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12 A Neutral Place? Anti-Colonialism, Peace, and Revolution in Stockholm, 1917

> When the Dutch-Scandinavian social democratic committee was established in the beginning of this year [1917] with the noble intention of discussing in what way and what means to use to end the war in general [. . .] this aroused lively expectations among the suffering and oppressed nations across the world as you deployed the use of such soothing words as internationalism, humanity, freedom, democracy, and "a permanent world peace".[1]

In 1917, leaders of the European socialist movement selected the capital of Sweden, Stockholm, as the logical place to discuss how socialism could contribute to find a solution to end the war on the European continent by convening the Stockholm Peace Conference. The First World War (or as it is written in the British historical tradition, the Great War) had assumed the character of an "imperial war", bringing about cooperation or conflict between former and new power alliances. The widespread belief amongst the involved nations was that the conflict would be "a war to end all wars", aiming to put an end to historical power disputes amongst the nations of Europe, an issue connected to global factors, such as claims of power through the geography of colonialism and imperialism.[2] In this context appeared and acted a parallel movement in Stockholm, consisting of numerous delegates travelling to Stockholm to represent the "oppressed nations" of the colonial world at the proposed peace conference; for example, two members of a Persian delegation, Sayyed Hasan Taqizadeh and Wahid-ul-Mulk claimed that "we have arrived here [. . .] to put forward our, the Persian people's cause. Our ambition is that the socialist movement, which

1 Letter from the "India Committee" to the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, Stockholm, 16 November 1917, Stockholm City Archive (SCA), Carl Lindhagen (CL) collection 820, B5, vol. 12.

2 The abundance of research literature on the First World War is vast; however, for the perspective of colonialism, imperialism, and global power politics, see, e.g., D. Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2009 (1989); Z. Steiner, *The Lights that Failed*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005; E. S. Rosenberg (ed.), *A World Connecting, 1870–1945*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2012; A. Hochschild, *To End All Wars: A Story of Loyalty and Rebellion, 1914–1918*, New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011.

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declares its support of national self-determination, shall reconsider the Persian case."[3] A second example is the statement from Virendranath Chattophadyaya (commonly known as Chatto), – an Indian nationalist revolutionary and representative of the European Central Committee of Indian Nationalists (also known as the India Committee, active from 1914 to 1919) who demanded "fairness, consistency, and impartiality" from the socialist movement on the question of India's future independence.[4] From a longer chronological perspective, the encounter of anti-colonialism in Stockholm is connected to the history of twentieth-century anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism. It is part of a history that stretches forward and retracts backwards, highlighted by epochal events such as the Afro-Asian Conference, held in Bandung in 1955; the First International Congress Against Colonialism and Imperialism, held in Brussels in 1927; and the five pan-African congresses that took place between 1900 and 1945, to mention a few.[5]

Other events developed in concurrence with the war, foremost with the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in February 1917, which the European socialist movement welcomed as positive as it yielded political and social change in Russia. Further, the idea of organizing a peace conference was part and parcel of the European socialist movement's need of revitalizing its disputed and damaged political credo in connection to the war. Pivotal for this was the establishment of the Zimmerwald movement in neutral Switzerland in 1915 and the ensuing work of the International Socialist Bureau (ISB), which organized three conferences between 1915 and 1917, events that focused on how the socialist parties should consolidate the impaired status of the socialist movement. The first was held in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, the second convened in 1916 at two locations in Switzerland, Bern and Kienthal, and the final conference took place in Stockholm in September 1917.[6] One crucial development in the political

3 "Persien under ryskt-engelskt förtryck. En intervju med Taqizadeh, persisk delegerad i Stockholm" [Persia under Russian-British oppression. An interview with Taqizadeh, Persian delegate in Stockholm], *Aftonbladet*, 29 June 1917.

4 Social History Portal (SHP), Stockholm 1917 collection, document: P/55, Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der Delegation aus Indien, 12 July 1917.

5 F. Petersson, "From Versailles to Bandung: The Interwar Origins of Anticolonialism", in: L. Eslava, M. Fakhri, and V. Nesiah (eds.), *Bandung, Global History, and International Law. Critical Pasts and Pending Futures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017, pp. 66–80; Ch. J. Lee, "Introduction", in: Ch. J. Lee (ed.), *Making a World After Empire*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010, pp. 9–10.

6 D. Sassoon, *One Hundred Years of Socialism*, London: I. B. Tauris, 1996, pp. 28–29; B. Lazitch and M. M. Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern*, vol. 1, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972, pp. 11–22.

activities of the socialist movement, running parallel with the work of the ISB, was the formation of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, a joint initiative between the leaders of the Belgian, Dutch, and Swedish social democratic parties, Camille Huysmans, Pieter Jelles Troelstra, and Karl Hjalmar Branting. The primary aim of the committee was to convene the Stockholm Peace Conference, a place and location perceived as a logical venue to meet because of Sweden's outspoken neutrality in the war. On 3 May 1917, the committee announced its formal establishment by issuing a communique, which declared the primary focus of the committee: to arrange the Stockholm Peace Conference and for it to be a part of "a general action of the working class" leading to "lasting peace".[7] In Sweden, and despite its outspoken neutrality, the political and social setting in the country was one of unrest in 1917, partly influenced by what had unfolded in Russia. Fredrik Ström, a Swedish socialist and contemporary observer, writes in his memoir, *I stormig tid* (In stormy times), that Sweden was on the brink of collapse as liberals, social democrats, and leftist socialists wanted to create controversy and political conflict. The reason was rooted in the consequences of the war (besides the Russian situation), for instance the German sinking of Swedish naval ships, the lack of goods coming from England and the US, an increased housing shortage, the prevalent German anti-British propaganda in Sweden, the postponed discussion on electoral rights, and a shortage of food as well as the rations system.[8]

Nevertheless, the peace conference was connected to the tremors and efforts of the European socialist movement to resurrect the political credibility of the Socialist International (SI). At the onset of the war, most of the socialist parties who belonged to the SI legitimized the war by supporting their national governments in power. Thus, by doing so, the parties went against the statutes of the SI, a principle that stipulated that the socialist movement should do anything possible to avert war. In 1916, the Zimmerwald movement declared its position vis-à-vis the war on the European continent, stating that it was "the outcome of imperialistic antagonisms" and that the "real aim of the war is to bring about a new partition of colonial possessions and to ensure the

7 SHP, document: P/06c, Pressekommuniqué zur Sitzung der holländischen und schwedischen ISB-Delegationen, Stockholm, 3 May 1917. SHP is a digital archive that contains a collection of key documents linked to the Stockholm Peace Conference in 1917. For the resource, see Social History Portal, https://www.socialhistoryportal.org/stockholm1917/documents (accessed 23 August 2018).

8 F. Ström, *I stormig tid* [In stormy times], Stockholm: P. A. Norstedt & Söners Förlag, 1942, p. 192.

submission of countries".[9] These statements were included in a resolution, issued by the ISB after the second Zimmerwald conference in 1916, and its message must have reverberated amongst thriving anti-colonial movements present in Europe during the war. Thus, the Stockholm Peace Conference not only is a narrative of European political history, but also is a history that contains other perspectives and national ramifications. Parallel to the efforts of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee to realize the Stockholm Peace Conference, Stockholm turned into a place that witnessed the arrival of several delegates representing the "oppressed nations" – meaning the colonial world. Travelling from various locations in Europe and known of having been present in Stockholm in 1917 were individuals and delegations from Egypt, Persia, Ireland, Flanders, Finland, India, Estonia, Poland, the Balkans, Armenia – which highlighted the oppression and atrocities committed against the Armenian population in the Ottoman Empire – as well as the Jewish socialist association Bund and representatives of the Muslim faith.[10] The delegates expected to use the conference as a way to declare their demands of national independence and the right to self-determination. Stockholm therefore evolved briefly into a hotbed of political and social activity that connected national, transnational, and international agendas, all located within the vicinity of the Swedish capital. Furthermore, the encounter of anti-colonialism revealed frictions and conflicts in the European perception of the world. The scenery was later described as an "international concentration of representatives of national liberation movements of various peoples", and it was a city where "foreign political activists" believed they could carry out their political work "unhampered and the atmosphere for work [was] far more pleasant and agreeable than in Switzerland".[11]

Ole Birk Laursen suggests that the Russian Revolutions in 1917 and the conclusion of the First World War in 1918 are "connected through the abandoned Stockholm Peace Conference and, given their anti-imperialist narratives, how

9 Arbetarrörelsens arkiv och bibliotek (ARAB; Labour Movement Archive and Library), 256/4/6/1, Handlingar rörande Internationella socialistiska kommissionen (ISK), Second International Socialist Conference of Zimmerwald: Resolutions, Bern, 1916.

10 A review of documents in the SHP collection on the Stockholm Peace Conference and published articles in Swedish newspapers from May to November 1917 reveal the presence of these delegations in Stockholm.

