

Lecturer: Will Travers

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence, Part 2 Nonviolent Action in Modern Movements**

“Wars are commonly fought over land. What do we do? This workshop provides an overview of some of the ways people have in the past few decades either obtained or kept land, implementing techniques of nonviolent action.”

### **Handouts**

- Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part Two: Methods*, pp. 388-9, 405-408 (3 pages)
- List of the movements discussed in the workshop (1 page)

### **Introduction**

Welcome to part 2 of the two-part workshop on Land Rights and Nonviolence. This particular workshop is on nonviolent action and how it's been used in recent history to obtain a more equitable distribution of land, or win back land for people from whom it was unjustly taken. In an era when a lot of violence is committed, and supposedly justified in the name of land rights, whether on the part of governments, or those working against governments, I think it's fairly timely and useful to study those instances in which equality and land rights have been obtained, in many cases, through exclusively nonviolent means.

I have organized this presentation mostly by country – that is modern-day 2008 nation-state. This is merely to help people visualize where I'm talking about, and assumes no bias on my part as to which side I'm rooting for, especially in those struggles for land rights where political independence is at stake. Also, since many of the struggles I'll be talking about involve indigenous groups, I sincerely hope not to offend by using the common country name, which often may be synonymous with what in many cases may be seen as the occupier. Finally, since there have been so many examples of nonviolent action being used successfully to win land rights for people, I will not attempt to be exhaustive neither in the breadth nor depth to which these I cover these movements, nor would I think you want me to be, as many of us have already arranged transportation out of Ann Arbor, and some of us may even have to work tomorrow.

## What is nonviolent action?

Nonviolent action is the strategic use of nonviolent methods to obtain a social or political goal. All those techniques listed before are part of it, as are numerous other techniques, not all of which you'd think about as constituting nonviolent action.

I'm going to go over first some definitions that Gene Sharp provides in the 2<sup>nd</sup> volume of his classic series *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* from 1973. This series is used as a basic reference point in the field for just about everything, and in this particular volume, he details the 198 separate methods of nonviolent action he identified, along with numerous examples illustrating each one. Method 173 – *Nonviolent occupation* – and method 183 – *Nonviolent land seizure* – apply especially to our topic today, and I've photocopied these pages for everyone so they can have them to refer to. Let's read a little from them....

A lot of this may remind some of you of squatting, and you'd be right. It basically is squatting. [Wikipedia](#) defines squatting as: "the act of occupying an abandoned or unoccupied space or building that the squatter does not own, rent, or otherwise have permission to use." Some issues to think about, however, before considering this nonviolent action are: Who technically owns the property being squatted upon? Is the property currently in dis-use? How long has it been since it's been used, and in what capacity? What are the needs of the people doing the squatting? Was any violence necessary to occupy the area? Any destruction of property? Has any compensation been offered? Has a genuine attempt at dialogue been made?

The answers to these questions are important for me to consider before I can really call an instance of squatting nonviolent action. In the examples I'll give involving land occupation, I try to take all these things into account.

## How has it been used for land rights?

So now that we have some idea what we're all talking about, let's look at how these things have been put into practice. I'm going to go over a lot of modern examples in anywhere between 19 and 21 different countries around the world, depending on how you count.

### Land Rights and Nonviolence in Israel

In the late 1960s a community was started about halfway between Tel-Aviv and Jerusalem, in land claimed by Israel after the Six Day War in 1967. Originally leased from a monastery of Trappist monks, [Major Wellesley Aaron](#) (grandfather of David Broza) and [Bruno Hassar](#) began a community intended to show that both Israeli Arabs and Jews can live peacefully together side by side. The community, located on one of the two Latrun hilltops, is called *Neve Shalom* in Hebrew, or *W\_\_at al-Sal\_m* in Arabic. In English it's *Oasis of Peace*. Anyway, about 50 families live there now (approx. 200 people) and about 300 more people are on the waiting list, with the village hoping to expand significantly. In a climate where so much antagonism is promoted between Arabs and Israelis, I think it's a nonviolent action of considerable proportions to found

and live in a village that promotes cooperation between both cultures, and bringing up, for instance, the children learning both languages.

Now before I go any further, since this is sometimes a sensitive topic for some people, I want to go on record as coming from what I see as a completely unbiased perspective. I'm neither Jewish, nor Palestinian, nor Druze, nor do I have a girlfriend that is any of those things. I've always tried to take a very dispassionate look at what's happened in "the holy land", with the only ideological stipulation being that I'm a firm believer in nonviolence. All violence, therefore, either on the part of the Palestinians or the Israelis, is in my opinion completely unjustified. So if I argue against something, please know that I'm not going at it from the point of view of someone from the other side, but merely someone who values all human life equally, regardless of religion or ethnicity.

Basically, whatever issues are at stake there, I just don't see them as so important that anyone deserves to die over them, let alone the many tens of thousands of people who have been killed there over the course of the last 60 years.

From the definitions that I just provided, do you think that the modern Israeli settlement movement could be considered nonviolent action? Why or why not? Can nonviolent action only be undertaken for what's considered a just cause? Does that leave me in the convenient position of accepting all those things I like as nonviolent action, and disqualifying all those things I don't? What about the legal question? The UN, the EU and others all consider Israeli settlement building to be illegal... but surely just because something's illegal – either according to national *or* international law – can't mean that nonviolent action can't be justified, no? Could we perhaps outline some criteria together for nonviolent action *to* be justified?

Links:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neve\\_Shalom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neve_Shalom)

<http://nswas.org/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli\\_settlement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israeli_settlement)

<http://www.peacenow.org/policy.asp>

### **Land Rights and Nonviolence in Palestine**

One story from Palestine involves [Mubarak Awad](#), a Palestinian-American activist and founder of the Washington, DC-based [Nonviolence International](#). In the late 1980s, a Palestinian farmer, whose land had been taken by Israeli settlers, asked Awad for a way to get it back. Awad was the director of the Jerusalem-based Palestinian Centre for the Study of Nonviolence at the time, which he himself had helped start. "Awad suggested that the simplest way would be to take down the fence that had been put up around it. He agreed to help the farmer, on condition that the participants not run away, even if they are shot or arrested, and not throw, or even pick up, stones. Within two days the man had assembled 300 people for the action. The settlers and soldiers started shooting, but no one ran away. Finally the military governor came and gave the land back to the Palestinians, who still have it."

