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U.S.-North Korea Summit
Science Fiction?
Dr Namrata Goswami



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U.S-North Korea Summit: Science Fiction?

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Bastariya Battalion: New force against India's Left-wing Extremists

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Science, Common Sense and Faith

Dr Ivo Coelho

Father Ivo Coelho earned a PhD in philosophy at the Gregorian University, Rome, for his work on the hermeneutics of the philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan, SJ (1904-1984). After teaching philosophy in Divyadaan: Salesian Institute of Philosophy, Nashik and holding various offices in his religious congregation, in Nashik, Mumbai and Jerusalem, he is currently based in Rome, where he is in charge of the sector of training and formation for the Salesian society of Don Bosco. Besides his interest in Lonergan, he has also edited collections of the essays of the Indologist Richard De Smet, SJ (1916-1997).



Hanoi, Culture Capital of Vietnam

- Artwork on Phung Hung Street **Mark Ulyseas**

Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing*. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*.



Gandhi and the Popes

Dr Peter Gonsalves

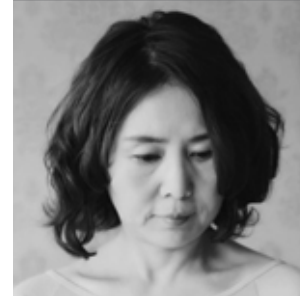
Dr Peter Gonsalves is the Dean of the Faculty of Social Communication at the Salesian Pontifical University, Rome. A member of SIGNIS, a world association for communicators, he has also written a manual for South Asian educators entitled *Exercises in Media Education*.



Glimpses of Santeria Cult

Joo Peter

Aka Joachim Peter is a Visual artist and writer based in Southwest Germany, presently working on documentary & travel photography in Asia right. He loves to explore and combine all arts in his work. Joo has studied Arts; painting and graphics, worked for theatre (designing stage, costume and light), did some work for television and film, went into teaching. He writes essays and a blog in his native tongue, German, for he feels his language combines philosophy and humour.



Drawing back the Bamboo Curtain

Mikyoung Cha

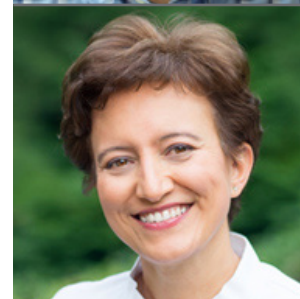
Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography – the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to *Live Encounters Magazine*.



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Andrea Lamberti is a nature photographer and a vegan. As well as supporting his physical health, Andrea found veganism is naturally aligned to his philosophy of living simply and minimally, allowing less packaging, chemicals and processing, and avoiding the unnecessary commodification of animals. Andrea documents the geography and underwater plant and animal species of his local coastline, to explore his relationship with the natural world, and his belief that humans should inhabit the planet primarily as curators rather than as consumers.



Balkabagi Corbasi

Ozlem Warren

International cooking teacher and Turkish culinary expert Ozlem Warren is a native of Turkey, lived there and extensively travelled for 30 years. She has been teaching wholesome, delicious Turkish cookery in the US, Jordan, Istanbul and England. Her recipes have been published in the local media in England, *Hurriyet* and *Sabah* national daily newspapers in Turkey. Ozlem also took part at the *"Turkish Chefs of the World"*, *"Dünyanın Türk Seftleri"* TV program aired at TRT, National Turkish TV channel and in 37 countries.



Space and Time

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Candess M. Campbell, PhD is the author of the #1 Best-selling book on Amazon, *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine and Live Intuitively: Journal the Wisdom of your Soul*. She is an internationally known Author, Speaker, Intuitive Coach and Mentor and Psychic Medium. She specializes in assisting others to regain their own personal power, develop their intuition and live a life of abundance, happiness, and joy.

Dr. Namrata Goswami is an author, strategic analyst and consultant on counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, alternate futures, and great power politics. After earning her Ph.D. in international relations, she served for nearly a decade at India's Ministry of Defense (MOD) sponsored think tank, the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi, working on ethnic conflicts in India's Northeast and China-India border conflict. She is the author of three books, "India's National Security and Counter-Insurgency", "Asia 2030" and "Asia 2030 The Unfolding Future." Her research and expertise generated opportunities for collaborations abroad, and she accepted visiting fellowships at the Peace Research Institute, Oslo, Norway; the La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia; and the University of Heidelberg, Germany. In 2012, she was selected to serve as a Jennings-Randolph Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Washington D.C. where she studied India-China border issues, and was awarded a Fulbright-Nehru Senior Fellowship that same year. Shortly after establishing her own strategy and policy consultancy, she won the prestigious MINERVA grant awarded by the Office of the U.S. Secretary of Defense (OSD) to study great power competition in the grey zone of outer space. She was also awarded a contract with Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), to work on a project on "ISIS in South and Southeast Asia".

With expertise in international relations, ethnic conflicts, counter insurgency, wargaming, scenario building, and conflict resolution, she has been asked to consult for audiences as diverse as Wikistrat, USPACOM, USSOCOM, the Indian Military and the Indian Government, academia and policy think tanks. She was the first representative from South Asia chosen to participate in the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies NATO Partnership for Peace Consortium (PfPC) 'Emerging Security Challenges Working Group.' She also received the Executive Leadership Certificate sponsored by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, National Defense University (NDU), and the Asia Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS). Currently, she is working on two book projects, one on the topic of 'Ethnic Narratives', to be published by Oxford University Press, and the other on the topic of 'Great Power Ambitions' to be published by Lexington Press, an imprint of Rowman and Littlefield.



Views expressed in this article are solely that of the author.

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US-NORTH KOREA SUMMIT - SCIENCE FICTION?



US President Donald Trump shakes hands with North Korea leader Kim Jong Un during their first meetings at the Capella resort on Sentosa Island Tuesday, June 12, 2018 in Singapore.(AP)

The June 12 U.S.-North Korea Summit is attracting the world's attention especially given the drama that preceded it; for starters, President Donald Trump's U.N. Speech in September 2017 in which he threatened to destroy North Korea.[1] For another, Trump stated that the military option was not off the table. The U.S.-South Korea joint 'five-day Vigilant Ace' military exercises in December 2017 that included 12,000 military personnel and 230 aircrafts – including six F-22s and 18 F-35s, both with stealth capabilities, as well as B-1B bombers.[2] North Korea viewed those exercises as hurtling the Korean peninsula into a nuclear war. The exercise came close at the heels of North Korea testing its most capable Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM), the *Hwasong-15* with a range that the North claimed could reach the continental United States.[3] However, experts believed that with a nuclear payload, it could plausibly reach Alaska. The U.S. has a troop presence of 28,000 in South Korea and has deployed the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), to the chagrin of China, who views it as directed at Chinese missiles as well. The rationale for the THAAD in South Korea is to protect U.S. allies like Japan and South Korea, at best, from North Korean incoming missiles. On August 28, 2017, North Korea fired a ballistic missile over Japan's Hokkaido Islands that landed in the sea. Called the *Hwasong 12*, this was North Korea's first military missile fired over Japan, and constituted strategic messaging of resolve by Kim Jong un, to counter President Trump's assertion that he was buckling under U.S pressure. This was followed by a September 2017 missile test over Hokkaido islands, that flew 3,700 kms, and reached an altitude of 770 kms before landing in the Pacific. This test was intended not only at Japan but also at the U.S. territory of Guam.[4] This registered demonstration of some serious development in missile technology capabilities by North Korea.

The U.S. motives for the Korean summit is influenced by three overarching factors; Korean denuclearization, limit Chinese influence, and maintaining U.S. primacy. The U.S. game plan vis-à-vis the Korean peninsula is to maximize the security of its allies (Japan and South Korea), and its bases, with a show of power. This, it accomplishes, with its tight knit security alliances with South Korea and Japan, and by a massive presence of its military in bases in both countries as well as its naval presence in the Pacific.



Consequently, both Trump and Kim set the stage for escalating tensions, with each viewing the other as a 'primary threat' to their respective homelands. So, after setting this 'escalatory stage', they then set the stage for a peaceful dialogue and a first face-to-face meeting. On returning to the U.S. Trump tweeted, "Just landed - a long trip, but everybody can now feel much safer than the day I took office. There is no longer a Nuclear Threat from North Korea." [5] This is direct messaging to his 'voter base' who saw North Korean missiles as a direct threat to the U.S. homeland and believed their elected leader would find a way out of it.

In this article, I explore the strategies at play, to include the U.S. and North Korean strategies vis-à-vis the summit. I argue that despite the demonstrated North Korean missile technologies and war rhetoric between Trump and Kim, the June 12 summit has indicated to us that both leaders are willing to give peace a shot, for obviously strategic reasons. For Trump, it would establish his 'legacy in foreign policy' as the U.S. president that successfully ended the Korean war and denuclearized North Korea, something no other president before him has succeeded. For Kim, it would mean lifting of sanctions, an investment in his long-term political survival, and South-North unification. For China, that would mean not having to commit itself militarily to North Korea, especially in a context where the end results could put it in a disadvantage. A changed Korean peninsula without a North Korean 'buffer' vis-à-vis the U.S. is not in China's interest.

So, what are the strategic goals of the U.S and North Korea, from a Trump-Kim summit? While the summit is just the start for an extended period of negotiations, as Trump indicated in his post-summit press conference, [6] what are the factors that have motivated both sides to invest in this 'elevated risk' summit?

U.S. Motives

The U.S. motives for the Korean summit is influenced by three overarching factors; Korean denuclearization, limit Chinese influence, and maintaining U.S. primacy. The U.S. game plan vis-à-vis the Korean peninsula is to maximize the security of its allies (Japan and South Korea), and its bases, with a show of power. This, it accomplishes, with its tight knit security alliances with South Korea and Japan, and by a massive presence of its military in bases in both countries as well as its naval presence in the Pacific.

Denuclearization

The U.S. aims to denuclearize North Korea in its efforts to maximize security of the Korean peninsula. Denuclearization addresses one of the greatest threats to the U.S. homeland from an incoming North Korean missile carrying a nuclear war-head, the urgency of which increased after the North tested the *Hwasong* 15. This aim of denuclearization, made a priority by the Trump Administration, is not his idea though. For the longest time now, the U.S. has made several attempts to denuclearize the Korean peninsula. In 1985, North Korea acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) but conditioned its International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards requirement to the withdrawal of the 100 U.S. nuclear weapons from South Korea. In 1991, President George H.W. Bush declared a unilateral withdrawal of all land-based and naval nuclear weapons abroad. As per the 1994 Agreed Framework, North Korea agreed to freeze its plutonium weapons in exchange of aid and easing of U.S. sanctions. However, the North's lack of reliability regarding its commitments to denuclearize as well as the George W. Bush's administration calling North Korea an 'Axis of Evil' in his 2002 "State of the Union" address prompted North Korea to restart its nuclear reactor and leave the NPT. There were attempts made by China to mediate especially through the Six party talks but failed to find any reliable solution. This chronology of U.S. efforts to de-nuclearize North Korea is critical to document, as it reveals a dismal failure to meet that objective. The pattern that emerges is that U.S. attempts to put pressure on North Korea by sanctions and calling it an 'axis of evil' only heightened North Korea's need for security and viewing its missiles and nukes as 'survival weapons'.

It is in this context that the Trump-Kim summit is critical given the optics of it, a U.S. President meeting a North Korean leader to find common ground. I will address that issue towards the end and what that means from Kim and North Korea in general.

Limit China's Influence

By creating a possibility where North Korea is talking directly to the U.S. limits China's role in the talks. By agreeing to meet at Singapore and not Beijing, for the summit further creates neutral ground. China's activities in the South China Seas, the Indian Ocean, and in its borders with India and Bhutan, have created grounds for a larger U.S. role.

The idea behind maintaining U.S. troops' presence in the Asia-Pacific is to ensure that there is no credible challenger to U.S. power. The existence of the nuclear capable North Korean regime is viewed as a direct threat to the U.S. and the international order that it has crafted that helps maintain its primacy. The rise of China with a different political regime is viewed as a threat to that primacy as well. China's help in sustaining the nuclear armed North Korean regime is not lost on the U.S.