11 Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Horst Krüger files, Box 21. Nr. 116 b–120, (Manuscript) Indian Revolutionaries' quest for "Golden Fleece" from abroad, by M. N. Roy, Amrita Bazar Patrika Independence Supplement, 15 August 1950. Manabendra Nath Roy, the renowned Indian communist, was though not present in Stockholm; N. K. Barooah, *Chatto. The Life and Times of an Indian Anti-Imperialist in Europe*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 101.

they impacted the colonial world".[12] Hence, the history of the Stockholm Peace Conference can be explained, in nature and scope, as a transnational space that witnessed the gathering of numerous individuals and national agendas, limited to an incentive not only of the socialist movement, but also of other actors, motivated by an agenda to protest against oppression, colonialism, and imperialism. To probe further into the latter is the focus of this chapter, as the outcome of the former has been described as a well-known bagatelle in the history of twentieth-century socialism. What does this imply? This calls into question a couple of crucial contextual factors. First, let us begin with a statement made by Chatto, which reveals the reason for travelling to Stockholm from Germany in May 1917. According to Chatto, it was to enlighten the public regarding the national oppression of India by the British Empire, not only seeking to gain support from the "peace manoeuvres" of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee to be included in the conference, but also to create connections with other delegations present in Stockholm, for example from Ireland and Egypt in their demands for "a better future".[13]

Second, the war had seriously altered the functional and structural conditions of anti-colonialism as an idea and movement as it had emerged in the first decades of the twentieth century, especially after Japan's victory over Russia in 1905. A new global political geography had created new political spaces for anti-colonial activists in Europe, Asia, and the USA, which, during the war, was fuelled by anti-British propaganda against British imperialism emanating from Germany. For this reason, the Stockholm Peace Conference suddenly appeared as one of the few available opportunities for anti-colonial activists to put forward their demands of national independence. Anti-British propaganda was categorized by the German Foreign Ministry (Auswärtiges Amt, AA) as "oriental", directed from anti-imperial centres in Berlin and Constantinople during the war as well as approved by and published with the consent and financial support of the AA.[14]

Third, the reason for perceiving the peace conference as a bagatelle is the fact that it never happened. Instead, it was frequently postponed in the summer of 1917, and as the German, French, and British socialist parties declared their

12 O. B. Laursen, "Revisiting the 1917 Stockholm Peace Conference", in: *Imperial & Global Forum*, CIGH Exeter, 11 April 2017, https://imperialglobalexeter.com/2017/04/11/revisiting-the-1917-stockholm-peace-conference-indian-nationalism-international-socialism-and-anti-imperialism/.

13 "På indiska byrån" [At the Indian bureau], *Aftonbladet*, 13 July 1917.

14 P. Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire*, New York: Picador, 2012, pp. 187–92; ZMO, Horst Krüger files, Box 64, (Secret) Memorandum on German literary propaganda as regards India and the Orient (Compiled by the War Office, London), 1917.

intention of not attending either due to patriotic alignments of the war or not receiving passports and visas, the idea petered out.[15] The sole outcome of the discussions and provisional alignments taking place in Stockholm was the third Zimmerwald conference, held from 5 to 12 September,[16] resulting in a draft manifesto issued by the ISB in October. Further, as the Bolsheviks' assumed power in Russia in November, a new direction and focus for the socialist movement emerged, which would leave a long-lasting impact on the future trajectory of anti-colonial movements, particularly after the establishment of the Communist International (Comintern or Third International) in Moscow in 1919. In these different contexts, anti-colonial activists initially perceived the initiative of the peace conference as something completely different, and rather than seeking to contribute to finding a political solution to end the war, Stockholm functioned as a place to put forward the colonial question in a political milieu that hopefully would support their demands of national independence and the right to self-determination once the war had ended.

Stockholm's Mayor Carl Lindhagen (Figure 1), a Swedish socialist and pacifist, had a leading role in connecting overlapping anti-colonial networks in the city 1917. Driven by an idea that "the nationalist struggles are connected with the world's population question", and as chairman of the pacifist 1916 Peace Committee, Lindhagen was an individual motivated by humanistic values. Using his political position, Lindhagen was influential in creating spaces for delegates of the "oppressed countries". The 1916 Peace Committee had been established in Stockholm to support the work of the Ford Peace Expedition, organized at least in name by US industrialist and philanthropist Henry Ford.[17] The committee's outspoken aim was to support "the rights of oppressed nationalities in every part of the world",[18] which, in 1917, gave assistance to and provided colonial delegates

15 See D. Kirby, *War, Peace and Revolution. International Socialism at the Crossroads 1914–1918*, Aldershot: Gover, 1986.

16 SCA, CL collection 820, C3D, vol. 9, Internationale socialistische Kommission, "Nachrichtendienst", Nr. 23, Stockholm, 24 September 1917. Attending the conference were delegates from Germany (Independent Social Democratic Party), Austria, Russia (Central Committee of the SDAP, Organisational Committee of the SDAP, and "Menshevik Internationalists"), Poland, Finland, Rumania, Switzerland, the US, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden.

17 SCA, CL collection 820, C2, vol. 25, Allmän klippsamling, 1915–17, "Krig eller fred?", *Fredsfanan*, 24 February 1917. The Ford Peace Expedition organized a public meeting in Stockholm on 29 December 1916.

18 "Lindhagen. – 4. Karl (Carl)", *Nordisk familjebok*, Stockholm, 1925, pp. 211–212; Lindhagen's quote was taken from a speech that he delivered in 1928 on the Kellogg–Briand Pact. In the speech, he referred passim to his "personal experiences" of meeting spokespersons of the North

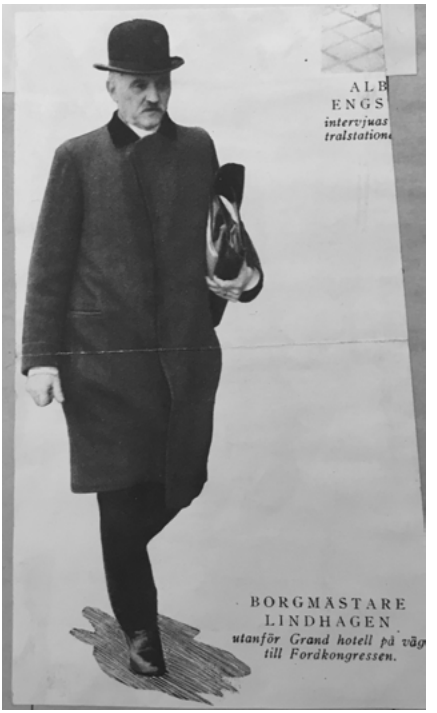

Figure 1: Mayor Lindhagen outside of Grand Hotel on his way to the Ford congress, December 1926.
Stockholm City Archive, B5, vol. 4, Pacifism och internationella förhållanden, 1910–39.

with spaces to meet and discuss demands of national self-determination. This culminated with the convening of a "peace meeting of the Muslims" at Viktoria Hall in Stockholm on 9 November 1917, an event that has been given different names in hindsight, for example "The Oppressed Peoples' Congress" or "The Oppressed Mohammedi Countries Conference with the Programme Africa for the Africans – Asia for the Asians". The event is crucial as it delineates the culmination of Stockholm as an anti-colonial space in 1917.

This chapter addresses a reversal of the reading and understanding of historical processes in localized settings. Stefan Rinke and Michael Wildt's discussion on "1917 and its aftermath" includes a perspective that is worth assessing in the context of the Stockholm Peace Conference. According to Rinke and

African tribes in Stockholm in 1917 (see SCA B5, vol. 2, Handlingar om pacifism och internationella förhållanden, 1912–1942, (Manuscript) Nationalitets- och rasstriderna, undated (1928)).

Wildt, "contemporary observers" were aware of global connections (journalists, activists, and intermediaries), and their interconnectedness. By assessing and analysing a broad range of different archival sources and material, it is possible to understand the activities of members from colonial delegations, Swedish intermediaries of the political left, the national press in Sweden, or the foreign security agencies in Stockholm.[19] The last refers to the accumulation of intelligence by British security agencies on individuals from India and Persia. Further, national historiographies have ignored "these global connections" for decades, and it is not until recently this has changed. Thus, novel and empirical research has analysed and generated a new understanding of the transnational links between revolts, rebellions, and revolutions connected to the unfathomable and symbolic year of 1917.[20]

The aim is to map out, assess, and analyse the locality of Stockholm as an anti-colonial space in 1917 as well as to analyse the level of activity taking place in the city. Was it through formal or informal meetings, and, if so, what do these encounters tell about anti-colonialism as a movement, for example the circulation of ideas in a fixed and localized setting? How did anti-colonial delegates anticipate the opportunity provided by the Stockholm Peace Conference, and to what extent was the city used as a cross-cultural venue to introduce demands of national independence? It is therefore revealing to interpret Stockholm as a transnational crossing of ideas, peoples, and relations that have been lost or misplaced in former historical analysis. This is connected to an understanding of what "lost history" represents as well as the reasons for this ignorance.[21] The perspective of "lost history" aims first at locating Stockholm as an anti-colonial space in 1917 and second at questioning whether it was neutral to analyse the scope and

19 This chapter is based on primary sources, located in several archives, digital and physical. Key documents related to the Stockholm Peace Conference are retrieved from the digital collection Social History Portal (see introduction above). Contemporary newspapers in the study are extracted from the holdings at the Royal Library in Stockholm. Archival collections that contain traces of the colonial delegates have been found in, for example, Horst Krüger Papers at Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (ZMO), Berlin; Carl Lindhagens collection at Stockholm City Archive (SCA); Labour Movement Archive and Library (ARAB), Stockholm; files of the "Swedish-Indian Society" at the Royal Library; National Archives/Riksarkivet (RA), Stockholm. Besides the archival documents, pamphlets, recollections, and memoirs written by some of the involved actors constitute useful sources.

