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## INTEGRATION OF THE INDIAN EXPERIENCE OF POLITICAL NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE INTO A GLOBAL POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

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**Abstract.** The article is devoted to nonviolent methods of political resistance and their significance for modern forms of political mobilization in the world. Special attention is paid to the ideas and methods of Mahatma Gandhi, which were implemented during Satyagraha in India. The success of Indian resistance to colonial authorities has inspired other political leaders to engage nonviolent resistance in their own political struggles. Indian experience has been integrated into the global political framework by Martin Luther King and the African American civil rights movement in the United States, Nelson Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement, the XIV Dalai Lama in defending the rights and interests of Tibet as part of the People's Republic of China.

The works devoted to nonviolent political movements and their methodology by Roberto Baldoli, Richard Gregg, Shan Scalmer, Robert Thurman, as well as the ideologists of political movements in the Republic of South Africa, the United States and Tibet became the source base of the study. General scientific methods and special methods of postcolonial theory were used in the article.

As a result of the study, the effectiveness of nonviolent methods of political resistance at various stages of the fight for human rights, the right for self-determination or political freedoms was shown. This effectiveness is due to the following features common to all the movements under consideration: mass character, moral, cultural or religious ideological basis, peaceful ways of struggle (boycotts, demonstrations, strikes, civil disobedience), moral and social pressure on the authorities.

**Key words:** nonviolent resistance, Mahatma Gandhi, nonviolent political movements, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela.

**Introduction.** The Indian experience of political nonviolent resistance, formed during the struggle for independence from the British Empire, has become a landmark phenomenon in world history and political theory. The central figure of this movement was Mahatma Gandhi, who offered a unique strategy of struggle – Satyagraha that combined ethical power of truth and fundamental rejection of violence. The Indian independence movement was not only an example of successful liberation of the colony without the use of weapons, but also a source of inspiration for numerous civil rights, social justice and national liberation movements around the world.

The integration of the Indian experience into the global political discourse was due to the activities of such leaders as Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, the XIV Dalai Lama and many others who adapted the principles of nonviolence to local contexts of their countries. Thus, the Indian model of nonviolent resistance has become not only a local phenomenon, but also a universal methodology of political protest, which continues to influence modern movements and formation of new paradigms of political struggle in the XXI century.

**The purpose of this study** is to analyze how the methods of Indian nonviolent resistance have become the basis of political movements and ideologies of resistance in different parts of the world, consider the process of their global adaptation and assess their significance for modern forms of political mobilization in the world.

**Materials and methods of research.** The source base of the study consists of works devoted to the study of post-colonialism and its impact on social, political and cultural transformations in soci-

ety, in particular the work of Leela Gandhi «Postcolonial theory». Moreover, works considering non-violent means of political resistance and social mobilization of society are also important. These are the works of Roberto Baldoli and Richard Gregg as well as the ideas of Mahatma Gandhi and works devoted to analysis of the use of Satyagraha and its impact on other similar political movements written directly by ideologists of such movements in the United States – Martin Luther King and in the Republic of South Africa – Nelson Mandela.

The article uses general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, comparative and descriptive, as well as specialized methods and principles of postcolonial theory: postcolonial analysis, genealogical approach to nonviolent resistance, discursive analysis.

The main material. Nonviolent resistance is a form of political or social protest that rejects physical violence and instead uses peaceful methods of struggle: demonstrations and marches (public expression of dissent), strikes (termination of work as a form of protest), boycotts (refusal to cooperate with the authorities, economic or social pressure), civil disobedience (deliberate violation of unfair laws), and parallel creation of political institutions (formation of alternative governing bodies).

In politics, the concept of nonviolence involves resolving conflicts and achieving political goals without physical pressure, using methods such as negotiation, mediation, and civil disobedience.

Roberto Baldoli in «Reconstructing Nonviolence: A New Theory and Practice for a Post-Secular Society» offers a new approach to the concept of nonviolence in a modern society experiencing secularization (reducing the influence of religion on public life).

The author argues that the traditional concept of nonviolence, which is mainly associated with religious ideas (for example, in the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi), needs to be updated. He suggests considering nonviolence as a universal ethical and political principle that can also be effective in modern post-secular conditions. A post-secular society is a society where religion remains an important source of moral values but is not the only one. In such circumstances, nonviolence can combine religious and secular ideas, offering a common ground for politics and social movements (Baldoli, 2019).

