Nonviolence vs. Non-Ethics in Harry Turtledove's Story "The Last Article"

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Harry Turtledove (b. 1949) is an American author of alternate history, historical fiction, science fiction, fantasy and mystery fiction. Turtledove's story "The Last Article" (1988) presents an alternate history of WWII where the UK capitulated to the Nazis in 1941. The story that has not been in the focus of the critics yet begins with the surrender of the British Army of India that fought heroically against the Germans until 1947. However, the local people headed by Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, the leaders of the Indian independence movement from British rule, continue to resist the Nazi regime. In our reality, in 1945, the Nazis capitulated to the Allies, and in 1947, India got independence from British colonial rule.

The aim of this paper is to study the main conflict of the story that is a moral clash between violent and nonviolent doctrines. Two epigraphs to the story reflect this conflict: Gandhi's motto ("Non-violence[9] is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed") contrasts Hitler's statement ("The one means that wins the easiest victory over reason: terror and force") (Turtledove, 1988, 1). Two characters of "The Last Article", Field Marshal Walther Model and Gandhi, embody violent and nonviolent worldviews, respectively. In the real history, Otto Moritz Walter Model (1891–1945) was one of Hitler's best field commanders known for his military operations on the Eastern Front. Model committed suicide when the Nazis' defeat was obvious. Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) was an Indian lawyer, politician, social activist and writer who became the leader of the nationalist movement against the British rule of India. Now, he is considered the father of his country and is internationally esteemed for his doctrine of nonviolent protest (Satyagraha, Sanskrit and Hindi: "holding onto truth") to achieve political and social progress. Gandhi's policy of passive resistance was successful in his anticolonial campaign. Alas, when Mahatma tried to employ his techniques in

[9] In this paper, the original spellings are kept in the quotes from the texts.

foreign policy and wrote two letters to Hitler, addressing him as "my friend", he failed. Being the 20th century apostle of nonviolence, Gandhi himself found a violent end: a Hindu extremist assassinated Mahatma when he was 78.

I suppose the author's impulse to write this story was his reaction to Gandhi's position during WWII concerning the Nazis, the British and the Jews, in particular. Mahatma with his messianic idealism tried to stop the mass massacre but Gandhi's letters and articles demonstrated his limited understanding of the situation in Europe. For example, in his letter, Gandhi assured Hitler, "Nor do we believe that you are the monster described by your opponents" (Suhrud, 2019). Mahatma gave advice to the British insisting on suicidal tactics of surrender, "This manslaughter must be stopped. You are losing; if you persist, it will only result in greater bloodshed. Hitler is not a bad man" (Ghose, 1991, p. 280). Trying to help the Jews persecuted by the Nazis, Gandhi suggested them satyagraha as a method of civil disobedience. "My sympathies are all with the Jews," Gandhi wrote in 1938 when the Holocaust was in full swing:

> If there ever could be a justifiable war, in the name of and for humanity, war against Germany to prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war. A discussion of the pros and cons of such a war is therefore outside my horizon or province. (Crane, J.K., & Agusti-Panareda, J., 2007, p. 99)

Therefore, Mahatma offered the Jews a voluntary suffering, "…And suffering voluntarily undergone will bring them an inner strength and joy" (Crane, J.K. & Agusti-Panareda, J., 2007, p. 102). Being criticized for these statements, Gandhi explained, "What I have pleaded for is renunciation of violence of the heart and consequent active exercise of the force generated by the great renunciation" (Gandhi, 2020, p. 28).

Consequently, Turtledove's story is a thought experiment extrapolating Gandhi's behaviour and the effectiveness of his policy of nonviolence in the face of Nazi oppressors. Remarkably, the author uses the third person limited point of view alternating Gandhi's and Model's perspectives during the narration.

The writer shows how Gandhi gradually tries to implement his policy of satyagraha against the Nazis. First, Mahatma bravely visits Model in Delhi and asks the occupiers to leave India. This courageous, honest, modest and spiritually strong man impresses and irritates Model at the same time: "a man out of the ordinary indeed, thought the field marshal, who respected courage when he found it" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 3). From time to time, Model considers Gandhi mad because their worldviews are quite different:

> "Herr Gandhi," he said, "how do you propose to bend to your will someone who opposes you, if you will not use force for the purpose?"
>
> "I have never said I will not use force, sir." Gandhi's smile invited the field marshal to enjoy with him the distinction he was making. "I will not use violence. If my people refuse to cooperate in any way with yours, how can you compel them? What choice will you have but to grant us leave to do as we will?" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 4)

Therefore, for Model, force equals violence, but for Gandhi who follows Ahimsa (nonviolence), force can be moral and spiritual too. Model needs Gandhi's obedience to the Nazis, threatens him and accuses him of "treason" against the Reich but in vain. Significantly, in this episode Model is the focalizer[10] that makes us feel that he dominates in the scene.

