

GANDHI AND THE NEW POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE

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Abstract

The impact of Gandhi on the emergence of new social movements in Europe after the Second World War has been significant. Gandhian influences can be traced to many important civic initiatives, movements and organizations around Third World liberation, peace and non-violence, international solidarity, the environment and democracy.

The paper looks into the process particularly from the perspective of four Nordic Countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden). The influences are traced in four different periods:

1917 - 1947 Dialogue, Constructive Programme and Liberation Struggle

1948 - 1969 Peace and Solidarity against Imperialism

1970 - 1990 Environmental Movement

1989 - Global Democracy Movement

In all these periods direct contacts and influences by Gandhi or his followers can be found with the key personalities in the European movements. For example, a Dane Ellen Hørup established one of the first international solidarity groups in Europe for Indian freedom struggle in the 1930s. At the same time her compatriot Anne Marie Petersen started secular cooperation relations in the framework of the Rural Reconstruction Workers Association.

Right after the World War II the movement against nuclear weapons gained early momentum by the 'Operation Gandhi' in London in 1952. A popular peace movement that continued and grew for decades followed. Along it various support movements for international solidarity and Third World liberation grew, many of them emphasizing non-violent struggle.

One set of roots of radical environmental movement in Europe can be traced to the trip of three young Norwegian scholars to India in 1969. Sigmund Kvaløy, Johan Galtung and Arne Naess travelled overland to India and studied Gandhi very carefully. All became major leaders of the first environmental 'satyagraha' in Europe against the Mardøla hydro dam. Later the influences have flown constantly, for example the Chipko movement inspiring similar action in Sweden.

Gandhian influence in the post-cold war global solidarity and justice movement is also remarkable. The Karnataka farmers struggles and initiative in forming the People's Global Action against the WTO and Free Trade that lead to the Seattle demonstrations in 1999 is one example. Further, the Gandhian concept of *swaraj*, provides a framework for movements trying to combine human dignity, cultural plurality, ecological concern, last-person-first economics and political participation into a comprehensive democracy perspective.

Gandhian and other Indian influence gained momentum among Western popular movements in the 1960s through four methods. The mass boycott which was used by the anti-apartheid movement, padyatras or long marches used by the peace movement, direct action through non-violent civil disobedience intervening in conflicts used by movements for freedom of speech and for disarmament and mass support for constructive programs. The long marches and direct actions were inspired by "Operation Gandhi" in London 1952. Young Theosophists initiated mass support in schools for constructive programs in the third world 1961 that gradually spread to all the Nordic countries. Satyagraha was successfully used in mass scale to oppose the reluctance of the Swedish government to fully support the liberation struggle of the South in 1967.

1. Introduction

In the context of Europe, new popular movements refer to the broad civic initiatives that had seen their peak after the second world war. The old movements, such as the labour movement and various rural and peasant movements or the movements of the burgoise vis-a-vis the aristocracy, date to earlier centuries.

The new social movements include the peace movements, the third world liberation and solidarity movements, the women and feminist movements, and the environmental movements. To some degree also the old movements have contributed significantly to the new movements by reviving themselves.

In this paper we draw attention to the impact of Gandhi and other Indian thinkers and actors on these new popular movements in Europe. Through particular case studies of personalities and movements we show, how some of the key actors in the European movements have been in direct or indirect contact with Gandhi or his followers, and how this contact has shaped their thinking and had a lasting impacts on the movements.

The focus of the paper is in the part of the Europe where we belong, i.e. the Nordic countries of Europe (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden).

Nordic connections with Gandhi and his stream of Indian freedom movement started in January 1917 with the meeting of Gandhi with two Danish ladies interested in new education, Esther Færing and Anne Marie Petersen. Since this meeting Gandhi and Indian popular movements have continuously influenced Nordic popular movements and societies in a remarkable ways. This is especially true when we look at the core values of the society such as freedom of speech, global justice, environmental devastation and the role of the Nordic countries' position in the global imperialistic system.

Gandhian and Indian influences are still important in the Nordic societies and especially among popular movements engaged in the struggle for global justice and responsibility. This text primarily deals with the political influence, especially when people are mobilised in societal conflicts. Indian influence culturally, spiritually, at the official political level and economically is of importance but is outside the scope of this paper.

The Gandhian and Indian popular movement influence on other societies is of global interest. The predominant view on social change and popular movements is that they start in modern Western societies, usually in the Great Britain or the US, and then are spread globally. Through this study, however, we argue that for almost a century some of the most important sources for the new social movements in the West are located in the Indian popular movements. The findings of this study thus challenge the present academic, governmental and corporate Western world view.

The research for this paper has been carried out by Tord Björk besides a full-time job as a teacher and activists engagements in the environment and solidarity movement. Basic research method has been oral conversations during three decades of international activism in the environmental and solidarity movement. This oral history has been supplemented by literature. (Björk 2007) Efforts by the Popular Movements Study Group in Sweden to study

and document popular movement history locally and globally has contribute much to this paper (c.f. Wiklund 2005). It is the interest in global justice, the environment and popular movement mobilisation that have led for the search for knowledge on the Indian-Nordic connection, not particular interest in India or Gandhi.

This study concentrates on how Indian inspiration has influenced movements that are in conflict with the dominant order in society and its place in the world order. Two criteria has been used for the purposes of this paper. First, the movement and conflict presented is historical both in terms of a high level of confrontation, and in terms of creating new public space and awareness of profound societal or ecological problems. Second, the movement has been explicitly aware of its Indian inspiration and acted accordingly.

