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Civil Disobedience Movement

Burma Moves Forward with Non-Violent Resistance!

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INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF
ENGAGED BUDDHISTS (INEB)

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and the School for Wellbeing Studies
and Research.

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Editorial Note

Dear friends of INEB,

We send greetings and best wishes for your health and wellbeing as the pandemic continues to affect the entire world.

Here in Southeast Asia, the military coup that took place in Burma on February 1, 2021, has sent shock waves across the entire region and is seriously impacting the lives of our friends in Burma as they find ways to survive the oppressive tactics of the military. This issue focuses on the pro-democracy movements in Siam and Burma with country reports and articles giving insights into the unfolding situations. Urgent funding appeals to support Burma's civil disobedience movement with additional information available on INEB's and the Spirit in Education's (SEM) websites are also included.

The Niwano Peace Foundation has announced that INEB's patron Venerable Bhikshuni Chao Hwei of Taiwan has been awarded the 38th Niwano Peace Prize. The American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine presented their Humanities Award to Roshi Joan Halifax. Roshi Joan is a member of INEB's Advisory Committee. We send our heartfelt congratulations to both Venerable Chao Hwei and Roshi Joan for their contributions in their respective fields of peacebuilding and palliative care. We also offer our congratulations to Venerable Dhammananda Bhikkhuni for successfully donating the land on which the Songdhammakalyani Monastery is located in Nakom Pathom province. The process took 40 years and now the Kalyani Temple has become the 25th temple in Sampran district.

Our close friends Sai Sam Kham and Lahpai Seng Raw both have articles about Burma/Myanmar with Sam's testimony at the UN Security Council on April 9, 2021, and Seng Raw's article questions whether there ever will be light at the end of the tunnel. Revolutionary artists supporting democracy in Burma/Myanmar provide a new perspective through the use of public spaces where bold statements have been displayed.

Late 2020, the INEB Executive Secretary met with the Ambassador of Pakistan when they discussed environmental protection and work with interfaith communities. We also shared an interest in exploring the Buddhist heritage of Pakistan as described in Professor M. Ashraf Khan's in-depth article about the Buddhist heritage of the Gandhara region. Both the INEB and SEM sections have articles about recent initiatives. The article on the 2021 SEM annual lecture by our good friends Hans and Wallapa van Willenswaard which shares east-west perspectives on Earth Trusteeship. We aspire to offer contents that appeal to our diverse readers and invite you to also visit INEB's website for more articles and information.

Please see the back cover poster for the 5th Mahamaya Festival in South Korea on May 29, 2021.

Burma/ Myanmar

How a Deadly Power Game Undid Burma/Myanmar's Democratic Hopes

By Max Fisher

New York Times [https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/world/asia/](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/world/asia/myanmar-coup-aung-san-su-ki.html)

[myanmar-coup-aung-san-su-ki.html](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/02/world/asia/myanmar-coup-aung-san-su-ki.html)

Published Feb. 2, 2021



Guarding a Hindu temple in Yangon, Burma/Myanmar, during a senior military officer's visit on Tuesday. Photo: *The New York Times*

Burma/Myanmar seemed to be building a peaceful transition to civilian governance. Instead, a personal struggle between military and civilian leaders brought it all down.

The wrenching collapse of Burma/Myanmar's once-celebrated democratic opening had many witting and unwitting accomplices along the way. But its central driver, activists and experts say, was a yearslong power struggle between the military and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the country's civilian leader.

Democratic transitions can be a

messy business. Old regimes tend to surrender power slowly, piece by piece. In a transitional phase that might last decades, the authoritarian and democratic systems often operate side by side. If they stay on tolerably good terms, with a shared understanding of their eventual destination, they have a chance to make it.

That was once the hope for Burma/Myanmar. The country's military junta, after decades of iron-fisted rule, in 2011 began handing off power to a civilian government. After her party's election victory in 2015, that

government was headed by Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient for her resistance to the junta through years of house arrest.

But rather than coexisting, both sides spent much of the last few years escalating a bitter and increasingly zero-sum rivalry that, in the end, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi lost to the side with guns. She is again a prisoner.

Their struggle took place in the context of decades of internal conflict that pitted the army against ethnic and separatist groups, including the military-led ethnic cleansing campaign against the Rohingya Muslim minority. The sense of crisis and siege accelerated Burma/Myanmar's high-level power struggle, which in turn worsened the bloodshed that both sides sought to exploit for political gain.

"In their race to outbid each other," said Avinash Paliwal, a scholar at the University of London, the two sides "not only failed the peace process, but also short-circuited the gains of democratic transition."

Strongmen and Generals

Expectations for Burma/Myanmar have often looked something like the South Africa model. There, F.W. de Klerk, the last apartheid-era ruler, pressured whites to accept the new democratic order. In return, Nelson Mandela, the first fully democratic president, protected white interests, ensuring broad buy-in from the country's stakeholders.

It's a model with uncomfortable trade-offs and generational timelines. In Chile, junta leaders surrendered power in exchange for lifelong



A military truck in Yangon, Burma/Myanmar, on Monday, after the military detained the country's civilian leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the president.

Photo: *The New York Times*



Daw Aung San Suu Kyi campaigning for Parliament in Aungban in 2012. Photo: Adam Dean, *The New York Times*

privileges and protections, many of which were only rolled back 30 years later.

"Thein Sein actually did, early on, act as a kind of de Klerk," said Aaron Connelly, a Singapore-based scholar at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, referring to the Burma/Myanmar junta leader who voluntarily handed off power in 2011. "But Aung San Suu Kyi did not act as a kind of Mandela. And so the partnership that she had an opportunity to forge with Thein Sein never eventuated."

Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi's critics charge that, rather than keeping Burma/Myanmar's political factions bought in to the democratic transition, she mostly sought to muscle them out. They accuse her of hollowing out her own party, replacing experienced hands with flunkies; purging would-be rivals; heightening restrictions on journalists; marginalizing Burma/Myanmar's minorities in favor of her ethnic Burmese support base; and consolidating what even some

members of her party characterize as the beginnings of authoritarian rule.

"It became a one-woman party," Mr. Paliwal said.

Even during the height of the military's systemic killing of Rohingya Muslims in 2017, some activists and civil society leaders told me that they considered Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi nearly as grave a threat to democracy as the military was.

"There's not a real sign of democratic values," Kyaw Thu, the head of a pro-democracy group, said. "Anyone not supporting their agenda is the enemy."

This past November, her government barred huge numbers of Burma/Myanmar's ethnic minorities, who typically support their own political parties, from participating in national elections. Her party then won in a landslide.

Military leaders gradually broke faith as well, as hard-liners clung to, and eventually seized by force, the power they believed was being wrongly

taken from them.

"I think they genuinely believed that they would win elections," Mr. Connelly said, referring to the military's proxy political party. But that party lost big in 2015 and even bigger this November, curbing the military's influence.

In between, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi moved again and again to erode the military's vestiges of power, which include a guaranteed hold on one quarter of seats in Parliament. Mr. Connelly called this "the riskiest thing she ever did."

An Escalating Struggle

Outsiders often assume that Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi backed the military's ethnic cleansing of Rohingya Muslims out of political expediency or cynical self-interest. Protecting the generals lest they turn on her.

But many analysts and activists have argued that her stance in defending the army's Rohingya campaign came from sincere



Rohingya refugees crossing from Burma/Myanmar to Bangladesh in 2017. Photo: Tomas Munita, *The New York Times*



Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing was given top honors in a display of military leaders' portraits at a museum in Naypyidaw in 2018. Photo: Minzayar Oo, *The New York Times*

conviction. For years, she had suggested that the Rohingya were illegal foreigners who were backed by shadowy outside powers and who posed a danger to Burma/Myanmar's Buddhist majority.

Her outspokenness, Mr. Paliwal said, had the opposite effect of appeasing the military, instead "outcompeting" them on anti-Rohingya sentiment. Burmese Buddhists filled social media with praise of Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi for her leadership against the Rohingya threat.

Meanwhile, officers bore the brunt of international sanctions, including against Senior Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, the military leader who took power in this week's coup.

This cycle repeated over the next few years as several of Burma/Myanmar's slow-burning insurgencies combusted.

"She was actually much harder-line than the military was," Mr. Connelly said, referring to a particularly bloody campaign in Rakhine, a long-troubled region. "The

military called a cease-fire, and Aung San Suu Kyi was supposed to play her part by calling elections in Rakhine State. She refused to do that, and so the cease-fire went to waste."

These episodes deepened a sense of zero-sum, even lethal, power struggle, "generating conditions for a conservative revolt" among military officers, said Mr. Paliwal, citing his time on the ground in Rakhine during some of the heaviest fighting.

A bloodless but no less fierce struggle played out in the capital. In January 2020, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi, apparently hoping to replace the international allies she had lost by defending the military, hosted Xi Jinping, China's leader, for a state visit.

But Burma/Myanmar military leaders widely see China as an enemy that props up their country's insurgencies. The junta is thought to have handed off power partly as a gambit to break China's grip on the country, hoping that Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi would bring Western support. Instead, she had Mr. Xi marching

through the capital.

Two months later, Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi attempted to push through constitutional amendments that would have gradually shrunk the military's share of Parliament from 25 percent to 5 percent. Though it failed, it was a political shot across the bow of an institution with the power to fire actual shots in return.

Her party won the November election in a blowout, shrinking the military proxy party's share of seats even further. General Min Aung Hlaing was set to retire later this year. It may have looked, to the generals, like a window was closing.

Political scientists compare democratic transitions to pacts: agreements between the country's stakeholders that some new system will be better than the old. But if the powers that be come to see change as no longer worthwhile, or see the other parties as no longer trustworthy, the pact breaks.

Burma/Myanmar's military and Ms. Aung San Suu Kyi both chipped

away at that pact for years. This week's coup was only the last in a long series of cuts.

The collapse is in one way a harsh lesson in the grinding difficulty of managing a peaceful transition to democracy from dictatorship — a rarer and rarer phenomenon in this age of retrenching authoritarians and backsliding democracies. But it is also a case of difficult personalities and recalcitrant institutions that proved unwilling or unable to go the distance.

“They changed strategies,” Mr. Connelly said of the generals, “and decided to just seize that power for themselves.”

Max Fisher is a New York-based international reporter and columnist. He has reported from five continents on conflict, diplomacy, social change and other topics. He writes *The Interpreter*, a column exploring the ideas and context behind major world events.



powerful solidarity, activists say.

After the coup, different religious groups “are more unified than ever,” Peter says, speaking by phone from Mandalay.

In diverse and deeply pious Burma/Myanmar, protests by religious groups have deep resonance in challenging the legitimacy of those who hold power. Today's cooperation among different faiths in backing a broader, youth-led protest movement against the junta reflects a decade of efforts at interfaith peace building since the country's opening to semi-democratic, civilian rule, experts say.

It has been challenging work in a country suffering devastating interreligious conflict, including a military campaign of killing, arson, and rape against Burma/Myanmar's Muslim Rohingya ethnic minority that since 2017 has forced more than 730,000 Rohingya to flee into Bangladesh.

That crisis was fueled, in part, by Buddhist nationalists. Now, activists worry that the military will try to provoke further religious conflict to win support from the majority Bamar ethnic people, who practice Buddhism.

“Burma/Myanmar is a country with so many complexities and so much history of identity politics,” says Aye, a Christian activist in Yangon, who for protection asked to use a pseudonym and the gender-neutral pronoun “they.” “It's so easy to say this Muslim person has raped this Buddhist woman or something that triggers mob violence. [The military has] done that really, really well over the years,” they add.

Burma/Myanmar

Burma/Myanmar Protesters Bridge Religious Divides to Counter Military Coup

By Ann Scott Tyson, 26 March 2021

Christian Science Monitor - <https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2021/0326/Myanmar-protesters-bridge-religious-divides-to-counter-military-coup-protests-women.html>

WHY WE WROTE THIS

Religion has long been a divider in Burma/Myanmar – most tragically, in the persecution of the Rohingya. But the urgency of opposing a military coup has brought activists from different faiths together, protesters say.

Peter, a young father, looked out at the sea of tens of thousands of peaceful protesters surrounding him in a sit-in at a market in his hometown of Mandalay, their bright red and yellow posters condemning the Feb. 1 military coup in Burma/Myanmar.

Moments later, security forces assaulted the crowd, firing tear gas and

live rounds. “They arrived as early as possible and start brutally cracking down, shooting, beating, even firing on the street,” says Peter, using a pseudonym for his protection. “A few of our friends died, and a lot were arrested.”

Peter is Muslim. The friends he lost in the protest earlier this month were Buddhist. Despite Burma/Myanmar's long history of discrimination and violence against Muslims by the Buddhist majority – tensions and fears the military junta seeks to exploit – today on Burma/Myanmar's streets people are showing a



Buddhist monks lead a protest march against the military coup that overthrew the elected government in Burma/Myanmar in February. **AP**

People offer prayers at the funeral of a Muslim woman who her family said was killed by the army in Burma/Myanmar. The military has shot and killed more than 300 protesters demonstrating against the coup in February. **AP**

But today, “there is a much more open conversation on what it actually means to be Muslim, what it actually means to be Christian, what it actually means to be Hindu and Buddhist and Sikh,” Aye says.

Coming Together

New networks involving Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, and other faithful are pooling resources and coordinating support for the protests in different parts of the country, Aye says. “They have the confidence to say democracy is for all of us.”

“The military miscalculated the strength and the groundwork that had already been laid, and didn’t think the people would be confident enough to come out against them so strongly,” Aye says by phone from Yangon, where they are active in protests.

Burma/Myanmar’s strong culture of giving – it is the second-most charitable country in the world after the United States – has seen an outpouring of donations to support informal health clinics and local

markets, as the civil disobedience movement halts public services and businesses.

Christians are playing a bigger role than in past protests, says David Moe, a Ph.D. candidate at Asbury Theological Seminary, who grew up in Burma/Myanmar’s majority-Christian Chin state. “The coup is clearly unjust for the majority of Christian groups, even though in the beginning of the movement some people were hesitant,” he says. The Burmese Christian refugee community in the United States is actively raising funds to help support striking government employees, he says.

For its part, the military junta is working to sow divisions within the protest movement, Peter says, such as by claiming the National League for Democracy, the political party of civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi that won a landslide election victory in November, was funded by overseas Muslim groups to promote Islam in Burma/Myanmar. Soon after the coup, the military raided the Muslim quarter

of Mandalay, claiming to be hunting terrorists, he adds.

But such timeworn scapegoating tactics are proving ineffective, Peter believes. “People are more united, and they see the coup as the main problem,” he says.

Religion and State

Religious unity is particularly threatening to the generals who led the coup, because of the historically symbiotic relationship in Burma/Myanmar between Buddhism and the state.

“The health of each is thought to be dependent on the other,” says Susan Hayward, an expert in peace building and Burma/Myanmar at Harvard Divinity School. “So the state provides for the monastic community’s health and well-being, provides economic resources, helps to ... oversee conflicts within the sangha [community of monks], and in return, the sangha provides forms of moral legitimacy, spiritual power, and religious legitimacy to the state.”

Some monks, especially in the older generation, side with the military. “They really believe they are the protectors of the country,” says Somboon Chungprampree, a Siamese/Thai social activist and executive secretary of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists in Bangkok.

But the coup has undermined the military’s effort to cast itself as the guardian of the nation and Buddhism, especially as the public grows weary of strident nationalism and religious discrimination and identity politics.

“Today when we say ... this person is a nationalist, it’s much more negative than positive,” says Aye.

In a potentially ominous development for the military, Burma-Myanmar’s influential, state-appointed Buddhist monks’ association, the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee, last week called on the military to halt its violence against the protesters, foreshadowing a possible break with the regime, according to a leaked document reported by the online news outlet *Myanmar Now*.

“That’s huge actually, because the Maha Nayaka ... has tended historically to be very conservative and not issue statements or take actions that are oppositional to the state,” says Ms. Hayward. For example, it did not support the 2007 Saffron Revolution led by Buddhist monks.

If this powerful Buddhist association “is considering participating in the civil disobedience movement and breaks with the state military, that would be a historical anomaly,” she says. “It would send a very strong moral message to the military that has tried very hard to present itself as having Buddhist

legitimacy.”

Protesting monks have drawn on religious symbolism to spiritually exile the military, turning over their alms bowls to signal they cannot accrue good karma by making donations, and that the monks will no longer perform Buddhist rites for them.

Taking Risks

Mandalar, a Buddhist monk in Mandalay, exemplifies the younger generation of monks who are wholeheartedly backing the protesters against the coup.

Depending on the day, Mandalar may be helping to carry injured protesters to makeshift hospitals in monasteries, or seeking donations to pay for medicine, food, and water.

“Even last night, they were shooting machine guns and killed and injured many people,” he says on a call from Mandalay. “We have martial law. If you go outside, they will shoot. It’s a bad situation.”

Activists in Burma/Myanmar reported that as of Friday more than 300 people had been killed by the government since the Feb. 1 coup and

nearly 3,000 had been arrested. In widespread clashes Saturday, Burma/Myanmar’s Armed Forces Day, the Associated Press reported that dozens more had been killed in what appears to have been the deadliest day since the coup. It cited an independent researcher in Yangon and *Myanmar Now* as saying the toll in more than two dozen cities and towns exceeded 100 dead by nightfall.

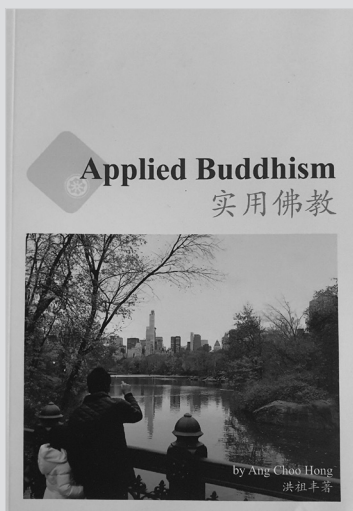
For Mandalar, his Buddhist faith and his activism complement each other – reflecting the strong connection in Burma/Myanmar between religion and community.

“When the people are suffering, how could we live in a peaceful way?” he asks, his voice rising with emotion. “We have to help the people get their rights and freedom. We don’t want to live in fear and danger. We are also part of the country and the family. If we deny the situation and don’t [get] involved, it’s a shame.