Another story is something I read today on the website for the [International Solidarity Movement](#). After staging a 3.5 month protest against their pending eviction, the Al-

Kurd family of East Jerusalem were finally evicted last night, and 7 international activists were arrested.

Links:

<http://www.holylandtrust.org>

<http://archive.peacemagazine.org/v04n6p05.htm>

<http://www.palsolidarity.org/main/2008/11/09/al-kurd-family-evicted-from-their-home-in-east-jerusalem-seven-international-solidarity-activists-arrested-from-protest-camp/>

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in the Philippines**

In the Philippines in 2006, a wave of murders swept through peasant organizations working for nonviolent land reform. Through the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program act, also known as CARP, the Filipino government was supposed to distribute both public and private lands, which it often did when the land in question was small and non-controversial. The more controversial large *haciendas*, however, remained untouched. According to IndyMedia in Belgium, big land owners had “cultivated a sense of impunity hardened by the government’s coddling of landed interests, private armies, and the lack of political will to actually redistribute lands.”

A group calling themselves [Task Force Mapalad](#) (TFM), representing more than 300 affiliate organizations in the Negros Occidental region alone, had been working to hold the government accountable to the land reform promised way back in 1988. During the first half of 2006, six members of either TFM or one of the organizations they represent were gunned down in separate incidents by private armies supported by landlords.

On April 22, 2006, community organizer Rico Adeva, aged 39, was killed by three unidentified men armed with pistols as he was on his way home with his wife. After his murder, TFM organized a huge funeral caravan from Silay City to Bacolod City, where they held peasant mass actions at both the Hall of Justice and the provincial office of the Department of Agrarian Reform. The group in a statement said that they could not be stopped from “pursuing agrarian reform and land distribution,” nor “provoked into taking retaliatory measures.” They continued, “We have always fought for agrarian reform and for the right of the rural poor to own land within the bounds of the law, and we will always continue to do so. We will push hard—real hard—for reforms and for redistribution of lands within the framework of non-violence.”

Links:

[http://tfmnational.org/tfm/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=156&Itemid=49](http://tfmnational.org/tfm/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=156&Itemid=49)

<http://www.indymedia.be/en/node/2294>

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in Canada**

In Canada, just this year, the Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI) tribe of [Northern Ontario](#) began to fight nonviolently for the rights to their traditional territory. People

there have lately been taking advantage of an antiquated law which allows anyone to drill on private property, looking for mineral reserves, for a one-time fee of only about 28 Canadian dollars. While some of those taking advantages are individuals hoping to strike it rich, others include corporations like Platinex, Inc., who had been drilling for uranium on traditional KI land. When the KI tribe found their land being exploited they decided to do something. To protest the unjust law, several members of the tribe committed civil disobedience, becoming known as the KI6.

In January of this year, six community leaders, including Chief Donny Morris, “were imprisoned for protesting development on their traditional land... A sacred fire was consecrated in front of the Thunder Bay jail where they were being held, which was extinguished by police on 19 March, 2008. First Nations have spoken out about this alleged violation of the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) and suppression of traditional ceremony. Several members of KI and surrounding nations protested their leaders' imprisonment by walking all the way from Kenora, Ontario to Toronto. The leaders were given temporary parole to appear at the protest at Queen's Park on May 26, and were permanently freed by the Ontario Court of Appeal two days later.”

After this whole ordeal, Chief Donny Morris and some others, including tribe spokesman Jacob Ostaman, decided to initiate a nonviolent defense program to protect its people and its homeland. In a newspaper article from September, Ostaman said “the community would continue to approach protests with nonviolence with the creation of the KI Defense Project.” “The idea of the project is to establish KI jurisdiction and self-determination over its homeland to protect its right to lands and waters in KI traditional territory.”

Someone else arrested at around the same time, for protesting Frontenac Ventures' uranium exploration activities on his community's traditional territory, was Bob Lovelace, age fifty-nine, an ex-chief and spokesperson for the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation (AAFN). He's also a father of seven and a lecturer at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. When Frontenac Ventures eventually obtained a court order to keep protesters from disrupting their mining activities, Lovelace “defied the order. He argued that he was governed by Algonquin law. That defiance led to a six month jail sentence and a 25,000 Canadian-dollar fine against Mr. Lovelace.” “Ultimately Mr. Lovelace served only 102 days in prison before the jail order and fine were both struck down by an appeals court in a decision, released in July, that rebuked the trial court for ignoring earlier rulings related to native land claims.”

Another First Nation figure who's been a strong advocate of nonviolence is [Ovide Mercredi](#), chief of the Assembly of First Nations from 1991-1997. This is a group that fights for political representation for all the First Nations in Canada, protecting rights, treaty obligations, ceremonies, and claims of citizens. “Mercredi is an advocate of non-violent methods for change, and has been nominated by the Government of India for the [Gandhi Peace Prize](#).” “In May 2007 Mercredi along with his fellow Manitoba Chiefs began seeking compensation from Manitoba Telecom Services for every cellphone signal that passes through First Nations land, saying the airspace should be considered a resource like land and water. Mercredi was quoted as saying ‘When it comes to using airspace, it's like using our water and simply because there's no precedent doesn't mean that it's not the right thing to do.’” An interesting twist to the concept of “land” rights, I thought.

Links:

<http://www.afn.ca/>

<http://www.aafna.ca/>

<http://www.freeki6.ca/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assembly\\_of\\_First\\_Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assembly_of_First_Nations)

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/02/business/02mine.html?partner=rssnyt>

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Leader+promotes+non-violence-a030237262>

[http://www.wawataynews.ca/archive/all/2008/9/4/KI-takes-nonviolent-approach-with-defense-project\\_13960](http://www.wawataynews.ca/archive/all/2008/9/4/KI-takes-nonviolent-approach-with-defense-project_13960)

<http://activistmagazine.com/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=880&Itemid=143>

[http://home.istar.ca/~arc/english/net\\_gr.html](http://home.istar.ca/~arc/english/net_gr.html)

<http://sumoud.tao.ca/?q=node/view/983>

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in New Zealand**

In the late 1800s New Zealand became an epicenter of peaceful protest, concentrated mainly around a village called Parihaka, on the North Island, near New Plymouth. There, [Te Whiti o Rongomai](#) and his relative [Tohu Kakahi](#) used innovative methods of nonviolent resistance to try and regain the land which had been confiscated by the New Zealand colonial government. “Such confiscations were in direct breach of the Treaty of Waitangi which had been signed in 1840.”

