

## **Influence of Gandhian Principles of Nonviolence in the Singing Revolution (Sąjūdis Movement) of Lithuania**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Singing Revolution (Sąjūdis Movement) was a non-violent freedom struggle of Lithuania along with Estonia and Latvia for liberation from an authoritarian regime of the Soviet Union. It is an inspiring precedent of non-violent political action in the late Twentieth century in which people's power of non-violence and their strong desire for independence expressed through the songs and culture. The key determinants which motivated the Leaders of Sąjūdis to adopt Gandhian principles and methods to produce a non-violent counter force against the violence of the Soviet army were; historical linkages, cultural and linguistic ties between Indian and Lithuania, similarity and popularity of Hindu philosophy and religion among the Lithuanian intellectuals, success stories of non-violent freedom struggle of India, and many other non-violent revolutions across the world. The proceedings of Singing Revolution have been the result of collective solidarity of Lithuanian people and their unbroken faith and persistent efforts in employing non-violent means to regain the national sovereignty. In fact, the singing revolution had set an example of the success of Gandhian principles of non-violence in the countries of Eastern Europe, and a major milestone in the history of non-violent revolutions.

**Key Words :** Non-violence, Satyagraha, Civil resistance, Sąjūdis, Baltic way

### **INTRODUCTION**

The people of Lithuania, along with Estonia and Latvia had waged several violent or non-violent wars at different phases of foreign occupation and subjugation of the nation. Moreover, the independence of the Baltic states in late 20<sup>th</sup> century was a watershed not only in the history of the Baltic States, but also stands as a major milestone in the history of modern world. Another importance of this great historical event was that people's non-violent aspirations for the restoration of their lost freedom from totalitarian regime voiced through national cultures and patriotic folk songs which were banned earlier under the Soviet rule. Intrinsically, the leaders of Sąjūdis shifted their techniques, methods and strategies from violent to non-violent to achieve the national freedom. Throughout the non-violent freedom movement (Sąjūdis<sup>1</sup>) of Lithuania, Gandhian principles of non-violence could be seen as a strong driving force in the formulation of strategies, methods and tactics of mass mobilization. In fact, the manifestation of successful non-violent resistance appeared to be well organized, inspired

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from various external non-violent leaders across the globe.

This great historical phenomenon, in which common people and political activists got their spiritual and moral strength by singing songs, is known as the “Singing Revolution”. The non-violent methods and tactics of Singing Revolution have a clear resemblance with Mahatma Gandhi’s principles of non-violence. However, the implementation of non-violent methods was not an innovation in the freedom struggle of Lithuanian people; the elements of non-violence were identical in the rich historical “culture and its symbolic expression”<sup>2</sup> of the three Baltic states. Eventually, Culture served as an instrument of national liberation and revival of mass consciousness in the late twentieth century. Clemens had argued that “Survival of the Baltic peoples and their emergence as independent states in 1920 and re-emergence in 1991 resulted from various forms of soft power, skilfully converted to undermine foreign rule and promote self-rule.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the power of culture and desire of self-determination culminated in the form of songs during public demonstrations, revival of symbolism and ancestral glorious past<sup>4</sup>, and celebration and commemorations of historical events, etc. Moreover, to disseminate the message of non-violent past, the artists and painters transformed the images of the Son of *Kalevi* and the *Bearslayer*<sup>5</sup> from their militant aspects to “more humane – even gentle and self-sacrificing”<sup>6</sup>.

In fact, any non-violent movement required a central point of contact between the people, where they could share their common cultural and historical legacies, and bitter experiences under a particular authority. This is the point at which people realised evils and oppressions, inhuman and barbarous face of existing rulers, and prepared themselves to have an organised non-violent confrontations against the evil doers. Mahatma Gandhi always emphasized to strike at the source of power with the help of that illegal authority maintains its control over the masses. The power which is envisaged in every individual: “In politics, (the use of nonviolent action) is based upon the immutable maxim that government of the people is possible only so long as they consent either consciously or unconsciously to be governed.”<sup>7</sup> If the people would not cooperate and support the government in any sphere of life, that government would not be successful to undermine the will of people.