“No one should live under threat, in danger, in fear,” he says. “Not now, and not in the future!”



Recommended Reading



Applied Buddhism

Author: Dato’ Ir. Ang Choo Hong
 Publisher: Yayasan Belia Buddhist, Malaysia
 (Initiated by YBAM)

Taiwan

Taiwanese Buddhist Master Ven. Shih Chao-hwei Selected for 38th Niwano Peace Prize

By Craig Lewis

Buddhistdoor Global, 26-02-2021

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/news/taiwanese-buddhist-master-ven-shih-chao-hwei-selected-for-38th-niwano-peace-prize>



Ven. Shih Chao-hwei

The Niwano Peace Foundation announced on Friday that Venerable Shih Chao-hwei, who has earned global renown as a socially engaged Buddhist monastic, activist, scholar, and author, will be the recipient of the 38th Niwano Peace Prize.

“The 38th Niwano Peace Prize will be awarded to the Ven. Shih Chao-hwei of Taiwan in recognition of her work in peace-building through her safeguarding of all forms of life, her promotion of gender ethics, gender equality, and her approach to open-minded dialogue with different religious leaders and social groups,” the Niwano Foundation said in an

announcement shared with Buddhistdoor Global. “It is the view of the Niwano Peace Prize Committee that, grounded in her Buddhist faith, she provides fearless leadership in the promotion of a sustainable and viable peace, and as such we are honored to recognize her work.”

The award will be conferred at a formal presentation ceremony on 2 June in Tokyo. The Niwano Peace Prize takes the form of a certificate, a medal, and a cash award of ¥20 million (US\$188,000).

A leading voice for liberation,

empowerment, and compassionate engagement in Asia and beyond, Ven. Chao-hwei An is a noted scholar and author of more than two dozen books and over 70 research papers. As founder of the Life Conservationist Association, Ven. Chao-hwei is an outspoken advocate for animal rights legislation and has authored numerous papers on nature and wildlife conservation. She has also been a vocal supporter of same-sex marriage and has been a key figure in the movement to support female ordination in all Buddhist traditions.

Ven. Chao-hwei was born in 1965 in the city of Rangoon (now Yangon) in Burma (Myanmar) to a Chinese family who had fled from China’s Guangdong Province during the rise of communism. At the age of eight, she moved with her family to Taiwan, where she flourished as a student. After attending Taiwan International Normal University, Ven. Chao-hwei was ordained as Buddhist monastic.

In 1994, Ven. Chao-hwei began teaching at Fu Jen Catholic University, and in 1997 started teaching religious studies at Hsuan Chuang University. Ven. Chao-hwei founded the Research Centre for Applied Ethics in 2004, which she continues to direct.

Ven. Chao-hwei also serves as the dean of graduate studies at Buddhist Hong Shih College and monastery, and is the chair of the department of religious studies at Hsuan Chuang University, where she teaches Buddhist philosophy and ethics, with a strong emphasis on animal rights. In 2007, Ven. Chao-hwei Shih was awarded the 48th Chinese Literature and Arts

Medal for her outstanding contributions to intercultural dialogue, and in 2009 was the recipient of the Outstanding Women in Buddhism Award. She is also a spiritual advisor to the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB).

“Ven. Shih Chao-hwei is an internationally renowned engaged Buddhist who is also involved in academics and has established educational institutes,” said Dr. Ranjana Mukhopadhyaya, a member

of the Niwano Peace Prize Committee. “She is a gender rights activists and animal rights advocate. Guided by the Buddhist teachings of saving all sentient beings, her activities have emphasized on safeguarding all forms of life. She is also vocal about various social and political issues of her country. I consider her an appropriate person for the Niwano Peace Prize.”



Siam

US Academic to Know Result of Visa Application on 3 May

Prachatai English, 20 Apr 2021

<https://prachatai.com/english/node/9185>



David Eirich Streckfuss, an American academic who had his work permit terminated without notice by Khon Kaen University, has to wait for 15 more days for the result of his visa application as the Immigration Bureau needs more time to inspect the

paperwork.

On 19 April, Streckfuss went to the Immigration Office at Khon Kaen to hear the result of his application for a visa based on his employment as a coordinator at the Buffalo Birds Production Co. Ltd.

Pol Maj Gen Preecha Kongkaew, Deputy Commander of Immigration Division 4 and Immigration Inspector Pol Lt Col Nathaphong Kunlasak said the delay was caused by the high volume of documents and the long Songkran holiday.

“I affirm that Khon Kaen Immigration is operating normally, with no political involvement. Mr. David is not a prohibited person according to the Alien Act. Therefore, the visa process should not have any problems,” said Pol Lt Col Nathaphong.

The Immigration Inspector insisted that Khon Kaen Immigration never pressured KKU to revoke Streckfuss’s work permit. Immigration only acted in response to the University’s letter terminating the US academic’s contract.

Streckfuss oversaw the Council on International Educational Exchange programme at the University under a contract until 15 August 2021. However, the University terminated the contract on 19 March 2021 due to his “inability to work as designated”.

Originally, there was a report that police officers visited the University President and Faculty Dean before the contract decision was made. The contract termination also took place after Streckfuss participated in the workshop which partly involved decentralization.

On 18 April, the *Bangkok Post* reported that KKU President Assoc Prof Chanchai Phanthongviriyakul denied that police pressure to terminate the contract or Streckfuss’ activism were factors. The agreement was cut short because he was unable to secure



David sitting in the Immigration Office on 19 April.

international students for the CIEE program.

Assoc Prof Chanchai also stated that Streckfuss was not a university employee, but the unpaid representative of the CIEE, a US-based non-profit organisation.

Prachatai tried to contact Assoc Prof Wongsu Laohasiriwong, Dean of

the Faculty of Public Health for comment, but received no response.

On 20 April, the *Isaan Record* published a statement in response to the criticisms of them publishing anti-monarchy contents and would sue any individual or organization which makes any allegations made to such effect.

“In the past few days, there have been some websites that have accused the *Isaan Record* website of producing

anti-monarchical content. The editorial board of the *Isaan Record* categorically denies any such allegations. The *Isaan Record* is an organization that produces in-depth news stories and news documentaries, conducts forums and training, and opens the space for Isaan people to organize and fight for their rights. The *Isaan Record* was established to be of benefit for people living in Isaan. We use various media formats to serve as a voice for Isaan people who comprise the largest segment of the Siamese/Thai population. We adhere to the slogan, “Isaan media for Isaan people.”

“The *Isaan Record* editorial team, in consultation with our attorney team, will proceed with litigation against any individual or organization who makes any untrue allegations about or against the *Isaan Record*, its website or Facebook page, or any of its employees, whether made orally, in print, or electronically.” stated the statement.

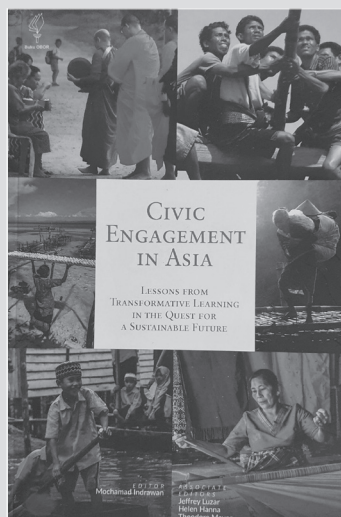
Since 19 March, Streckfuss has been living in Siam-Thailand on a 30-day visa which will expire next Monday. He is now trying to acquire a work permit with the Buffalo Birds Production Co., a company that produces documentaries and organizes events, where he is working as a coordinator. Immigration police came to interview him and the employer for the third time on 16 April.

Streckfuss is known for his expertise on the royal defamation law in Siam-Thailand. In 2010, he wrote “Truth on Trial in Thailand: Defamation, treason and lèse-majesté.”

Recommended Reading

Civic Engagement in Asia
Lessons from Transformative Learning
in the Quest for a Sustainable Future

Editor: Mochamad Indrawan
Publisher: Yayasan Pustaka Obor, Indonesia,
2020



Siam-Thailand Must Free Student Hunger Strikers Now Protest Leaders Facing Lese-Majeste Charges Singled Out by Judiciary

By Tyrell Haberkorn and Thongchai Winichakul

25 April 2021

Source: *Nikkei Asia* - <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Thailand-must-free-student-hunger-strikers-now?fbclid=IwAR2P7OvSCFy0r9ZAenzU6DG-Ft59EFVT5eBBSqV>



Arrested anti-government protester Parit “Penguin” Chiwarak flashes a three-finger salute upon arrival at the criminal court to face lese-majeste charges in Bangkok on Mar. 15. © Reuters

Two students, Parit “Penguin” Chiwarak and Panusaya “Rung” Sithijirawattanakul, have gone on hunger strike while being detained ahead of their trials in late May for alleged lese-majeste. The pair are refusing nourishment to protest the denial of their right to bail.

Numerous bail requests have been made on their behalf by their faculties at Thammasat University, where Parit

is a fourth-year political science student and Panusaya is a third-year sociology and anthropology student. The judges say they have not been persuaded the defiant duo will not go out and reoffend.

Parit embarked on his hunger strike on Mar. 15 and Panusaya joined him 15 days later. The risk to their health grows with each passing day. As long as the authorities ignore their

peaceful protest and deny their right to bail, there will also be risks to the health of Siam/Thailand’s polity, which has been in turmoil since youth-led protests for greater democracy began in July 2020.

In the second half of 2020, the protests brought diverse constituencies out on the streets with three main demands. First, that General Prayuth Chan-ocha and his cabinet resign. Second, that the constitution be redrafted with public consultation. Third, that the monarchy be reformed under the constitution.

Prayuth seized power with a coup on May 22, 2014, when he established his junta, the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO). He then made himself prime minister, and remained in that position following a general election in 2019 that critics said was neither free nor fair. The NCPO oversaw the drafting of a constitution that is Siam-Thailand’s 20th since the end of absolute monarchy in 1932. Although it was adopted in a national referendum in 2016, many citizens felt it denied them their rights and the opportunity to participate in national governance.

The call for reform of the monarchy under the constitution is the reason Parit and Panusaya are among a lengthening roster of activists facing criminal prosecution. They have been charged with violating Article 112 of the criminal code, which criminalizes insult, defamation and threat to the king, queen, heir-apparent or regent. Those found guilty face three to fifteen years in prison per count, with multiple terms to be served consecutively.



Panusaya "Rung" Sithijirawattanakul arrives at the criminal court on Mar. 15.

© Reuters

But these activists have not actually insulted, defamed, or threatened the monarchy. Instead, they have dared to call for an open and frank discussion on the place of the monarchy in Siam/Thailand -- particularly with respect to its relationship with the law, the judiciary, the military and its assets.

Parit faces at least 20 counts of violating Article 112, and Panusaya at least nine. Their sentences for speeches at peaceful protests and social media posts could break records -- evidence how afraid the state and the palace are of such discussions.

According to Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, at least 82 people have been charged under Article 112. They are among 581 people charged with sedition, unlawful assembly and other alleged offenses during mostly peaceful protests between July 2020 and March 2021.

The first of these cases to be heard in court will be those of Parit and Panusaya relating to protests staged on Sept. 19 and 20. Another 20 people

have also been charged for alleged offenses on those days, including seven under Article 112. The 13 who have not been charged with lese-majeste have all been granted bail.

The right to bail is guaranteed under Siamese/Thai law and by Siam/Thailand's international human rights obligations, but it is routinely denied in Article 112 cases on the grounds of national security and the fact that the harsh penalty makes flight more likely. Denying bail to key leaders has effectively shut down the protest movement, and instilled fear in those who dare to dissent.

When Parit announced the start of his hunger strike in court on Mar. 15, he asked: "Why do the courts of justice, which are a place of truth that must establish the truth, then imprison the truth? Why do you not grant bail to the truth to prove itself? Or is it that you detest and fear the truth so much that you must lock it away to suffer, with the hope that this will crush and ruin the truth until it disintegrates on its own?"

The judges responded that Parit was in contempt of court by making this statement and for refusing to shut up when ordered.

A week later, activists took to gathering outside the Supreme Court every evening in silence to call for the release of those detained without bail. Every Saturday afternoon, the mothers of the imprisoned, led by Parit's mother, Sureerat, protested outside the detention facility. They had T-shirts and large posters with their children's faces upon them, and pledged to carry on. The numbers outside and inside will grow as the number of pending cases steadily mounts.

"But the truth is the truth, whether it is in a cage, subject to a machine of torture, or on the scaffold," Parit lectured the judges. "The truth remains the truth. No matter how long you lock me up and no matter how much pain you inflict on me, suffering will not be able to destroy the truth."

As each application for bail is denied, it becomes more evident that preventing citizens from openly discussing the monarchy and its role in the Siamese/Thai polity are to the authorities more important than the lives of citizens. Parit, Panusaya and all the other political detainees must have their bail rights restored.

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AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
HOSPICE AND PALLIATIVE MEDICINE

American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine

Humanities Award



Recognizes person(s) whose work has advanced the relationship between humanities and palliative care, and who have employed the discipline of the humanities to improve end-of-life care through community or professional education. Candidates for the award include poets, artists, musicians, medical educators and others involved in medical humanities in the broadest terms.

Roshi Joan Halifax, PhD is a Buddhist teacher, Zen priest, anthropologist, and pioneer in the field of end-of-life care. She founded the Upaya Zen Center, a Buddhist study and social action center in Santa

Fe where she continues to practice, teach, perform social and environmental work, and train health care professionals. Her work has helped drive palliative care forward within our health care systems. She has

been a true advocate in the conversations and transformative work to improve the care of the seriously ill and dying.

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WORLD UNITY WEEK

20-27 JUNE 2020



WORLD UNITY WEEK (June 19-26, 2021)

NON-SELFISHNESS

The capacity to maintain a non-selfish attitude is the most beautiful aspect of human nature. It helps us connect with others, and leads both directly and indirectly to peace, harmony and unity.



It is said that selfishness is the basis of all human problems. It will not be wrong to say that mankind is usually selfish, but to different degrees. Many of us are quite careless about our states of mind, our immediate environment; we don't care much about the earth we live on, don't even bother to think about the immediate neighbourhood or the problems of the next colony. Day and night, most of us think and act/react only in terms of "me" and "mine"; everything outside our personal orbit is almost non-existent or secondary in our awareness.

Then, there are those among us who may not be totally selfless but have some level of genuine concern about other people. This is evident through self-aware daily behaviour: taking care of creatures and plants around them, always speaking nicely to others, not wasting water, not littering and polluting, not flaunting their social status or talking skill. The motto of this category of people is: "If you cannot help others, at least do not harm them". Our ancestors, I believe, lived by this motto, lived and enjoyed a less complicated and more practical life. They fulfilled all their needs from nature, worshipped it and lived in harmony with their environs. We can and should take such lessons from our ancestors by being less selfish and more caring.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama says that 'Universal Responsibility' should be the philosophy of life. Caring for others and protecting the environment on which we all are completely dependent is the key to human survival. Everybody should take some responsibility for the wellbeing of someone else. The best contribution to world peace is to open a space for others within our hearts.

Non-selfishness is not just an abstract spiritual ideal, or wishful thinking, but a transformative virtue that is attainable in real life.

- Lama Doboom Tulku
www.wbct.org

The International Network of Engaged Buddhists' Statement Calling for Reconciliation, Non-Violence, and Democratic Processes in Burma/Myanmar

09 February 2021

As the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), our members—Buddhists as well as those of other faiths and non-religious standpoints—represent a variety of peoples across Asia, and other parts of the world including the Americas, Europe, Oceania, and Africa. Our network has a long commitment to building peaceful societies together through using a compassionate, holistic and thoroughly non-violent approach. As Buddhists, we find violence an unskillful way of dealing with conflict that also leads to intolerable levels that inflict human suffering.

Regarding the unfolding situation in Burma/Myanmar, we are deeply concerned that reconciliation be achieved and the restoration of democratic processes occur through nonviolent means. Images during the past few days have shown nonviolent discontent by thousands of people in Burma/Myanmar with the unconstitutional seizure of power by the military. The military, most of whom are Buddhist, have been shown not responding with acts of aggression against the people, and we fervently hope that they continue to do so.

We urge the civilian government under the leadership of the National League for Democracy (NLD) and the military of Burma/Myanmar to undertake an inclusive dialogue process with the support of religious leaders, ethnic representatives, civil society partners, and '88 generation leaders. Such leaders from outside the government and military can create a reflective space in which the NLD, particularly Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the military, specifically General Min Aung Hlaing, may

reconsider for themselves their true roles as representatives of the people's will, and not their own visions as leaders or commanders of the people.

As fellow Buddhists, we urge them to practice generosity (*dana*), patience (*khanti*), and renunciation (*nekkhama*) to engage in service (*dasa*) to all people's and sentient life in Burma/Myanmar, which will lead to longer term solutions, including:

- The firm establishment of right governance as an expression of right aspiration (*samma-sankappa*) and right concentration (*samma-samadhi*) in which local, regional, national, and international interests are harmonized to avoid the exploitation of others and ensure civil and human rights are honored as part of the system.
- The wide promotion of cultural and ideological inclusivity as an expression of right view (*samma-dithi*) and right action (*samma-kammanta*), which forms the root of a non-violent society so that Burma/Myanmar can prosper as a vibrant democracy.

We invite any partners who resonate with these goals to reach out to us so that we can continue to build bridges and connections that contribute to finding solutions in Burma/Myanmar.

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URGENT APPEAL for Humanitarian Relief to Support Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Burma/Myanmar's Political Movement Against Military Dictatorship

This is an urgent appeal for humanitarian assistance by the Siam/Thailand-based International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) and the US-based Clear View Project to support Buddhist monks and nuns in Burma/Myanmar! Many Buddhist monks and nuns have taken the leadership in front line of the civil disobedience protests, as ordinary people continue to be arrested, killed, while many others are in hiding. Their leadership continues the pressure to end military dictatorship, build a new federal democratic state, and provide justice for the people of Burma/Myanmar.

At this time, monks and nuns are not generally being targeted by the military, yet some key monks have been arrested, unlawfully detained, and injured. All need humanitarian relief funds for food, blankets, medical assistance, help their families to visit them in prison, and legal counsel. An estimated 20 monks would benefit greatly by receiving 3,000 USD each to help them. As of this writing, no nuns have been arrested.