In other words this is not a study on how Gandhian or other Indian thoughts have been received in the Nordic countries, but rather how popular movements in India continuously have influenced popular movements in the Nordic countries and in this way (both) have contributed to the common aim of global justice and protecting the planet from ecological disaster.

The main focus of this paper is on strong societal conflicts or movements that grow from a small beginning to a larger participation, i.e. a popular movement, the main topic of this paper. For this paper **popular movement is defined as a lasting collective effort that at the same time tries to change society and live according to its own principles**. This double task is often very troublesome. Most of the time the collective efforts ends by being integrated into market or state routines or disintegrated into individual or sectarian lifestyles. But the quality of living as you teach and promoting change of the existing social system whether this is national or global can continue to exist at some places. And suddenly a new mass movement can rise again and contribute to important social and other changes. In this study accounts for both such small collective efforts that combine living as you teach and challenge the present world order and how new popular mass movements emerge.

The Gandhian and Indian influence on Nordic countries can be summarised into four periods. The first period is the dialogue, school building, liberation struggle and work camp movement period beginning with dialogue and pedagogic initiatives and continuing with international work camps and support for the liberation struggle. The second period is the anti-imperialism and peace struggle including the World Youth Festivals in the late 1940s and 1950s as central together with small but crucial alternative movements struggling for peace and global justice with inspiration from India both strands ending with joint mass peace, freedom of speech and solidarity mobilisations in the 1960s. The third period is the global environmental movement period 1970-1990. The fourth period beginning at the shift of decades between the 1980s and 1990s is too early to put a label on but can be described as the global democracy period with a search for alternatives to neo-liberal hegemony.

2. Liberation Struggle and Constructive Programme 1917 - 1947

Although numerous Europeans popular movement leaders were in touch with Gandhi already in 1910s and 1920s, the interactions became much more intensive in the 1930s.

That is when the Indian freedom struggle obtained new momentum and Gandhi's constructive programme had become increasingly popular. This growth in Indian popular movement activity had its response in Europe also. These early contact benefited from direct contacts with Gandhi himself.

2.1 Ellen Hørup and International Solidarity for India's Freedom Movement

The freedom struggle for India set an example for the whole of the colonised world in Africa, Asia and Latin America. A central question in the struggles were the means, especially role of armed struggle. Gandhi addressed these issues already in his seminal *Hind Swaraj* in 1909, taking very strong stand against violence and for *ahimsa*. Based on the 1906/07 experiences with *satyagraha* in South Africa, he was able to outline the basic elements of the active non-violent struggle also. The ideas and practices of the support groups inspired by Gandhi for the freedom of India served as models for future solidarity campaigns all the way to the transformation of South Africa in the 1990s from apartheid to democracy.

The Gandhian non-violent freedom struggle inspired many Europeans and engaged them in various support activities. One such person was Danish lady Ellen Hørup who since the 1920s wrote extensively on Gandhi and Indian liberation and contributed centrally to the establishment of the India freedom support group in Europe in the 1930's. Hørup was a modern feminist, pacifist and anti-fascist who in her 40s got into journalism, contributing regularly to the influential Danish newspaper *Politiken*.

Hørup became interested in Gandhi in the 1920s when she lived in Rome. In January 1929 she travelled to India and stayed at Gandhi's ashram at Sabarmati for over a week. Back in Denmark she established *Indiens Venner* (the Friends of India Society) in Copenhagen in October 1930. She also established a monthly magazine with the same name devoted fully to the Indian liberation struggle and Mahatma Gandhi that run until 1938. In this first issue she reflected upon the importance of the independence movement:

"The opening of a new chapter in the history of the human race, where violence and weapons are abolished, and antagonism between races and nations do not anymore put a hindrance to understanding among people."

After the Salt March of 1930 the British imposed a censorship on news from India. Ellen Hørup organised a group of barristers and cultural persons to a little self-constituted commission, whose members all travelled to India on their own. The group took an interest in the severe repression against the Indian freedom movement during the civil disobedience movement led by Gandhi. They met not only Gandhi but also other Indian leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad and Subhas Chandra Bose. The members of the informal international group spread the suppressed news around Europe thus breaking the silence the British had sat up.

A feverish solidarity activity developed in Europe. For example, in Norway Caroline Bokken Lasson set up a Friends of India Society. On October 6, 1932 Hørup organised an International Conference for India in Geneva. At the conference an International Committee for India was established with Hørup as a honorary secretary. She soon moved

to Geneva and became the organisational force behind the international solidarity movement for India. A second conference was organised in March 1933, mostly with people based in Geneva and a third International conference on September 19, 1933. The speakers included Bhulabai Desai and Subhas Chandra Bose and Mrs Hamid Ali with delegates from many European countries attending. The committee published the magazine the "Indian Press", the first international magazine to support the Indian cause abroad with Hørup as a main contributor. The magazine was closed down 1935 on the request of the Indian National Congress. The last number of the "Indian Press" quoted the Modern Review (Calcutta): "It was a mistake on the part of the Congress to have given up foreign work... It is true; we must win freedom mainly by our efforts. But the sympathy and at least the moral support of foreign nations are valuable" (August 1935). Ellen Hørup then wrote, "Because of the decision taken by the National Congress of India, we have decided to suspend the publication of our magazine for the time being. We will take it up again as soon as the Indian organizations themselves recognise the necessity of a propaganda campaign in foreign countries".

