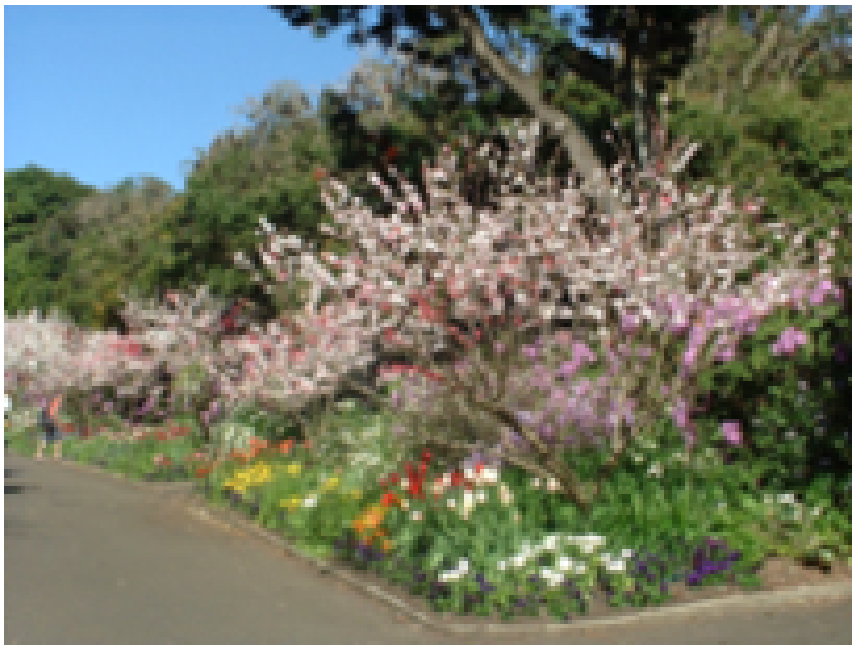
The nonviolent personality



Giuliano Pontara

Translated and edited by Maria Keet

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Keywords: peace research, peace education, violence, peace and conflict studies, international relations, nonviolent personality

This book is typeset in LaTeX

Cover design by Maria Keet
Cover photo: Spring lane in the botanic garden in Sydney, Australia

Printed and bound by your printer

Italian original printed by Tipolito Subalpina, Torino

ISBN: 978-88-905038-8-7

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Introduction

Why a translation now

The book's original setting is in the 'post Cold War era' and the élan to create a better future in the new Millennium. The many conflicts that emerged in the 1990s were thought to be due to the fall of the Berlin wall twenty years ago in 1989, because the post-World War II bi-polar world of communism versus capitalism had communism as 'loser' and consequently there were, on the one hand, less incentives to support proxy-wars by either side and, on the other hand, it opened up spaces for asserting influence by regional actors. In addition, the USA assumed the role of sole superpower with capitalism as the winning ideology, formulated most aptly in the document by the Project for a New American Century as a novel version of imperialism and 'empire'. The end of the Cold War was perceived by those who considered themselves the winners as having been offered a *carte blanche* for a new boost of capitalism and the quest for (economic) growth on a global scale—globalization of exploitation. The problems Pontara describes in the first chapter have not been ameliorated, let alone resolved, over the past 20 years, but have *worsened* for, primarily, the people in Latin America, Africa and Asia, i.e., outside Western Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia (commonly referred to as 'the West' despite its diversity), but also in the latter countries due to a gradual, but steady, break-down of the institutional infrastructure that the social democracies had built up after World War II and with it, the unraveling of the fabric of society not unlike Angelo Tasca[1] described about post-World War I Italy. In this respect, the problems are even more actual and urgent to address than 15 years ago when *la personalità nonviolenta* was written.

At the moment of writing this introduction, the international landscape has changed considerably, both politically and economically. Regarding the former, (*i*) Russia had

[1] Angelo Tasca (1892 – 1960) was one of the founding members of the youth socialist movement in Turin and later on member of the Presidium of the Communist International. His book *La nascita del fascismo* [the birth of fascism] (original in French: *Le marche sur Rome*) provides an analysis how Mussolini and c.s. managed to gain power and impose fascist rule in Italy.

collapsed but in recent years is steadily expanding its sphere of influence in Europa and Asia, (*ii*) China is gradually transitioning from a communist system to a capitalist one and actively invests in and courts countries in Africa and produces many goods for the European and U.S. markets, (*iii*) emerging economies in countries such as Brazil and India are gaining influence in the international stage as well, and (*iv*) the Latin American Alternative collaboration among at least 9 countries in Central and South America (ALBA) is steadily expanding and consolidating, which is based on a socialist and social-democratic programme. Put differently, these days we are moving toward a 'multipolar' world politics, which, thus far, can neither be characterised as a game between US-style capitalist actors nor is it clear yet what, in game-theoretical terms, stands in for the goals and pay-offs (other than that it has to do, at least in part, with access to and control over raw materials, such as oil, gas, platinum, silver etc.). If the pattern of proxy wars between blocks of power as observed in the second half of the last century is given new life, then such proxy wars are likely to be more prevalent and more complex, hence, more challenging to prevent or resolve. This makes it even more urgent to highlight characteristics of a nonviolent personality and, if it is not already too late, to introduce and expand on the kind of education that not only enables but also motivates people to develop characteristics of a nonviolent personality.

Regarding the second change between the mid 1990s and now (early 2011), the economic landscape has changed dramatically. Whereas back in the 1990s, the sky seemed the limit, limits certainly have been reached—and it was not the sky. For various reasons, such as the monetary practices under the G.W. Bush regime, NINJA (sub-prime) mortgages, lack of oversight and checks-and-balances of financial markets, consolidation of companies and banks, and the 'enforced' opening up of national markets under the WTO banner, the world is plunged into a recession that has left no country untouched. On the one hand, there are voices that say this is part of the natural capitalist cycle of booms and busts and a recovery is around the corner, on the other hand, there are voices that say that the capitalist system is roaring its ugly head and that with the profound recession people are waking up to the notion that this is not the way to go forward. Either way, there is an impression that state control of economies and companies in, at least, the West is increasing instead of decreasing, given the bailouts, demand for stricter control of financial markets, and patronage of environmentally-friendly solutions that are seen as a way out of the crisis and also sold as a responsibility of the current generations toward the future generations—the latter efforts, in fact, attempting to resolve the "generational violence" Pontara describes. However, such potential gains are partially annihilated by the reductions in government spending—hence, diminishing state control over its country—due to the recession and the quest for biofuels. The production of biofuels, in its current incarnation, consumes fertile soil for the cultivation of sugar and maize destined to be converted into energy both to meet the growing energy demands of the West and to diminish the dependence on oil (and, to some extent, reduce carbon emissions) whilst depriving people of food, be it through less acreage for food production or higher market prices for staple crops due to its actual or artificially created scarcity. Not so coincidentally, this biofuels-

induced food scarcity affects primarily people who live in poor countries or in ones with emerging economies.

The characteristics of the nonviolent personality are in dire need both to be described and explained and to be developed in people through appropriate education, given that the recession and its (lack of constructive) management brings forth a range of undesirable and, euphemistically, uncomfortable situations. Speaking for Europe where I used to live until very recently, and Italy in particular, there are parallels to be drawn between 1930s Germany and the current state of affairs—and we all know what the former led to. The infamous, mayor-mandated, *Operazione Natale Bianco*, Operation White Christmas[2], in Coccaglio in the province of Brescia in Northern Italy in 2009 and the petition and demonstration against the foreigners, and Muslims in particular, in the town I used to live (in front of the building where I lived) are not exceptions in the policies and practices adopted by the Berlusconi Government, its lackeys at the regional or local level, or in the policies adopted by certain companies; all that suffice to be treated badly is to be not an Italian—be it holding citizenship of another country within the European Union or outside it. Knowing what might happen by going further down the road of nationalism, discrimination, and xenophobia, gives one the insight to not go that road again. However, cuts are being made to education and research that will affect generations to come in terms of advancing or refining a civilization toward a decent society (in its broadest sense[3]), let alone the possibility to create the space for education of characteristics that foster development of a nonviolent personality. Bringing the contents of *la personalità nonviolenta* under attention of a broader audience might add its proverbial two cents to at least stem the tide of the descent toward what at the moment looks like a permanent state of war, both regarding 'fortress Europe' and the other countries that constitute 'the West' who try to keep foreigners out (or at least to a minimum) and maintain the standard of living by all means available to them, and regarding the erosion of solidarity within said countries between the haves and have-nots and the *guerra tra i poveri*, war among the poor, instigated by the resource-rich echelon.

What might be gained from it

Aside from becoming cognizant, or refreshing one's memories, of the state of affairs and outlook in the mid-1990s, the third chapter of Pontara's essay can be seen as the core of the original version of the booklet. It sets the stage for inquiries into what actually are the characteristics of a nonviolent personality, and, framed in positive terminology rather than its negation: what are the personality traits of a person committed to peace and peaceful resolution of conflicts? For the readers who see this question for the first time, the booklet gives an excellent overview of the topic and plenty of food

[2]House-to-house *razzias* to find 'clandestine' non-Italians of a non-pale skin colour (in this case, the police was targeting mainly Africans and Chinese), with the aim to detain and deport them.

[3]As elaborated in, for instance, Avishai Margalit, 1996, *The Decent Society*, Harvard: Harvard University Press, 304p.

for thought. Chapter 3 provides an answer to the question, but I do not know if it is the final answer or if it can be refined concerning the ten identified characteristics.

Although some of the references are in Italian and refer explicitly or implicitly to, at least, Italian circumstances, characteristics of the peaceful person are independent of the country or society of origin. It is primarily for this reason that a translation into a language has been made that, for better or worse, is the predominant international language: English. The hope is that with this translation a wider audience can be reached and thus will generate, first of all, a broader reflection and, perhaps, enactment on the notions of characteristics of a nonviolent personality. Second, it may affect development of curricula for peace education. Chapter 4 of the original *la personalità nonviolenta* contains both relevant and some outdated material with respect to the current state of peace education. This is not a limitation of the author, but of the time it was written. In the past 10 years, much more research has been conducted and many peace education programmes have been developed to fill this gap, ranging from courses in peacekeeping for the UN blue helmets who serve in a peace operation to postgraduate, masters, and doctorate-level programmes to a (UN-mandated) University for Peace. However, these courses are for, as some would say, the 'educated elite' and do not reach the proverbial Joe and Joanne Soap. To have a fully functional peaceful democratic society, peace education has to reach *all* levels of education and people. If this is not the case, and the rule (or terror) of a violent majority reigns, then a comparatively small group of people educated in peaceful means do not suffice to counterweight the passivity, complicity, and numbness of the un-thinking masses that easily can be fooled into following a prevailing fascist doctrine. It has been done before, be it Nazi supporters in World War II, the flag-waivers in the USA that happily supported the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq that was motivated by fabricated evidence and under the conceptually flawed notion of a 'war on terror', or the anti-foreigner, anti-women, money-and-masculine-is-power tendencies of the Berlusconi Government that also contributes to the above-mentioned gradual break-down of the institutional and societal infrastructure.

How can one educate children in such a way that they develop characteristics of a nonviolent person? I do not have the answer. Some proposals are described in Chapter 4, and I hope that people will respond with answers, or at least results of experiments and methodologies as to what seems to work. Although one could argue that one ought not to experiment with children, the current state of affairs in primary and secondary schools (and, increasingly, universities) is that no experiment is a guarantee of failure to teach said characteristics. This short booklet then can serve as a useful introduction to set things in motion to move in the direction of integrating peace education at all levels of education.

C. Maria Keet
Durban, February 2011

Foreword to the English edition

At the beginning of the new century, the culture of peace finds itself facing many and difficult challenges, many of which can be traced to the last century.

In the first chapter of this little book—written many years ago for a larger public—I survey what I believed—and still believe—to be some of the most formidable challenges that a culture of peace has to face, and in the second chapter I point to the characteristics that I believe a mature culture of peace should have in order to respond to those challenges. The third chapter focuses on the question what type of person is most suitable to be the carrier and bringer of such a culture of peace. I call such type of person the nonviolent personality (as opposed to the authoritarian personality) and I survey several fundamental characteristics of such a personality. In the fourth and last chapter I develop some considerations regarding the factors that in the educative process tend to impede and favour, respectively, the development of moral subjects equipped with a nonviolent personality.

Although the book was written many years ago, I dare say that in the main, it is still actual. That is why I have endorsed Maria Keet's project of publishing a translation in English.

I am very grateful to Maria both for the translation and the editing of the book.

Giuliano Pontara
Stockholm, February 2011

Preface

Approaching the end of the century, the culture of peace finds itself facing many and difficult challenges. In the first of the three chapters of this brief essay, I direct the discourse to some of those challenges and to the characteristics that a mature culture of peace should have in order to respond to them. In the second chapter, the topic moves on to the problem what type of person is most suitable to be the carrier and bringer of such a culture of peace. I call such type of person the nonviolent personality and I indicate several fundamental characteristics of such a personality. In the third and last chapter I go through some considerations regarding the factors that in the educative process tend to impede and favour, respectively, the development of moral subjects equipped with a nonviolent personality.

I have given keynote speeches in English about the topics in these three chapters at international courses of the International University of Peoples' Institutions for Peace (IUPIP) in 1994 and 1995. Some of these topics are already developed partially in an article entitled *La nonviolenza si impara* that I have published in the journal "Bozze" (December 1993). In addition, I have presented and discussed a previous version of the three parts of this essay at the conference "Uno sguardo sull'infanzia" (Urbino, April 1995).