In his speech at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged for the Indo-Pacific region to embrace freedom of navigation, "We will promote a democratic and rules-based international order in which all nations, small and large, count as equal and sovereign...We will work with others to keep our seas, space and airways free and open".[7] Recently, the U.S. renamed its largest military command, PACIFIC COMMAND (PACOM) as the INDO-PACIFIC Command (INDOPACOM), a nod at India and a move that have caused China anxiety.[8] China's influence in North Korea looms large; its role in the Korean War; the North's largest trading partner; its role in limiting the range of UN Security Council sanctions vis-à-vis North Korea.[9] Interestingly, right after the Trump-Kim summit, China called for lifting of sanctions on North Korea.[10] China wants to see the end of the THAAD deployment in South Korea as well, and therefore could be working with North Korea towards removing the rationale for its deployment; North Korean ballistic missiles. For all talk about China-North Korea deteriorating relationship outwardly, in response to the 'Vigilante Ace' U.S. and South Korea's five-day military exercise in the Korean peninsula, the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and PLA Navy (PLAN) conducted air and sea-borne exercises on December 7, 2017 to demonstrate their combat readiness with more than 40 warships from PLAN taking part in the East China Sea.[11] On December 4, 2017, coinciding with US-South Korea joint exercises,[12] the PLAAF conducted exercises near the Korean peninsula, to include fighter jets, reconnaissance aircrafts and surface to air missiles.

Maintain US primacy

The idea behind maintaining U.S. troops' presence in the Asia-Pacific is to ensure that there is no credible challenger to U.S. power. The existence of the nuclear capable North Korean regime is viewed as a direct threat to the U.S. and the international order that it has crafted that helps maintain its primacy. The rise of China with a different political regime is viewed as a threat to that primacy as well. China's help in sustaining the nuclear armed North Korean regime is not lost on the U.S. Consequently, if one reads the joint statement signed by Trump and Kim post summit, the second and third clauses: "the United States and the DPRK will join their efforts to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula; reaffirming the April 27, 2018 Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK commits to work towards complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula"[13], it clearly addresses the need to denuclearize. How that will be accomplished given the North Korean regime's perception that its nukes are 'survival weapons' given the Libyan model of denuclearization, one has to wait and see.

Consequently, if one reads the joint statement signed by Trump and Kim post summit, the second and third clauses: "the United States and the DPRK will join their efforts to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula; reaffirming the April 27, 2018 Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK commits to work towards complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula"[13], it clearly addresses the need to denuclearize.

North Korean Motives

North Korea's motives are premised on the following parameters.

- 1) Re-unification of Korea
- 2) Reassure the U.S. to Put off Pressure
- 3) Create a 'Great Power' Bargaining Situation
- 4) Showcase North Korean Leverage

Re-unification of Korea is one of the primary reasons South Korean President Moon Jae-in is invested in the Trump-Kim summit. While the aspirations for the type of unification model may be different, this is part of popular discourse in South Korea and has even entered the popular music genre of K-Pop. For his part, Kim Jong-un could be strategizing a U.S. exit from South Korea, whose presence, he views as an obstacle to Korean unification as well as a direct threat, more so with the deployment of THAAD and U.S. command of South Korean forces during war. North Korean leaders, from Kim II-Sung onwards to Kim Jong-un views the greatest threat to Korea coming from imperialist forces, the biggest imperialist being the United States. The second parameter is to reassure the U.S. The North Korean ICBMs constitute a threat to the U.S. homeland. The latest missile, the *Hwasong-15* has a range of 6, 700 km; North Korea boasts that it can hit anywhere in the U.S.,[14] while U.S experts believe it can hit Alaska. There are speculations that the North is developing nuclear war-heads capable of targeting the U.S. Thereby agreeing to meet Trump is a calculated move to reassure him that there is a 'direct negotiating line' between Washington, D.C, and Pyongyang. It also reveals that the U.S. takes seriously the North's nuclear capabilities. Third, meeting the U.S. directly has created enormous leverage for Kim vis-à-vis China, who before the U.S. summit, ignored him as a nuisance. Not surprisingly, immediately after the announcement of the Kim-Trump summit, China suddenly found itself sitting on the sidelines. Scrambling to set matters right, an invitation to Kim Jong-un was issued for a visit to Beijing in April 2018 followed by a second visit soon after, great bargaining points for Kim. Fourth, North Korea has shown that it has leverage by expressing the rationale for its discomfort especially regarding joint U.S-South Korean military exercises, going so far as to say before the summit that "it seriously chills the atmosphere of the DPRK-U.S. dialogue and is of no help to the development of the situation." [15]

The U.S. appears to have taken rein of the North Korean issue, delegated to other countries in the lead before; namely, China. Trump can showcase to his 'voter-base' that he is in control; that he is expecting Kim to meet his obligations, and in due course, if those obligations of denuclearization are met, sanctions could be removed. Cleverly, Trump has made it clear that it will take time to denuclearize, as well as incrementally establishing diplomatic relations. Trump portrayed the 'war-games' or military exercises with South Korea as expensive, even while flying U.S. bombers from Guam, covering about six and a half hours. He argued that it was inappropriate to be conducting war games, so close to the North Korean border, especially in the context that Trump and Kim are now seeking to establish a peaceful regime in the Korean peninsula.



In fact, there were reports that the U.S. scaled down the military exercise on South Korea's request especially since the exercise involved the B-52 bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons. In North's perspective, all such exercises are a prelude to invade North Korea. Consequently, Trump's statement during his press conference after the June 12 summit that he will be stopping all military exercises or 'war-games' as he put it between the US and South Korea calling them expensive and 'very provocative', is directly addressing these North Korean concerns.[16] While U.S. mainstream media are reporting that the Pentagon and South Korea have been taken by surprise by Trump's declaration that he will stop these 'war-games',[17] Defense Secretary James Mattis has come out and said that he was consulted beforehand.[18] No one seem more committed than South Korean President Moon Jae-in towards normalizing relations with North Korea, and it would seem rather odd that he would not remove a cause (military exercises) that might be provoking the North to test those missiles as deterrence. For long, U.S. analysts have harped on the fact that North Korea is unreliable about its commitments to denuclearize without clearly analyzing the impact U.S. mixed signaling: demanding North Korean denuclearization and at the same time, conducting military exercises and terming it an 'Axis of Evil' have ensured that the first U.S. goal of denuclearization is never met.[19]

What does the U.S. Gain from the Summit

The U.S. appears to have taken rein of the North Korean issue, delegated to other countries in the lead before; namely, China. Trump can showcase to his 'voter-base' that he is in control; that he is expecting Kim to meet his obligations, and in due course, if those obligations of denuclearization are met, sanctions could be removed. Cleverly, Trump has made it clear that it will take time to denuclearize, as well as incrementally establishing diplomatic relations. Trump portrayed the 'war-games' or military exercises with South Korea as expensive, even while flying U.S. bombers from Guam, covering about six and a half hours. He argued that it was inappropriate to be conducting war games, so close to the North Korean border, especially in the context that Trump and Kim are now seeking to establish a peaceful regime in the Korean peninsula. Interesting reference to context changing there as well as the changing dynamic, from war-mongering to seeking peace. The U.S. gains by demonstrating that it is still the primary mover in Asia, given the amount of attention the summit generated in Asia. For Trump, it offers him enormous bragging rights, and he can now repeatedly mention his 'deal-making' powers as well as his willingness to take risks to his voter-base, an eye on 2020.

What does North Korea Gain from the Summit?

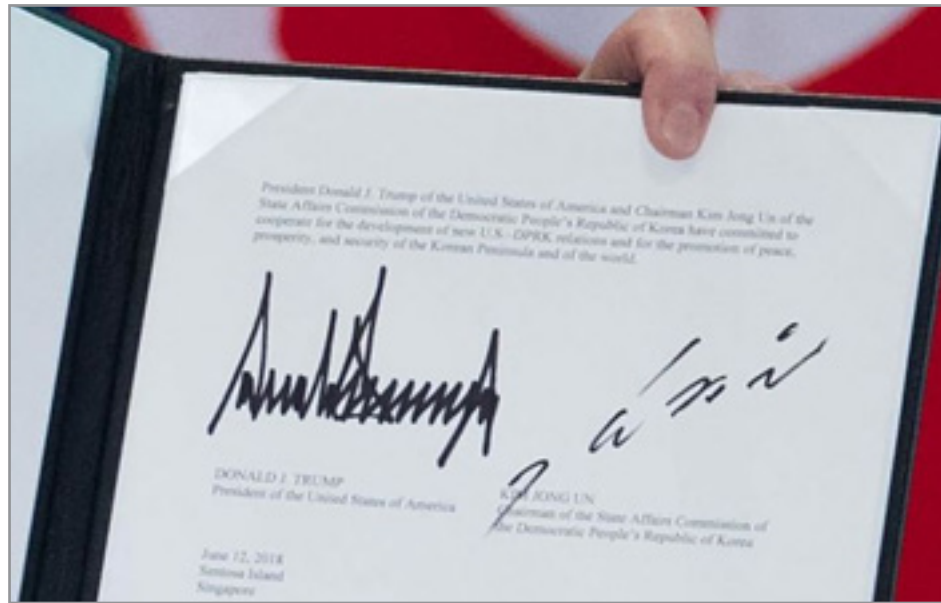
North Korea gains a lot from the summit, perhaps much more than the U.S. For one, Kim gets to meet the leader of the world's strongest nation, a great honor for him resulting in reputation gains back home. Second, North Korea has created enormous bargaining power via-a-vis China especially in the context of its neighborhood. China has played into the fear of a U.S. military presence as threatening to North Korea to continue creating the 'buffer' as well as treat Kim as a junior partner. That dynamic might have changed now. Third, North Korea cleverly utilized its escalatory ballistic missile tests, explaining their existence as provoked by the U.S. military presence in South Korea and the joint U.S.-South Korean military exercises. That rationale appears to have convinced Trump for now who has halted those exercises.

The Associated Risks

For the U.S., the associated risks are that North Korea will commit to denuclearize on paper, while continuing to keep its nuclear option alive and ready. This situation had arisen before, only for the U.S. to discover after commitments to do otherwise on paper that North Korea had continued with plutonium enrichment. The second risk is to be unable to have 'verifiable and irreversible' denuclearization process, one that is internationally vetted. The third risk is for Trump to commit to halting joint military exercises only to find that North Korea has not done much barring token promises on paper to appease him. What then?

For North Korea, getting too cozy with the U.S. will alienate one of its biggest guarantors, China. Hence, Kim will have to learn to walk a tight rope, between keeping China close, while at the same time, developing a credible relationship with the U.S. The second risk is that given Trump has invested so much in this summit, any walking back towards more nukes create risks of war. However, I see that as unlikely given the involvement of South Korea, specifically its president's personal commitment to the process. Finally, though it may appear that Trump and Kim are on an equal footing, this cannot be further from the truth. The power difference between them is enormous and the U.S. military machine is a threat North Korea cannot take lightly.

For now, it all seems a bit surreal for Kim and he indicated as much, soon after he met Trump; "it sure feels like a science fiction movie".[20]



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BASTARIYA BATTALION: NEW FORCE AGAINST INDIA'S LEFT-WING EXTREMISTS



(Induction parade of the Bastariya Battalion, Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh, 24 May 2018, Source: PIB)

Abstract

Bastariya Battalion, a new battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is being inducted into the Left-wing extremism- afflicted Bastar region of Chhattisgarh state. Comprising of tribal recruits, the battalion is expected to add to capacities of the CRPF and bridge the deficiencies that affect its performance. Critics, on the other hand, fear that the induction of a 'tribal only' force will lead to brutalization of the tribals in the region. The reality is different. The attempt is continuation of the government's inability to address the shortcomings of its security-centric counter-LWE approach. Unless loopholes in training, command and control, and intelligence are addressed, countering left wing extremism would remain an arduous task.

In Chhattisgarh state's Ambikapur, a new battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) was commissioned into service on 24 May 2018. The 1000 men-strong 'Bastariya Battalion' raised exclusively from the tribal population of the left-wing extremism (LWE) affected Bastar region (comprising Sukma, Dantewada, Narayanpur and Bijapur districts), will add to the muscle of the 59 battalions of CRPF deployed in the state to fight the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-Maoist) or the Naxalites (also known as Maoists). Home Minister Rajnath Singh, said on the occasion^[1] that the Government of India conceived the idea of raising the Bastariya Battalion having learned about 'the courage and honesty of the tribal brethren of Bastar'. On the other hand, critics allege that the battalion is part of a strategy that repeatedly seeks to pit tribal security forces against the tribal extremists. The only outcome of this has been the brutalization of the tribal society, they allege. The truth, however, is somewhere in between these two extreme views.