20 S. Rinke and M. Wildt, "Revolutions and Counter-Revolutions: An Introduction", in: S. Rinke and M. Wildt (eds.), *Revolutions and Counter-Revolutions. 1917 and its Aftermath from a Global Perspective*, Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2017, pp. 12–18.

21 J. Fowler, *Japanese and Chinese Immigrant Activists. Organizing in American and International Communist Movements, 1919–1933*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007, pp. 12–13.

outcome of these encounters from a spatial and temporal perspective. The reason for why is that the Stockholm Peace Conference offered anti-colonial activists a chance to formulate an understanding of colonialism and imperialism and then to introduce it to a political and social audience commonly defined as "the West".

The Stockholm Peace Conference and the reasons for why it never took place has been covered extensively in previous research[22]; however, the activities, demands, and connections of the colonial delegations and their representatives are, to a large extent, unknown and excluded from an historiographical tradition that has been defined either by methodological nationalism or has focused on depicting the history of Swedish and European labour movements. The influx of colonial delegates in Stockholm and their connection to the conference have not been a part of the general narrative. Karl-Michael Chilcott proposes a deeper discussion on the historical aspects of the Swedish social democratic party and its tentative engagement with the anti-colonial struggle in the twentieth century, a departure that should involve aspects of humanitarian and general democratic traditions.[23] In spite of this call, the peculiarity of the anti-colonial influx and their movements in Stockholm has not entirely been ignored. A constructive example of this is Ole Birk Laursen's interpretation on the Stockholm Peace Conference,[24] and Martin Grass' analysis of the delegates "for the Islamic peoples" in Stockholm. The latter was written within the project "Sweden and the Islamic World", in which Grass observes Stockholm as a centre for international politics. While Grass highlights the religious agenda of the delegates, which culminated in the "peace meeting of the Muslims" on 9 November, a deeper discussion on the agendas and behaviour of other anti-colonial activists is not mentioned, for instance Indian, Irish, or Finnish delegates. However, Grass' article remains one of few detailed interpretations of Stockholm as a place that highlights a connection between peace, revolution, and national self-determination.[25]

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22 See, e.g., A. Kan, *Hemmaboljsevikerna. Den svenska socialdemokratin, ryska bolsjeviker och mensjeviker under världskriget och revolutionsåren 1914–1920* [Home bolsheviks: Swedish Social Democrats and Russian Bolsheviks and Mensheviks during the First World War and the revolutionary years], Stockholm: Carlsson, 2005; M. Nishikawa, *Socialists and International Actions for Peace 1914–1923*, Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2010; Kirby, *War, Peace and Revolution*.

23 K.-M. Chilcott, "Historische Aspekte im Verhältnis der Sozialdemokratischen Arbeiterpartei Schwedens (SAP) zum antikolonialen Kampf" [Historical aspects of the relationship of the Social Democratic Workers' Party of Sweden (SAP) to the anti-colonial struggle], *Nordeuropa. Studien der Wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift der Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-Universität Greifswald* 20 (1986), p. 91.

24 Laursen, "Revisiting the 1917 Stockholm Peace Conference".

25 M. Grass, "'Tio muselmän redogöra för sina nationers slaveri.' Representanter för islamska folk i Stockholm 1917" [Ten Muslim men explicate on the slavery of their nations. Representatives of the Islamic peoples in Stockholm in 1917], *Arbetarhistoria* 25 (2001) 97, pp. 42–49.

Nirode K. Barooah's reading of Stockholm and the peace conference is, similar to Grass', framed along the international perspective, but the focus is essentially placed on analysing the internationalization of the Indian question in Stockholm, particularly through the undertakings of Chatto and the India Committee. Yet, the contributions from Barooah, Laursen, and Grass are central as they situate a transnational history that links together the peace conference in Stockholm in 1917 with anti-colonialism.[26]

The Stockholm Peace Conference was foreshadowing things to come in the arena of power politics, future international relations, and the colonial question. This connects explicitly to the treatment of the colonial question at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919, which, in hindsight, has been highlighted as a forum that practiced prejudice against and exclusion of colonial delegates present at the conference by the victorious nations (US, France, Great Britain, and, to some degree, Italy). Erez Manela shows in *The Wilsonian Moment* that the spatial scenery of how the question of self-determination and the colonies was treated and largely ignored at Versailles and, in turn, how this contributed to establishing the international origins of anti-colonial nationalism. The US president, Woodrow Wilson, introduced the idea of liberal internationalism at Versailles, together with how this would gradually transfer national independence to the colonies over time, which would be administered through a system of mandate states by existing colonial empires, thus allowing France and Great Britain to carve up a new global imperial structure after 1919. For the colonial delegates present in Versailles, the idea of national self-determination proved to be a mirage as they were treated with silence and indifference.[27] The socialist initiative to convene a peace conference in Stockholm is therefore foreshadowing what happened in Versailles, meaning similar patterns of ignorance vis-à-vis the colonial delegates were on display in

26 Barooah, *Chatto*. Other examples of previous research that touch upon the topic of Stockholm and anti-colonialism, though with an explicit focus on the activities of Indian national revolutionaries, can be found in H. Ch. Aspengren, "Indian Revolutionaries Abroad: Revisiting their Silent Moments", *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* 15 (2014) 3; H. Ch. Aspengren, *En dag i Delhi, om viljan att slå rot* [One day in Delhi: About the will to take root], Stockholm: Norstedts, 2014; B. Zachariah, "Indian Political Activities in Germany, 1914–1945", in: J. Miyang Cho et al. (eds.), *Transcultural Encounters between Germany and India*, Oxon: Routledge, 2014, pp. 1–11; N. Kuck, "Anti-Colonialism in a Post-Imperial Environment. The Case of Berlin, 1914–33", *Journal of Contemporary History* 49 (2014) 1, pp. 134–159; F. Petersson, "Subversive Indian Networks in Berlin and Europe, 1914–1918. The History and Legacy of the Berlin Committee", in: R. T. S. Chhina (ed.), *India and the Great War, 1914–1918*, New Delhi: United Service Institution of India, 2018, pp. 124–157.

27 E. Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment. Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Stockholm despite that the organizers professed that the city in itself was "a neutral" place that made it possible to hold open discussions on how to achieve a just peace. The anti-colonial encounters in the Swedish capital in 1917 reveal a global locality that intertwined separate identities from colonized states and nations sharing similar objectives amongst people and associations regardless of nationality.[28] Thus, this calls for discussing the specific question of who can be identified as an anti-colonial activist.

Who is an Anti-Colonial Activist?

The definition of an anti-colonial activist can be linked to a broader discussion on what anti-colonialism constitutes and represents. Pankaj Mishra's and Robert J. C. Young's definitions of anti-colonialism and what inspires anti-colonial activities are grounded in a political, social, and cultural milieu that concerns itself less with class or race and more with values connected explicitly to a questioning of colonial oppression. In the context of the First World War, and by connecting it to the Stockholm Peace Conference, the questioning of Europe as a leading imperial centre for the anti-colonial movements is central here. Further, Stockholm embodied a locality that consisted of individuals from "a diasporic production" that represented "the indigenous and the cosmopolitan", resting here on Young's suggestion.[29] In Stockholm, the diasporic production was situated in a local setting that expressed radical and universal principles, and the city witnessed the construction of limited anti-colonial networks that facilitated political and social encounters between different national revolutionary and anti-colonial associations. Ultimately, the primary aim of these anti-colonial encounters was to generate attention on the national liberation struggle and to disseminate information about this struggle in radical and intellectual circles in Stockholm. But what does this imply about who can be identified as an anti-colonial activist in Stockholm in 1917?

The *anti-colonial activist* was (and remains) anyone who identified him/herself as coming from, belonging to, and representing an "oppressed nation". Thus, this is connected to nationalism and how this can be linked to international anti-colonialism. For an anti-colonial activist in Stockholm, national agency and identity mattered; however, the city made it possible to organize

28 A. Iriye, *Global and Transnational History. The Past, Present, and Future*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013, p. 15.