The next scene is a conversation between Gandhi and Nehru when Mahatma tells about his meeting with Model. Here, the reader can understand Gandhi's mistakes in judging his Nazi opponents: Mahatma does not believe the "rumors" from Europe about the genocide against the Jews.

> "Those I do not believe," Gandhi said firmly. "No nation could act in that way and hope to survive. Where could men be found to carry out such horrors?"
>
> "Azad Hind," Nehru said, quoting the "Free India" motto of the locals who had fought on the German side.
>
> But Gandhi shook his head. "They are only soldiers, doing as soldiers have always done." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 5)

[10] I.e. we see the events from his perspective.

Without understanding the essence of Nazism, Mahatma mistakenly accepts Model as a soldier who obeys orders but has his own conscience and honour, "'Model struck me as a man not much different from various British leaders whom we have succeeded in vexing in the past.' He smiled at the memory of what passive resistance had done to officials charged with combating it" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 4).

In our reality, Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) served successfully as India's first prime minister (1947–1964). Since Gandhi is a focalizer in this episode, the readers can feel his domination in this political duet. However, Turtledove presents Jawaharlal Nehru as a more realistic and pragmatic politician than Gandhi but out of respect for his old friend, teacher and ally, Nehru agrees with him, although doubting every time.

In the following episode, Model bewildered by Gandhi also reflects on their meeting sharing his thoughts and feelings with his aide, Major Dieter Lasch. Their relationship seems rather democratic and confidential, and, to emphasize this approximate equality, Turtledove uses the third person omniscient point of view here. We understand that Gandhi becomes a challenge and an obstacle for Model who is a model, disciplined and effective professional able to save any military operation. Being a Wehrmacht officer, he used to deal with combat armies but not with the prophets and messiahs. Model even sees himself as "the Roman procurator, listening to the rantings of some early Christian priest" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 5). Since Hitler's Third Reich together with Mussolini's fascist Italy followed some Ancient Roman imperial traditions, it is natural that Model feels as a successor of the Roman procurator (perfect or governor) "bloody confused… facing that kind of man" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 6). In "The Last Article", the author emphasizes the parallels between Gandhi and Christ and between Model and biblical Pontius Pilate, the governor of the Roman province of Judaea who presided over the trial of Jesus and ordered his crucifixion. However, Model tries to avoid this scenario because he remembers that, in historical perspective, Christ has won, and therefore, the Nazi cannot allow Gandhi to win in their political duel:

> "But then, I have two advantages over the dead procurator… My procurator was such a sophisticate that he tolerated anything, and

never saw the danger in a foe who would not do the same. Our Christian God, though, is a jealous god, who puts up with no rivals. And one who is a National Socialist serves also the Volk, to whom he owes sole loyalty. I am immune to Gandhi's virus in a way the Roman was not to the Christian's."

"Yes, that makes sense," Lasch agreed after a moment. "…And what is our other advantage over the Roman procurator?"

Suddenly the field marshal looked hard and cold, much the way he had looked leading the tanks of Third Panzer against the Kremlin compound. "The machine gun," he said. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 6)

The turning point of the story is the next scene displaying a peaceful march organized by Gandhi and Nehru as the beginning of satyagraha although the Germans' orders forbid assemblies. Turtledove hints at the future bloodshed by describing the morning of that day: "The rising sun's rays made the sandstone of the Red Fort seem even more the color of blood. Gandhi frowned and turned his back on the fortress, not caring for that thought" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 6). In this fragment, Gandhi is a focalizer. Turtledove illustrates that Mahatma really has many backers and his moral authority is very high. Gandhi is even able to stop the German squad whose commander does not know how to react to the peaceful procession, and it let Mahatma think for a moment that the Germans do not differ much from the British even though some details alert him:

Their gear, Gandhi thought, was not that much different from what British soldiers wore: ankle boots, shorts, and open-necked tunics. But their coal-scuttle helmets gave them a look of sullen, beetle-browed ferocity the British tin hat did not convey. Even for a man of Gandhi's equanimity it was daunting, as no doubt it was intended to be. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 7)

Then the focus of narration shifts from Gandhi to Model who is informed about the "trouble" by phone and rushes to fix the problem: "Gandhi, I gather, can have that effect on people who aren't ready for his peculiar brand of stubbornness. That, however, does not include me" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 8). Coming face to face with Mahatma, Model behaves dryly and resolutely:

He said harshly, "You were warned against this sort of behavior."

Gandhi looked him in the eye. They were very much of a height. "And I told you, I do not recognize your right to give such orders. This is our country, not yours, and if some of us choose to walk on our streets, we will do so."

From behind Gandhi, Nehru's glance flicked worriedly from one of the antagonists to the other. Model noticed him only peripherally; if he was already afraid, he could be handled whenever necessary. Gandhi was a tougher nut. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 8)

Turtledove demonstrates how effectively the field marshal solves the problems. In Gandhi's case, Model manipulates with his conscience: the Nazi behaves as if he has no choice except violence and this is Mahatma's fault :"The field marshal waved at the crowd behind the old man. "You are responsible for all these people. If harm comes to them, you will be to blame" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 8). Surprisingly to the Nazi, Gandhi speaks German in this fragment showing his readiness to take steps towards his German opponents (their other conversations are English). Model appreciates Gandhi's propagandistic skills comparing him to the Nazi ideologist Goebbels and understanding how dangerous to the Reich Mahatma could be if he organized partisans in the countryside. This understanding pushes Model to nip the protests in the bud:

"Come, Lasch," he said, and started toward the waiting German troops. About halfway to them, he dropped the handkerchief on the ground. He spoke in loud, simple German so his men and Gandhi could both follow: "If any Indians come past this spot, I wash my hands of them." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 9)

This phrase is a direct allusion to the biblical Pontius Pilate, and Gandhi points it out at once (*Bible*, Matthew, Ch. 7, Verse 24). However, Model distinguishes between him and the Roman procurator: "Pilate washed his hands to evade responsibility… I accept it: I am responsible to my Führer and to the Oberkammando-Wehrmacht for maintaining Reich's control over India, and will do what I see fit to carry out that obligation" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 8). Dropping his handkerchief Model seems crossing his Rubicon like Julius

Caesar (so, Model casts his die). It also looks like throwing the gauntlet (glove) down that meant the challenge to a knight's duel in Europe. Nevertheless, Model throws his handkerchief but not his glove. In the Western civilization, the handkerchief symbolized the man's honour, knight's courage, high status and so on. Hence, the field marshal's action can be treated symbolically as making an irrevocable decision, challenging Gandhi and losing Model's honour at the same time.

Then Turtledove focuses on Gandhi again. Mahatma is discussing with Nehru who understands that Model means to carry out his threat. Nevertheless, Gandhi is ready to give his life "if freedom requires that" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 10). The problem is that Mahatma is not alone and, despite Gandhi's protests, his followers do not allow their great leader to risk his life forming with their bodies a shield between Gandhi and the German guns. As a result, Gandhi risks their lives too. The following events are given from Model's perspective. This is the point of no return in the German and Indian relations:

> A man stepped on the field marshal's handkerchief. "Fire!" Model said.
>
> A second passed, two. Nothing happened. Model scowled at his men. Gandhi's deviltry had got into them; sneaky as a Jew, he was turning the appearance of weakness into a strange kind of strength. But then trained discipline paid its dividend. One finger tightened on a Mauser trigger. A single shot rang out. As if it were a signal that recalled the other men to their duty, they too began to fire. From the armored personnel carriers, the machine guns started their deadly chatter. Model heard screams above the gunfire. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 10–11)