What will the Bastariya Battalion achieve that nearly 80,000 central forces and at least 40,000 state police forces have not been able to achieve? How will 1000 tribals-in-uniform bridge the gap between the current stalemate and victory? These questions are indeed at the heart of the debate of a problem that in reality is demonstrating obdurate signs of longevity and is in the private assessment of the intelligence agencies, 'nowhere close to being over'.

LWE Sitrep

According to government's claims, last four years (2014 to 2018, tenure of the current regime in New Delhi) has brought about significant improvements in the LWE situation in the country. This apparently is primarily because of a policy which resulted in the elimination of 510 extremists, including 119 killed in the first five months of 2018 alone. As a result, LWE incidents have decreased from 6,524 in the period 2010-2013 to 4,136 between 2014-17. Deaths of civilians and security forces in LWE theatres have also fallen 55.5 percent from 2,428 to 1,081 during the above-mentioned period. Official statistics also denote shrinking landscape under the control of the Maoists, with the number of 'worst' LWE-affected districts now down to 30, from 35.[2] The list of 'affected' districts, a longer compilation of areas which either witness actual violence or are 'targeted' by the extremists and hence, are covered by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)'s Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme too has been truncated to 90, from 126.[3] If data alone is a pointer towards an improving security situation and the current anti-LWE policy is purportedly effective to ensure victory in the coming years, as the government has repeatedly claimed, the rationale behind investing in a new battalion especially for Bastar, arguably the most LWE affected region of the country today and many years preceding it, is difficult to understand. That raising a new battalion costs approximately Rupees 300 crores (US\$50 million approximately) and the CRPF is continuously raising more and more battalions are extraneous to the debate. What will the Bastariya Battalion achieve that nearly 80,000 central forces and at least 40,000 state police forces have not been able to achieve? How will 1000 tribals-in-uniform bridge the gap between the current stalemate and victory? These questions are indeed at the heart of the debate of a problem that in reality is demonstrating obdurate signs of longevity and is in the private assessment of the intelligence agencies, 'nowhere close to being over'[4].

The Rationale

According to a concept paper prepared by the CRPF in 2016 for raising in Bastariya Battalion, it argued that it would be a 'useful step' as 'the recruits will be mostly tribals who would help address local unemployment issue, provide tactical advantage to CRPF in operations, intelligence collection and language benefits'. The paper, however, admitted that regular recruitment methods may not be effective in a tribal-inhabited region like Bastar where health and education facilities are not upto

The contestation between the security forces and the Maoists continues amid claims and counter claims of victory by both parties. While in recent years, the security forces have been able to inflict a series of setbacks on the Maoists, the latter have managed to hit back with revenge seeking and morale boosting ambushes.

the same standards as an urban area. Therefore, it proposed that not only a pre-recruitment training should be provided to the local people, but 'relaxation' in the height and weight requirement too should also be brought in. As a result, while in case of 'tribal male candidates' in rest of the country, the minimum height requirement is 160 centimeters or 5.25 feet) [the requirement is 165 centimeters for 'general category' male candidates], candidates from the Bastar region were given a relaxation of 4.5 centimeters. Similarly, a ten percent relaxation on weight requirements (weight is measured as proportionate to height and age) was also provided.[5] The point made here is that the Bastariya Battalion's troopers, notwithstanding their tribal lineage and familiarity with the demography of region, are certainly not the best men to fight the extremists. Buoyed by the nod to raise the Bastariya Battalion in 2016, arguably the first experiment in the CRPF's strategy of localizing recruitment and operations, the para-military organization in early 2017 went on to propose raising two 'Kashmiriyat battalions' comprising youth from South Kashmir. The force proposed to recruit from Tral, Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian as these areas, in the words of a senior official, "are worst affected by terrorism." [6] CRPF already has two battalions comprising youth from Kashmir and these are generically named like other battalions. The spree of naming the new battalions underlining their primary recruitment region is interesting and probably is in line with goes the fetish for catchy nomenclatures of the present government. Till the writing of this article, the MHA had not cleared the proposal.

Contrasting Narratives

The contestation between the security forces and the Maoists continues amid claims and counter claims of victory by both parties. While in recent years, the security forces have been able to inflict a series of setbacks on the Maoists, the latter have managed to hit back with revenge seeking and morale boosting ambushes. Among the numerous instances that support this assertion are the following, the most recent cycle of violence. The paper, however, admitted that regular recruitment methods may not be effective in a tribal-inhabited region like Bastar where health and education facilities are not upto the same standards as an urban area. Therefore, it proposed that not only a pre-recruitment training should be provided to the local people, but 'relaxation' in the height and weight requirement too should also be brought in. As a result, while in case of 'tribal male candidates' in rest of the country, the minimum height requirement is 160 centimeters or 5.25 feet) [the requirement is 165 centimeters for 'general category' male candidates], candidates from the Bastar region

The Bastariya battalion is supposed to be deployed for five years in Bastar. However, given the track record of government achievements, such deployment can be expected to last beyond the stated. While the tenure of deployment isn't exactly a matter of dispute, the strategy of using the tribal security forces against the tribal extremists is definitely a source of concern for the civil society.

(Map of Bastar, for representational purpose only. The highlighted locations have no links with the analysis, Source: Economic Times)



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This year in March, the Maoists killed nine CRPF personnel in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district by placing an improvised explosive device (IED) under a Mine Proof Vehicle (MPV).[7]A month later, in April, in neighbouring Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district, police personnel claimed to have laid a trap and killed nearly 40 extremists in two encounters.[8]Maoists, however, claimed that 42[9] people were killed out of which only 22[10] were their cadres, whereas nearby tribal hamlets identified some of the killed as their villagers that included teenagers.[11]In a follow up operation, Maoists on 20 May, used an IED to target a security force vehicle in Chhattisgarh. The IED threw up the vehicle at least 100 metres in air, leading to the deaths of seven police personnel.[12]This trend, where both the security forces and extremists look out for avenging deaths of their colleagues and often succeed, is likely to continue.

The government could be hoping to obliterate the CPI-Maoist by simply neutralizing their cadres. This strategy, with the present neutralization rate (deaths, arrests and surrender among the extremists), in the highly unlikely scenario of a zero-recruitment by the Naxals, would take at least take 20 years to succeed. And the CPI-Maoist, estimated to be at least 20,000 strong, has indeed been successful in recruiting, albeit at a slower rate than before.[13] That's why the MHA's periodic claim that 'the war on the Maoists is inching towards finish' has begun to sound hollow. The public posturing is probably intended to disguise a concern that's turning into paranoia of sorts. A number of post-event investigations have revealed that the attacks on the security forces, both the bigger and high-profile attacks and the smaller ambushes, are rooted in three chronic failures of the security forces. First, the security forces fail to abide by the standard operating procedures. This is mostly due to lack of proper training and also, due to the typical operating environment. Second, operations are hampered by serious command and control problems. For instance, the operational leadership of the force often does not lead the forces during operations and the top leadership does not visit the security force camps. And third, in spite of the numerous attempts to beef up ground level intelligence- both TECHINT and HUMINT- the extremist ambushes continue to spring surprises. Surprisingly, both the political leadership and the short-tenured officials who head the forces have consistently failed to address these shortcomings. Failure of imagination has led to policies that bridge these operational gaps by recruiting more battalions, possibly in the hope that the new ones would be better than the old. Bastariya Battalion, although lauded as an initiative of the government to bring tribals to the side of the state, is indeed a product of that mindset. According to reports, the MHA also has cleared the proposal for Black panther, a new anti-naxal commando force of the Chhattisgarh police.[14]The CRPF too plans to replace 12,000 of its ageing and less motivated personnel by young recruits in Chhattisgarh.[15]As stand-alone measures, these appear as genuine attempts to improve operations, but seen as part of the counter-LWE strategy, they symbolize adhocism.

Deja vu

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The strategy of using the Bastariya Battalion may or may not succeed, but the apprehension that it would be a repeat of the Salwa Judum may have been little too far-fetched. Unlike the Salwa Judum which was given almost a free hand to stem the tide in favour of the state and which operated with complete impunity, the Bastariya Battalion is an official CRPF formation, trained and subject to the rules and regulations of the organization. It is neither a vigilante force, nor is it to operate without the checks that any designated para-military force is subjected to. Notwithstanding the fact that even the CRPF and other forces have been accused of a large number of human rights abuse cases, tarnishing the Bastariya Battalion even before it operates isn't exactly fair.

Rights activists fear that the Bastariya battalion may repeat the excesses committed by the Salwa Judum vigilante group or its new avatar, the District Reserve Guards (DRG).[16]The Salwa Judum, comprising tribals and some former extremists, had been supported by the state police and was accused of large scale human rights violations. The Salwa Judum recruits, then known as Special Police Officers (SPOs) were systematically targeted by the Maoists and in turn, participated in operations that led to the killing of a large number of Maoists. However, the criminal excesses they committed on the tribal civilians may also have widened the acceptability base of the CPI-Maoist. As it was disbanded by an order of the Supreme Court in 2011[17], the Chhattisgarh police adopted them officially, trained them in counter-extremist operations and renamed them as the DRG. The DRG's 'success' has been fiercely contested by several local organisations, who accuse them of continuing the Salwa Judum's excesses.

Strategy shortcomings

The strategy of using the Bastariya Battalion may or may not succeed, but the apprehension that it would be a repeat of the Salwa Judum may have been little too far-fetched. Unlike the Salwa Judum which was given almost a free hand to stem the tide in favour of the state and which operated with complete impunity, the Bastariya Battalion is an official CRPF formation, trained and subject to the rules and regulations of the organization. It is neither a vigilante force, nor is it to operate without the checks that any designated para-military force is subjected to. Notwithstanding the fact that even the CRPF and other forces have been accused of a large number of human rights abuse cases, tarnishing the Bastariya Battalion even before it operates isn't exactly fair. The Bastariya Battalion may not wreak havoc on the tribals. Nor would it be a force on whose shoulders the war on the CPI-Maoist would be won. The battalion only superficially addresses the loopholes that continues to affect the CRPF's performance. The CRPF may be able to overcome the language barrier in communicating with the tribals and minimally reducing the unemployment rate among the employable tribal youth, youth, but to expect that these tribals-in-uniform would be able to overcome the operational dysfunctions that are rooted with inadequate training, abysmal command and control shortcomings, and leadership crisis may be too far-fetched. And even the existential capacities of the Bastariya Battalion would come under severe strain should the Maoists, in a desperate attempt, selectively target family members of the battalion's troopers in the remote hamlets sans security cover.

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Father Ivo Coelho earned a PhD in philosophy at the Gregorian University, Rome, for his work on the hermeneutics of the philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan, SJ (1904-1984). After teaching philosophy in Divyadaan: Salesian Institute of Philosophy, Nashik and holding various offices in his religious congregation, in Nashik, Mumbai and Jerusalem, he is currently based in Rome, where he is in charge of the sector of training and formation for the Salesian society of Don Bosco. Besides his interest in Lonergan, he has also edited collections of the essays of the Indologist Richard De Smet, SJ (1916-1997).

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DR IVO COELHO - SCIENCE, COMMON SENSE AND FAITH

I am tempted to say that the topic of science and faith, or science and religion, is "an easy one." I know there have been dreadful to do's on the point: the Galileo case and the Darwin thing come obviously to mind.

I am also aware that, while most people are by now quite reconciled to the point that Galileo was making, and while Pope John Paul II also tendered a sort of apology for the case, evolution is still a sticking point for many – despite the fact that the same pope also made significant openings on this topic.

The relationship between science and faith is not necessarily a Christian issue. It is, to the best of my knowledge, equally relevant to religions like Judaism and Islam. I am not quite sure how it would work out within the context of Hinduism or Buddhism, these being religions of a significantly different kind. And then heliocentrism and evolution are not the only topics in this area, but they are the ones that come most readily to mind, and, at least to my mind, the attitude one takes towards them is quite symptomatic or, better, representative of the attitude one takes on the issue of the relationship between science and faith in general.

My conviction is that we are dealing with two quite different fields when we talk about science and faith, or science and religion. Methodologically speaking, empirical science is governed by what Bernard Lonergan calls a canon of selection: only theories, laws, hypotheses that involve sensible consequences qualify as scientific.

The major point is that theories, laws, hypotheses that do not admit of sensible consequences are not therefore ruled out of court as nonsensical, meaningless, irrelevant or stupid. What follows from the canon of selection is merely that they do not qualify as belonging to the natural sciences.

The case of Galileo is complex also because it involves conflict not merely between science and faith, but also between science and common sense.

