

# **GANDHI AND THE NEW POPULAR MOVEMENTS IN EUROPE**

Tord Björk, Popular Movements Study Group, Sweden  
Marko Ulvila, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Finland  
and SADED/CSDS, India

tord.bjork@mju.se  
marko.ulvila@kaapeli.fi

## 1. Introduction

In this paper we discuss the impacts of Gandhi and other Indian thinkers and actors on 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 lasting impacts on the movements.

By new popular movements in the context of Europe we refer to the broad civic initiatives that had their peak after the second world war. The old movements, such as the labour movement and various rural and peasant movements, 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 to the new movements by reviving themselves.

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 influence of Gandhian and Indian popular movements 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 during the 20<sup>th</sup> century 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 Eurocentric world view.

The research for this paper has been carried out by Tord Björk along a full-time job as a teacher and activism in environmental and solidarity movements. 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 contributed 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 Indo-Nordic connection, not particular interest in India or Gandhi.

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. For this paper popular movement is defined as a lasting collective effort that at the same time tries to change society and to live according to its own principles.

The Gandhian and Indian influence on Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) 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 together with small but crucial alternative movements struggling for peace and global justice with inspiration from India ending with massive 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 end of the 1980s, is too early to be named 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 European 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 contacts benefited from direct contacts with Gandhi himself.

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

The freedom struggle of 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 the 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*.

In January 1929 Hørup 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.

A feverish solidarity activity developed in Europe after the Salt March. 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. The committee published the magazine the "Indian Press", the first international magazine to support the Indian cause abroad with Hørup as a main contributor. (Terp 2007)

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.”  
(Reddy & Terp 2006)

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 Swiss radical pacifist Pierre Ceresole. The activity has been facilitated by Service Civil International (SCI) 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. (Bernet 2007)

The growth of the movement was halted by the Second World War. Towards the end of the war new national work camp organisations and members of the Service Civil International were set up and started to prepare for reconstruction work based on voluntary 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 particular 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 international intentions. In Norway Internasjonalt 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. 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 the 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 1968 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. This first international consumer boycott campaign to end the Apartheid regime in South Africa 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.

During the following years the opinion against apartheid grew in the Nordic countries. 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. The inspiration for the European campaigns for African liberation and against apartheid and for 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.

Håkan Thörn argues that Western notions labelling the kind of mass actions that are used in the beginning of the 1960s as new politics are false. When "single-issue" strategies, civil disobedience and consumer boycotts were used in the North they were 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. (Thörn 2006)

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 in developing countries. 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 inspiration for peace *padyatras* 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 late 1950s and 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. Philosopher 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. The same year in Denmark No More War group made direct action sit-ins to stop rockets for atomic weapons from being unloaded. In Finland a similar movement, the Committee of 100, started in 1963 to mobilise long demonstrations with a carnival-like participation. In Iceland, Denmark and Norway actions were organised with demands against having atomic bombs on their own soil, in Finland concerning defence policy and in Sweden against the plans for a Swedish atomic bomb. In the Nordic countries the movement was successful and in some years the plans for having nuclear weapons on Nordic soil was dropped for the time being.

Discussions on non-violence and Gandhian methods rather than Gandhi's whole ideology were crucial in this era that has been described as the breakthrough of new social movements in the North by its own activists and academicians. 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." (Liversage 1987) The Operation Gandhi had a mass influence across Europe.

### *3.3 Shanti sena and Direct Non-Violent Interventions in Conflicts*

The third inspiration came from Gandhian peace army tradition – *shanti sena*. Already in the 1930s Westerners inspired by Gandhi had made an attempt to set up international teams of activists willing to interfere nonviolently in conflicts. 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 were at times successfully able 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. Through these groups inspiration came to Great Britain motivating civil disobedience and organising long marches against atomic weapons. But it went further.

In 1957 the Quaker Lawrence Scott started an action group in the US that became permanent under the name of the Committee for Nonviolent Action Activists a year later. The Committee was supported by 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. Three groups were sent from Ghana through the Sahara desert to protest against French atomic bomb test sites in Southern Algeria in 1959-1960. (Moser-Punagsuwan 1995)

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".

World Citizen Movement in Sweden and Committee for Nonviolent Action in the US came up with the idea to organise a long peace walk from the USA to the soviet Union. Secular Gandhian anarchists met thus Christian pacifist Gandhians. The result was a padyatra - 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. 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.

The most important contribution inspired by Satyagraha and the Indian direct action tradition came later in the struggle for democracy and global solidarity. This gained a peak when the mass movement against the US war in Vietnam grew stronger together with mass support for third world solidarity in general.

When the repression against the anti Vietnam war movement grew during 1967 in Sweden the street activists and intellectuals found in satyagraha a way to join hands to force the government to support the liberation movement and oppose the US war. In December 1967 some 1.500 participants at a mass meeting decided to challenge the ban to demonstrate near the US Embassy. They broke the police lines and struggled their way close to the Embassy. The violent police repression faced by the peaceful demonstrators became such an issue, that the government changed its position two months later and minister Olof Palme joined the demonstrations hand in hand with North Vietnam delegates.