Second, an estimated total of 1,000 monks and nuns urgently need funds to support their participation as non-violent protester leaders in the civil disobedience movement. Many of them are in hiding. Donating 100 USD to each of the monks and nuns would help to meet their essential needs including food, first aid, legal counsel, SIM cards, transportation and more.

This humanitarian crisis began on February 1, 2021, when the Burma/Myanmar military unconstitutionally seized power and detained democratically elected

members of government, including president U Win Myint and state counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Within three days after the unlawful military coup, millions of people in Burma/Myanmar including Buddhist monks and nuns took to the streets, peacefully protesting against military rule as they refuse to be dragged back to the days of disappearances, forced labor, and torture of previous military governments.

Protesters have turned out in millions across the entire country. Hundreds of thousands of people—an estimated three quarters of all government employees—have walked off their jobs, as an attempt to bring the government to a standstill and force the military to relinquish control. They have been joined in solidarity by millions of nurses, students, workers and citizens in a massive general strike movement.

The violent response of the military against peaceful un-armed protesters has caused an estimated 750+ deaths, injured countless persons, and detained more than 4,400 persons as of April 26, 2021. Sadly, the death toll and number detained is estimated to be higher, according to the Siam/Thailand-based Assistance Association of Political Prisoners.

Your support will be greatly appreciated by the people of Burma/Myanmar and the Buddhist monks and nuns as they continue the non-violent struggle against military dictatorship.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW ARE FUNDS DISTRIBUTED IN BURMA/MYANMAR?
The International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) collaborates with verified partners, both individuals and organizations on the ground to distribute funds to those in need. INEB has been working inside Burma/Myanmar for more than 25 years through grassroots initiatives. Our partners are from locations throughout the country which helps to ensure that many people have access to support.

In order to protect our distribution partners for Burma/Myanmar we are unable to name them publicly.

HOW WILL THE FUNDS BE USED?

The fund will support humanitarian emergency relief by providing resources to those who joined the civil disobedience movement. For most, this means food, first aid and medical supplies, protective gear from COVID-19 and tear gas, SIM cards, legal assistance, shelter, and transportation among other priorities.

ABOUT THE CLEAR VIEW PROJECT

Clear View Project is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization based in Berkeley, California. A partner organization within the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, the Clear View Project has worked extensively on humanitarian projects throughout Burma/Myanmar, Bangladesh, and India. Clearview Project has been actively supporting projects in Burma/Myanmar since 2007. Clearview Project is overseen by Hozan Alan Senauke, working in close collaboration with a global network of socially engaged Buddhists.

ABOUT INEB

INEB is not affiliated with any political party or organization. In 1989, INEB was established in Siam (Thailand). Over the years the network has expanded to include members, both individuals and organizations, from more than 25 countries across Asia, Europe, North America and Australia. From this diverse member base, an understanding of socially engaged Buddhism has emerged which integrates the practice of Buddhism with social action for a healthy, just, and peaceful world. INEB

operates as an autonomous organization under the Sathirakoses-Nagapradeepa Foundation (SNF), Siamese/Thai NGO, established 1968.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF DONATIONS GOES TO SUPPORTING THE HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY RESPONSE?

Administrative costs of seven percent (7%) including bank charges will be applied to all donations. NO donated money goes to operating costs, salaries, etc.

HOW CAN I MAKE A DONATION?

● Donating to INEB via Bank Account

Your donation can be transferred to INEB's bank accounts as follow:

Bank name: Siam Commercial Bank Plc.

Branch: Charoen Nakorn

Bank address: 674 Charoen Nakorn Road,
Banglumpulang, Klong San, Bangkok 10600
Siam/Thailand

Account type: Savings

Account number: 024-2-62146-8

Account name: INEB (by Sathirakoses-Nagapradipa Foundation)

SWIFT code: SICOTHBK

Donations to INEB can also be made through PayPal

● INEB Contact Information:

Email: INEB Secretariat - secretariat@inebnetwork.org

INEB address: 666 Charoen Nakorn Road,
Bang Lamphu, Klong San, Bangkok 10600
Siam/Thailand

INEB website: <https://www.inebnetwork.org/>;
<https://www.inebnetwork.org/engagements-humanitarian-reliefsupport-buddhist-monks-and-nuns-in-myanmars-political-movement-against-military-dictatorship/>

● **Donations through Clear View Project can be made by check or by Paypal** and are fully tax-deductible for donors in the U.S. Please see this page on the Clear View website for links and full information: <https://www.clearviewproject.org/support/>
Or email to: asenauke@gmail.com

INEB's Mindful Action: COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund

Final Report by INEB Staff

How INEB's Mindful Action Fund Came About

By mid-April 2020, the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) had issued a statement regarding the COVID-19 pandemic calling for compassionate action around the world. INEB's universal appeal was to maintain communal harmony and offer loving kindness to all human beings everywhere. INEB, in close collaboration with its members and partners designed a process to respond to the emerging situation which included setting up an emergency relief fund as a resource to help the most vulnerable communities from affected countries in INEB's network.

Where the Emergency Relief Activities Took Place

INEB's partners and members were spontaneous and generous when setting up the Mindful Action COVID-19 Emergency Relief Fund that has directly benefitted persons in 5 countries in the South and Southeast Asia region. Originally the relief activities took place in 4 countries – Bangladesh, India, Burma/Myanmar, and Nepal. Cambodia was added in response to the extreme flooding conditions taking place in Battambang province which further exacerbated the pandemic.

The Mindful Action Fund made small grants (between 1,000 and 5,000 USD) available immediately after applications were reviewed and approved. All applicants conducted needs assessment which helped them to prioritize their relief efforts. Most funds were awarded in May and June 2020; some organizations applied for a second phase of funds based on decisions by a group of INEB's Executive Committee members. Most applicants were from INEB partner organizations where they were already working with local communities. Funds were also awarded to some organizations outside INEB's network for the first time based on recommendations from our Executive Committee members.

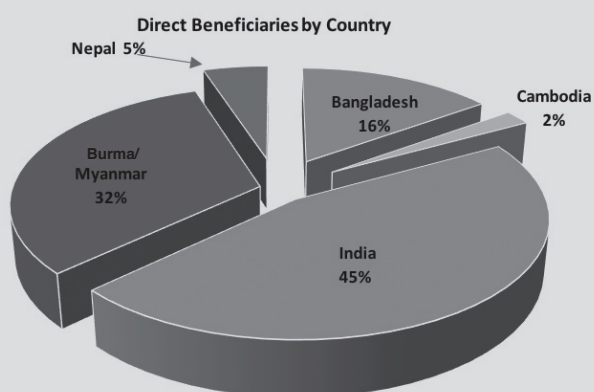
JST Korea also designated separate funds to support medical materials and COVID-19 test kits for distribution in Burma/Myanmar.

Who Benefitted from the Emergency Response?

A total of 32,094 persons directly benefitted from receiving emergency assistance provided by 16 country partners. Overall, the actual number of direct beneficiaries and households exceeded the estimates from proposals by 64%. The numbers of indirect beneficiaries are believed to be much higher.

The medical materials and COVID-19 tests donated by JST Korea were distributed to two locations in Yangon which has been the epicenter of the second phase of COVID-19. The donations directly benefitted 1,070 patients, 431 medical staff (doctors, nurses and other staff) and 204 volunteers. Again, many more persons will indirectly benefit from these materials and tests which ensure that the health care workers, volunteers and patients health and safety has been addressed.

All the Mindful Action partners' relief activities focused on addressing the most needy and vulnerable communities in the areas where they were working. Many partners helped persons that had no safety nets, or social and economic support system, who had lost their livelihoods or had no income that were living in containment areas, or otherwise were confined to their homes. Emergency activities were prioritized to support: women led-households; extremely poor persons living on the margins of society; migrant workers; persons vulnerable to domestic and gender-based violence; Internally Displaced Persons



(IDPs) in Chin and Rakhine states of Burma/Myanmar; students and teachers confined on campuses of monastic schools; orphans; persons displaced by flooding conditions in Bangladesh, India and Cambodia; children at risk of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation; and more.

The relief activities, in some situations, could be implemented more efficiently because the partners had a local presence with access to communities where they were known and trusted. They also had relationships with local authorities through which they requested and received necessary authorization and permits needed to access communities to distribute relief assistance.

Distribution was strategic and varied depending on the situation. Some activities and supplies were distributed in central locations with social distancing in place. In other situations, staff and volunteers distributing relief supplies went to people's homes where visits were made by boat, on foot, by car and motorbike.

The partners also were aware of the psycho-social impact of the pandemic in local communities. Their reports included observations of how local people were coping and their general wellbeing. They also commented how people's spirits were lifted when they received food which relieved some of their stress. Some partners did provide telephone counseling, medical transportation and basic medical assistance which addressed physical and some psychological needs.

Some donors designated funds that were to be used to address specific populations' needs. Arigatou International provided funds for IDP children in Rakhine and Chin state who were at risk of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. JTS Korea provided more than 110,000 medical materials (six types of PPE and COVID-19 test kits) to Burma/Myanmar with a shipment arriving at the Yangon seaport from Korea late in December 2020.

The partners' matching funds and in-kind donations included reusable cloth masks, clothing and household items, blankets, public awareness about COVID-19. Ultimately, the partners' additional resources of matching funds and in-kind expanded the entire relief effort and reached more people in need. The Mindful Action Fund contributed to a larger scale relief effort which made every dollar go further in each of the five countries.

Challenges and Risks

The pandemic, in most locations, made living situations that were already difficult, much worse. The situation was fluid, sometimes the locations where supplies were to be distributed

had to be changed because the conditions changed. Having difficulties with logistics and communication were common themes. The partners faced many challenges including: delays distributing relief supplies while waiting for required authorizations; extreme weather conditions during the rainy season where roads were wiped out and flood waters were high; unavailability of supplies and fluctuating prices of supplies, in addition to increased transportation costs which doubled in some locations; police blocking access to communities; volunteers and staff were more at risk of the virus when distributing supplies; and people's resistance to wearing masks. Chin and Rakhine states of Burma/Myanmar were still experiencing an internet blackout that began in June 2019, making communication in and out of the refugee camps nearly impossible, in addition to armed conflict that displaced the local population.

Sometimes there was tension within communities when some families received relief supplies, while others did not. The reality for the staff and volunteers delivering the emergency supplies was that the need was always greater than the emergency relief provided. A quote from Nagajunar's report captures this the best: "There is no glorious or extremist needs of the communities. The communities only need the basic food to survive to feed their children and old people."

Medical materials and COVID-19 tests distributed in two locations in Yangon, Burma/Myanmar, had unique challenges, most of which were securing the requisite permits from government authorities.

Report

The report covers the period of April 2020 through March 2021 and is organized by country within which each partner's activities are described. The Mindful Action Country Partner Maps shows the partner organizations' locations and where relief activities took place. Each Mindful Action partner relied on their extensive networks which included civil society organizations, religious groups, and government officials among many others. This was a first experience for INEB to collaborate on an emergency relief effort of this size which was possible through the trust, strength and responsiveness of its entire network.

The full report can be found on INEB's website - <https://www.inebnetwork.org/mindful-action-covid-19-emergency-relief-fund-april-2020-march-2021-final-report/>





USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

USAID WILDLIFE ASIA

Workshop for Spiritual Leaders On Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products

by INEB Staff



The March 13, 2021, workshop was a collaboration between the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), USAID Wildlife Asia, WildAid Thailand, the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (DNP), FHI360, the Sekhiyadhamma network and the Bodhiyalaya Foundation. The day-long workshop was held at the Phitsanulok Psychiatric Hospital, 1 Wang Tong District, Phitsanulok province, Siam/Thailand. This event was second time that Buddhist spiritual leaders were brought together to learn about how monks and nuns can be key influencers in Siam/Thailand's national effort to end the killing of animals and using wildlife products (skin, teeth, ivory, meat, etc.) in the belief that these products bring good luck and protection.

Workshop Objectives

Building on the outputs of the October 21, 2020, "Workshop for Spiritual Leaders on Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products" the two planned workshops aim to strengthen the capacity and commitment of monks and nuns in key selected temples in Siam/Thailand to:

1. Echo key messages of the two spiritual beliefs campaigns in their own teachings and respond to questions from people visiting temples and others with whom they come in contact with
2. Provide information regarding the negative impact of consuming endangered species based on findings from USAID Wildlife Asia's Thailand 2018 Consumer Research, Rapid Monitoring Survey of USAID Wildlife Asia's campaign messages that

will be relevant in their temples and other relevant research studies

3. Develop messages aligned with USAID Wildlife Asia's campaigns that will be relevant in their particular temples and similar settings
4. Speak authoritatively and explain why the use of ivory, tiger, and other amulets derived from endangered species are not in line with Buddhist teachings
5. Disseminate USAID Wildlife Asia's spiritual beliefs campaign messages and engage their followers in discussions with participants to counter these spiritual beliefs

Participants

The participants were 22 Buddhist monks and 6 lay representatives from 20 temples in 11 provinces including the Bodhiyalaya Foundation and the Sekhiyadhamma network. These monks and lay persons will be the key influencers to promote the message to stop using wildlife products and stop killing wildlife. Participants also included representatives from each of the coordinating organizations and presenters from DNP, USAID Wildlife Asia, and WildAid Thailand, and the INEB team, 5 from Phitsanulok Psychiatric Hospital and one observer from Mahidol University for a total of 52 persons.

Agenda and Methodology

Training Topics

1. USAID Wildlife Asia Consumer Research on Demand for Wildlife Products 2018 in Siam/Thailand
2. Results of Rapid Monitoring Survey
3. Illegal Wildlife Trade in Siam/Thailand
4. Buddhism's perspective on killing animals/wildlife for use as spiritual items to bring good luck and prevent harm
5. Spiritual beliefs and Buddhism
6. What Thai law says about Ivory Trade
7. What monks and nuns can do to help reduce consumer demand and counter illegal wildlife trade

8. Key outputs from the October 2020 "Workshop for Spiritual Leaders on Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products"

Training Methodology

The workshop methodology included group presentations, showing videos, and both large and small group discussions with presentations.

Phra Khru Pipit Sutahorn, chairman of the monastics working on community development in upper northern Siam/Thailand sharpened the workshop's focus in his opening comments by saying that sometimes we comply with the law through wildlife conservation efforts and protecting wildlife, but not the moral responsibility. Here he highlighted the existing gap between law enforcement and moral authority and emphasized the workshop's objective to learn and share information with the monks.

Elenora DeGuzman from USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA) thanked the monks and other participants for attending the workshop. Her opening remarks highlighted that this is a regional project which covers the Mekong region, Vietnam, Siam/Thailand and China where two campaigns have been implemented to reduce consumer demands for ivory and tiger products. Ajarn Boon Choi added that through this learning opportunity, as spiritual leaders we will have a message to deliver to society.

Session 1 – An update on how Siam/Thailand is tackling the illegal trade of wildlife products such as ivory and tiger parts by Mr. Mongkol Khamsuk and Mr. Natthakorn Ketrakthong from the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation, (DNP), Phitsanulok Office. This session focused on the legal definition of wildlife which is applied in the areas of wildlife sanctuary and non-hunting areas. He also discussed the latest version of the law which was passed in 2020. One challenge from the recent change in the law which remains is how to prevent hunting wildlife on



Session 1

monastery grounds. Some species are protected by law when living in conservation areas, but may not be if they are found outside those areas.

Since Siam/Thailand is at the center or hub of international trading, the laws vary among countries which makes it possible for some products to be sent to them. Country borders are porous which make enforcing the law in the border lines difficult.

A lively discussion followed with concerns raised by the participants regarding educating local people about the issues; the use of wild animal products in local medicine; unequal enforcement of the law; and conservation of local resources by local people.

Session 2 - Introduction of USAID Wildlife Asia, Spiritual Beliefs regarding Wildlife Products and Spiritual Beliefs campaigns - “No Ivory, No Tiger Amulets” and Results of Rapid Monitoring Survey by Chinnapat Chin, USAID Wildlife Asia. Their campaigns focus on changing attitudes and social norms reflected through behaviors. Generally, the feedback from the social media has been positive. However, the media channels need to continuously run the campaigns and the users are difficult to reach, especially persons in the 25 – 29 year age group. Chin closed by saying that these campaigns can be a call to action through which people can become involved by sharing their personal stories which others can relate to. Being adaptable to receiving these messages through off line and online media platforms will reach a wider audience.

Session 3 – Ajarn Surin On-prom and Phra Win Siri wattano of the INEB team, led the large group discussion on the role of Buddhist monks in disrupting illegal wildlife trade and consumption in Siam/Thailand. Ajarn Surin also highlighted the need to conserve the forest and its role in animal habitats near roads, dams, and where humans live and work, etc. People need to learn how to coexist with the animals in their habitat without killing them.

The discussion included the following topics:

- Relationship between monks and wildlife, the role of monks
- Role of monks in campaign against use of wildlife parts
- Buddhist principals regarding use of wildlife parts
- “Prasuth Chadok” (Buddhist holy scripture teaching) on the virtues of wildlife
- Case studies of temples and wildlife conservation in Siam/Thailand
- The role of the monks in wildlife conservation and avoiding the use of wildlife parts/products
- Agencies involved in supporting monks in conservation efforts to end trade of wildlife parts/products

A monk participant who attended the previous workshop had played his music (lyric composed by himself during the last workshop against the use of elephant ivory and tiger fang). Here is the link: https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=4568660079871130&id=100001815502457.

Session 4 - Developing Messages & Materials to assist monks in disseminating messages to deter use of wildlife parts by Chinnapat Chin. Chin presented the correlations between the 2018 baseline and the 2020 surveys which was new information since the October 2020 workshop. Overall, the data indicated positive changes in beliefs and attitudes, future buying behavior and social norms all of which favor reduced use of ivory and tiger products.

Overall, the pattern of people’s intention to buy tiger

or ivory products has shifted with a larger percent indicating that they will not purchase these products, as well as a decrease in the group which will buy or possibly buy these products.

Shifts can also be seen in social norms and social acceptability of having these products as there is increased agreement among family and friends that using either tiger or ivory products is unacceptable.

