside of caste; no bride-dowry
- house like ashram
- attended many Gandhi Prayer Meetings

Paternal Friend

Surendranath Jauhar

- influenced by Shraddhananda
- founded Aurobindo Ashram, Delhi
- changed Sikh name (Sikhandarla) to Surendranath Jauhar; became a 'Faquir'
- asked Karunamayee to live at Ashram

Karunamayee Abrol

- went on early morning *bhajan* singing parties, *prabhat pheris*
- at 16, sang for Gandhi at evening prayer meeting, Delhi (1945)

Elder Sister

Santosh Mati/Bhatt

- at 16 jailed as *satyagrahi*:
 - arrested: 2 September 1942
 - released: 22 November 1942 (2 mos, 22 days)
- went often with father to Gandhi's 4 a.m. prayer meetings
- sang three times for Gandhi, once at evening prayers with sister Karunamayee (1945)

4 Other Sisters

2 Brothers

CHAPTER SEVEN. POST-COLONIALISM, SOME REFLECTIONS, AND A FINAL SUMMATION

POST-COLONIALISM AND ASSESSMENTS OF *SATYAGRAHA*

During the final years of Gandhi's life, he became more and more depressed as it became clear to him that his campaigns for non-violence were not accomplishing what he wished. Although independence had been achieved, violence between Pakistan and India had escalated over the Partition, and that same violence would eventually take his life. The violence still continues today, and Gandhi would be most dismayed over the current nationalist fervor and the current acts of violence.

David Smith has written that in the modernity currently emerging from India, 'much of religion has [been] transmuted into nationalism,' whilst India and Pakistan stand poised against each with their nuclear weapons in "[t]he hands of the Doomsday Clock of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*' (Smith 2003, p.184 & p.200). In his work *Hinduism and Modernity*, Smith outlines how nationalism, which was once needed to evict the British, and which was once described in 1979 by the Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party) as a force for providing to India a nation 'which is modern, progressive and enlightened in outlook and which proudly draws inspiration from India's ancient cultures and values' (Smith 2003, p.189), has today become embroiled in competitive wrangling. 'The nationalism of modernity overrides the original Hindu model' (Smith 2003, p.189). Gangsters are prevalent in the political system, and the violence between Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs has continued since the time of the Partition, with the destruction of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya (said to be the birthplace of Rama) being among one of the worst examples of communal violence, with thousands having been killed.

Echoing Smith's description, Shri Karunamayee spoke in Chapter Six of the present-day circumstances in which Indians find themselves living :

'Big business from the West and western culture have taken over and we now have no voice against it. [H]ow it has overshadowed so many good things of the East, I can not tell you. Families have lost their foundations, their values, and everything Bapuji [Gandhi] was upholding.

...so many things of the culture are now also falling apart, decreasing. ... Now, in politics, in the constitution as formulated, India is a secular place. *Dharma* now has no place. So, if you are not left with *dharma*, what are you left with? ...

Groupism and parties -- further and further away from the real values for which India stood. But inside, people still want to uphold these values, because that is our basic spring.'

With the current situation of violence and chaos that reigns in modern India today, one is tempted to ask whether Gandhi's *satyagraha* approach to *svaraj* was a success or a failure. Quoting from C.R. Rajagopalachari, one of the very few of Gandhi's colleagues still alive in the mid-1960s, Hugh Tinker has printed what Gandhi's wishes had been for post-Colonial India:

'He desired simplicity in living to become a general feature. He desired self-sufficiency at least in food and clothing. He desired that the citizens should govern themselves freely and that the compulsory powers of the state should be reduced to a minimum. He desired Hindus and Muslims to live in mutual trust and fraternal unity. He desired firm friendship between India and Pakistan and elimination of all hostility between them' (Tinker 1965, p.154).

For Hugh Tinker, writing in 1965, and drawing on Frank Moraes' *India Today* (1960), Gandhi was a "magnificent failure." Within ten years of Gandhi's death most of his closest colleagues had abandoned the *satyagraha* principles: "Service...has given way to a struggle for power and privilege" (Tinker 1965, p.136). Tinker remarks that Gandhi foresaw this decline, as in December 1947, he wrote: "'Today everybody in the Congress is running after power.... The Congressmen failed to come up to scratch and to shoulder the burden. Such is our bankruptcy'" (Tinker 1965, p.146).

Tinker also concludes that much of Gandhi's decline came not only from others' desires for power, but from his own insistence on choosing causes unpopular to the general Hindu populace (Muslim unity, elimination of untouchability, etc). Gandhi was also reticent to move quickly into the industrialization of the West.

Would he have minded more that, as Frank Moraes suggests, his own trusted lieutenant, Jawaharlal Nehru, deliberately took the path of centralization and industrialization? The greatest departure from the Gandhian ideal has certainly been the pursuit of the material standards of the West by means of the western techniques of industrialization: the attempt to turn India into a factory and a mine (Tinker 1965, p148).

Tinker comments that people still look back on the Freedom Fighting days as "days of glory," and they glamorize the memories of Gandhi and the great struggle. However, for the most part, Gandhi's actual techniques and aspirations have been abandoned. His were the ideals of compromise, conciliation, and cooperation. "The extent to which independent India has furthered this creed is the true measure of Gandhi's success or failure" (Tinker 1954, p.141). If Tinker had written this today, in the light of current circumstances, he would most probably have judged Gandhi, along with Moraes, still "a magnificent failure."

Others, in more recent days, have, at least in certain ways, judged Gandhi through a different lens, and have judged his life's work to have been a success.

In his work *Margins of Political Discourse* (1989), Fred Dallmayr has suggested that Mohandas Gandhi was actually one of the first "true mediators" between the East and the West, even though Gandhi's wish was to stem the tide of western material aggression. Dallmayr focusses on Gandhi's quasi-Socratic ability in 'his capacity for unsettling traditional dividing lines and dichotomies, including (above all) the polarity between East and West' (Dallmayr 1989, p.24). As a "critical traditionalist," able both to critique and to defend his own tradition, he provided both a corrective and "a gateway or threshold between cultures, a threshold which links and separates at the same time" (Dallmayr 1989, p.26).

'What is typically invoked in contemporary writings is an image of Gandhi not as a modernizing nation-builder but rather as a critical traditionalist, that is, as a figure able to combine reliance on indigenous Indian traditions with the aspiration of liberating transformation. In this respect, Gandhi is clearly an unparalleled political and intellectual figure in our century, someone who has lessons not only to India, but to the world at large' (Dallmayr 1996, p.172).

Gandhi has written of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*: '...probably the ashram [sung]-prayer is a hotchpot of something Eastern and something Western. As I have no prejudice against taking anything good from the West or against giving up anything bad in the East, there is an unconscious blending of the two' (Gandhi 2000, p.144). Dallmayer has assessed Gandhi to be 'a guidepost or beacon of light for East and West alike, a guidepost pointing toward an alternate cosmopolis or future world society'" (Dallmayr 1989, p.38).

Many people have identified Gandhi's genius with his ability to combine concepts from differing religions in such a way that a new hybrid was formed, which touched and moved people. In his *Orientalism and Religion* (1999), Richard King points to the need for an awareness of the hybridization that can take place within and between religions and cultures: "What is required of the study of Indian culture and 'religion' in a post-colonial context is an attempt to think across or beyond traditional Orientalist representations - to 'transgress the boundaries' imposed by normative Western models of 'religion' (King 1999, p.210). He goes on to say that "[t]here is no single 'Indian,' 'Chinese' or 'African' way of looking at the world, just as there is no definite 'gender-critical stance' from which to approach the study of religion (King 1999, p.212).