Another important mechanism that’s also very necessary to organize the non-violent demonstrations is to “have adequate organizational support and firm ideological control”<sup>8</sup> over the movement to elude the violent confrontations. Moreover, it requires to provide training to prepare non-violent volunteers (Gandhiji called them *Satyagrahi*) to take sufferings without doing counter violence. Non-violent struggle could be an adequate and effective alternative of violent resistance. As Grazina Miniotaite a Lithuanian intellectual correctly noted “Gandhi was among the first national leaders to show both in theoretical analysis and practical action that nonviolent struggle is a positive force.”<sup>9</sup> On the basis of measures and parameters of non-violent resistance; the liberation movement of Lithuania remained a successful example of late twentieth century to organize and maintain the non-violent movements.

The central point of contact among Baltic people had been their historical legacies and bitter experiences under the authoritarian rule of Soviet empire. In fact, political activists, artists and intellectuals made efforts to establish a comprehensive mass contact through; public meetings and demonstrations, arts, literary writings, song festivals, etc. One of the most important means of mass contact became the media. The media persons patriotically, facilitated non-violent actions and worked as a forum for public communication: “Journalists saw themselves as centrally involved in the non-violent movement regardless of whether their political loyalties leaned toward popular fronts or citizens’ committees.”<sup>10</sup> Lithuanian leaders of Sąjūdis movement used media as an instrument to establish public communication and to disseminate the ideals of non-violence. Popular public media transformed itself into a forum for debate and discussion about the illegalities of Soviet rule and brutalities over Lithuanian people.

In fact, the Soviet policy of forced Russification, and totalitarian communist regime already

created an environment of deep indignation and dissatisfaction among the Lithuanian people. Since the occupation of Lithuania, the dissident groups and reformer's movement had been challenged broadly, the various aspects of human rights violation, restriction of religious freedom, and rejection of national self-determination. The people of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had developed the sentiments of national protection, but at this point of time "the collective emotional attachment of people or a group for their habitats in which they grow up becomes the nationalism."<sup>11</sup> Moreover, the massive loss of population, culture and identity, and 'increasing environmental degradation'<sup>12</sup> due to the industrialization and collectivization proved the extensive failure of communist rule. This widespread anti-Soviet wrath among the dissidents and patriotic groups, exiled people, artists and intelligentsia turn out to be as an important force in the national awakening in the mid of 1990s. In 1985, Gorbachev became the general secretary of the communist party of the USSR and started the social and political reforms, *Perestroika* (restructuring) and *Glasnost* (openness) to come over the economic stagnation.<sup>13</sup>

The movement for national liberation got its momentum when the Sąjūdis (Reform Movement of Lithuania) the first political organization was founded by "the group consisted of writers, artists, journalists, scholars, architects, musicians, and philosophers"<sup>14</sup> including communist members; under the guiding slogan "openness, democracy, and sovereignty."<sup>15</sup> Within a short period of time it spread to every corner of Lithuania and got the enormous support of people, and electronic and print media; "with each newspaper article and public demonstration the sense of solidarity and shared ideas became more intense."<sup>16</sup> The significant cornerstone of the Sąjūdis movement was that it sought to establish non-violent means to achieve the goal of national freedom. Attempts were made to signify the non-violent national culture rooted in the Lithuanian society, "the mechanism was based on an idea that songs and singing are the nation's preferred "weapons."<sup>17</sup> The song festivals, the national heritage of the Baltic States, worked as a force to connecting the hearts of every individual, irrespective of all the ethnicities. It played a very vital role in uniting the people on a single platform to fight for their national freedom. The songs gave them the spiritual power and psychological support to keep them energized for the novel cause of national liberation.