“Both men were committed to nonviolence, drawing on ancestral Maori as well as Christian teachings.” Beginning in 1879, the M\_ori tribe “asserted their land rights by removing survey pegs and by ploughing and fencing across roads and settler-claimed areas.” “In November 1881 the village of Parihaka was occupied by Government troops and Tohu was arrested along with Te Whiti and hundreds of others.” They “were charged with ‘wickedly, maliciously, and seditiously contriving and intending to disturb the peace’ but they were never brought to trial.” Unfortunately, by the time they were released, “the arrests and dispersion had reduced the population and importance of Parihaka.”

Interestingly, “since 1975 (and especially since 1985) the Waitangi Tribunal has provided a forum in which Maori with land confiscation and misuse grievances can be heard. The process has been ongoing and has resulted in several large awards in compensation, most noticeably with Ngai Tahu in respect of most of the South Island.”

So even though they didn’t technically win, at least back in the day, it’s also doubtful that they would have won had they adopted *violent* methods. There was no shortage of examples from New Zealand of the Colonial government suppressing indigenous uprisings with their far-superior weaponry and fire-power. The bottom line is: just like violence, nonviolence doesn’t always work. If done strategically, however, for an objective that commands widespread popular support, it can very often be more effective than violence. And even though the Maori land rights were, in the long run, not respected, this example is still significant as being an instance of organized nonviolence, with a very conscious emphasis on the purity of the means, several years before Gandhi, who is widely considered the person who came up with the idea.

Speaking before his campaign of nonviolent land seizure in “June 1879, Te Whiti said to his ploughmen: ‘Go, put your hands to the plough. Look not back. If any come with guns and swords, be not afraid. If they smite you, smite not in return. If they rend you, be not discouraged. Another will take up the good work.’” It honestly sounds like something that Gandhi could have said, which is amazing considering that in 1879 Gandhi was only 10 years old.

Links:

<http://sof.wellington.net.nz/hohaia2003.htm>

<http://www.pukeariki.com/en/stories/conflict/pacifistofparihaka.asp>

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in Australia**

One of the most important aboriginal leaders for land rights in Australia was [Vincent Lingiari](#), of the Gurindji people, who in 1966 convinced indigenous workers facing unsafe and humiliating conditions to [walk off](#) their jobs at the Wave Hill cattle station in the Northern Territory. After a continued strike of seven years, during which time the struggle became one of land rights, at the same time as becoming nationally famous, it finally ended in 1975 with the return of Gurindji land by the Commonwealth of Australia.

Nonviolent struggle was also successfully used by the Koori people over the years, in their attempt to obtain “sovereignty, land rights, self-determination,” and to maintain their cultural identity. “This nonviolent struggle has taken many forms and has included a wide variety of actions entailing protest, non-cooperation and nonviolent intervention.”

For instance, during the first half of 1972, “Kooris defiantly maintained an Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawn opposite Parliament House in Canberra. According to black activist [Roberta Sykes](#): ‘The Aboriginal Embassy is credited with bringing more immediate and much wider changes’ to Kooris than the 1967 referendum which recognised Kooris as Australian citizens. It was also during this time that the Aboriginal flag was first flown; a symbol of tremendous importance to Kooris and their supporters ever since.”

In another example, “from 1983 until 1985, Kooris nonviolently occupied Oyster Cove in Tasmania. As a result, Koori control is now widely accepted despite the lack of legal acknowledgement by governments.”

Australia has a rather rich and diverse history of nonviolent action being used for land rights, and I would strongly encourage you, if you’re interested, to learn more about the seven-year strike and other successful campaigns by checking out some of these:

Links:

<http://home.vtown.com.au/~jmcnicol/NvT/17/17.4.txt>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native\\_title](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_title)

<http://www.reconcile.org.au/getsmart/pages/get-the-basics/reconciliation-timeline.php>

## Land Rights and Nonviolence in Nigeria

In 1994, the Ogoni writer and environmental activist [Ken Saro-Wiwa](#) stated: “35 years of reckless oil exploration by multi-national oil companies have left the Ogoni environment completely devastated....[ These oil installations] have spelt death for human beings, flora and fauna. It is unacceptable”. The Ogoni are an ethnic group who live in a 404-square mile area in the Niger delta region, in southeast Nigeria. Ken Saro-Wiwa was their most well-known activist. An accomplished writer, journalist, and television producer, he became very active in causes related to the environment and to Ogoni independence in the 1980s. In 1990 he founded the [Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People](#) or MOSOP, which fought nonviolently for Ogoni rights. A group of Ogoni elders that year composed the Ogoni Bill of Rights, which was later amended by the MOSOP, and basically set out the movement's demands, which included “increased autonomy for the Ogoni people, a fair share of the proceeds of oil extraction,” compensation for oil extracted during the last 35 years, and a redress of all the environmental damage caused to Ogoni lands.

In January 1993, in the wake of peaceful protests by numerous Nigerian communities, and after a 30-day notice to quit the area was not met, Ken Saro-Wiwa and the MOSOP, organized a peaceful march against the Shell oil company of about 300,000 Ogoni people – more than half of the Ogoni population. The march wound its way “through four Ogoni centers, drawing international attention to his people's plight.” Shell withdrew its staff from the region shortly thereafter, but eager to be back in business was able to convince the Nigerian military to do their best to repress the Ogoni community. There were arrests, beating, and killings, Ken Saro-Wiwa getting arrested himself three times. Finally, in response to the murder of four Ogoni leaders, thought to have been perpetrated by people secretly employed by the military, Ken Saro-Wiwa was arrested for the last time. After being held for 11 months, most of which without any charges being brought, Ken Saro-Wiwa was tried for these murders and executed along with eight others by the Nigerian government. It was later revealed that Shell had paid off government witnesses, and that what they really wanted was for the protest movement to stop. The movement did not stop, and the international outrage over these judicial killings led to Nigeria’s suspension from the British Commonwealth of Nations. The Nigerian government, however, continued their repression, with the Shell Corporation eventually restarting their activities there. Since then there has been a [boycott movement](#), but I get the sense that it was unfortunately never all that successful.