Halbfass has also written that

'The modern idea of 'Hinduism,' or of the 'Hindu religion,' is a

reinterpretation of the traditional ideas and, in a sense, is a hybridization of the traditional self-understanding. Yet it is by no means a mere adaptation of Western superimpositions. It is also a continuation of the tradition, an expression and transformation of that self-understanding which articulates itself in its commitment to the Vedic revelation. It is this commitment that provides the focus for traditional Hindu self-understanding...' (Halbfass 1991, p16).

In this regard, Gandhi was ahead of his time, and he himself certainly helped create the open space for this new, modern kind of Hinduism, as his "effectiveness lay in his creative use of traditional beliefs and symbols. He 'used the traditional to promote the novel; he reinterpreted tradition in such a way that revolutionary ideas, clothed in familiar expression were readily adopted and employed towards revolutionary ends'" (Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence*, p.105 in Parel 2000, p.133). He was an adept at hybridization.

Bikhu Parekh attests to Gandhi's having remained within his own Hindu tradition, while also borrowing freely from other religious traditions when he desired. Parekh describes a number of ways in which Gandhi utilized the religious terms of his tradition, but provided them with new definitions. For instance, '*samādhi* meant not leaving the world...but temporal withdrawal from the daily routine in order to compose one's thoughts and to reflect on the meaning and significance of one's actions' (Parekh 1999, p.108). While Gandhi's ideas on religion as social service had had its roots in the 19th century, 'his view that a total and lifelong commitment to wiping away every tear from every eye was the *only* path to *moksha* was almost entirely new' (Parekh 1999, p.111). Further, while the practices of fasting were age-old in India, 'Gandhi's concept of the redemptive fast was based on a creative combination of some Hindu ideas and practices with the Christian concepts of vicarious atonement and suffering love. ...[N]ew to both traditions, [this concept] owed [its origin] to his creative synthesis of [both of] them' (Parekh 1999, p.112).

In her book *Gandhi and the Challenge of Religious Diversity* (2005), Margaret Chatterjee has marked several ways in which Gandhi blended religious concepts from divergent religions into new hybrids. While Gandhi was in London, intellectual discussion of the day focussed on examinations of the Truth, '[however], linking of Truth and nonviolence was peculiarly his own' (Chatterjee 2005, p.23). He would combine Vivekananda's concern with God 'as the protector of the needy' with the evangelical concept of 'seeing 'the living God' in the poor' (Chatterjee 2005, p. 32). Most importantly Gandhi grafted Jain concepts into his beliefs; however, again with his own selectivity. In 1926, Gandhi wrote: 'My *anekantavada* [the Jain concept of the many-sidedness of perspectives] is the result of the twin doctrine of *satya* and *ahimsa*' (Chatterjee 2005, p.33).

'For Gandhi, a tradition was not a repository of inviolable norms and values but a place of criticism, change and development. Reinterpreting *moksha* to include political freedom goes along with identifying *dharma* and *moksha* since means and ends are on a continuum. Interpreting *bhakti* both vertically and horizontally encouraged fellow-feeling beyond the bounds of community' (Chatterjee 2005, p.36).

Gandhi was moved by the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount, and by the simple services of the Quakers. Stoic in character, he combined the attributes of the *sthitaprajna* [person of steady wisdom] from the *Gita* with service to humanity. Chatterjee also mentions additional terms to which Gandhi even gave new meanings:

'Likewise the three *margas* (paths) of *Jnana* (knowledge), *bhakti* (devotion), and *karma* (action) are held in tension by him after the reinterpretation of each. *Jnana* now refers to the need to be sure of the facts before plunging into what may turn out to be ill-advised action. ... *Bhakti*, a term usually reserved for devotion to God, retains its original usage, but in addition Gandhi gives it a horizontal application, love of one's fellow man, that is, a ... sense of 'caring

for'. For Gandhi, *karma*, the third of the three *margas*, indicates not so much single actions of the kind that set off a train of *karmas* or consequences, as whole strategies and policies and their execution (Chatterjee 2005, p.63).

Gandhi made an art out of culling religious and ritual language from various religions and making them his own in an inclusive manner, which was inviting to all. He created an interpretation of Hinduism that was unlike that of the Brahmo Samaj or the Arya Samaj, or any other. His influences and practices were much broader than simply joining with or denying one religion, Christianity. He culled from Jainism, from Islam, from the Quakers, from Buddhism -- and the *Ashram Bhajanavali* is a reflection of this diversity.

Rudolph and Rudolph (2006) have suggested that his overall hermeneutic was postmodern, as "[h]e sought meaning in context, a perspective brought to the interpretation of practice and texts" (Rudolph & Rudolph 2006, p.7). In this regard, he was, as Dallmayr (1989) has asserted, one of the first "true mediators" between the East and West.

Similarly, Ashis Nandy has supported Gandhi's *satyagraha* as an experimental model over and against the "One World of Beauty" chimera, which does not admit to the necessity for the experience of co-suffering in order to understand either other or self. Gandhi's experiment can, says Nandy, continue to encourage the pursuit of a "*ramarajya* that is the earthly kingdom of God or the community of genuine doers of truth" (Dallmayr 1989, p.38). So, too, in his work *Parapolitics: Toward the City of Man*, "[u]sing Western terminology, [Raghavan] Iyer renders *ramarajya* as an ongoing quest beyond the claims of 'class and race, sect and creed,': namely as 'the continual, if incomplete, incarnation of *civitas Dei* into an unfinished *civitas humana*, in the midst of earthly cities where 'ignorant armies clash by night'" (Dallmayr 1989, p.38).

MAHATMA GANDHI'S VOICE

Stephen Hay (2000) views Gandhi's work even more deeply and as even more significant than the East-West dialogue. In his article, 'Gandhi: Guide to a Better Human Future,' he suggests that Gandhi's principles are literally life-saving for humanity and the planet. He identifies three primary concerns in Gandhi's practice: 1) individual self-control or *svaraj*; 2) an empathic desire to serve others, even if they are one's opponents; and 3) the use of prayer in order to help solve what Hay sees as the four current major human problems. Those problems are: 1) physical violence among nations and within nations; 2) the economic plight of women and children, along with problems of illiteracy and world-wide poverty; 3) the destruction of the planet's resources and the decline in air and soil quality, which will lead to eventual destruction of the planet, and 4) a general decline in moral standards and civility.

These concerns were addressed by Gandhi as he trained his *satyagrahis* in *svaraj* (self-discipline). His advice from 1920 about containing 'visceral emotions' is worth remembering today: 'As heat conserved is transmuted into energy, even so our anger controlled can be transformed into a power which can move the world' (in Hay 2000, p. 141). He taught *ahimsa* or non-violence, service to others, and he was greatly concerned for the welfare of women, widows, and children, as well as the problems of poverty and illiteracy. His concern for the planet was illustrated by walking wherever he could, as opposed to taking cars or trains. He advocated simple, but healthy vegetarian foods, which today have been proven to decrease the rate of cancer and heart disease. Finally, he engaged in "heart-felt" sung-prayers at least twice a day, and his desire for self-purification and harmony can still prove useful to those today looking to serve the causes of peace and justice.

'Roger W. Sperry, a Nobel Prize winner, pinpointed the urgency of our situation: 'If we do not succeed soon in adopting a theology that will protect the biosphere and if we do not find a common neutral belief system and global ethic on which most nations and cultures and faiths can

agree, then shortly there may not be any nations or theologies or sciences to worry about -- or even any biosphere' (Hay 2000, 144).

Stephen Hay, thus, sees Gandhi's template for *satyagraha* as no kind of failure, but rather a very successful model for the future survival of both humanity and the world.