### **The Gandhian Principles of Non-violence :**

Mahatma Gandhi, known as the father of Indian independence has turned out to be a strong inspiration for non-violent socio-political movements around the world. However, the Gandhian principle of non-violence (*Ahimsa*), a central ideal of his political philosophy is not his innovation; the ideas that shaped Gandhian non-violence were drawn both from Western and Indian sources. The trial of Socrates as described in Plato's *Apology* had a deep impact on Gandhi. The moral principles of the Sermon on the Mount, as interpreted in Leo Tolstoy's (1893) '*The Kingdom of God Is within You*', had a lifelong sway on him. *A Letter to a Hindoo*<sup>18</sup> (1908), correspondence between Gandhi and Tolstoy, also influenced Gandhi's views on non-violence. Tolstoy through his letters encouraged Gandhi in his struggle in Transvaal, South Africa (Tolstoy 1909)<sup>19</sup>. The substantial contribution which he made for the success of non-violent power in action is his innovation to develop methods and technics, and pragmatic attempts to employ this "political philosophy systematically in the individual, social and political life of man, the national state, revolution, international intercourse, international organization and the new world order."<sup>20</sup> He himself accepted that "I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and Non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could."

His political philosophy of non-violence as moral opposition of violence was based on the pragmatic consideration about the most effective ways to mobilize popular power, and to resist and replace authoritarian and undemocratic regimes and protect fundamental rights. This popular power was vested in the "collective actions of citizens to whom Gandhiji considered higher than state"<sup>21</sup>. He propounded an action oriented philosophy for the reconstruction of modern world civilization, based

on universal truth force or non-violence, which he considered very near to God. Mahatma Gandhi's opening words of his defence speech at his trial at Ahmadabad "Non-violence is the first article of my faith. It is also the last article of my creed."<sup>22</sup>, reveals his deep seated faith in non-violence. As a worshipper of *Satya* and *Ahimsa* (truth and non-violence) he trained and inspired his followers during the Indian freedom struggle. He utilized the strategy of non-violence as a weapon for liberating the Indian masses from British domination.

Gandhi applied the methods of mass communication for enhancing the ideas of non-violence and *Satyagraha* through mass meetings and personal writings which published in *Young India* and *Harijan*. Despite, having British control over the press, Indian press showed its active participation in mobilizing the nationalistic feelings and propagating Gandhian ideas in Indian society.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, Gandhi opened up various volunteer training camps including *Sabarmati Ashram*, for *Satyagrahi's* to teach them about the methods and strategies of *Satyagraha*. He organized *Prarthana Sabhas* (Prayer assemblies) in which he, with his followers used to sing harmonious songs. The patriotic poems like *Vande Mataram* (salute to Mother India) and Indian national anthem '*Jan Jan Mann Adhinayak*' written by Bankimchandra Chatterji and Rabindranath Tagore, respectively, became a very inspirational for bearing the British brutal treatments during the painful hours of civil resistance. The symbolic images of 'Bhaarat Maata' (Mother India), portrayal of tri-colour national flag and commemoration of the historical event and celebration of cultural traditions stimulated the self-consciousness about the glorious past of Indian nationhood.

Gandhi's non-violent attempts had been continued till the achievement of the freedom of India on 15 August 1947. The victory of Gandhi's non-violent strategy influenced the prominent scholars and peace activists in India and abroad such as Gene Sharp, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King. The Gandhian model of non-violent movement focused on people's power of civil resistance broken the hegemony of colonial rule, forced occupation and authoritarian rule, etc. Gandhi's model of non-violent political action emerged as a pioneering strategy to mobilize the masses against the unjust political systems. It has been exemplified by Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, Apartheid Movement in South Africa, the 'People's Power' movement in the Philippines, and the non-violent collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. Gandhian principles of non-violence remain a source of inspiration for millions of masses, those were suffering the authoritarian rule; the case of Singing Revolution is the pioneering one in the field of non-violent political action inspired by Mahatma Gandhi.