Hørup was one of the few contemporary Scandinavian friends of Gandhi who dared to voice also criticism of him:

"Gandhi enters the great and admirable fight for the untouchables. He fasts for their right to get into the temples for which he is subject to attempted assassinations, and he gets the entire priesthood on his back. Gandhi has declared that there is no such thing as an untouchable in the holy writings, and even if there was, it would conflict with all humanity and therefore could not be divine truth. Everybody enthusiastically follows him on his Harijan-tour. But the untouchable is a by-product of the caste system, and Gandhi fights for the untouchable but wishes to keep the caste system."

This account of Ellen Hørup demonstrates some early solidarity activism and movement building to support liberation struggle of a colonised country. At this stage the main method was information work and appeals to public and governments. Gandhian ideas and ideals were spreading, but the struggle methods did not yet get rooted in the solidarity work.

2.2. Pierre Ceresole and the case of constructive work

Another lasting impact on European popular movements from the generation that had direct association with Gandhi is the international work camp movement established by a radical pacifist Swiss Pierre Ceresole. This movement that learned a lot from Gandhi's constructive work programme has mobilised tens of thousands of people to spend their time in helping communities in need at home and abroad. The activity has been facilitated by Service Civil International established by Ceresole already in 1920 bringing together various nationalities together to help communities in need through practical work.

Pierre Ceresole met with Gandhi in Switzerland in 1931 and got so inspired that in 1934 he organised probably the first secular volunteer project in the Third World in Bihar, India. Together with three others he went to respond to the natural calamity in Bihar for more than two years working side by side with local inhabitants rebuilding the communities.

Back in Europe around 1936 Ceresole was invited to Denmark and Sweden. In Copenhagen

there was already a great interest in his vision. In Sweden German political refugees were spreading the idea, among them the radical pacifist Ulrich Herz. He together with Lennart Bergström, Inga Thorson and others started to collect money to enable to invite Céréssole to Sweden. Soon members were organised in a Swedish section of Service Civil Internationale and Swedish volunteers could be sent to work camps around Europe helping areas hit by severe natural or social problems while Inga Thorson kept the office in a shoe box under her bed. In 1937 the first training camp could be set up at Tostarp in Southern Sweden before embarking assignments in Europe. A similar organisation started in Norway 1939. A Quaker and German-Jewish refugee Wolfgang Sonntag succeeded in organising a Norwegian work camp team bound for helping Finland after its war with the Soviet Union. But before the group could go to Finland he had to flee again to Sweden when Germany invaded also Norway in April 1940. When the war started, also the incipient Swedish Section of Service Civil International withered away. Herz was put in a concentration camp by the Swedish military among other pacifist social democrats and communists who the military saw as a threat to the state.

In this situation Sonntag vigorously tried to re-establish interest in building a movement of peace volunteers willing to train themselves for international work camps reconstructing countries destroyed by the war. He was heavily guarded by the police and met almost no interest. Among established youth organisations there were no interest in how peace should be constructed outside Sweden after the war. Sweden seemed to be "the country without volunteers". But finally Sonntag found Frisksportarna (Healthy sportsmen), a popular movement that promoted simple lifestyle, healthy food and had nothing against practical work. In 1942, a study circle on the work camp issue received interest in this movement but the first enthusiasm faded away quickly. 1943 new initiatives were made and Internationella Arbetslag, International Work Camps was born with both young and grown-up volunteers and Quakers as supporters. Thirteen "peace volunteers" pledge themselves and urge others to do the same by participating in training courses and set up teams that when the war was over should be sent abroad. In an appeal the 13 peace volunteers declared it was necessary to "abstain from your privileges and your satisfied safeties in the 'neutral' Swedish society." When peace came 20 courses had already taken place, many that helped refugees practically in Sweden. But it was not easy. There was a tension between those that wanted to build a popular movement for peace and those that seemed more interested in adventure or practical work without any goal to also create knowledge and understanding among people from different nations.

Towards the end of the Second World War new national working camp organisations and members of the Service Civil International were set up and started to prepare for reconstruction work after the war built on volunteer efforts and international solidarity for peace. It was through these work camps partly developed in association with Gandhi's constructive programmes that the Gandhian influence in the Nordic societies spread in a very subtle way, without any reference to India or Gandhi.

In 1943 the radical pacifists in Denmark could set up a fund for volunteer reconstruction work after the war, Fredsvenners Hjaelparbejde (Friends of Peace Aid) to work according to Service Civil internationals intentions. When peace came the initiative from the radical pacifists had gained wide support and 150 persons were trained to start working. When the government called for a meeting to organise post-war reconstruction abroad it was

concluded that Fredsvenners Hjaelparbejde was best prepared and the courses received state funding. In June the first group of volunteers was sent to Northern Norway to take care of sick prisoners of war on Northern Norway. Contrary to the Swedish initiative put emphasis on being both practical and a popular movement built on ideas the Danish put the emphasis on the practical and soon became more or less part of governmental efforts. Fredsvenners Hjaelparbejde was soon well established and the radical pacifist origin was soon forgotten.

In Norway Internasjonal Dugnad was started already in 1939, in Sweden International Arbets Leger (IAL) in 1943 and in Finland the Kansainvälinen vapaaehtoinen työleirijärjestö KVT in 1947. In all countries the Christian sect of Society of Friends, or Quakers, were central in supporting the initiatives. The Norwegians having the sharpest experiences on resistance in different forms, the Danes well-equipped, the Swedes most idealistic and wide in their concern and the Finns utterly aware of their balance position between East and West. During the decades that followed tens of thousands people of all ages participated as volunteers in the camps organised by the SCI and building personal bridges first in Europe that was deeply divided by the wars and later overseas also.