From a common sense point of view, even after we have thoroughly accepted Galileo, it still appears as if it is the sun that rises every morning. And here I love the distinction Lonergan makes between description and explanation. From a descriptive point of view, he says, it is true to say that the sun rises. From an explanatory point of view, however, things are quite different, and we have to admit that it is the earth that moves round the sun. Galileo had the signal merit of initiating, while not being fully aware of what he was doing, the shift from description to explanation. That shift is, to my mind, absolutely vital.

I enjoy asking my students as they are seated comfortably in class whether, at the given moment, we are at rest or in motion. Most jump at the obvious answer: we are at rest. But it takes only a moment to realize that, if we believe all that we have been taught, we are in motion: we believe that the earth is in motion, and that it is in fact hurtling at breakneck speed through space, while at the same time turning around on its axis.



Understanding the intelligibility of a circle does not mean one has answered questions in the area of efficient causality. Answering the question, 'What is a circle?' does not constitute an answer to the question, 'Who drew this particular circle?' Much less does it make the latter question irrelevant, insignificant, meaningless or nonsensical.



Things become even more complicated when we realize that the entire planetary system is itself in motion, spiralling towards some point and perhaps expanding ever 'outward,' whatever that might mean. So here we are, hurtling through space, and yet, for all practical purposes, completely at rest.

So what's the story? Are we moving or are we at rest? And so we come to tiny realizations of what Newton might have meant when he talked about inertia: the same laws hold whether a body is moving or at rest, provided the motion is uniform. I love inertia: it is because of inertia that I am able to eat in a moving train or plane, otherwise you can imagine your coffee remaining back while you move forward....

I hope all this is not baffling, but the point is that there is something peculiar about uniform motion. Despite what Aristotle thought, uniform motion does not have to be explained, it has no cause. It is only acceleration – and by acceleration I mean here simply 'change of motion' – that calls for explanation.

Lonergan puts it elegantly: there is a lack of intelligibility in uniform motion. That same lack of intelligibility is what is probably at the bottom of Einstein's paradoxes. I am far from claiming that I understand anything of what Einstein was saying, but I do remember reading about one of his thought experiments that ran like this: Imagine you are in a spaceship in uniform motion. That spaceship has only one window, and through that window you can see another spaceship, also moving at the same speed and in uniform motion. There is nothing else that you can see, no other points of reference. And then you ask yourself: are you moving or are you at rest? And you realize: does it matter?

I can't resist another example, and this one is about gravity. There was this young student called Tony who believed that the earth was round, but he thought it was round like a dish. One day one of his companions pointed out to him that the earth was round not like a dish but like a football. So Tony took that in, and adjusted his images, and things were okay, till one day his friend realized that he thought the earth was round like the inside of the football: sky above, land below, a bit curved here and there, but manageable all the same.

So Tony had to be told that the earth was round not like the inside of a football but like the outside of a football. And then the problems began: if the earth is round like the outside of a football, the

people on the top of the football are fine, but what about people at the bottom? Do they fall off? Or, if they don't, how is it that they don't? We are back again at the viewpoint of description and the viewpoint of explanation. From a descriptive viewpoint, we have all of Tony's problems about gravity and more.

From an explanatory viewpoint, things are far more complicated, but that complexity has to be faced if it is true that the earth is round like the outside of a football and if people in Australia don't keep falling off. Once again, one begins to get a glimmer of light when one suspects once again that up and down are perhaps – merely relative.

The conflict between science and common sense has not perhaps been in the spotlight as much as the conflict between science and religion, but I do believe that the two conflicts are related, and that attaining a glimmer of light in one area tends to at least clear the ground for comprehension in the other.

The Galileo conflict was handled when the churches realized that God might not have intended the scriptures to be repositories of any and every kind of wisdom. The God who revealed the scriptures also is the creator and origin of human reason and it stands to reason that there should not be any ultimate conflict between the one and the other. The Second Vatican Council put it thus: the purpose of the scriptures is to teach truths concerning salvation – and not, therefore, to take over the role of the empirical sciences.

On the other hand, the empirical sciences deal with what Lonergan calls 'immanent intelligibility,' which is what Aristotle used to call the 'formal cause,' whereas faith and religion are concerned with ultimate intelligibility which at least in some way overlaps with the question of efficient causality.

Understanding the intelligibility of a circle does not mean one has answered questions in the area of efficient causality. Answering the question, 'What is a circle?' does not constitute an answer to the question, 'Who drew this particular circle?' Much less does it make the latter question irrelevant, insignificant, meaningless or nonsensical.

The empirical sciences, to my mind, deal with questions of the immanent intelligibility of the universe. They do not deal with the question of ultimate intelligibility, which is really the question of God.

And even if, as Stephen Hawking tells us, the universe is proved to be eternal, the metaphysical question of creation does not cease to be relevant – as even a glance at Thomas Aquinas might have shown the great scientist. Aquinas long ago said that, even if the universe was eternal in time, we would still have to ask the question, why is there this universe rather than nothing. The question of creation, in other words, is quite a different cup of tea.



And even when they seem to raise questions of efficient causality, as in the case of scientific cosmologies that ask about the origins of the universe and go on to speak of Big Bangs and singularities and oscillating universes and continuous creation, they are by their very canons restricted to the realm of the sensible.

In other words, there is no way that empirical science can make the shift into metaphysics without violating its own canons. This is not to say that there are no scientists that attempt this shift. There are. But it has to be recognized that they are making category mistakes, if you want to be polite, or simply indulging in illegitimate crossovers. They allow, in other words, their reputations as scientists to wash over into claims that are, properly speaking, beyond the domain of science.

So to my mind, neither the Big Bang Theory nor the Oscillating Universe theory nor the Continuous Creation theory have anything to say one way or another about the metaphysical or the religious doctrine of creation.

And even if, as Stephen Hawking tells us, the universe is proved to be eternal, the metaphysical question of creation does not cease to be relevant – as even a glance at Thomas Aquinas might have shown the great scientist. Aquinas long ago said that, even if the universe was eternal in time, we would still have to ask the question, why is there this universe rather than nothing. The question of creation, in other words, is quite a different cup of tea.

Similar thoughts about evolution: Without wanting to defend all of Darwin, it would appear to me that there is overwhelming evidence for an evolutionary world view. And whether the world manifests an evolution, or whether instead, in a most unlikely scenario, it emerges all ready made and static (and this very way of talking is problematic), all this has simply nothing to do one way or other with creation – because evolution is a scientific hypothesis, and being a scientific hypothesis, it deals once again with immanent intelligibility, and neither raises nor answers nor in any way rules out of court the question of ultimate intelligibility: why is there something rather than nothing.

On this topic, one of the most neglected intellectual contributions is that of Lonergan who, in the early chapters of his little book [Insight](#), presents a devastatingly beautiful explanation, on cognitional rather than sense-empirical grounds, of an evolutionary worldview, which he calls the worldview of emergent probability. Required reading on this topic, to my mind, and well worth the time and energy.

Science and religion have been involved in celebrated conflicts which have in the end contributed importantly to clarifying the methods and limits of each, leaving each, hopefully, wiser and more serene. Or at least that is what I feel.

So to my mind, neither the Big Bang Theory nor the Oscillating Universe theory nor the Continuous Creation theory have anything to say one way or another about the metaphysical or the religious doctrine of creation.

Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. It is a not for profit (adfree) free online magazine featuring leading academics, writers, poets, activists of all hues etc. from around the world. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry*, which was relaunched as *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing* in March 2017. He has edited, designed and produced all of Live Encounters' 130 publications till date (June 2018). Mark's philosophy is that knowledge must be free and shared freely to empower all towards enlightenment. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com



PHUNG HUNG STREET ARTWORK HANOI OLD QUARTER TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARK ULYSEAS

Over forty years ago the Vietnam War ended (April 1975) and with it the cessation bloody strife. Since then, the Vietnamese have risen from bombed out buildings, lack of basic amenities like clean drinking water and more to build a thriving economy. The resilience of its people has made it the new Asian Tiger with massive development and foreign investments. Amidst the rumble of its industriousness, beautiful gems of the old world of Hanoi shine through to remind us that Hanoi was, is, and will always be the culture capital of Vietnam.

The following photographs of the public art project on Phung Hung Street on the arch walls of the Long Bien Bridge is the collaborative work of Vietnamese and Korean artists aiming to create a new community and cultural space for local residents and visitors alike. It was executed by **Hanoi Old Quarter Management Authority, Nguyen The Son, internationally acclaimed Vietnamese artist, scholar, and photographer, and artist partners Lee Gang Jun Public Design Institute**. And implemented by the Hoan Kiem District People's Committee – with support from The Korea Foundation (KF) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme in Vietnam (UN-Habitat Vietnam). This project was in commemoration of 25 years of diplomatic relations between The Socialist Republic of Vietnam and The Republic of Korea. The project began in November 2017 and was completed in February 2018.

This exclusive feature is a first in a photo series depicting the many enchanting facets of Hanoi, Culture Capital of Vietnam.



View of the artwork by Vietnamese and Korean artists on the arch walls of the Long Bien Bridge.

Captions for the photographs have been taken from the signage at the site. However, in some cases the captions have been edited/paraphrased for coherency and brevity.



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Electric Locomotive, by artist - Kim Hu Chang

Hanoi's first electric locomotive was built in 1900, remaining an integral part of the city's life until its final journey in 1991. The distinctive 'leng keng' sound of the train remains a symbol of the city's storied past. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Ban An Pagoda, by artist - Oh Ye Seul

The formidable *Ban An Pagoda* was demolished in 1898, and the Hanoi Post Office built in its place. The name 'Ban An' extorts children to remember and give thanks to their parents; the Three Jewels of Buddhism; their Homeland; and the souls of the dead. Although the only remnant of the structure is the Hoa Phong Tower, Ban An remains a witness to Thang Lon imperial power as well as the city's thousand-plus years of civilisation. This work represents a reimagining of the temple, offering a message of respect for the past and preservation of the future. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Old Fashioned Days, by artist - Lee Seung Hyun

As familiar city scenes make way for the changing face of modernity, Hanoi's hard working days of yore are remembered in black and white form.

"The crowded lofts are filled with hope.

The sunshine streaming in..." (Vietnamese poem)

(Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Streets of Flowers, by artist - Oh Ye Seul

Hanoi is known as the land of flowers, and the petal drenched scenes of basket-bearing ladies – their bouquets spilling out onto the streets – remain the fragrant face of the capital. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



Áo dài on the street, by artist - Choi Luk Won

Past and present coalesce as a pair of young women dressed in áo dài stroll down an ancient street – a metaphor for a play between the city's eternal essence and ever-changing face. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Vietnam's Tet, by artists - Oh Ye Seul and Choi Luk Won

"Every year when peach blossoms bloomed
There, we saw an old calligrapher
Spread his ink and scrolls of red paper
On the busy side walk amidst the crowds" (Vu Dinh Lien - "Ông Đồ")