#### *3.4. Mass Mobilisation of School Children for International Solidarity*

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

At this time all international organisations of relevance to popular movements and politics had their global leadership in industrial countries either in the West or the East. The exception was the Theosophical movement with headquarters in India.

In 1961 five young theosophists, Jan Fjellander, Roland von Malmberg, Christer von Malmberg, 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 sent out with the help of theosophist youth organisation TUG a kit to all 1.500 schools in Sweden containing information on how to make a fund raising action and why the money is needed to enable the Lutheran Aid organisation to help the refugee children. 110 schools got involved and the result was more funds than the aid organisation could handle.

The next year the established organisation for pupils, SECO, took over the campaign collecting twice as much money to Algeria, and in 1964 the campaign became Scandinavian in a joint Danish-Norwegian effort supporting Peru. In 1967 it became Nordic and Finnish schools participated also. 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 for a day and the payment went to solidarity with the third world. Money was raised also to humanitarian work of armed liberation movements like Frelimo, ANC, SWAPO and others in Southern Africa from 1969 and onwards, apart from common third world development projects often directed to education.

No total estimate has been made of the sum collected but it is probably above half a billion euros 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.

Thus Gandhian and 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 Indian inspiration. 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 boycotts, 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 to change the society.

#### **4. Environmental Movement 1970 - 1990**

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

In 1969 three Norwegian men made a trip in a car to India that might be considered the most important Nordic-Indian encounter so far. They were Sigmund Kvaløy, Johan Galtung and Arne Næss. Their goal was to participate in the celebrations of Gandhi's 100 years anniversary. Næss was a university professor of philosophy in Norway and an interpreter of Gandhian thought. Galtung had started the first Peace Research Institution in the West in Oslo 1959 and later became central in establishing futures research. Kvaløy was a jazz music enthusiast, philosopher and activist.

The following year environmental civil disobedience flowered 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 where the power station should be constructed while leaving the original Eikesdal valley with no waterfall except 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 dam was eventually built but the action started a new era in Norwegian politics that also inspired similar actions in neighbouring countries.

The Mardøla action was initiated 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 a development critique.. Sigmund Kvaløy 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 Norwegian membership in the European Union (at the time abbreviated EEC, European Economic Community).

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. In Sweden successful non-violent direct actions took 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 Finland in 1979 the Finnish environmental movement organised its first mass civil disobedience action to protect the lake Kojjärvi in a Gandhian manner. 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.

In the 1980s Nordic contacts with the Chipko movement in India grew. The Chipko model was applied in 1987 when 400 activists hugged trees to stop the building of the motorway at the West Coast of Sweden proposed by the European Industrialists. The activists were 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 well known term inspired from India for anyone who wanted to protect values of importance to the community. Sunderlal Bahaguna from the Chipko movement also went to the West Coast to show his support and demonstrate together with the local tree huggers.

## **5. Global Democracy Movement 1989 -**

It is 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 1st January 1994 when the US-Mexico free trade agreement came into force thus building the link with long-term local struggles and global ones. The other main source is in the Gandhian tradition in India. By 1998 these two came together in organising the anti-globalisation movement into an international initiative.

Gandhian inspiration strongly re-emerged on global scale in 1998 when the Karnataka farmers and their chairman M.D.Nanjundaswamy along with others from Gandhian socialist background such as Kishen Pattnayak and Medha Patkar took the leadership in forming People's Global Action against the WTO and Free Trade (PGA). It centred on the principles of non-violence and refusal to cooperate as the main tools in the struggle against the neoliberal world order. The emphasis was 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 the WTO in Bangalore in 1993.

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 the WTO were carried out all over the world and the multilateral agreement on investment (MAI) defeated. The anti-globalisation movement emerged with summit protesters and the PGA as key actors, obtaining global media coverage first time in Seattle during the WTO

ministerial meeting in 1999. While the media often state the 1999 Seattle demonstrations as the beginning of the anti-globalisation movements, its origins can be traced to the struggles years before in India and Mexico.

## *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 has been 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 (VK) 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.

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 (ESF).

Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – An Alliance for Comprehensive Democracy is one of the organisers of ESF 2008 with a role also in the World Social Forum process. Together with Nordic cooperation partners like Popular Movement Study Group VK organised 15 activities in 2005 to celebrate the 75th 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 hardships 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 had hard times to survive during this first period of the liberation struggle but did 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. 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. However, 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 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 effect only 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 in hiding refugees, in stopping racists from harassing neighbourhoods, in defending public spaces, in stopping the closure of welfare services or in protesting against Summits. The linkage to Indian inspiration is less obvious 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 say, 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 challenges 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 leader 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 Gandhian insights far behind and adopt to Western values. Opposition has its roots in lack of understanding the world as a global reality beyond nations and beyond 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 their complete importance for global history if we want to make global democracy a reality.

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