3. Peace and Solidarity against Imperialism 1948 - 1969

After the Second World War and Indian independence, also the Gandhian methods of social change found their way to the practices of European popular movements. What would bring mass participation to new popular movements in all Nordic countries were four Gandhian and Indian inspirations simultaneously being introduced in a large scale. These inspirations came directly or through African liberation movements often using the same kind of liberation methods and inspired by Gandhi and the Indian freedom movement. Especially ANC in South Africa and the liberation movements in Ghana and Northern Rhodesia/Zambia used mass civil disobedience and nonviolence in their struggle for freedom.

The four inspirations were boycotts against oppressive regimes, padyatras or long marches linked to direct action, intervention by direct nonviolent intervention in conflicts and mass support for constructive programmes to give humanitarian support to liberation movement territories. Between 1960 and 1964 the political landscape had been completely changed in the Nordic countries thanks to this Indian influence.

3.1 Boycott Campaigns for Third World Solidarity

In March 1960 the trade unions and cooperative consumer organisations in all Scandinavian countries launched a boycott against South African goods to support the freedom movement in the country. The first international consumer boycott campaign was called upon by All African People's Conference in Accra 1958. As the international trade union movement agreed to the proposal it became viable. The massacre of 68 peaceful anti-apartheid demonstrators at Sharpeville in South Africa in March 1960 created new momentum for the movement.

During the following years the opinion against apartheid grew in the Nordic countries while politicians continued to refuse taking a stand in the same way they had done since Asian and African countries had called for action. In 1963 a new Nordic boycott started, this time with coalitions of national youth organisations as initiators and with no time limit. The boycott became the main organising tool and hundreds of local committees started to disseminate information to make people to stop buying South African products.

As is well known, a consumer boycott at a mass scale was a central part of the Indian freedom movement in their struggle against the British. An inspiration for the European campaigns for African liberation and against apartheid and the demands for a boycott were mainly the liberation movements in Asia and Africa. The boycott movement of South Africa sustained three decades until the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

To some commentators in the Nordic countries this boycott was considered a threat to democracy. Leading social democratic newspapers criticized the campaign on principal grounds to be a form of political act as it was a kind of citizen action making foreign policy without a parliamentary mandate. The conservatives and the business community did not like the boycott either. The defendants of the boycott claimed that such acts were legitimate and could even contribute to deepen democracy when the related demands has a broad appeal among the population but is neglected by the political elite.

In his assessment of the anti-apartheid movement and the emergence of a global civil society Håkan Thörn states that Western notions labelling the kind of mass actions that are used in the beginning of the 1960s as new politics are false. (Thörn 2006) When "single-issue" strategies, civil disobedience and consumer boycotts were used in the North it was claimed as new methods in spite of that popular movements in the South had used them since very long. Thörn specially refers to the Indian freedom movement and the South African anti-apartheid movement.

Later, the experiences with the Boycott of South African goods provided a model for an international boycott against Nestle company for its unethical and lethal marketing practices of baby milk formulas. The campaign in the 1980s connected groups, movements and issues in a unforeseen way against a multinational corporation.

3.2 Operation Gandhi and peace padyatras against nuclear armament

The second inspiration grew within the peace movement and got its first clear expression with The Operation Gandhi 1952 in London. This grew into the more known mass movement against nuclear weapons in the early 1960s. The Operation Gandhi took place in front of the war ministry in London with a street sit-in blockade and collecting 136.000 signatures for a peace declaration. The peace *padyatras* against nuclear weapons started when a single person marched from London to a nuclear site at Aldermaston in 1957. Next year he was joined by 800. When the march went the other way and ended in London in 1960 there were already 100.000 participants. Bertrand Russell was a key figure both in initiating broader initiatives and himself participating in civil disobedience the Gandhian way.

In 1960 the first Nordic march against nuclear weapons took place in Iceland and later the same year in Denmark initiated by radical pacifists in No More War that made direct action sit-ins to stop rockets usable for atomic weapons from being unloaded, 1961 in Sweden and 1963 in Norway. In Finland as similar movement, the Committee of 100 started in 1963 to mobilise similar long demonstrations with a lot of music and more carnival looking participants than had been seen before. On Iceland, Denmark and Norway with demands against atomic bombs on their own soil, in Finland concerning defence policy and in Sweden against the plans for a Swedish atomic bomb and to propose alternative uses for military resources. In Sweden the movement was based on membership in local chapters. In the Nordic countries the movement was successful and in some years the plans for having nuclear weapons on Nordic soil was for the time being dropped.

Discussions on non-violence and Gandhian methods rather than his whole ideology were crucial in this era that by its own activists and academicians has been described as the breakthrough of new social movements in the North. The Danish activist Toni Liversage writes in her memoirs "The movement against atomic armament in the beginning of the 60s thus was the first broad popular movement in the post-war period, where people decided to take an issue in their own hand and act, and the movement in this way became a predecessor of the grassroots movements of the 70s and 80s." Operation Gandhi started to have mass influence in many countries.

3.3. Shanti Sena and direct non-violent interventions in conflicts

The third inspiration came from Gandhian peace army tradition or in Hindi – Shanti Sena. Already in the 1930s Westerners had made an attempt to set up international teams of activists willing to interfere nonviolently in conflicts inspired by Gandhi. World War II put these efforts into a great difficulty but in the end of the 1950s a new upsurge took place. In India Gandhians successfully were able sometimes to interfere with peace armies to prevent ethnic violence and disarming bandits. Among Christians in the US a small subculture of radical pacifists had emerged during the war making sit-ins against racial segregation and protesting for the rights of pacifists sentenced to jail. It was within these groups inspiration came to Great Britain inspiring civil disobedience and organising long marches against atomic weapons. But it went further.

