

TRACKING GANDHI

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India | Bangladesh | Africa | Europe, 2014-2019
78 Fotografien, 65 x 50 / 90 x 70 / 130 x 100 cm
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My life is my message. (M. K. Gandhi)

In his role as political and spiritual leader of the Indian independence movement and in his out-and-out commitment to human rights, Mahatma Gandhi today ranks as one of the key figures of the last century –on a par with such people as Martin Luther King or Nelson Mandela, whose lives reflect his influence. The concept of radical, non-violent resistance that he developed - both the content and method of his political action - continues to fascinate to this day.

Despite his historical achievements, Gandhi has remained a visionary. Today's world has still not fully embraced such fundamental political objectives as social equality for all people, mutual understanding between the different religions or the assured satisfaction of basic human needs across the globe through vegetarian nutrition and regionally controlled production.

The project *Tracking Gandhi* is a photographic journey to places in India, Africa, and Europe that represented important milestones or turning points in Gandhi's private and public life. It is a complex journey that leads halfway round the world. Some of the photographs that have been produced for this project were taken in places that are not accessible to the public and not only involved extensive research but also required a time-consuming approval process and the negotiation with elaborate bureaucratic systems.

Moreover, the project includes images of places that have not previously been considered in connection with Gandhi. The results obtained in this way can therefore be considered unique in their current form.

Imagery arranged chronologically shows the exciting and by no means contradiction-free life journey of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and visualizes a tension between the present and the historically charged aura of the places depicted: some photographs document visible commemoration and historical-political appropriation, while others show functional continuities or superimpositions. Sometimes visual references are only partially recognizable.

This opens up a deeper level of meaning: superimposed historical layers show how past, present and future are interwoven in the images.

Gandhi himself rejected stereotyping, personality cults and simplified categorizations. *Tracking Gandhi* respects this attitude in terms of form and content and offers new perspectives for unbiased observations.

The project includes 78 photographs accompanied by explanatory texts and quotes from Gandhi.