
DO IS IT NECESSARY TO RESIST TO THE EVIL BY FORCE? (on the foundation of humanistic policy)

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In this research reveals possible variants of the correlation between violence and nonviolence in politics: especially Machiavelli's idea (*only the good political end justifies any means*), Machiavellianism (*the end justifies any means*), humanistic (*the good end can be achieved only by good methods*), and pacifist (*non-resistance to evil by force* — L. Tolstoy) concepts. The basic difference between the specified variants of understanding the correlation between morality and politics in humanistic and pacifist version is established. In the article stresses that the pacifist non-resistant variant is immoral. Asserts that global problems, both international and domestic ones, can be solved only based on the humanistic nonviolence policy: *non-resistance to evil by violence*, which does not exclude *resistance to evil by force* and sometimes even requires it. Its principles revealed in the “axial time” suggested by the world religions and philosophy and developed by I. Kant, F. Dostoevsky, M. Gandhi, M.L. King, etc.

Key words: political philosophy, machiavellism, humanistic policy, nonviolence, pacifism, “axial time”, existential-personal politics.

I hate both abuse and lack of power...

Vl. Vysotsky

Violence seems to be the simplest and the universal way of governing. However, it reduces the human world to the animal-like, barbaric level. In Kant's opinion, it is only morality that makes a man a person, *homo sapiens*. Yet politics is commonly considered to be outside morality nowadays. Many notable politicians, lawyers, and even philosophers try to convince us that this is true. Still, this persuasion has failed to justify itself in both theoretical and practical aspects. Politics is inconceivable without morality, as it transforms into something else when outside it. Isaiah Berlin has understood it perfectly, as he considers that political theory is a branch of moral philosophy, which starts from applying moral categories to political relations [4. C. 3—4]. We shall try to examine two variants of the relations between morality and politics: humanistic policy and conception of Pacifism. It is important to divide them and not to mix up. But speaking generally we can discover four variants of interrelation between morality and politics.

First of all it is Machiavelli's variant, which may be formulated as follows: *only a good political end justifies all the means*. Thus, Machiavelli writes about a political figure as follows, “Let his actions be blamed, if they are justified by their results, and he will always be justified, if the results turn out to be good...” [8. C. 148]. This thesis should be understood correctly, as it is not developed for merely justifying violence. As L. Belas mentions, “politics is the basic point of Machiavelli's meditations, where the highest political norm is represented by the self-protection of the state as a political community. Yet it should not be regarded as a goal in itself. It has turned out that

Machiavelli regards the state as a guarantee of securing man's life, freedom, and citizens' property" [1. C. 45—46]. To Machiavelli, "public welfare" has always been the goal. A political leader should "avoid deviating from good, if possible, yet be able to tread the path of evil if necessary" [9. C. 289].

The second variant may be named Machiavellianism, which is actually a refutation of Machiavelli (1). It reads: *the end justifies any means*. A. Ch. Gorfunkel writes that "the correlation between the actual teachings of Machiavelli and 'Machiavellianism' is rather complicated" because "having formulated the principle that the means used by a politician are to be justified by his ends, he provides an opportunity of a rather arbitrary interpretation of the correlation between the ends and the means of a political action" [7. C. 155], whereas, according to Nikolai Berdyaev, "Machiavellianism is not a special trend in Renaissance politics, but it is the essence of the politics recognized as autonomous and free from any moral constraints" [3. C. 287]. Examples of this "politics" have been provided by Hitler and Stalin, as another Russian philosopher, I.A. Ilyin (1883—1954), mentions (2). A more appropriate thesis may be applied to misanthropic slaughtering despots: "*resisting good with violence*" or "*destroying good with violence*".

Humanistic Policy (I. Kant, F. Dostoevsky, M. Gandhi, M.L. King, etc.) is based on the following thesis: *good ends can be achieved only with good means* (3). This statement is not a wish of an abstract cartoon character, but an axiom proven by practice. The point is that the ends depend on the means they are achieved by; this is why good ends cannot be achieved through bad means; otherwise, they will mutate and become different, not good ones. Answering the question, "What is the true policy?" I.A. Ilyin writes, "*Adopting organic solidarity of everyone with everyone*". He continues, "The *True Political Allegiance* is not directed at separate groups or independent classes, but *the entire nation in general*. Politics, by its very nature, does not split people or kindle their fury to make them confront each other; on the contrary, it *unites the people* by using the things *all of them have in common*" [6. C. 155]. Therefore, the Marxist-Leninist division of society into antagonistic classes and inciting bloody struggle between them is regarded by Ilyin as "political immorality".