In 1957 the Quaker Lawrence Scott started Call to Non-Violent Action Against Nuclear Weapons. For a week a vigil was held at the testing ground for atomic bombs at Las Vegas in the US. The year after the action group became permanent under the name of the Committee for Nonviolent Action Activists with the support of Fellowship of Reconciliation, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, War Resisters League and a Quaker Peace committee. They started to sail boats into testing areas in the Pacific to prevent atomic bomb testing. The Gandhians from India, international radical pacifists, Christian from the US and others soon joined hands together with African states. 1959 – 1960 peace activists gathered in Ghana. With the support from many neighbouring African countries and peace organisations in the West three groups were sent from Ghana through the Sahara desert to protest against French atomic bomb test sites in Southern Algeria. All were caught by French military.

This action was followed by two attempts to make further interventions. At the War Resisters International's global meeting in India 1960, a proposal was made "to internationalise the Shanti Sena idea". A World Peace Brigade with section on the Asian, European and North American continents was going to be set up that should be able to interfere in different conflicts.

At the same time the World Citizen movement in Sweden had similar ideas as the Committee for Nonviolent Action in the US. Thus secular Gandhian anarchism meets Christian pacifist Gandhians. The result was the American - European March for Disarmament or Walk for Peace between San Francisco and Moscow 1960 – 1961.

Inspired by Gandhi since his youth, a Swede Inge Oskarsson from World Citizen movement was one of the key organisers of the European part of the *padyatra* from UK to Moscow. Oskarsson experienced too many problems in the encounter between the American and Europeans activists and finally he went home when German participants were not given any of the plentiful food. But the march could successfully come to Moscow because of his preparations and spread the same message of unilateral disarmament both in the West and the East in spite of harassment by the authorities in both blocs.

European peace activists continued to live in the midst of international contacts and Indian inspiration. In 1961, a meeting in Lebanon established the World Peace Brigade according to Gandhian thoughts. The Asian section intervened in the Chinese – Indian border conflict being harassed by both governments. A training camp was set up in Tanzania. Here a team should be sent to Northern Rhodesia to intervene non-violently in the conflict between white settlers and the black majority. At Tived in the forest in the middle of Sweden a camp was also set up in 1962 to train people to participate in the action. But the liberation movement was successful enough on its own and the action was called off.

Another intervention by the Peace Brigade was to send a vessel to Soviet Union to protest against atomic weapons. The sailing ship *Everyman III* visited Stockholm both on its way to Leningrad and on their way back. The kind of nonviolent interventions as a "living wall" according to Gandhi's ideas continued to grow as a tool for interventions in social conflicts all over the world and is today better established.

The most important contribution inspired by Satyagraha and the Indian direct action tradition came later in the struggle for democracy and global solidarity. When the mass movement against the US war in Vietnam grew stronger together with mass support for third world solidarity in general the government in Sweden answered by rhetorics and no deeds. At the same time there was a growing problem within the movement that some were doing the hard work on the streets including no-violent sit-in demonstrations which was violently suppressed by the police while more prominent participants of the movement had more pleasant tasks representing the opinion in media.

During 1967 the polarisation escalated and there was a need for a new strategy. The solution was expressively to use Indian *satyagraha* methods by letting international known intellectuals go in the forefront of mass civil disobedience. In Sweden on 20th December 1967 some 1.500 participants at a meeting defied the orders by the police to not demonstrate at the US embassy. What followed was bloody clashes with the police when

dogs, mounted policemen with their whips and batons crushed down on the demonstrators following them all through the city in the midst of Christmas shopping. Two months later minister of education and soon to become prime minister Olof Palme went side by side with a North Vietnamese diplomat and the radical Vietnam demonstrators to end the Vietnam war and within a year 85 percent of Swedish parliamentarians and the government supported liberation movements in Southern Africa and Vietnam politically and with practical humanitarian aid. There were no more serious clashes with the police for decades. (Hammarström 1975)

3.4. Schools children's mass mobilisation for international solidarity

The fourth Indian inspired action became the corner stone in all Nordic societies third world solidarity model. This time there was no special Gandhian influence but another Indian influence that is the origin of the largest mass solidarity action in the Nordic countries.

All organisations of relevance to popular movements and politics with international linkages in the Nordic countries at this time to my knowledge had their global leadership in industrial countries either in the West or the East. The exception was the Theosophical society in Sweden which had a youth group, TUG, started 1955 by Gudrun Fjellander. Its first involvement with social action was in 1959 when the group "adopted" a Tibetan refugee child. Soon the members of the group became involved in the peace movement visiting the Aldermaston marches and active in the first atomic marches in Sweden and other more radical activities of the pacifist and world citizen movement. 1961 five young theosophists, Jan Fjellander, Roland von Malmborg, Christer von Malmborg, Margareta Homstedt, and Jan Rosenblom, decided to support 100.000 refugee children in the liberated areas of Algeria during the ongoing war with France where 1 million people were killed. They send out with the help of all TUG an information kit to all 1.500 schools in Sweden containing information on how to make a collect action and why the money are needed to enable the Lutheran Aid organisation to help the refugee children. 110 schools got involved and the result was more than the aid organisation could handle, 600.000 Swedish crowns were collected which was 20 percent more than planned and a lot more than the grown ups in the Aid organisation ever thought was possible.

