Dying without killing: Self-Immolations 1963-2002
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This paper is a collection of observations and facts, therefore this document consists of a summary relevant to me. The points here help to gain a deeper understanding of the history and historical conditions of the phenomenon.

- On behalf of collective causere
- not intended to cause physical harm to anyone else
- between 800-3000 acts of individual self immolation
- One individuals action tneds to inspire others (who share the collective cause) to imitate it
- buddhist were 'using their bodies like a lamp for help' (Tich thien-an 1975b:138)
- Only correleatoin with people who self immolate is religion. buddhism and hinduism specifically. More about the intensity of belief then content of belief.
- associated with the degree of democracy. Totalitarian states supress information and In a totalitarian state such an act is less likely to have a broader impact.
- subject to positive feedback {biggs 2003a)
- rarely precedec by any public threat, not allowing the oponent to make concessions and avert the sacrifice.
- usually not done by those who do threaten to do it
- Often condemned by the groups for who they want to raise awareness. Interesting exception: the case of the buddhists Quang Duc and Tich Tieu Dieu. Both were deemed old enough and sufficiently wise to make a responsible decision.
- These cases are also exceptional in the sense that they were highly staged and organized as to keep out police and attract press etc.
- To burn oneself by fire is to prove that what one is saying is of the utmost importance.
- In many cases more appropriately conceived of as 'a gamble with death' instead of an attempt at death.
- Survivors do not consider themselves to have failed, nor do they try again.
- in some cases self immolation shades into self-mutilation.
- no cases in which self mutilation preceeds full self immolation.
- "I am proud of what I have done"

the task of dissecting, from the comfort of ones office, motivations for the ultimate sacrifice must be approached with trepidation. !!

- 'I am proud of what I have done' Chadha in hospital near death.
- 'selfless motivations', collective cause. either appealing to others by means of a costly signal or inciting potential symphatizers by provoking an emotional response.
- commitment to the cause may also be manifested in the non-instrumental motivation of despair.
- more 'egocentric' motivatons? (generally rare)
cheating the adversary
transfiguration (very rare)
redemption from personal failings
'vanity' (doubtful)

- message (body-on-fire) can be adressed directly to the adversary or in a wider sense to public opinion.
- A costly signal which conveys information
- People who imitate the act are often moved by shame for their own lack of commitment/actoin.
- can be a sacrifce to a supernatural agent (Tran Bach Nga) (very rare)
- in case of 'despair': similarities with psychological 'cry of pain' model of suicide (williams and pollock 2000: 89/ M williams 1997) but in this case the defeat is not individual but collective.
- Jan Zajic "this motivation is not merely to die, to escape the distress that stems from identification with the cause, but to make a final -albeit instrumentally useless- statement to the world.
- In soviet union any survivor of a self immolation was consigned to a psychiatric institution.
- Self immolation is rarely explained by suicidal tendencies
- self immolation is unique in the sense that it contains two images: the victim who is innocent and the hero who braves the ultimate sacrifice.
- inspires acrifice and also provokes outrage.
- can intensely enhance the commitment of others who believe in the cause. Chan Khong 'I too would do something for the respect of human rights in as beautiful and gentle way'
- sacrifice is legitimate only as an individual choice
- self immolation may be spurred by anger but cannot be motivated by revenge or retaliation.
- suffering can serve to advance a collective cause
- It is unique in that it does not depend on the reaction of authorities or opponents.