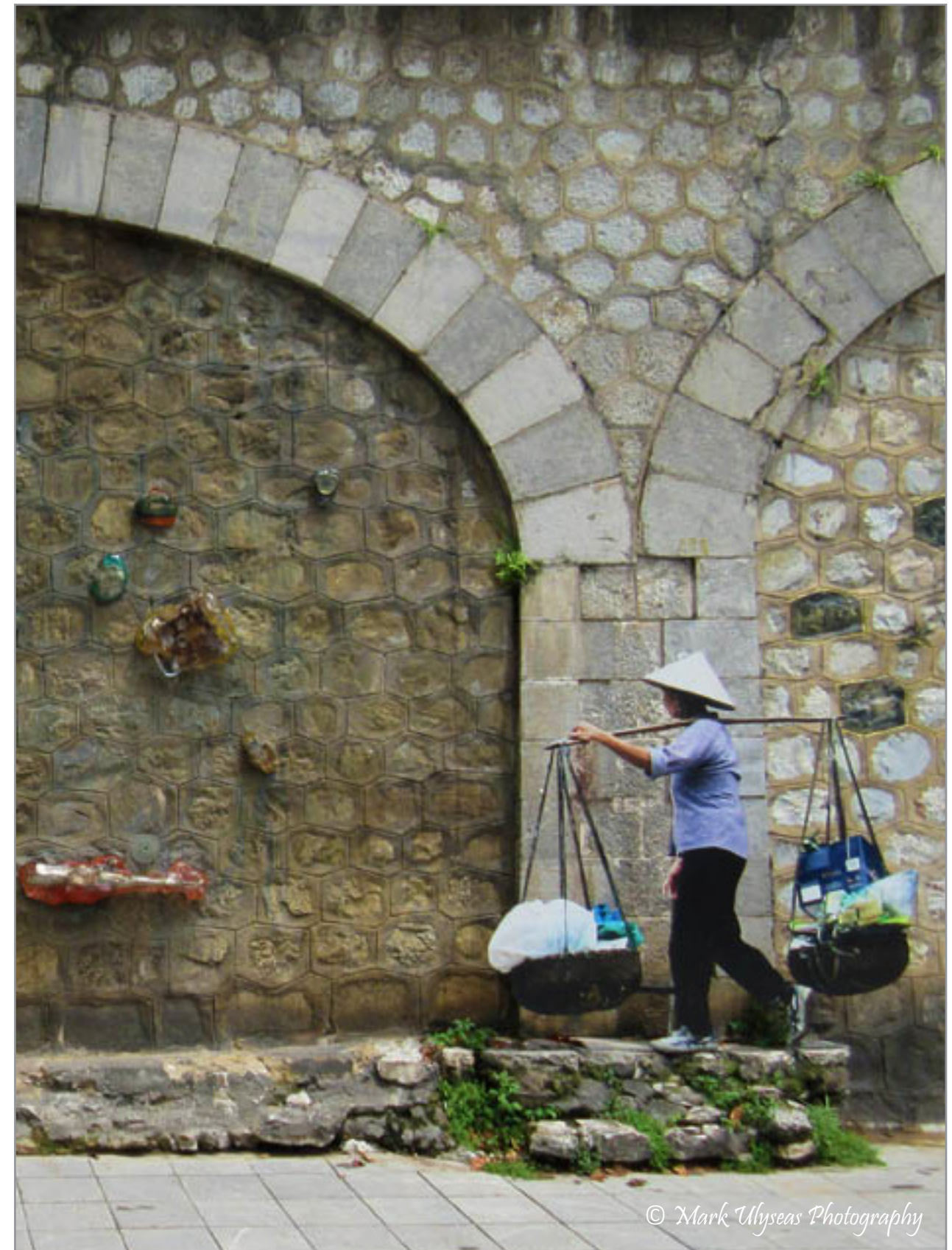
Faithfully maintaining their traditional custom dating back to centuries past, Vietnamese continue to seek out a calligrapher to mark the New Year, hoping the auspicious brush strokes will deliver on their promise of joy and prosperity. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

**Kim Van Giot Le,
by artist - Duong Manh Quyet**

The ubiquitous Honda motorcycle has become the symbol of life for the people of Hanoi. The first motorcycle market was on Phung Hung Street. Thirty years on much has changed but the memories live on...a time when people struggled to save money to buy this motorcycle. It was, and perhaps is, the life line for many. This artwork assists the viewer to experience a potent symbol of the past.



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Carriers, by artist - Nguyen The Son

The image of women carrying twin baskets over their shoulders has appeared throughout the long history of Thang Long Ke Cho. It symbolises the daily struggle of Vietnamese women – buying and selling things on the street to provide for the family. These vendors, ever present at street corners in hail and shine, brought a life force to the city and gave Hanoi its distinctive character. Sadly, modernisation and globalisation has disturbed the rhythm of their lives. How long will these women street vendors survive in their trade?

Photographs © Mark Ulyseas

2018 july © www.liveencounters.net



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House Number 63 Phung Hung Street, by artist - Tran Hau Yen The

Phung Gung Street is like a border dividing the western side with its colonial structures and the eastern part – Hang Street (the old street of Ke Cho and Thang people). Over time the colonial buildings slowly disappeared. Few remain. This artwork depicts the door frames of the house with different layers of time. In a 100 years what will be left of the house? The doors have been deliberately kept ajar to entice the viewer to discover the hidden side of history behind the doors. (I am not part of the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

General Merchandise, by artist - Lee Seung Hyun

The general merchandise store was a classic image of old Hanoi, a familiar artefact of a bygone era. Its many shelves were stocked with hundreds of high quality products marked 'Sample - Not For Sale', until in 1995, it made way for a modern shopping center.



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

The Nostalgic Water Tap, by artist - Nguyen The Son

The public water tap is reminiscent of the subsidy period. Many streets in Hanoi had public water taps installed. Most houses lacked basic facilities and regular water supply to homes was little or non-existent. The arch walls of Phung Hung, before they were bricked up, had water taps installed. It was here that people of all ages met to collect water and exchange news and views. This interaction symbolised the 'value of life', then. It remains an inspiration to the people of Hanoi. History of this wall is also history of old Hanoi.



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Bong - Bong - Bong, by artist - Can Van An

This artwork reflects the view of the younger generation of Vietnamese towards the past, in these exciting and fast-changing times. As time passes much has been lost...such as atmosphere and distinct character of old streets in Hanoi...the old houses replaced by new structures. In these changing times, the young generation thinks about *what is* and *what was*...and perhaps, *what has* been lost forever. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

Hang Ma Street - Street of Childhood, by artists - Tran Hau Yen The and Le Dang Ninh

Currently built signs are nothing more than objects. Signs must reflect the essence of the place, a touch of nostalgia. Like the street signs of *Tran Hau Yen The*, a guide to the past. Hang Ma is the street for mid-autumn festivals and folk games. Traditional toys are disappearing. Hang Ma Street of *Le Dang Ninh*, sells a lot of traditional and some modern toys. The mural conveys a sense of humor as well as hope for the return of traditional folk games. (Disregard the shadows on the mural).



© Mark Ulyseas Photography

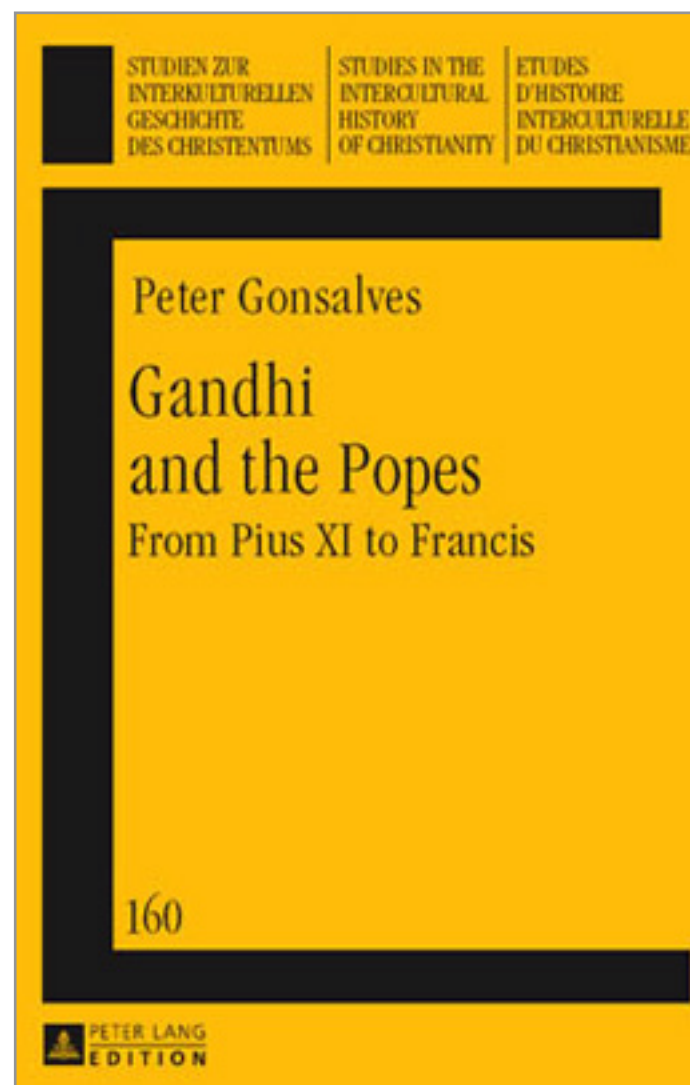
Long Bien Bridge, by artist - Jang Su Ik

The familiar face of Long Bien Bridge is punctuated with colorful wire. The landmark's unique charms stems not only from its distinctive appearance, but also from its symbolic importance, a bridge between the past, present and future. (Disregard overhanging tree, it is not part of the mural).

Dr Peter Gonsalves is the Dean of the Faculty of Social Communication at the Salesian Pontifical University, Rome. A member of SIGNIS, a world association for communicators, he has also written a manual for South Asian educators entitled Exercises in Media Education. www.petergonsalves.in
www.amazon.com



This article is an extract from the author's book, *Gandhi and the Popes* (Peter Lang, 2015). It is the last of his Gandhian trilogy, preceded by *Clothing for Liberation* (Sage 2010) and *Khadi: Gandhi's Mega Symbol of Subversion* (Sage 2012).



DR PETER GONSALVES - GANDHI AND THE POPES

When Paul VI wrote a letter to the President of India in 1969, he said, "One cannot forget Gandhi's profound admiration and esteem for the person of Jesus Christ, whose Sermon on the Mount greatly influenced his own thought and action." [1] In 1986, John Paul II read aloud the beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount at Gandhi's tomb as if to remind the world that they were the words "with which the Mahatma was very familiar and in which he found the confirmation of the deep thoughts of his heart." [2] Benedict XVI's reply to a question on inter-religious dialogue in 2008, drew attention to the impact of Christ's Sermon on Gandhi yet again.

Exponents of non-Christian religions have said to me: the presence of Christianity is a reference point for us that helps us, even if we do not convert. Let us think of the great figure of Mahatma Gandhi: although he remained firmly bound to his own religion, the Sermon on the Mount was a fundamental reference point for him which shaped his whole life. Thus, the leaven of [Christian] faith, even if it did not convert him to Christianity, entered his life. [3]

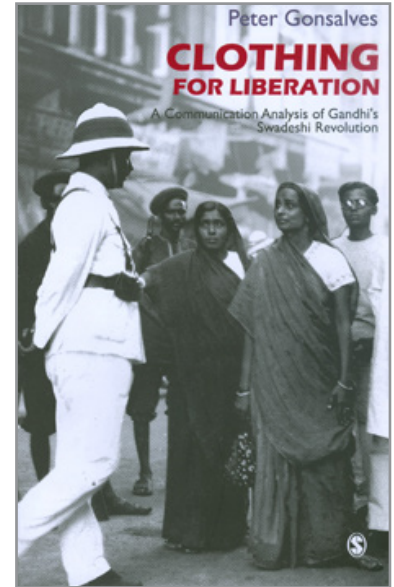
Indeed, Gandhi felt drawn to the life and teachings of Jesus. Books have been written on the subject by several authors, especially by those in the West. [4] One book, *The Message of Jesus Christ*, which was a compilation of his thoughts on Christianity, was assembled by his followers and even published under his supervision. [5] Although the popes' statements about the 'Jesus effect' on Gandhi are based on historical evidence, we still ought to examine the *nature* and *extent* of the effect, and the reaction it had on his contemporaries.

Early Christian Impressions

As a boy, Gandhi was unable to bear the sight of street-corner missionaries preaching against Hindus and their gods. He was repulsed by the attitude of Christian converts who took to eating beef, drinking liquor, wearing Western attire, denigrating the religion of their ancestors and despising traditional customs and their country. Only when he landed in England as a student of law did he encounter Christians of a different ilk. The first vegetarian Christian he met patiently showed him that meat-eating and liquor-drinking were not biblical regulations. He advised him to read the Bible to discover more. Gandhi confessed that he "plodded through [the Old Testament] ... with much difficulty without the least interest or understanding." [6] The New Testament, however, produced a different impression and the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapters 5 to 7, went straight to his heart. [7] The figure that attracted him most was the person of Jesus. [8]

"I saw that the Sermon on the Mount was the whole of Christianity for him who wanted to live a Christian life. It is that Sermon which has endeared Jesus to me." [9] The call to turn the other cheek 'delighted him beyond measure.' [10] He could not help comparing it with the Gita because, "[it] echoed something I had learnt in childhood and something which seemed to be part of my being and which I felt was being acted up to in the daily life around me." [11]

In South Africa, one of the sources that introduced him to a deeper understanding of the Sermon was Leo Tolstoy's book that took its title from the Gospel of St. Luke, Chapter 17, verse 21, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Tolstoy explained that Christianity was founded on a non-violent ethic that was active, not passive. A passive non-violence abstained from doing harm to others. An active non-violence resisted violence through non-violent ways. This meant doing good to those who hate, walking the extra mile and loving one's adversary.