The next year the established organisation for pupils, SECO, took over the campaign collecting twice as much money also to Algeria, 1964 the campaign became Scandinavian in a joint Danish-Norwegian effort supporting Peru, 1967 it became Nordic and Finnish schools also participated. Operation One Day's Work was born when pupils offered to help people suffering from oppression in the third world. They soon offered their service to the community and the payment went to solidarity with the third world. Money was raised also to armed liberation movements like ANC, SWAPO and others in Southern Africa from 1969 and onwards, apart from common third world development projects often directed to education. 1974 the trade unions in Finland joined giving one hour's salary, and in 1978 the Finnish church. In 1985 alone 40 million crowns was collected in a joint Nordic project to support ANC, in 1990 28 million crowns was collected in Norway alone to support Amnesty human rights education project in the third world. No total estimate has been made of the sum collected but it is probably above half a billion ECU or US dollars since the

beginning in 1961. It has gained full support from all of society both from authorities and the civil society with one exception - in Denmark right wing political groups attacked the work for supporting violent ANC and since the middle of the 1990s the Danish government has also tried in different ways to make it harder to make the solidarity action as a school activity, demanding that it should be organised voluntarily outside the school. The action has continued in large scale in spite of these efforts also in Denmark. The Indian inspiration to this Nordic mass solidarity model has never been made public and is unknown outside oral tradition among some few people. Nation state oriented history, both academic and other, tend to systematically make invisible the kind of democratic connections that exists between the third world and industrial countries as such connections do not fit into the ideal that democratic progress at every stage starts in the West.

Thus Indian influence was crucial in many ways when the Nordic countries opened up to the world and became aware of global issues. Contrary to many accounts that see this as a result of new democratising methods developing in rich countries it was rather inspired by small but influential groups that knew their inspiration to come from India. The methods used were first often experienced in large scale in the Indian freedom movement in South Africa and India, later by others in North America and Africa. The boycott, the long marches linked to direct action, the peace army and a constructive programme were many could participate melted together in a powerful vision of that something could be done.

4. Environmental Movement 1970 - 1990

4.1. Arne Næss, Johan Galtung and Sigmund Kvaløy and eco-satyagraha

In 1969 three men in a Renault made a trip to India that might be consider the most important Nordic-Indian encounter so far. They were Sigmund Kvaløy, Johan Galtung and Arne Næss. All were experienced men with a lot of capacities. Their goal was to participate in the celebrations of Gandhi's 100 years anniversary. Næss was a university professor of philosophy in Norway, appointed 1939 and with an influential position in his country as a consistent advocate of a broad scientific approach to social questions and an interpreter of Gandhian thought to the Western societies. Galtung also interpreted Gandhi, started the first Peace Research Institution in the West in Oslo 1959 and later became central in building futures research. Galtung and Næss had written a book together on Gandhi's political ethic in the nuclear age together. Kvaløy was a jazz enthusiast, philosopher and activist.

In year 1970 environmental civil disobedience exploded in Norway, otherwise a calm society that had little signs of dissatisfaction. The state planned to construct a dam to the second highest water fall on earth at Mardøla in the West of Norway. The water should be led to the Romsdal valley were the power station should be constructed while leaving the original Eikesdal valley with no waterfall accept a small shower for tourists in the summer. To stop the construction environmental activists nailed themselves to the mountain with chains. Among them were Kvaløy and Næss. The police evacuated the occupation but during the night local inhabitants from the Eikesdal valley reoccupied the construction site. Now inhabitants from Romsdal valley took the matters in their own hand and threatened the new occupants. Finally the action had to be given up. The Mardøla action started a new

era in Norwegian politics that also inspired similar actions in neighbouring countries.

The Mardøla action was preceded by a course on Gandhian philosophy at the Oslo University. Gandhian thinking soon became essential to the environmental, peace and alternative movement, not only as a philosophy of method but also in deeper development critical sense. This was due to an alliance between the most advanced university philosophy of the country involving professor Næss with small farmers in the rural areas like Arne Vinje. Small farmers maintained a philosophical interest and important role in the political culture of the country. Sigmund Kvaløy, Mardøla activist and eco-philosopher played a central role in establishing a globally conscious environmental movement. He went in 1971 to the Sherpas in Himalaya to learn more about sustainable living and became well-integrated in the local Buddhist culture. The environmental issues were linked to social questions challenging industrial growth society and urbanisation while at the same time contributing to the struggle against the European Union (at the time abbreviated EEC, European Economic Community). While all established organisations from labour, business and both right and left parliamentary forces as well as the mass media was strongly advocating Norwegian membership in the EEC, a popular movement alliance was opposed. The conflict resulted in a victory for the popular movement alliance against all the established forces in the referendum 1972, the only time accept for Greenland 1983 and Norway again in 1994 when the opposition of the establishment has won in a referendum on membership in the EU.

The early 1970s was a time of growing interest in nonviolent direct action. The most militant took place at Myvatn, the biggest lake on Iceland in 1970. Here every woman, child and man went out and together they put explosives to a dam that caused environmental damage and was put in place to enable the construction of a larger dam. They made photographs of their action to prove to the press and courts that they were united and then blasted the dam making it harmless. When the dam construction and their action came to the court the local inhabitants used their farms as mortgages to afford to win the juridical battle. And they won.

In the Nordic countries Indian influences continued to have importance as well. 1979 the Finnish environmental movement organised its first mass civil disobedience action to protect the lake Kojjärvi with direct inspiration from Gandhi. Successful non-violent direct actions already had taken place throughout the 1970s to protect trees and the public space and against more car traffic in Sweden in cities like Stockholm and Gothenburg. In the 1980s the protests were growing against the building of motorways and in general against the European Roundtable of Industrialists and their corporate vision to build huge infrastructure projects and at the same time reduce social welfare and create an inner market.