So, it would appear, that the voice of Mahatma Gandhi is still today very much in need of being heard, regardless of some of his failings. Gandhi communicated regularly with his followers and the general public through many venues -- in books, newspapers, periodical publications, correspondence, interviews, etc. He voiced his opinions and his guidance in clear and public ways. J.L. Mehta's assertion that India has, in fact, always had strong voices in the East-West dialogue correlates well to the strength with which Gandhi, in his own practice of self-understanding, addressed his country.

Parekh (1999) makes a very pertinent point in this regard. In referring to the many ways in which Gandhi communicated with his followers, his country, and the world-at-large, Parekh writes: Since his correspondents belonged to different cultural and religious traditions and came from all over the world, the columns of his paper took on the character of an ecumenical forum of debate between conflicting points of view (Parekh 1999, p.121). This ecumenical forum is offered as a model for the on-going East-West dialogue.

Yet, further on, beyond the columns of Gandhi's newspaper correspondence, lies another very important source for the ecumenical forum of debate -- the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* may be said to be "the voice" of *satyagraha*, and it is asserted here that the *Bhajanavali* was, and still is, a "voice" for Gandhi.

In addition, Shri Karunamayee is a "voice" for Gandhi. Dedicated to the teachings of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, she is a living embodiment of its principles of religious tolerance, openness to the other, and service to humanity.

Her voice, in its strength, is, indeed, that much more necessary in a time when Hindustani art music, especially the music of the Muslim hereditary professionals is rapidly disappearing. R.B. Qureshi has written that "the stark reality is that within a generation most of these musicians, along with their oral musical heritage, can be fully expected to fade away, a process that can be solidly documented already" (Qureshi 1991, p.162), and that because of a complete lack of patronage and interest (witnessed in 1987), "in twenty years archaeologists will be needed to research music in Pakistan" (Qureshi 1991, p.165).

As a representative of the North Indian, Hindustani tradition, living in Delhi, Shri Karunamayee has herself experienced a present lack of interest from the Indian populace in regard to learning classical Indian music and its repertoires. Since 1987, she has been visiting the West on a regular basis, where she has found new interest from western students to learn the Sufi, classical Indian, and *Ashram Bhajanavali* repertoires which she teaches. Shri Karunamayee produces, as did Gandhi, a strong voice for the on-going East-West dialogue, about which Halbfass has written.

Shri Karunamayee is a sacred singer with ancient roots. As Schneider has remarked, the singer of the sacrifice continued the original creation for the well-being of one's community: '[a] sound sacrifice is accomplished by a singer who surrenders his breath and individuality in order to bring expression to an impersonal empty form and pushes his own personality into the background in order to make himself the sounding board of a higher principle' (Schneider, 1989a, p.75). She is situated in a long line of ancient sacred singers, who can still chant with the *rishis* "*brahma varma mamāntaram* -- my innermost protection is sung-prayer," or even with Indra, who moved throughout the Vedic world *arcann anu svarājyam*, "singing [her] own self-established rule." Her voice may indeed be only one "bead" on the *mala*, but her voice is very strong.

For Shri Karunamayee, the *Ashram Bhajnavali* is not a dead document. It is a living essence, which, especially when sung, brings alive "the light that was emitted thousands of years back." For her, *satyagraha* has not ended. These verses have the power to overcome nuclear proliferation and have the power to continue sustaining the creation of the world. Gandhi's *Ashram Bhajnavali* and its principles, as taught by Shri Karunamayee, continue to hold a valuable template for the continuation of East-West dialogue and peace.

A SUMMATION OF THE THESIS

In "Reflections on Tradition and Inquiry in the Study of Religions," Gavin Flood called for an encounter with texts which "gives hospitality to traditions and their self-representations, allows for discussion across subdisciplines..., is dialogical in nature" (Flood 2006, p.48), and that acts as a bridge between cultures "contributing to human self-understanding and the human good" (Flood 2006, p.57). The present examination has considered one text, the *Ashram Bhajnavali*, and has attempted to locate it within the context of Gandhi's *satyagraha* movement, to examine its development, and to elucidate its contents and usage. In so doing, Gandhi's own words and descriptors have been utilized to understand this text and its usages. In addition, interviews with Shri Karunamayee have helped to elucidate the function and importance of this text to the *satyagraha* movement. In each case, the "voices" being heard have hopefully been presented in a manner consistent with Flood's paradigm.

Chapter One began with the primary assertion that the *Ashram Bhajnavali* has, until recently, been ignored as a key that unlocks Gandhi's theories and practices of *svaraj* based in a new understanding of sung-prayer. It also includes some methodological considerations, along with a description of the reform movements during that period of Colonial rule in India that served as prologue to Gandhi's *satyagraha*.

Chapter Two consisted of a historical overview of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, along with a descriptive summary of the sung-prayer materials found within it. (Chapters Three through Five also provide additional information regarding historical context and development.) This collection of chanted prayers used by the Indian *satyagraha* community, was and is much more than what the term "hymnal" often implies, both in the scope of its contents and in its importance as another tool with which to understand the developments of Gandhi's *satyagraha* community.

In response to the question "what is the message of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*?", it can be clearly stated that its message was that of Gandhi's *svaraj* movement, as reflected most succinctly in the Eleven Vows. The vows were chanted during both Morning and Evening Sung-Prayers. They represented the core values of the *satyagraha* community, and they were the life vows which ashramites had taken and were expected to uphold: *ahimsa, satya, asteya, brahmacharya, asangraha, sharirashrama, asvada, sarvatra bhayavarjana, sarvadharmasamanatva, svadedhi* and *sparshabhavana*. Its eclectic selections of sung-prayers illustrated Gandhi's preferences for a reformed Hinduism, as well as training material for those participating in the non-violent independence movement.

"Who transmitted the message?" of course, changed over time. First and foremost, Mohandas K. Gandhi and the prime-movers of *satyagraha*, such as Khare and Kalelkar, transmitted the message. As the movement grew and sung-prayer groups were established, the text was transmitted by other *satyagrahis* from the *ashrams*, and eventually other *satyagrahis* who met in their own homes or in public places for sung-prayers. In the beginning of the movement, the daily sung-prayers of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* were transmitted to those members committed to *ashram* life. As more and more people committed to *satyagraha* became involved in various forms outside the ashram, more and more Indian people became receivers of the *Ashram Bhajanavali* message. By the end of Gandhi's life,

hundreds of thousands of Indians attended his sung-prayer meetings, and millions could hear his radio speeches around the world. Furthermore, Rappaport's comments must also be remembered here, regarding the fact that ritual participants, who are performers and transmitters themselves, are, simultaneously, a most significant segment of the population who "receive" the message as well.

Chapters Three, Four, and Five examined in more detail how the *Ashram Bhajnavali* was used in ritual contexts, and how these sung-prayers supported Gandhi and the nation in its work for social change. These chapters investigated and discovered the *Bhajnavali's sitz im leben*, as it were.

Chapter Three discussed the use of these sung-prayers in ritual prayer meetings that were chanted twice daily. These sung-prayers provided rhythmic stability and devotional grounding to the *satyagraha* community in its early days. They provided guidance, nourishment, and rules to live by as the movement grew. These prayers were repeated twice a day, every, day for at least four decades.

Chapter Three also juxtaposed the liturgical ritual theory of Roy Rappaport with Mohandas Gandhi's practices. Rappaport's schema of liturgical ritual, its features and its particular ways of functioning, have been utilized during examination to illuminate the simple rituals of the *satyagraha* movement.

Beyond the regularized use of twice-daily sung-prayers, Gandhi used ritual to surround those events that could be termed "dangerous," such as fasting or public marches, with sung-prayers. While short, twice-daily rituals would have helped, in Rappaport's terms, to shape and provide formation for developing behaviors, the longer rituals of the fasts and marches would have had a deeper psychological, stronger transformative effect on Gandhi and those around him. Gandhi also performed other rituals within the community, such as marriages and funerals.