The activity of Mahatma (Mohandas Karamchand) Gandhi (1869—1948) may serve as a model of humanistic policy of nonviolent resistance: he succeeded to make a seemingly impossible thing, practically proving the possibility of non-violence politics and won when violence was a widespread and accepted norm, perceived as something mundane and ordinary, unlikely to cause any protest. Before him, violence in political affairs was considered to be as natural and necessary as the biological death of a man of old age.

The pacifist non-resistance policy can be expressed by the thesis of "*non-resistance to evil by force*" (Leo Tolstoy). At the same time, it must be fundamentally distinguished from the humanistic non-violence policy based upon the thesis of "*non-resistance to evil by violence*", yet recognizing the need to "*resist evil by force*". The difference between these theses and approaches is a qualitative one, but it is not always noticed, as these provisions are often confused. Let us try to clarify these differences.

The Revolution both feeds on violence and generates it (hence the “demonic spirit”, according to Dostoevsky, and the “red wheel”, according to Solzhenitsyn). However, Vl. Soloviev spoke out against non-resistance, arguing with supporters of abstract humanism and Tolstoyism, demonstrating how the necessary means should be selected to implement the non-violence principle, “You think reason and conscience tell me only about myself and about the villain, and, in your opinion, the matter is not to let me lay a finger on him. But, in fact, there is a third person here, and the most important one, in my opinion: a victim of cruel violence, who needs my help... But which of these ways of helping (force or prayer. — N.S.) should be used? It depends on the internal or external conditions of the events, and only one thing is certain: I have to help those who are mistreated. This is what my conscience says” [16. C. 337]. Both L.N. Tolstoy and V.S. Solovyov appealed to the tsar asking to pardon the murderers of Alexander II, yet explained the necessity of the pardon in fundamentally different ways. The philosopher finds death penalty unacceptable, regarding it as violence against the perpetrator who is already neutralized, which is justified by sheer revenge, “if you can admit death as a deviation from the unachievable ideal, killing in self-defense or for the sake of protection, the cold murder of an unarmed man merely sickens the soul of the people” [17. C. 42]. The writer begins his letter in a deliberately aberrated manner used to disguise his arrogant pride, “I, a worthless, unacknowledged, weak, and poor man, am writing this letter to the Russian Emperor trying to give him a piece of advice... I am a miserable, wretched man, tortured by temptations...” He ends his message with the following demand, “Recompense evil with good, do not resist evil, and forgive everyone” [19. C. 44].

Dostoevsky criticized non-resistance even before Tolstoy turned it into a doctrine. The most insightful thinkers promptly found what these ideas could result in. “You are too kind to Leo Tolstoy as a preacher,” Konstantin Leontiev writes to N. Rozanov. “He is worse than *criminal* nihilists. Those are sending themselves to the gallows, and he is whimsical, living off the fat of the land” [12. C. 359].

Already in his book titled *Out of the Depths*, describing the consequences of the events in 1917, Berdyaev gives the following evaluation of Tolstoy’s non-resistance, “Tolstoy was hindering the birth and development of a morally responsible person in Russia, prevented the selection of personal qualities, and this is why he was the evil genius of Russia, the man who kept leading it into temptation. In his works, Russian moralism had a fatal encounter with Russian nihilism, and he provided a religious and moral justification of Russian nihilism, which enticed many a man... Tolstoy’s morality triumphed in the Russian revolution, but it did not choose those idyllic and loving ways Tolstoy himself was imagining. Tolstoy himself would probably have been horrified at seeing this implementation of his moral values. But he wished much, too much of what is happening now. He called forth the demons that possess the revolution, and he was possessed by them himself”. According to Berdyaev, the First World War was lost by Russia because Tolstoy’s moral assessment of war prevailed in it, “The Russian nation was weakened by betrayal, selfishness, and Tolstoy’s moral judgments in the terrible hour of the world struggle” [2. C. 81, 82].