In the 1980s contacts through the help of the Swallows, a small solidarity organisation based in Sweden related to the Emmaus movement, were growing with the Chipko movement in India. 1987 the polarisation reached a climax when 400 activists hugged trees to stop the building of the motorway at the West Coast proposed by the European Industrialists. They were all sentenced in court in the biggest political trial ever in modern Swedish history. The activists soon were labelled *trädkramare*, Swedish for Chipko and it became a wellknown term inspired from India for anyone who wanted to protect values of

importance to the community. Sunderlal Bahuguna from the Chipko movement also went to the West Coast to show his support and demonstrate together with the local tree huggers. The Narmada movement was also influential in questioning the World Bank and Western ways of development in all Nordic countries in the end of the 1980s bringing about interest for Indian development critique.

5. Global Democracy Movement 1989 -

It is a somewhat early to write about the history of the new phase of popular movements after the end of the cold war. However, some observations about the emergence of the anti-globalisation movements and their growth to global justice and democracy movements can be made in the context of Gandhi's sustained influence.

5.1. The Anti-Globalisation Movement

Two important sources can be found in the emergence of radical anti-globalisation movement in the late 1990s. One of them is in the uprising of indigenous farmers in the province of Chiapas in Mexico in 1994. The Zapatista movement was launched on 1 January 1994 when the US-Mexico free trade agreement came into the force thus building the link with long-term local struggles and global ones. The other main source is in the Gandhian tradition in India. In the early 1990s these two came together in the organising the anti-globalisation movement.

Gandhian inspiration strongly re-emerged on global scale at the end of the 1990s when the Karnataka farmers and their chairman M.D.Nanjundaswamy along with others from Gandhian socialist background such as Kishen Pattanayak and Medha Patkar took the leadership in forming People's Global Action against the WTO and Free Trade (PGA) centred on the principles of non-violence and refusal to cooperate as the main tools in the struggle against the neoliberal world order. The use of violence was not explicitly excluded but the emphasis was only made on non-violence with the inspiration from the Gandhian style mass movements in India and the impressive demonstration with half a million participants against WTO in Bangalore in 1993. Many other movements were also present when PGA was founded in Geneva in 1998, mainly mass movements from the third world like the Landless movement from Brazil, the black movement from Colombia, Ogonis from Nigeria, Maoris from New Zealand, the Indigenous communities from Ecuador, trade unions from Argentina, Nicaragua and Canada, farmer movements from everywhere and the Zapatistas from Mexico as well as Friends of the Earth from Finland, Sweden and Uruguay and the organisation of small farmers from Norway.

PGA came in the right time to radicalise and broaden the scope of the emerging movement against neo-liberalism and in search of its alternatives. Soon international action days against finance capital and WTO were carried out all over the world and the multilateral investment agreement, MAI, defeated. The anti-globalisation movement emerged with summit protesters and PGA as key actors, obtaining global media coverage first time in Seattle during the WTO ministerial meeting in 1999.

PGA also influenced Nordic movements. Some PGA activists were brought to Finland at a development meeting in 1998, at the Nordic counter power summer camp in Falun 1999 initiated by Friends of the Earth Sweden a representative from the Karnataka farmers came, at the EU Summit in Gothenburg 2001 PGA organisations from Bangladesh and Indonesia participated as speakers at demonstrations and seminars. PGA included anti-capitalism in its platform at its meeting in Bangalore 1999 making Friends of the Earth in Sweden and Finland inactive in the network as this goes beyond an anti-neoliberal alliance. The direct action oriented movements were especially inspired by PGA. They established a Nordic Anti-Capitalist Network including Globalisering underifrån (Globalisation from below), in Sweden, Globale Rödder (Global Roots) from Denmark and a social centre from Helsinki. This Nordic PGA network was influential among radical movements in Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden also having an impact on Social Forums.

5.2. Global democracy movements

In the Nordic countries this period was inspired by the Finnish solidarity movement and their close relations with India. In Finland, a seminar titled Third World Connection was held in 1989 where many critical thinkers from the South had come to interact with the solidarity movements of Finland, among them Gandhian socialists from India. The same year environmental and solidarity organisations in all Nordic countries initiated Solidarity, Equality, Ecology and Development, SEED that in 1990 organised SEED Popular Forum at the preparatory conference for Europe and North America for UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio 1992. The single issue perspective was now left behind and a more comprehensive look at the issues became evident.

It was problematic to maintain this development critique and multi-issue approach. The strongest organizing efforts were the result of the long lasting exchange of activists between Finland and India out of which grew Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam in Finland and India. All through the 1990s A SEED Europe, a youth activist network inspired by the SEED Popular forum, was strong in organizing alternative activities at Bretton Woods and EU Summits. But social issues like unemployment and social justice became more dominant in the movement. Attempts at strengthening third world participation, development critique and multi-issue approaches at the EU-Summit protests in Gothenburg 2001 ended with heavy repression. The Popular Movement Conference centre and accommodation for 700 people was encircled by the police with 150 containers and riots took place after police provoked a number of demonstrations. 50 demonstrators were later sentenced to in total 50 years in prison, a higher total number of years in prison than after any earlier riots in Swedish history for more than 100 years.

But the popular movement cooperation is since then beginning to be rebuilt on different issues with social welfare as the issue gaining most momentum. This time thanks to important work by Attac the Swedish mainstream trade unions are also participating in popular movement networks together with organisations like Friends of the Earth Sweden. The same kind of alliances that built the earlier Nordic efforts like SEED Popular Forum 1990 are now joined by the trade unions in organising European Social Forum to be held in Malmö in the South of Sweden 2008.