29 Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire*, pp. 1–11; R. J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism. An Historical Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001, p. 2.

meetings, share experiences, and express ambitions, adopting a common political platform to address the "oppressed nations". Hence, it did not matter whether the subject identified him/herself as "Finn", "Pole", "Jew", or "Egyptian", "Indian", "Persian", or "Irish". Further, Samuel Moyn states in *The Last Utopia* that "anti-colonialist ideology" originates in tiny groups "on the far left" that are often linked to student or immigrant networks, all expressing their own understanding of internationalism and nationalism in metropoles.[30] Migration and migratory patterns are therefore crucial. These perspectives sheds light on and explains the global spread of anti-colonialism in the first decades of the twentieth century, which in the interwar period culminated and changed trajectory. Understanding this dissemination involves mapping transnational encounters by analysing how the experience of travel amongst anti-colonial activists changed their perception of the world. At the core, this involves a tracing of and locating flows and movements of "intellectual migrations" that took place from the colonies to imperial centres in the West and, sometimes, back again to the first decades of the twentieth century.[31]

Place, Transnational Currents, and Anti-Colonial Interconnectivity

The landscape of anti-colonial activities in Stockholm was local and enacted in closed and confined networks. However, these networks were transnational in character as they overlapped with each other, sharing common interests and physical spaces. By perceiving Stockholm as an anti-colonial locality, characterized by, as Doreen Massey suggests in her discussion of place, "particular bundles of activity spaces, of connections and interrelations, of influences and movements",[32] this makes it possible to devise a mental map based on chronology and a thematic approach. The mapping of Stockholm as an anti-colonial space can also be interpreted as a "contact zone", a theoretical framework that draws inspiration from the transnational notion and networked interactivity of individuals, regardless of nationality, race, or class identity. Essentially, the notion and idea of the contact zone is, as Mary Louise Pratt introduces in *Imperial Eyes*, to grasp the functions of "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and

30 S. Moyn, *The Last Utopia*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2010, p. 156.

31 F. Petersson, "'A Man of the World'. Encounters and Articulations of Anti-Imperialism as Cosmopolitanism", *Twentieth Century Communism: A Journal of International History* 10 (2016), pp. 84–111.

32 D. Massey, "The Conceptualization of Place", in: D. Massey and P. Jess (eds.), *A Place in the World? Places, Cultures, and Globalization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 59.

grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power". However, and as Emily S. Rosenberg suggests, for us to interpret and understand the spatiality of a contact zone, the tracing of currents, interconnectivity, and frictions occurring in the contact zone is decisive.[33] That being said, the focal point in this chapter is to map the nature and character of the anti-colonial contacts, relations, and meetings that took place in Stockholm in 1917, and, it is essential to note that this precedes any ambition of interpreting Stockholm as an anti-colonial contact zone. Rather, the objective is to uncover previously unknown patterns and currents that occurred in Stockholm as a place and space of anti-colonialism. Fundamental to this analysis is "the city", meaning Stockholm turned for a short while into a "world city". This implies that Stockholm was an international centre of activities that transcended national boundaries, connecting people who shared similar ideological values and goals. The Swedish newspaper, *Svenska Dagbladet*, described how Stockholm "for the first time has become a name in the world".[34] Thus, by mapping the anti-colonial scenery of Stockholm from a transnational perspective, this fits well with Karl Schlögel's suggestion in his seminal study of Moscow in the year of the Great Terror in 1937, which strives towards unifying what has been separated across time from a historiographical and scientific division of labour.[35]

The anti-colonial panorama in Stockholm was not static in 1917. It shifted its contextual character in shape and content as novel networks were created, overlapped, and transformed over an intense period, and it was a process that radicalized some of the actors, such as the members of the India Committee. From a chronological perspective, colonial delegates can be seen from May to August as wanting to gain ground within the socialist movement and be included in the plans of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. However, a second phase emerged between September and November, characterized by exclusion, radicalization, and new relations. The latter phase included some of the delegates monitoring the events that unfolded in Russia with the events leading up to the Bolshevik coup d'état on 7 November 1917 and also the presence of

33 M. L. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes. Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London: Routledge, 2008, 2nd edn., p. 8; E. S. Rosenberg, "Transnational Currents in a Shrinking World", in: E. S. Rosenberg (ed.), *A World Connecting, 1870–1945*, Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 2012, pp. 819–820.

34 D. Stevenson, *The City*, Cambridge: Polity, 2013, pp. 122–123; "Stockholm för första gången ett världsnamn" [Stockholm is for the first time an international name], Svenska Dagbladet, 16 August 1917.

35 K. Schlögel, *Terror och dröm. Moskva år 1937* [Terror and dream: Moscow 1937], Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 2011, p. 18.

Russian Bolsheviks in Stockholm.[36] By uniting what has been separated over time and taking into consideration how contemporary observers were aware of global connections, Stockholm in 1917 and anti-colonialism coalesce into a temporal and spatial context, defined by the tensions of the ideological landscape in the city and the war on the European continent.

Mapping the City: Stockholm as an Anti-Colonial Venue, 1917

> [T]hey drift around in Stockholm, having as an excuse that they fight for the oppressed.[37]

The encounters of anti-colonial activists in Stockholm challenged the heuristic and structural understanding of empire, but even more importantly, the activists strived at putting forward the question of the struggle between colonizers and colonized in public settings. And for some, this was a personal journey. The case of Thomas St. John Gaffney was typical of this. As a former US consul general in Munich and Dresden, Gaffney had been forced to resign during the war after expressing anti-British views and declaring a pro-Irish position and having a personal relation to the well-known British pacifist Roger Casement. In 1917, Gaffney travelled to Stockholm as a representative of the association The Friends of Irish Freedom and established upon arrival in the capital in June "cordial terms with representatives from India, Persia, Egypt, and the Ukraine Nationalist Parties who had established bureaus in the Swedish capital".[38] Indicative of the transnational interconnectivity was that Gaffney's Irish association shared an office with the India Committee at Artillerigatan 28 B in Stockholm (Figure 2). The bureau of the India Committee opened in the beginning of July and resumed the work of connecting itself with similar Indian bureaus in Europe and the US. The Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet* sent a journalist to the bureau and interviewed Chatto on 13 July 1917. The report describes that it was located on the first floor in a "modest apartment" and on the doorpost one could read, beside the printed name India Committee, written in hand: The Friends of Irish Freedom. Chatto explained that "we cannot afford at

36 According to the Gregorian calendar in Russia, the Bolshevik coup took place on 7 October.
37 Th. St. John Gaffney, interview with *Aftonbladet*, 6 July 1917.
38 Th. St. John Gaffney, *Breaking the Silence. England, Ireland, Wilson and the War*, New York: Horace Liveright, 1930, pp. 209, 220.

this stage a classier place, but we might join the Irish and Egyptians to get a better place in the future".[39]

Figure 2: The locality of anti-colonialism in Stockholm, 1917.
1. Artillerigatan 24b: Bureau of Indian Committee and The Friends of Irish Freedom
2. Humlegården: The Royal Library
3. Tunnelgatan 19b: Viktoria Hall
4. Regeringsgatan 67: Angelica Balabanov's home, and office of the International Socialist Bureau (ISB)
5. Mäster Samuelsgatan 27: Egyptian delegation, Mohammed Farid Bey
6. Klara Västra kyrkogatan 3: Office of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee
"Karta över Stockholms stad med omnejd. Upprättad av H. Hellberg och A. E. Påhlman, 1917–1934" [Map over Stockholm city and its vicinity. Created by H. Hellberg and A. E. Påhlman, 1917–1934], https://stockholmskallan.stockholm.se/post/31519.

Similar transnational exchanges of hospitality took place at other locations in Stockholm. Angelica Balabanov, the Russian Bolshevik delegate, arrived in Stockholm in May to partake in the negotiations between the ISB and the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. Fredrik Ström met Balabanov and described her later as "a linguistic genius" and one of the "noblest and best socialists" he

39 "På indiska byrån. Brantings nådasol har börjat skina" [At the Indian bureau. Branting's sympathy shines through], *Aftonbladet*, 13 July 1917.

had ever met. Her apartment at Regeringsgatan 67 in Stockholm functioned as a shelter for "poor refugees" from India, Persia, the Arabic nations, and Hungary as well as disillusioned Jews, persecuted Italians, Quakers, anarchists, and beggars. Further, the apartment was the office for the ISB, which functioned as a connective centre between the Bolsheviks, left-wing socialists, and the socialist movement. The Swedish security agency observed that the ISB received funding from affiliated associations across Europe, but any contacts with colonial delegates in Stockholm are not mentioned.[40] According to Balabanov, nonetheless, Stockholm was littered with "spies, agents of different governments, disappointed journalists, indiscrete individuals from many countries".[41]

The mapping of transnational encounters of anti-colonial movements in Stockholm in 1917 illustrate a terrain consisting of several individuals and associations engaged in putting forward demands of national freedom and the right to self-determination. Aside from the India Committee and The Friends of Irish Freedom, other associations frequented the city, for example the Ukrainian Information Bureau, the Estonian Information Bureau,[42] delegates representing the Islamic faith in the "oppressed nations", and the Jewish socialist association Bund, to mention a few. Likewise, charismatic figures arrived in Stockholm, for example the "distinguished cosmopolite" Georg Matchabelli, an émigré Georgian nationalist and later perfume entrepreneur in New York[43]; and émigré

40 Ström, *I stormig tid*, p. 206; Swedish National Archives (SRA), SE/RA/420640.02, F2: Stockholmspolisens kriminalavdelning 6:e roteln; Kommunistiska handlingar, Del 7, 1918–1930, Förtroligt P.M., 1918. According to Swedish police, the ISB disseminated "revolutionary propaganda" in the publication *Internationale Kommission*.