G.P.

CHAPTER 1

Several major challenges to a culture of peace

The end of the Cold War has marked, or at least has accompanied, big social, economic, and political changes, both at the local and global level. (For an account of the various interpretations of what has happened, see Salio (1995) ch. 1). Personally, I have strong doubts that many of these changes have been changes for the better, and I know very well that there is a wide disagreement about which have been changes for the worse. There is one point about which I feel quite sure though: the movements for peace and human rights, the world of the NGOs, of people's diplomacy, and of transnational civil society face today challenges that are no less serious than those preceding the end of the Cold War. Let us briefly have a look at some of them.

1.1 Today's political violence

Is it reasonable to assert that the end of the Cold War has led to a decrease in political violence in the world? Or is the contrary true instead? These questions are very difficult to answer.

On the one hand, there are pointers to a slowing down of the arms race and a decrease of defence budgets in several countries. Also the military industry, at least at the global level, seems to produce less than during the times of the Cold War and the international arms market is perhaps not as blooming as it was back then. On the other hand, peace researchers have identified more than 90 conflicts between 1989 and 1993, whereby both parties have employed armed forces, and have calculated that those conflicts caused the death of more than 70000 people in 1992 alone (Wallentseen and Axell, 1994). According to certain estimates, there were no less than 57 ongoing armed conflicts in the world in 1994—from civil war that afflicted the African continent to those going on in Asia, in Latin America, in several territories of the ex-Soviet Union and in ex-Yugoslavia. To these and other wars, one has to add the sys-

tematic terrorism in Algeria, in East Timor, in Nigeria, in Liberia and many other parts of the world, as well as the increase in social violence in many countries (included several—more or less—democratic countries), especially the violence against ethnic minorities and the immigrants, in what Enzensberger (1994) has called the "molecular civil war"[1].

In addition, the disappearance of Soviet military power has left, at least for now, the USA as the only military superpower in the world. Due to its military power, and its influence in the UN Security Council, the USA have succeeded getting accepted or even formally sanctioned military operations, such as the intervention in Panama and the massive one against Iraq[2]. Beyond the verbal and rhetorical appeals to safeguard state sovereignty, or democracy, freedom, and human rights, these operations, in reality, are motivated by more realistic reasons: reasons of state and of the (oil) market, which not seldom reinforce each other. These violent operations have contributed to the process of ongoing global brutalisation in the world and to the re-legitimisation of war as instrument of management of big conflicts.

Consequently, the question whether the end of the Cold War has coincided with a decrease of political violence, is perhaps not that important: the amount of violence still present in the world and its continuous threat of further escalation pose, in any case, an enormous challenge to all those who are involved in the struggle to decrease violence and promote peace.

1.2 The victims and the mechanisms of post-modern wars

We know that post-modern wars cause indescribable damage and suffering, especially among civilians.

It has been estimated that World War I has cost the lives of eight million soldiers and one million civilians. In World War II, 17 million soldiers were killed and about double that amount of civilians. It has also been calculated that in the more than hundred wars (including many civil wars) that have been fought around the world between 1945 and 1995—from Korea, Algeria, Vietnam, to Afghanistan, ex-Yugoslavia, Georgia, Chechnya—more than 20 million people have found their death and around 60 million have been injured or disabled; 80-90% of all these victims are civilians: children, the ill, elderly, and women.

There are other things we know about war and about armed violence in general.

We know that the recourse to it, as a rule, diminishes the possibility of compromise and reconciliation between the parties in the struggle and that seldom, if ever, violence leads to stable solutions of the conflicts. On the contrary, there are reasons to believe that the use of violence, especially if it is protracted in time and conducted on a large scale, leads invariably to the intensification of sentiments of hate and revenge, and it induces processes of dehumanisation and brutalisation that produce more violence in a ever more spinning whirlpool from which it is increasingly more difficult to get out. We

also know that when people (until very recently mostly males) act within authoritarian structures, as invariably the military is, they can be very easily brought to behave in extremely inhuman ways towards those who are characterised as 'the enemies'. This is partially corroborated by the famous (and infamous) experiments conducted by the American psychologist Stanley Milgram and afterwards repeated by others. During the course of such experiments, the majority of the test subjects were driven to administrate to other people—who in reality simulated—what they believed to be extremely painful electric shocks, some even lethal; and the test subjects were driven to behave in such a way following the fact that the experimenter politely requested those who expressed concerns with the experiment to continue, giving them the impression that he would shoulder the full responsibility of the damage done unto to the (faked) victims of the electrical shocks (Milgram, 1975)[3].

Further, we know that the recourse to violence in the management of conflicts tends to kill the truth and the dispassionate search for the truth; that it involves secrecy, the systematic distortion of facts, the manipulation of the mind and conscience through propaganda of which currently the mass media are very efficient conveyers. For instance, it has been well-documented that the media has served several nationalist groups that contributed to the violent disintegration of ex-Yugoslavia and that they actually where an active and integral part of the wars that brought hell among the peoples. The media was also one of the most direct causes of those wars through the campaign of systematic dehumanization of other ethnic groups and through instigation to hatred and ethnic violence (Thomson, 1994).

The use of violence nurtures Manichean attitudes, ways of thinking in black and white: 'we' are on the side of the right and the truth, 'they' are mistaken and in the wrong; 'we' are the good guys, 'they' are the bad guys; 'we' are defending ourselves, 'they' started the aggression; 'we' are with God and God is with us, 'they' are the infidels, the lost ones, the children of Satan. It is clear that such attitudes and ways of thinking contribute to the worsening and aggravation of conflicts and lead to the acceptance of forms of violence that at the start of the conflict were rejected as unacceptable. At the end of such a process of brutalisation, there is always the position of the fanatic for whom any violence—at worst also the nuclear holocaust—becomes accepted and justified in the name of values that are held to be known with absolute validity and for the triumph of which the killing of a person becomes, as the Italian philosopher and nonviolence activist Aldo Capitini[4] once remarked, 'just noise'.

Another thing we know is that the recourse to violence favours the emergence of people with low levels of inhibition toward violence, and we know also that the use of military violence is intimately connected with the creation and reinforcement of authoritarian institutions and as such constitutes a continuous obstacle to democracy and the well functioning of it.

All the processes that I have alluded to have taken place time and again when acute group conflicts have been conducted with violent methods: it suffices to look at what has happened during the armed phases of the Israeli-Palestine conflict, during the Gulf wars, those in Yugoslavia, in Afghanistan, and in Rwanda, Burundi, Georgia,

Chechnya, and Algeria. Unfortunately, the examples easily can be multiplied.

The necessity to stop the spiral of violence that grows on violence is a challenge at least as strong as it was before the end of the Cold War. Two of the necessary measures to respond adequately to this challenge are (i) the strengthening and democratization of the UN, as has been proposed by various parties, and (ii) a further development of the forces of transnational civil society committed to methods of peaceful, nonviolent conflict resolution.

Unfortunately, the UN is in crisis, partly because all too often the United States of America have intervened militarily in acute conflict areas without or against previous authorisation by the UN, and partly because the UN does not have the necessary economic resources at her disposal to—with the needed force and credibility—carry on with the various humanitarian and peacekeeping operations she is involved in and to launch others that would have been much needed. Currently, the UN has an accumulated debt of $420 million and if the member states do not pay their whole quote, she will go bankrupt. At he beginning of 1996, the 185 member states of the UN were debtors for $3.3 billion of which the United States alone accounted for $1.2 billion.

Meanwhile, both the strengthening and the reforms of the UN and the further commitment of the peace forces of transnational civil society, however necessary, are not sufficient to ensure peace processes of long and stable duration. It is also necessary to invest in adequate peace education projects for the young generations of the planet, especially among the millions who are, or have been, victim or direct witness of the extreme violence of war.

1.3 Ethnic separatism, nationalism, and fundamentalism

Another big challenge originates from the growth and diffusion of ethnic separatism, myopic nationalism, and of radical fundamentalism.

Generally, the sense of identity of people is profoundly rooted in the culture they belong to, in the traditions of the group with which they identify themselves, in the language they speak since childhood, the religion they believe in, and the value system they adhere to. Therefore it is certainly of vital importance that people do have the possibility to affirm their own culture, to speak their own language and to teach it to their children, to cultivate their own traditions, to practice their own religion, and to pursue the realisation of the values they believe in. Wherever occurs the opposite, we have violence, either structural or direct.

But there are limits to the affirmation of one's values and rights: one's freedom ends where the equal freedom of the other begins. As soon as a group affirms its own culture, language, religion, value system, and thereby hindering others to do likewise or even obstruct them by means of coercive measures, then the perverse mechanisms of intolerance, fanaticism, violence, terrorism, and the militarisation of society get off the ground—and we know that once these mechanisms are activated, it is very difficult

to stop them.

1.4 Cowboy ethics and the return of the Nazi mentality

Among the most exasperated forms of ethnic separatism, nationalism, and fundamentalism that exist, wherever they manifest themselves, there are several common characteristics akin to those that are typical of the Nazi mentality or ideology.

It would be wrong and dangerous to consider Nazism as a non-repeatable historical phenomenon that took place between 1933 and 1945 and was indissolubly linked to the person and evil power of Hitler. What happened in Nazi Germany was the expression of a mentality, of a way of thinking and looking at the world and life, a *Weltanschauung* (essentially already formulated in Hitler's *Mein Kampf*) whose roots are to be sought long back in western "culture" and which could very well repeat itself. Actually, there are several sings that it is again in a new phase of expansion.

The Nazi mentality is a complex cluster of several different components (Ofstad, 1989). A fundamental mark of this mentality is not so much the glorification of the Aryan race or of the German people as the greatest expression of it, but rather the glorification of the 'strong' and the contempt of the 'weak'. The world is seen as a vast area of struggle wherein not only the 'strong' are those who win and the 'weak' the ones who lose, but also where the strong, the victors, have, as such, an absolute right to rule and command, while the weak rightly must lose, obey, and perish. Ultimately, the power of the strong exercises itself through violence, and war is the supreme test of who is the best. In the Nazi mentality, the glorification of the 'strong' is intrinsically linked to the identification with power and the glorification of violence. No wonder, then, that when Germany finally lost the war, Hitler directed his contempt toward his own people and quite coherently committed suicide—leaving to 'stronger' peoples and individuals the task to reign the world with violence.

For the Nazi, the ultimate and only moral principle absolutely valid is the right of the strongest, *might is right*—an ethics of cowboys is elevated to a supreme principle of conduct and government of the world.

Such an ethics is currently fearfully on the rise, both in those parts of the world where there are no democratic governments as well as in those in which there are democratically governed states. The identification with power and all its symbols—elitism, authoritarianism, the contempt for those who are considered weak, and the cult of an image of man (meaning masculine) identified with the strong in the sense of hard and cold perpetrator of violence—are components of a 'message' that is more and more frequently transmitted by movies, videos, TV programmes and other mass media all over the world.

One can see the manifestation of such Nazi tendencies in the actions at the levels of individuals and groups who hurl violently against ethnic minorities, immigrants, and 'strangers' as well as in the policies of states and multinational corporations, which treat the 'weak' people of the earth in ways that are still—judged from the point of view

of the victims—essentially not different from those of the Nazis, though not (always) as openly brutal as those of the Nazis.

The rise of Neo-Nazism tendencies constitutes a danger to be taken very seriously and the struggle against it is a challenge that a mature culture of peace has to be capable of responding to in an effective way.

1.5 Totalitarian capitalism and structural exploitation

Another challenge originates from the enormous social and economic inequalities that exist in the world, in particular between North and South. The poor get poorer and the difference between the haves and the have-nots becomes ever larger.

According to data provided by the World Bank, this difference has grown 30% in the last 10 years. The world population is reaching 6 billion. In terms of economic goods, the richest billion is 150 times better off than the poorest billion. According to data provided by the World Health Organisation, the United States of America—with about 4% of the world population—consumes 42% of the total resources for hygiene and healthcare used in the world. (But at the same time, the gap between the rich and the poor, between 'the strong' and 'the weak', is growing even within the United States.)

30% of the world population does not have enough to eat and half a billion human beings living in the poorest regions of the world suffer from 'absolute hunger'. According to the definition given by Robert McNamara when he was president of the World Bank, 'absolute hunger' means 'conditions of life that are so limited by malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, polluted environment, high level of infant mortality, and short life expectancy, as to be incompatible with any reasonable conception of human dignity'.

Recent statistics of the World Bank tell us that 65% of the population in Africa lives in such conditions. 190 million children under 5 years of age suffer from chronic malnutrition. Six hundred million people do not have access to clean water and a recent UNICEF report says that two million children under five years die because of infections caught due to lack of clean water.

The principal causes of all these deaths and suffering are not to be sought in the forces of nature and natural disasters that happen every now and again in certain regions. They rather should be traced back to the existing structures both in the developed and developing nations, as well as in the economic policies of the former towards the latter. For instance, the protectionist policies of the rich countries in the North cost the poor countries of the South billions of dollars each year. And the interest and amortization that the poor countries in the Third World have to pay on their foreign debt sum up to about 50 billion dollars annually. This constitutes one of the major and most perverse obstacles to their development. In 1993, the total foreign debt of the South summed 1500 billion dollars and 20% of the loans have been spent buying arms. The people in the world who are dying of hunger are not victims of natural disasters; they are victims of structural exploitation.