### **Moving towards Gandhian Principles of Non-violence :**

Gandhian influence in the ideas and strategies can be understood from two aspects: common cultural and linguistic background of India and Baltic states and Baltic intellectual discourse on non-violence and strategies adopted in Singing Revolution. It has been mentioned by Baltic scholars and political leadership that in the Baltic states, since a very long time, Indian culture and philosophy have been very popular among the Lithuanian philosophers and intellectuals, even some extent among common people. Prof. Vytis Cuibrinkas (Centre for Oriental Studies, Vilnius University, Lithuania), in his lecture on "Lithuanian Singing Revolution" mentioned that "they studied and discussed about the ideology and strategy of India's freedom struggle led by Gandhi to adopt while they were planning their own struggle for independence during the last years of Soviet Union."<sup>24</sup>.

The first of all it would be crucial to discuss, in brief, the long historical, cultural and linguistic linkages between India and Lithuania. Firstly, it is the assumption of old cultural, linguistic and civilizations link between the Baltic countries and India. The historical common ancestral roots of Balts and India are often cited based on the similarity in language and Vedic culture. Ancient Indian Aryan Vedic religious traditions and practices had very closer marks to the ancient Baltic pagan religious practices.<sup>25</sup> The Indo-European linguistic and cultural background is depicted in studies as

the basis of this common origin hypothesis. He further wrote that:

“It may be mentioned in passing that during the nineteenth century, when the Baltic peoples, the Latvians and the Lithuanians, began to study their national literature of the *Dainas* and became conscious of their Indo-European heritage, through their study of it from the German *Sanskritists* who took a leading part in establishing the “Aryan” or Indo-Germanic or Indo-European bases of culture”<sup>26</sup>

The Indo-European connections of the ancient pagan traditions remain important to the modern Latvian and Lithuanian pagans. The myths of pre-Christian Latvian *Dainas* and Lithuanian *dainos*, for example, have been compared often with the Vedic hymns of ancient India<sup>27</sup>. India’s religion, philosophy, culture, customs, myths, spirituality, attracted the Lithuanian philosophers and intellectuals to explore it on their own land. One of the prominent Indology scholars and philosopher during the Soviet era in Lithuania, Vydunas (Vilhelmas Storost, 1868-1953), is known as the Lithuanian Gandhi, got inspirations from the Hindu religious text: “He was extremely interested in Indian philosophy, especially Hindu religious philosophy and spirituality so that he could create a system of philosophy school based on Vedanta.”<sup>28</sup> Prof. Audrius Beinorius (Center of Oriental Studies, Vilnius University, Lithuania) analysed that, “The affinity of Vydūnas and the Hindu reformers is best seen through his and their relation with their own culture and the principles of using the culture in the struggle against national oppression.”<sup>29</sup> Prof. Audrius Beinorius further clarified:

When the philosophy of Vydūnas is taken as a complete system, as a result, it is impossible not to see his affinity to that trend of Indian philosophy which included the ideas propagated by his almost contemporary figures in the Indian national movement and the reformers of one of the basic religions of the country — Hinduism. The most outstanding among them were R. Roy, D. Tagore, Sri Ramakrishna, S. Vivekananda, S. Dayananda, Sri Aurobindo, B. Tilak and M.K. Gandhi.<sup>30</sup>

In the beginning of the Twentieth century, during the freedom struggle of India, the Indian leaders have been keenly watching and extremely supporting the independence of the Baltic states. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a freedom fighter and India’s first Prime Minister expressed his views about the social-political development in the Baltic states after the First World War:

“They (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland) are small states, but each is a distinct cultural entity with a separate language. You will be interested to know that the Lithuanians are Aryans (like many others in Europe) and their language bears quite a close resemblance of Sanskrit. This is a remarkable fact, which probably many people in India do not realize, and which brings home to us the bonds of which unite distant people”.<sup>31</sup>