41 A. Balabanoff, *Minnen och upplevelser* [Memories and experiences], Stockholm: Tidens förlag, 1927, p. 157. Balabanov stated that in Stockholm, and even more than in other "neutral countries", there was an abundance of "adventurers and spies" in 1917. According to a confidential report of the Swedish security agency, Balabanov left Sweden for Russia on 23 September. During her stay in Sweden, she frequently travelled in the country and visited other countries (Germany and Denmark).

42 The Estonian Embassy in Stockholm published a pamphlet of the legation's history in the city in 2010, describing Stockholm in 1917 as an "important step" in the national independence struggle as it provided political space for the nascent nation's network, connecting with Estonian bureaus in Copenhagen and Kristiania (nowadays Oslo) (see T. Valmet, *A House in Lärkstaden*, Stockholm: Estonian Embassy, 2010, p. 9).

43 The emigration protocols of the Stockholm police recorded that Matchabelli arrived in Stockholm on 12 May, SCA, SE/SSA/0022/1, Överståthållarämbetet för Polisärenden 2. Poliskammaren, Nummer 164. Matchabelli had, prior to arriving in Stockholm, travelled extensively, visiting Constantinople, Petrograd, Japan, the US, Kristiania (Oslo), and Berlin (see H. Gummerus, *Jägare och aktivister* [Hunters and activists], Helsingfors: Söderström & Co, 1927, p. 343).

political activists from Finland, who were organized in an "illegal Finnish legation central bureau", where some convened political sessions under the name Pelikan-Klubben (Pelican Club).[44]

Finnish resistance against tsarist Russia has been extensively covered in the writing of Finland's national history; however, to perceive this as an anti-colonial struggle against tsarist Russia is a perspective rarely touched upon.[45] The Finnish nationalist Herman Gummerus was a character of a different kind in this context. Founder of the militant association Jägarrörelsen (Hunter Movement), Gummerus assumed a leading role to coordinate the Finnish nationalist network in Stockholm in 1917. Gummerus later depicted his experience of Stockholm in the autobiography *Jägare och aktivister* (Hunters and activists), describing the organization of meetings with the League of Oppressed Peoples in Russia in his apartment, an association that was distinctly anti-colonial in its political disposition, consisting of members from Finland, the Baltic nations, Belarus, Poland, the Caucasus region, and the Jewish diaspora.[46] Further, not only was Gummerus in contact with Lindhagen on the question of the national liberation struggle, but also he was acquainted with anti-colonial activists "from far and wide", and the most prolific one was Chatto. According to Gummerus, Chatto's hatred towards the British Empire and its rule over India was "so glowing and irreconcilable that it sent shivers down your spine when you listened".[47]

Chatto was the leading representative of the India Committee in Stockholm (Figure 3), and he established close contacts with leading persons in the Swedish left-wing socialist movement, such as Lindhagen, Ture Nerman, Zeth Höglund, and Otto Grimlund, but also with intellectuals. A scholar on the Middle and Far East, the archaeologist Ture J. Arne at the History Museum in Stockholm, became a close friend to Chatto, with the latter sharing his experiences of the Middle East with Arne.[48] Arne observed that the first decades of the twentieth century in Stockholm witnessed an influx of "strangers from Asia" in Stockholm, all

44 F. Petersson, "Mot det ryska förtrycket: en finländsk socialistisk självständighetskamp i Stockholm 1917" [Against Russian oppression: A Finnish socialist independence struggle in Stockholm in 1917], *Svenska Yle*, 26 November 2017, https://svenska.yle.fi/artikel/2017/11/26/langlasning-mot-det-ryska-fortrycket-en-finlandsk-socialistisk.

45 H. Meinander, *Finlands historia: Linjer, strukturer, vändpunkter* [History of Finland: Trajectories, structures, turning points], Stockholm: Atlantis, 2010.

46 Gummerus, *Jägare och aktivister*, pp. 288–289.

47 Ibid., p. 344. Original quote in Swedish: "glödande och så oförsonligt, att det gick kalla kårar genom en då man lyssnade därtill".

48 Material on Chatto's relation to Arne is filed in the archive of the Swedish-Indian Association, which was established in Stockholm 1949. The documents are located at the Royal Library in Stockholm, Kungliga biblioteket (KB), Svensk-indiska föreningens arkiv Acc 2013/35.

Figure 3: Virendranath Chattophadyaya (Chatto) at the Indian bureau in Stockholm. Kungliga biblioteket, Acc 2013:35.

"dressed in European fashion, except from Indian women and sometimes the men".[49] For Chatto, Stockholm also functioned as a place to further his education. Aside from keeping himself busy at the bureau of the India Committee, within a walking distance was the Royal Library, which he frequently visited to study Sanskrit literature and read Karl Marx and the published works of the Swedish author August Strindberg.[50]

A Place of Meetings, Making Voices Heard

Delegates of the "oppressed nations" expected to meet the Dutch-Scandinavian committee after arriving in Stockholm. Yet, the crux of the matter was that

49 T. J. Arne, *Svenskarna och Österlandet* [The Swedes and the lands to the east], Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1952, p. 365.
50 KB Acc 2013/35, Brev från Sven Strömgren till K. V. Padmanabhan, Legation of India, Stockholm 2/4 (1955).

invitations to attend the third Zimmerwald conference had been dispatched to specific national parties belonging to the Socialist International.[51] The invitation was distinctly Eurocentric in character and would leave a lasting impression on those excluded and those included in the deliberations with the leaders of the socialist movement in Stockholm. The committee emphasized that the peace conference was directed towards "affiliated parties", and three principal issues would be addressed: (1) The world war and the Socialist International; (2) The peace programme of the Socialist International; (3) The road and means to realize this programme and put an end to the war.[52] Thus, this made it evident for the delegates representing the "oppressed nations" of the need to make their voices heard within the political space in Stockholm. One such space was the Swedish national press. The sudden increase of delegates representing other objectives and areas in comparison to what the Dutch-Scandinavian committee addressed had an effect. On 29 June, *Aftonbladet* published an interview with Taqizadeh and Wahid-ul-Mulk of the Persian delegation, which depicted how British imperialism and the expansionist tendencies of tsarist Russia had subjugated Persia over time, claiming that it was not only a privilege of the European people to govern themselves and that this should also be a right of the Asian people. The journalist noted that Taqizadeh's "fluent English" expressed faith in the goodwill of the socialist movement to organize a peace conference; notwithstanding, this would not solve the conundrum of achieving peace – it was only a step towards it.[53]

Distrust of the motifs and capacity of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee to deal with the colonial question were accentuated at an early stage. The reaction of The Friends of Irish Freedom, after wanting to meet the committee, to discuss the prospect of "raising awareness about the Irish situation" exhibited the dilemma. The committee refused to meet the Irish association; thus, Gaffney and George Chatterton-Hill went public and accused the committee of being "a squire of the Entente", ignoring to deal with "people oppressed by British imperialism", in reference to Ireland, India, Persia, and Egypt. The main reason for the committee not wanting to meet the Irish delegation was related to the origin of their departure: Berlin. Prior to leaving Berlin for Stockholm, Gaffney and Chatterton-Hill considered the idea of presenting the Irish question at the peace conference as positive. However, as they were "enemy foreigners" residing in Germany,

51 ARAB 256/4/6/1, Einladung zu der dritten Zimmerwalder Konferenz, 1917.

52 "Den internationella socialistiska fredskonferensen" [The International Socialist Peace Conference], *Aftonbladet*, 14 July 1917.

53 "Persien under rysk-engelskt förtryck" [Persia under Russian-British oppression], *Aftonbladet*, 29 June 1917.

according to Gaffney, he consulted the German Foreign Office if it was a good idea to travel to Stockholm, wondering if they would be able to return to Germany. The latter could not be guaranteed by the German authorities. Accordingly, the committee rejected the Irish delegation's affiliation with Germany, and, as Gaffney assumed, they were perceived as "suspicious German agents" by the committee, a dilemma that would not have happened if they had arrived from Paris, London, or Petrograd in "neutral" Stockholm. Thus, Gaffney questioned the outspoken principle of neutrality and the attitude of the socialist movement towards neutrality and peace.[54]

The Swedish newspaper *Aftonbladet* highlighted the situation of European national minorities. For example, the Flemish social democrat Edward Joris travelled to Stockholm to put forward the argument that it was crucial to solve "the Flemish question, if not, the seed to a new war would be sown". Still, Joris claimed that the Flemish had no intention of separating from Belgium; rather, they wanted to receive a degree of cultural, economic, and political self-rule. On 12 July, the Dutch-Scandinavian committee met Joris and recommended that the Walloon workers lead the Flemish question, and since Brussels was "a mixed city, not a pure Flemish city", then it was up to the Belgian government to decide if the Flemish should receive some form of self-rule.[55]

A second account was the ambiguity in and controversy surrounding the Ottoman Empire's treatment of the Armenian population. After the deportation and ensuing massacres of Armenians in 1915, the question gained international attention,[56] and in 1917, it was connected to the agendas of national independence in Stockholm. The leader of the Dashnaktsutium (Armenian Revolutionary Federation, established in 1890), the socialist Stepan Zorian, arrived in Stockholm to discuss the situation of the Armenian population with the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. Yet the situation of the Armenian population had already been addressed at a public meeting in Stockholm earlier in 1917. On 27 March, Lindhagen and the 1916 Peace Committee organized a public meeting on the "terrible situation of the Armenians", where the social democratic leader Hjalmar Branting

54 "Stockholmskonferensen – ententens vapendragare" [The Stockholm Conference – The Squire of the Entente], *Aftonbladet*, 6 July 1917; Gaffney, *Breaking the Silence*, pp. 202, 221. The Dutch-Scandinavian committee included the Irish question on the "peace programme" on 10 October 1917 (SHP, document nr. P/72a, Entwurf zu einem Friedensprogramm).