Rappaport has written that one of ritual's most significant aspects is its ability to bind people together, to harmonize differences in *communitas*, and to merge into

the High Level Order of Meaning of Enacting the Divine Order. Materials presented in Chapters Three and Four serve to illustrate the extent to which Gandhi used the ritual materials from the *Bhajanavali* in his attempts to create that sense of *communitas*, first within the *satyagraha* community (on both organizational and personal levels), then within the nation (Hindu, Muslim and Sikh), and eventually to the world.

'Congregational [sung]-prayer is an aid to being in tune with the Infinite' (Gandhi 2000, p.144). This coincides with Urban's phenomenon of the "Indexical I" shifting radically through participation into the "Projective I" of Original Being. This phenomenon of Enacting the Divine Order through participation in ritual is strongly paralleled by and echoed as well in Shri Karunamayee's comments regarding the *Ashram Bhajanavali's* sung-prayers as being "the light that was emitted thousands of years back."

Chapter Four investigated further how the texts were used in ritual contexts beyond the everyday. These sung-prayers prepared the *satyagrahis* and Gandhi himself for the grand and dangerous acts of non-co-operation. The country was focussed on and inspired by these sung-prayers for decades, and millions read the newspaper account as they functioned as instruction, and later listened to "sermon" texts at Gandhi's evening speeches. These songs were used by Gandhi and the *satyagraha* community to achieve their purposes, as the movement grew into a national initiative. They furnished devotional ideals whose intent was to control and calm natural human tendencies, thus enabling the *satyagrahis* to respond to force with non-violence.

Chapter 5 considered how it was that this sung-prayer repertoire, being specifically sung and chanted (rather than read or spoken), had a significant appeal and power for the nation of India and the *satyagraha* communities. By relating this collection to its historical past, the extent to which these sung-prayers affected and shaped Gandhi's program of *satyagraha* in India should be significantly clear.

Chapter Six considered the life and work of one spiritual musician, Shri Karunamayee Abrol, who teaches the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, its melodies, its history, and its significance for *satyagraha*. Shri Karunamayee's family were Freedom Fighters, and, as a child, she sang for Mahatma Gandhi, receiving his blessing. She is a link to Gandhi, having first-hand knowledge of the use and practice of this sung-prayer literature. As a spiritual musician, she is a "tradition-bearer" for the *Ashram Bhajanavali* and *satyagraha*.

Chapter Seven has consisted of Post-Colonial reflections in an analysis of *satyagraha*'s "success" or "failure." While the negative assessments came in early, following Gandhi's death, more positive assessments have been formed since that time. Within a modern-day India, (or the world, for that matter), where terrorism is an everyday occurrence, Gandhi's vision still has a significant place at the political table. It has, as well, presented some reflections regarding the *Bhajanavali*'s place within the continuing East-West engagement. As representative of Gandhi's "voice" (which freely offered space for the presence of other "voices"), and as a living tradition, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* presents the field of Religious Studies and inter-religious dialogue with a template of engagement which contributes "to human self-understanding and the human good."

This examination has meant to focus on one text, the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. This text, truly was a primary religious text of the *satyagraha* community, as it 'has a 'voice' from the past that is complex in its formation -- perhaps being the totality of authorial voices that have composed it -- and enlivened by the present communities who set the text aside, breathe life into it through their...reception, and enact it' (Flood 2006, p.53), while it provided a 'blueprint for how people should live their lives (prohibitions, injunctions, and stories to live by) (Flood 2006, p.53).

Furthermore, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* was a text that consisted of materials which were intended to be sung (or chanted), and as such, the extent to which it influenced Gandhi and his followers must be acknowledged as greater than that of

a text meant to be read. The auditory field is a "global" experience, as sounds are perceived not only by the ears, but by the bones of the body, the organs, and even the skin of the body. 'The surrounding, penetrating quality of sound maximizes larger unities than individuals as such' (Ihde 1976, p.77). These texts were intended to be repeated on a regular basis and 'learned by heart, internalized to the degree that [they could] become self-performing...' (Lutgendorf 1991, p.37). From this stance of calmed transition, these "sonic weapons" of non-violence could enable the ritual participants to embody *ahimsa* and *satya*, and to react to violent force in non-violent ways.

Finally, this examination has also been meant to acknowledge the significant role that ritual played in Gandhi's life and in the *satyagraha* movement. The *Ashram Bhajanavali* and Gandhi's own words have given clear evidence of exactly how those "plain and featureless" rituals functioned to situate *svaraj* within Rappaport's realm of a High Order Level of Meaning, that of Divine Order Enacted. These rituals supported every aspect of *satyagraha*'s attempt to bring heaven to earth.

A FINAL SUMMATION

In concluding the Azad Lectures on India and the World in 1960, Arnold Toynbee spoke:

'I have one last point to make. To my mind it is more important than any other. Gandhiji had a vast amount of daily business to transact. ... Yet Gandhiji was never too busy to withdraw temporarily from business affairs for recurrent periods of contemplation. If he had not made this his practice, he would not, I suppose, have been able to go on doing his business, because his spells of contemplation were the source of his inexhaustible spiritual strength' (Raghavan 1966, p.82).

Arnold Toynbee knew obviously of Gandhi's "spells of contemplation," but he may not have understand that those "spells" were in Gandhi's collection of sung-

prayers, the *Ashram Bhajanavali*. The *Bhajanavali* is a rich source of information concerning *satyagraha* and Gandhi's "inexhaustible spiritual strength." It is hoped that the present examination of this collection has been a partial remedy for this lacuna. For it has also been noted by Raghavan that the peoples of India responded readily to the songs of the saints and the mystics: This was the secret of the success of Mahatma Gandhi and his mass movement' (Raghavan 1966, p.22) (emphasis added).

Until the present, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* has been overlooked. However, the *Ashram Bhajanavali* stood at the center of Gandhi's life and mission. Today, it is an important doorway onto *satyagraha*, and onto Gandhi's cherished ideals for a new India, while still continuing to remind the chaotic, violent world of today that there are other models of interaction which consist of hope and conciliation. Most significantly, it provides more-than-ample evidence for understanding the large extent to which Mohandas Gandhi and *satyagraha* were sustained by ritual, and the even greater degree to which Gandhi led the Indian independence movement through the power of sung-prayers.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.Bhaj. = *Ashram Bhajanavali*. Delhi: Navajivan Press, orig. 1947;
2000, 32nd edition.

CW = *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*. Government of India, Publications
Division, 1971, (*Ashram Bhajanavali* is Vol. 44, pp.386-465).