The fall of the communist system as implemented in Eastern Europe and Russia has left a hole that has been filled quickly by a totalitarian capitalist system that practices rapacious vulture politics toward nature, the weakest groups, and the countries in the Third World. The system of the powerful and all-encompassing multinational and transnational corporations is overtaking more and more the place and the functions of the totalitarian state: it exploits, manipulates, indoctrinates, conditions people from the moment they are born until they die. It is the multinational corporations who produce the food for our children, the seeds we sow on our fields, the machines we use to plough, the medicines that we need to survive, the nails that close our coffins forever. And as if that were not enough, we are hammered day and night by advertisements, sometimes harsh and sometimes very subtle and creeping, in which they invest billions of dollars manipulating and conditioning the market in such a way that to talk of free market is not talking about our world. Consequently, the parliaments of democratic countries are more and more reduced to institutions whose function is to choose between alternatives imposed from outside, from the global system of multinationals often called the Market. A system that continuously threatens peace and justice in the world.

Europe itself can become a new serious menace for these values. The European Union certainly can be seen as the expression of a tendency to go beyond the nation-state, a trend toward a larger regional integration. In my opinion, this is something positive. The negative side of this ongoing process of European unification is the risk that it results in a new bigger and stronger nation-state, in a new economic and military superpower in which the French nuclear arms systems have entered into an inseparable marriage with the German capital and military science. Such a development would constitute another great menace for the weak of the earth and would render the Iron Curtain between North and South even thicker. To prevent this from happening is another big challenge.

1.6 Water and the thirsty of the world

The majority of the thirsty of the earth live in the south of the world where, in fact, one finds the main part of the arid and semi-arid regions of the planet. North Africa, several countries south of the Sahara, and the Middle-East are some of the regions where there is a great scarcity of water. Some of these regions are also among those where the population growth is very high.

Water has become an extremely precious good in many parts of the world, a good for which one can kill. We need water to live, for domestic means, for our hygiene, for the generation of energy, for agriculture, for industry and for many other purposes. Hoarding sweet water is limited for any country, at least on the medium to long term. In addition, water is distributed unequally across the globe and various countries do not have the water sources necessary for their economic development. International water basins, transnational rivers and lakes etc. are for many countries the only main source

of water. This fact has already caused several conflicts, some of which are very acute and also violent.

Water, as has been noted, is one of the factors at the source of the Arab-Israeli conflict, given that Syria, Israel, Palestine and Jordan depend heavily on the water of the river Jordan.

The Euphrates and the Tigris are of maximum importance to both Syria and Turkey. Turkey is involved in a project, the so-called Anatolian project, which foresees the withdrawal of large quantities of water in the upstream part of these rivers to the detriment of the countries situated downstream. The realisation of such a project can be ground for a very serious conflict between Turkey and Syria.

The water of the Nile is of essential importance for the economy of Egypt, to such an extent that Boutros Boutros-Ghali declared clearly and openly—in the times he was the Foreign Minister of Egypt[5]—that if there were a cause for which Egypt would be willing to risk a war in the future, it would be for the control of the water of the Nile. This river crosses various states and its water is vitally important for each one of them. Here there are latent conflicts, since several upstream countries, such as Ethiopia and Sudan, are planning a noteworthy increase in their withdrawal of water from the river for both the direct needs of the population and for agriculture and industry.

The great Ganges-Brahmaputra basin traverses India, Bangladesh, and China and solely between India and Bangladesh there are more than 140 transnational basins.

Other transnational basins have been created recently following the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the establishment of several independent states in diverse regions of the ex-Union.

Water can turn out to be the cause of grave conflicts in all these areas of the world. This is also because the world population is continuously increasing and this increase inevitably brings with it the growth in demand of water for all the above-mentioned purposes. The total water consumption in the world has doubled between 1940 and 1980 and it is estimated that by the end of the century it will have doubled again due to further population growth and successes of poverty reduction programmes.

Water is, in a sense, very similar to oil: both are the source of serious geopolitical problems. But, unlike oil, water cannot be substituted with another resource. And this is the reason why the problem of access to water, its global distribution, and the way in which this problem will be tackled, are destined to have a large impact on the generations to come.

1.7 What prospects for future generations?

This brings us to another big problem: that of our responsibility toward future generations (Pontara, 1995). This is intimately linked with the effects of our collective actions on nature and environment, how they affect biodiversity, the thinning of the ozone layer, the emission of greenhouse gases, and other phenomena such as soil erosion, acid rain, the decrease of arable land, and with problems such as the secure storage of

radioactive waste. The challenge is no less than that of realising a sustainable development at the global level.

As is well-known, the problem has been put to the forefront in the 1980s with the Report of the Bruntland Commission[6], where sustainable development is defined as the process of "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"[7]. There is widespread agreement that to respond to this challenge, three measures are necessary, even though they are certainly insufficient. First, one needs to put an end to the rapacious exploitation both of the non-renewable and of the renewable resources of the planet. Second, one needs to reduce drastically those (generally collective) actions that entail a serious menace to the commons, such as the oceans, the atmosphere, and the climate. The third necessary measure is to limit the ever faster growth of the world population.

I focus briefly on the third point. It has been estimated that the world population hovered around half a billion in the 17th century and it took another two centuries to double it. The sharp rise begins at the start of the XXth century: the world population grows from one to four billion from 1900 to 1970. In the past 25 years, there has been an increase of another 1.7 billion persons of whom the majority live in the poorest countries in the Third World. In a recent report of the UN it is estimated that in the next decade the world population will grow with 90-100 million each year. If those estimates are correct and the trend continues, the population will reach 11-12 billion by 2050. In a preliminary document prepared for the UN conference on population, which was held in Cairo in the autumn of 1994, it was proposed as objective that the world population should be stabilised at around 7 billion.

This challenge raises two problems: that of the necessary measures to realise the proposed objective and that of their ethical justification. One thing would seem essential anyway: the improvement of the conditions of women and their emancipation from a culture dominated by man, especially in the Third World.

CHAPTER 2

Several basic features of a mature culture of peace

The questions concerning war and peace cannot be confronted without facing directly those regarding nationalism, ethnic separatism, fundamentalism, the local and global inequalities, the exploitation of two-thirds of the world by one third, environmental and ecological degradation, and the impact of our collective choices on future generations.

The big challenges that I have indicated previously are strongly connected, and so should be the answers to them; a mature culture of peace must be able to deal with them in an organic way, both at the local and at the global level.

2.1 Which peace?

A mature culture of peace does not define peace in such a narrow way as to identify it with the pure absence of war. Neither, on the other hand, will it define peace in such a broad way so that everything that is believed to render a society just and good is subsumed under the notion of peace. Both definitions are inadequate. There are societies where there is no war, but are certainly not considered as a peaceful society for that reason alone. On the other hand, a society where peace reigns is not necessarily a society where everything that renders a society just and good has been realised.

According to the conceptualisation most consonant with a mature culture of peace, peace is to be seen as a property of a social system: there is peace when the actors in the system cooperate and when the conflicts that emerge are managed, transformed, and resolved in a nonviolent and constructive manner. Consequently, peace cannot be seen as something static, as an end that one can achieve once and for all. It is rather to be seen as a dynamic and permanently ongoing process for which continuous efforts are needed, not least in the field of education. Gandhi was pleased to repeat: ‘There is no way to peace; peace is the way’. And to stay on this way, it is necessary to respond adequately to the big challenges mentioned above, and to respond to them by

using all the means of peaceful conduct of conflicts. These include the various forms of diplomacy, from official to peoples' diplomacy, and all the different forms of nonviolent struggle—from 'negative' or 'pragmatic' nonviolence, understood as the set of techniques of non-armed struggle, to the 'positive' or 'principled' nonviolence, intended as a strategy that incorporates the principles of Gandhian nonviolence (Pontara, 1973, 1996a,b,c).

2.2 Education for peace

A mature culture of peace will respond to ethnic separatism, myopic and fanatic nationalism, radical fundamentalism, and the Nazi mentality with, *inter alia*, a vast and thorough programme of permanent education in nonviolence and democracy, favouring the formation of men and women in the direction of what I shall call in the next chapter the nonviolent personality. This is a very arduous and complex task where theory and practice, thought and action, will have to proceed in concert. We know very well that eventually we educate through the way we live; therefore, a serious educative process is at the same time a serious process of self-education. An important principle in such a process of peace education, is the principle of fallibilism (to which I will return in the next chapter). The principle says that no-one can ever say for sure that what s/he believes to be true at a given point in time, is indeed so. The internalization of this principle in essential for dialogue and tolerance.

A particularly important task is to activate valid projects of recovery and peace education for millions of children who are traumatised by violence and war: those children—the adults of tomorrow—who will have to manage conflicts exacerbated by the violence of their fathers and older brothers.

But, however important, education is insufficient: profound structural changes are needed, both at the local and the global level.

2.3 Which changes?

One of these changes is certainly the drastic reduction of the so-called 'national defense' expenditures—a notion which in its traditional meaning is today obsolete—in all countries in order to free up resources which are badly needed in the struggle against illiteracy and for the improvement of the conditions of the hungry and thirsty in the world.

Also important is a sustainable conversion of the military-industry that, without representing a menace for the environment, should be directed toward the production of necessary goods for satisfying fundamental human needs. Today we have a good understanding of how such a conversion could be realised, given that many related problems have been the subject of multiple and intense studies by whole groups of specialists from various disciplines.

Another important measure is that of solving in a fair manner the problem of the enormous foreign debt that not only drains the economies of many countries in the South and currently constitutes one of the major obstacles to achieve a sustainable development in those countries, but also shoots back like a boomerang against the countries of the North (George, 1988).

The problems created by the neoliberal 'structural adjustment' doctrine imposed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund on the indebted nations of the Third World are particularly grave. This doctrine prescribes the reduction of public expenditures, especially those regarding the school and healthcare systems; the privatization of the social sector; the freezing of wages at lower levels; an increase in production of goods destined for export to the detriment of local consumption (e.g., food production). This programme, imposed by big international capital, has had disastrous effects for the poorest groups, and particularly for women and children, especially in Latin America and in Africa (Dalla Costa and Dalla Costa, 1993; Audat, 1995).

Take for instance Africa, where Ghana has been constrained to reduce public expenditure for healthcare by 47% and Cote d'Ivoire by 43% in the decade from 1978 to 1988. Similarly, Mozambique was constrained to reduce public expenditure for the healthcare system by 50% between 1980 and 1990. As a consequence of such 'structural adjustments', the schools and public healthcare have become worse and the privatised healthcare more expensive, both in these African countries as in various others where 'structural adjustments' programmes have been implemented. This has caused a dramatic halt in the struggle against illiteracy (even though literacy is fundamental to stem the tide of the spread of AIDS) and a serious worsening of the sanitary conditions of the poorest groups. For instance, the 'structural adjustment' programme adopted in Nigeria since 1988 has resulted in an upsurge of cholera epidemics, yellow fever, and meningitis. In 1991, the mortality of the Nigerian population had a net increase and the cause is most probably traceable to the dismantling of the public healthcare system, a consequence of the 'structural adjustment' programme (Federici, 1993). The challenge 'Health for all in 2000' launched at the Alma-Ata conference in 1974, has shown to be little more than an empty slogan.

To ensure satisfying the fundamental, non-manipulated needs of everybody and to give anyone fair opportunities for self-realisation, it is necessary to launch a well-planned redistribution of the basic resources of the planet and strengthen the instruments of control of the market (which, anyhow, is for the reasons mentioned earlier not free).

These measures are necessary also to safeguard fundamental interests of future generations. In fact, the actors in the market do not care about the consequences of their own actions in the medium and long term. They look at the short-term only, normally the next 10-15 years, and they assume that possible future costs and benefits are less important the further ahead they are from the present. And this is the reason why they are normally discounted at an annual rate that varies between 5 and 10%. But future costs and benefits are not only economic costs and benefits. They are also benefits in terms of quality of life and costs in terms of suffering and human lives. Well,

let us assume an annual discount tax of 5% for such costs on future humans. This implies that the violent death of one million people within 145 years is at present as bad as the violent death of one person in the next year. This is outrageous. One should not permit that the choice of economic, social, military policies etc.—having consequences for many generations to come—are taken by applying an intergenerational discount rate. One violent death in 100 years is just as bad as a violent death today.

In effect, I am inclined to maintain that a mechanism of control over the market is insufficient. I am inclined to agree with those who sustain the necessity of democratic control by society not only over the strictly political institutions, but also over those institutions within which the big economic decisions are taken. According to a common view among the great theoreticians of democracy, from Rousseau to Dewey, the principle that lies at the basis of the democratic idea is indeed that the basic institutions of society—those in which decisions regarding the interest of all are taken—must be put under the control of everyone who is affected by them. The Italian philosopher Aldo Capitini coined the term 'omnicracy': equal power of all over all that concerns the fundamental interests of all (Capitini, 1969).

It is precisely on the basis of the democratic principle of equal power by all over all decisions that concerns the fundamental interests of all that one can put forth a claim of a democratic control by the people over the large means of production and distribution, as well as over the institutions where the far-reaching economic decisions are taken. The more global the effects of such decisions, the more global has to be the democratic control over them. It is not the democratic idea that excludes the people from control of the means of production and distribution, but the liberal demand for a sphere of private freedom as large as possible, sustained in old times by Locke and J.S. Mill and in our days by von Hayeck and Nozick (to name a few celebrated names). There is a more intimate nexus between democracy and socialism than between democracy and liberalism, as was highlighted by the social-democrats of the old times. We should learn from them and not let ourselves be deceived by those who sell under the name of fundamental demands of democracy that which instead is historically connected with the basic demands of liberalism that, as such, are not easily matched with those of democracy (Pontara, 1988, chapter 9).