The next tragic episode shows from Gandhi's point of view how "the march dissolved into a panicstricken mob" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 11) although many Indians defend Mahatma with their bodies and help him and Nehru to escape. The nameless Indians give their fugitive leaders shelter and food. Of course, Gandhi "was winded, battered, and filled with anguish at the failure of the march and at the suffering it had brought to so many marchers and to their kinsfolk" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 11). Since Gandhi often recalls his anticolonial campaign experience and compares the Germans to the British,

he reminisces the Amritsar massacre in 1919, when the British Brigadier-General R. E. H. Dyer and his soldiers shot the peaceful crowd of Indian protesters at the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, Punjab, killing or injuring hundreds of people. Subsequently Dyer was called "the Butcher of Amritsar", removed from duty and widely condemned both in Britain and in India. Some historians consider this tragic event was a decisive step towards the end of British rule in India. So, Model's cruelty should not surprise Gandhi who witnessed the similar actions of the colonists, and the killed protesters can be regarded as the "sacred sacrifice" necessary for any struggle for independence or revolution but Mahatma feels something totally inhumane, mechanistic and soulless in the Nazis' coldblooded actions on Qutb Road:

> "The Amritsar massacre pales beside this," he said, setting down the empty cup. "There the British panicked and opened fire. This had nothing of panic about it. Model told me what he would do, and he did it." He shook his head, still hardly believing what he had just been through. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 11)

Nehru is also crushed with the massacre organized by Model "but his eyes, usually so somber, were lit with a fierce glow:

> "And by his brutality, he has delivered himself into our hands. No one now can imagine the Germans have anything but their own interests at heart. We will gain followers all over the country. After this, not a wheel will turn in India."
>
> "Yes, I will declare the satyagraha campaign," Gandhi said. "Noncooperation will show how we reject foreign rule, and will cost the Germans dear because they will not be able to exploit us.
>
> The combination of non-violence and determined spirit will surely shame them into granting us our liberty." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 12)

At the same time, Model orders to cease fire on Qutb Road where "almost all the Indians in the procession were down or had run from the guns" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 12). Now, we see the events from Model's point of view again. He praises the platoon that shot the Indians and shows his indignation of the squad that did not stifle the Indian march at the start:

> "Speak," the field marshal urged. "Enlighten me—tell me what

possessed you to act in the disgraceful way you did..."

> The sergeant-major flushed under Model's sarcasm, but finally burst out, "Sir, it didn't look to me as if they were up to any harm, that's all. The old man heading them up swore they were peaceful, and he looked too feeble to be anything but, if you take my meaning." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 12)

If we imagine a spectrum or a scale of humanism – anti-humanism for measuring the Germans presented in the story, this sergeant-major ("a sensible man" as Gandhi characterized him) will be the most humane among them. When Model suggests the "guilty" squad to redeem by finishing off the wounded Indians, the unknown sergeant-major rejects to obey Model's order despite it means the court-martial and death for him. Two other Germans also choose to be arrested instead of killing the wounded. As we can see, Gandhi's nonviolent policy works but not very effectively: it influences three Germans but most Nazis obey Model who considers himself "a fair man" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 13).

In the next scene, Gandhi listens with "an undisguised dismay" to the witness about the end of the march and cannot believe it:

> "This is madness!" he cried...[11] "He must have gone insane," Gandhi said; it was the only explanation that made even the slightest sense of the massacre of the wounded. "Undoubtedly he will be censured when news of this atrocity reaches Berlin, as General Dyer was by the British after Amritsar." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 13–14)

Unfortunately, Gandhi's expectations are too far from reality. In the next episode, Model is a focalizer again, and the reader learns that the other Nazi officers approve the field marshal's actions. One of them, Jürgen Stroop from the Waffen-SS, declared:

> "You could not have handled things better. A lesson for the Indians—less than they deserve, too… and a good one for your men as well. We train ours harshly too."

[11] Let us remember how Model treated Gandhi as a madman at the beginning of the story: their moral values are so different that they consider each other insane when the opponent's behaviour is beyond their understanding.

> Model nodded. He knew about SS training methods. No one denied the daring of the Waffen-SS divisions. No one (except the SS) denied that the Wehrmacht had better officers. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 14)

In our reality, Jürgen Stroop (1895–1952) was the SS commander who crushed the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943 and wrote the Stroop Report, a book-length account of the liquidation of the ghetto. Stroop was executed in Poland for his military crimes. Being a Nazi and a hereditary police officer, Stroop did not repent of his crimes before death. In "The Last Article", Turtledove presents Stroop to show that Model is not the main Nazi "butcher" since the field marshal tries to avoid the unnecessary bloodshed. So, this is Stroop who occupies the extreme point of anti-humanity scale in the story:

> "Force is the only thing the racially inferior can understand. Why, when I was in Warsaw—"
>
> That had been four or five years ago, Model suddenly recalled. Stroop had been a Brigadefuhrer then too, if memory served; no wonder he was still one now, even after all the hard fighting since. He was lucky not to be a buck private. Imagine letting a pack of desperate, starving Jews chew up the finest troops in the world.
>
> And imagine, afterwards, submitting a seventy-five-page operations report bound in leather and grandiosely called *The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More*. And imagine, with all that, having the crust to boast about it afterwards. No wonder the man sounded like a pompous ass. He was a pompous ass, and an inept butcher to boot. Model had done enough butchery before today's work—anyone who fought in Russia learned all about butchery—but he had never botched it.
>
> He did not revel in it, either. He wished Stroop would shut up. He thought about telling the Brigadefuhrer he would sooner have been listening to Gandhi. The look on the fellow's face, he thought, would be worth it. But no. One could never be sure who was listening. Better safe. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 14)

These reflections display not only the contradictions between the Wehrmacht troops (the Nazi armed forces) and the SS (the Nazi paramilitary

forces responsible for the genocidal murders and numerous punitive operations). Turtledove shows that Model scorns Stroop because the SS commander failed his work letting the uprising break out: for Model, order, discipline and duty, as he understands them, are the priorities, and the war needs professionals like any other sphere of human life.[12] To understand the Nazis' worldview better we should pay attention that they do not use the negatively connoted word "violence" anywhere in the text, only "force", "power", "order", "lesson" or "discipline". On the contrary, Gandhi speaks about violence and nonviolence because to him the German "force" means violence.[13]

In the next scene, Turtledove proves that not only the local Nazis but also the official Berlin praises Model's actions. Gandhi (a focalizer) and Nehru harboured by some Indian named Lal are listening to the Nazi news on the radio, and Gandhi hopes to learn "what action is to be taken against Model… No government can uphold the author of a cold-blooded slaughter of wounded men and women. The world would cry out in abhorrence" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 15). But they hear the shocking speech instead:

> Reinhard Heydrich commends Field Marshal Walther Model's heroic suppression of insurrection in India, and warns that his leniency will not be repeated… Henceforward, hostages will be taken at the slightest sound of disorder, and will be executed forthwith if it continues. Field Marshal Model has also placed a reward of fifty thousand rupees on the capture of the criminal revolutionary Gandhi, and twenty-five thousand on the capture of his henchman Nehru. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 15–16)

On hearing that, the Indian leaders decide to announce the full noncooperation of the natives with the occupiers: "Not a soul will cooperate with them from now on. We outnumber them a thousand to one; what can they accomplish without us? We shall use that to full advantage" (Turtledove,

[12] Actually, in our history, Stroop was sent to Warsaw to replace the previous SS commander who failed to suppress the uprising at the onset, and therefore, the real Stroop was "an effective manager" from the Nazi cynical point of view.

[13] It could be a subject for an interesting analysis how in the names of many military organizations or forces the positive connotation ("defence") prevails (let us remember the Ministry of Peace, Minipax, responsible for the war affairs in George Orwell's *1984*): for example, Wehrmacht means "defence force" and SS (Schutzstaffel) is "Protection Squadron".

1988, p. 16). The following scene illustrates Model's counter move. At first, on learning that "None of the locals has shown up for work today" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 16), the field marshal is taken aback but understanding that it was Gandhi's influence, he restores his self-control:

> Now that he saw where his trouble was coming from, he began thinking like a General Staff-trained officer again. That discipline went deep in him. His voice was cool and musing as he corrected his aide: "It was no riot, Dieter. That man is a skilled agitator. Armed with no more than words, he gave the British fits. Remember that the Führer started out as an agitator too."
>
> "Ah, but the Führer wasn't above breaking heads to back up what he said." Lasch smiled reminiscently, and raised a fist. He was a Munich man, and wore on his sleeve the hashmark that showed Party membership before 1933.
>
> But the field marshal said, "You think Gandhi doesn't? His way is to break them from the inside out, to make his foes doubt themselves. Those soldiers who took courts rather than obey their commanding officer had their heads broken, wouldn't you say? Think of him as a Russian tank commander, say, rather than as a political agitator. He is fighting us every bit as much as much as the Russians did. (Turtledove, 1988, p. 17)