CW-e = *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi* in digital e-book format,
Government of India, Publications Division, 1999, (*Ashram Bhajanavali*
is Vol. 50, pp.323-406)

K = Shri Karunamayee

CS = Cynthia Snodgrass

APPENDIX: ASRAM BHAJANĀVALI

I. Collected Works (CW-e)
Vol. 50, page 323 (1930)

II. Published
1947 32nd Reprint

<u>No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Translation</u> <u>Date 1930</u>	<u>p. 2, no #</u>
---	<i>Nityapatha (Ishavasyam idam)</i>		-----	
1.	<i>Pratah smarami</i>	Shankara	6 May /20 Nov/ 20 Dec.	p. 2, #1
2.	<i>Pratar bhajami</i>	"	7 May	p. 4, #2
3.	<i>Pratar namami</i>	"	8 May	p. 4, #3
4.	<i>Samudra-vasane Devi</i>		9 May	p. 4, #4
5.	<i>Ya kundendu-</i>		10 May	p. 6, #5
6.	<i>Vakratunda</i>		11 May	p. 6, #6
7.	<i>Gurur Brahma</i>		12 May	p. 6, #7
8.	<i>Shantakaram</i>		13 May	p. 8, #8
9.	<i>Kara-carana-kritam</i>	Shankara	14 May	p. 8, #9
10.	<i>Na tvaham kāmāye</i>		15 May	p. 8, #10

11. <i>Svasti prajābhyah</i>	16 May	p. 10, #11
12. <i>Namaste sate te</i>	17 May	p. 12, #12
13. <i>Tvam ekam sharanyam</i>	18 May	p.12, #13
14. <i>Bhayanam bhayam</i>	19 May	p. 12, #14
15. <i>Vayam tvam smaramo</i>	20 May	p. 12, #15
--- <i>Ekadasha Vrata</i>	-----	p. 14, no #
--- <i>Kuran Prarthana</i>		
<i>Ouzu Billahi</i>	-----	p. 14, no #
<i>Al Fatiha</i>	-----	p. 16, no #
<i>Sura Al-Ikhlās</i>	-----	p. 18, no #
--- <i>Zoroastrian Gatha</i>	-----	p. 20, no #
--- <i>Buddhist Mantra</i>	-----	p. 20, no #
--- <i>Sayankalaki Prarthana (Evening Prayers)</i>		
<i>Yam Brahma-</i>	-----	p. 22, no #
<i>Bhagavad Gītā II: 54-72</i>	-----	pp. 22-30
16. <i>Vipado naiva</i>	21 May	p. 32, #4 (Vidya Mandiraki)
17. <i>Vishnur va</i>	22 May	p. 34, #5 (Prarthana)
Upanishads		
18. <i>Hiranmayena</i>	23 May	p. 40, #1

19. <i>Agne naya</i>	24 May	p. 40, #2
20. <i>Shreyashca preyashca</i>	25 May	p. 40, #3
21. <i>Sarve veda</i>	26 May	p. 42, #4
22. <i>Na tatra suryo</i>	27 May	p. 48, #14
23. <i>Tapah shraddhe</i>	28 May	p. 48, #15
24. <i>Atmanam rathinam</i>	29 May	p. 42, # 5 & 6
25. <i>Vijnāna sarathir</i>	30 May	p. 42, #7
26. <i>Uttishtthata jagrata</i>	31 May	p. 44, #8
27. <i>Agnir yathaiko</i>	1 June	p. 44, #9
28. <i>Vayur yathaiko</i>	2 June	p. 44, #10
29. <i>Sūryo yathā</i>	3 June	p. 46, #11
30. <i>Eko vashi</i>	4 June	p. 46, #12
31. <i>Nityonithānām</i>	5 June	p. 46, #13
32. <i>Parikshya lokan</i>	6 June	p. 48, #13
33. <i>Tasmai sa vidvan</i>	7 June	p. 50, #17
34. <i>Pranavo dhanuh</i>	8 June	p. 50, #18
35. <i>Bhidyate</i>	9 June	p. 50, #19
36. <i>Brahmaivedam</i>	10 June	p. 50, #20

37. <i>Satyena labhyastapasa</i>	11 June	p. 52, #21
38. <i>Satyam eva jayate</i>	12 June	p. 52, #22
39. <i>Nayam atma pravacanena</i>	13 June	p. 52, #23
40. <i>Nayam atma balahinena</i>	13 June	p. 54, #24
41. <i>Samprapyainam</i>	15 June	p. 54, #25
42. <i>Vedanta-vijnana</i>	15 June	p. 54, # 26
43. <i>Yatha nadyah</i>	16 June	p. 54, #27
44. <i>Sa yo ha vai tat</i>	17 June	p. 54, #28
45. <i>Yato vaco</i>	18 June	p. 56, #29
46. <i>Yuva syat sadhu</i>	19 June	p. 56, #30
47. [no title: "He may not witness dance..."]	20 June	-----
48. <i>Balam vava</i>	21 June	p. 56, #31
49. <i>Madhuvata</i>	22 June	p. 58, #32
50. <i>Na jatu kamat</i>	23 June	p. 58, #34
51. <i>Ya deva vidyaya</i>	24 June	p. 58, #33
52. <i>Yam Brahmaa-Varunendra</i>	25 June	p. 22, no #(Sayankalaki)
		(Vikya Mandiraka)

Kumar Mandir (School) Prayers		- 32nd Ed.)
53. OM Saha navavatu	26 June	p. 32, #1
54. OM Asato ma	27 June	p. 32, #2
55. Yo'ntah pravishya	28 June	p. 32, #3
Women's Prayers		
56. Govinda Dvarikavasin	29 June	p. 36, #1
57. Dharmam carata	30 June	p. 36, #4
--- He Natha!	-----	p. 36, #2
--- Krishna Krishna Mahayogin!	-----	p. 36, #3
58. Ahimsasatyamasteyam	1 July	p. 36, #5
59. Ahimsa satyamasteyam	2 July	p. 38, #6
60. Vidvadbhish	3 July	p. 38, #7
61. Shuyatum	4 July	p. 38, #8
--- Slokardhana	-----	p. 38, #9
62. Adityacandravanilo'nalashca	5 July	p. 38, #10
--- Mukam karoti	-----	p. 38, #11
Dwadasha Panjarika Stotram		
63. Mudha jahihi	6 July	p. 70, no #s

64. <i>Arthamanartham</i>	7 July	"
65. <i>Kamam krotham</i>	8 July	"
66. <i>Tvayi mayi</i>	9 July	"
67. <i>Nalini-dala-gata salilam</i>	10 July	"
Pandava Gita		
68. <i>Pandava: "Prahlada-Nārada-"</i>	11 July	p. 60, no #s
69. <i>Kunti: "Svakarma-"</i>	12 July	"
70. <i>Drona: "Ye ye-"</i>	13 July	"
71. <i>Gandhari: "Tvam eva-"</i>	14 July	"
72. <i>Virata: "Namo brahmanyadevaya-"</i>	15 July	"
<i>Prahlada: "Natha-"</i>	"	"
<i>Bharadvaja: "Labhas-tesham"</i>	"	"
<i>Markandeya: "Sa hanis-tan-"</i>	"	"
<i>Shaunaka: "Bhojanacchadane-"</i>	"	"
<i>Sanatkumara: "Akashat-"</i>	"	"
Mukundamala		
73. <i>Sri Vallabheti</i>	15 July	p. 64, #1
74. <i>Mukunda murghna</i>	16 July	p. 64, #2
--- <i>Nastha dharme</i>	-----	p. 64, #3

--- <i>Divi vā bhuvī vā</i>	-----	p. 64, #4
--- <i>Krishna Tvadiya</i>	-----	p. 66, #5
--- <i>Bhava-jaladhi-gatanam</i>	-----	p. 66, #6
75. <i>Bhava-jalidham agadham</i>	17 July	p. 66, #7
<i>Baddhenanjalina</i>	"	p. 66, #8
<i>Madana parihara</i>	"	p. 68, #9
<i>Idam shariram</i>	"	p. 68, #10
76. <i>Namami Narayana</i>	18 July	p. 68, #11
<i>Ananta Vaikuntha</i>	"	p. 68, #12
--- <i>Ramcaritmanas</i>	-----	p. 72-81

Bhajans

(Hindustāni Bhajana
- 1947)

77. O elephant-mouthed One <i>Johi sumirata</i>	19 July	Kalidas	p. 82, #1
78. For those in want there is <i>Dina ko dayalu</i>	20 July	Tulsidas	-----
79. Thou art merciful; I am in <i>Tu dayalu</i>	21 July	Tulsidas	p. 82, #2
80. When shall I conduct myself <i>Kabahuka</i>	22 July	Tulsidas	-----