55 "En flamländsk delegation till Stockholm. Dess ledare, Joris, uttalar sig" [A Flemish delegation to Stockholm. The leader, Joris, makes a statement], *Aftonbladet*, 8 July 1917; SHP, document nr. P/57, Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der flämischen Delegation, 12 July 1917.

56 Fromkin, *A Peace to End All Peace*, pp. 212–215.

and Swedish author Marika Stjernstedt delivered speeches.[57] Rumours of the event travelled across Europe; for instance, the Délégation Nationale Arménienne (Armenian National Delegation) in Paris sent a letter to Lindhagen, thanking him as well as Branting and Stjernstedt for addressing "the fate of the oppressed minority people" – a question that should be solved "in accordance with the principles of nationalities, law and justice".[58] Branting was aware of the Armenian situation, and on 26 July, Zorian met the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. He presented the Armenian-Turkish question as "an international question" that deserved a solution considering the massacres of the Armenian people on Turkish soil. To partly solve this, Zorian demanded "complete independence" based on the principles of national self-determination. Nevertheless, the committee had no clear answer; instead, the Dutch socialist Troelstra concluded that the Armenian struggle seemed to be "very complicated". On the one hand, it was geographically divided between Russia and the Turkish parts, and on the other hand, if Armenia was "a single state of 4 million, it would be easier", Troelstra stated.[59]

The concept of nationality and ethnicity was, however, an attitude of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee in the contacts with delegates of the "oppressed nations". At four separate meetings on 12 July, as noted in *Aftonbladet*, "the wishes of four new delegations [. . .] and not members of the International" – the Egyptian nationalist party Wafd and its leader Mohammed Farid Bey[60]; Taqizadeh from Persia; Chatto and Mandayam Parthasarathi Tirumal Acharya of the India Committee; and a delegation of Turkish workers' organizations – declared some level of independence. According to Bey, the Dutch-Scandinavian committee had to recognize the historical right of Egypt to achieve national independence, and it

57 SCA, SE/SSA/0023/01, Överståthållarämbetet. Polisärenden 3, Anteckningsböcker rörande möten, 1912–17, Tisdagen den 27 mars 1917, "Armeniernas fruktansvärda ställning".

58 SCA, CL collection 820, A2, vol. 3, Mottagna brev, 1896–1942, Letter from Délégation Nationale Arménienne, Paris, to Carl Lindhagen, Stockholm, 4/4-1917.

59 SHP, document P/59, Sitzung des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees mit der armenischen Delegation, Stockholm, 26 July 1917. Stepan Zorian (pseudonym: Rosdom, 1867–1919), based in Geneva, travelled extensively in the Balkans and Caucasus during the war. He died in Baku in 1919 (see "Zorian, Stepan", *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz*, http://www.hls-dhs-dss.ch/textes/d/D45415.php (accessed 17 September 2018)).

60 Farid Bey travelled extensively and published his views on British imperialism and its effect on Islam. In March 1917, he argued in the pamphlet *Les Intrigues Anglaises contre l'Islam* (English intrigues against Islam) that the Arab movement was an invention of the English and the mere continuation of British "anti-Islamic politics", rooted in a geographical explanation due to the broad inclusion of Muslims in the British Empire, especially as it controlled India, the Middle East, and Egypt (see M. F. Bey, *Les intrigues anglaises contre l'Islam*, Lausanne: Librairie Nouvelle, 1917, p. 6).

was a nation comprising 13 million citizens. A realization of this reform would allow Egypt to become "a truly modern" nation, Bey stated. In response to Bey, Branting made it clear that the conference had no intention of authorizing the participation of "other parties than socialist parties"; notwithstanding, it was still possible to listen to "native parties having their own wishes" and for the delegates "to make a memorandum" and submit it to the organizers of the peace conference.[61] The 12 July meetings yielded no distinct results, leaving the delegations with no solution to the question if national independence for the "oppressed nations" would be an issue at the conference. Some delegates did not take this situation lightly. After the India Committee had left the meeting, Chatto was interviewed by *Aftonbladet* at the Indian bureau. Accordingly, the personal relation between Chatto and Branting was tense since the establishment of the India Committee's bureau in the beginning of July. Branting had been "dismissive", and the journalist took notice of Chatto's "disappointment" of not getting any positive response. However, and despite the poor outcome of the 12 July meeting, Chatto had noticed that Branting and the committee "had been much friendlier" and listened to the demands of the India Committee.[62]

The colonial question and the situation of the "oppressed nations" was never the central issue in July. It was a peripheral topic in comparison to other issues, the foremost being the daily development of the Russian Revolution and the difficulty of securing passage of socialist representatives in Europe to Stockholm.[63] Yet, occasionally the colonial question was mentioned, particularly in the context of positing British imperialism in an international framework. On 20 July, a joint group of Russian Bolsheviks; socialists from Poland, Lithuania, and Bulgaria; and the left wing of the Swedish social democratic party claimed that the peace conference functioned as a venue for "social patriots", wondering what the factual purpose of the event was. Regardless of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee expressing words about "a peace without annexations" and the right to national self-determination, the joint group questioned why the committee had not levelled any criticism against "the rule of English world capital" over India and Egypt. Notwithstanding, the group had no intention of expressing solidarity with the anti-colonial struggle; instead, it

61 "Stockholmskonferensen", *Aftonbladet*, 20 July 1917; SHP, documents P/53-56a. British intelligence in Stockholm notified the Foreign Ministry in London on 13 July that the Dutch-Scandinavian committee had received Egyptian, Persian, and Indian nationalist delegates (National Archives, Kew Gardens FO 3449, The War Stockholm Peace Congress).

62 "På indiska byrån", *Aftonbladet*, 13 July 1917.

63 "Stockholm för första gången ett världsnamn", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 16 August 1917.

was to highlight the need of overthrowing British imperialism through revolution, thereby achieving world peace.[64]

Nevertheless, other voices tried to raise awareness of the situation of the "oppressed nations" without mentioning "revolution" as the key. *Aftonbladet* referred to an article published in the British journal *Contemporary Review* and authored by missionary John Hobbis Harris that stated that the future of "the coloured peoples" was crucial to solve "at the next peace congress" after the war had ended. Harris questioned the quintessence of European imperialism, wondering "who had given the European nations the right to regard" the people in the colonies as "trading goods".[65] Other points of concern were highlighted, for example news of Ukrainian nationalists demanding independence from Russia or the hopes of the Jewish socialist association Bund that the Socialist International would fulfil its obligation to unite the people and act as "the spokesperson for the oppressed people".[66] Thus, circulation of knowledge of the colonial question and the situation in the "oppressed nations" existed. However, for the delegates residing and waiting in Stockholm for any kind of response from the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, this gradually vanished when Troelstra declared that the peace conference's focus was twofold: on the war and on the right to vote, excluding any reference to the "oppressed nations".[67]

Infinite Postponement and a Peace Manifesto

The Stockholm Peace Conference never materialized; it was postponed frequently in July and August, and in September, the third Zimmerwald conference convened in Stockholm. For the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, the single outcome of this process was the release of a press communique on 3 September, which declared that it had been impossible to convene the peace conference on 9 September, thus "a new date has to be decided and communicated to adhering parties". The committee explained that due to difficulties of attaining visas and passports for delegates travelling from England and France, it was recommended to postpone the

64 A. Balabanoff, *Die Zimmerwalder Bewegung 1914–1919*, Frankfurt: Verlag Neue Kritik, 1969 [1928], pp. 77–78.

65 "De färgade folkens framtid" [The coloured peoples' future], *Aftonbladet*, 21 July 1917.

66 "Ukrajnska nationalisternas krav" [The demands of the Ukranian nationalists], *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 August 1917; "De judiska socialisternas krav på freden" [The Jewish Socialists demands on the peace], *Svenska Dagbladet*, 16 August 1917.