Links:

<http://www.mosop.net/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ogoni\\_people](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ogoni_people)

<http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=19097>

<http://www.ecologistasenaccion.org/spip.php?article2118>

<http://archive.greenpeace.org/comms/ken/murder.html>

<http://www.rightlivelivelihood.org/saro-wiwa.html>

<http://www.goldmanprize.org/node/160>

<http://www.remembersarowiwa.com/>

## Land Rights and Nonviolence in France

In October 1971, French Defense Minister Michel Debré decided, without consulting the local population, to turn a military camp in the Larzac region of France into a huge army base about six times as large. Local farmers objected and decided to fight against the project. People from the nearby Community of the Ark, led by the Italian pacifist [Lanza del Vasto](#), were also very active in opposition to the camp. Nicknamed Shantidas by Gandhi in 1937, this 75-year-old man undertook a hunger strike in March 1972 that lasted 15 days, after which a collective decision was made to adopt nonviolent action as the means with which the group would resist the government's plans.

They began with actions such as the occupation of empty farms purchased by the Army in anticipation of the expansion. The 103 families with surrounding land all formally agreed not to sell the military anything, no matter what price they were willing to pay. Using creative and effective nonviolent actions, designed as much to gain publicity as to have fun and share a laugh, they successfully turned their cause into one of the most visible in France. In 1972 the farmers brought about 60 sheep to Paris, to graze on the Champ de Mars, just below the Eiffel Tower. They would also routinely use tractors in their protests. They undertook, for instance, a 600km march to Paris in 1973, led by 26 tractors. When stopped by the French riot-control police (the *CRS*) in Orléans, local farmers provided 26 more tractors so they could continue all the way to the nation's capital.

In August 1974, farmers spontaneously and illegally plowed a field belonging to the army, an action that would also be repeated four years later. In 1977, during a civil-disobedience trial implicating a number of the farmers, a group of their colleagues brought 30 of their sheep to court for the proceedings. A local referendum was held, and 90% of the community was found to be against the military base. After the election of François Mitterrand in 1981, the French Council of Ministers scrapped all plans and the army soon completely evacuated the area. In August of that same year, they held an International Meeting for Peace there, which 3000 people attended, and the farmers were able to advise a group of Japanese peasants on how best to resist their own government's plans to build an [airport at Narita](#), now, and unfortunately for the group of peasants, the Tokyo area's main international airport.

Anyway, because of its history, [Larzac](#) was chosen as the site of a massive meeting against the World Trade Organization which took place in August 2003. 200,000 people attended the event, which was proposed by French syndicalist [José Bové](#), who himself had been released from prison only a short time earlier for having ripped GMO crops out of the ground in protest over the EU's agricultural policy. He currently resides in Larzac, where he moved to in the 70s, to take part in the historic protest movement.

Links:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larzac>

<http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larzac>

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larzac\\_2003](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Larzac_2003)

<http://books.google.es/books?id=jLRHZdWJIV4C> (pp. 301-302)

<http://www.larzac.org/resister/non-violence.php>



## Land Rights and Nonviolence in Spain

Recently in Spain I saw a news report that listed how many people there were without homes, and how many empty apartments there were in the country. Now I don't necessarily remember what the numbers were or anything, but I remember it being a pretty ridiculous. The whole collapse-of-the-global-economy thing has been happening over there, too – they call it, affectionately, *la crisis* – and it can be seen most notably in the insane unemployment rate they're now running – highest in the EU, by far.<sup>1</sup> And even in Granada, where I was – where it's hot as balls in the summer – now it's starting to actually get pretty cold. So partly as a solution to all this, and partly – well, actually also probably *mostly* – because a lot of people just think it's cool, or are lazy and would rather not pay rent for someplace legal, there's a growing movement of squatters, called the *movimiento okupa*, who move into abandoned buildings in cities like Madrid and Barcelona. So I'm not suggesting that people do this or anything, but as a nonviolent technique it *is* out there, especially if it can be done without breaking anything (some people don't consider anything nonviolent that includes the destruction of property) and it's basically the urban equivalent of a lot of the actions I'll be describing shortly in Latin America. As we'll see in Brazil, for instance, the *campesino* movement has begun imitating the *okupas*, a usage of the technique that could be seen as much more valid, as poverty in Brazil is much more widespread and severe than in Spain.

Links:

<http://www.okupatutambien.net/>

[http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Movimiento\\_okupa](http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Movimiento_okupa)

[http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eskalera\\_Karakola](http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eskalera_Karakola)

<http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desalojo>

## Land Rights and Nonviolence in Italy

“As a few examples...” (Read from handout: Sharp, pp. 405-406)

Of the land that was occupied illegally or pending legislation, according to another book on the history of Fascism in Italy, oftentimes the owners wanted to avoid either having to sell their land, or lose it outright. The peasants who had occupied the land thereby gained very favorable leases for themselves, much more so than had they not taken action at all.

Links:

<http://books.google.es/books?id=1amiqdBZItkC&pg=PA195> (pp. 193-4)

## Land Rights and Nonviolence in Bolivia

“In 1952...” (Read from Sharp, p. 407)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.abc.es/20081101/economia-economia/espana-registra-septiembre-subida-20081101.html>

Many of you know who Evo Morales is, the first indigenous president of Bolivia, a country where Amerindio and Mestizo groups make up of over 90% of the population. You might not know, however, that he was once a llama herder, and later on, a coca farmer, quickly rising to the head of his coca grower's union. In 1988 he was elected executive secretary of the largest union of coca growers in the Chapare, the Federación del Trópico, a position which he retains to this day, even as president. In the 1980s the Bolivian government, with the help of the US Drug Enforcement Agency, began an eradication campaign of all the coca crops in the country. As head of the largest coca grower's union in Bolivia, Morales led a 600 km march from Cochabamba, where he moved as a teenager with his family, to the capital city of La Paz. While marchers were often attacked by law enforcement, they managed to proceed by sneaking around control posts. The closer they came to La Paz, the more often they were greeted by supporters who would come out in the streets with the marchers, giving them food, drinks, shoes, and clothing. They were greeted with cheers by supporters in La Paz and the government was forced to negotiate an accord with them.

The government unfortunately soon reneged on their agreements, but Morales continued his organizing of *cocaleros*, and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in both 1995 and 1996 for his nonviolent movement against the war on drugs. He has said, "I am not a drug trafficker. I am a coca grower. I cultivate coca leaf, which is a natural product. I do not refine (it into) cocaine, and neither cocaine nor drugs have ever been part of the Andean culture." The coca leaf incidentally, in Andean culture, is often used for medicines and herbal teas as a dietary supplement, a means to ease hunger pangs, ease thirst, and also as an antidote for altitude sickness. In 1994 it was estimated that one out of every 8 people employed in Bolivia was a coca farmer.