81. O my soul! How foolish art <i>Aisi mudhata</i>	Tulsidas	23 July	p. 83, #3
82. O Lord! Hear this my prayer <i>Yaha vinati Raghuvir</i>	Tulsidas	24 July	p. 84, #5
83. O Madhav, how can this <i>Madhava moha</i>	Tulsidas	25 July	p. 84, #4
84. O Raghuvir, help of the distressed <i>Maim kahi</i>	Tulsidas	26 July	p. 85, #6
85. None is so generous <i>Aisi ko</i>	Tulsidas	27 July	p. 86, #7
86. Shun those people as enemies <i>Jake priya</i>	Tulsidas	28 July	p. 87, #9
87. What should I do to be able <i>Kauna jatana</i>	Tulsidas	29 July	-----
88. Raghunath knows what love is <i>Janata pittarita</i>	Tulsidas	"	-----
89. O Raghavar, my shame is <i>Raghavar tumako meri laja</i>	Tulsidas	"	p. 88, #10
--- <i>Jaun kahan...kako nama</i>			p. 88, #1
--- <i>Janakinatha</i>			p. 90, #13

90. O Prince of the Raghus, wake up <i>Jagiye Raghunatha</i>	Tulsidas	30 July	-----
91. O Lord, my mind will not <i>Meri mana</i>	Tulsidas	31 July	-----
92. O Rama, he (Bibhishana) left <i>Kutumba</i>	Tulsidas	1 August	p. 86, #8
93. O my mind, worship <i>Bhaja mana</i>	Tulsidas	2 August	p. 89, #12
94. I have spoiled everything hitherto <i>Aba laun</i>	Tulsidas	3 August	p. 91, #14
95. O my mind, what is the use of <i>Mana pachitai</i>	Tulsidas	4 August	p. 91, #15
96. O Madhav! there is none <i>Madhava mo samana</i>	Tulsidas	"	p. 92, #16
97. In the Kaliyuga Ramanama is <i>Kali nama kamataru Rama ko</i>	Tulsidas	5 August	p. 93, #17
98. Hail to Thee, O Rama <i>Jaya Rama (fr. Ramcaritmanas)</i>	Tulsidas	6 August	-----
99. There is no religion like the <i>Tulasi bodha (fr. Ramcaritmanas)</i>	Tulsidas	7 August	-----
--- <i>Or nahm kachu</i>		-----	p. 93, #18

---	<i>Shri Ramacandra</i>	Surdas	-----	p. 94, #19
---	<i>Kahanke pathika</i>		-----	p. 95, #20
100.	I bow to the lotus feet <i>Carana-kamala</i>	Surdas	8 August	p. 96, #21
101.	O Lord, keep me as Thou wilt <i>Jaise rakhahu</i>	Surdas	9 August	p. 103, #32
102.	O God, Thou removest the woes <i>Dinana dukha-harana</i>	Surdas	10 August	p. 97, #23
103.	I have heard that Rama <i>Sune ri</i>	Surdas	11 August	p. 98, #24
104.	I belong to my devotees <i>Hama bhaktana</i>	Surdas	"	-----
105.	Now it is my fixed resolve <i>Abaki teka</i>	Surdas	"	p. 98, #25
---	<i>Tum meri rakhe</i>		-----	p. 100, #27
---	<i>Ṭere suno</i>		-----	p. 101, #29
106.	Who can be so crooked, bad <i>Mo sama</i>	Surdas	12 August	p. 102, #30
107.	O God, do not lay to heart <i>Prabhu mere</i>	---	13 August	p. 103, #31

108. I am pining to see God as the <i>Akhiyam Hari-darasana</i>	Surdas	14 August	p. 96, # 22
109. The best tie is the tie of love <i>Sabase unci prema</i>	Surdas	15 August	p. 104, #33
110. O Gopal, I have danced away <i>Saba maim</i>	Surdas	16 August	-----
111. Now is the thing known all over <i>Aba tare</i>	Surdas	17 August	p. 105, #35
112. O God, guard me against insult <i>Lajja mori</i>	Surdas	18 August	p. 99, #26
113. Although Putna administered <i>De Putna</i>	Surdas	19 August	-----
114. O Lord, save me now. <i>Abake Natha</i>	---	20 August	p. 101, #28
115. O my foolish soul, thy life <i>Re mana</i>	Surdas	21 August	p. 105, #34
116. O Lord, save me this once Natha moham	Surdas	22 August	-----
--- <i>Aba main nacyo bahut Gopal</i>	Surdas	-----	p. 106, #36
--- <i>Chandi mana</i>		-----	p. 107, #37
--- <i>Saba dina</i>		-----	p. 108, #38

---	<i>Udho karmanaki</i>	-----			p. 109, #39
---	<i>He Govinda, He Gopala</i>	-----			p. 109, #40
---	<i>Vrikshanase mata le</i>	-----			p. 110, #41
117.	Open thy face, thou wilt see <i>Ghungataka pata khola re</i>	23 August	Kabir		p. 111, #42
118.	O good man, natural meditation <i>Sadho sajaha samadhi bhala</i>	24 August	Kabir		p. 111, #43
119.	When the soul is saturated <i>Mana masta</i>	25 August	Kabir		p. 113, #44
120.	We are not to stay here long <i>Rahana nahim desa</i>	26 August	Kabir		p. 115, #46
121.	O friend, my mind is fixed <i>Mana lago meri</i>	"	Kabir		p. 114, #45
122.	O my soul, my dear friend <i>Sumai dekha mana</i>	27 August	Kabir		-----
123.	Be thou absorbed in God <i>Tu to Rama sumara</i>	28 August	Kabir		-----
124.	Do not give way to self-deception <i>Mata kara moha tu</i>	28 August	Kabir		p. 115, #47
125.	Without the master, who can <i>Guru bina</i>	29 August	Kabir		p. 115, #48

126. O Father, I will not give up <i>Nahim chondum re Baba</i>	Kabir	30 August	-----
127. This sheet (called body) is <i>Ghini ghini bini cadariya</i>	Kabir	31 August	p. 116, #49
128. What is the use of taking pride <i>Isa tana dhanaki</i>	Kabir	1 September	-----
129. O Brother, sing the praises of <i>Bhajo re bhaiya Rama</i>	Kabir	2 September	p. 117, #50
130. O my soul, how shall I reason <i>Mana tohe kehi</i>	Kabir	3 September	p. 117, #51
131. I have obtained the name of God <i>Payo satanama gareke harava</i>	Kabir	4 September	-----
132. With fight in front a brave person <i>Shura sangrama ko</i>	Kabir	5 Sept.	p. 118, #52
---	---	-----	p. 120, #54
---	---	-----	p. 121, #55
133. O God, I seek refuge in Thee <i>Thakura tum</i>	Nanak	6 September	p. 121, #56
134. O good man, give up thy pride <i>Sadho manaka</i>	Nanak	7 September	p. 122, #57

135. O God, ever since I have had <i>Visara gai saba</i>	Nanak	8 September	p. 123, #58
136. O my soul, dedicate thyself <i>Re mana Rama</i>	Nanak	9 September	p. 124, #60
137. Why dost thou search for Him <i>Kahe re</i>	Nanak	10 September	p. 123, #59
138. O my soul, remember thy God <i>Sumarana kara le</i>	Nanak	11 September	p. 125, #61
139. Why hast thou given up <i>Nama japana</i>	Khalus	12 September	p. 125, #62
140. All intentions came to naught <i>Manaki mana</i>	Nanak	13 September	p. 126, #63
141. I have obtained a jewel <i>Payo ji</i>	Mira	14 September	p. 127, #64
142. Such a birth does not come often <i>Nahim aiso</i>	Mira	15 September	p. 128, #66
143. O my soul, touch the feet of Hari <i>Mana re parasa Harike carana</i>	Mira	16 September	-----
144. For me there is none else <i>Mere to</i>	Mira	17 September	p. 129, #67