Another famous Lithuanian “traveller, explorer and anthropologist, Antanas Poška (1903-1992) — the man who undertook an incredible journey to India on a motorbike all the way from Vilnius in 1929”, arrived in India in 1930s and spent almost 7 years. During his stay he explored linguistic and cultural links between India and Lithuania. He wrote a series of books “From the Baltic Sea to Bengal” in which he describes his experiences during the “Great Journey” in very attractive manner. Hermann Kallenbach, a Jewish architect of Lithuanian background had been a worthy friend of Mahatma Gandhi during his stay in South Africa. Kallenbach was associated with Satyagraha movement in South Africa. Sonja Schlesin, Gandhi’s private secretary in South Africa, was also a Lithuanian<sup>32</sup>. There were many more Lithuanian personalities who directly or indirectly remained in touch with religious and cultural legacy of India; it reflected in their literary works and paintings, etc.<sup>33</sup>

The freedom struggle of India became the source of inspirations for many countries of the world those had been suffering under the colonial and authoritarian regime. Miniotaite described that the very first resolution of the Council stressed the importance of the discipline of non-violence in the pursuit of the goal of independence. In the words of Miniotaite whose ideas were drawn from Lithuanian non-violent resistance:

The scale of the East European non-violent liberation movements can only be compared to India’s drive for independence, led by Mohandas Gandhi ... Gandhi was among the first national

leaders to show both in theoretical analysis and practical action that nonviolent struggle is a positive force that can be successfully used in conflict. Yet with Gandhi we see this axiom applied on a nearly unimaginable scale for national liberation.<sup>34</sup>

The religion, traditions and culture of Lithuania also contain values and norms against violence; at several points of time they resisted the violent aggression over their nationality. The articulations of Vydaunas's philosophy of humanism, and love and kindness towards all human beings, had occupied a deep ground in the heart and mind of peace loving people of Lithuania. The philosophical underpinnings of Vydaunas and other Lithuanian leaders had developed a sense of spiritual resistance towards all kinds of wrongs and illegalities.

Finally, the ultimate reason to adopt non-violent means to restore national sovereignty was; to avoid the violent confrontations with the powerful Red Army, which could have caused into the bloodshed and socio-political devastation. The Baltic people had a very bitter experience of violent guerrilla warfare in the early period of their occupation by the Soviet Union. They realized that use of direct violent methods would be resulted in more bloodshed and injuries of civilian people; as the threat of military violence increased, an understanding had deepened that the only way of countering the aggression was "Gandhi's way"<sup>35</sup>. Robert Halvey rightly analysed about the Singing Revolution of three Baltic nations the "Strategic non-violent struggle is advanced as an alternative to armed conflict, in part, because of the reasonable likelihood that it will result in fewer lives lost and less destruction of property"<sup>36</sup>. The people of the Baltic states found the Gandhian non-violent means more adequate and trustworthy. For them it seemed the reliable weapon and worldwide supported approach to defeat the colonial and totalitarian regime of the Soviet Union.<sup>37</sup> Gorbachev's policies of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* provided them sufficient space and an opportunity to deploy non-violent methods.

### **The Manifestation of Gandhian Principles in Singing Revolution :**

The manifestation of Gandhian principles of non-violence could be studied in the ways as Sąjūdis mobilized the Lithuanian people to get independence through persistent, dedicated and active non-violent actions. In any non-violent struggle, the strategies and methods might be different according to the situation, but basic rudiments of non-violence remain same. The case of Singing Revolution is also a path breaking journey in the ways of non-violent political actions as it produced different tactics and methods, *i.e.* the power of songs inspired a million of people to fight for their national freedom. Since its foundation in 1988, Sąjūdis emerged as a political entity that started challenging the power monopoly of the Communist Party in Lithuania. It tries to make common consensus among the Lithuanian people about the socio-political issues; environmental pollution became the first priority that fuelled the process 'eco-nationalism'<sup>38</sup>. The popular support of the national integration called for the national awakening in the Baltic region to regain their independence as a nation, as they were before Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939s.