However, democratic control by society over the big economic institutions is not only a requirement of democracy. It is also a demand of justice based on the ideal of a fair distribution of opportunities for self-realization. As Gandhi, the Apostle of non-violence, wrote: "this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be; they should not be made a vehicle of traffic or exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation of group of persons would be unjust..." (Young India, 15.11.1928).

This means that the concept of territorial sovereignty, understood as implying an absolute right of ownership over the resources under control of a state, has to be reassessed. It also involves contrasting the rapacious politics of the ruling classes, which are in many countries identical (or anyhow intimately linked) with the military

classes, the large multinationals, and the financial corporations that control the big international capital.

2.4 Our responsibility

The grave social and economic inequalities and the serious menaces toward the environment and thus toward our children and the generations to come, are not only attributable to the exploitative politics of the myopic and egoistic ruling classes and to exploitative international capital. They are also the result of innumerable single actions done each day by millions and millions of individuals. Each of those actions, taken on its own, is such that either it is done or not does not make any difference on the global scale, while generally it does make a noteworthy difference on the single interests of the actor. Nevertheless carrying out these actions, when taken collectively, contribute to a global result that is for everyone worse than the global result that would have been produced had everybody, or anyhow the large majority of subjects, acted differently.

Here we find ourselves facing known dilemmas related to collective action. Why should I act differently from what I do when I know that the others continue to collectively act counterproductively anyway? For instance: if I am a poor citizen of a poor and densely populated country where the vast majority of the inhabitants are poor, why should I strive to bring less children in the world and consequently diminish my life prospective when I grow old, when I know that no-one else who finds himself in my condition is willing to do the same? The same reasoning is valid for each person when taken individually, and so everyone continues to bring many children into the world. As a consequence, the population grows, the country becomes poorer, and everyone ends up with being worse off than what would have been the case if everyone had given birth to less children. Moreover, in order to bring about a certain positive global outcome, it is normally sufficient that a certain majority of people does, or omits to do, certain actions so that, each one taken individually, gains when he is not acting in the requested way provided the others do it. It is the well-known free-rider problem, of the passenger who travels for free at the costs of others, who receives the benefits produced by general cooperation of others without participating in the cooperation (and incur the costs that cooperation requires) himself.

In these kind of situations, which are partially similar to the so-called prisoners' dilemma, a set of measures are necessary to guarantee general cooperation. The people have to be chained, as it were, to certain courses of action: the chains can be internal or external, moral constraints, or coercive measures. The former as much as the latter are necessary. We all should learn to think less about our little egoistic interests and instead seek to internalise moral norms of conduct that require solidarity, respect for nature and the environment, and cooperation. Since the big problems mentioned above are planet-wide, such a moral has to be planetary itself.

Meanwhile, given that quite a few of us are saints and that internal moral constraints may not be sufficiently motivating, external legal measures are also needed to realise

positive global results. Beside a planetary morality there has to be an adequate juridical system valid at the global level.

A central task of a mature culture of peace for the XXIth century is to contribute to elaborate on the details of a global morality and a planetary juridical system and to render them operative.

What generates a certain optimism is that today there is such a mature culture of peace in the world. The consciousness of the big challenges I have mentioned above is growing continuously. An increasing number of NGOs and other transnational civil society movements committed to a planetary morality and an adequate global legal system are more and more involved in constructive peace work, in the further elaboration of international law and the strengthening of the institutions necessary to enforce it.

Education in nonviolence and democracy plays a central role in this constructive effort. What are the ends and what are the means of this education? I will deal with these questions in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 3

The nonviolent personality

3.1 Democracy and nonviolence

Democracy and nonviolence are closely related. Democracy is, at least partially, a method of conflict management and resolution based on the principle counting heads instead of cutting them, using the ballot instead of the bullet. When a conflict is not resolvable through the democratic method, nonviolence goes ahead and proposes strategies and techniques to manage and resolve conflicts that are not based on violence; therefore, as I have said several times before, nonviolence is the continuation of democracy by other means.

It always has been one of the fundamental theses of Gandhi that there is a profound connexion between democracy and nonviolence. More recently, this has been highlighted by Karl Popper, the defender of the 'open society', as well: during an interview a few years ago with the Italian journalist Giancarlo Bosetti he said that "the rule of law demands nonviolence, which is its fundamental nucleus". Preoccupied by the trend toward lower inhibitions against the use of violence—a trend that also can be detected in democratic societies and that put democracy in danger—Popper underscores the importance of "educating in nonviolence" (Popper, 1992, pp 37-38).

Education in democracy and in nonviolence largely coincide. We shall look more closely at what education in nonviolence means, but much of what will be said is relevant also to what it means to educate in democracy.

So, what does it mean to educate in nonviolence? What is the end goal and what are the means of such an education? These are complex questions, and an in-depth treatment of them—which obviously is beyond the scope of this essay— cannot ignore the noteworthy amount of studies about peace education produced in the field of peace research (see Brock-Utne, 1989).

In this chapter, I will expand on thesis that educating in nonviolence means favour-

ing the development of individuals having a personality that, in contradistinction to what is called the authoritarian personality (Adorno *et al.*, 1950), we can call a nonviolent personality.

3.2 Ten characteristics of the nonviolent personality

The nonviolent personality is characterised by a constellation of qualities among which I would like to highlight the following ten.

- Rejection of violence
- The capability to identify violence
- The capability to have empathy
- Refusal of authority
- Trust in others
- The disposition to communicate
- Mildness
- Courage
- Self-sacrifice
- Patience

Some of these qualities may require a longer discourse, others a shorter one. Before I comment each one of them, I would like to underscore that, personally, I do not hold any of these 10 characteristics a quality good in itself or intrinsically desirable. In my opinion, these qualities are desirable when all of them are well-integrated in the character of a person, and therefore I consider them virtues. The value they have, however, is an instrumental one: they are the qualities that are desirable to develop because when they are well-integrated in the personality, they render individuals equipped with such a personality particularly able to be actors of peace and democracy. Or so, anyway, I believe.

3.2.1 Rejection of violence

A first quality of the nonviolent personality is, clearly, to have a very high level of inhibition to use or threaten with the use of violence. A nonviolent person is a person who has internalised deeply a moral norm that prohibits the recourse to violence.

A more precise description of this characteristic requires several comments regarding both the concept of violence and the nature of the norm in question.

Regarding the concept of violence, it should be noted that a nonviolent person refuses the identification of violence with physical violence. If violence as such is an evil—maybe justifiable in certain situations, but still always an evil—then this definition appears gratuitously narrow. If intentionally killing a person or inflicting her serious physical pain against her will is an evil, then, arguably, so is the intentional and forced inflictions of psychological suffering or psychological destruction as well, whether it occurs through the use of physical force or without it. Thus, it is appropriate of the nonviolent personality to operate with a notion of violence that subsumes both physical and psychological violence, just as much the active violence (perpetrated through commissive acts)as the passive violence (perpetrated though acts of omission). (For a more comprehensive and detailed analysis, see Pontara 1978; 1990, ch. 3; 1996a).

Let us now consider the norm that prohibits the recourse to violence. The question is here whether such a norm should be construed as an ultimate and absolute norm, or not.

Generally speaking, having internalised this norm as absolute brings with it a (more or less strong) disposition never to commit violent acts (or ones that are deemed violent). The absolute pacifist exemplifies this position. As a rule, such a position calls for an 'ethics of principles' according to which the valid moral principles are so independently of the consequences that ensue by acting in accordance with them. Particularly important for the absolute pacifist are the following two principles, which are regarded not only absolute in the sense of being unconditionally valid, but also ultimate in the sense of not being deducible from any more fundamental principle:

1. it is prohibited to use methods of struggle that involve intentional killing of persons against their will;
2. it is prohibited to use methods of struggle that intentionally inflict suffering to people against their will.

Now, since it is possible to think of situations where killing or inflicting suffering upon someone against his will is the only way to save the lives of many people, or to save many people from suffering, the problem arises whether the two principles remain unconditionally valid also in those situations.

An affirmative response to this question presupposes an interpretation of the first principle so that it does not imply that one ought to save lives; and, equally, it presupposes an interpretation of the second principle so that it does not imply that one ought to alleviate or prevent suffering. With this interpretation, the two principles can be accepted as absolute without getting into unsolvable conflicts between the two: the absolute prohibition not to kill or not to inflict suffering remains valid in so far as one does not have any obligation to save lives or to alleviate or prevent suffering.

Such an interpretation of the two principles presupposes, though, the validity of the normative assumption that there is a fundamental moral distinction between commissive acts and omissive acts (in this case between, on the one hand, killing and inflicting suffering, and, on the other hand, omitting to save lives and prevent or diminish suffering). This assumption is, however, at least at the theoretical level, scarcely sustainable (Pontara, 1988, ch. 6); it is also incompatible with the assumption of a definition of vio-

lence, as the one indicated above, that puts at the same ethical level the active violence as much as the passive violence.

On the other hand, if one interprets the two principles in question in a way such that the first one prohibits not only actively killing but also the omission to save lives, and the second one prohibits not only the active forced infliction of suffering, but also the omission to alleviate or prevent the suffering of others, then one has to confront not just two but four principles that cannot be considered absolute, since then one would have insoluble conflicts between them. It has been discussed recently among philosophers whether the fact that an ethical view implies unsolvable conflicts should be considered as an argument against it. Personally, I am inclined to line up with those who sustain that this is the case (but, admittedly, the case is complex).

However it may be, if the supporter of the four principles wants to avoid being involved in unsolvable moral conflicts, he can choose between two options.

The first one is to consider the principles of not to kill and not to inflict suffering always as having priority over those that prescribe to save lives and to alleviate or prevent suffering. If one chooses this option, however, one has to face the implication that killing a person against his will is always prohibited, independently of the number of people that could have been saved by killing that person; and, equally, one faces the implication that inflicting suffering to a person against his will is always prohibited, independently of the amount of people whose greater suffering could have been prevented by inflicting suffering to that single person against his will. By choosing this option, one maintains the position of absolute pacifism.

The second option is to consider all four principles as non-absolute, *prima facie* principles; that is, such that in case of conflict between the four, the first two do not always and unconditionally have priority over the other two.

If one chooses this option, there are two serious consequences: one is the difficult question of the relative weight of the various principles, when they conflict with each other; the other consequence is that one, in fact, abandons the position of absolute pacifism to the extent that the obligation not to kill and not to inflict suffering is no longer absolute: the obligation not to kill and not to inflict suffering may be outweighed by that of saving lives or of alleviating or preventing suffering.

The advocate of absolute pacifism thus finds himself in a dilemma: either he accepts the questionable view of a moral distinction between commissive and omissive acts or he renounces the absolutist position and thus must deal with the problems that come from the conflicts of principles. Either way, the costs seem to involve paradoxical or unmerciful choices.

What would seem more plausible is an ‘ethics of responsibility’ according to which whether our actions are morally justifiable depends on the consequences that they lead to. Why, in fact, should one conform to a certain principle, when by non conforming to it one realises better consequences? But if it is like this—if, plausibly, the consequences that originate from our actions (and from our omissions) are relevant for their justification—then the use of violence cannot be condemned *a priori* as being always unjustifiable.

This does not imply, however, that it is not possible to argue in favour of a norm that prohibits the recourse to violence. One can move, as suggested, from an ethical view according to which what counts morally are the consequences of our actions for general well-being. On the basis of this view—which is the one proposed by the classical utilitarians—one can argue that it is desirable that at the practical level, at the level of everyday morality, people internalise a norm that prohibits the use of violence, especially when the internalisation of this norm goes together with the other qualities which characterise a nonviolent personality.

In fact, the immediate objectives of a nonviolent position are to prevent that a conflict changes into an antagonistic conflict, to inhibit the propensity that the opponent may have to resort to violence, to decrease the opponent's violence, to humanise the struggle by humanising the opponent by building bridges of communication that permit and encourage dialogue. To be able to obtain these objectives, the behaviour of an individual or of a group has to have maximum credibility—in the first place in the eyes of the opponent towards whom it is directed—as genuinely nonviolent behaviour. To this end, it is extremely important that the nonviolent group manages to convince the adversary that it—in any phase of the conflict—will not resort to armed violence or any other method of struggle that would jeopardise the physical and psychological integrity of members of the opposing group or would involve inflicting them serious physical or psychological suffering against their will. But to succeed with this intention, it is necessary that the would-be nonviolent group is not only disarmed, but also composed of members who have a high level of inhibition to use violence insofar as they have profoundly internalised the moral norm that prohibits the recourse to violence. Strictly speaking, it is not necessary that this norm is internalised as absolute. It suffices that it is internalised as a strong norm according to which a violent act is a morally negative one that always requires a special justification. It should, in fact, be kept in mind that the rejection of violence in the nonviolent personality is integrated with mutually reinforcing other qualities and that this is what makes a person equipped with them an effective actor in the peaceful management of conflicts.

3.2.2 The capability to identify violence

The nonviolent personality typically has the capacity to identify violence in all its forms and at all levels: personal, institutional, structural, international, and intergenerational.