Other areas Chin presented included:

- Identifying the audience (target segmentation)
- Designing key message
- Selecting channels for messages – Online Vs. Offline Channels

How to reach target groups is the challenge! Chin raised the question about how an advocacy approach can be developed to have an impact. One idea is to have learning exchanges and exposure trips for youth into

other environments. All too often, issues such as those presented in the workshop are taken for granted locally because they may not be critically questions or appreciated within the entire community context.

One topic that demonstrates interconnections is how slash and burn agricultural practices destroy wild cats' habitat with the fire. One dilemma is how to find networks and people working in local areas on these issues.

Training Results and Outputs

Small Group Discussions

The large group was divided into 4 breakout groups. The small group discussions were very productive as monks and lay persons sat together discussing and planning how to integrate key messages into their teachings that would effectively reduce the use of wildlife products, and end killing wild animals.

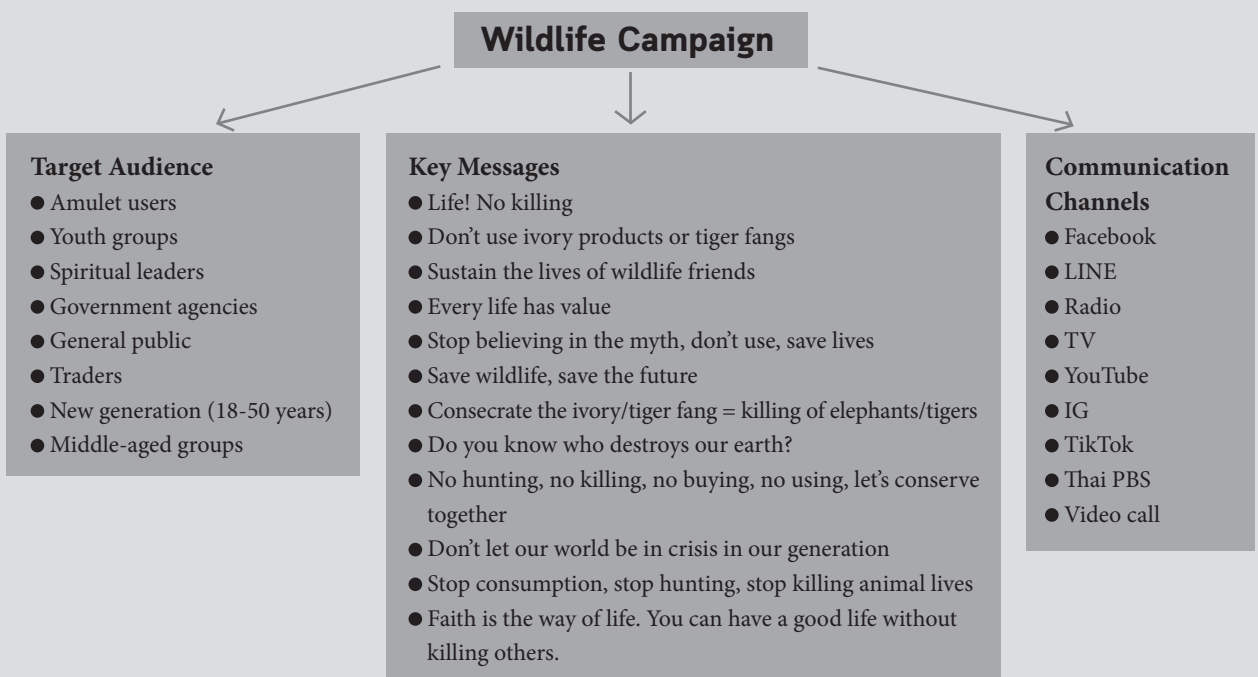
The small groups were asked to make very short

The outputs from the small group discussions have been summarized into the chart below.

Phitsanulok Workshop on Reducing Demand for Wildlife Products

Outcomes of Small Group Discussions

Translated by Wansiri Rongrongmuang, INEB Team





Small Group Discussion

videos to post on social media that were designed to reach their target groups and conveyed their specific messages. Dhanakhorn Thongdeang, INEB team member, gave some practical tips about how to make these short videos and to use a hashtag to identify it.

Three of the four small groups created a short video to post on their FB pages.

The key messages in the videos were:

Group 1 – “The pure beauty lies in the heart of the believer, not in the killing.” <https://web.facebook.com/watnpklp/videos/1795011303992158/>

Group 2 – “Stop killing, stop buying”

<https://web.facebook.com/100032807586307/videos/438068263963423>

Group 3 – This group has not created a video yet.

Group 4 – This video began with 4 questions “Who, What, When and Why.” The FB link to this video has been removed a day after the workshop.

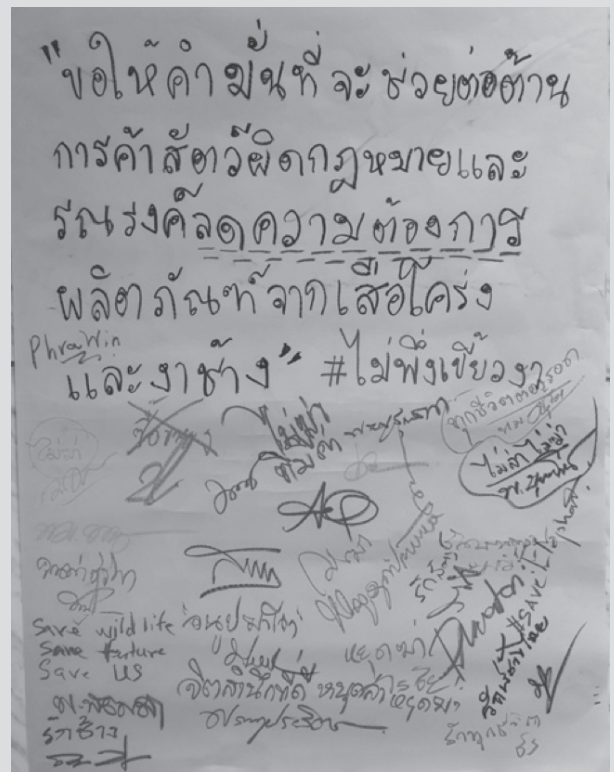
<https://web.facebook.com/Mathawinsanti/videos/3853347044709277>

The participants want to continue working within their networks on these issues. The first videos are an introduction to connect what they learned in the workshop to broader networks. Future videos will have messages to reach people in their local communities.

Next Steps

The workshop participants were actively involved in all the discussions, with many monks and monasteries already involved in conservation efforts. As a whole, they had a very positive response to the workshop, with the groups from Chiang Rai and Mae Hong Song provinces specifically expressing their commitment to continue their activities. The next workshop will be scheduled in April 2021.

The participants drafted a statement which they all signed confirming their commitment to continue addressing stopping killing and the sale of wildlife products.



“We vow to prevent illegal wildlife trade and campaign to reduce the demand for products from tigers and elephant ivory.”

#don't depend on fang and ivory



Small Grant Guidelines for Female Sangha Initiative For Social Transformation in Southeast Asia

January - October 2021

Thank you!

On behalf of INEB and the partner organizations of the 'Female Sangha Initiative for Social Transformation in Southeast Asia Project', we would like to express our deepest gratitude to JTS Korea for generously providing 50,000 USD in keeping with JTS Chairman and Venerable Pomnyun Sunim's vision to empower Buddhist women (both lay and ordained) throughout Southeast Asia. This women's empowerment initiative was announced at the end of December 2020, and proposals were submitted by January 31, 2021. The goal is to empower Buddhist women to engage more with social issues locally, regionally and globally, with values guided by the Buddha-Dharma.

In March 2021, nine applications were selected for

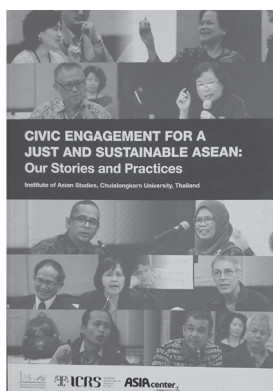
funding. The selected applicants were from eight organizations and one small group in four countries: Siam/Thailand, Indonesia, Burma/Myanmar, and Bangladesh. The funds requested totaled 45,000 USD and 6,025 USD matching funds from The International Women's Partnership for Peace and Justice (IWP), Foundation for Southeast Asia Studies and Atisha Dipankar Peace Trust Bangladesh & Atish Dipankar Society (ADS). The targets included a total of 3,281 direct beneficiaries and an estimated 12,750 indirect beneficiaries. The nine projects commissioned are diverse in nature intersecting areas of development, women's empowerment, interfaith relations, and natural healing. The approved projects included six related to capacity building, two interfaith training, and one manual production.

We thank our advisory committee: Anchalee Kurutach, Jill Jameson, Rita Litwiller, and Kishore Thukral. Thank you for your kind consideration in accepting the invitation to become the advisory committee for the project. Your dedication and efforts were incredible, and your comments and suggestions helped shaped this initiative. Thank you!

These projects will create a space for Buddhist women to participate more freely and actively in social activities that contribute to an improved environment and society within which equality for women is valued and actualized.

Opor Srisuwan
Project Coordinator

Recommended Reading



Civic Engagement for a Just
and Sustainable ASEAN:
Our Stories and Practices

Editor: Jackie Imamura
Publisher: Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, 2020

Solidarity with Burma/Myanmar's Civil Disobedience Movement

INEB Staff



The focus of the Spirit in Education Movement's (SEM) work shifted dramatically after the February 1, 2021, coup by the Burmese military government. The SEM team immediately mobilized to assess how to support the SEM team members inside Burma/Myanmar, as well as how to support the civil disobedience movement (CDM) in general.

SEM has long standing relationships with civil society organizations within Burma/Myanmar having supported grassroots initiatives there for more than 25 years. These relationships have cultivated a network of deep friendships based on trust which are invaluable, especially within the unfolding context of countrywide armed conflict and repression.

Before the end of February 2021, the SEM team had launched an urgent funding appeal to support the pro-democracy movement in Burma/Myanmar that focuses in 4 areas:

- Public Advocacy on Democracy
- Media Campaign to Promote Democracy Against Dictatorship
- Emergency Response to Protect Activists in Burma/Myanmar
- Network Coordination and Forming Alliances

SEM team members have been working along the border where they are documenting the situation and gathering information about what the people's urgent

needs are. Immediate needs are for legal counsel, food, shelter and shelter materials, medical care, and transportation.

Currently the SEM team is developing a long-term strategy for responding the increasing humanitarian crisis taking place along the Thai-Burma border. Thousands of people are being forced to flee their homes in all parts of Burma/Myanmar, many of whom are scattered along the country borders. SEM plans to set up satellite offices in two locations along the Siamese/Thai side of the border which will be strategic locations for coordinating with the humanitarian response. The SEM team is also coordinating with other organizations involved in the wider humanitarian response.

Donors have been spontaneous and generous as the humanitarian emergency continues with more people being affected on a daily basis. The overriding concern is how to provide safe havens for these people.

Your support is also vital to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Burma/Myanmar. To donate, please visit these links:

SEM - <http://www.sem-edu.org/how-to-support-us/>
INEB: Monks and Nuns Appeal -

<https://www.inebnetwork.org/engagements-humanitarian-reliefsupport-buddhist-monks-and-nuns-in-myanmars-political-movement-against-military-dictatorship/>



27th Sem Pringpuangkeo Public Lecture
Saturday 13 February 2021

COME ON, LET'S COMMON.*

East - West perspectives on Earth Trusteeship

Hans and Wallapa van Willenswaard - Right Livelihood College Bangkok

Birth of a New Society?

"Professor Sem is involved in both the birth of children and the birth of a new society" is how Prof. Prawese Wasee introduced Prof. Sem when he held – at 90 years – the 2001 Komol Foundation Lecture. Are we in 2021 still in the painful process of a new society being born? In our lifetime transformation of society has not only been analysed in terms of decades but in a time span of millennia. In particular in 2001 when humanity made its first steps into the "third millennium".

Resistance Movements in Siam/Thailand, Burma/Myanmar, Hong Kong: the *Milk Tea Alliance*

Today, 13 February 2021, it is less than two weeks ago that a brutal coup d'état was staged in Burma/Myanmar. In Siam/Thailand, young protestors including pioneers of the Ratsadorn group, are forced into pre-trial detention. Their friends in Hong Kong are heartlessly jailed. In a context where activists in Laos, including the good friend of Ajarn Sulak, fellow educator, Sombath Somphone, as well as Siamese/Thai activists in Cambodia, and environment protectors here in Siam/Thailand, became victims of forced disappearance. Regionally activists identify themselves as the *Milk Tea Alliance*.

The "commons movement" is growing. Social initiatives in Siam/Thailand – and globally – discover that they share the principles of "commoning". What is "commoning"? David Bollier and Silke Helfrich, in their book *Free, Fair and Alive. The Insurgent Power of the Commons* (2019), emphasize that an organisation structure is not what makes a project part of the "commons movement". The quality of "commoning" – a verb invented to describe the act of commoning – makes the difference.

In our SEM Lecture we try to answer the question is the concept of the "commons" relevant for the present protest movement in Siam/Thailand and the region. Does the commons movement provide direction for a future scenario where present young changemakers will take leadership? Can this transformation be enabled by "Earth Trusteeship"?

In our lecture we make six steps to explore the relevance of the commons movement in East – West in historic perspectives. Our hypothesis is that there is a dynamic resonance between the key concepts in this development. Understanding of this resonance provides direction for future scenarios.

1. Foundations of our Socio-political Order. The French Revolution and Beyond.

The revolution staged by Pridi Banomyong and the Ratsadorn group in 1932 was influenced by the values of the French Revolution: Freedom, Equality and Brotherhood. Also in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, the values of the French Revolution are traceable. However, Dr. Ambedkar maintained that similar values embedded in the constitution of independent India were definitely rooted in Buddhist philosophy. Can we accept an Eastern democratic worldview originating from the Buddhist era? In his book *Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: Buddhist Revolution and Counter-revolution in Ancient India* the author Dr. D.C. Ahir attributes this statement to Dr. Ambedkar:

Buddhism was a revolution. It was as great a revolution as the French Revolution. Though it began as a religious revolution, it became more than religious revolution. It became a social and political revolution. To be able to realise how

profound was the character of this revolution, it is necessary to know the state of the society before the revolution began its course. To use the language of the French Revolution, it is necessary to have a picture of the ancient regime in India.

This is an essential statement as often democracy in the East is attributed to “alien” sources, something “from the West”.

2. Cross-roads of Politics and Religion

Buddhadasa Bhikkhu established in 1932 – exactly the same year Pridi Banomyong launched his political revolution – Suan Mokkh in Southern Siam/Thailand. Two decades later in India Dr. Ambedkar converted to Buddhism. Moreover, he promoted conversion to Buddhism as path of liberation from the cast system. On 14 October 1956, at Nagpur, 380,000 of Ambedkar followers converted publicly. This was just the beginning. The present time Ambedkar movement carries the name Triratna Community referring to the Three Jewels in Buddhism: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha.

In the same era, soon after World War II, various Buddhist leaders and their communities became victim of violent occupation and Human Rights violations. H.H. the Dalai Lama, Tibet, Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnam, and Maha Ghosananda, Cambodia, all had to live in exile. Ultimately, they followed the support of Buddhadasa for a bold initiative of Sulak Sivaraksa, Siam/Thailand. In collaboration with former Buddhist monk at Suan Mokkh, Pracha Hutanaawat, Ajarn Sulak, in 1989, inaugurated the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB).

“Dhammic socialism” – an early social innovation close to the “commons” by Buddhadasa – and the Economic Plan of Pridi based on peoples’ cooperatives met with overwhelming suppression.

3. Building Blocks for a New Society: Right Livelihood, Earth Democracy and Earth Trusteeship

In addition to concepts developed by H.H. the Dalai Lama, including “universal responsibility” and Thich Nhat Hanh’s “inter-being”, let’s look at leading ideas of three fellow Right Livelihood Laureates. Their visions

stand in three different traditions: Sulak Sivaraksa, Siam/Thailand, in Buddhism; Vandana Shiva, India, in Hinduism; and the late Christopher Weeramantry, Sri Lanka, in Christianity.

In his famous book *Seeds Of Peace: A Buddhist Vision For Renewing Society* (1992) Sulak Sivaraksa says about Right Livelihood:

“Economic justice is bound up with Right Livelihood. We must take great pains to be sure there are meaningful jobs for everyone able to work. And we must also take responsibility for the theft implicit in our economic systems. To live a life of Right Livelihood and voluntary simplicity out of compassion for all beings and to renounce fame, profit, and power as life goals, are to set oneself against the structural violence of the oppressive status quo.”

The social critique of Ajarn Sulak transcends the mainstream perception of Right Livelihood. The conventional perception in Buddhist philosophy is “doing good” within an existing social framework, without questioning it. Ajarn Sulak breaks through this convention.

Based on the “deconstruction” of Sivaraksa, Vandana Shiva “reconstructs” in her book *Earth Democracy, Justice, Sustainability and Peace* (2005) governance as common care. Earth Democracy implies that democracy is not only about humanity but that in our decision making we should include Nature as a living partner.

“Earth Democracy globalizes peace, care and compassion”.

The third step in constructing an innovative approach to global governance in the face of climate emergency, economic inequality and decline of cultural integrity was made by Judge Weeramantry.

Judge Weeramantry argued that the conflicts of interest between environment and development as they reached the International Court of Justice in The Hague, often were caused by misguided frameworks based on Western notions of property. Taking the way traditional farmers in Sri Lanka shaped irrigation systems as example, he observed that it were not Western property rights, but



Ratsadorn activists accused of *lèse majesté* in Siam/Thailand are forced into pre-trial detention. The Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) in Burma/Myanmar unites people in resistance against the brutal military *coup d'état*. Activists in the region are inter-connected by the Milk Tea Alliance.

parallel with secular visions. Dasho Karma Ura, President of the Centre for Bhutan & GNH Studies spoke about the Constitution of Bhutan.

“Every Bhutanese is a trustee of the Kingdom’s natural resources and environment for the benefit of the present and future generations (...).” Article 5 of the Constitution of Bhutan (2008).