The policy of nonviolence is an alternative to the policy of physical, aggressive resistance. That is why Gandhi's ideas, according to Baldoli, can and should be adapted to new conditions. Therefore, mentioning the practical application of nonviolent resistance, we can consider such movements as the movement for the rights of African Americans by Martin Luther King in the United States, the beginning of the anti-apartheid movement in the Republic of South Africa and Nelson Mandela, the policy of the Dalai Lama in the Tibetan independence movement.

Gandhi has become a symbol of nonviolent struggle not only in India, but around the world. His methodology was adopted and adapted by the leaders of these movements. Leela Gandhi writes: «Gandhi's nonviolent resistance becomes a crucial template for postcolonial politics, emphasizing ethical opposition to imperial domination» (Gandhi, 2019). That is the reason to consider in more detail what revolutionary things happened in India in the process of the disobedience movement, which became an example for other similar political movements.

The Indian independence movement (1915-1947), the leader of which was Gandhi, sought to liberate India from British colonial rule. His strategy was called Satyagraha which literally means «the power of truth». It combined active protest and absolute rejection of violence which included boycotting British goods, organizing peaceful demonstrations, the Salt March, and refusing to cooperate with the colonial authorities. As a result, the movement became one of the most famous examples of the successful use of nonviolence in politics and led to India's independence in 1947.

Satyagraha achieved its goal and became an example for other similar movements, for several reasons. First, the colonial context is very familiar to many countries that haven't had their own statehood or have stayed under the significant influence of a politically stronger hegemon for a long time. Secondly, it was the mass character and involvement of many ordinary people in various ways of resistance (Scalmer, 2017).

The problem of protests often created the gap between the intellectual elite, which wanted revocation or reform, and the masses, who did not understand the complexity of the concepts expressed by the elite. In India, this gap was narrowed to the greatest possible extent. And the proximity of ideas to the elites and most of the population was the third reason for the success of the resistance movement. It was possible due to the ethical basis of the movement – nonviolence (ahimsa) that has been deeply rooted in Indian philosophy, religion and worldview of the Indians. In addition to redirecting politics into the sphere of moral values – justice, truth, nonviolence, which resonated among ordinary people who thought in terms of such categories – Gandhi also avoided complex political rhetoric. The action program, which included boycotts of British goods, hunger strikes, and strikes, was clear to everyone. Even the appearance of the leader of the resistance movement was indicative of his identification with the people. Gandhi dressed, lived and behaved as a plain man. He gave up his status and privileges, which also helped bridge the distance between the elite and the masses.

In this way he was able to show that the issue of colonialism concerns everyone – from the peasant who pays salt taxes, the artisan who cannot compete with British textiles, to the intellectual or young future politician.

Nonviolent movements have proven that profound social change can occur not only through armed conflicts or revolutions, but also through systematic moral pressure, solidarity, and massive rejection of cooperation with repressive regimes. India's historical experience and Mahatma Gandhi's leadership have become iconic examples of effective nonviolent struggle, turning them into symbols and methodological models for civil rights movements, anti-colonial initiatives, and democratization in various parts of the world. «There have been many instances of the successful use of nonviolent resistance in different countries and at different times. Because the taste of historians inclines more toward politics and wars, these other events have received but slight attention at their hands, and the records of many of them have been lost. In some instances the nonviolent resistance was by individuals, in other instances it took a mass or corporate form. The latter form is rarer and perhaps more significant» (Gregg, 2002). Let's consider some examples.

The civil rights movement in the United States (the 1950s and 1960s) aimed to achieve equal rights for African Americans and eliminate racial discrimination. Its leader – Martin Luther King Jr. – got acquainted with the ideas of Satyagraha while he was a student at the seminary. In 1959, he even visited India to better understand Gandhi's strategy in practice. In «Stride Toward Freedom», he wrote: «Christ gave us the goals and Mahatma Gandhi – the tactics» (King, 2021).