V. Zenkovsky evaluated Tolstoy in a less critical way; according to him, “Tolstoy passionately fought against the transformation of Christianity into utopianism, some decorative, lifeless system...” He even mentions, “Tolstoy’s maximalism and radicalism fully meet the spirit of Christ’s teaching, because the commandments of Christ are a way of life, not some Utopian ideal tasks”. However, “he rejected the family. He rejected the state, court, war, science, and art to remain free from harm they contain; therefore, he associated the whole problem of evil with the avoidance of the world. In this aspect, Tolstoy was alien to historic Christianity...” [23. С. 117]. F. Stepun shares the same viewpoint, “Christianity is definitely peaceful and definitely international. Nevertheless, Christian peacefulness in its spiritual roots and resolute aspirations stands very far from pacifism which has emerged on the democratic and socialist basis (without the influence of sectarianism). The difference is that the attitude of pacifism is an optimistic attitude, whereas the attitude of Christianity is tragic. Pacifism, in particular, the pacifism of Tolstoy, believes that the rejection of war can eradicate evil, which generates it. Christianity is sure that, as long as the roots of the world feed on evil, the world cannot avoid being infected by the war, from which no one can escape anywhere without substituting the issue of withdrawing oneself from the world for the issue of saving the world from harm, even unconsciously” [14. С. 411].

S.N. Bulgakov, expressing the idea of non-violence, has stressed the need to “combine the irreconcilable attitude towards evil with the refusal to revenge upon evil-doers” [5. С. 196]. A. Solzhenitsyn also tried to avoid the extremes of both Machiavellianism and pacifism. On the one hand, his whole life was devoted to unmasking the Bolshevik practice of violence; on the other hand, he spoke against the policy of succumbing to an aggressor accepted in the West since the Munich events; he opposed both totalitarianism and Tolstoyism [11]. The policy of the Provisional Government’s refusal to combat frankly evil Leninist violent extremism led Russia to the disaster of the October Revolution, the civil war, and the total terror. *The Red Wheel*, his ten-volume work, describes the way these events were taking place. It reveals a kind of special *dialectic of the red wheel*, i.e., the way the refusal from an active and uncompromising struggle against evil (the pacifist non-violence policy) eventually leads to the widespread, total violence. P.B. Struve describes this dialectic as follows, “The revolution, which led to the destruction of the state and the decline of culture, triumphed not by the power of the people, but by their weakness. The weakness of resistance against the sedition, which marked the behavior of the Russian public from 1906 to 1917” [15].

Non-resistance and violence are the dialectical opposites which transform into each other and feed on each other. This dialectic has another hypostasis: violence breeds violence, when the revolution devours its own heroes, which has already been demonstrated by the Jacobin phase of the French Revolution and described by Dostoevsky. The launched engine of the violent usurpation and retention of power cannot stop: this is the methodology of its existence. It has inevitably led to the civil war and Stalin’s Gulag. On the other hand, later, in 1974, Solzhenitsyn said, “People ask me: do I offer passive resistance?.. Not quite a passive one: it is passive in the sense that we do not have to pick up the rifles, shoot, or kill. But it is very active...” [18. С. 117].

The writer's call, "Live Not by Lies", refers to this non-violent resistance: evil should be resisted, but by non-violent methods. It is also a realization of the principles of Gandhism, but under the Soviet totalitarian regime. It is therefore clear that the writer is well aware of the extremes of both Machiavellianism and pacifism. Basing upon the real socio-political situation, he suggests various methods for its solution based on non-violence principle.

Therefore, non-violence differs from pacifism by the fact that it does not prohibit the necessary self-defense against an aggressor. Another important difference is that non-violence claims the need to protect a third party, especially if the latter cannot protect itself (a woman, a child, or a weak person threatened by a strong villain, etc.). From this perspective, the doctrine of pacifism is immoral, because, apart from disarming the subject himself in the face of evil, it also endangers the other persons, innocent and weak, by refusing to protect them. By refusing to take up arms, a pacifist is forcing the others to perform the function of protecting instead. This is not a moral, non-violent position; it is a struthious attempt to avoid responsibility for the other by a total renunciation from using the force. But morality is characterized by the fact that it does not avoid the responsibility, but accepts it instead. A moral person is certainly a responsible one; such persons are responsible for both themselves and the people around them, the society they live in, the state and humanity in general, which is especially important in the globalization era.