There is the violence that we commit against ourselves when we behave in ways that will cause intense physical and psychological suffering to our personal "future self"; there is the family violence—both physical and psychological—between spouses, between parents and children, and between children and parents; there is the psychological violence perpetrated at school by those teachers who systematically marginalise those pupils who do not correspond to their expectations of being a 'nice pupil' or, even worse, those pupils who are considered second-class citizens; there is the violence on the streets where road rage is like a war that causes thousands of deaths and tens of thousands of injured and disabled people each year; there is the violence in the work-

place where many people are subject to abuse of power or are humiliated or otherwise degraded each day; there is the structural violence related to social practices where the most heavy and most monotonous jobs are paid less and are almost always carried out by people from the same social class; there is the violence in those penitentiary systems where jails are real places of physical and psychological torture wherefrom the prisoner gets out destroyed and not uncommonly more criminal than when he was jailed; there is the growing amount of violence, be it physical or psychological, in the big metropolitan cities where respect for human life and the physical and psychological integrity of the individual tend to weaken and indifference towards the other gradually turns into a cold, complete disinterest; there is the physical and psychological violence with respect to immigrants, the refugees, the 'strangers'; there is the violence connected to the spread of the Neo-Nazi or neofascist attitude of contempt for the weak, for those who do not make it, who are not capable to elbow others, who have a different cultural or religious background or whose hair is not sufficiently blond; there is the violence that characterises the North-South relation, both at the global level and, in certain countries, such as Italy, also at the national level; there is the violence committed against millions of sentient non-human beings, which are reduced to 'live' in meat factories that are real Nazi concentration camps for animals, where life is only suffering; and there is the violence against the yet unborn beings, those who are, together with animals, the most defenseless: the future inhabitants of the planet who do not have any contractual power and have no way to defend themselves against the violence perpetrated against them by the generations that are over-exploiting the planet through collective actions, dictated by generational egoism, which can cause negative effects which are irreversible or difficult to reverse (global warming, hole in the ozone layer, radioactive waste left as heritage for future generations, etc.).

The ability to identify these and other forms of violence is essential, because the public renunciation of violence does not have any substance without it. For an individual with a nonviolent personality, the rejection of violence in all these forms and at all levels entails not only to detect and denounce all of them, but also to actively favour the moral, social, economic, and political reforms required for diminishing them.

3.2.3 Empathy

One of the most typical features of the authoritarian personality—and as already mentioned in the previous Chapter, a feature cultivated systematically within the Nazi ideology—is the tendency to identify oneself with those who hold power, with the power structures, and the roles and symbols of power. In contradistinction, an essential quality of the nonviolent personality is a developed capability to identify with people, and in particular with the most weak and defenseless—the victims of abuse of power, injustice, and unequal structures, those who suffer most.

What does it mean to identify oneself with the suffering of others? It is not only knowing that they suffer. In fact, one can know about someone else's suffering without identifying oneself with his suffering. Knowing that someone suffers entails imagining

oneself in that situation with the feelings and preferences of that person. The devil knows nothing more pleasant than a bath in boiling oil after spending a day torturing his victims with boiling oil. The devil knows that they suffer exactly because he can imagine how it is to have a bath in boiling oil having the nervous systems and the preferences of his victims: therefore, himself loving doing it, he does not want to find himself in the position of the victims. The devil, however, does not identify himself with them, with their suffering. To identify with others, with their suffering, it is necessary to put oneself in their situation and to have not only the desire to not find oneself in their position suffering like them, but also to have the desire that the suffering of those who suffer ceases as soon as possible.

Empathy, therefore, is knowledge coupled with identification: a capability to see things from the point of view of the others—to put oneself in their shoes so to speak; to rejoice when they rejoice and to suffer when they suffer whilst searching for appropriate measures within one's capability to alleviate their suffering.

3.2.4 Refusal of authority

Now, it is possible for a person to have a high level of inhibition against the recourse to violence and a noteworthy capability to identify with others, and yet to have a disposition in certain circumstances to use violence against others when ordered to do so by what he believes to be an authority *de jure* (in the sense that he believes to have a special moral obligation to obey its orders), or by an authority on which he can throw the responsibility for his own acts of violence.

In the authoritarian personality, the identification with 'the strong' and the contempt for 'the weak' are closely related with unconditional obedience of those who are higher up in the pyramid of power and the more or less absolute right to command those who are lower down in the hierarchy and to demand obedience from them. These characteristics are taken to their extremes in the Nazi ideology: a pyramid structure where the Führer is at the top as the supreme authority and 'the subjects' are at the bottom without any authority and each one has the obligation to obey blindly whoever is above him and has an almost absolute right to command and demand obedience from whoever is below him. The responsibility of each person consists entirely in obeying the superior (the concept of *Verantwortungsfreude*). Nazism, therefore, eliminates any concrete individual responsibility—understood as any demand that the individual, before acting, endeavours to ascertain the relevant facts and to evaluate them on the basis of his own autonomous values—and the responsibility for doing what one does when ordered to do it is shifted to the superior authority. This formalistic morality of obedience, even though it was exasperated in the Nazi ideology, is not only typical of Nazism, but is inherent in all authoritarian and pyramidal structures, not last the military systems.

An essential characteristic of the nonviolent personality is the rejection of such a formalistic morality of obedience and, more generally, the rejection of the idea that there is such thing as an authority *de jure*. (I have argued this thesis elsewhere; see Pontara (1990), pp. 42-45). From this follows that for the nonviolent personality there is

no such thing as a special moral obligation to obey the state and its laws for the simple reason that they are in force, and, in general, that there is no special obligation to obey the commands of whatever 'authority' regardless their contents just because they are issued by an authority. Consequently, a nonviolent person holds that the responsibility for what one does cannot be shifted onto others, and, moreover, maintains that an act of civil and nonviolent disobedience or insubordination does not, as such, require any special justification: obedience, as such, is not a virtue. Surely, a person equipped with a nonviolent personality does, as a rule, obey the laws scrupulously, at least where they are a result of a democratic process and he considers them just. Actually, he may maintain that the law in force, as a rule, has to be respected for reasons that have to do with the general good of the society. On the basis of the same reasons, however, he could also justify acts of civil and nonviolent disobedience and insubordination in certain circumstances.

3.2.5 Trust in others

To put this fifth characteristic in a better light with respect to the nonviolent personality, it may be useful to proceed first with a brief analysis of the logic of violence and the military mentality.

It is typical of this logic and mentality to see acute conflicts between large groups—those conflicts where the threat and ultimately the recourse to armed violence are deemed necessary—as being cases of what are called zero-sum games, i.e., games where there is always a winning party and a losing party. The logic of violence is based on the principle of power that prescribes to surpass the violence of the enemy, causing him maximum possible damage with the arms at disposal while at the same time reducing as much as possible the damage on one's own side. Von Clausewitz enunciates this principle in the following way[8]: "[P]hilanthropists may easily imagine there is a skilful method of disarming and overcoming an enemy without great bloodshed, and that this is the proper tendency of the Art of War. However plausible this may appear, still it is an error which must be extirpated. [...] War is an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds; as one side dictates the law to the other, there arises a sort of reciprocal action, which logically must lead to an extreme" (von Clausewitz, 1970, pp. 21-22).

The theory of equilibrium of power as a guarantor for peace, in the sense of a state of not-war, is linked up with this logic, and likewise is an attitude of distrust that, with the intensification of conflict, always develops into an attitude of mistrust towards those who are identified as 'the enemy'. This is the reason why no violent measure that one judges appropriate to prevent, block, or rebut the others' moves will be discarded *a priori*, however terrible the consequences may seem if the measure is carried out. As the military psychologists know very well, an important role in this perspective is played by the process of dehumanization of the opposing group by spreading a stereotypical image of its members as 'enemies' who are devoid of any human quality and against whom, consequently, even the most brutal type of violence, can be made acceptable

and accepted.

This approach to the management of conflict is reinforced and becomes more dominant when the opposing group uses the same approach. As a rule, it results in a process of rapid escalation of reciprocal mistrust that, in turn, tends to diminish gradually the possibility for communication and dialogue between the parties and, consequently, leads to an escalation of the threat of violence (arms race) or, in case the conflict already has taken a bellicose form, in the further escalation of violence (as it unfailingly happens in every war).

The nonviolent personality refuses this logic. He does not see conflicts as zero-sum games whereby, necessarily, there is a winner and a loser, but rather as positive-sum games played through moves and counter-moves whereby the conflicts are transformed into cooperative games and resolved in such a way that all parties gain. To this end, it is important that the nonviolent personality has the capability to identify "superordinate goals", objectives that the parties involved in the conflict are interested to realise and the realisation of which requires forms of communication and constructive collaboration between them.

The nonviolent personality refuses also the doctrine of the equilibrium of military power as guarantor for peace because such as doctrine has never served guaranteeing a stable and enduring peace. This is seen rather as a doctrine that, as a rule, has brought militarisation of the society and has served pretty well to the militarists of all times to provide a thin coating of justification on the road to weaponry, but in reality it is dictated by expansionist interests and economic (or ideological) imperialism that always put peace in serious danger instead of guaranteeing it.

The nonviolent personality does not dehumanise the opposing party in the conflict, he refuses the concept of 'enemy' and replaces it with that of the 'opponent' whereby the group with whom one is in conflict is seen as made up of individuals who are capable to listen, to reason, and to react in a human way when confronted with genuinely nonviolent behaviour by people who have to a high degree the qualities of a nonviolent personality.

One of the fundamental principles of nonviolence is just that which prescribes approaching a conflict in such a way so as to appeal to the better sides of the opponent, using techniques of struggle aimed at generating in an increasing number of individuals that make up the opposing group a growing trust in those who compose the nonviolent group. What is at work is a continuous attempt to replace the vicious spiral of mistrust that is typical of the logic of violence, with a virtuous spiral of mutual trust.

3.2.6 The disposition to communicate

In this strategy of trust, the disposition to communicate and listen to the reasons of the opposing party, and thus the effort to keep open the channels of communication with it, is immensely important. Therefore, an essential quality of the nonviolent personality is to have a capability and disposition to communicate; such a disposition, in turn, is closely related to another quality of the nonviolent personality to which I return further

below: patience.

Underlying the disposition to communicate is the acceptance of the principle of fallibilism. This principle says that since we are all mortal beings with limited knowledge, no one can ever say with certainty that that which he believes to be true at a given time actually is true; it may very well turn out to be false.

Fallibilism applies in the first place in the field of science, but it also applies in the area of ethical beliefs. Our moral judgments can in fact be distorted by our small egoistic interests, or based on empirically false hypotheses or incomplete information. They also can be based on value assumptions that we have not assessed critically and such that if critically examined, we would be inclined to abandon them. Our moral judgments, like our empirical judgments, are therefore always revisable in principle. One can also hold an objectivist point of view according to which our moral beliefs are either true or false in the same sense (whichever it may be) that our factual beliefs are true or false—and yet at the same time accept the principle of fallibilism. Fallibilism in ethics is perfectly compatible with having deep moral convictions, that is, with having good reasons to believe that certain moral judgments are true rather than false. To be a fallibilist means to be aware that such reasons are never conclusive. Consequently, a person equipped with a nonviolent personality can be deeply persuaded of the goodness of his cause, even its *objective* goodness, but he will not exclude *a priori* the possibility to be mistaken and the adversary to be right. For this reason, a nonviolent person refuses methods of conflict management that entail the destruction of the adversary and he is always inclined to search for techniques of nonviolent struggle that can be applied in situations where the adversary, refusing the principle of dialogue, is not ready to listen to reason.

Fallibilism embraces religious beliefs as well and is compatible with having a profound religious faith. Gandhi, one of the great supporters of fallibilism both in ethics and in religion, was at the same time one of the most moral and religious people that have ever existed. He taught “to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter” (Gandhi, 1986, p542). His constant prayer was that the Christian became a better Christian, a Muslim a better Muslim, and so forth for the other religions. For Gandhi, the believer has to learn to understand that God is different for different people. Above all, the believer has to learn to understand that for millions of dispossessed, unemployed, and starved people in the world “the only way in which God can appear is in the form of work and promises of wages and food”; to the poor in the world “God can only appear as bread and butter” (Young India, 15.11.1931).

The internalisation of the principle of fallibilism is, therefore, one of the best vaccines against all forms of fanaticism—ethnic, nationalist, political, religious; it is fundamental for the well-functioning of democratic institutions and it constitutes a great incentive for tolerance. Much of what passes for tolerance these days is rather more indifference and disinterest than tolerance. Tolerance is something else. To be tolerant entails taking seriously the beliefs of those people who think differently from us and this, in turn, means trying hard to understand those beliefs and examining impartially the arguments

that may be put forth in their favour.

Fallibilism covers all opinions—including fallibilism itself: we cannot exclude *a priori* that the belief that we are all fallible is, in fact, false. Very little, however, support this conclusion. The opposite of fallibilism is dogmatism.

3.2.7 Mildness

The Italian philosopher and political scientist Norberto Bobbio[9] has written a beautiful essay about mildness, distinguishing it, on the one hand, from various akin virtues, and, on the other hand, from several opposing virtues. According to Bobbio, the notion connotes a constellation of qualities (Bobbio, 1995, pp. 13-31). I have commented this essay elsewhere (my comment, the response from Bobbio, and my response are now published in (Bobbio, 1995, pp. 33-45)). Here I limit myself to restate that not all qualities that characterise mild according to Bobbio are also qualities that characterise the nonviolent personality as here construed. Mildness, says Bobbio citing the Italian philosopher Carlo Mazzantini, "leaves the other be what he is, even if he is arrogant, obstinate and provocative". The mild person, continues Bobbio, "does not enter in relation with others with the intention to compete, to create conflict, and eventually to win". The mild person is distinguished from the submissive one who does not participate in political struggle because he is acquiescent, weak, fearful. Nevertheless, the mild person, according to Bobbio's characterisation, is completely outside the political struggle because he does not accept the conditions on which it is founded: rivalry, power, violence, fraud, and the division between winners and vanquished.