Sizing up his opponent's ideological force, Model reacts violently:

> "We'll start with the railway workers. They are the most essential to have back on the job, yes? Get a list of names. Cross off every twentieth one. Send a squad to each of those homes, haul the slackers out, and shoot them in the street. If the survivors don't report tomorrow, do it again. Keep at it every day until they go back to work or no workers are left." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 17)

Explaining his extremely cruel order to his aide, Model emphasizes:

> "We have a dozen divisions here; Gandhi has the whole subcontinent. I have to convince them in a hurry that obeying me is a better idea than obeying him. Obeying is what counts. I don't care a pfennig as to whether they love me… 'Let them hate, so long as

they fear'" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 17).

Model's political game now involves not only violence but also a monetary reward to a traitor who would help to capture the rebellious leaders. He decides to play on the contradictions between the Hindus and Muslims hoping that the Islamists will "help hunt Gandhi down" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 17). Unfortunately, Model's calculations are successful. The next episode shows from Gandhi's point of view the decline of the protests, the betrayal and capture of Mahatma and Nehru. When the Indian leaders discuss the nonviolence policy, a man bursts "into the hovel where they were hiding. "You must flee!" he cried. "The Germans have found this place! They are coming. Out with me, quick! I have a cart waiting" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 17). That black-bearded man despicably deceives Gandhi and Nehru and hands them over to the Germans. Turtledove alludes here to Ghrist's betrayal by Judas by mentioning "thirty pieces of silver" as a reward for the man's treachery: "My rupees!" the black-bearded man shouted. Nehru turned on him, so quickly he almost got shot for it. "Your thirty pieces of silver, you mean," he cried" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 19).

The final episode presents the last dialogue between Model and Gandhi. Nehru has been sent to be shot without any conversations since he is not "interesting" to the field marshal. Model is a focalizer here again: the Nazi has won this political duel, at least for the current moment. Mahatma and Model exchange some acute verbal and psychological blows without trying to hide their true thoughts and feelings. Gandhi is as noble, self-controlled and courageous as usual:

> "I will talk, in the hope of persuading you to have mercy on my people. For myself I ask nothing."
>
> Model shrugged. "I was as merciful as the circumstances of war allowed, until you began your campaign against us. Since then, I have done what I needed to restore order. When it returns, I may be milder again."
>
> "You seem a decent man," Gandhi said, puzzlement in his voice. "How can you so callously massacre people who have done you no harm?"

"I never would have, had you not urged them to folly."

"Seeking freedom is not folly."

"It is when you cannot gain it—and you cannot. Already your people are losing their stomach for—what do you call it? Passive resistance? A silly notion. A passive resister simply ends up dead, with no chance to hit back at his foe."

That hit a nerve, Model thought. Gandhi's voice was less detached as he answered,

"Satyagraha strikes the oppressor's soul, not his body. You must be without honor or conscience, to fail to feel your victims' anguish."

Nettled in turn, the field marshal snapped, "I have honor. I follow the oath of obedience I swore with the army to the Führer and through him to the Reich. I need consider nothing past that." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 20)

Although Mahatma still stands his ground, calling Hitler a madman and believing that it is possible to make an enemy a friend, Model is proud that he outplayed Gandhi: "he had succeeded where a generation of degenerate, decadent Englishmen had failed" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 20). The field marshal points out to Gandhi his two mistakes: confusing the Germans with more tolerant British and urging the German Jews to resist passively in 1938: "Yes, I made a mistake," Gandhi said… "I made the mistake of thinking I faced a regime ruled by conscience, one that could at the very least be shamed into doing that which is right" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 21). It reminds me of Pontius Pilate's trial of Yeshua Ha-Notsri (or Yeshua Ha-Nozri, meaning "Jesus from Nazareth" in Aramaic) from *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov, the Russian writer (Bulgakov, 1987). Bulgakov like Gandhi followed Leo Tolstoy's idea of resistance to evil through nonviolence. This novel is written in the Soviet Union between 1928 and 1940 during Stalin's regime and published in a censored version only in 1966–1967, after Bulgakov's death. Living in a totalitarian atheistic state, similar to Hitler's Germany, Bulgakov could refer to many themes only allegorically. In his novel, Pilate's trial is a story within a story where Yeshua is the image of Christ. Bulgakov's Pilate, to some degree, is just a cog in the Empire's wheel: he is reluctant to be