Anyway, to make a long story short, he kept pushing for reform after entering politics, now he's president, and the Bolivian government no longer destroys the crops that its citizens grow. Morales told a crowd in early 2006, after taking office, "The fight for coca symbolizes our fight for freedom. Coca growers will continue to grow coca. There will never be zero coca."

Links:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evo\\_Morales](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evo_Morales) & [http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evo\\_Morales](http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evo_Morales)  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/3203752.stm>

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in Peru**

"Huntington reports that..." (Read from Sharp, p. 407)

In early August, 2008, in Peru, indigenous groups organized "a 600-person peaceful takeover of the Aramango hydroelectric plant in the Amazonas district, as well as a takeover "by nearly 2,000 Machiguenga community members of ten barges belonging to Hunt Oil and Pluspetrol's controversial Camisea gas project in the Lower Urubamba." The protests all in all lasted 10 days and included nonviolent seizures of an oil pipeline and a natural gas field.

These protests were "part of a wider range of public demonstrations by rural communities across the country, including in the Andes," who believe that the [free trade](#)

[agreement](#) with the United States, whose approval its government was considering, would reduce their standard of living, and weaken their land rights in favor of loggers, miners, and drillers.

On August 22, two days after lawmakers had struck a deal with indigenous rights groups whose protests had shut down oil and gas operations across the country, Peru's Congress rejected two decrees by President Alan García that made it easier for foreign developers to buy Amazon rainforest land. According to one article, however, "Indigenous groups and human rights activists say the new law repealing García's decree was not enough to solve the problem." Amazon indigenous group AIDSESEP, which stands for *Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana*, and other regional groups have said they will hold new protests if similar norms that they say fail to protect indigenous lands and their communities' way of life are not repealed as well.

"Lima-based human rights organization APRODEH [the *Asociación Pro Derechos Humanos*] cheered Congress' historic decision but said that other legislative decrees threaten indigenous rights, such as the right to be previously consulted for mining projects. 'This is the first time in Peru's history that Congress approves a law that reflects the interests of the Amazonian people,' said Wilfredo Ardito, chief of Aprodeh's social, economic and cultural rights department. But he also noted that Congress voted to repeal the decrees after large, crippling protests. 'These norms weren't passed to benefit the indigenous peoples, but rather oil and timber companies, Ardito said, adding, 'If it wasn't the massive mobilization of Amazon indigenous last month, these decrees would still be in effect.'"

Links:

<http://www.aidsep.org.pe/>

<http://www.aprodeh.org.pe/>

[http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id\\_article=13294](http://www.bilaterals.org/article.php3?id_article=13294)

<http://news.mongabay.com/2008/0831-peru.html>

[http://www.amazonwatch.org/newsroom/view\\_news.php?id=1617](http://www.amazonwatch.org/newsroom/view_news.php?id=1617)

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in Brazil**

"In 1963-1964..." (Read from Sharp, p. 408)

Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (or MST, using its Portuguese initials) is the largest social movement in Latin America with an estimated 1.5 million landless members organized in 23 out of Brazil's 26 states. Its roots go back to December 1980 and early 1981, when over 6,000 landless families established an encampment on a portion of land located between three unproductive estates in Brazil's southern-most state of Rio Grande do Sul. With the support of civil society, including the progressive branch of the Catholic church, the families pressured the military government into expropriating nearby lands for the purposes of agrarian reform. The actual organization was officially founded in 1984, as Brazil's military dictatorship came to a close.

The movement has become famous for its tactics of illegally occupying land, although it has admittedly not always been 100% nonviolent. Its biggest successes, however, have always come on the heels of actions in which people largely refrained from sabotage,

looting, and destruction of property. For example, in 1985, a group gathered after midnight one night and “illegally invaded 9,700 hectares of plantation land... The fertile but idle tract was being used for little more than a window view by one of Brazil's great absentee landowners, Bolivar Annoni. Once on the ground, the squatters set up a squalid camp and began planting soybeans and corn. They fended off armed attacks by police and hired gunmen - three peasants were allegedly murdered during the two-year struggle - until the federal government finally granted them title to the land in 1987 for use as an agricultural cooperative (the owner received compensation).”

The cooperative became known as Novo Sarandi, and has been a huge success story in what TIME Magazine described in a 1998 article as “something extraordinary in Latin America: a leftist revolution that seems to work.” Keep in mind this is before Hugo Chavez, and before Evo Morales. The co-op’s quality-control director, Marcos Antonio Celso, is asked in the article about the Che Guevara posters on the wall of his office. He replies, “Che is a symbol of resistance for us, but the best revolutions aren't carried out with guns.” Nonetheless, the MST appears not to put quite the same emphasis on strict nonviolence as with some of the other movements I’ve been describing. In 1997, for instance, “MST militants armed with spades and scythes stormed a branch of the Banco do Brasil in the remote southern town of Teodoro Sampaio, demanding the release of \$3.5 million in funds. The bank had to close its doors a week before Christmas, which angered many residents.” If they can keep things like this to a minimum, however, it looks as if they’re assured public support in a nation where alarming numbers of people are either homeless or landless, and much of the nation’s wealth is still in the hands of the very few. In a 1998 poll mentioned in the article, “85% of Brazilians said they back the land invasions so long as they're nonviolent.”

Another successful action was in 2005, after a two-week-long march from the city of Goiania, when nearly 13,000 landless workers arrived in their nation's capital, Brasilia, 200 km away. While thousands of landless carried banners and scythes through the streets, specifically in front of the U.S. embassy and Brazilian Finance Ministry, a delegation of 50 protesters held a three-hour meeting with Brazilian President Lula da Silva, who donned an MST cap for the cameras. Some of the demands included that President Lula implement his own limited agrarian reform plan rather than spend the project’s budget on trying to pay down the national debt. During this session Lula recommitted to settling 430,000 families by the end of 2006 and agreed to allocate the necessary human and financial resources to accomplish this goal. He also committed to a range of related reforms, including an increase in the pool of lands available for redistribution.