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He was also brought under the "magic spell" [17] of John Ruskin's *Unto this Last* [18] – a book that drew inspiration from Christ's parable of the vineyard in the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 20, verses 1 to 14. The parable refers to the 'last' as the labourers who, despite being recruited at the day's end, received the full day's wage just like the average labourer. Ruskin's essay was critical of the capitalist bourgeois economists of the 18th and 19th centuries who were unfair to the weaker sections of society and who in turn were often unable to obtain a decent living wage because they lacked opportunities or skills. It brought about "an instantaneous and practical transformation" [19] in Gandhi's life. He translated it in 1908 under the title, *Sarvodaya* (well-being of all). He even practised the equal wage system at his Phoenix Settlement where each inmate received the same salary without distinction of function, race or nationality. The book was an essential influence in his elaboration of an Indian theory of equality linked to social economy. [20]

By his own admission through emotive language, [21] it is evident that Christ's teaching and example did have an *effect* on Gandhi's own thinking. It was *caused directly* by his reading of the Gospels or *indirectly* through Christ-inspired literature and witnesses who lived their Christian faith.

Christ's Teachings through Hindu Eyes

However impressive Christ's influence might have been on Gandhi, it would be a misconception to think that he imbibed what he read univocally and exclusively. Much like the influence of all other scriptures, he adopted and creatively adapted what he read while adhering firmly to the Hindu religious framework. [22] His dedication to the *Advaita* School gave him the sense of unity and coherence that he relentlessly sought. Consider, for example, this statement on the Sermon.

I may say that I have never been interested in a historical Jesus. I should not care if it was proved by someone that the man called Jesus never lived, and that [what] was narrated in the Gospels was a figment of the writer's imagination. For the Sermon on the Mount would still be true for me. [23]

These euphoric expressions seemed grossly exaggerated to his Christian acquaintances. Yet, his emphasis on the symbolic rather than the historical was in line with Hindu oral tradition that was often misunderstood by the rationally inclined Western mind. [24] Gandhi found value even in interpreting Hindu myths despite their lack of historical accuracy. [25] Needless to say, the ambiguity of his hermeneutical approach to religious literature also disturbed Hindu orthodoxy when he judged their beliefs by the same yardstick.

My Rama, the Rama of our prayers is not the historical Rama, the son of Dasharatha, the king of Ayodhya. He is the eternal, the unborn, the one without a second [...] who belongs equally to all. [26]

Or again:

I have not been able to see any difference between the Sermon on the Mount and the Bhagavad Gita. What the Sermon describes in a graphic manner, the Bhagavad Gita reduces to a scientific formula. [...] Today, supposing I was deprived of the Gita and forgot all its contents but had a copy of the Sermon, I should derive the same joy from it as I do from the Gita. [27]

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And more brazenly:

The Mahabharata is the story of a bloody war. But I have maintained in the teeth of orthodox Hindu opposition that it is a book written to establish the futility of war and violence.[28]

This scrutiny of religions according to his own hermeneutical principles, and his decision to consider all religions equal while refusing to consider any one of them superior to the others, was the typically Gandhian tightrope walk. Not all his admirers could deal with this apparent ambiguity. [29] It exasperated those who were confused, disappointed the unconvinced, and vindicated his sworn enemies.

Another aspect of Christianity that attracted Gandhi was the Crucifix, the symbol of Jesus' non-violent submission to suffering love. He probably saw in the Cross the apotheosis of his own life: to be semi-nude and 'nailed' to an excruciating *tapasya* (austerity) for the liberation of oppressed peoples, beginning with his own. He declared: "Though I cannot claim to be a Christian in the sectarian sense, the example of Jesus' suffering is a factor in the composition of my undying faith in non-violence which rules all my actions, worldly and temporal." [30] As with the Sermon on the Mount, so with the Cross: Gandhi assimilated and let himself be inspired through his personalized and ecumenical manner of perceiving religions. Bhikhu Parekh demonstrates this in his analysis of Gandhi's reinterpretation of *ahimsa*.

He abstracted what he took to be the central values of Hinduism and set up a critical dialogue between them and those derived from elsewhere. Thus he took over the Hindu concept of *ahimsa*, in his view one of the greatest values derived from the profound doctrine of the unity of life. He found it negative and passive and reinterpreted it in the light of the Christian concept of *caritas*. He thought the latter was too emotive and led to worldly attachments, and so redefined it in the light of the Hindu concept of *anasakti*. His double conversion, his Christianisation of a Hindu category after suitably Hinduising its Christian components, yielded the novel concept of an active and positive but detached and non-emotive love.[31]

Clearly, Gandhi's manner of being 'influenced' by Christ was no facile imitation, nor indiscriminate borrowing, nor blind acceptance. It was a complex hermeneutical process that was strongly linked to

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his personal and social identity and to the values he lived by. Gandhi's way of being influenced by Jesus tells us more about Gandhi and his perception of Jesus than it does about the 'Jesus' of history or Christian theology.

Who was Jesus for Gandhi?

People generally gauge the intelligibility of whatever is strange or foreign on the basis of their habitual frames of reference. The act of co-opting anything new within one's cognitional framework is therefore a demanding process, because it involves creative risk-taking through selection (or elimination) and interpretation. The truth that Gandhi was influenced by Jesus therefore depends on a further question: what did Gandhi accept, reject or reinterpret to arrive at a perception of Jesus that was truly his own – and different from the 'Jesus' in whom Christians believe?

Through numerous interviews with Christian missionaries, Gandhi patiently and forthrightly explained his position. Understandably, his answers were not always what they expected or wanted to hear. Firstly, he disagreed with the fundamental tenet of Christianity that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God.

To me it ['begotten'] implies a spiritual birth. My interpretation, in other words, is that in Jesus' own life is the key of His nearness to God; that He expressed as no other could, the spirit and will of God. It is in this sense that I see Him and recognize Him as the Son of God.][32]

But this did not mean he accepted Jesus as the *only* begotten Son of God, or as *divinely begotten* in the way Christians do. He explains:

If God could have sons, all of us were his sons. If Jesus was like God, or God Himself, then all men were like God and could be God Himself. *My reason was not ready to believe literally* that Jesus by his death and by his blood redeemed the sins of the world. Metaphorically there might be some truth in it. [...] I could accept Jesus as a martyr, an embodiment of sacrifice, and a divine teacher, but not as the most perfect man ever born. His death on the cross was a great example to the world, but that there was anything like a mysterious or miraculous virtue in it my heart could not accept.[33]

On being informed by a missionary that Christ's crucifixion on the cross was more than martyrdom or sacrifice and that it was a 'redemptive offering' ordained by God to cleanse this world from the consequences of sin, Gandhi replied: "I do not seek redemption from the consequences of my sin, I seek to be redeemed from sin itself, or rather from the very thought of sin. Until I have attained that end, I shall be content to be restless."

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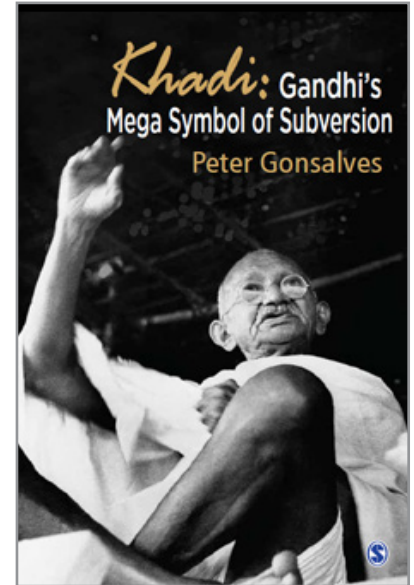
Furthermore, the claim that Jesus was divine implied attributing *perfectibility* to Jesus. According to Gandhi this would mean denying God's superiority over man. God alone is absolutely perfect. [35] When He decides to intervene in the world as a human being, "He of His own accord limits Himself." [36] A proof of Jesus' limitation is his death on the cross. "Jesus died on the Cross because he was limited by the flesh." [37]

Presuming that, in Gandhi's reckoning, Jesus was one of the many *avatars* of God, would he accept Jesus as one of the highest among the manifestations, one closest to divinity, or one more divine than others? Gandhi replies:

No, for the simple reason that we have no data. Historically we have more data about Mahomed than anyone else because he was more recent in time. For Jesus there is less data and still less for Buddha, Rama and Krishna; and when we know so little about them, is it not preposterous to say that one of them was more divine than another? In fact even if there were a great deal of data available, no judge should shoulder the burden of sifting all the evidence, if only for this reason that it requires a highly spiritual person to gauge the degree of divinity of the subjects he examines. To say that Jesus was 99 percent divine, and Mahomed 50 per cent, and Krishna 10 per cent, is to arrogate to oneself a function which really does not belong to man. [38]

As for the miracles and prophecies of Jesus, Gandhi declared that he had no need of them to prove Jesus' greatness as a teacher: "Nothing can be more miraculous than the three years of his ministry." [39] Regarding the miracle of feeding the multitude, he believed that "a magician can create that illusion." [40]

And on Jesus' power to raise the dead to life he said: "I doubt if the men he raised were really dead." He substantiates this with a personal experience in which a child who was thought to be dead and was about to be cremated was restored to life after he gave her an enema. Gandhi goes on to confirm his belief in the unchangeable laws of Nature, rather than in miracles.



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I do not deny that Jesus had certain psychic powers and he was undoubtedly filled with the love of humanity. But he brought to life not people who were dead but who were believed to be dead. The laws of Nature are changeless, unchangeable, and there are no miracles in the sense of infringement or interruption of Nature's laws. But we limited beings fancy all kinds of things and impute our limitations to God. We may copy God, but not He us. [43]

Thus, while politely respecting the Christian choice and defending the Christian's right to believe in the divinity of Jesus, he also claimed his personal right to be inspired by Jesus without adhering to any Christian denomination and without rejecting the equal dignity of all scriptures.

I cannot ascribe exclusive divinity to Jesus. He is as divine as Krishna or Rama or Mahomed or Zoroaster. Similarly, I do not regard every word of the Bible as the inspired word of God, even as I do not regard every word of the Vedas or the Koran as inspired. The sum total of each of these books is certainly inspired, but I miss that inspiration in many of the things taken individually. The Bible is as much a book of religion with me as the Gita and the Koran. [44]

Who, then, was Gandhi's 'Jesus'?

To me, He was one of the greatest teachers humanity has ever had. To His believers, He was God's only begotten Son. Could the fact that I do or do not accept this belief make Jesus have any more or less influence in my life? Is all the grandeur of His teaching and of His doctrine to be forbidden to me? I cannot believe so.

To me, it implies a spiritual birth. My interpretation, in other words, is that in Jesus' own life is the key of His nearness to God; that He expressed, as no other could, the spirit and will of God. It is in this sense that I see Him and recognize Him as the Son of God.

And because the life of Jesus has the significance and the transcendency to which I have alluded, I believe that He belongs not solely to Christianity, but to the entire world, to all races and people – it matters little under what flag, name or doctrine they may work, profess a faith, or worship a God inherited from their ancestors.

But I do believe that something of this spirit, that Jesus exemplified in the highest measure in its most profound human sense, does exist. I must believe this; if I do not believe it I should be a sceptic [...]

[M]an has within his breast an impulse for good and a compassion that is the spark of Divinity, and which some day, I believe, will burst forth into the full flower that is the hope of all mankind.

An example of this flowering may be found in the figure and in the life of Jesus. [...] The lives of all have, in some greater or lesser degree, been changed by his presence, his actions, and the words spoken by his divine voice. [...]

And because the life of Jesus has the significance and the transcendency to which I have alluded, I believe that He belongs not solely to Christianity, but to the entire world, to all races and people – it matters little under what flag, name or doctrine they may work, profess a faith, or worship a God inherited from their ancestors.[45]

Gandhi welcomed Jesus' influence and believed that "the imitation of Christ or moral identification with him"[46] was the universal and timeless imperative to give people hope. He rejected 'Christianity' for its dependence on imperial power, lax culture, and ostentatious claims to exclusive salvation that tarnished its original identity. He "rejected Christianity for the sake of Jesus." [47] Two anecdotes may help to demonstrate the impact Gandhi's own 'imitation of Christ' had on his followers. The first is Gandhi's advice to a Christian who used uncharitable language in his zeal to defend Gandhi against a "particularly vicious attack." [48]

I did not like your writing in the Chronicle. It is not ahimsa. [...] Why should you spoil a good case by bad adjectives? And when you have a good cause never descend to personalities. [...] 'Resist not evil with evil.' You have neutralized the evil writing [of your opponent] by a writing of the same kind. [...] If you have realized the fundamental truth of what I have said, you will even partially mend the evil by [...] writing a private note somewhat after this style: "Although I hold your charges and innuendoes to be wrong, I feel that I ought not to have adopted towards you the language I did. I want to follow Christ. I own that my conduct was not Christian. I have no right to judge you. I would feel somewhat relieved if I could have a line from you to say that you have accepted my apology." [49]

Gandhi embraced Christ but rejected Christianity. He welcomed a Christianity that sought to purify itself from all that was unlike Christ. The only picture on the wall of his mud hut at Sevagram in 1940, was a black and white image of Jesus kneeling at Gethsemane with the caption: 'He is our Peace'.