Leaders of Sąjūdis formulated their strategy and tactics based on the non-violent methods to mobilize the people. Moreover, writings of Gene Sharp published in the Baltic states to teach them how to organize the non-violent resistance<sup>39</sup>. Eventually, Sąjūdis became mass organization; participation became open to all, including dissidents and political prisoners. Sąjūdis organized people from all strata of political, social and cultural background. The main strategies of Sąjūdis were Civilian resistance, civil dis-obedience, picketing, socio-political boycott, singing songs and organizing cultural songs festivals, sending delegations, public meetings and protests, displaying the national flag, tearing down Soviet flags; holding memorial meetings, drawing national symbols and defiant slogans on walls, commemorating historical events, organizing anti-regime demonstration, distributing leaflets, defying illegal laws, and providing training of non-violent actions. Sąjūdis published the success stories of various non-violent revolutions; among them stories of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther

King translated in Lithuanian language and distributed to all non-violent participant: “They derived from a pattern of thought and action that spun from Henry David Thoreau to Lev Tolstoy to Gandhi to Martin Luther King”<sup>40</sup>.

The singing and music festivals, a hundred years old cultural tradition emerged as a common uniting force that energized the peaceful masses; it worked as a platform of public communication to enhance the ideas of non-violence. In July 1988, the tour of rock music festivals led by architect and musician Algirdas Kauspedas a member of the national council of Sąjūdis and a leader of best-known rock groups<sup>41</sup>. The songs turn out to be the weapon and shields; a mean to express the power of truth and non-violence; the hands of unarmed people were full of powerful weapons of songs<sup>42</sup>. They were singing consistently to be ready to bear the suffering of the nation, for the land of their fathers. Forbidden to sing anything other than Soviet propaganda songs, the choir and the crowds rang out as they sang “Land of My Fathers, Land that I Love” with lyrics<sup>43</sup>. Moreover, the singing culture and historical symbols enhanced the quest for national freedom. The music and songs placed a strong influence over the soul and the mind of the Lithuanian people.

In 1988, on the eve of Christmas, “people were asked to turn off their lights for half an hour and to put candles in their windows as a symbolic referendum for Lithuanian independence”<sup>44</sup>. Lithuanian people also adopted the methods of boycott and non-cooperation like a boycott of dairy products (controlled by the state monopoly) and the refusal to pay increased taxes. Till 1989, the influence of non-violent non-cooperation was so deep that the Lithuanian youths boycotted conscription and burned their conscription cards. A large number of individual citizens repeatedly accepted personal risk to oppose superior coercive force. “Over one hundred Lithuanian veteran of the Soviet army returned their medals and awards. Some public organizations, unions, and societies, including the Lithuanian Communist Party, ended their relationships with Moscow”<sup>45</sup>. These acts of social-political and economic non-cooperation of Lithuanian people had clear resemblances with the methods of Mahatma Gandhi which he used during the freedom struggle of India.

Another significant phenomenon during the Singing Revolution, which firmly holds the values of Gandhian non-violence, was the “Baltic Way”, a stunning example of solidarity and quest for freedom. In August 1989, about 2 million people joined hands to form a human chain, ‘The Baltic way’ that extended more than 650 km through Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the fateful Molotov-Ribbentrop<sup>46</sup>. People of three countries, taking hold of each other’s hand, were singing their patriotic songs; the event augmented the strong feeling of nationalism. Live media coverage of the event internationalized the demand of national freedom. The singing of nationalistic songs became an instrument for reducing tension and stress, encouraging the participant and moreover, psychologically disarming the opponents. The singing of patriotic songs was very similar to the Gandhian method of prayer that he used to sing to strengthen the spiritual and moral aspects of Satyagrahi’s. This human gathering demonstrated the strong will and aspirations of a large number of people.

