

Vandana Shiva is no Ghandi, does the impoverished no favors

There have been several Indian pretenders to the Mahatma Gandhi legacy in the 66 years since his assassination, but only one of them truly deserves the title. What Gandhi was to the British Empire, Dr Shiva is to Monsanto, the multinational agribusiness corporation, and its allies, including the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation, the US government and Bill and Melinda Gates. She has put all of these extremely powerful actors on the back foot for a very long time, which is not where they are accustomed to being.

The only question that really matters regarding Dr Shiva and her campaign is whether or not that is a good thing. The debate over genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in the West tends to revolve around two issues: whether foods engineered in the laboratory are bad for us and whether they might dangerously contaminate the environment.

Dr Shiva has got carried away with her own rhetoric, wowing her Western audiences with visions of innocent, bio-diverse village India falling prey to evil Western capital. In the process she has made herself look ridiculous, claiming that the expense of GM cotton – which unlike GM food crops is widely grown in India – has caused hundreds of thousands of farmer suicides and that Monsanto is guilty of “genocide”.

Like Gandhi, Dr Shiva is in thrall to a romantic vision of village India which bears little relation to the real thing. By stripping down to the dhoti and spinning cotton, Gandhi hoped to banish the modern world and lead India back into a state of innocence which never existed outside his imagination.

Read the full, original article: [Meet Vandana Shiva: The deserving heir to Mahatma Ghandi's legacy](#)