This tactic was implemented as follows. In India, there was a boycott of British goods, in the United States – a boycott of bus companies (as in case of the Montgomery bus boycott). The reason for the boycott was the arrest of Rosa Parks, an African American woman who refused to give up her seat to a white passenger on a bus. At that time, the city of Montgomery (Alabama) had racist laws that forced black passengers to give way to white ones. In response, the African American community announced a boycott of city buses. Most of the bus passengers in the city were black, so the boycott caused significant financial losses to transport companies. As a result, after more than a year of protests, the Supreme Court of the United States declared that bus segregation was unconstitutional.

The organization of peaceful marches is demonstrated by the March on Washington. The march was a key moment of the civil rights movement. It brought together more than 250,000 people of different races, religions, and professions who came to the US capital to demand: equal work (access to work without racial discrimination); abolition of racial segregation; and equal rights for black Americans in all spheres of life – from education to voting. It was attended not only by African Americans, but also by white Americans, trade unions, religious leaders and cultural figures. The march was a powerful impetus for the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned racial discrimination in the United States.

It was during this march that Martin Luther King delivered his world-famous speech «I Have a Dream». In it, he called for a world where people would assess each other not by skin color, but by strength of character.

Acts of civil disobedience are embodied in a massive violation of racist laws. For example, Sit-in is a classic of mass civil disobedience. In 1960, four black students in Greensboro, North Carolina, came to a white cafe and deliberately sat down at the so-called «white» tables, refusing to leave the place. The act inspired thousands of other students across the South of the United States to repeat this form of protest. Another example is the struggle for electoral rights. In the Southern states, black voters were made artificial barriers in the form of literacy tests, tax requirements, etc. In response, the activists deliberately came to the polling stations and submitted documents, knowing that they would be refused. These acts were wide-sweeping and documented by the press which caused public response.

The effectiveness of these methods of nonviolent resistance is caused by several factors. Media broadcasts made marches and acts of disobedience public, which put a lot of pressure on the authorities. And the absence of violence on the part of the protesters did not allow justifying the brutal pressure of these movements by the authorities. The mass factor did not allow law enforcement agencies to respond in time to all the actions of the protesters. After all, when not only a few, but hundreds or thousands of people violate it, the system simply does not have time to punish everyone. And the last, but perhaps the most important factor is symbolism. Such actions destroyed the myth of the legitimacy of racist laws. The success of the movement led to adoption of civil rights laws and the abolition of segregation.

The mottos of Indian resistance and American resistance correlate: in case of Gandhi Satyagraha has the power of truth, and for King – Soul force has the spiritual power of struggle.

«Both Gandhi and King defy simplistic interpretations or quick characterizations. Their uniqueness suggests that no particular mold shapes great leaders of nonviolent movements. They arose from different cultures, religions and epochs, yet they both believed that nonviolent approaches can be adopted by anyone with the will and desire for positive social change. Both believed in nonviolence as a universal principle and a transcendent value, yet they understood that not everyone could make their commitment. They knew that many of their adherents had previously used violence. Although they are often described as visionary, far more consequential is how intensely practical they were. In their respective struggles, they wanted to minimize anything negative and maximize the chances of success. Nonviolent behavior was, for both of them, a means of transforming relationships and creating peaceful transitions of power. No religious or spiritual vows were required by either man as a condition of participation and, in fact, they learned through their own endeavors that nonviolent methods were effective whether religiously motivated or not. Neither sought sainthood or martyrdom» (King, 1999, p. 4).

Another example of nonviolent resistance inspired by the ideas of the Indian leader Gandhi was the South African anti-apartheid movement (at its early stages). Although over time some participants of the movement more and more used armed resistance, peaceful protests, boycotts, economic sanctions, and international pressure played a significant role, especially at the beginning. The goal of the resistance was to abolish apartheid policies that included racial segregation and discrimination against the black population. Eventually, the apartheid regime was abolished, and Nelson Mandela became the first black president of South Africa in 1994.

In the 1940s and 1950s, at the beginning of his political career, Mandela was deeply inspired by the example of Mahatma Gandhi, who also fought against racial discrimination in South Africa, even before returning to India. At this stage, the ANC, to which Mandela belonged, followed a nonviolent strategy of resistance relying on mass peaceful demonstrations, civil disobedience campaigns, refusal to cooperate with the government, organizing boycotts and strikes.