The Baltic leaders found public media, an easy way for propagating and disseminating the Gandhian principles of non-violence among the Baltic masses. Therefore, mass media remained a very effective device and became a venue to discuss and propagate the non-violent Gandhian values among the common people. Moreover, for strengthening the nonviolent resistance among Baltic people and to teach them Gandhian methods of peaceful opposition, civil disobedience and non-violence, “the movie ‘The Gandhi’ was shown alternatively on nationwide television”<sup>47</sup>. The movie ‘The Gandhi’ which covers about all non-violent political protests of Mahatma Gandhi (from South Africa to Indian freedom struggle), produced a deep psychological influence over the mind of Baltic people to follow the non-violent path: “Popular Lithuanian newspapers, such as *Gimtasis Krastas*, *Soglasije*, and *Lietuvos Aidai*, published articles on the history and techniques of civilian are resistance. Several television shows taught the basic principles of civilian defence”<sup>48</sup>. Gradually,

Baltic press, TV channels and Radio stations all mass media resources became an integral partner of the singing revolution. Information and communication played a significant role in awakening the Baltic people toward the atrocities and illegal annexation of the three Baltic states by the Communist regime<sup>49</sup>.

Finally, the Lithuanian Supreme Council declared independence on 11 March, 1990. The Soviet leadership predictably denounced this act as unconstitutional. Moscow sought to bring Lithuania to heel with an economic blockade in April<sup>50</sup>. The strategy of civilian based defence well demonstrated during the January events. Before formulating the strategies of non-violent political action, Gene Sharp's famous book *Civilian-Based Defense* was studied by the Sąjūdis members and activists<sup>51</sup>. On 8 January 1991, Soviet tries to coup the existing independence; the leader of the Sąjūdis Vytautas Landsbergis communicated with people on radio channel to defend their strategic sites: "Come and help your own government, otherwise a foreign one would overcome us"<sup>52</sup>. People gathered from all over Lithuania to protect the supreme council building and strategic places. The people showed their comprehensive interest in following the strategies of civilian based defence. The influence of the non-violent actions was very strong that civilian based volunteers were to bear any burnt of aggressive actions of Red Army.

### **Conclusion :**

The Red Army troops moved on the capital of Vilnius, killing 14 and more 700 get injured, unarmed demonstrators protecting the nation's TV tower, news and images were transmitted out of the country from another station,<sup>53</sup> and large crowds were called out later that day to gather around the supreme council building. This day was memorized as 'bloody Sunday' in the history of Lithuania. This brutal act of Red Army and the dual character of Soviet policies of *Glasnost* and *Perestroika* revealed the real face of the Soviet Union before the world. The Sąjūdis leaders remained firm with their strategy of non-violent actions. Instead of surrendering or issuing a call to arms, Lithuania called on the citizenry to "hold to principles of nonviolent in subordinate resistance and political and social non-cooperation."<sup>54</sup> The unarmed people hold on the central principles of non-cooperation and civilian based defence, they were protecting their strategic site by singing songs and prayers. They protected their parliament with unarmed citizens and requested the Fellowship of Reconciliation to provide nonviolence training for the volunteer militia they had established. The brutal and cruel acts of Soviet army became ineffective before the unshaken faith of non-violent people. They translated the literary works of Gene Sharp, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, and many other non-violent leaders. In August 1991, Lithuania restored her sovereignty and was officially recognized as an independent nation.

The victory of the Singing Revolution was the victory of strategic non-violent actions, civilian based defence, civil resistance, social and political boycott and non-cooperation with an aggressor. It was the victory of singing people who firmly hold to the ideals of non-violent political action; they sang for the freedom of their nation and to restore the democratic values. In fact, overall comprehension makes it clear that it was Gandhian philosophy directly or indirectly, the Baltic people believed to be an adequate weapon for opposing the Soviet rule. In the newsletters of Sąjūdis leaders and their action plans employed all Gandhian techniques such as social and political non-cooperation, boycotts of soviet goods, civil dis-obedience and *Satyagraha*, etc. The national centre for the civilian based non-violent defence being set up even in the local town to teach the Gandhian ideals and trained the volunteers. The media made this task very easy by broadcasting the program for strengthening the no-violence. The case of the singing revolution proved the effective use and careful implementation of non-violent political action and success of Gandhian principles in the late Twentieth century in Eaten Europe.

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