Thus, a redefinition of the relationship of humanity to the Earth, taking into account transformative Right Livelihood and Earth Democracy, results in a new Earth Trusteeship “maxim”: *all global citizens are equal trustees of the Earth for the wellbeing of future generations and the community of life.*

4. Independent “Engaged Spirituality” in the 20st century. *Threefolding.*

One more step in this exploratory lecture is needed to come closer to the enigma of the “spirit” in SEM and conceptual resonance towards the foundation for a future scenario. The 20st century is marked by the emergence of streams of independent spirituality in addition to and sometimes in conflict with organized religion, as well as with mainstream science.

The broadest movement, founded by Helena Blavatsky and colonel Henry Steel Olcott in New York, 1875, was the Theosophical Society. From Theosophy sprouted three off-shoots: 1. The re-vitalization of Buddhism in Sri Lanka supported by colonel Olcott; 2. The movement around Krishnamurti as an independent philosopher after he distanced himself from the claims of the Theosophical Society that he was the reincarnated Maitreya. 3. An alternative path guided by Rudolf Steiner. He was leader of the society in Germany until he innovated his own spiritual “school” named Anthroposophy.

“trusteeship” responsibilities that guided them. A trustee is a person who carries out ownership responsibilities and enjoys rights not in his/her own benefit but for the benefit of others. In his book *Tread Lightly on the Earth. Religion, the Environment and the Human Future* (2009), Weeramantry elevates this principle to the universal level:

“Humanity is in a position of trusteeship of the environment and not in a position of dominance.”

This sense of ‘trusteeship of the environment’ – later coined **Earth Trusteeship** – complies with what Weeramantry describes as:

(...) the world’s religious traditions [and indigenous spirituality] contain collectively an enormous reservoir of wisdom and principles concerning the relationship between humans and the environment, and on duties towards future generations.

(...) international law already incorporates these principles within its corpus of “customary international law” (...)

In this line Right Livelihood College Bangkok/ School for Wellbeing organized in 2019 an Earth Trusteeship Forum bringing a diversity of perspectives together. Interreligious dialogue included Harsha Navaratne, Sri Lanka (Buddhism), Alissa Wahid, Indonesia (Islam), Catherine Marshal, USA, (Christianity) and many others,

To renew European culture after World War I, Rudolf Steiner proclaimed that a fresh, contemporary and non-violent understanding of the three values of the French Revolution could shape economic alternatives and a new “threefold” world order. Independent but interactive cultural, political and economic “spheres of influence” would constitute a Peace building balance of powers.

In this context, Philippino Right Livelihood Laureate Nicanor Perlas represents a new wave in the “threefolding” movement. It culminates in a contemporary interpretation of “tri-sector development”: 1. elected governments, 2. a responsible business sector based on community values 3. an interdependent but free and vibrant civil society.

In Perlas’ analysis the present corporate sector hijacked the value of “freedom”. Based on this “theft”, extreme neo-liberalism dominates the economic system. Civil society should have equal space to re-claim genuine freedom. While the corporate sector should be driven by “sister- and brotherhood” or community, or, in Buddhist terms, by the Sangha principle – in a modern manifestation of the “commons movement”. Governments should focus on guaranteeing social justice. The legal foundation of this threefold governance rooted in Human Rights and complemented with Nature Rights – thus based on Earth Democracy – can be articulated as Earth Trusteeship.

5. Emergence of a New Economy

In South Korea, Hansalim, is a concrete example of a consumer – producer food cooperative. It is professional but genuinely participatory. With ca. 350,000 household members and annual sales in 2012 of US\$250 million it is said to be the biggest community supported agriculture (CSA) enterprise in the world. Its success is the result of a decades long learning process in which members knew how to overcome their differences, stay together and uphold the principles of a true “commons”.

The second example of a social enterprise is Commonland, based in the Netherlands, operating internationally. Commonland applies a “four returns” business model. These are “return of inspiration” where people feel they are at the losing end of development; “return of social capital” improved multi-stakeholder collaboration; “return of natural capital”, healthier ecosystems, and, as a final result, “return of financial capital”: diversification, marketing, job creation and new social enterprises.

Finally, at a much smaller scale and focusing on Siam/Thailand, Innovation Network International (ini) started the Connecting the Commons (CTC) project, supported by Heinrich Böll Foundation Southeast Asia. CTC identified 30 projects and organisations in Siam/Thailand which work in the spirit of the commons. Young anthropologists Kittipon Phummisittikul and Sittipat Tangsin guided by TOA Coordinator Narumon Paiboonsittikun, undertook case studies on sustainable food sharing: Hug Muang Nan ecosystem restoration project, Urban Gardening in Bangkok, and barter trade (rice and fish) between indigenous Karen and Moken communities.

6. SEM and the Right Livelihood College Bangkok: A Joint Incubation Hub for Activist Right Livelihood Studies?

Co-creation of an educational plan for changemakers demands reflections in daringly broad and long term perspective. Within the framework of this summary we just mention three flagpoles in history:

1. The prototype of 800 years Nalanda at the dawn of the first millennium
2. UN Secretary General U Thant, Burma/Myanmar, as educator and as initiator of the first conference on Environment at Stockholm in 1972
3. The impulses emanating from the 40 Years Right Livelihood conference at Chulalongkorn University.

Together these flagpoles lay out a landscape for a renewed “spirit” in education movement: we propose an emergency plan with focus on activist Right Livelihood Studies. In Siam/Thailand with reference to the Ratsadorn group and likeminded activists; in Burma/Myanmar (Mekong region) the courageous Civil Disobedience Movement; and in Asia the Milk Tea Alliance as a binding force.

Come On, Let’s Common.

Hans and Wallapa van Willenswaard are members of INEB’s Advisory Committee.

*Please go to INEB’s website for the full article - <https://www.inebnetwork.org/27th-sem-pringpuangkeo-public-lecture-saturday-13-february-2021-come-on-lets-common/>



Sai Sam Kham's Testimony

at the UN Security Council
on April 9, 2021

Madam Chairperson, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,
It is an honour to address the Arria Formula meeting of the UN Security Council on the situation in Burma/Myanmar.

I would like to address the challenges facing the pro-democracy movement across Burma/Myanmar, including for ethnic and religious minorities. This statement is made in my own capacity as a Burma/Myanmar citizen, and it has nothing to do with the opinions of individuals or the organisations that I have affiliated with in the past.

After three months of the illegal military coup d'état in Burma/Myanmar, over 2,800 civilians have been arrested, over 500 have been charged and many are in hiding. Over 600 civilians have been killed on the streets and in their homes. Most of them were deliberately shot in the head and back. They were also shot with rocket propelled grenades. The military and police under their command have committed extrajudicial killings, torture and looting with total impunity.

The fallen ones, including the 7 years old girl Khin Myo Chit, are not just numbers or statistics. They have names and families who dearly loved them. Tin Zar Hein, a 20 years old trainee nurse from Monywa, went to the frontline every day to save lives. Angel, a 19 year old of Chinese descent from Mandalay wished to donate her body for medical research if she got killed. Somia Pan Myat Chel, a 20 years old Muslim woman from Myinchan stood on the frontline every day to protect protestors from tear gas and rubber bullets. A placard she carried read "I will run away if you shoot me but if I am not killed today, I will come back tomorrow". K Za Win is a 39 year old poet and a former student union activist

from Monywa. His last poem before he was killed read "The whole world will be cleansed, when the song of young people gets louder. The manifold injustice will cower under the reverberating song of the youth." They are just a few vignettes among the many courageous and selfless heroes who tragically made the ultimate sacrifice for a free and democratic Burma/Myanmar.

The streets of Yangon and in many parts of the country, are now strewn with yellow padauk flower, a symbol of new year for Buddhists, the religious majority. Just as no one can keep the padauk from blooming, no one can stop the aspiration of young people who believe freedom and democracy is worth dying for.

The people of Burma/Myanmar have experienced hope and the relative freedom of the military-controlled transition from 2011-2021. They would never give up their rights. Neither the terrorist junta nor any states siding with them have the power to crush the determination of 53 million people. Some have framed the Nway Oo Revolution as a violent riot or a part of a Western agenda, which is condescending and an insult to the intelligence and agency of Burma/Myanmar people. We will take none of that.

The price to fight against the military dictatorship is steep. Recently, the junta conducted indiscriminate air strikes in Karen state, resulting civilian deaths and the destruction of schools, houses and other property. Over 20,000 people have been displaced and the Siamese/Thai

government prevented them from reaching safety. A similar fate has fallen on the Kachin, Shan and Ta'ang. While urban residents now experience the terror of the military, this has been the unending nightmare of many ethnic and religious minorities reality for over 70 years. The democratic transition in Burma/Myanmar has uneven, across time and space. While civic democratic space opened up in urban areas, hundreds of thousands of Kachin, Shan and Arakan people were displaced. Burma/Myanmar's electoral democracy was not enough to stop the rivers of blood.

Under the watch of the democratically elected NLD government, a million Rohingya people were violently driven from their homes to Bangladesh. The slow burning genocide is still ongoing today. Land belonging to the Rohingya continues to be confiscated. Just a few days ago, there were reports of 300 acres were confiscated in Maung Daw township. The racist and undemocratic 1982 Citizenship law must be abolished and there must be a clear pathway to reinstate and protect citizenship rights of the Rohingya.

Genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity were perpetrated by the Burma/Myanmar military with blanket impunity for many decades. Repeated calls for holding the perpetrators accountable were ignored. The UN Security Council has the mandate and moral obligation to end the ongoing atrocities and the destruction of more innocent lives.

Please allow me to repeat the recent courageous call of 488 Burma/Myanmar civil society organizations to the UN Security Council, to

1. Immediately dispatch an "enhanced monitoring and intervention mission to Burma/Myanmar" to stop the violent attacks by the junta on peaceful protesters and vulnerable minority populations across the country, prevent further bloodshed and loss of life and release all those arbitrarily detained;
2. Urgently impose a coordinated, global arms embargo on Burma/Myanmar; and
3. Refer Burma/Myanmar to the International Criminal

Court to hold the military regime to account for the atrocity crimes that it has committed and is continuing to commit.

International support is crucial for the pro-democracy movement in Burma/Myanmar. I strongly urge governments to refuse to grant the junta the recognition it desperately wants. Any acknowledgement of the junta as a government legitimates their illegal rule and will cause the people of Burma/Myanmar more suffering. Regarding the recent siege of the Burma/Myanmar embassy in London, I want to express our disappointment that the UK has taken the unnecessary and unfortunate step of referring to the junta as the government of Burma/Myanmar when the junta is clearly not in control of the country and cannot be considered even the de facto authority.

On behalf of the Burma/Myanmar people, I would like to thank the individuals, organisations, diplomats and governments who show solidarity and support to Burma/Myanmar's struggle. I am thankful to the countries who designated military-controlled businesses for targeted sanctions. I am grateful to the companies such as EDF, Scatec, DNB and Nordea, who suspended untenable businesses or divested their shares in military-linked companies. I strongly urge Adani Ports, POSCO, Total and others to follow suit by suspending payments to the junta and cutting ties with military businesses. For democracy to take root in Burma/Myanmar, the economic and social reproduction of military dictatorship must be completely stopped.

Today, Burma/Myanmar people including all ethnic and religious minorities, stand strongly behind the leadership of the CRPH, Burma/Myanmar's democratic representative body. I acknowledge that there are ongoing disagreements, discussions, and negotiations and that there is room to improve. Burma/Myanmar people overwhelmingly support the abolishment of the undemocratic 2008 constitution and we commend the CRPH for their courageous decision to annul it.

Madam chairperson, excellencies, ladies and



Sai Sam Kham

gentlemen, as a Shan and Chinese ethnically mixed person I am very proud to call myself a Burma/Myanmar today. Amidst the painful circumstances, I am seeing an emerging new Burma/Myanmar which values human rights and human dignity. We are seeing people challenging old norms such as patriarchy, extreme religious nationalism, racism and discrimination. The courageous leadership of women like Ei Thinzar Maung is being praised. Many people offer sincere public apologies to the ethnic minorities for being ignorant about their decade long sufferings, and for not speaking up for them. I saw people genuinely apologize to Rohingya, Muslims and other religious minorities for previous discriminatory words or actions, or for their silence when genocide and religious violence was being committed. I saw disabled people and LGBTQ+ people being praised for their courage. Burma/Myanmar has shown that it has the courage and ability to acknowledge, learn from the past mistakes, apologize, heal the wounds and move forwards. I commend the courage of the government staff including police and military personnel, who joined the civil disobedient movement, CDM. Despite the brutal crackdown, they courageously persisted. The doctors and medical staff initiating the CDM and risking their own lives to save many at the frontline will be forever remembered.

In the early days of the protest, Burma/Myanmar people hope the UN or international community will

intervene decisively. Although some expectations are unrealistic, we also observe that some international actors are not fulfilling their moral duty and mandate under international law. Burma/Myanmar people are disappointed and offended by the actions of the states that persistently block their calls for a decisive international intervention. Such interference damages relations in a way that could be irreversible. Burma/Myanmar people feel that they are left alone to face the brutal regime armed to its teeth, stocked from arms sold by the same international actors who preventing action.

The realization that they are on their own makes Burma/Myanmar people more determined about what future they want and how they must fight for it. Burma/Myanmar people are determined that they will not tolerate any form of dictatorship nor mockery of a democracy. They are defiant and courageously defending their rights. To achieve democracy and freedom, they will continue fighting through any means available for them. Burma/Myanmar has a long history of nonviolent movement as well as a 70 year long ongoing armed revolution. Thousands of young people are now leaving the cities to join armed movements. None of us, who fail to take decisive action and let the terrorist junta enjoy blanket impunity for their atrocity crimes has a right to tell young people that they are wrong to take up arms. Do they have any choice to choose between a peaceful democratic transition and an armed civil war? Does the security council and its members state have the conscience and the right to say so? With or without the support of the UN security council, Burma/Myanmar people are determined to create their own democratic future. The security council and the member states can decide which side of history they are going to stand – with the people of Burma/Myanmar or with the war criminals who orchestrated the coup. I pray wisdom and compassion prevail and that the Nway Oo Revolution will bring a new federal democratic Burma/Myanmar soon.

Thank you for your attention!

Will there ever be light at the end of the tunnel?

A Burma/Myanmar Commentary by **Lahpai Seng Raw**

18 February 2021

Transnational Institute - <https://www.tni.org/en/article/will-there-ever-be-light-at-the-end-of-the-tunnel>



Public demonstration in Myitkyina, Kachin State / Photo credit KBC

The tunnel that we have had to pass through is a very long one... 70 plus years, and there is still no sign of light that we are nearing the end. The leaders have staunchly blocked the exit. No ordinary civilian can pass through, and those inside the tunnel only get to see glimpses of light through tiny holes now and then. By the time the leaders of our country have agreed and worked out their differences, it will be too late for those of us who have been suffocating inside the darkness for far too long.

This begs the question: what should we do to get out of that tunnel for better tomorrows?

Covid-19 enabled me to go through many of my notes from way back and one dated 24 February 1990 in Kamphaeng Phet Province, Siam/Thailand, strikes me in particular. I was travelling with Duwa La Wom, a prominent Kachin who had been Burmese ambassador to Israel and the Philippines in the 80s. Subsequently, he was one of three peace intermediaries in the 1994 ceasefire agreement between the State Law and Order Restoration Council and Kachin Independence Organisation. On our way to Manerplaw in Karen State, we talked about the upcoming general election in May

that the military junta had promised. Today his words have special resonance:

“It is very likely that the NLD could win but by a narrow margin. The army will be reluctant to turn over power to the winners unless they are willing to share power with the army. Since there is no new constitution upon which to base its authority, the new government formed after the election will be an interim government until a constituent assembly is convoked.”

La Wom was spot on in his prophecy of what would follow after the elections. The army did not hand over government power, and his remarks are still valid to date. However both he and many of us underestimated the overwhelming support that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy would continue to win in the following decades among the general public. The party won resounding victories in each of the elections in 1990, 2012 (by-elections), 2015 and, most recently, in November 2020. But, throughout these long years, there was one objective that everyone agreed upon: the need for a constitution that all peoples and parties could accept. The question was how this might come about.

For his part, the late KIO Chairman Maran Brang Seng was one person who put all his eggs in the constitution basket. The ceasefire offer by the SLORC government to ethnic armed organisations in the early 1990s – without any prior demand for disarmament – seemed quite reasonable at the time, and a compromise too good to refuse. Under Brang Seng's leadership, the KIO agreed a ceasefire with the military government against a backdrop of both hope and caution in February 1994. To be part of an ongoing drafting of a constitution that was promised to settle all the underlying grievances among the co-founders of the Union seemed a God-sent opportunity to him. Bamar, Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Chin, Mon, Shan and Rakhine: all the peoples of Burma/Myanmar could finally take part in resolving the country's future together.

Unfortunately, as subsequent history showed, the National Convention that developed under the SLORC (later SPDC) government resulted in a political system that has been the source of continuing controversy and disagreement, both in its inception and implementation. Peace and democracy are yet to come to our country, and the 2008 constitution is tightly secured with a three-tier interlocking system that makes it impossible to amend. First, it ensures that 25 per cent of the seats in all legislative bodies are reserved for appointees of the national armed forces: the Tatmadaw. Second, it is stipulated that more than 75 per cent of votes are required to amend it. And third, in addition to control of three ministries, Tatmadaw leaders have remained adamant in their insistence to unilaterally defend and safeguard the constitution as it stands.

A political dilemma thus exists. The only way to unlock this logjam is by having the armed forces vote for change. Would the military do this? What if the promised general elections take place within one year as suggested, but only to be based on the same 2008 constitution? If so, the message to the public cannot be clearer: military leaders have no intention of passing on power to a civilian government without maintaining a large part of it. In essence, under the existing political structures, there would be no change. This is why the political impasse has become so very deep in our country.

For this reason, I had some very different initial thoughts as the military coup set in at dawn on 1 February 2021. What if the 2008 constitution were to be suspended, and a new constituent assembly were to take place? If that were to happen, then there might be grounds to hope that there could be light at the end of the tunnel. Experiences over the past three decades have shown that an unjust system and an unrepresentative status quo cannot be reformed incrementally. In 2021, if the cycles of state failure are to be ended, it is vital that all the peoples are included in the processes for political dialogue and building peace and national reconciliation together.