The second anecdote reveals how Gandhi's radical manner of following Jesus was so infectious that it affected the behaviour of Hindu and Muslim participants in his campaign for civil-disobedience. E. Stanley Jones (1884-1973), a Methodist missionary in India, recalls:

In one place the nationalists were forbidden by the government to carry the national flag beyond a certain point on a bridge which led into the European or Civil section of the town. The nationalists made it an issue. The magistrate, who arrested and tried most of them, remarked to me that those whom he arrested were much more Christian in their spirit than he was. They would let him know what time they were coming across the bridge with the flag and how many! Would he please be prepared for twenty-five today? Of the twelve hundred who were arrested in that flag agitation, although none of them were professed Christians, and although they could take into jail with them only a limited number of things which they had to produce before the magistrate, the vast majority took New Testaments with them to read while there. The reason they did so becomes apparent when one of them remarked, "We now know what it means for you Christians to suffer for Christ." [50]

If Gandhi who was against proselytism was open to the moral influence of Jesus on his life, if he believed that Christ's message had much to contribute to enriching the Indian ethos, what would his advice to Christian missionaries be? Jones, who was concerned about Gandhi's criticism of the foreignness of Indian Christianity, once put a similar question to him and received this reply:

First, I would suggest that all of you Christians, missionaries and all, must begin to live more like Jesus Christ. Second, Practice your religion without adulterating it or toning it down. Third, emphasize love and make it your working force, for love is central in Christianity. Fourth, Study the non-Christian religions more sympathetically to find the good that is within them, in order to have a more sympathetic approach to the people. [51]

Gandhi embraced Christ but rejected Christianity. He welcomed a Christianity that sought to purify itself from all that was unlike Christ. The only picture on the wall of his mud hut at Sevagram in 1940, was a black and white image of Jesus kneeling at Gethsemane with the caption: 'He is our Peace'. [52]

FOOT NOTES

- 01 Paul VI, “Letter of Paul VI to His Excellency Varahigiri Venkah Giri, President of India, August 22, 1969”, in Vatican.va, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/letters/1969/documents/hf_p-vi_let_19690822_varahigiri-venkah-giri_en.html (08-11-2012). See also: L’OR, 3.10.1969, 1.
- 02 John Paul II, “Address on the Occasion of the Visit to the Funerary Monument of Raj Ghat Dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi, Delhi, Saturday, 1st February 1986”, in Vatican.va, no. 4, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/1986/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19860201_raj-ghat_en.html (03-01-2012).
- 03 Benedict XVI, “Meeting with the Parish Priests and the Clergy of the Diocese of Rome, 7 February 2008”, in Vatican.va, http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2008/february/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080207_clergy-rome_en.html (08-02-2013).
- 04 Some books that focus exclusively on Gandhi and Jesus are: Robert Ellsberg (Ed.), Gandhi on Christianity New York, Orbis Books, 1991; Terrence J. Rynne, Gandhi and Jesus: The Saving Power of Nonviolence New York, Orbis Books, 2008. See also a selection of early writings in chronological order that deal partially with Gandhi and Christianity: Joseph J. Doke, M. K. Gandhi: An Indian Patriot in South Africa New Delhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 1919, 1967; Romain Rolland, Mahatma Gandhi, The Man Who Became One with the Universal Being, London, The Warthmore Press Ltd., 1924; Francis Watson, The Trial of Mr Gandhi, London, Macmillan and Co., 1969; Haridas T. Muzumdar (Ed.) The Enduring Greatness of Gandhi: An American Estimate, being the Sermons of Dr. John Haynes Holmes and Dr. Donald S. Harrington, Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1982; Charles Chatfield (Ed.), The Americanization of Gandhi: Images of the Mahatma, New York: Garland Publishing, 1976; Margaret Chatterjee, Gandhi’s Religious Thought, London: Macmillan, 1983; Ignatius Jesudasan, A Gandhian Theology of Liberation, New York, Orbis Books, 1984.
- 05 For a compilation of Gandhi’s words on Christianity see: Anand Hingorani (Ed.), The Message of Jesus Christ, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1964. See also R. K. Prabhu, What Jesus Means To Me, Ahmedabad, Navajivan, 1959.
- 06 Autobiography, 63.
- 07 Ibid.
- 08 CWMG, vol. 48 (1931) 437-438.
- 09 CWMG, vol. 48 (1931) 438.
- 10 Autobiography, 64.
- 11 CWMG, vol. 48 (1931) 438.
- 12 The book, The Kingdom of God is Within You, was written in 1894 as Leo Tolstoy’s plea for a return to a Christian ethic based on the Sermon on the Mount. This was contrary to the Russian Orthodox Church that merged with the Russian state and fully supported state policy. It was contrary also to the conflicting international relations of European powers at the end of the nineteenth century.
- 13 Leo Tolstoy, The Kingdom of God is within You, trans. Constance Garnett, Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1984, 380, quoted in Rynne, Gandhi and Jesus, 30.
- 14 “There is one thing which occurs to me, which came to me early in my studies of the Bible. It seized me immediately when I read the passage: ‘Make this world the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and everything will be added to you.’” M. K. Gandhi, The Message of Jesus Christ, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1986, 18.
- 15 “If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity.” CWMG, vol. 63 (1936) 240. “I am endeavouring to see God through service of humanity, for I know that God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in everyone.” Young India, 4-8-1927, 247-8. See also K. L. Seshagiri Rao, Mahatma Gandhi and C. F. Andrews, Patiala, Punjabi University Press, 1969, 35.
- 16 Gandhi, Autobiography, 127.
- 17 Gandhi, Autobiography, 273.
- 18 The book, Unto This Last was written in 1860. Rather than discuss the religious meaning of the parable, Ruskin looks at its social and economic implications. He discusses issues, such as, who should receive a living wage and how that wage should be distributed equitably even to those who are underprivileged.
- 19 Gandhi, Autobiography, 275.
- 20 Anthony J. Parel, “Gandhian Freedoms and Self-Rule”, Richard L. Johnson (Ed.)
- 21 In the passages quoted above Gandhi describes the ‘effect’ of Jesus’ teaching and example on his life through emotion-laden vocabulary which I repeat here in italics: The New Testament made a ‘different impression’; Christ beatitudes ‘went straight to his heart’ and ‘endeared’ Jesus to him. The turning of the cheek ‘delighted him beyond measure’ and ‘echoed’ what seemed to be ‘a part of his being’. Tolstoy’s book ‘overwhelmed’ him and Ruskin’s brought him under its ‘magic spell’.
- 22 See Bhikhu Parekh, Colonialism, Tradition and Reform, New Delhi, Sage, 1999, 26.
- 23 CWMG, vol. 48 (1931) 338.
- 24 To understand the semiotic foundations of the East-West encounter of religions in colonial India see the publications of Robert Yelle: Semiotics of Religion: Signs of the Sacred in History, Bloomsbury, 2013; and, Modernity and Disenchantment: Christianity and the Secularization of Colonial India, Oxford University Press, 2012.

- 25 The ambiguity of Gandhi’s hermeneutical approach to scriptural texts can be seen in his use of the word ‘gospel’ as detached from its historical significance, and his preference for the term ‘varna’ (instead of ‘caste’) precisely because of its historical significance. To him and his close collaborators – most of whom were not Christian – the word ‘gospel’ meant ‘doctrine of prime importance’ rather than the etymologically derived 13th century word ‘godspel’: god+spel or ‘good+story’ which refers to “the Good News of Jesus Christ the long-awaited Anointed One.” Contrarily, in interpreting a Sanskrit term like varna, Gandhi was extremely respectful of its historical significance that dates back to the Vedas since it supported his argument in favour of a non-hierarchical division of society based on labour instead of the vertically stratified notion of ‘caste’ that was coined in the 1600s.
- 26 CWMG, vol. 30 (1926) 557.
- 27 M. K. Gandhi, Christian Missions: Their Place in India, Ahmedabad, Navajivan Press, 1941, 187. Elsewhere Gandhi goes on to tell Christian missionaries: “Hinduism as I know it entirely satisfies my soul, fills my whole being and I find solace in the Bhagavad Gita which I miss even in the Sermon on the mount.” B. R. Nanda, Gandhi and his Critics, New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1977, 5.
- 28 CWMG, vol. 70 (1939) 334.
- 29 Take the case in which Gandhi interpreted Islam according to his cherished principle of ahimsa by stating that the Koran eschewed violence altogether. A Muslim correspondent wrote to remind him that Islam does allow the use of force on certain occasions by pointing to the Prophet’s participation in the battle of Badr. He plainly adds: “I dare not cite any authority because you have refused to accept any interpretation except your own.” In reply, Gandhi admitted that he was aware of the prophet’s use of violence, but believed that “it is possible that the teaching of a book or a man’s life may be different from isolated texts in a book or incidents in a life, however many the latter may be.” CWMG, vol. 70 (1939) 332-334.
- 30 CWMG, vol. 68 (1939) 278. (*italics mine*)
- 31 Parekh, Colonialism, Tradition and Reform, 26.
- 32 Prabhu - Rao (Eds.), MMG, 99.
- 33 Autobiography, 126. (*italics mine*)
- 34 Autobiography, 115. (*italics mine*)
- 35 CWMG, vol. 65 (1937) 82.
- 36 CWMG, vol. 65 (1937) 82. Hinduism believes in avatars or ‘manifestations’ as God’s deliberate descent to earth in material forms.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 See Harijan, 6-3-1937 in M. K. Gandhi, What Jesus Means to Me, (Compiler: R. K. Prabhu), Ahmedabad, Navajivan Publishing House, 1959, 7.
- 39 CWMG, vol. 65 (1937) 82.
- 40 Ibid.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 “As for Jesus raising the dead to life, well I doubt if the men he raised were really dead. I raised a relative’s child from supposed death to life, but that was because the child was not dead, and but for my presence there she might have been cremated. But I saw that life was not extinct. I gave her an enema and she was restored to life. There was no miracle about it.” CWMG, vol. 65 (1937), 82.
- 43 Ibid.
- 44 CWMG, vol. 64 (1937) 397.
- 45 CWMG, vol. 75 (1941) 69-70. This text is Gandhi reply to the claims made by Christians that because he was not a Christian and did not accept Christ, it was impossible for him to understand the full meaning of Christ’s teachings.
- 46 Ignatius Jesudasan, “Gandhi’s Way of the Cross”, Robert Ellsberg (Ed.), Gandhi on Christianity, New York, Orbis Books, 1991, 92.
- 47 James W. Douglass, “From Gandhi to Christ: God as Suffering Love”, in Robert Ellsberg, Gandhi on Christianity, New York, Orbis Books, 1991, 102. See also his refutation of the charge that he was influenced by C. F. Andrews and Christianity on the issue of untouchability: CWMG, vol. 19 (1921) 289.
- 48 CWMG, vol. 43 (1930) 159-160.
- 49 CWMG, vol. 43 (1930) 159-160. Replying to a ‘particularly vicious attack on Gandhiji’, the addressee Reginald Reynolds, decided to defend Gandhi by writing to The Indian Daily Mail ‘in a sudden explosion of anger’. The above excerpt is Gandhi’s reply to Reynolds after having read the defence.
- 50 Earl Stanley Jones, The Christ of the Indian Road, New York, Abingdon Press, 1926, 75-76.
- 51 As quoted by E. Stanley Jones, Mahatma Gandhi: An Interpretation, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1950, 69-70.
- 52 Jan Peter Schouten, Jesus as Guru: The Image of Christ among Hindus and Christians in India, Amsterdam, Rodopi B.V., 2008, 137. The caption, “He is our Peace” is from Ephesians 2:14.

Aka Joachim Peter is a Visual artist and writer based in Southwest Germany, presently working on documentary & travel photography in Asia right. He loves to explore and combine all arts in his work. Joo has studied Arts; painting and graphics, worked for theatre (designing stage, costume and light) , did some work for television and film, went into teaching. He writes essays and a blog in his native tongue, German, for he feels his language combines philosophy and humour.