violent, wants to help Yeshua but is afraid of Emperor's anger. Perhaps, in such a way Bulgakov presented millions of his compatriots dehumanized by the immoral system. In my opinion, Model has some common features with Bulgakov's Pilate: they both have to serve the authoritarian inhumane system; they are experienced military overwhelmed by the encounter with the idealistic philosophers; they appreciate their opponents and give them chance to step back to save their lives. Alas, finally Pilate and Model send their opponents to death because they cannot oppose the Empire or Reich. However, Bulgakov's version is more positive: his Pilate at least feels endless remorse for his cowardice and punishes Judas who betrayed Yeshua. Eventually, supernatural forces help Yeshua, and he continues living in the heavens. On the contrary, in "The Last Article", Gandhi fails without any hope for another chance.

To sum up, Model follows Pilate's way but unlike the biblical procurator, he does not want to evade his responsibility and unlike Bulgakov's Pilate, the Nazi has no sympathy and pangs of conscience: "History will judge us," are Mahatma's final words. Model responses with a smile, "Winners write history" (Turtledove, 1988, p. 21). At the end of the story, a satisfied field marshal asks Lasch about the menu for lunch and gets a response:

> "Blood sausage and sauerkraut, I believe."
>
> "Ah, good. Something to look forward to." Model sat down. He went back to work." (Turtledove, 1988, p. 21)

These culinary details underline that the German New Order has come to India: the locals cook for the Nazis the German dishes. Mentioning "blood sausage" seems symbolic in the violent context too. The end of "The Last Article" is painful to the readers who cheered for Gandhi since the beginning of this confrontation. During the story, these readers lose their hope. The plot metaphorically resembles a chess gameplay[14] started by the White (Gandhi); then the players take turns to make moves (the writer alternates their points of view); the Black (Nazi) announces "check" when the peaceful march is shot and later "checkmates" the White and wins the game. The problem is their total misunderstanding as if they played the games using different rules.

Model like Niccolo Machiavelli is sure that end justifies the means. On the

[14] By the way, the chess game has an Indian origin.

contrary, Gandhi accepts only the noble means (as he wrote, "They say, 'means are, after all, means'. I would say, 'means are, after all, everything'. As the means so the end.") (Kool & Agrawal, 2020, p. 97). To Gandhi, it is contradictory to use violence to achieve peace. Model sees the humans as rather predictable and weak creatures who can be easily frightened, bought and broken. Gandhi considers the average people better than they are, appreciates freedom and tries to make even an enemy a friend appealing to his conscience. The idealistic Indian focuses on the people's souls, not on their physical bodies, while the materialistic, remorseless and pragmatic Nazi ignores ethical values and finds the direct ways to make his order like a machine.

Unfortunately, Gandhi does not know his Nazi enemies well because Hitler "liberated" them "from the degrading chimera known as 'conscience'." It is a conflict of humane (Christian, Hindu, etc.) ethics and inhumane (Nazi, Fascist, etc.) non-ethics. The Third Reich with its ideology of master race supremacy tried to eliminate the ethics that had united many nations before WWII.

According to Robert Sapolsky, an American scientist, the biology behind human behaviour all comes down to context (the group of conditions that exist where and when something happens). In decisions about violence, punishment, reward and empathy, context is of great importance. Sapolsky argues that humans "don't hate violence. We hate and fear the *wrong* kind of violence, violence in the wrong context. Because violence in the right context is different" (Sapolsky, 2017, p. 9). It seems that Turtledove builds his story on the contrasts to provide us with different contexts for presenting characters and their values. Model is a monster for Gandhi, but he is more "humane" than Stroop because tries to minimize the victims. Nehru is more pragmatic and closer to the context than Gandhi: without his influence, Nehru could have initiated the armed resistance. The Indian leaders could have won only if they had supported the British in their armed fight against the German occupiers or raised their three hundred million people to a guerrilla war against the Nazis.

Consequently, this story depicts a failure of the nonviolence policy against Nazism as an immoral ideology. It is also the warning to the writer's

contemporaries not to be naïve because the policy that is a success in one ethical environment will be a flaw in another context. In his thought experiment, Turtledove proves that nonviolent policy works only in the context when the opponents share the same or close ethical background otherwise the violence wins.

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