During the past two weeks, the crisis has deepened even further, and now threats to life and human security have spread in every part of the country. These are realities that ethnic nationality peoples have long had to live with. Such moments of military takeover and political breakdown have occurred several times before. Nevertheless this is not the moment to despair. More than ever, there is a need for fresh-thinking and, although neglected, alternative solutions have always existed. After the events of the past months, the whole world can now see the need for fundamental change.

All of these challenges bring huge responsibilities though. If there is to be any imminent way out of the latest political crisis, lessons must be learned from the past, whether they are positive or negative. Without this, I fear that ethnic nationality peoples will believe we are returning to the pre-1988 era when we considered that the central power holders are the same whatever the political system. In 1988, we were bystanders while we watched a struggle that played out among the ethnic Bamar population in the towns. But then, when pro-democracy students and elected candidates from the

1990 polls took refuge in our lands, strong bonds and solidarity emerged between us. We realised that ours is a common struggle for freedom and we could pledge to converge together for the aspirations of a “genuine” federal union.

Sadly, that feeling of oneness slowly declined after the 2012-by elections. The setback began and reaffirmed our fears that the country will always be in a cycle of a “military state” or “patrimony state” – or a combination of both, and that many among the Bamar-majority population will never realise that their political failures are an innate part in national instability. As long as the central Burmese state is dysfunctional, the rest of the country will be. Who to work with, who to side with have become key questions for us all in every cycle of political crisis and deadlock.

Today many older people are resting their hopes with Generation Z, but they will need to accept that there is presently a significant gap in our struggles for freedom. For those of us “hill tribes” from the “Frontier Areas”, our struggles have always been for full autonomy in internal administration. This was what was agreed at the Panglong conference in February 1947 when answering the call for independence from the British and our leaders agreed to join the new Union. Elections alone cannot deliver this. We need a political system that guarantees the rights of all the peoples of our country.

In the meantime, nationality peoples in the ethnic states and regions must continue with the role that they traditionally play – maintaining good relations with one another and also with those from our immediate neighbouring countries with whom we share family and language affiliations. These are values that must be maintained in a healthy way. If we are not able to do this, we will be buried alive, never able to leave the dark tunnel.

For those that do eventually manage to come out from the tunnel, the light they see will be short-lived unless they understand and appreciate one integral need: ours is a country that is a mosaic of ethnicities and religious beliefs and all the mosaic pieces must enjoy equal freedoms and human rights if we are to move forward in peace, prosperity and stability together. It is time that we see this diversity as strength rather than a weakness, and come together to design a new future together that holds promises and hopes for us all.

Lahpai Seng Raw is a 2013 Ramon Magsaysay Award winner and co-founder of the Metta Development Foundation and Airavati in Burma/Myanmar. She was also a delegate at the 21st Century Panglong Conference.



A Return to Calm

Friends, how are you now?
It looks like I am near,
but I am far from you.
I always miss you,
and think and pray to stop the coup
from destroying you
and our friends.

how long
until they will stop?
Or do they want to kill all our friends
who love justice and peace
Our friends who leave their lives,
sacrificing for a return
to calm.

why
Because of the greed of the few
who want to have more, more, more
and make the people in this world suffer.
Everyone wants to support our friends
in any way
But the coup leaders don't want to stop killing.

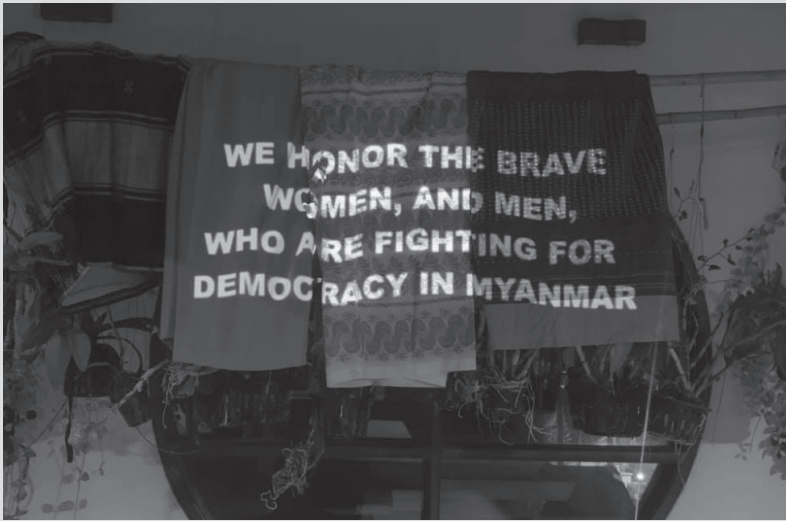
how
can we find the way
to help our friends cross this time of suffering
quickly?

who
You can help us.
Please send peace to our friends.

Oranuch Lerdkulladilok, a graduate of the School of English for Engaged Social Service (SENS 2020), is an Asian Public Intellectual (API) fellow and the founder of the forOldy project, a social enterprise supporting vulnerable elderly people in Bangkok, Siam/Thailand. In her youth, she enjoyed writing poetry in Thai. “A Return to Calm” is her first English language poem.



The Revolutionary Artists Fighting for Democracy in Burma/Myanmar



The 100 Projector Project is a group of Burma/Myanmar revolutionaries using visual art to rebel against the violent military coup. Zoe Rasbash speaks to a member of the movement – Lori¹ – a filmmaker putting her life on the line each day to bring hope to the movement. Since this interview, Lori has been detained by military forces.²

On February 1st 2020, Burma/Myanmar's military instigated a violent coup to seize leadership after the National League of Democracy (NLD) won the November general election in a landslide.

An almighty civic movement calling themselves Burma/Myanmar's Spring Revolution rose to oppose the dictatorship, holding mass protests across Burma/

Myanmar. Grassroots minority groups, such as the LGBTQI+ community, joined teachers, lawyers, students, government workers have taken to the streets, with the protests escalating in size due to the power of factory labourers. Security forces employed violent tactics to oppress the swell, arresting and murdering civilians and protestors. Democratic leaders were abducted, and their

¹ Name has been changed to protect interviewee.

² Lori has since been released

tortured bodies returned to their families. Despite internet blackouts, protestors on the ground inform international allies that armed soldiers wander the streets of cities at night, shooting at random to terrorise the residents.

While NLD members who escaped arrest urge protestors to continue fighting, many fear their lives. Now, artists, directors, poets, and filmmakers have united to lend their talents to bring hope to the movement in unusual and impactful ways. One group of likeminded artists, calling themselves the 100 Projector Project, are using guerrilla tactics to project videos of pro-democracy art in public spaces to spread a message of solidarity across Burma/Myanmar.

“The military terrorist groups are conquering street by street systematically by pointing guns and threatening civilians every day,” says Lori, a filmmaker and leader of the 100 Projector Project. “They know their advantage is having guns and fear has taken the people.”

“We needed a positive message, so we decided to spread it.” Lori and her comrades, a group of 40 artists and revolutionaries across Burma/Myanmar calling themselves projector fighters, work in secret. Using projectors, they broadcast defiant and hopeful messages through paintings, graphic art, performance art, film and photography in public spaces, onto buildings, roads, trees, flat surfaces, bridges and cars.

“We want to protest every 24 hours until we win. We will use every tool to do so.” Lori tells me after a few days of radio silence, as she had attended a protest that turned violent and saw many of her friends detained. “We use guerrilla tactics to light up the energy of the people. We project positive and victorious work.”

I asked Lori what it is like being an artist in Burma/Myanmar right now. “We grow up very oppressed in terms of education and politics. So we find a way to express our voice. We find a way to dare to dream. Art is one of the ways we can express ourselves.”

Artists across the country are the vanguard of this revolution, creating essential spaces for rebellion,

reflection and experimentation. “We don’t have ready-made solutions for our country. The process of creativity is very important. There are lots of creative ways of protesting across Burma/Myanmar. All the leaders and citizens are experimenting with every possibility of what could win – this is very abstract.”

“The 100 Projector Project is one of our experiments. We use it to spread our voice.”

But many artistic leaders are facing brutal and violent treatment at the hands of the police. A poet, Kayza Win, was shot dead at a protest in Monywa on March 3rd. Writers Maung Thar Cho, Htin Lin Oo and Than Myint Aung have been detained, alongside musicians Saw Phoe Kwar and U Kyi Win. Further, award-winning actor Lu Min and filmmaker Min Htin Ko Ko Gyi have been arrested alongside another fifteen prominent poets. Kyaw Thu, a well known actor, and his wife are on the run after their humanitarian clinic in Yangon was raided and destroyed by the military.

It is like we are creating one painting. We know what we would like to paint. We will finish this painting. But we paint with our blood.”

Lori shares with me a call for solidarity from Burma/Myanmar artists to the global creative community. “We put the video clips in multiple languages so you all can understand our emotions: how hungry we are to escape from this shit and how we continue to resist.”

A growing movement of international allies has taken up the mantle of projector fighters, broadcasting their videos in other countries across the globe such as Finland, Siam/Thailand and the Philippines. Activists on the ground in Burma/Myanmar ask all of us to take up this mantle and share the message, using projectors to broadcast their videos in public spaces and send photos back in Burma/Myanmar to bolster morale. “It helps us emotionally, we feel supported” says Lori. Instructions on how to download and share their videos can be found on their Facebook page.

The last words Lori sent to me before her arrest were “THE REVOLUTION MUST WIN!”. As many across



Source: Shado - <https://shado-mag.com/all/the-revolutionary-artists-fighting-for-democracy-in-myanmar/>

the world face an authoritarian crackdown on the essential right to protest, international allies must stand in solidarity with our siblings in Burma/Myanmar. Currently in my hometown of Bristol, UK, citizens are mobilising on mass to oppose the new Police, Crime, Sentencing and Court Bill which gives more powers to the police to criminalise public protest. The fight for fundamental democratic rights is a global one, and recognising this only makes our movements stronger.

#100projectors
#projectorfighters
#projectorfightersfightfordemocracy

Since this article was published 'Lori' has been released. She is still passionately active with 100 Projectors and deeply concerned on the situation in Burma/Myanmar. When she was interrogated in custody she was told that the military believed that the people who died would be forgotten. She and art-activist friends are dreaming into a virtual mausoleum and planting trees for fallen heroes.

If you would like to support Lori and others fighting for justice in Burma/Myanmar please send donation to Civil Disobedience Movement c/o Spirit in Education Movement.

To donate to the CDM, please visit SEM's website: <http://www.sem-edu.org/how-to-support-us/>



Buddhist Heritage of Gandhara, Pakistan

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Pakistan is an important region in South Asia since ancient time. It served as a pivotal point of Buddhism from centuries that's why it is called a "Holy land of Buddhism". The territory of Gandhara is spanning over a vast area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Taxila valley (northern Punjab), lower Indus valley and whole of Kashmir. Actual Gandhara forms a triangular shaped purlieu which lies between 100km in east and west and 70km in north and south. But Gandhara art crossed geographical barriers and stretched towards Eastern Afghanistan, Uddiyana, Balkh, Swat Valley, Dir, Buner, Bajaur and Peshawar valley to Kashmir (Khan and Lone 2004: 7).

Different dynasties governed this area and transformed its socio-political, economic, religious and artistic perspectives according to their own ways. They incorporated their own cultural elements in Gandhara art and architecture to enhance its beauty. As the life story of Buddha has been depicted in Gandhara art and architecture so stupa was the very first monument erected in Gandhara to commemorate Lord Buddha. Buddhism spread in Gandhara in a very short duration of time and a Mauryan king Asoka proved to be a catalyst in propagation of Buddhism. He had been responsible for the opening of original nine stupas and redistributed Buddha's relics in the core regions of Buddhism. This foot step triggered construction of first Buddhist monuments in the region of Gandhara such as at the sites of *Dharamarajika* in Taxila and Butkara I in Swat Valley of Pakistan dated back to 3rd Century BCE. And the stupas were decorated with many Buddhist cult symbols and foreign cultural influences (Luczanits 2008: 73). One of the most remarkable heritage among is the Buddhist heritage, including multiple Buddhist sites,

stupas and artefacts spotted all over Pakistan. It can be said that Pakistan is the home to two major civilization of the world, Indus and Gandhara Civilization. Gandhara is the ancient region invaded by Alexander the great in 326 BCE (Harle 1994: 22). On the other hand, according to an ancient Indian epic 'Ramayana' elaborates that Gandhara was conquered by Bharata, a brother of Rama (who basically founded two major regions for his sons named 'Pukaryat or Pushkalawati' known as Charsadda today and 'Takail or Takshasila' known as Taxila today).

Gandhara realm lasted from early 1st millennium BCE to 11th Century CE and was at its zenith during Kushans from 1st Century to 5th Century. The literary mean of Gandhara is 'land of fragrance'. Gandhara Art is divided into two phases, an-Iconic phase and Iconic phase. Several major powers ruled over Gandhara but the reverence for Buddhism can be seen in almost every ruler. The other common notable feature was the adaption of Indo Greek artistic tradition (Zwalf 1996: 14).

Spread of Buddhism in Gandhara

Buddhism reached Gandhara around 3rd Century BCE and played a central role in Indian Sub-continent for decades. It can be said that Gandhara was the gateway for spreading Buddhism to Central Asia and China (Pia and Kurt 2006: 04). This new religion (Buddhism) flourished rapidly and gain local patronage. The oldest evidence of Buddhism in Gandhara can be found through 'Ashoka edicts' established by 'King Ashoka'. 'Gandhari language' has been used over Ashoka edicts which identifies the presence of Buddhism in Gandhara. There were six stupas founded by 'King Ashoka' as stated by Xuan Zang. Whereas the largest one is Dharmarajika Stupa, Taxila, Pakistan. King Menander-I was a great supporter of Buddhism so as he promoted this religion as much as he can during his reign. It was due to the Greek influence over the art of Gandharan Buddhism that for the first-time anthropomorphic representation of Buddha can be observed.

Kushans was also in favor of Buddhism, hence promoted the construction of monasteries and stupas. Due to the utmost struggle, end of 2nd century CE there were number of Buddhist centers found in Gandhara. The capital city of Kushan empire (Peshawar) had several Buddhist stupas and monasteries, besides this narrative relief and sculptures were erected depicting the life scenes of Buddha. Around 3rd century, the slight increase can be observed in the patronage of Buddhist sites. The Buddhist sites of this period included Taxila, Takht-I-Bahi, Sehri Bahlol, Jamal Garhi, Ranigat and Tharei. It is due to the Kushan's support for Buddhism that this religion continues to spread rapidly to Bactria, Central Asia and China along the Silk Road. It also established the assured trading route from Gandhara to Asia. The main of Kushan period are Butkara Stupa and Barikot (Swat), Pakistan. During the second half of 5th century, the decline of Kushans has been started with the arrival of White Huns in Gandhara. But soon after the breakdown of White Huns around 6th century, the decline of Buddhist sites can be observed. Several abandoned sites in Gandhara region was identified by Chinese Monk Xuan Zang, after his visit. Though, Buddhism sustained flourishing outskirts of Gandhara.

One of the main cities of Buddhist activity was Bamiyan (Afghanistan), remains of monumental Buddha sculptures known as 'Buddhas of Bamiyan'. These monumental sculptures are dated back to 3rd-6th century CE and appears as the resilient Buddhist site in 7th century. Other important Gandharan site regarding Buddhism was Gilgit on Silk Road (Rehman 1996: 75).

Buddhist Stupas and Monasteries in Pakistan

Large number of Buddhist sites, preserving stupas, monasteries, viharas, settlements, caves, rock carvings and inscriptions are scattered all over Pakistan. The most famous of all the Chinese pilgrims, Hsuan-Tsang, graced the Swat valley by his presence in the 7th century CE and mentioned 1400 monasteries in Swat that eloquently confirmed the extensive remains of the Buddhist period. Even today over 400 Buddhist stupas and monasteries still can be seen in Swat. The Buddhists built mostly their stupas and monasteries higher on the hills with the aim that agricultural economy may not suffer and to provide a sort of protection and security to them from the invaders. Another renowned city regarding Buddhist heritage is Taxila valley in Pakistan.

Details of few monasteries has been mentioned below:

Mankiyala is a round stupa located in District Rawalpindi dated back to 3rd Century BCE. In 1830 Mankiyala stupa was discovered by five hundred workmen in the supervision of an Italian General Jean Baptiste Ventura (1792) who was employed by Maha



A General View of Mankiyala Stupa, Rawalpindi

Raja Ranjit Singh. They found coins as well. In this way first scientific publication was published on Gandharan Buddhist findings. The stupa of Mankiyala was the first Buddhist monument (Bautze .K Joachim 2008: 44). It has again round stupa with a row of Corinthian pilasters around the drum and stairs in front of the plinth.

The earliest Buddhist stupa and monastery is found in Dharmarajika (3rd Century BCE) which is located three kilometers from Taxila Museum. It was erected by Mauryan king Ashoka. He was called “Dharmaraja” because he was a Buddhist devotee. For this reason Dharmarajika is an ample example of his Buddhist faith. This stupa is round in shape similar to that of Sanchi in India. The massive anda is still 15 m high with base diameter of 50 m. The circumbulatory path or pradakshina patha is constructed at ground level. This stupa has circular plan with cylindrical base followed by anda on top of the base as well as vertical continuation of superstructures (Jansen 2008: 291).

Butkara I (3rd century BCE-10th century CE) in Swat Valley. It was mentioned by Sung Yun, who visited the area in 520 CE. It was also described by the Buddhist pilgrims from China in the 5th, 6th and 7th centuries CE. It lies in the East of Mingora, the ancient capital of Uddiyana. The main Stupa stands tall in the middle, surrounded by other Stupas, Viharas and columns. The main building is on its Northern side and inhabited area is in the North and West. The Great Stupa was renovated and extended for several times, from 3rd century BCE down to 10th century CE.

Nimogram Stupa and Monastery (1st - 5th century



A General View of Butkara I Stupa, Swat Valley

CE) in Swat Valley. The place of an archaeological importance, Nimogram is in the Shamoza Valley of Swat, which is located about 45 km in the West of Saidu Sharif and 22 km from Bairkot, on the right bank of Swat river. Nimogram was discovered in 1966. It consists of three main Stupas in a row, from North to South. There is a courtyard with 56 consecrated Stupas and a Monastery, adjacent to the West of the main Stupas. The definite history of Nimogram Stupa could not be revealed, yet the coins found there, indicating towards the period of Kushana, dated back to the 2nd or 3rd century CE. Besides the coins and pottery of Scytho-Parthian period, there are many stone-carving and Stucco sculptures, which illustrates the Buddhist Mythology.