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GLIMPSES OF SANTERIA CULT

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY
JOO PETER

Roots of Santeria religion goes back to African origins. Its cosmos of powerful archetypical gods are called *Orishas*, also worshipped in catholic saints as incarnations of *Orishas*. You can identify dancers incarnating major *Orishas* quite easily: blue and white is *Yemayá*, goddess of the Ocean, Birth and death. Yellow is *Oshun*, goddess of Rivers and love, beauty and vanity, a very tempting goddess proud of her beauty.

Concerning healing rituals of Santeria I'm quite sceptic, but Santeria is powerful and influential as a culture with its art, music, and unique identity.



© Joo Peter Photography

Dancer performing as spirit.



© Joo Peter Photography

Altar in the home of a Santeria cult follower.



© Joo Peter Photography

Children receiving gift by performers symbolising spirit of Santeria Cult.



© Joo Peter Photography

Altar in the home of a Santeria cult follower.



© Joo Peter Photography

Dancers performing as spirit of Santeria Cult.



© Joo Peter Photography

The watching eye and a tongue pierced by a dagger is believed to repulse bad talk, envy and evil spirit on everybody coming with bad intentions.



© Joo Peter Photography

Painted skull of a cow used by santeria cult in a shop for religious items.

Mikyoung Cha is a graduate in Oriental Painting from Hyosung Women's University, Daegu, South Korea. She has participated in a number of group art exhibitions in South Korea and Japan. In 2016 she took up photography – the camera becoming her paint brush. This globe trotting photographer is a regular contributor to Live Encounters Magazine.



DRAWING BACK THE BAMBOO CURTAIN

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY
MIKYOUNG CHA

The people of Myanmar are warm hearted, hospitable and religious to a fault. I travelled to Bagan, Inle and Yangon capturing images of an ancient land as it slowly awakens from a slumber that cocooned it in a time of its own making.

Now the threads of this time are gently unravelling to reveal the richness of its culture.

The following photographs are mere glimpses of my journey.



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Shwezigon Paya (pagoda), Bagan.



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Village of weavers, Inle.



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Child winks, Inle



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Circular Railway, Yangon.



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Rice cracker and tea, Inle.



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Shwesandaw (pagoda), Bagan.



© Mikyoung Cha Photography

Way back home, Bagan.

The third in a photo series by Andrea Lamberti as he explores his relationship with nature



ARUM LILIES

CAPTURING A MOMENT IN TIME OF NATURE'S ARTISTRY

TEXT & PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ANDREA LAMBERTI

Our world is an open-air art gallery and you do not have to go far before natural works of art show themselves. The vividness and form of the arum lily really inspired me to capture its architectural beauty, in a moment in time. To me, it is incredible how something with such a simple structure can also be so complex; revealing a multitude of different shapes and contours as each bud unravels.

Next time you walk somewhere, perhaps take a moment to look at a plant or flower in the same way you might contemplate a painting or sculpture.

Andrea Lamberti is a nature photographer, taking panoramic images as well as close-up perspectives of the natural world, above and below water. His main passion is documenting the geography and underwater plant and animal species of his local coastline in the UK. Andrea uses photography to explore his relationship with the environment, and the belief that humans should inhabit the planet primarily as curators rather than as consumers.



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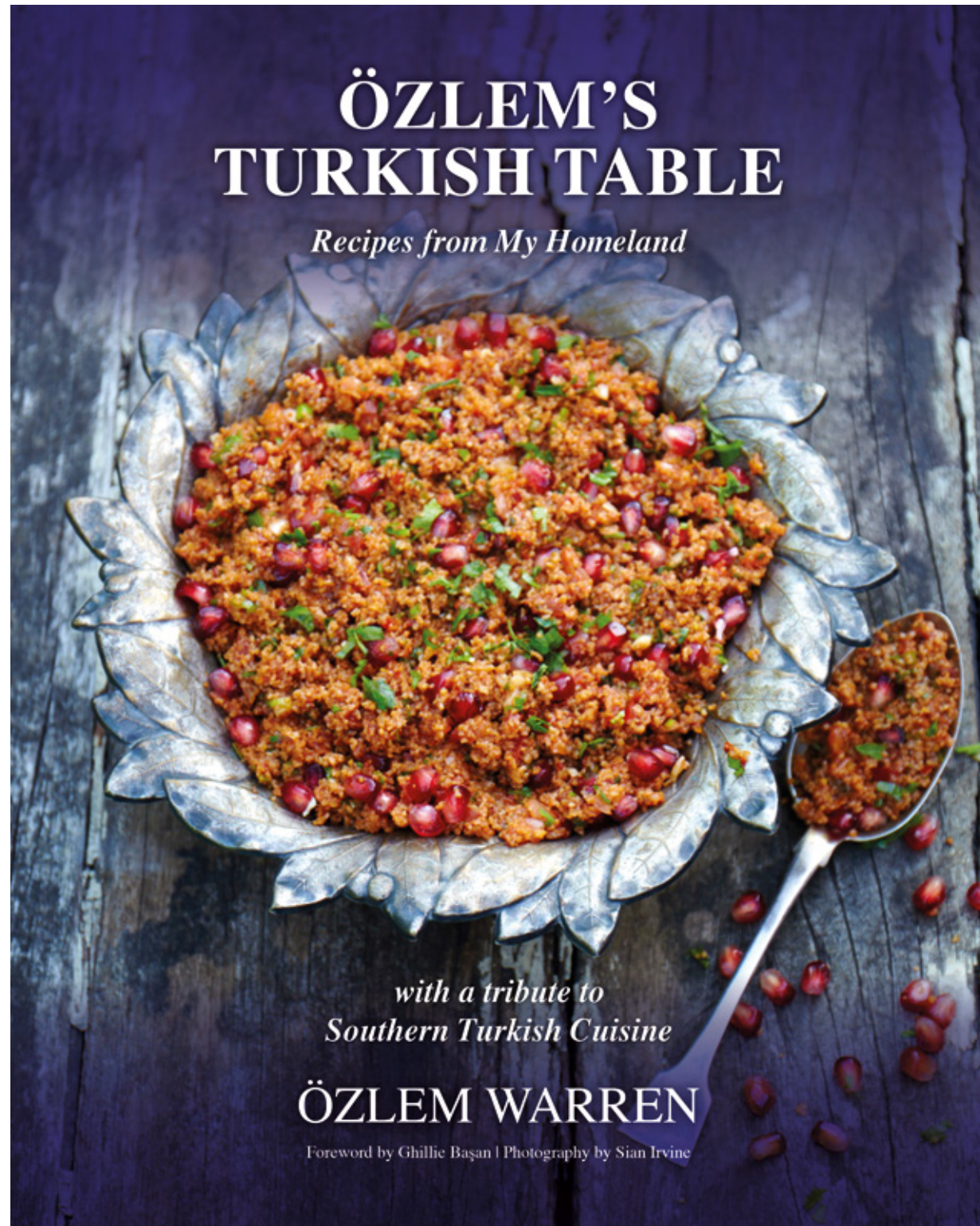


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BALKABAGI CORBASI

Pumpkin Soup with Cumin, Chili Flakes, Yoghurt

This is an easy, delicious, pumpkin soup flavored with spices and yoghurt. Balkabagi, pumpkin, is sold in street stalls and farmers markets, Pazar, at home, either as a whole or in huge, deseeded chunks and we love its natural sweetness.

I mildly flavored our pumpkin soup, Balkabagi Corbasi, with ground cumin and red pepper flakes. Warming, pungent cumin and a delicious spicy kick from red pepper flakes or chili flakes work well with the sweetness of the pumpkin. Adding plain yoghurt at the end gives a lovely creamy texture and a bit of tartness, really delicious and wholesome. When pumpkin is not in season, you can try this soup with butternut squash.

I hope you enjoy this nutritious, easy pumpkin soup, packed with flavor.

Afiyet Olsun,

Ozlem

Signed copies of
Ozlem's Turkish Table; Recipes from My Homeland
 by Ozlem Warren is available at
www.gbpublishing.co.uk/product-page/ozlem-s-turkish-table-hardback



Delicious and easy to make pumpkin soup, flavored with spices and yoghurt. Pic © Ozlem Warren

Serves: 4

Ingredients:

800 gr / 1.75 lb. deseeded pumpkin flesh, cut in small chunks
1 large onion, finely chopped
2 small carrots, cut in small cubes
15 ml / 1 tbsp. ground cumin
15 ml / 1 tbsp. red pepper flakes or chili flakes (you can use more or less depending on your taste)
1 lt / 1 ¾ pints / 4 cups vegetable stock (or chicken stock if preferred)
30 ml / 2 tbsp. olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
60 ml / 4 tbsp. plain natural yoghurt to serve
Roasted pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds to serve (optional)
Extra virgin olive oil to serve (optional)

Instructions

1. Clean, peel and deseed the pumpkin and cut in small chunks.
2. Put the pumpkin chunks, onions and cubed carrots into a heavy pan. Pour in the stock and olive oil. Then bring the pan to the boil.
3. Reduce the heat, cover the pan and simmer for about 25 minutes, or until all the vegetables are cooked.
4. Puree the soup in a blender and return to the pan.
5. Over a low heat, season with salt, freshly ground black pepper, ground cumin and red pepper flakes or chili flakes. Combine well and turn the heat off.
6. Pour the soup into serving bowls. Swirl a tablespoonful of plain yoghurt over. Sprinkle a few sunflower seeds or roasted pumpkin seeds, as well as little red pepper flakes and ground cumin, if you like. I also like to drizzle a little extra virgin olive oil over the soup before serving.
7. Serve hot; afiyet olsun.



MATCHING ENERGY

Dr Candess M Campbell

When I was taking classes in Meditation and Healing at the Church of the Divine Man many years ago, they taught about “matching” other people’s energy. An example is, if you are around someone who is angry, you may match him or her and become angry. When you are around someone peaceful, you can match him or her and become peaceful. I have been teaching this in my counseling practice for years and helped clients understand they can change how they feel by becoming aware and making choices.

I remember reading a study in one of my books (which I cannot find) where they studied three plants. One control plant was watered without any variables. The second plant was watered with water held for a period of time by someone who was very happy and positive. The third plant was watered with water that was held for a period of time by someone who was clinically depressed. Of course, the result was the plant watered by the person who was happy grew the most. The second plant, the control plant’s growth was less than the first and the plant watered by the person who was depressed had stunted growth.

Physics has taught us that everything is energy, including humans, and it makes sense we affect each other in subtle and powerful ways. When I feel blue, a little grumpy, I will put on a CD by someone like Wayne Dyer to raise my mood, to shift my energy. Conversely, when I binge on country music from my childhood, remembering my dad who has passed, such as listening to *Sunday Morning Coming Down* by Kris Kristofferson, I have to pick myself up off the floor!

Candess M. Campbell, PhD is the author of the #1 Best-selling book on Amazon, *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine* and *Live Intuitively: Journal the Wisdom of your Soul*. She is an internationally known Author, Speaker, Intuitive Coach and Mentor and Psychic Medium. She specializes in assisting others to regain their own personal power, develop their intuition and live a life of abundance, happiness, and joy. She specializes in DNA Activation and Karmic Clearing with a group of Ascended Masters called The Lords of Karma who include the Great Divine Director, El Morya, St. Germain, Maitreya, Kuthumi, Athena, Kwan-Yin, Clyclopea, Mary, Sananda and Lady Portia. Candess has been guided by this group of Masters since she was young. <http://energymedicinedna.com>



We are affected by those who are closest to us. Think about six people you spend most of your time with. How do you feel before you are with them? How do you feel when you leave their presence? You can use a scale from one to ten, with one feeling low energy, lethargic, negative and ten being, high energy, motivated and positive.

You can also shift your vibration to a higher level before you are in contact with people. You can listen to music that energizes you, get exercise and eat healthy, or read authors such as Neale Donald Walsh, the author of *Conversations with God* or James Twyman who I admire for this work as a *Peace Troubadour*. When you are with others then, you will help lift them to your vibration.

For years the focus on my work has been to empower others to access their Essence, to realize who they truly are and to manifest their dreams in their lives. I often read and listen to others that vibrate at a high level so I am focused, energized, and motivated by their work.

Please take some time to think about who energizes you.

Who helps you become your better Self. Who leads the way and makes it easier for you to excel and manifest your dreams. Think about who it is that drains your energy and leaves you feeling bad about yourself. Sometimes we can’t change who we are around, but we can use those who are motivating and inspiring to bring us back into balance.

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