The mildness that I consider as a fundamental characteristic of the nonviolent personality is not intended in this sense. A person equipped with a nonviolent personality is not outside the political struggle, but rather is one who participates in it in certain ways; he is not a person who shuns conflicts, on the contrary, in certain occasions he can create them or bring latent conflicts to the foreground; he does not reject necessarily neither power nor force, because he thinks it is perfectly plausible to distinguish between violent power and force and nonviolent power and force; he rejects the dichotomy winner-vanquished, just as he rejects the Schmittian friend-or-foe dichotomy, and he refuses them because they themselves yield a violent mentality and tend to produce violent attitudes and actions; he prefers to talk about opponents, or of the parties involved in the conflict instead of talking of enemies or foes, and, as indicated already, he approaches conflict from the very beginning with the aim of transforming it in such a way that there are neither winners nor vanquished. Gandhi was a mild person, but he was not only mild; he was also a nonviolent man.

Mildness, as a trait of the nonviolent personality, is to be construed in such a way that it does not conflict with the other constitutive qualities of this type of personality. In this context, it is therefore more plausibly identifiable with only a part of the qualities highlighted by Bobbio, namely those that in the realm of nonviolence are very important and which can be summarised into a disposition not to feel and act in certain ways: not harbouring grudges, not nourishing hatred, not having resentment, not desiring

evil upon the other, not being vindictive, not imposing oneself onto the other. These qualities are necessary in order to abstain from the use of violence.

3.2.8 Courage

Aristotle (in his *Nicomachean Ethics*) places courage halfway between fear and temerity and seemed to understand it as a disposition to face things one is, and should be, afraid of but which one has to face. Such a definition creates more problems than it solves, given that it poses difficult normative questions concerning which things one has to be afraid of and which of those one has to face. Aristotle included courage among the good, desirable, or admirable dispositions; that is, he considered it as a virtue and therefore he was led to give it a definition that rendered his value judgement maximally plausible. But maybe it is more fruitful to define courage such that it remains an open question whether it is a virtue, a question to which it is possible to answer with 'it depends'.

Obviously, here it is not possible to enter into the details of this multi-millennial discussion. It suffice to note that, like all discussions regarding the definition of concepts, even the discussion on the definition of courage (even though very subtle and sophisticated) tends to be entirely unfruitful where the context in which it has to serve is not explicitly specified.

Now, in the context of the qualities that characterise the nonviolent personality, courage is understood as a disposition to take a stand and holding up to it, a disposition to firmness, to overcome fear or keep it under control, to run certain risks, and in certain situations also to risk one's own life. Understood in this way, courage is not always desirable, not even instrumentally. Whether it is, or not, depends partly on the situation where it manifests itself and partly on what are the other qualities that accompany it. Arguably, it is preferable that a convinced Nazi is not courageous because if he is not he probably will do less damage. But one can argue that courage is a desirable quality when it is coupled to all the other nine qualities of a nonviolent personality.

Gandhi, as known, never tired to repeat that he preferred the violence of those who courageously defend themselves and the weak victims of violent aggression over the passivity of those who yield to fear and cowardice. "I would rather have India resort to arms in order to defend her honour than she would, in a cowardly manner, become or remain a helpless witness to her own dishonour" (Gandhi, 1948, p1). However, he exhorted his compatriots to resort to the "nonviolence of the strong", which, he believed, is superior to violence to the extent that it manifests a greater courage than the latter. People can practice "the nonviolence of the strong", said Gandhi, only if they "are free from fear, whether as to their possessions, false honour, their relatives, the government, bodily injuries or death." (Gandhi, 1986, p250). Such a courage is probably not possible without a certain measure of 'detachment' both toward oneself and one's own goods, as well as toward those who are closest by relationships of affection.

3.2.9 Self-sacrifice

This quality is here understood as a disposition to make sacrifices, including considerable ones, in the struggle to realise specific common objectives. Like courage, this quality is not typical only of the nonviolent person; it is an essential quality for being a good soldier or warrior, too. Self-sacrifice is a quality put in the foreground even by the Nazi ideology where the maximum sacrifice is demanded from the individual for the cause of an organic whole (the party, the state, the nation, the Aryan race) of which he is an insignificant part. In addition, in Nazism, self-sacrifice does not refer only to the readiness to sacrifice one's own well-being, one's personal interests, and one's life, but also to sacrifice one's own opinions and autonomy.

Thus self-sacrifice is not always a virtue: whether it is or not depends on the type of situation where it manifests itself and on other qualities that accompany it.

In the nonviolent personality, self-sacrifice is not only a disposition to undertake sacrifices required by the struggles one is involved in, but also a disposition to undertake those sacrifices that are necessary in order to minimise suffering of the opposing group: "the doctrine of violence has reference only to the doing of injury by one to another. Suffering injury in one's own person is, on the contrary, of the essence of non-violence ad is the chosen substitute for violence to others." (Gandhi, 1948, p43). This second characteristic of abnegation is important not only with respect to indicating a radical moral difference between self-sacrifice of the nonviolent and violent type, respectively, but it is also important because there is reason to think that it is instrumental to the end of blocking violence in cases of acute conflict with people and groups who are not nonviolent.

3.2.10 Patience

The nonviolent personality does not do things in a hurry (nor badly or roughly), he is capable of waiting, does not let himself be discouraged, disheartened, or brought down if he does not see results here and now, instantly; he knows that given certain ends, only certain means lead to them, and that the ends to which nonviolence aims can be pursued only by means of which its employment requires great patience. To have patience in the nonviolent management of conflicts means to have a disposition not to resort to methods of radical nonviolent struggle before having explored the options to manage the conflict to an acceptable solution with less radical methods. It also means to be willing to reach compromises where it comes to objectives that are not of vital importance. Gandhi said that one of the things he discovered in his long nonviolent struggles was the 'beauty of compromise'. This concerns compromise not based on bargaining, on *do ut des*, but rather grounded on the above mentioned principle of fallibilism according to which one never can be sure that the objectives one struggles for are just every inch of it. "I am a human being essentially inclined to compromise because I am never sure to be in the right", said Gandhi.

3.3 Two general hypotheses

The personality that has all the ten reviewed qualities in full degree is naturally an ideal. It is an ideal, however, that is useful in two ways: it serves both as a source of inspiration and as a criterion of how nonviolent one is, i.e., how close or how distant one is from the ideal.

We now can tentatively formulate two very general hypotheses.

First hypothesis: the more a democratic society is composed of people who have the ten qualities of the nonviolent personality in a substantive degree, the more this society is a democratic one in substance and not only in form.

Second hypothesis: the more a group is composed of individuals that have the qualities typical of the nonviolent personality in a substantive measure, and the larger the group is, the better are the possibilities and probabilities for this group to transform, in a constructive way, the conflicts in which it is involved and to block the violence to which an opposing group may want to resort.

The more tenable these hypotheses are, the more important it is to favour the development of individuals toward the ideal of the nonviolent personality.

One should remember, however, what I have said at the start of this chapter: a person equipped with the ten characteristics that I have illustrated synthetically is not necessarily an absolutist pacifist who is convinced that the recourse to armed violence is never, under any circumstance, justifiable. A person equipped with a nonviolent personality can admit that in specific situations, given certain conditions, the recourse to armed violence, can be justifiable, at least in principle. He can hold, though, that today these conditions do not obtain and that the state of the world today is such that it is no longer possible to justify resorting to the massive and systematic violence involved in modern war, civil war, guerilla war and the various forms of political terrorism.

In addition, the person equipped with the typical properties of the nonviolent personality always seeks to reduce more and more the situations where the recourse to violence could be sustained to be justifiable as ‘necessary’; he does so through the capability to plan constructive management from the beginning of a conflict and by demonstrating that there are alternatives.

Gandhi was a great nonviolent personality and demonstrated concretely to the world that there are alternatives. He had all ten described characteristics to a high degree. There is no doubt that he succeeded in developing them through a continuous process of self-education which he carried out with tenacity during the whole time-frame of his long adult life.

It would be very interesting to take a closer look at such a process of self-education; but I shall not do it here. Instead, in the next chapter I will deal with the problem concerning the means of education of a nonviolent personality.

CHAPTER 4

Education and the nonviolent personality

What are the factors that tend to obstruct and favour, respectively, the development of a nonviolent personality during the educational process of children?

This is a difficult question. I will limit myself here to formulate briefly a series of hypotheses of which there are good reasons to support it. These hypotheses concern several factors in the family, in the media, in school, and more generally in the institutions where a child comes regularly into contact with the world of adults.

4.1 Violence toward children

There is a vast amount of research showing that the use of physical and psychological violence toward youngsters, both in the family and in the school and other institutions, is a very frequent phenomenon in the East as much as in the West, in the South as much as in the North. For instance, several studies carried out already at the end of the 1970s showed evidence of a high percentage of violence against children in the familial environment in the United States (Gellers, 1978; Gellers and Strauss, 1979; Strauss *et. al.*, 1979). Other studies carried out about at the same time showed that the same holds for other countries (Oliver *et. al.*, 1978). Also with respect to the Italian society the phenomenon of violence against children and adolescents seems very disturbing: according to estimates provided by specialists, there are between 100 and 150 thousand cases of violence of of various forms against children in the society each year.

This violence tends to have very negative consequences for the development of its victims. In the following, I indicate briefly several hypotheses that can reasonably be held to be valid given the actual state of the art in the relevant field of research.

A first hypothesis is that the use of violence by adults toward the minor tends to impede the development of several of the qualities typical of the nonviolent personality

and instead favours the development of several opposite qualities associated with the authoritarian personality.

A wide range of scientific research corroborates the thesis that the way a baby is treated in the very first years of infancy has a great impact on the capacity to identify with others when the baby has grown up to be an adult (Bowlby, 1951, 1965; Lewis, 1954; Eriksson, 1963; Fraiberg, 1968).

Another hypothesis which also would seem to be corroborated is this: the minors who are in the family or at school or other institutions are subjected to repeated violence by adults run a higher risk to turn into adults with a weak sense of their own identity and value than those who are not subjected to violence; furthermore, as compared to the latter, the former run a higher risk of turning into adults prone to attitudes of submission and auto-destructive behaviour or turn into particularly aggressive individuals with a low capacity of identification with others and to nurture confidence in them (Toch, 1969; Sears and Maccoby, 1974; Martin and Beesly, 1976; Kinard, 1979).

Modern social learning theory would also seem to support the hypothesis that children belonging to the former of the above-mentioned two groups run a higher risk than those belonging to the second group to develop into adults with low levels of inhibition to use violence, especially towards those who are judged to be weaker. It seems that this risk increases further when the child is subjected to violence by adults who sanction it as justified punishment. Several studies would also seem to corroborate the thesis that those who have been subjected to corporal punishment in childhood (and this concerns more often the males than the females) by their parents (more often the father than the mother) are more subject to becoming violent parents in their turn (Steinmetz and Strauss, 1974).

It should be noticed, however, that it is not only the use of physical violence towards children that tends to impede their development in the direction of a nonviolent personality; there is reason to believe that this development will be blocked also where the child has been the object of repeated psychological violence. Violence of this type occurs whenever the child is put in a state of intense anguish, fear, panic, or terror following menaces of various types or following harsh critique, mock, contempt, psychological marginalisation etc. by the parents or teachers or other adults with whom he is in regular contact.

Being the spectator of repeated violence among the parents is another factor which purportedly tends to block the development of the child in the direction of a nonviolent personality.

At this point it may be important to point out a distinction, even if it is quite obvious.

On the one hand, there is the violence used against the child in the belief that it is an integral part of the educative process, for instance because it is believed to be a necessary evil to instill the development of certain qualities such as obedience, respect for adults, for authority, certain moral precepts etc. in the child. On the other hand, there is the violence used against children by parents, teachers, and other adults that is caused by other factors: stress, frustration, authoritarianism, prestige and the like. It is important to keep apart these two different types of violence against the child

since there is reason to believe that different measures are necessary to combat them.

When dealing with violence used as educational method, providing precise and detailed information about its negative consequences and counterproductive effects for the development of the child can be sufficiently effective, especially if information is accompanied by legislation that at least prohibits, but should render punishable, any physical violence toward children. But it is quite clear that such informative and legislative measures are insufficient to combat physical and psychological violence committed against the child by adults who are stressed, frustrated, or authoritarian, or who have very low levels of inhibition to use violence against the weakest because they themselves have been the victim of parental violence. To combat this kind violence toward children, other measures are necessary; measures that will work on the psychological, social, and economical roots of the factors that most immediately bring forth such violence.

4.2 Violence on TV and violence in life

Another factor that tends to block the development of the child in the direction of a nonviolent personality, is the systematic exposure to the enormous quantity of violent programmes offered by TV and other visual media.