The site of Gumbatuna is a Buddhist establishment situated on the right bank of the river Swat, 6km west of Barikot village along the metaled road leading towards

A General View of Nimogram Stupa and Monastery, Swat Valley



A General View of Gumbatuna Stupa and Monastery, Swat Valley

Nimogram in a wide valley. The lower zone comprises the main stupa encompassed by the votive stupa and columns bounded by the enclosure wall. The main stupa stands on a square plinth. The huge stupa is probably the best preserved in ancient Udyana consisting of a dome, upper and three lower drums. The drums of the stupa is cylindrical in shape. The stupa is ascended by a flight of twelve steps on the east side leading to the top of the podium. A circumambulation path of schist stone was provided around the base molding of the stupa plinth. The masonry of the main stupas is executed in diaper.

The Buddhist site of Tokar-dara (Najigram) is situated about 5km on the south of Barikot on the way to Karakar pass. The site consists of a large stupa, the associated monastery, living quarters, assembly hall, and an aqueduct cave, two other stupas badly damaged and several unidentified remains. The Large Stupa is probably the best preserved in this area. It consists of a hemispherical dome, upper and lower drums resting on a square podium. The main stupa was surrounded by the votive stupas which have been destroyed by unauthorized diggers. Faint traces of the votive stupa can still be seen. The stupa had already been dug out at the center from the top in search of antiquities by the robbers which damaged the stupa structure and the surface finds.

- **Monastery:** The monastery is rectangular in plan. It has two entrances one on the north leading to the main stupa and another on the south leading to an assembly hall. There are six domed cells, square in shape. Some of the cells still reserved the vaulted roof. There are ventilators and small niches in each cell for keeping statues or lamps.
- **Assembly Hall:** Near the south-western corner of the monastery court, there are the high walls of a big hall probably used as an assembly hall for the Buddhist community. Ruins of isolated cells lie on the slope of the valley against the rock.
- **Cave:** On the eastern side of the glen, about 45m above the monastic quadrangle, lies a cave with its high entrance, blocked about half of its height by a wall. This cave was probably used by the monks for meditation.

- **Aqueduct:** In the area along the streamlet, are the remains of an aqueduct for the purpose of bringing water for domestic use, ablution and also for irrigation purpose. Below the aqueduct, there are the remains of another ruined stupa about 1.82m in height.

The Buddhist site of Panr (1st-5th century CE) is built on two terraces on the side of the clay hill. Site comprises of one main stupa having south facing stairway. The main stupa is surrounded by votive stupas.

This site was also excavated by Italian Archeological Mission with the collaboration of Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan. During the excavation large number of antiquities were found including stone, stucco sculptures, pottery and other objects that are housed in Swat Museum.

The stupa of Shingardar is situated about 3km to the northeast of Barikot village, by the left side on the road from Mingora to Mardan. Originally the plinth of the stupa was square in plan, but the inhabitants of the village removed the well-dressed facing stone and for the construction of their houses and road. The stupa consists of lower drum decorated with two cornice, upper drum and a dome. The total height of the stupa from dome to the existing base is 27m. The upper cornice is marked by a shallow recess about 0.50m high producing a light and shade effect. The masonry comprise large dressed slabs of white stone separated by small columns of dark slate pieces. On the eastern and southern sides of the stupa



A General View of Shingardar Stupa , Swat Valley

about 15 meters from the base, traces of Buddhist settlement can be seen, now occupied by the modern houses.

Takht-I-Bahi is located on a raised spur from the plain in district Mardan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It was founded in the early 1st century CE, spectacularly positioned on various hilltops. This Buddhist monastery was in continual use until the 7th century CE. It is composed of an assemblage of buildings and is the most complete Buddhist monastery in Pakistan. The buildings were constructed of stone in Gandhara patterns (diaper style) using local dressed and semi-dressed stone blocks set in a lime and mud mortar. Modern day, the ruins comprise a main stupa court, votive stupas court, a group of three stupas, the monastic quadrangle with meditation cells, conference hall, covered stepped passageways and other secular buildings.

Bellow stated in 1864 about the original entrances of the site. Bellow found broken pottery with inscribed Kharoshti. Later on, Spooner wrote about his assumption of underground structures which was proved during his excavation in 1909 by the discovery of a window in western wall. Those explorations reported the main stupa, votive stupas, images of Buddha, Bodhisattva, cult objects and a considerable number of elephant brackets (Hargreaves 1910 II: 33-39).

Julian is situated away from Taxila, over a mountain rises around 100 meters above the surrounding country.

The cells of this monastery are enclosed by a rectangular central court with verandas same as the other monasteries in Gandhara. This monastery is surrounded by a bathroom, an assembly hall, a storeroom, kitchen, latrine whereas there is no evidence of well has been found. Main stupa is damaged badly and enclosed by 21 votive stupas. These stupas are beautifully decorated having Greek influence. The carved motifs have been modified by Buddhist artisans around 2nd centuries BCE. Many reliefs of teaching Buddha has been spotted. This monastery was recovered after the invasion of white Huns.

Main stupa of Bhamala is unique, having crossed plan of a giant square base for dome, the projections of which can be seen from all four sides. This region was once a major center of the Buddhist civilization and left an archaeological legacy of art and architecture.

This is among one of a few sites around the world to have a cruciform stupa, reserved for Buddha himself. Furthermore, the Maha Pari Nirvana statue measures 14 meters in length, making it the largest ever statue of its kind in the history of greater Gandhara civilization.

Jinan Wali Dheri (Mound of Evil Spirits) is an archaeological site near Taxila, Pakistan. The remains of a Buddhist monastic complex dating to the 5th century CE, part of the Gandhara civilization. It is one of the best-preserved Buddhist monastic complexes in the Taxila valley. The complex includes a main stupa, votive



A General View of Takht-I-Bahi Monastery,
Peshawar Valley



Bodhisattva
(Peshawar Museum)



Head of Bodhisattva Maitreya
(Hund Museum)

stupas, an enclosure around the main stupa provided with chapels facing towards main stupa, two platforms of rather late period constructed in front of the chapels situated on the both corners of the eastern wall, an upper court votive stupa and a monastery/sangharama on the eastern side of the stupa. Discoveries at Jinnan Wali Dheri include fragments of murals on the walls of the corridor of a monastery leading to the main stupa. The most remarkable discovery at 'Jinnan Wali Dheri' was the mural paintings of the monastery corridor. The paintings depict images of Buddha and figures of worshippers. Most of the paintings have been defaced over the years, but a few fragments of paintings were recovered in a much better condition. The paintings collapsed when the site was destroyed by the White Huns in the 5th century. In 2010, the complex was opened to the public. The antiquities recovered from the stupa include coins of the Kushan dynasty period and a silver coin of the White Huns, pots, jewelry, jars, bowls and other items. These antiques are preserved at Taxila Museum. (Khan and Hassan 2008).

Buddhist Monastery of Badalpur (Taxila Valley) is situated about 9 km North West Taxila museum and 2 km North-West of Julian village. Alexander Cunningham, the then Director General of Archaeological Survey of India visited this important Buddhist monastery during 1863-64. Further excavations were carried out the site by the Federal Department of Archaeology and Museums from 2005-2009 led by Muhammad Ashraf Khan, Arif and Mr. Shakir Ali. During the course of excavations a huge number of antiquities have been discovered. But the most remarkable discovery of the excavations is the discovery of a Mathura sculpture of the Buddha made from reddish sand stone. The sculpture depicts a Buddha seated on a throne with a cross legged, both soles of the feet having dharmachakra symbols. The right hand is in abhaya mudra with a wheel of law on the palm. pipal tree is engraved at the back of the sculpture. Similar Mathura style sculpture of Buddha was also discovered from the surface of Bhari Dheri site in Taxila valley. Due to this unique discovery it is very clear that the Mathura images of Buddha from these sites were originated from the soil of Mathura and were presented to these monasteries by

some devotees/monks during their pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Taxila in the era of 2nd century CE. Another remarkable discovery is the sculpture of bodhisattva Maitreya and a stupa shaped relic casket in schist stone was also revealed during the past excavation from this monastery (Khan et al 2013).

Findings from Gandhara

Buddhist Rock Art Along the Silk Route

The unique petroglyphs are spreading across Indus-Kohistan to Baltistan and reaching to Ladakh and Tibet. The rock art sites are extending besides Indus river as well as its tributaries like Gilgit river up to Yasin and the Hunza valley. The complex of the rock art sites are situated between Shatial in Indus-Kohistan and Raikot Bridge. More than 50,000 rock carving and 5000 rock inscriptions have been found from the same area. These epigraphic documents are starting from Neolithic time (7th/6th millennium BCE) to the arrival of Islam (since 16th Century AD).

The Buddhist petroglyphs were found along Karakoram Highway or Silk Road from Shatial to Khunjarab pass. Buddhism reached at this place about 1st Century CE. Arrival of Buddhism influenced rock art of this area and the prominent engravings comprised of the images of Buddha, Bodhisattvas, Jatakas and stupas. Stupas are very common among them. These human made markings have dark patina. These engraving are the representative of artist's skills. The Buddhist petroglyphs display a variety of iconology and development of architectural methods. The depiction of Buddhism among the Karakorum carvings include predominantly stupa architecture and majority of anthropomorphic Buddha. In execution and style, these Buddhas can be comparable with earliest known anthropomorphic representations of Buddha in the region of Gandhara. This suggests about the 'missing link' between Gandhara and the rise of Chinese Buddhism in Xinjiang, with the Karakorum mountains as linking passageways (Maillard and Jera-Bezard 1994).

The huge image of a seated Buddha carved into a high rock face of reddish color that rises on the hillside to the southwest of Janabad village. It is situated at 5km to the

Buddha (Peshawar Museum)



Buddha with Acetic (Dir Museum)



Buddha Emerging from Lotus (Hund Museum)



Birth Scene of Siddhartha
(Peshawar Museum)



Jenabad Buddha, Swat



Depiction of Stupas at Ladakh



Stupa at Ladakh



Kargha Buddha



Talphan Seated Buddha

North East of Manglawar. The figure of the Buddha is shown seated on a high throne in the attitude of mediation. The snail shell curls of this Buddha are very carefully rendered. His eyes are more than half closed, there is a prominent Ushnisha and long ear lobes. The folds of the robe are stringy, with a planned alteration of high and low ridges.

Conclusion

Gandhara is a sacred land which is famous for Buddhism as well as for its propagation in the same area. Still today a large number of stupas and monasteries have been found there which pointed towards the practice of Buddhism at this place. As Gandhara is governed by

different dynasties so accordingly its art and architecture had been transformed. But Mauryan monarch were the very first to build stupa in Gandhara, usually the name of Ashoka is associated for Buddhist proliferation.

Silk Route is considered an important route as it was the source of trade and it also played a significant role in the propagation of Buddhism. It is evident from the rock art (Buddhist) of Gilgit Baltistan as Buddhist pilgrims used to illustrate the cult images of Buddhism on huge boulders across their way to pay homage and dissemination of their religion.

Gandhara art is a blend of religious and secular dimensions i.e. basically it portrays Buddhism but at the same time many cultural elements of Greeks and Romans e.g. drinking, dancing and loving scenes have been depicted in this art which is entirely a secular aspect of the west. Beside them, several decorative designs such as

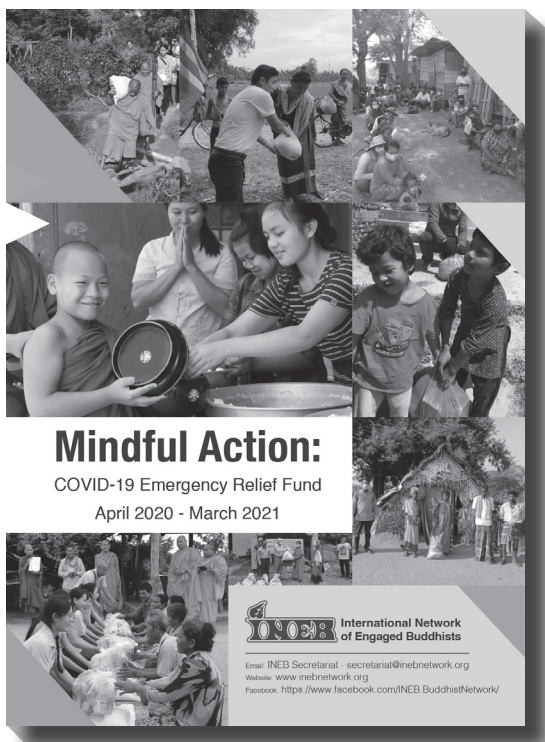
acanthus leaves, vine scrolls; architectural patterns i.e. Doric, Ionic and Corinthian pilasters as well as Greco Roman god and goddesses have also been incorporated in this art. Indian and Persian cultural influences are also amalgamated in Buddhist Art of Gandhara.

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Please visit INEB's website where you can download the Mindful Action Report

- <https://www.inebnetwork.org/mindful-action-covid-19-emergency-relief-fund-april-2020-march-2021-final-report>



Offering Land to Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni Sangha

Reported by **Dhammananda Bhikkhuni**

8 Feb 2021



Soon after the Buddha's enlightenment, the Mara came to see the Buddha and reminded him that now he was enlightened, he had achieved what he came out for, it should be time for him to consider passing away.

The Buddha refused, and said that he would not consider passing away yet, not until his fourfold Buddhist communities (Bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen) are well established. That they practice well and they are able to preach the dharma well. The Mara accepted and retreated.

Forty-five years passed, the Mara appeared again reminding the Buddha to keep his words. The Mara confirmed that the fourfold Buddhist communities were then well established as the Buddha expected. He then reminded the Buddha of his promise, this time the Buddha accepted and announced that he would pass away in the next three months.

This idea of establishing the fourfold Buddhists communities is very important for the growth of Buddhism. Ven. Bhikkhuni Voramai Kabilsingh (1908-2003 A.D.), the first Siamese/Thai bhikkhuni, also thought of making the great merit making, apart from many other projects, she wanted to offer the land to build temples for bhikkhus and bhikkhunis.

She founded Songdhammakalyani bhikkhuni Arama in 1958 A.D. The temple is situated on Petkasem highway. in Nakhonpathom province. This is a province 53 kilometres west of Bangkok. She bought the land from Queen Indrasakdisaci, Queen of King Rama VI. It took her sometimes to slowly built the temple on this land

which was a barren paddy field. During her time she built a beautiful Uposatha hall which can be seen from a distance as the landmark of the temple. She herself started her monastic life as early as 1955 A.D. and fifteen years later, she was able to receive full ordination from Taiwan and became the first Siamese/Thai bhikkhuni.

The temple now passed on to her daughter, Dr.Chatsumarn Kabilsingh. The latter also joined monastic life and came to be known as Ven. Dhammananda. She was fully ordained February 2003, just before the passing away of Ven. Bhikkhuni Voramai Kabilsingh in June 2003. Thus we can say Songdhammakalyani bhikkhuni Arama has an unbroken lineage of bhikkhuni since 1973.

While starting her own temple for bhikkhunis, she also had an idea to purchase another piece of land to offer to build another temple for bhikkhus. She wanted to support both the sanghas for the establishment of Buddhism. The land she acquired for this purpose is on the bank of Thacheen river in Sampran district, also in Nakhonpathom, the same province where she started her own temple for bhikkhunis.

She would like to offer the land to a temple. Therefore the temple must be official. By law, minimum land requirement to build a temple must be at least 6 rai (approx. one acre is 2 rais). Monks were invited to come

and live on the land. There must be at least 4 monks residing during the vassa (rain) continuously for not less than 5 years before they can register the land as a temple. Years passed by there were so many obstacles. Monks who came to stay on the land were not educated, were not well organized, were not accepted by the local people, etc.

Ven. Somdej Pra Maha Viravong of Wat Makut came to visit Songdhammakalyani Temple in 1958 at the time when the temple just got started. He wrote down in the visiting book giving encouragement for Ven. Voramai Kabilisingh to continue her good work. He also suggested the name of Kalyanisongdhamma as the name of the temple. So Ven. Voramai used this name as the name of the new temple in Sampran district. Ven. Somdej Pra Maha Viravong later became the 16th Sangharaja.

Thus the name of the temple is auspicious as it was given by the Sangharaja.

Thirty years passed by, Ven. Bhikkhuni Voramai Kabilisingh passed away at the age of 95, she was not able to live long enough to offer this land to a temple with her own hand.

Ven. Dhammananda started to gather all the paper work again, and she herself went to offer all the paper work needed to the local monk who took care of the new temples at Tambon level. It was stuck here for another 10 years at least, as the Tambon Chief was not in favour of the idea to have the temples too close by.

It was not until the new district Chief of Sampran District came into position in 2019. He is Chaokhun Pra Pipatsuksakorn, abbot of Wat Bang Chang Nuea. The Tambon chief returned the whole pile of paper work of Wat Kalyani to him, asking the District chief to handle it himself.

The complication of Kalyani temple was the acting abbot was not well accepted by the local people around the temple due to various reasons. In this difficult situation, the Sampran District Chief had to become acting abbot of Kalyani temple while the paper work was being processed.

In 2020 during COVID19 the Sampran District Chief came to see Ven. Dhammananda himself, wanting to clarify if she is still willing to offer the land to build Kalyani temple. Ven. Dhammananda confirmed the wish of her mother. From then on, the Sampran District Chief was active in clearing all the details which were

obstructions for the temple to be accepted officially.

Kalyani temple was declared official in June 2020. Towards the end of the year, there was a big celebration where the Provincial Chief of Nakhonpathom came to deliver the official paper accepting Kalyania as a temple under the Siamese/Thai sangha.

Kalyani being the 25th temple of Sampran District, thus allow the district to have 5 tambons of administration instead of 4. (there are five temples to each administrative tambon) the 24th temple is Wat Yanavesakavan which you may be familiar with.