Actions continue there all the time, as even with a relatively understanding, left-leaning president, the situation there is still far from perfect. To demonstrate how varied and specialized the actions can sometimes be, on International Women’s Day in 2006 (March 8!) a group of 2000 *campesinas* (women peasant farmers) occupied a plantation of Eucalyptus trees belonging to the Aracruz Celulosa paper mill. Their group is called the *Campesina Women’s Movement* (MMC in Portuguese), and they often work very closely with the MST. The occupation was to protest what they called “green deserts”: the artificial forests planted by paper mills, which rapidly deplete the soil of water and nutrients. In addition to environmental concerns, the protesters were also “fighting for agrarian reform, as well as an end to violence against women,” and respect for the rights of women “to be the legal owners of the land on which they live and work.”

Another way in which nonviolence is being used is akin to what I described in Spain, although in Brazil it's being done to a much larger extent, and also less likely to be done because it's fashionable. It's basically the urban version of what the landless peasants have been doing – moving into unused areas in order just to have a home. The MST recognized the need to reach out to those in urban areas and created a spin-off organization that helps out the homeless in basically the same way the MST helps out the landless: doing *whatever* possible to get *as many people* as possible off the streets, and trying to gain as much publicity as possible in the process.

A final thing that may be of interest is that in addition to these movements, or maybe partly *because* of these movements, the first, second, third, and fifth annual conventions of the [World Social Forum](#) were all held in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre. Designed to coincide with the much more capitalist and elitist World Economic Forum, held each January in Davos, Switzerland, the World Social Forum brings together groups and individuals working for a fair and equitable alternative to corporate globalization. People like Noam Chomsky, Arundhati Roy, and the economist Joseph Stiglitz have taken part in years past. It was originally organized by the [Brazilian Worker's Party](#), the Porto Alegre government, and the French group [ATTAC](#) (in which José Bové plays an active role). The 9<sup>th</sup> WSF, this coming January, will once again be held in Brazil.

Links:

- <http://www.mstbrazil.org/?q=node/86>
- [http://www.mmcbrasil.com.br/index\\_ingles.html](http://www.mmcbrasil.com.br/index_ingles.html)
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landless\\_Workers%27\\_Movement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Landless_Workers%27_Movement)
- [http://upside-down-world.org/main/content/view/830/63/](http://upside-down-world.org/main/content/view/full/830/63/)
- [http://www.time.com/time/magazine/1998/int/980119/latin\\_america/brazils\\_la5.html](http://www.time.com/time/magazine/1998/int/980119/latin_america/brazils_la5.html)
- [http://blog.lib.umn.edu/ashuster/nonviolence/2008/09/agriculturebrazil\\_rural\\_women\\_protest\\_against\\_pulpwood\\_plantations.html](http://blog.lib.umn.edu/ashuster/nonviolence/2008/09/agriculturebrazil_rural_women_protest_against_pulpwood_plantations.html)

### **Further Examples of Land Rights and Nonviolence in Latin America**

- In Uruguay** .....  
<http://www.turning-the-tide.org/node/263>  
<http://www.fucvam.org.uy/>
- In Ecuador** .....  
<http://home.vtown.com.au/~jmcnicol/NvT/31/31.2.txt>  
<http://www.yachana.org/research/zumbahua.pdf>  
<http://www.yachana.org/indmovs/chronology.php>  
<http://www.lacta.org/>
- In Honduras** .....  
<http://archive.peacemagazine.org/v21n3p18.htm>  
<http://rds.org.hn/copinh/index2.html>
- In Guatemala** .....  
<http://www.nisgua.org/resources/links.asp>  
<http://www.cuc.org.gt/>
- In México** .....  
<http://www.nonviolentways.org/chiaconflict.html>  
<http://www.landaction.org/spip/spip.php?article220>  
<http://www.mexicosolidarity.org/>

## Land Rights and Nonviolence in the United States

The Lakota tribe in the Dakota region has been trying to deal with US government intrusion on their land for some time... There's actually an excellent documentary out there – I'm not sure if anyone's seen it – which was playing at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC over the summer. It's a 53-minute film made last year called [Standing Silent Nation](#), and it describes how the Lakota tribe has formally been granted “sovereignty” over their lands... There's actually an awesome clip of Bush in it stammering on about what “sovereignty” means... I'll give you a hint: he uses the word “sovereign” in the definition. Anyway, as a means of improving their economic situation the Lakota tried multiple times to grow hemp – the nonpsychoactive cousin of marijuana – but the US government repeatedly violated their land sovereignty by destroying the crops. They did this by either spraying defoliants from helicopters, or using federal DEA/FBI agents with guns and weed-wackers. They continue to plant hemp in direct defiance of the US government, claiming true territorial integrity for historic Lakota lands.

In 2002, Western Shoshone grandmothers Carrie and Mary Dann led the struggle to preserve indigenous cultural and land rights among the Western Shoshone people, in the state of Nevada. Mining and nuclear interests had been trying to purchase Western Shoshone land for 15 cents an acre and dispossess the people – a price established by George Bush in 2004. “The land is the third largest gold producing area in the world and home to Yucca Mountain, a proposed US nuclear waste repository.” The Shoshone petitioned and brought suit before the UN in 2006, arguing that according to an 1863 treaty, the US has no right to occupy or privatize their ancestral land. The UN sided in their favour, and ordered “the US to freeze plans to privatize the lands for transfer to extractive industries and energy developers.”

*“The elders before us stood up for life...our Indian children are over in Iraq fighting for their country. What are they fighting for? If the war on terrorism is about protecting this country then why is our own government trying to take away our homelands?”*

- Mary McCloud, Western Shoshone elder

200 Mohawk Indians in August 1957, part of the Iroquois Confederacy, set up shop on the banks of the Schoharie Creek in New York. They claimed that construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway had deprived them of homes, and that under a treaty from the 1700s. They built a house of worship and a half dozen cabins, and refused to move, saying that as a sovereign nation they'd deal only with the Federal government. (Sharp, p. 389)

In November 1969, about 100 American Indians occupied the old island prison of Alcatraz, claiming that under a certain treaty they were awarded all deserted areas within a tribe's original territory. Although the government cut water and power, they were able to occupy the island for an entire year and a half, supported by Indians and non-Indians alike on the mainland, “who donated food, clothing, and medical supplies.” The last 15 were finally removed by Federal marshals. (Sharp, p. 389)

Links:

<http://www.warresisters.org/nva/nva596-2.htm>

<http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2007/standing/>

<http://www.twofrog.com/hemp.html>  
<http://www.bringbacktheway.com>  
<http://www.wsdp.org/dann.htm>  
[http://www.nodirtygold.org/western\\_shoshone\\_nation\\_usa.cfm](http://www.nodirtygold.org/western_shoshone_nation_usa.cfm)  
<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C0CE0D8103FF932A05753C1A9649C8B63&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>  
[http://www.oxfamamerica.org/newsandpublications/press\\_releases/archive2006/press\\_release.2006-03-10.3507376169/?searchterm=shoshone](http://www.oxfamamerica.org/newsandpublications/press_releases/archive2006/press_release.2006-03-10.3507376169/?searchterm=shoshone)  
<http://www.thinkandask.com/news/shoshone.html>  
[http://ncseonline.org/nae/docs/anti\\_indian.html](http://ncseonline.org/nae/docs/anti_indian.html)  
[http://www.mediariights.org/film/honorable\\_nations\\_the\\_senecas\\_land\\_rights](http://www.mediariights.org/film/honorable_nations_the_senecas_land_rights)

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in Puerto Rico**

In 1939, the US Navy began to use the Culebra archipelago, off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico, as a gunnery and bombing practice site. This was done in preparation for the United States' involvement in World War II. In 1971 the people of Culebra began protests, known as the [Navy-Culebra protests](#), for the removal of the US Navy from Culebra. This movement prominently featured lawyer and activist [Rubén Berríos](#), who has since become the leader of the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP). Him and other protesters squatted at Culebra's famous Playa Flamenco for a few days, got arrested, charged with trespassing on US military territory and imprisoned for civil disobedience. Berríos spent 3 months in jail, and as a consequence of his imprisonment, was fired from the University of Puerto Rico's Law School, where he had been a professor. The protest movement continued and four years later, in 1975, the use of Culebra as a gunnery range ceased and all operations were moved to the neighboring, and much larger, island of Vieques. As a recent addendum, in 2006 Berríos was rehired as a professor at UPR.

The transfer of Navy training activities from Culebra to Vieques generated significant controversy, including organized protests, but a protest effort significant enough to reclaim the island had to wait for about another 25 years, when a growing group of people began to get sick of the Navy ruining the island's pristine beaches, poisoning the wildlife, and contaminating the environment for locals and tourists alike. People who lived there were found to have a significantly higher risk of developing cancer, and the public became outraged when they heard about [Milivi Adams](#), who was diagnosed with malignant brain tumors in 1999, and who died in 2002 at the age of 5. Add to all that the continuous bombing exercises that in April 1999 killed a civilian employee at the base, [David Sanes Rodríguez](#), and you have the makings of a pretty mean civil disobedience campaign.

The kinds of things people did were basically to come, break into, and occupy the practice grounds. Some of them began to camp there, even building small wooden structures. The first campaign lasted 2 weeks before US Marshals and Marines evacuated the protesters. Five days later, hundreds of people from around the world came and occupied the grounds. With peace as main cause of the protests, all the protesters behaved in a peaceful manner upon their arrest; most of them singing songs or shouting something like "*Paz para Vieques*" (or "*Peace for Vieques*" in English). A few had to be carried by U.S. officials, as they sat or lied down, and didn't move after

being ordered to leave the practice grounds; although they didn't offer physical resistance or insult the officials. The protesters were again officially charged with trespassing on US military territory. Notable people who were among those arrested, and who spent time in prison are actor Edward James Olmos, environmental lawyer Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., the Rev. Jesse Jackson's wife, Rubén Berríos (from before), and the [Rev. Al Sharpton](#), who served 90 days in prison, during 31 of which he fasted in protest.<sup>2</sup> A New York Times article from 2001 says the following:

Mr. Sharpton began a hunger strike yesterday to call public attention to the bombing exercises, and the other three men joined in. Former Mayor Ed Koch met with Mr. Sharpton. "He's in good spirits and is holding up well," Mr. Koch said. "In fact, I told him that he looked thinner. And I told him I think President Bush would let him die before he commutes his sentence."<sup>3</sup>

Finally, in 2001, Governor [Sila María Calderón](#), who was elected in part based on a US-Navy-out-of-Vieques platform, reached an agreement with President Bush that guaranteed the military leave of the island in May 2003. The land now belongs to the US Department of the Interior, who has pledged to clean up the soil, remove the thousands of unexploded bombs, and turn it into a wildlife refuge. About a year later, the Navy decided to close its Roosevelt Roads base on mainland Puerto Rico, saying that without Vieques they no longer had any reason to be there. The Navy claimed at the time that as a result of their departure Puerto Rico would be losing \$250 million a year, but the Puerto Rican government saw other potential ways in which the land could be useful, including a second airport to relieve the heavy traffic at San Juan's Luís Muñoz Marín International.

Links:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culebra\\_Island](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culebra_Island)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy-Culebra\\_protests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy-Culebra_protests)

<http://archives.cnn.com/2000/US/11/05/statue.protest/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy-Vieques\\_protests](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Navy-Vieques_protests)

<http://archives.cnn.com/2001/US/04/27/vieques.protests.03/>

<http://www.forusa.org/programs/puertorico/archives/1200protestupdate.html>

<http://www.viequeslibre.addr.com/espanol/index.html>

## **Land Rights and Nonviolence in India**

In the Bardoli Campaign, in 1928, peasants whose land had been repossessed out of their refusal to pay taxes either returned or refused to leave at all. They cultivated the land, planted crops, "and insisted that whatever the current legal status might be, morally the land remained theirs and that they had a right to use it for constructive purposes." (Sharp, Politics, p. 389)

In 1973, in what's now the state of Uttarakhand, a group of women peasants began what was to become known as the *Chipko Movement*, literally meaning "to stick" in Hindi. These environmental activists were known for bodily defending trees against logging

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<sup>2</sup><http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B03E7DC173CF931A35756C0A9659C8B63&scp=1&sq=vieques%20navy%20leaves&st=cse>

<sup>3</sup><http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F0DEEDA133CF933A05756C0A9679C8B63>

interests, throwing their arms around the trunks. They were truly the original “tree huggers”, and also one of the first all-woman movements for land rights. As the website [womeninworldhistory.com](http://womeninworldhistory.com) describes, “As primary food, fuel, and water gatherers, women have strong interests in reversing deforestation, desertification, and water pollution. The women who eke out a living in the Himalayan foothills, using its forests as sources of food, fuel, and forage for their animals, face a particularly severe challenge. The Himalayas, a young range subject to erosion, need forests on these steep slopes to allow the absorption of water and prevent flooding.” By declaring their intention to die along with the tree should it be cut down, these women were effective in saving numerous forests, and provided inspiration for future activists such as the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize winner, [Wangari Maathai](#), from Kenya.