Research into television usage by children in the United States tend to converge on estimates that American kids spend about four to five hours in front of the TV screen each day, reaching six to seven hours in the weekend; thus, on average, about 40 hours of TV exposure each week and about 300 hours a year. This means that the average American primary school kid has watched TV for about 1500 hours in the past five years. It is also estimated that during all these hours spent in front of the screen, the child has seen 100 000 simulated scenes of violence and 8000 simulated homicides when he has reached the end of elementary school. The shows proposed for children by the American TV contain quantitatively much more violence than the shows offered to adults (Condry, 1993)[10].

The problem question regarding the correlation between systematic exposure to prolonged scenes of violence on TV, on the one hand, and the use of violence and a permissive attitude toward it, on the other, is one of the most debated and studied among sociologists and psychologists over the past 40 years. I am not an expert in this field of study, but it seems that, after 40 years of study, the specialists broadly agree that there are significant correlations between systematic exposure to blood-and-guts television programmes and antisocial and violent behaviour in society: the systematic and prolonged exposition to violent programmes contributes to produce an unrealistic image of violence in the boys and youngsters, a distorted image of the causes and effects of violence, a diminished sense of empathy, a lowering of inhibition to resort to violence, antisocial tendencies, the contempt for the weak and the glorification of the strong, the bully, the tough and cold perpetrator of violence. The correlation between systematic exposure to violent programmes on TV and the increase in aggressiveness

in the daily conduct is held by some to be so strong that it permits to talk of a causal relation. It seems, though, that such a relation concerns only the males (and it is an interesting problem why this is the case).

Already in a survey carried out in 1978 by William Belson of the Survey Research Center in collaboration with the London School of Economics among a sample of male adolescents of London between 13 and 26 years, it was found that systematic exposure to violence on TV increases the level in which the youngsters resort to serious forms of violence in life. (Belson, 1978). The findings of Belson were confirmed in a comparative analysis of international studies and data that were published around the same time (Eysenck and Nias, 1978). More recently, further proofs of a clear and significant correlation between exposure to televised violence and propensity to resort to violence in American society, have been put forth by the vast research carried out by nine scholars of the American Psychological Association (Huston *et. al.*, 1992). Similar conclusions have been drawn concerning Sweden, based on studies carried out by the Institute of Communication Science and Media at Lund University, Sweden (Rosengren, 1994). I am not aware of surveys carried out in Italy, but it would surprise me if they came to quite different results from those emphasised by English, American, and Swedish studies that I have cited.

It is clear that the big television industry—whose interests, like in any other industry, are to sell goods, reduce costs and increase profits—will continue to deny that there are statistically significant relations between violent programmes on TV and violence in society, and even to deny that the TV has any particular effects on our way of thinking and behaving in general. But that is a hypocritical response because at the same time hundreds of millions are being spent on commercial propaganda on television with the aim to influence our way of thinking and acting, manipulating in a more or less subtle manner people's preferences, conditioning an increase in their demands of certain goods, among others of ever more violent shows. Then one justifies the increase in supply of these things and programmes by calling upon the sovereignty of the consumer and the respect for their preferences!

If things are as I described above, one can plausibly ask how to stem the tide of the offer of violence on TV, at least the outpour of violence in the programmes for children, adolescents, and in general for all minors.

More censorship, which is perhaps nor justifiable when it concerns programmes intended for autonomous adults, can very well be justifiable when it concerns programmes intended for minors who are not yet autonomous. Besides, those who are against censorship of violent television programmes should be aware that it is precisely through the TV that daily subtle, but very effective, censorship is practiced in front of the viewers; it suffices to point at the deliberately censured, distorted images, which many television channels have given us daily about what was happening during the Gulf war and, more recently, the wars in Yugoslavia, demonising the Serbians, putting systematically the damper on the atrocities perpetrated by the military and paramilitary forces of Croatia, and generally being silent about the criminal acts by the Muslims and only increasing it when they became militarily stronger (Morrison *et. al.*, 1996[11]).

The proposal that the philosopher Karl Popper put forward recently should also be taken into consideration, which is to introduce

One should also take into consideration the proposal which the philosopher Karl Popper put forth in his comment on the article by Jonh Condry published in the Italian booklet “Cattiva masestra televisione” (Popper, 1994). Popper’s idea is to introduce a set of more precise rules of professional ethics for all television operators and to equip each one of them with a license that is revocable in case one has violated the rules, and the withdrawal that would result in the loss of one’s job (Popper, 1994, pp. 13-25).

The school also can play a very important role in the struggle against the dehumanizing, brutalising, misinforming, manipulating TV. The problems about the role of the television in society, about the forces that control it, about the type of programmes sent into the ether and the effects they can have, etc., should be discussed in class with help of specialists in civic education, highlighting, through practical exemplifications, what potent positive instrument of information and education the TV also can be.

I will return shortly to the topic concerning the function of the school in the education of the democratic and nonviolent personality. First I would like to focus on another big obstacle to the development of the boy in that direction. This obstacle is constituted by that what I call a moral-rigorous education.

4.3 The moralistic-rigid education

By a moralistic-rigid education I mean a process whereby the child is regularly subjected to excessive, exaggerated demands by his parents or teachers or other rigid, severe, and authoritarian adults: adults who demand that the child rigorously obeys a whole set of precise rules without being able to understand why ever he should obey them—supposing that there are reasons to obey them in the first place; or superambitious adults who demand that the child achieves results and successes which are beyond his capacities. Not seldom in such a moralistic-rigid educative process the adults involved show a tendency to reinforce their severe demands with threats and effective inflictions of punishment, be it physical or psychological ones.

A child who is systematically exposed to such a process of education can easily develop in the direction of a deeply insecure adult with a weak sense of identity and of his own worth; an adult prone to look for security in a formalistic-bureaucratic morality that puts at the forefront not the values of solidarity and identification with others, but rather the demand of a legal nature according to which the supreme duty is unconditional obedience to rules, either for the sake of the rules or because they are perceived to be orders emanating from a presumed absolute legitimate authority *de jure*.

Wherever there are individuals who embrace such a rigid moralistic conception, the violent and militaristic authoritarianism has an optimal possibility for growth. In fact, militaristic authoritarianism tends to attract authoritarian individuals of the mentioned type, and through its authoritarian structure and bureaucratic ethics of blind obedience

tends, in its turn, to further blunt in the individual subjects the sense of responsibility for what they do to others, especially when they are called 'enemies'.

The opposite of a moralistic-rigid education is not a *laissez-faire*, permissive, education where the child is left completely to his own devices without any guidance and profound emotive contact with the adults surrounding him. The opposite is a process of moral development that is based on a profound respect of the child, on a deep love and a trusting attitude toward him: "better thousand acts of virile trust and one caress, rather than thousand caresses and one act of mistrust" said Aldo Capitini. Such a process of moral development takes place through a continuous cooperation between minors and adults, in the first place the parents or those who fulfill this task, in an atmosphere of continuous, open dialogue between the minors and adults, where the latter do not fear to show their own insecurities, to acknowledge that they do not know certain things, to recognise openly their own errors. Naturally, a loving firmness from the side of the adults is also necessary. As Jean Piaget, Erik Eriksson and many others have argued in detail, it is this kind of relation between minors and adults that offer the best possibilities to former to develop themselves in the direction of emotionally secure adults who take themselves seriously and are capable to identify with others and trust them (Piaget, 1932; Eriksson, 1963, 1968). Such a process of education also facilitates the development of other qualities of the nonviolent personality: courage, the capacity for critical, autonomous judgment, and the disposition to look for constructive solutions of conflicts.

4.4 Schools and nonviolent personality

A long and detailed discussion would be needed about the function of the school as instrument of formation of a nonviolent and democratic personality. Such a discussion is beyond the limits of this small book. I shall provide some considerations regarding, in particular, the role of the school in the development of a moral and civic conscience.

4.4.1 The development of a critical moral conscience

The kind of school favouring the development of the qualities of the nonviolent personality, is one where the teachers (especially those involved in civic education) do not fear to deal in the classroom with the most current, serious, and debated political, social, and moral problems—always treating them in relation to the age and maturity level of the young people with whom they work.

It is still widely held that the school should be neutral in the sense that she should not touch upon the most burning problems of society. Such an opinion is based on a false view on objectivity and impartiality. In fact, such type of school is in fact not neutral. It is a school that acts as watch-dog of the prevailing ideology, whichever it may be, to the extent that it does not stimulate the pupils to confront themselves

critically with the dominant values in society—which is the best way to review one's own values and deepen one's awareness of them.

If the first years of the child's life are fundamental for the development of his emotions and capacity to identify himself with others, the years between 15 and 20 are, according to various experts, the crucial ones for the formation of a critical moral conscience. If in this period the youngster does not become equipped with the critical instruments necessary to take more and more autonomous stands on the moral issues in which he will run into, then there are notable risks that in the rest of his adult life he will accept passively the values received from his family, the current going norms, or will follow uncritically those he believes to be the competent authority on the matter, or even will renounce to take a position relegating the ethical aspects of his choices to the margins of his conscience or simply ignoring them.

The development of a critical moral conscience is particularly important for the flourishing of a nonviolent and democratic society, which requires independent citizens who are not easily manipulated and who are capable to take a position after weighing the arguments for and against on the basis of critically examined values, so that that they can, at least to a certain degree, support their position with arguments. Moreover, and and as I have already pointed out in previous chapters, a critical examination of one's own values favours tolerance and even respect for the different values of others, encourages dialogue, and thus constitutes a valid obstacle to the development of fanatic or fundamentalist attitudes in society.

The development of a critical moral conscience is today particularly important for several reasons, of which I would like to highlight two.

In the first place, it is important to block those factors that contribute to the numbing of the conscience and weakening of the sense of one's moral responsibility, which are factors particularly active in our society of consumerism, conformism, and manipulating mass media.

Secondly, the development of a critical moral conscience is particularly important today because the scientific developments, for instance in the field of genetics, confront us more and more with moral problems that are totally new and for which, generally, the received concepts and moral norms do not seem to be capable of giving clear and satisfying answers.

Now, the school always has had a fundamental role in the formation of a moral conscience of the youngsters. Like I have mentioned already, very often this role has been a conservative one, a role of indoctrination carried out by reinforcing a-critical acceptance of the dominant values of society. But it need not necessarily always be this way. The school can also have the opposite role of helping to think critically about the dominant values, including one's own. This does not mean that one will end up rejecting all those dominant values; on the contrary, it may very well lead to discovering that they pass the critical examination and thus a conscientious acceptance of them, achieving a deeper internalization and integration of them in one's personality.

I believe that today the schools should assume this role of the formation of a critical moral conscience. I also believe that to reach this goal, it is important to introduce in the

secondary schools—or perhaps already in the last two years of primary school—well-planned occasions of ethical reflection during the lectures, such as group discussion (done in class) about current, concrete, ethical issues, which are felt to be particularly important by the pupils.

Such a programme of ethical reflection could consist of three phases, which I will summarise shortly.

First phase. This phase can suitably begin with an exploration into the moral problems that are most felt among the pupils and then to proceed to discussion some of them—always relative to the age and level of maturity of the pupils of the teacher—at the intuitive or pre-analytical level. It is important, however, that already in this phase the pupils are encouraged to develop and try to give arguments in support of the position they are inclined to take and to listen to those who think differently. In this phase, 'the teacher' should begin to underscore the importance of gathering relevant factual information regarding the problem discussed, thereby making the problem more precise; based on the disagreements that surfaced in class, he should also draw attention to the various types of disagreement; verbal, apparent, fact-based, value-based.

Second phase. The work in groups assumes more importance in this phase. The pupils, suitably are divided in groups based on the diverse positions that have emerged in the preceding phase, are encouraged to collect more factual information about the problem under discussion and to sharpen their arguments in the light of this new information. When (after a certain amount of time) this task has been completed, each group will present the results of their work and a new discussion will follow.

Third phase. In this phase, 'the teacher' chooses a newspaper or magazine article where an author argues in support of a certain position regarding a problem that is of interest to the pupils. Together with the pupils, 'the teacher' conducts an analysis of the argumentation: the aim of the exercise it to highlight the thesis that the author sustains, to marshal the arguments that he produces in support of it, to bring clearly to light the premises of the values that underlie them, and finally to asses the validity and relevance of the arguments.

Once the pupils have become familiar with such a method of analysis, they can work in groups on selected ethical problems of common interest by studying newspaper and magazine articles where such problems are discussed and produce simple analyses of the argumentation that are to be presented and discussed in class.

I think it is important that in such work of ethical reflection, 'the teacher' does not assume rigid attitudes as if he were a person who has some certain or irrefutable truths to communicate, but instead demonstrates an open mind and, posing as an *unum inter pares* (one among equals), he is disposed to take advantage of the process of the common research. This does not mean that the teacher should hide the positions he is inclined to support about the moral dilemmas under discussion. He will not fear to demonstrate his own insecurities when he is insecure about which position to take, and he will not shun from self-criticisms when, in the course of the discussion, he discovers that the position he is inclined to take is more problematic than he initially had thought.

A school where the described type of ethical reflection is practiced, favours a moral

dialogue and thereby the nonviolent management of social conflicts where the moral values of the people involved do not always play a secondary role.

But giving space to ethical reflection is not enough.

4.4.2 A school for democracy

We can daily see how in democratic countries democracy tends to become more and more formal and is corroded. These processes are linked partially to the tendency toward a diminished citizen's participation in the daily management of public affairs, partially to the increasing weakening of the sense of collectivity, i.e., of the identification of the individual citizen with the laws and the institutions of the democratic society. The democratic process tends to become more of a game, often a not very clean one, at the level of parliaments, parties, large lobby groups, supported (more or less consciously) by the citizens who are called to vote, choosing every now and then between powers that are often more interested in manipulating them rather than informing them.