67 "Krigsmålen och fredskonferensen" [The goals of War and the Peace Conference], *Aftonbladet*, 29 July 1917.

conference.[68] Furthermore, the committee had met with Russian delegates to discuss the progression of the Russian Revolution, an issue that assumed a central position in the committee's deliberations. On 15 September, the committee published a manifesto that declared that the peace conference would "usher in a new era in the struggle of the proletariat against imperialism", and it should demarcate "one step on the march of international socialism".[69]

The delegates of the "oppressed nations" bided their time, waiting for any clear-cut opinion from the committee on the colonial question while continuing to raise awareness. For example, the India Committee issued a statement in *Aftonbladet* on behalf of "the oppressed peoples' of Asia and Africa", a message connected to the proceedings of the Second All-Russia Muslim Congress, held in Kazan from 21 July to 2 August 1917. Authored by Chatto, the statement showed an increased disbelief in the capacity and willingness of the organizers behind the proposed peace conference to "act in solidarity with the people of the Orient", declaring that "we Indians, alongside the other delegations of the East, have been received by the conference's organizational committee and have been convinced that the committee have no intention of actually wanting to give any assistance."[70]

On 10 October, the Dutch-Scandinavian committee made known its position on the colonial question. According to a draft for a peace programme of the committee, the document was void of any references to India and Egypt but mentioned Persia's need to receive "economic restoration". The committee suggested that groups belonging to the population in the colonies "that have reached a certain cultural level" should receive "at a minimum, administrative autonomy". Further, the committee concluded that the "fundamental aim" of the draft was to introduce the political attitude of the socialist movement on how to achieve permanent peace, implying that peace was impossible if annexations were allowed; territorial issues and war indemnities had to be solved, and the principle of nationality issues and the recognition of the right to self-determination

68 SHP, document P/65, Pressekommuniqué des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees, 3 September 1917. The peace conference had at first been scheduled to commence on 3 August and then it was postponed to 10 August, and finally, to 3 September.

69 SHP, document P/70b, Manifest des Holländisch-skandinavischen-russischen Komitees, 15 September 1917. The manifesto must also be linked to the outcome of the Third Zimmerwald Conference.

70 "Asiens och Afrikas undertryckta folk" [The oppressed peoples of Asia and Africa], *Aftonbladet*, 6 September 1917.

was central.[71] However, the last remark, if applied to the colonies, denoted an attitude that presupposed that the colonies should be evaluated along Western cultural principles. Therefore, the essence of the draft was the continuation of a European discourse towards the colonial question and the "oppressed nations".

This, however, did not mark the end amongst the delegates of the "oppressed nations" in Stockholm to continue building relations. Instead, it opened up a new direction that no longer relied on standing in contact with the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. According to a report from the British intelligence representative in Stockholm, Esme Howard, six delegates of the Muslim faith had arrived in Stockholm in September. The delegates declared the aim of the visit as "purely nationalistic", that is to say Stockholm would be used as a venue to emphasize "nations oppressed by the Entente".[72] To do so, other connections in Stockholm were deployed to assist in orchestrating a demonstration of anti-colonial nationalism: the Viktoria Hall congress on Islam.

"A Most Original Meeting at Viktoria Hall"

Carl Lindhagen and the 1916 Peace Committee proved to be pivotal as the intermediary the colonial delegates needed, especially as the primary focus of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee was Europe, and not the "oppressed nations" and the colonial question. For Lindhagen, the endeavours of the delegates were comparable to pilgrims, describing the convening of the Subject Muslim Countries Conference at Viktoria Hall in Stockholm on 9 November 1917 as one of the most "specific episodes" during his political career. Moreover, the committee had previously raised awareness of the "oppressed nations" of Jutland, Poland, Lithuania, and Armenia, but this time it was curious to see "guests from far away reach our country to bring word about the world". The "pilgrims" contacted the committee in October to see if they could assist in organizing a meeting to raise the question of the "liberation of oppressed nationalities", something the Swedish press later would describe as "a most original meeting".[73] The heart of the matter was that foreigners were

71 SHP, document P/72a, Entwurf zu einem Friedensprogramm des Holländisch-skandinavischen Komitees, 10 October 1917. The draft was printed in Stockholm 1918; however, rumours about the content circulated immediately after it had been drafted in October.

72 TNA, FO 3449, Report from Esme Howard, Stockholm, to A. J. Balfour, London, 16 October 1917.

73 C. Lindhagen, *Memoarer. Första delen* [Memoirs. First part], Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1936, pp. 67–68.

prohibited by law to deliver speeches in public[74]; hence the 1916 Peace Committee acted as the formal organizer, inviting "representatives of the oppressed Muslim nations" to put forward their demands at a private meeting, something the police could not prohibit. Therefore, the congress was organized with a peculiar twist, having the committee send invitations to people in Stockholm who might be interested, and as Lindhagen perceived it, the issue was not religious but rather focused on national independence.[75] Swedish press observed that it had been "a novel meeting" that conveyed an understanding of "the oppressed Islam", and it had succeeded in exhibiting the aims of "the unfree Oriental peoples".[76]

The auditorium at Viktoria Hall had been "utterly characteristic", having Lindhagen seated on the stage surrounded by "a circle of Orientals, some dressed in turbans and loosely fitting kaftans". The "circle" consisted of Farid Bey of Wafd and Abd al-Aziz Shawish, a journalist and pan-Islamic activist from Egypt; Salih al-Sherif al-Tunisi and Ismail el-Safaihi of the Committee for Tunisian and Algerian Independence; Yussuf Bey Shatwan as the delegate of Benghazi and Mohamed ben Salih of Tripoli; Ahmed Saib Kaplan Zade, a professor from Caucasus; the Turkestan delegate sheik Abdul Aziz Khairi; and the brothers and professors Abdul Jabbar Khairi and Abdul Sattar Khairi from India.[77] Other guests attending the congress were Chatto and his friend Ture J. Arne; the Swedish socialist Ture Nerman; Herman Gummerus; the editor of *Svenska Dagbladet*, Viktor Söderberg, and journalist Oscar Wieselgren. Based on the reports in the newspapers, the meeting was a linguistic challenge, especially as several of the delegates only spoke their native language. Speeches

74 This is explained by a decision by the Swedish government to partly curb and control the flow of immigrants coming to Sweden during the war because, to some extent, of the radical political view expressed by some foreigners living in or passing through the country. In the summer of 1917, the Swedish Foreign Department implemented the decision that every foreigner residing in the country should be in the possession of a valid passport (see "Främlingar i Sverige under passtvång" [Strangers in Sweden subjected to passport coercion], *Aftonbladet*, 25 July 1917).

75 SCA, CL collection 820, B5, vol. 12, "De Förtryckta mohamedanska länders konferens med program Afrika åt afrikanerna-Asien åt asiaterna" (undated).

76 "Hos det förtryckta Islam" [At the oppressed Islam], *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 November 1917; "Muselmännens fredsmöte. Ombuden i Stockholm för ofria orientaliska folk" [Peace meeting of the Muslim men. Delegates of the unfree oriental peoples in Stockholm], *Dagens Nyheter*, 10 November 1917. A transcript of Svenska Dagbladet's article on the Viktoria Hall meeting was published in *Göteborgs Aftonblad* on 13 November 1917.

77 Grass, "Tio muselmän", p. 47; "Hos det förtryckta Islam", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 November 1917.

given in Arabic were translated first to French by Bey and then translated "in third hand by a lady" to Swedish, and Zade, from Caucasus, spoke a language no one could understand. Thus, the lack of interpreters made it difficult for the audience to understand what was really happening on the auditorium; nonetheless, it was evident that feelings were strong, and the main tendency was "violently hostile against Europe". Moreover, Nerman enthusiastically declared the successful seizure of power by Lenin's government in Russia on 7 November, only to be succeeded by a short programme of songs performed by "a Swedish gentleman" about "the East". However, and regardless of these curious episodes, the meeting succeeded in procuring a demonstration against colonialism and imperialism. According to *Svenska Dagbladet*, every speaker declared total unity for the same goal, that is to say the ending of the war would lead to the "total liberation" and end of oppression across the world. The meeting therefore did not function as a rallying point to emphasize Islam's position in the world; rather, it was a gathering that repeated the demands that the colonial delegates had stated earlier to the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. Further, the reports in the newspapers observed that a discussion of "national existence" revolved around issues of culture and history, comparing the democratic structure of Islam with the European state system, where the former was still striving towards freedom. As chairman of the congress, Lindhagen concluded the event with the prosaic remark that "it is a sad world that forces strangers to travel long distances to remote places in order to open up their hearts", hoping that the delegates soon would be able to fulfil the wish of national liberation.[78]

The congress had an effect on the attending individuals. Lindhagen thought of it as a memory that obligated respect for the "pilgrims", particularly his encounter with the Indian delegate Abdul Jabbar Khairi. At the congress, Khairi delivered an "eloquent speech" on the situation in India, which then was printed in a pamphlet ending with the words "peace to the belligerent peoples, love for all, India for the Indians". Lindhagen believed that the congress at Viktoria Hall had been a positive experience for the delegates, mainly because it received attention in the national press on the issue of national self-determination for the colonies.[79] Gummerus described the event as "a strange conference" that had taken on an overtly socialist character, and therefore, considering his nationalist disposition, he questioned why Finland really had to get involved with Indians,

78 *Svenska Dagbladet*, 10 November 1917; *Dagens Nyheter*, 10 November 1917.

79 Lindhagen, *Memoarer*, pp. 67–68; SCA CL collection 820, B5, vol. 12, "De Förtryckta mohamedanska länders konferens med program Afrika åt afrikanerna-Asien åt asiaterna" (undated).