However, non-violence can also be all encompassing and uncompromising, reminiscent of pacifism. But, in fact, it is quite different. Its most prominent example is M. Gandhi. He was a proponent of non-violence, but not a pacifist. In the early years of Satyagraha, Gandhi explained its essence to the Europeans using the English words "passive resistance", but then he came to the conclusion of their inadequacy [13. C. 215]. When men from several villages fled attempting to escape from the punitive expedition, during one of the non-cooperation actions, abandoning women and children, Gandhi rebuked them for their cowardice and shamelessly using the pretext of non-violence for their flight. He found cowardice incompatible with non-violence [20].

Thus, Gandhi actively fought against evil, not only appealing against it, but devoting his whole life to this struggle. At the same time he, like M.L. King, was ready to sacrifice himself (though not blindly), but not the *others* (4). This is another radical difference of non-violence concept from pacifism. In the latter case, one sacrifices not only oneself, but also the others, without asking their consent for their becoming defenseless victims. A man can recognize himself as the victim and practice completely non-violent behavior, but he cannot demand the same from the others or leave them to the mercy of fate. Non-violence is a realistic concept, which transforms the life morally, whereas pacifism is Utopian, which, in fact, avoids solving problems instead of changing the life itself.

Pacifism is a "malign" idealism, not associated with the realities of human life. Non-violence is a reasonable idealism based upon morality and reality, seeking to implement the moral principle in life to the uttermost; it transforms life on this basis, rather than avoids life in the search of some pseudo-moral purity. Pacifism is inevitably

ambiguous and inconsistent: it seeks to proceed from the moral principle, “Thou shalt not kill”, understood in a maximalist manner, but ultimately it only yields more violence, as it fails to oppose evil in an active way. Facing no resistance, evil increases and destroys the pacifist himself. Thus, this doctrine is deadly to others and self-destructive for those sharing it: it eliminates itself. Pacifists may only exist as long as there are those who still struggle with the evil using force in the world, i.e. those who act in accordance with the non-violence principle. If everyone becomes a pacifist, the society will cease to exist: it will be either destroyed by crime (if at least a single criminal survives) or eaten by wolves. Apparently being aware of this, Leo Tolstoy disliked Tolstoyist communities and never tried to spread them. The reason was not merely that they could distort his idea, but because the wider his idea of non-resisting evil by force could spread, the more casualties would be in the world. Tolstoy preferred to be an abstract preacher: on the one hand, he was calling to follow his ideas; on the other hand, he realized the impossibility and the impracticability of this requirement. Thus, he writes in his letter to Odin Bellow, “... a compromise inevitable in practice cannot be allowed in theory... A compromise in theory is a great sin, an intention to downgrade the ideal of Christ in order to make it feasible” [20. С. 34—36]. In other words, the ideal of Christ is recognized to be actually impossible, but its unconditional implementation is required (in theory). This duality is the drama of Tolstoy’s life and teachings, not to call it a lie. These are the good intentions the road to hell is paved with. I. Ilyin, who criticized the teachings of Tolstoy, and A. Solzhenitsyn, who criticized the writer’s ideas in *The Red Wheel*, especially vividly realized that in the Russian culture.

Mankind will only reach the level required for survival in the modern era when it recognizes (not in words but in deeds) the highest value of human life, each individual human life, and when the great humanist principle formulated by Immanuel Kant and stating that “man is the goal and can never serve as a means” is implemented. A person cannot be sacrificed to any interests or ideologies. Yet he may perceive himself as a sacrifice of love and kindness, if the person chooses serving the others.

The universal values of non-violence mankind developed in various cultures: Taoism (*naturalness*), Hinduism (*ahimsa*), Christianity (“*Thou shalt not kill*”), Islam (Allah is perceived as “*compassionate*”, “*merciful*”), etc., have to be recognized, and man should proceed from them. The common good is unattainable otherwise. Rejecting these principles of the “axial time” implies returning to some pre-civilized state of barbarism, which is now seen in international politics, where the cult of violence and ultimatums has prevailed. In this age of globalization, national interests and values have to be balanced with those of all mankind, represented by the world religions, philosophy, and spiritual culture of different nations. Going back to dividing the world into antagonistic “blocks” or using definitions like “rogue countries” and the “axis of evil” is unacceptable. It is obvious that this sinister terminology is unable to lead the world toward multipolarity and mutually beneficial cooperation.