A school for a democratic and nonviolent society ought to support the development of instruments of participation and control from the base. For this reason, I think, it cannot be an institution where the mind is stuffed with an accumulation of facts and useless notions; and, strictly, neither can it be an institution that equips pupils with knowledge in certain fields: such knowledge may be important to the extent that it stimulates curiosity and favours the development of a critical mind, equipping the pupils with the critical instruments of what John Dewey called *insight* (distinguishing it from *knowledge*). As the great Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore[12] once said, "the main object of teaching is not to explain meanings but to knock at the door of Mind".[13]

A school aiming at the development of a critical mind—of the disposition to dialogue based on what I called above the principle of fallibilism—has to be a school where the youngsters will be encouraged to search for the truth through discussion and argument. This already involves taking distance from didactic methods based on mechanic teaching and learning, on rewards, the good mark to whom answers in the 'right' way, and instead giving priority to didactic methods where questioning is dominant and and is practiced in an atmosphere where it can be important that the young pupil answers questions in the 'wrong' way but with the right mind.

A school for democracy and nonviolence has to be a school that favours insight—I use again this Deweyian term—into the modes in which they function and of the direction in which they develop the social, political, economic, and cultural forces both at the local level and the global level.

A school for nonviolence and democracy also has to be a school that is aware of the fact that for most people their own sense of identity is profoundly rooted in one's own language, traditions, and culture. Therefore it is extremely important that the school is aware of and respects the traditions, the cultures, and languages of various minorities, providing for the young pupils who belong to these minorities the possibility to use their own language and to deepen their knowledge of it and of the culture in which it is embedded.

Here I cannot discuss at length the question about the contents of the teachings in a school that wants to educate nonviolence and peace. But an important moment will certainly be the debunking of war and violence and the questioning of their role in the historical process. Another important moment will be the analyses of the forces that menace peace in the world. It is necessary that the young pupils, always in relation to their age and level of maturity, have the possibility to discuss in class—and in an objective way leaving space for all voices—questions of the following kind: the role of nationalism and national egoism as factors of conflict, violence, and war; the problem of militarism and of the economic, social, and bureaucratic structures that are closely connected with it; the role of the war industry and the politics of defence of one's country; the role of the army, also in a democratic country, as a warrant of undue privileges of certain groups, or of a whole nation, etc. History teaching should be in reverse order: it should start from an analysis of the problems, the conflicts and wars in the contemporary world, and then move on to inquire into their origins and developments, going back in time; it is also important to pay major attention to the study of situations, past and present, where acute social and international conflicts have been or are being conducted with nonviolent means. In this way, history lessons become much more interesting and rewarding than it is in many a school today.

Just as important is the gradual introduction about non-European cultures, the various religions and various conceptions of life and the world. This helps to understand that our own is not necessarily the 'right' one, let alone the only 'supremely valid' one.

But the most important thing in a school that wants to educate nonviolence and democracy is, I believe, to encourage the young people to show reciprocal attention, to care about each other, and especially for the 'weak', the marginalised, those who have more difficulties in life. This is aptly done, I believe, by favouring cooperative study and research methods instead of competitive methods that make the young pupils more and more aware that dispassionate search for truth is a choral adventure where all voices have to be listened to seriously and above all those that may seem most discordant.

4.4.3 Practical conflictology and group work

There are two other important moments for the formation of a democratic and nonviolent person in school.

The first aspect is that teaching young people the rudiments of the theory of conflicts, drawing their attention to the psychological factors in particular and, more generally, the mechanisms that tend to precipitate conflicts toward physical armed violence. It is also important that current or latent conflicts within the class or school are faced openly, involving, if necessary, psychologists and other social workers, and also that pupils are trained in the constructive nonviolent management of conflicts by means of simulations, games, etc.

Another factor that stimulates the development of the diverse qualities of the nonviolent personality is the participation of the youngsters in group work, also manual, both

within the school (cleaning, reparations, gardening, etc.—unions permitting!) and in society (alternative civil service). William James, John Dewey, and Gandhi are among those who have given special importance to this factor in the education of nonviolence and democracy.

Here one might object that in the struggle against militarist, nationalist, ethnic, and religious authoritarianism, education has a secondary importance compared to the economic, social and political factors that underlie these, and other, forms of authoritarianism. I certainly do not want to deny that the forces and factors that favour an authoritarian culture of violence are many and very diverse. Neither do I want to deny that there are many and diverse factors that influence our attitudes and our personality in general; nor do I deny that there are various and diverse factors that determine the modes in which conflicts are created, conducted, and eventually resolved.

Nevertheless, the ways in which conflicts develop and the outcomes they lead to depend plausibly, at least in part, on the type of persons who are involved in the management of them. In addition, what type of person we are, and thus the ways in which we act and react in conflict situations, depend in part on how we are educated, first of all in the family and secondly in school and in other institutions that educate, directly or indirectly, the young people in society. That is why the question concerning the way in which these institutions support or obstruct the development of the qualities of a nonviolent personality in children and adolescents is an important one. And so, if the type of institutions and education to which I have drawn attention, favours the development of such qualities, well, then working to realise such type of institutions and education is a basic task for the forces committed to the construction of a mature culture of peace for the twenty-first century.

Notes to the translation

In the first version of the translation, I had tried to remain truthful to the writing style of the original version, which, from a English language perspective, did not always result in easily readable sentences. Pontara himself was enthusiastic about the translation, and together we have made a translation that we think is easier to read. So, where a too literal translation with respect to the sentences construction was nigh on unreadable, minor changes have been made. Some 'complexity' of the original version got lost in the translation due to the fact that Italian grammar is more structured than English grammar and therefore has, on average, longer sentences than English. The former simplifies writing multiple sub-clauses in one sentence to represent one piece of thought or idea, which would have rendered the direct translation into English at times difficult to read and open to multiple interpretations. In those cases, I have chopped up the sentence into two shorter English sentences or used clauses enclosed in hyphens or braces instead of more comma-delimited subclauses. In addition, English requires a subject to go with the verb, whereas this is normally omitted in Italian unless emphasis is required; the translation uses "he" and "him" in those cases, although this can be replaced equally with "she" and "her", respectively. Some specific translation issues and additional explanatory information are included as endnotes further below in the Notes section. Then there were 'translation issues' that had more to do with the semantics that Italian and English words do, can, or might, convey in various settings; sometimes the ambiguity was transferred to the English translation on purpose, sometimes a clearer stance taken. Nevertheless these issues, I hope you will find that a better readable and more widely accessible version of *la personalità nonviolenta* will be, is, or has been worthwhile reading anyway.

Compared to the original booklet, this translation contains a new preface to the English edition by Giuliano Pontara, a new foreword by Maria Keet, these notes to the translation, an index, biographical sketches, and the bibliography in alphabetical order. Chapter 1 in the original has been divided into two shorter chapters in this edition. The information about the Italian "Alternative" booklet series is omitted.

Concerning the format of this book, the layout is done in such a way that it is possible to print two pages on one A4 side or crop it to B5 and still keep the text readable, but another layout—like page size, font type and size, back flap, and chapter headings—is easily generated with LaTeX. So if you perceive the need to have a different layout, you can contact the translator/editor (Maria Keet) using the contact information at `http://www.meteck.org`.

Last, thanks are due to Wordreference.com for making available online a free Italian-English dictionary, which made searching for the most suitable translations a lot easier compared to flicking through paper-based dictionaries. The, also free, typesetting program for LaTeX that was used to write this document was TeXShop. This file is stored on my website, which is generously hosted by Nowsales.nl. No one mentioned in this tanks-are-due-to paragraph asked, let alone required, me to include them here. I took the front cover picture of Spring Lane in the botanic garden in Sydney, Australia, in September 2008. If you are holding a printed & bound version of "The Nonviolent Personality" in your hands, that I did pay for.

Notes

[1]An English introduction to the concept of molecular civil war can be found at `http://www.cscs.umich.edu/~crshalizi/NPQ/molecular-civil-war.html`, which, in turn, is an adaptation from his book 'Civil Wars: From LA to Bosnia' that has appeared in the journal *New Perspectives Quarterly*, (12:1).

[2]Recollect that this book was published in 1996, so the operation against Iraq refers to the Gulf war in 1991 when George Bush Sr. was President of the USA.

[3]The original English version of the Italian reference is: Milgram, S. (1974), *Obedience to Authority; An Experimental View*, Harpercollins ISBN 0-06-131983-X, with a lay person overview summarised here: `http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milgram_experiment`.

[4]Aldo Capitini (Perugia, 23 December 1899 – Perugia, 19 October 1968), philosopher, politician, anti-fascist and at times called 'the Italian Gandhi' for his contributions to theory on nonviolence. A biography in English can be found on the Capitini website at `http://www.aldocapitini.it/englishversion/absing.htm`.

[5]Boutros Boutros-Ghali was Foreign Minister of Egypt from 1977 until early 1991 and became Secretary General of the United Nations afterward from 1991 to 1996.

[6]The report is officially called "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future", which is online at `http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm`. See also the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/42/187 at `http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/42/ares42-187.htm`.

[7]The English original of the report is quoted here (Chapter 2, section IV at `http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm`), not a back-translation from Italian to English.

[8]The quoted English is not an Italian-to-English translation but taken from the 1874 translation of *Vom Kriege* into English, as available on the Project Gutenberg website at `http://www.gutenberg.org/files/1946/1946-h/1946-h.htm`.

[9]Norberto Bobbio (October 18, 1909 – January 9, 2004) was an Italian philosopher and political scientist active in the socialist party and as senator for life. He is considered to be one of the major intellectuals and cultural personalities of Italy in the 20th century. More information in several languages is available online at `http://www.erasmo.it/gobetti/` and in Wikipedia.

[10]The Italian reference in the original was (Popper, 1994), an edited volume with contributions from various authors. The original essay by Condry is cited here.

[11]This is attributed to “Morrison - Taylor - Ramachandaran, 1996”, but there is no such reference in the bibliography. The Italian reference is: Morrison, D., Taylor, P., Ramachandaran, S. *Media, guerre e pace*. EGA-Edizioni Gruppo Abele, 1996; there is no English version of it. For an English account about censorship and war in the media (and, hence, propaganda), the reader may want to consult Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky. *Manufacturing consent—the political economy of the mass media*. London: Vintage Books. 1994. 412p.

[12]Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941) was a Nobel prize-winning (Literature, 1913) Bengali poet, author, songwriter, philosopher, artist, and educator; see also `http://tagoreweb.in/`.

[13]The book provides both Pontara’s translation and the English original, although no source is given of the original quote. The original is “The main object of teaching is not to explain meanings, but to knock at the door of the mind.”, in chapter 13 of *My Reminiscences*; the whole book and other works are available at `http://www.gutenberg.org/browse/authors/t#a942`.

Biographical sketches

Giuliano Pontara

Giuliano Pontara is a retired Professor from the University of Stockholm where he taught practical philosophy for over thirty years. He has been one of the co-founder of IUPIP – *International University of Peoples' Institutions for Peace* – and has been the Chairperson of its Scientific Committee and the Course Director from 1993 to 2004.

He has written extensively mostly in Italian, but also in English and Swedish on ethical and political philosophical issues, focusing especially on such topics as social and international justice, equality, utilitarianism, responsibility towards future generations, the relations between ethics and politics, violence and non-violence, and the ethical and political thought of M.K. Gandhi. Some of his writings have been translated into Spanish, French and Japanese.

Maria Keet

Dr. C. Maria Keet is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Computer Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. She obtained her PhD in computer science (2008) from the KRDB Research Centre, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy, focusing on logic-based knowledge representation. She also holds a MSc in Food Science (free specialisation: Microbiology) (1998) from Wageningen University and Research, the Netherlands, a MA first class in Peace and Development Studies (2003) from the University of Limerick, Ireland, and a BSc(hons) first class in IT & Computing (2004) from the Open University, UK.

She has worked in several countries, including Peru, Ireland, Italy, and South Africa, and has participated actively in various organizations and international activities, such as the Wageningen Student Organisation, Irish Peace Society, the Federation of Young European Greens, and the Harvard WorldMUN. Her MA thesis topic focussed on applying game theory to terrorism by analyzing and modeling strategies for negotiations and coalitions between aggrieved groups and the state. Currently, she is exploring if and how knowledge representation can enhance understanding of the dynamics between the parties involved in conflict and in post-war reconstruction.

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Index

About *The Nonviolent Personality*

At the beginning of the new century, the culture of peace finds itself facing many and difficult challenges. This booklet surveys some of these challenges and the characteristics that a mature culture of peace should have in order to respond to them. Particularly, it investigates what type of person is more apt to be a carrier of such a mature culture of peace: the nonviolent personality. Finally, it addresses the question regarding the factors that in the educative process tend to impede and favour, respectively, the development of moral subjects equipped with a nonviolent personality.

The original Italian version was written by Giuliano Pontara, emeritus of Philosophy at the University of Stockholm, and published in 1996, but its message is certainly not outdated and perhaps even more important in the current climate. Why this is so, and why it is useful to have a more widely accessible version of the booklet available, is motivated in the introduction by Maria Keet, Senior Lecturer at the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Cover design by Maria Keet.
Printed and bound by your printer.

ISBN: 978-88-905038-8-7