The Defiance Campaign of 1952 was the first large-scale nonviolent campaign against apartheid legislation. The ANC, along with the South African Indian Council, organized a series of deliberate violations of racist laws – black and Indian activists entered «white-only» zones en masse, ignored pass laws, and openly challenged racial restrictions. The campaign showed injustice of the laws, created mass movement and moral pressure on the authorities. 6,000 people were arrested, including Mandela, but thousands of new activists were involved, which laid the foundation for nonviolent resistance.

In the 1950s, Mandela and the ANC coordinated the anti-pass campaign. These laws required black citizens of South Africa to always carry special documents (passes). The documents determined exactly where Africans could live, work, and move. The protest form was called the anti-pass campaign, which refers to resistance to pass laws that were a key tool of the apartheid regime created to segregate and control the movement of black South Africans. The refusal to comply with these laws has become a symbol of the struggle for dignity, freedom of movement and equality. The ANC activists, including Mandela, publicly burned or collectively handed over their documents, directly demonstrating their disobedience to racial laws. People deliberately came out in the streets without mandatory documents, knowing that this would lead to arrest, but thus creating moral pressure on the authorities and drawing attention to the injustice of the system. An important role in the campaign was played by women who created their own resistance networks, including organizing the 1956 Women's March to the government building in Pretoria, where 20,000 women protested the forced registration and issuance of passes to women.

One of the key events of the nonviolent period of resistance in South Africa was the People's Congress. A large-scale meeting of representatives of various racial and political groups in South Africa was held in June 1955 in Kliptown (near Johannesburg). Its goal was to jointly develop and adopt the Freedom Charter, a program that was supposed to reflect the vision of a future democratic, equal and free South Africa. The Charter declared the following principles:

South Africa belongs to everyone who lives there.

- All people will have equal rights.
- The wealth of a country belongs to its people.
- Education will be free and equal for all.
- The land will be distributed fairly.
- No group or individual will have privileges over others (African National Congress, 1955).

On the one hand, the document became an example of peaceful political mobilization of the broad masses. On the other hand, the Charter was not just a political document, but also a moral weapon against apartheid. This is reminiscent of Gandhi's nonviolent petitions and declarations against British colonialism.

Mandela spoke openly about Gandhi's influence on his political involvement. He recognized non-violence not so much as a moral principle, but as a practical tool for mobilizing the masses, especially in a situation where the black population of South Africa did not have access to weapons or political levers of influence. «Gandhi's political technique and his social ideas were profoundly relevant to us in South Africa» (Mandela, 1995).

Despite these nonviolent methods, after the Sharpeville massacre (1960) and banning of the ANC, Mandela concluded that exclusively nonviolent resistance in the context of South Africa was insufficient. Therefore, in 1961, he helped create the armed wing of the ANC – «Umkhonto We Sizwe» (Spear of the Nation). But even then, Mandela emphasized that armed struggle is a forced step, and not a rejection of Gandhi's ideas about the ethical power of the struggle for truth and justice: «I began to suspect that both legal and extra-constitutional protests would soon be impossible. In India, Gandhi had been dealing with a foreign power that ultimately was more realistic and far-sighted. That was not the case with the Afrikaners in South Africa. Nonviolent passive resistance is effective as long as

your opposition adheres to the same rules as you do. But if peaceful protest is met with violence, its efficacy is at an end. For me, nonviolence was not a moral principle but a strategy; there is no moral goodness in using an ineffective weapon» (Mandela, 1994, pp. 146-147).

As part of the study of the integration of Satyagraha methods into the global political framework, the political activity of the leader of Tibet, the XIV Dalai Lama, is prominent. Since 1950, after the invasion of Tibet by the People's Republic of China, the struggle to preserve Tibet's autonomy and cultural identity has begun. The XIV Dalai Lama, the spiritual and political leader of Tibet, led a non-violent resistance against the Chinese occupation.

After being forced to migrate to India in 1959, the Dalai Lama became the voice of Tibet on the international stage. His strategy was not to call for insurrection or violent struggle, but to seek support through moral pressure on the international community. He clearly stated that Tibet's struggle should remain nonviolent even despite repressions, deportations and cultural genocide. This decision was based on the principle of ahimsa – refusal to harm anyone, even the oppressor.