In the early 20th century, a number of Russian thinkers warned of a real threat to the endorsement of totalitarian ideology, including its stabilization in the West, the deep crisis of the Euro-Atlantic democracies (N. Berdyaev, S. Frank, G. Fedotov, I. Ilyin,

etc.) [22. С. 307, 304]. In the end of the previous century, A. Zinoviev spoke of “totalitarian democracy”, whose essential features have to be explored yet, but which was already triumphant at that moment.

The new political theory, based on the well-neglected principles of the “axial age”, world religions, and true humanity, should be an existential-personal one, not a class dialectical and liberal extremist one. Freedom, democracy, and justice are not the ends in themselves. They are only the means (often unsuitable ones, if violence is needed for implementing them) used to achieve the personal and social good. In international politics, where the “democracy” understood ideologically and geopolitically has won, anything that promotes the establishment of a single sovereign power on Earth (unipolarity) is “democratic”, whereas everything that does not fit into this scheme (multipolarity) is regarded as undemocratic. The method of overcoming these ideologemes, neutralizing them should be implemented at the theoretical and practical levels. The most appropriate and effective way for this purpose is the assertion of priority of moral values, especially non-violence, in domestic and foreign policy. In today's world, “democracy”, “liberalism”, “freedom”, or other distorted and discredited values are unable to rectify the situation; only morally oriented, existential personal politics can do that. This is exactly the policy the spiritual traditions of humanity, its best minds have sought to promote. Deepening, developing, and spreading a culture of active and efficient (not pacifist disarming) non-violence, capable of resisting the evil and violence without resorting to their own methods, is necessary. Morality requires protecting those insulted and humiliated, neutralizing aggressive intentions. Non-violent moral politics should not indulge in extreme violence or extreme pacifism, which denies resisting violence and evil. Moral politics should be life affirming, able to assert the truth of its principles both theoretically and practically.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) Merleau-Ponty mentions, “One can say that Machiavellianism is a contradiction of Machiavelli” («Заметки о Макиавелли») (*A Note on Machiavelli*. P. 256—257).
- (2) According to I.A. Ilyin, “From a formal point of view their everyday struggle and their career were ‘political in nature’, because they sought the state power and seized it. But their activity was *essentially anti-political* and *anti-state*. They ‘succeeded’ as adventurers and careerists, yet has an *ignominious failure* as ‘politicians’, as they were destroying their own people in need, fear and humiliation”. (*Ильин И.А. Кризис демократии обостряется... С. 153*). (Ilyin I.A. *The Crisis of Democracy is aggravating... P. 153*).
- (3) “Nonviolence demands that the means we use must be as pure as the ends we seek”. (*Кинг-младший М.Л. Письмо из бирмингемской городской тюрьмы // Ненасилие как мировоззрение и образ жизни. М., ИВИ РАН, 2000*). (King Jr., M.L. *Letter from Birmingham Jail // Nonviolence as a World Outlook and a Way of Life*. Moscow, Institute of World History at the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2000. P. 281).
- (4) The day before M.L. King was murdered he said during his famous speech in Memphis, “Like anybody, I would like to live a long life... But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will... I do not fear any man! Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!” (Miller W.R. *Martin Luther King Jr., His Life, Martyrdom and Meaning for the World*. New York, 1968. P. 275—276).

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ПРОТИВИТЬСЯ ЛИ ЗЛУ СИЛОЙ? (об основаниях гуманистической политики)

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В данном исследовании вскрываются возможные варианты соотношения насилия и ненасилия в политике, среди которых: самого Макиавелли (*только благая политическая цель оправдывает любые средства*), макиавеллистский (*цель оправдывает любые средства*), гуманистический (*благая цель может быть достигнута только благими методами*) и пацифистский (*непротивление злу силой* — Л. Толстой). Определяется основополагающее различие между специфическими вариантами понимания соотношения морали и политики в гуманистической и пацифистской версии. В статье подчеркивается, что пацифистский непротивленческий вариант является аморальным. Утверждается, что разрешение современных глобальных как международных, так и внутренних проблем возможно лишь на основе гуманистической политики ненасилия: *несопротивления злу насилием*, что не исключает, а иногда нуждается в *сопротивлении злу*. Эти идеи развиты в мировых религиях и философии И. Кантом, Ф. Достоевским, М. Ганди, М.Л. Кингом и др.

Ключевые слова: политическая философия, макиавеллизм, гуманистическая политика, ненасилие, пацифизм, «осевое время», экзистенциально-персоналистическая политика.