145. O mother, I have bought <i>Mai maine Govinda</i>	Mira	"	p. 132, #71
146. O my Ranaji, I must sing <i>Mere Ranaji</i>	Mirabai	"	p. 130, #68
147. My mind is fixed <i>Mori lagi</i>	Mira	"	p. 128, #65
148. O God, Thou deliverest <i>Hari! tum haro</i>	Mira	"	p. 130, #69
149. O God, make me Thy slave <i>Mhaune cakara</i>	Mira	17 September	p. 131, #70
--- <i>Ramanama rasa pajai</i>	---	-----	p. 133, #72
150. One who speaks ill of me <i>Nindaka baba</i>	Dadu	18 September	-----
151. Still does cruel life cling <i>Ajahun na</i>	Dadu	19 September	p. 133, #73
152. O God, Thou art sandal, I am <i>Prabhuj!</i>	Raidas	20 September	p. 134, #74
153. O God, my mind is distracted <i>Nara Hari cancala</i>	Raidas	21 September	p. 134, #75
154. O dullard, why does thou <i>Vanom sona (CW-e) = Kyom soya (32nd Ed.)</i>	Nitanand	22 September	p. 136, #76

155. A knowing man uses his knowledge <i>Akala kala</i>	Akha	23 September	p. 136, #77
156. O brother, the morning has broken <i>Jaga jiva</i>	Sahajram	24 September	-----
157. That ornament of Nanda's home <i>Nanda bhavanako</i>	Nandadas	25 September	p. 139, #81
158. To whom shall I bear ill will? <i>Aba haun</i>	Haridas	26 September	p. 137, #78
159. Let those who will, praise <i>Koi bando</i>	Jasvant	27 September	p. 138, #79
160. In the world the saints do <i>Santa parama</i>	Brahmanand	28 September	p. 139, #80
161. O man, fear God, how canst thou <i>Prani! tu Hari som</i>	Braj Kishore	29 September	-----
162. O thou Protector of the universe <i>He Jagatrata</i>	--	30 September	p. 146, #91
163. Among the fishes the Fish <i>Varnamani mina</i>	Kanhar	1 October	-----
164. O God, my friend I ask of Thee <i>Visara na</i>	Premasakhi	2 October	p. 140, #82
165. O Beloved, I seek refuge in Thee <i>Ho rasiya maim to</i>	Premasakhi	3 October	p. 141, #83

166. O Star of my eyes <i>Darasana dena</i>	Rasik	4 October	p. 143, #85
167. O Divine Spirit, let me <i>Chetana! aba mohim</i>	--	5 October	p. 143, #86
168. I have now become immortal <i>Aba hama amara</i>	Anandghan	6 October	-----
169. All is Brahman. <i>Rama kaho Rahman kaho</i>	Anandghan	7 October	p. 144, #87
---	---	---	p. 145, #89
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170. O God, break my bondage <i>Bandhana kata</i>	Vidhuband	8 October	-----
171. My reliance is on the celebrated <i>Maim to birada</i>	Premanand	9 October	p. 142, #84

172. If Thou wouldst see Him <i>Agara hai</i>	Mad Mansur	10 October	p. 152, #98
173. Life in this world called beautiful <i>Hai bahare bhag</i>	Nazir	11 October	p. 153, #99
174. Yes, now Thou art the only King <i>Basa aba mere</i>	---	12 October	p. 154, #100
175. O God, Thy law is mysterious <i>Ajaba tera</i>	---	13 October	p. 155, #101
176. My boat is tiny and is laden <i>Naiya meri</i>	Giridhar	14 October	p. 145, #88
177. O good woman, put on thy best <i>Kara le sangara</i>	---	14 October	-----
178. He is a Vaishnava who <i>Vaishnava jana to</i>	Narasaiyo	15 October	p. 156, #102
Marathi Bhajana			
179. Know him to be a true man <i>Je ko ranjale</i>	Tukaram	15 October	p. 197, #142
180. God is near indeed <i>Deva javali antari</i>	Ramdas	"	p. 209, #164
181. O God, Thou Who art known <i>Tem mana nishthura</i>	Ekknath	"	p. 209, #165

182. O God, let me not be witness <i>Papaci vasana</i>	Tuka	16 October	p. 197, #143
183. What can <i>maya</i> do to one who <i>Smaratam nitya Hari</i>	Amrit	17 October	p. 205, #158
184. O God, grant me love <i>Santapadaci</i>	Amrit	17 October	p. 205, #157
185. Give thyself to devotion <i>Bhava dharare</i>	Shivdini	18 October	p. 210, #166
186. Who will lay by stores <i>Ashashvata sangraha</i>	Amrit	19 October	p. 206, #159
187. Do not let thy time pass <i>Hari bhajanavina</i>	Sohira	20 October	p. 206, #160
188. Blessed is that family <i>Pavitra tem kula</i>	Tuka	21 October	-----
189. If thou wouldst be a yogi, <i>Niyama palave</i>	---	"	p. 210, #167
190. Wherever I go, Thou art my <i>Jethem jato</i>	Tuka	22 October	p. 198, #144
191. When one does not know <i>Na kalatam</i>	Tuka	22 October	p. 199, #145

192. To the servants of Vishnu <i>Mukti-panga nahim</i>	Tuka	23 October	p. 199, #146
193. How now shall I describe <i>Kaya vanum</i>	Tuka	"	p. 200, #147
194. Saintliness is not to be purchased <i>Nahim santapana</i>	Tuka	24 October	p. 201, #148
195. He is a devotee who <i>Bhakta aise</i>	Tuka	"	p. 201, #149
196. The essence of the endless Vedas <i>Veda antata</i>	Tuka	25 October	p. 202, #150
197. This heart of mine is determined <i>Anika dusarem</i>	Tuka	"	p. 202, #151
198. What though I get nothing to eat <i>Na mile khavaya</i>	Tuka	26 October	p. 203, #152
199. He who becomes enraged <i>Maharasi shive</i>	Tuka	"	p. 203, #153
200. Let the body persist or perish <i>Deha jāvo</i>	Namdev	27 October	p. 207, #161
--- <i>Santacem laksana</i>	Nama (Namdev)	-----	p. 208, #162
--- <i>Sodim sansaraci</i>	Nama (Namdev)	-----	p. 208, #163

201. Merit consists in doing good <i>Punya para-upakara</i>	Tuka	27 October	p. 204, #154
202. This is my last prayer <i>Shevatinci vinavani</i>	Tuka	"	p. 204, #155
203. O God, grant only this boon <i>Henci dana de ga deva</i>	Tuka	28 October	p. 205, #156
Bengali Bhajana			
204. O Thou Dweller in my heart <i>Antara mama</i>	---	28 October	p. 212, #168
205. Endless stream of joy flows <i>Vahe niranantara ananta</i>	---	29 October	p. 212, #169
206. Thou art Brother, Thou art Lord <i>Tumi bandhu tumi Natha</i>	---	30 October	p. 213, #170
207. In one prostration, O Lord <i>Ekati namaskare Prabhu</i>	The Poet	30 October	p. 213, #171
---	<i>Ananda loke</i>	---	p. 214, #172
---	<i>Jivana jakhana</i> (p. 215 note: based on Gujarati song on p. 195)	---	p. 215, #173
---	<i>Tora apana</i>	---	p. 216, #174
---	<i>Tomari nama</i>	---	p. 217, #175
---	<i>Mora sandyaya tumi</i>	---	p. 218, #176