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam is one of the initiators of ESF 2008 with a role also in the WSF process. Together with Nordic cooperation partners like Popular Movement Study Group VK Finland organised 15 activities in 2005 to celebrate the 75 anniversary of the Salt March using the occasion to promote the ideas of Gandhi and global popular movement cooperation. VK activists also learned from the experiences of repression at the EU-Summit in Gothenburg 2001. At the Asia-EU Summit in Helsinki 2006 a team of observers was initiated by Thomas Wallgren with the result that the discussion afterwards was much more balanced when the observers could claim that also police made mistakes. At the G8 Summit in Rostock in Germany 2007 the mass civil disobedience regained strength in protesting against the present world order and in Copenhagen mass protests against the tearing down a house for Youth “Ungdomshuset” have also turned more and more into well organised mass non-violent civil disobedience.

6. Conclusions

This paper shows that Gandhi and other Indian influences and interaction have been important to the political culture of the Nordic countries and sometimes to all Western countries all through the past ninety years. In the 1930s the Indian freedom struggle inspired the first modern international solidarity movement in the Nordic countries that was also international by organizing news services, fact-finding missions and a network of national organisations capable of organizing meetings and other activities. This kind of solidarity organisations became common in the 1960s but the example was in the Nordic countries set in the early 1930s.

Long-lasting influence came out of the idea to start constructive programs with the help of international volunteer work camps which became an effort bridging gaps globally thanks to the inspiration from Gandhi and the leadership of Pierre Ceresole with the mission to Bihar 1934. In spite of hard-ships due to the World War II this work camp movement survived and became the seed of many other movements bridging the gaps between East and West, North and South. The Indian impulses to the international popular movements have hard times to survive during this first period of the liberation struggle but can do this especially in the form of the international work camp movement were internationalism and live as you preach can be celebrated.

Stronger impact have the boycott, long marches, direct action to intervene non-violently in conflicts and mass support for constructive programs of the second period. A combination of them all makes Sweden a pioneer in the Western world in supporting third world liberation movements closely followed by Finland and Norway but never really by Denmark. At the beginning of this period the support for the struggle against US imperialism and war in Vietnam was less than a percentage of population and no political party backed the anti-imperialist movement, in 1972 nearly three million Swedes out of eight million population signed a petition to the US to stop the bombings of North Vietnam, a petition supported by all political parties. Sweden backed the liberation movements in Southern Africa with more than 100 million US dollars until apartheid was abolished. The limitation of this period is its use of the Indian impulses into methods for supporting traditional national liberal demands from the 19th century. The development model as such

was not questioned. The Indian impulses thus became less and less evident although they were fully addressed at the climax of the confrontations that brought about the change in the political culture of the Nordic countries towards the third world.

In the third period the development model was challenged strongly 1970 by the Norwegian environmental movement directly inspired by Gandhi. This did not only effect the environmental issue but was also crucial in giving ideological strength to the alliance between rural and urban people in the referendum on membership in the European Economic Common market, EEC, in 1972. Here an alliance of popular movements was up against all major groups in society, the industry, the media, large political parties to the right and to the left. But the popular movement won the referendum against most odds and self-confidence was strengthened both among rural people and those opposing the dominant development model. In Finland and Sweden similar actions took place with Indian influence expressively addressed while Gandhi in Denmark was more of an inspiration for the peace movement of the 1980s. Indian influences also were influential in democratizing the UN and making it more open to popular movements. The limitation of this period is a national understanding of the victory in the Norwegian referendum. This brought the movement back into some tendencies of state focus while at the same time the environment and development critique is not transformed into a social critique due to both inner limitations in what was called the environment and alternative movement and the left who wanted to maintain its monopoly on linking issues and movements defining the environmental movement falsely as single-issue movement. The strength of the period is the continued influences brought to the Nordic and other countries by new Indian popular movements like the Chipko and Narmada andolan.

In the fourth period the Indian influence is further integrated into third world influences on global popular movements opening avenues for democratizing the world order. Mass civil disobedience is in the Nordic countries not any longer mainly focused on environmental issues but takes also place to hide refugees, stop racists from harassing neighbourhoods, defend public spaces, stop the closure of welfare services or protest against Summits. The linkage to Indian inspiration is less obvious if it exists at all although among the internationally active groups inspired by People 's Global Action or Gandhi the understanding of the importance of Indian popular movement mass civil disobedience strategy is there. The period started with a strong influence of Indian comprehensive development critique in Finland and at the Nordic and European SEED Popular Forum. This development critique is still there but have partly been replaced by a growing interest in questions of global democracy and the role of popular movements in our societies and globally. It is too early to judge but one might state that while especially the second and third period is characterized by influences primarily going from India to the Nordic countries the fourth period can be a starting point for a more interactive exchange.

One of the main obstacles to such a more two-way dialogue is the need to build on the truth of the earlier periods. Without recognizing that for almost a century India was a main inspiration to popular movements in the West changing and democratizing these societies and their role in the world, there is no chance of overcoming the hybris established by Western science claiming the west to be the best in global democracy and creating development. This understanding might have as strong opponents in India as in the West as India now seems to have left the Gandhians insights far behind and adopt to Western values

and the narcissism of the Western world is well-known. Opposition has its roots in lack of understanding the world as a global reality beyond nations and the separation of politics, economy, ecology and culture. From a comprehensive perspective the satyagraha, national liberation, antiracist, anticolonial, ecological and development critique influences from India have had lasting impacts that need to be seen in its full importance for global history if we want to make global democracy a reality.

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