Instead of demanding full independence, the Dalai Lama developed the Middle Way Approach, which became the basis of the official policy of the Tibetan government in exile. Its essence was recognition of Tibet as part of the PRC, but with guarantees of full cultural and religious autonomy, protection of the Tibetan language and Buddhist traditions, prohibition of Chinese migration to Tibet for the purpose of demographic changes. This compromise approach is a form of nonviolent political strategy reminiscent of Gandhi's Satyagraha. It is about seeking justice through moral pressure and negotiation, not violent confrontation.

Thus, the XIV Dalai Lama has repeatedly spoken of his respect and inspiration for the life and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. He noted that the principles of nonviolence (ahimsa) and Gandhi's Satyagraha had a profound impact on his own position on the struggle for Tibetan rights: «He was the most influential person of the 20th century with his idea of nonviolence, ahimsa. He took a 3,000-year-old Indian tradition of ahimsa and karuna (compassion) and made it something living and relevant. He made it relevant by fighting for India's freedom through nonviolence – that's great» (Roche & Umachandran, 2019).

The Tibetan leader has built a strong network of international support, addressing the UN (statements in 1959, 1961, 1965) and various human rights organizations, world leaders in Europe, the United States, India, and Buddhist communities in the world.

«The Dalai Lama sees himself not as a politician, but as a spiritual teacher who carries a moral responsibility to speak up for justice and peace» (Thurman, 2008, p. 112). This helps him influence not only politicians, but also the public around the world – creating a powerful moral front of support for Tibet.

The Dalai Lama's political ahimsa is a multi-level strategy that combines moral authority, cultural resistance, diplomatic dialogue, rejection of violence, and the creation of international solidarity. This approach has made the Tibetan struggle a symbol of global nonviolent resistance – alongside Gandhi's India, the civil rights movement in the United States, and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

**Conclusion.** Nonviolent movements have shown that social change can be achieved not only through war or revolution, but also through moral pressure, solidarity, and refusal to cooperate with oppressors. India and Gandhi have become global symbols of this methodology.

An analysis of the Indian experience of political nonviolent resistance showed that the methods formed in the context of the struggle for Indian independence not only achieved their local goal but also became a solid foundation for the development of a global culture of nonviolent protest. Thanks to Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and Satyagraha's practices, nonviolence has evolved from a moral principle to an effective political strategy that has proven its universality in various historical, political, and cultural contexts. The process of global adaptation of Indian methods of resistance is

reflected in the struggle for civil rights in the United States, the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, the struggle for the autonomy of Tibet, and numerous modern forms of civil mobilization. This process has demonstrated that nonviolent methods are not only morally justified, but also effective in countering authoritarianism, colonialism, and social injustice.

Nonviolent political movements have the following characteristics, which have manifested themselves in each political resistance discussed above. The involvement of broad segments of the population indicates not only the mass nature of the movement but also prevents rapid suppression of movement by law enforcement or other public oversight authorities. In addition, nonviolent resistance always has a certain moral and cultural basis. Depending on the country and purpose, it is based on ethical or religious principles. This adds legitimacy to it. The next common feature is methods. They are all peaceful. These are boycotts, demonstrations, strikes, and civil disobedience. The goal of nonviolent resistance is moral pressure on the authorities: the main tool of nonviolence is to create moral and social pressure on those in power.

Today, the Indian model of nonviolent resistance remains an important source of inspiration for modern protest movements, in particular environmental, anti-war and human rights initiatives. In the face of global crises, polarization and the spread of new forms of violence, India's experience once again confirms that the power of solidarity, civil disobedience and nonviolent pressure can transform societies while preserving human dignity and moral correctness. Thus, the methods of Indian nonviolent resistance have not only integrated into the global political discourse but also have become one of the key elements of modern political culture, which emphasizes their long-term relevance and ability to further evolve in the XXI century.

Nonviolent movements have proven that social change can be achieved not only through armed struggle or revolution, but also through moral pressure, solidarity and peaceful resistance. India, led by Gandhi, has become a symbol of this methodology, which has inspired global movements for freedom and justice. Examples include the struggle for civil rights in the United States, the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, and the peaceful resistance of Tibetans – the principles of nonviolence continue to influence political processes today.

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