--- *Satya mangala premamaya tumi* --- ----- p. 219, #177

Gujarata, cont'd

208. On this globe, worship of God
Bhutala bhakti Narsainyo 31 October p. 156, #103

209. We should forsake him who
Narayananam nama Narsainyo 1 November p. 157, #104

210. O Good man, remember God
Samarane Shri Hari Narsainyo 2 November p. 158, #105

211. Throughout the whole universe
Akhila Brahma Narsainyo 3 November p. 159, #106

212. As long as the secret of the soul
Jyam lagi atmatattva Narsainyo 4 November p. 161, #107

213. It is useless to sorrow
Je Rame --- 5 November p. 162, #108

214. As I awake I see no world
Jagine joun to jagata Narsainyo 6 November p. 163, #109

215. O lazy man of poor wit <i>Dyana dhara hari tanum</i>	Narsainyo	7 November	-----
--- <i>Bapaji papa mem</i>	Narsainyo	-----	p. 164, #110
216. This temple is worn out <i>Junum to thayum re</i>	Mira	8 November	p. 165, #111
217. I will not forget Hari <i>Nahim re visarum Hari</i>	Mira	9 November	p. 167, #113
218. Do not utter anything else <i>Bola ma bola ma</i>	Mira	10 November	p. 166, #112
219. O dear Lord, I love Thy face <i>Mukhadani maya</i>	Mirabai	11 November	p. 168, #114
220. Thou has not yet become <i>Vaishnava nathi thayo tum re</i>	Daya Vitthal	12 November	p. 168, #115
221. O God, such as I am, I am <i>Hari, jevo tevo</i>	Pritam	13 November	p. 169, #116
222. You may call to mind the sages <i>Mahakashtha pamyā vina</i>	Dayaram	14 November	-----
223. Returning again and again <i>Bhatakātam bhavāmam re</i>	Daya	15 November	-----

224. Godward way is for the brave <i>Harinam marga che</i>	Pritam	16 November	p. 170, #117
225. Blessed be Gopichand's mother <i>Janani jivo</i>	Nishkulanand	17 November	p. 172, #119
226. No matter what one does <i>Tyaga na take</i>	Nishkulanand	18 November	p. 173, #120
227. The yogi has migrated <i>Jangala vasavyum</i>	Nishkulanand	19 November	-----
228. Those yogis who are like Jada <i>Jada Bharatani</i>	Nishkulanand	20 November	-----
229. They are patient and brave <i>Dhira dhurandhara</i>	Muktanand	21 November	p. 174, #121
230. Thou who will not break <i>Teka na mele</i>	Brahmanand	22 November	-----
231. We must risk life itself <i>Re shira sate</i>	Brahmanand	23 November	p. 175, #122
232. Without the help of a true guru <i>Sadguru sharana bina</i>	Keshav	24 November	p. 176, #123
233. My pulse is in Thy hands <i>Mari nad</i>	Keshav	25 November	p. 177, #124

234. O Lord of the afflicted <i>Dina-Natha</i>	Keshavlal	26 November	p. 178, #125
235. God comes to us through devotion <i>Bhakti vade</i>	Keshav	27 November	-----
236. There is no help for thee but God <i>Koi sahaya nathi, bina Hari</i>	Keshav	28 November	p. 178, #126
237. He only knows what it is who <i>Ramabana vgyam</i>	Dhano	29 November	p. 179, #127
238. Who can destroy him <i>Jene Rama rakhe re</i>	Dhiro	1 December	p. 180, #128
239. The mountain is in the straw <i>Tarana othe dungara re</i>	Dhiro	1 December	p. 181, #129
240. Beware, O my mind, you have <i>Khabaradara mana</i>	Dhiro	2 December	-----
241. The world is mad <i>Duniya to divani</i>	Dhiro	3 December	-----
242. Resolve upon enthroning <i>Nishce karo Ramanum nama</i>	Narbho	4 December	-----
243. Men of God should have <i>Harijana hoya tene</i>	Bhojo	5 December	p. 182, #130
244. Devotion is for the brave <i>Bhakti shuravirani saci</i>	Bhojo	6 December	-----

245. O teacher, you say Brahman <i>Guruji tame</i>	Bapu	7 December	p. 183, #131
246. O tongue, why dost thou tire <i>Jibhaladi re</i>	---	8 December	p. 184, #132
247. Worship God, take Rāmanāma <i>Bhagavata bhajajo</i>	Gavaribai	9 December	-----
248. By the grace of the good, <i>Santa kripathi</i>	Pritam	10 December	p. 171, #118
249. Those who trust in God <i>Harine bhajatam</i>	Premaldas	11 December	p. 185, #133
250. The works of him who has <i>Anubhava evo re</i>	Nirant	12 December	-----
251. Light thy heart and sweep out <i>Dilamam divo</i>	Ranchhod	13 December	p. 185, #134
252. When will the matchless time come <i>Apurva avasara</i>	Rajchand	14 December	p. 186, #135
253. How neglectful must my eyes be --- <i>Maram nayanani</i>	---	15 December	p. 190, #136
---	---	-----	p. 191, #137
---	---	-----	p. 193, #138
---	---	-----	p. 194, #139
---	---	-----	p. 195, #140

---	<i>Jivana java</i>	---	-----	p. 195, #141
Sindhi bhajana				
---	<i>Tera makana</i>	---	-----	p. 220, #178
Angleji bhajana				
---	Take my life and let it be		-----	p. 221, #179
---	Lead, kindly, light	Newman	-----	p. 222, #180
---	When the mists have rolled in splendour		-----	p. 223, #181
---	Near my God, to Thee, nearer to Thee		-----	p. 225, #182
---	Rock of ages, cleft for me		-----	p. 226, #183
---	When I survey the wondrous Cross		-----	p. 227, #184
Rashthragita				
---	<i>Vande Mataram</i>	Chatterj /Paluskar	-----	p. 229, #185
---	<i>Janaganamana</i>	Tagore	-----	p. 229, #186
---	<i>Ayi bhuvana-mana-mohini!</i>	Tagore	-----	p. 232, #187
---	<i>Sare jahanse accha</i>	Iqbal	-----	p. 232, #188
Bhajanaki Dhun				
---	<i>Narayana</i>	---	-----	p. 234
---	<i>Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram</i>	Paluskar	-----	"
---	<i>Shri Krishna</i>	---	-----	"
---	<i>Siya-svaminki jaya</i>	---	-----	"
---	<i>Rama-dhun laga, Gopala-dhun lagi</i>	---	-----	"
---	<i>Jaya Govinda Hari Govinda</i>	---	-----	"
---	<i>Bhaja le, bhaja le Sita-Ram</i>	---	-----	p. 235
---	<i>Bhaja mana pyare Sita-Ram</i>	---	-----	"

---	<i>Radha-Krishna jaya</i>	---	"
---	<i>Pavana Rama, Patitapavana Rama</i>	---	"
---	<i>Raja Ram Ram Ram, Sita Ram</i>	---	"
---	<i>Jaya Ram, jaya Ram, jaya jaya Ram</i> ---	---	"
---	<i>Hare Ram, Hare Ram, Hare Ram</i>	---	"
---	<i>Bhajava Ram</i>	---	p. 236
---	<i>Nivritti jnanadeva</i>	---	"
---	<i>Gopala Radhe Krishna</i>	---	"
---	<i>Samba Sadashiva</i>	---	"
---	<i>OM Shiva OM Shiva parat para Shiva</i> ---	---	"