In 1984, in the state of Orissa, the Indian government concocted plans to build a missile testing range in the rural region of Baliapal. In addition to the obvious damage to the environment, the testing range threatened to displace 100,000 people, and destroy the local economy, which was mostly agriculture-based. People from both sides of the political spectrum were united in opposition, and the resistance movement decided to exclusively adopt nonviolent methods of noncooperation, obstruction, and defiance. Some of the specific tactics used were nonviolent human barricades to prevent government vehicles from entering the site, and dismantling the villages that were being built for those evicted by the testing range.

“In 2003, the *Adivasi Gothra Maha Sabha*, a social movement for adivasi land rights in Kerala, organized a major land occupation of a piece of land of a former Eucalyptus plantation in the Muthanga Wildlife Reserve, on the border of Kerala and Karnataka. After 48 days, a police force was sent into the area to evict the occupants - one participant of the movement and a policeman were killed, and the leaders of the movement were arrested.” Indian writer and activist Arundhati Roy “travelled to the area, visited the movement's leaders in jail, and wrote an open letter to the then Chief Minister of Kerala, A.K. Antony now India's Defence Minister, saying ‘You have blood on your hands.’” The letter can be read [here](#).

In the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh in 2002 in the Tin Shed district of Bhopal, four activists with the [Nārmada Bachao Andolan](#) – the Save the Nārmada Movement – embarked on an indefinite hunger strike to get the government to rectify the situation they had created by forcibly evicting more than 1000 *adivasi* (untouchable) families (6000) to make way for the Maan dam. All that Vinod Patwa, Mangat Verma, Chittaropa Palit, and Ram Kunwar were asking for was that the government resettle the people it was about to displace. Instead the government had said nothing. After a 29-day hunger strike, however, the Madhya Pradesh government finally “agreed to look into the rehabilitation of project-affected people.” Another article said the government had “agreed to the completion of rehabilitation of the Maan dam oustees in a time-bound manner, no later than July 31st, 2002.”

[Arundhati Roy](#) wrote about this struggle as it was happening, which I only learned about years later from her 2004 collection of essays titled *The Ordinary Person's Guide to Empire*. She pointedly asked what was happening to nonviolence if, after forcibly taking their homes, the Indian government would then let four people starve to death rather than give them a new place to live? In the very country that gave birth to history's most famous apostle of nonviolent resistance, Mohandas Gandhi, how could

the government have such little regard for what she calls “India’s greatest gift to the world”? Instead of a Save the Narmada Movement, she said, we would soon need a Save the Nonviolence Movement. She closes her essay by saying, “As for the rest of us, concerned citizens, peace activists and the like, it’s not enough to sing songs about giving peace a chance. Doing everything we can to support movements like the Narmada Bachao Andolan,” she says, “is *how* we give peace a chance. *This* is the real war against terror.” (pp. 3-9, or [here](#))

Let’s watch about 10 minutes from this hour-long BBC documentary with Ms. Roy, made in 2002, called [DAM/AGE](#).

For those who are interested further, the woman speaking to the crowd of people was [Medha Patkar](#), another well-known Indian land rights activist. To find out more about actions centered on the Narmada river, there is an organization called [Friends of the Narmada](#), made up of people in North America, Europe, and elsewhere who are concerned about the well-being of communities located along its banks, and want to help.

And yet another recent nonviolent movement for land rights in India is the [Janadesh Movement](#), begun in 2005 by the organization [Ekta Parishad](#).

Finally, at the beginning of October of this year, mostly nonviolent efforts were able to convince Tata motors to abandon plans for a factory in Bengal. According to the BBC, “Tata group chief Ratan Tata said: ‘We have little choice but to move out of Bengal. We cannot run a factory with police around all the time.’ He was speaking after protests in a row over land acquired from local farmers... The West Bengal government acquired 1,000 acres of land for the Tata Nano project two years ago. More than 10,000 farmers accepted compensation for their land, but just over 2,000 of them refused and demanded land be returned.”

Links:

[http://www.innatenonviolence.org/readings/2008\\_01.shtml](http://www.innatenonviolence.org/readings/2008_01.shtml)

<http://books.google.com/books?id=EoFitGy-0HwC> (p. 154)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farmers%27\\_movements\\_in\\_India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farmers%27_movements_in_India)

<http://www.icrindia.org/?p=151>

[http://www.amnestyusa.org/filmfest/seattle/2002/dam\\_age.html](http://www.amnestyusa.org/filmfest/seattle/2002/dam_age.html)

<http://internationalrivers.org/files/WRR.V17.N3.pdf>

<http://www.indiatogether.org/campaigns/narmada/opinions/mkssmaan.htm>

[http://rawstory.com/news/dpa/20\\_000\\_tribals\\_march\\_for\\_land\\_right\\_10022007.html](http://rawstory.com/news/dpa/20_000_tribals_march_for_land_right_10022007.html)

<http://theyouwin.yooook.org/>

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/thscrip/print.pl?file=2008092556000300.htm&date=2008/09/25/&prd=th&>

<http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/thscrip/print.pl?file=2008050456070400.htm&date=2008/05/04/&prd=th&>

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7651119.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7651119.stm)

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/7603271.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7603271.stm)

[http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ekta\\_Parishad](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ekta_Parishad)

## **Conclusion**

I hope this has been helpful for you, informative, not too boring... and I hope you all look further into these movements, getting involved in any way you can. Nonviolent action is a powerful tool of social resistance, and can be employed in many different ways with great effectiveness to achieve a more just society, especially with respect to land rights. Anyway, best of luck to everyone, thanks for being here and participating, and PEACE!

### **Some organizations working for nonviolent land reform:**

Land Research Action Network (<http://www.landaction.org/>)

Poorest Areas Civil Society Program (<http://www.empowerpoor.com/>)

Rainforest Action Network (<http://www.ran.org/>)

Grassroots International (<http://www.grassrootsonline.org/>)

International Peasants Movement (<http://viacampesina.org/>)

Rainforest Foundation UK (<http://www.rainforestfoundationuk.org/>)

### **Some terrific resources:**

[Protest, Power, and Change](#) by Powers, Vogele, Kruegler, and McCarthy

[The Methods of Nonviolent Action](#) by Gene Sharp