Persians, and Egyptians.[80] For Arne, the congress assumed the most "curious character", reflecting on Chatto's noticeable speech, which had explicitly aimed "fierce hatred" at the British Empire,[81] an account not included in the Swedish newspapers. Arne's recollection of the congress is mentioned in his memoir, a book reviewed by Oscar Wieselgren in *Svenska Dagbladet* in 1953, who also attended the Viktoria Hall congress. Remembering Chatto, Wieselgren thought he was a "mild and calm" person; notwithstanding, once at the rostrum, Chatto transformed into a "violent fanatic" against the British Empire. In comparison, Wieselgren established a relation to Bey, where the latter described how Egypt's national independence would be accomplished after the war, especially as Europe would be "too exhausted" to prevent this from happening.[82] The Viktoria Hall congress, on the one hand, succeeded in highlighting the agenda of pan-Islam,[83] and, on the other hand, through the connective endeavours of the 1916 Peace Committee, it created a space of anti-colonialism in Stockholm. The event was novel from the perspective as it united nationalities across borders, sharing similar values, ambitions, and aims in the anti-colonial struggle for freedom and national independence, and furthermore, the aftermath confirmed a new direction.

"We Have Fortunately Never Held Any Illusions . . . "

Representatives of the Muslim delegation wanted to raise awareness of the results of the Viktoria Hall congress. On 10 November, the Dutch-Scandinavian committee received a memorandum on Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Tripoli, Benghazi, India, Caucasus, and Turkestan, addressing the need of the socialist movement to discuss "effective means of liberating [the oppressed nations] from foreign subjection" and the hope that this would be tackled "at the next congress of peace". It is not known if the delegation visited the committee to hand over the memorandum or if it was dispatched after the congress on 9 November. According to the archival notes of the *Social History Portal*, any other sources to confirm whether a meeting with the committee ever took place has not been found. What is known, however, is that the memorandum was circulated at Viktoria Hall, and then published in the Wafd paper, *Bulletin du Parti national égyptien*, in November. Thus, any response from the Dutch-Scandinavian committee has not been found; accordingly,

80 Gummerus, *Jägare*, p. 346.
81 Arne, *Svenskarna och Österlandet*, p. 365.
82 O. Wieselgren, "Svenskarna i Orienten", *Svenska Dagbladet*, 8 February 1953.
83 Grass, "Tio muselmän", p. 49.

the act of passing on the memorandum must therefore be seen as a symbolic finale of the activities of the Muslim delegation in Stockholm.[84]

The India Committee was more explicit in its opinion to the proposed peace programme of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. On 16 November, the India Committee sent a letter to the committee, criticizing it for "its lack of sincerity, which apparently exists within the Western European social democratic parties". The length of the letter (eight pages) was a harsh criticism of the India Committee and its disappointment of having realized that the socialist movement had no intention of including India in the programme. Furthermore, the letter is symbolic from the perspective that it demonstrated the definitive position of the India Committee vis-à-vis the Dutch-Scandinavian committee. According to the India Committee, it was obvious that "for Western social democracy, as for every European imperialist, the word humankind equals Europe". Accordingly, the "oppressed nations" were left out of the equation, especially those under the control of France or England. The letter highlighted a transnational perspective, comparing and questioning why the Dutch-Scandinavian committee treated other regions and "oppressed nations" differently from India. For example, Armenia, the Free State of Congo, Persia, Afghanistan, and China were given a more positive description. Clearly, it was a letter written with care; nevertheless, it declares the severing of ties to any allegiance of the India Committee to socialism as a political movement. Instead, the letter implied a radicalization of the committee, that is to say a deeper bond with Swedish left-wing socialists, and the creation of a relation to the Bolshevik regime in Russia. Further, the letter was written by Chatto, who concluded that "we have fortunately never held any illusions about the honesty of West European social democracy"; nevertheless, he expected of "international socialists to, at least, abide to the principles which they themselves have confessed" to achieve world peace. If India or other "oppressed nations" were not included in this framework, it would not be possible to achieve a permanent peace, Chatto stated.[85]

To confirm the dissociation with the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, the India Committee published two brochures in November. The first included statements of British socialists on England's rule over India, and the second, *De internationella socialistiska kongressernas tal och resolutioner angående Indien* (Speeches and resolutions of the international socialist congresses on India), emphasized a historical background of the international socialist movement

84 SHP, document P/75-75a, Zusammenfassung der Forderungen der islamischen Gruppen, November 1917.

85 SCA, CL collection 820, B5, vol. 12, Letter from India Committee, Stockholm, to the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, Stockholm, 16 November 1917.

in the Indian liberation struggle. Yet the definite break was communicated in January 1918, with the publication of the brochure *Indien och världsfreden. En protest mot den Holländsk-skandinaviska socialdemokratiska kommitténs fredsprogram* (India and world peace. A protest against the peace programme of the social democratic Dutch-Scandinavian committee). According to the India Committee, it was an act of resignation, stating "that our protest can be of interest to others, especially the suppressed and oppressed nations". Because of the "illogical and hypocritical" treatment of the Indian question by the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, the India Committee put its faith in Russian revolutionaries and their methods of wanting to create world peace by "giving the broadest attention to the principle of nationality".[86] Thus, the hope and expectancy of the India Committee, which had been invested in the European socialist movement to take an active position against colonialism and imperialism, was transferred to Lenin's Bolshevik regime in Soviet Russia.

Anti-Colonialism in Stockholm, 1917: A Limited Space

Stockholm as a locale of and for transnational anti-colonial encounters in 1917 comes across as a vibrant place; but foremost, it was a limited space. The encounters of delegates – representing the "oppressed nations" and the variety of different nationalistic agendas by, first, being introduced to the Dutch-Scandinavian committee; second, being published in the Swedish press and printed material (brochures, pamphlets); and thirdly, by being presented at the Viktoria Hall congress on 9 November – exhibit a "lost history" of the portrayal of colonialism and imperialism in a politicized setting in Stockholm. Enacted at crucial time, as the war raged on the European continent, and with the uncertainties surrounding the Russian Revolution, movements against colonialism sought support from socialist movements to highlight the political aims of national independence and the right to self-determination once the war ended. From a longer perspective, despite the post-war era of decolonization and Sweden's international role in declaring solidarity with the struggles of the Third World, by emphasizing the brief temporal and spatial role of Stockholm in 1917 in shaping and connecting anti-

86 "Englands herravälde i Indien" [England's domination over India], *Aftonbladet*, 28 November 1917. The brochures have been located in Carl Lindhagen's "brochure collection" at SCA. For further on the publications of the India Committee, see Barooah, *Chatto*, pp. 116–125.

colonialism as a political movement, this is, by and large, a forgotten history. For a short period, Stockholm facilitated a perspective that enabled encounters of anti-colonialism while observing how these movements and agendas were perceived and treated, as in this case, by the socialist movement. Yet, the capacity of the delegates of the "oppressed nations" to advocate their agendas was restricted in the end; thus, Stockholm was a limited space to introduce ideas and arguments that questioned the current system of colonialism and imperialism. Moreover, it did not matter that the delegations wanted to enlighten the Dutch-Scandinavian committee about the "oppressed nations" – the question of political affiliation and bureaucracy pervaded the matter.

This forced the delegates to not only create connections and relations that cut across national identities, but also to act with perseverance in order to gain access to the Dutch-Scandinavian committee as well as the Swedish press. The former confirmed membership to the European socialist movement as a credential for inclusion, and the latter perceived the presence of colonial delegates as something novel in the Swedish capital, particularly as it underscored insight into "the Oriental" and the situation in Africa and Asia. Thus, it contributed to conveying an understanding of the world outside of Europe, while, at the same time, depicting Stockholm as the centre of international politics for a short moment.

Yet, the movements of the colonial delegations became limited over time. This was partly based on practical factors (lacking finances, denied visas, and surveillance); but it was mostly because of the perception of some delegates as being suspicious "German agents" due to their point of arrival from Berlin to Stockholm. Despite the socialist movement perception of Stockholm as a neutral place, it was not neutral from the perspective of the ongoing war, as some of delegations received financial support from Germany, such as the Indian and Irish associations. Furthermore, after having invested time to establish a dialogue with the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, events unfolded leading to other promising connections, particularly with the arrival of a Bolshevik delegation in Stockholm and the willingness of the left-wing socialist movement in Sweden to assist in providing political spaces for colonial delegates. Hence, the development of an anti-colonial presence in Stockholm in 1917 reveals a process of gradual radicalization, foremost for the India Committee. It also confirmed how the European socialist movement treated the colonial question from a European cultural perspective, and therefore the undertakings of the delegates of the "oppressed nations" in Stockholm foreshadowed what later would take place at the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919. The idea of a gradual transference of liberation to the colonies after the Great War, shaped by

Wilson's agenda of liberal internationalism, holds a similar bearing as the one that was coined in 1917 by the Dutch-Scandinavian committee, where the latter explicitly referred to cultural values. In 1917, Stockholm was an international centre of global politics. However, it was also a space of anti-colonialism in the history of twentieth-century resistance movements, and therefore it is connected to a protracted history that distinguishes how individuals shape their understanding of the world in times of migration and change, either voluntarily or through force.