The land previously offered by Ven. Voramai was 6 rais, but meanwhile the land department took some half a rai for the expansion of the bank of the river so there was only 5 and three quarter left.

To meet the land requirement of 6 rais, Mr. Chatthakur Kabilisingh (Ven. Voramai's grandson) offered a small piece of land (74 sq. wah) next to the temple to complete the requirement of 6 rai by law.

Now the process at the land department was complicated. Ven. Dhammananda as a giver and Ven. Chaokhun Pra Pipatsuksakorn as receiver went to the land department in Sampran District for three times without success. There were many more processes before the actual handling of the land deed.

December 2020, Ven. Navavas, appointed new abbot came to visit and introduced himself to Ven. Dhammananda. With the grace of Chaokhun Pra Pipatsuksakorn, District Chief, he eventually found this monk as a new and able abbot. He is 63 years old, he came from that location and well accepted by the people and by the local sangha.

Eventually the handling of the land deeds to Kalyani temple finally took place on February 5, 2021.

Ven. Navavas, the new abbot was the recipient representing Kalyani temple, and the donors were Ven. Dhammananda and her son representing Ven. Voramai, the original donor.

Thus, with the blessing of the Buddhas, this new temple is promising under the organization of able hands of the senior monks.

This is a happy report that after some 40 years, finally the land was successfully given to the bhikkhu sangha. I would like to invite you to come and visit Kalyani temple serenely settled on the bank of Thacheen river in Sampran district, Nakhonpathom.

In Pandemic Times: Reflecting on Futures and How Buddhist Values and Practices are Contributing

By **José Antonio Rodríguez Díaz**

Buddhistdoor Global, 29-03-2021

<https://www.buddhistdoor.net/features/in-pandemic-times-reflecting-on-futures-and-how-buddhist-values-and-practices-are-contributing>

The following is a translation of an article that was originally published by *Buddhistdoor en Español*.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has generated such a magnitude of disruption that it has created an opportunity to take advantage of the reconstruction process ahead of us, and thus to think about building better futures. It calls us to look to the future creatively, without fear, and to think of the crisis situation in which we live as a time for humanity as a whole to create better, fairer, more egalitarian, harmonious, free, democratic, and happier societies.

The global scale and dramatic consequences of the pandemic invite us to collectively reflect on the probable, possible, and preferable social futures, and thus begin the path of building better and more desirable societies. It also offers us an opportunity to reflect on the contribution of Buddhists to those futures. Our future is not set in stone.

To achieve this, from my perspective as a sociologist and a Buddhist, I review our understanding of our possible futures, look at the pandemic from the perspective of those futures, and analyze the contribution of Buddhist values and practices in building better futures. Buddhist ideals such as non-self, dependent origination, emptiness, non-duality, the law of karma, the bodhisattva path, loving-kindness, and the four immeasurables all imply interrelatedness with other beings. In that interrelatedness, one wishes for their well-being and happiness. These ideas constitute a major body of values and practices that can be employed toward the creation of harmonious relationships with other individuals and within and between societies.

What is the future?

And why should we think about it?

I begin by recognizing something paradoxical for students of the future: the future does not exist. In fact, when it becomes so, it is no longer the future; it is the present. Hence, thinking about the future is nothing more than a way of focusing on the present, and we focus on the present to build our future.

But although the future does not exist, there are elements that will constitute it, ingredients and seeds of the future, already in the here and now. And the future, like everything in the life of this planet, is the result of complex causal forces in constant interaction. Obviously, our actions are also part of such a system. Hence, individual and collective action are creators of possible futures.

The future is open, it is not unique or predetermined, and therefore there may be alternative possible futures. The idea that the future does not exist leads us to the idea that the future is changeable. If it doesn't exist, it has yet to be created. And if it has to be created, then we can help shape it.



Three types of future and COVID-19

Wendell “Wendy” Bell (1924–2019), a sociologist and founder of futures studies, introduced a classical approach that defines futures in the plural and indicates three main types: probable, possible, and preferable.* Probable futures are those that we think can occur with high probability based on current causal forces and trends. They are largely a continuation of the present. Possible futures are all those thinkable and imaginable futures that we believe could happen in a somewhat more distant future. And the preferable futures are those that we like and think should happen or that we would like to foster.

The study of probable futures focuses on several questions: what would be the most likely future of a specific phenomenon in a specific period of time and under specific conditions? What will the future be like if things continue as they are today? As present conditions change, this type of future must be constantly rethought. Furthermore, changes in the ingredients of causation systems and in human actions change those highly probable futures.

During these months of pandemic, predictions about the future after the effects of the coronavirus have multiplied. Obviously, many predictions are made with the best of intentions, aiming to help us move into the future that they say awaits us. Many of the predictions are possibly attempts to define the future, to shut it down, or to make it inevitable. They seem to want to convince us that this is the future and it will be, and therefore we must accept it and adapt to it. “Nothing will be the same” and “the new normal” have become the mantras of this

pandemic. They have become the dominant discourses. (Rodríguez 2020)

In addition to the numbers, curves, and lines of those infected and killed by COVID-19, the media have also provide us with news, analyses, and forecasts about the near probable future in economic and political terms—declining GDP, the closures of companies and sectors, massive job losses, slow recovery, tensions between countries, tensions between parties, territorial closures, increases in vulnerable populations, and so on.

All of this could create an image of an unavoidable dystopian future, generating fear and paralyzing the social capacity to act. But it is precisely the knowledge of these predictions that allows them to be changed. Each of these predictions can generate forces to enhance, or stop, or transform them.

Possible futures

All of these probable futures force us to venture into the definition of alternative possible futures. This is where human creativity has led us to imagine and think about future realities. The avenue of possible futures implies thinking of present and future problems as opportunities and obstacles and limitations, and as something that can be overcome. This means looking at the present in an innovative way and realizing that the current possibilities of the future are achievable.

One of the most used instruments to think about possible futures are scenarios. Scenarios are narrative descriptions, stories with internal consistency, about possible themes or developments. Alternative scenarios are built in order to conceptualize alternative futures and



clarify the possible consequences of current decisions.

The most widely used models are double-entry scenarios in which the crossing of two trends or uncertainties produces four scenarios with four typical combinations: positive change, negative change, no change, and unknown change. As an example of the first type, we can think of alternative scenarios combining two uncertain trends. For example, pandemic control on the one hand and global cooperation on the other. This would offer us four alternative scenarios: planetary consciousness, cooperation, weakness, and failure. Two of these are positive and two are rather negative.

In the planetary consciousness scenario, the infection has been controlled and a vaccine has been obtained. Planetary governance systems have been created to deal with global issues. The association of COVID-19 with the deterioration and destruction of the environment leads to actions to control environmental deterioration and to allow a certain return of nature.

In the cooperation scenario, it has not been possible to fully control infections, but growing global cooperation allows a better understanding of the transmission processes and thus increases the capacity to stop the spread. International scientific cooperation is making great strides on a COVID-19 vaccine.

The weakness scenario is dominated by uneven development and tensions between countries and regions. The control of COVID-19 has had a high economic cost in addition to the high cost in human lives and human resources. The result is weakness in the face of any future global pandemic.

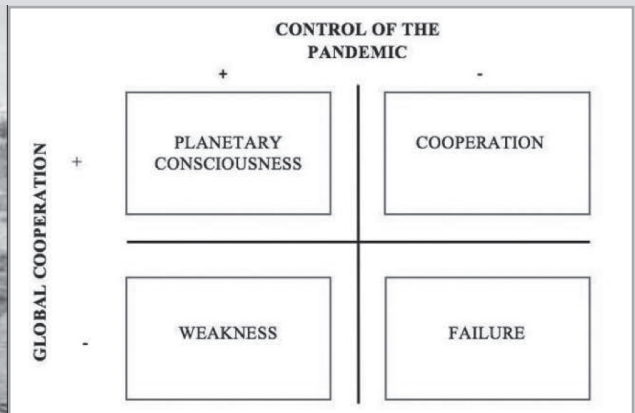


Figure 1. Possible scenarios based on Pandemic Control and Global Cooperation

In the failure scenario, economic problems abound and uncontrolled infections lead to a critical situation of high unemployment, poverty, illness, and death.

Preferable futures

The scenarios that we could build would allow us to visualize the best and most desirable futures and also give us clues on how to walk toward them and how to avoid undesirable futures. Preferable futures involve evaluating the desirability of alternative futures and prioritizing ethical foundations. Thinking about preferable futures leads us to worry about the nature of a good life and society.

The values and actions of Buddhists collected in the World Values Survey (WVS) point to their preferable futures. A general analysis of the value system shows clear positions of Buddhists toward harmonious relationships. Like most non-Buddhists, they oppose war and do not justify violence against others at all. In fact, they value altruism and tolerance as good qualities to teach children and also stand out for believing that the majority of people can be trusted and that it is important to move toward a more humane society in which wealth can be better shared.

According to this survey, the majority of Buddhists consider the people around them—family and friends—to be very important in their lives. But the proximity to others is not limited to people, but extends to all sentient beings represented by concern for the environment. A

quarter of Buddhists—twice the non-Buddhist population—believe that environmental degradation is the most serious problem today. And they also favor protecting the environment over economic development a little more than non-Buddhist people. In general, Buddhist values provide an image of proximity and care for those around them as well an orientation and desire for harmony with people and the environment. (Rodríguez, 2019)

Building futures

And once we have seen facts and trends pushing toward probable futures, along with images and values that shape possible and preferable futures, we are faced with the challenge of building futures through individual and collective action.



Burma Spring Benefit Film Festival

AStreaming June 4-13 2021

<https://bsbff.eventive.org/welcome>

The Burma Spring Benefit Film Festival presents a curated program of over 30 films from or about Myanmar (Burma), plus daily live talks featuring prominent activists and observers. Net proceeds from this festival will go to grassroots humanitarian organizations working in Myanmar in support of the non-violent democracy movement.

A Festival pass provides access to all the films and talks for a one-time donation (suggested minimum: US\$30, but no one turned away). All the films are being provided to the Festival at no charge.

*The Burma Spring Benefit Film Festival
salutes the courage and dignity
of the ordinary people working nonviolently
to regain control of Myanmar's destiny.*

INEB is one of many community sponsors.

The WVS survey shows that Buddhists also stand out as having a high level of social activity, above the averages of global and non-Buddhist populations. This is exemplified with actions toward the well-being and happiness of others and taking care of the environment. This higher level of social action coincides with higher levels of membership in civil and environmental organizations. Participation in social organizations increases trust and ties, facilitating broader and more harmonious relationships. This high level of care for others and the environment places Buddhists in the first positions of social activity towards a more harmonious and sustainable future society.

The values and actions of Buddhist populations paint an alternative image of possible and preferable futures that keeps open the possibility of futures different from some of the catastrophic images created in recent months that often lead to inaction.

We have looked at probable futures and the seeds of possible and preferable futures. How they are configured in the coming months and years will also depend on us. The main challenge is to realize that we are creating a future in the present with our ideas, thoughts, and actions. And after that, we must take additional steps to consciously create desired futures—our future, those of our loved ones, and the futures of all beings on the planet.

For the benefit of all beings!

José Antonio Rodríguez Díaz is professor of sociology at the University of Barcelona, Spain.

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In Memory of Hans Küng

1928 - 2021

Sulak Sivaraksa



Hans Küng was a leading Swiss Catholic theologian who taught at the University of Tübingen in Germany. Since he was a progressive who challenged papal infallibility, the Vatican prohibited him from teaching as a Catholic theologian. This

proved to be an important turning point because it led him to seek for Truth in other religions, especially Buddhism. Subsequently, he paid a visit to Bhikkhu Buddhadasa at Suan Mokh and wrote several books on promoting interreligious understanding. On several occasions, he invited me to give talks at Tübingen. He even joked that the two of us were alike: he was persecuted by the pope and I by the Siamese king.

At the Parliament of World Religions conference convened in Chicago in 1993, the assembly proposed the idea of a global ethic shared by the world's religious and spiritual traditions. A special commission was

established, and Hans Küng served as Chair. I was invited to join it, representing Buddhism. Several conferences were later held in Tübingen. In sum, the commission incorporated the first four of Buddhism's Five Precepts as part of a global ethic. The fifth precept (i.e., to abstain from intoxicants causing carelessness) was rejected because wine is a central element in Christianity. In reality, the Fifth Precept talks about intoxicants causing carelessness, which can broadly refer to anything not only alcohol or drugs, and it does not directly prohibit the consumption of alcohol. In others, moderate consumption of alcohol that does not lead to carelessness may not be against the Fifth Precept.

Hans Küng had led a healthy and lively life. He was a candid person. He had a lot of friends and possessed a good sense of humor. He lived to the age of 93 years old and recently passed away on 6 April 2021.



Reverend Yoshiaki Fujitani

1923 - 2021

It is with deep sadness that we inform you of the passing of Reverend Yoshiaki Fujitani, the 11th Bishop of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Rev. Fujitani passed away on Monday, May 17, 2021, at the Kuakini Medical Center, Honolulu, HI, at the age of 97.

Naresh Sahai Mathur

1954 - March 19, 2021



Naresh Mathur has just passed away at hospital in Delhi, India, of COVID-19. Naresh was committed to dharma and a devoted student of Buddhism learning from HH the Dalai Lama, HH the Karmapa,

Lama Zopa Rinpoche, Situ Rinpoche and Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche. He was a founding member of Siddhartha's Intent India, as well as their legal counsel, he was on the Deer Park board of directors, a Supreme Court Advocate, as well as a Trustee of the Dalai Lama Trust. Naresh was an "elegant, cheerful and encouraging bridge between generations and between Indians and Tibetans." He was initially connected with INEB during INEB's Nagpur conference in 2004, and was a great friend to many of the INEB Indian sangha.

Ian Mayo-Smith

1924 - 2021



Ian Mayo-Smith, a British-born poet, author, administrator, academic, raconteur, and Bletchley Park veteran, died January 8 in Sun City, Florida at 96. Born December 3, 1924 in Muswell Hill, Mayo-Smith came into a world reeling from World War 1, the Spanish flu pandemic, and on the cusp of the Great Depression. His

bureaucratic career in colonial-era Britain reshaped his view of global politics and made him a tireless advocate for social justice around the world.

As a young man, Mayo-Smith became active in the Oxford Movement, now known as Initiatives for Change. Its mission inspired him to co-found, with Krishna, Healing the Heart of Hartford, a group passionately committed to healing racial and sectarian rifts.

Ian traveled to over forty nations. Particularly fond of Siam/Thailand, for twenty-eight years he spent his winter months there living with a Thai extended family. His hobbies included photography, classical jazz, classical music, musical revues, poetry, of which he published several collections, and novels. He wrote songs and music and sang.

Dear Acharn Sulak

Thank you for your 2021 Happy New Year card. Nancy and I are well. We are now living in a retirement community--Havenwood Heritage Heights-- in Concord, New Hampshire.

I am now fully retired from teaching but continue my translations of Buddhadasa Bhikkhu.

My brother, Bill, celebrated his 90th birthday this year. Both you and I are approaching that milestone. Hope we both make it! :-)

Sadly, It is very unlikely that we'll be making another visit to Siam/Thailand.

Hope all is well with you and yours.

With best wishes--

Don (Donald Swearer)

Hi Sulak

Thank you for the lovely New Year's card and the picture of you with your family.

I wanted to let you know that my mom, Nancy Kenyon, passed away peacefully on 5/27/21. She had been struggling with Alzheimer's but had a wonderfully cheerful disposition throughout. We were able to keep her at home and she died in her beloved San Francisco house with family around. Give the pandemic, we were so grateful to have her with us at home.

My mom had the utmost respect for you and your work. Thank you for making our world more peaceful.

Warmly,

Perryn Reis

(#2 daughter)

Dear Sulak,

Thank you for your seasonal greetings. a wonderful foto with the entire family. And it is good to see you all united in this time of division and distancing: 10 persons and 1,5 meter! We are just starting the second hard lockdown. We are very thankful that everything is fine with us, none is sick, all are healthy. What we hear about Bangkok and Siam/Thailand is not encouraging to spend holydays in your country. And even His Majesty, Your King prefers to spend his days here in Germany! But I guess, it is a safe location, there in the Bavarian Alaps, where the last German "Leader" had his domizil nearby! During October/November here the Media were full of News and Stories about Siam/Thailand and the anti-royal movements, mainly about the mass-demonstrations in the capital. At present, it has become more quiet. Is that so, because the protest has been oppressed? According to the media here, the present movement has been inspired by the Hong Kong protest against Beijing politics. I cannot trust this kind of analysis, because they compare what has no point of comparism except that people demonstrate! Anyhow, I do hope that you are not involved actively.

The scenery around us was covered with snow for two weeks. Now that it has become warmer, snow has almost gone. Christmas will therefore be a green, but not white Christmas. There will not be many, who will spend their holydays in warmer areas of the globe like in Siam/

Thailand. Travel-restrictions will not allow. So, you can recover from the annual wave of visitors.

My thoughts are very often with You, remembering former days "of attempts to safe the planet"! Is BfdW still around in Siam/Thailand, acting in projects etc.? and what about all the others agencies of religious, political, socialist, liberal orientation? what about the impact and outlook of all he older projects and programs, initiated in ouer active days? What about your bookshop?

May patience and strength will be given to us every day of the year to come, to fullfil our "vow to live an awakened life". Be carful!

Greetings, including from Inge, Wolfgang Schmidt.

March 2021

Happy Birthday (I forgot to send this important message when I wrote last month.)

David Chandler, who organized the national identity conference in May 1998, turned 88 in February this year. He sends his warm regards.

Love always,

Craig Reynolds

Australia

8. January 2021

Dear Sulak

What a year we have behind us! I had hoped to see you much more this year, but instead I was confined to my home in Paris. Which was nice in a strange way, as well. I hardly go out and spend my time writing my opus magnum; I do yoga and meditate every day. It has helped me to find a beautiful balance after Judith's passing. I am full of gratitude for the wonders of life, as you can see from the attached poem.

Talking of gratitude, I would like to make a donation out of Judith's estate. It took us a long time to settle with Judith's children – not because we had conflicts, but because bureaucracy is tedious in France. Anyhow, we are not ready. We will give a contribution to the Help Without Frontiers Foundation that supports children at the Thai-Myanmar border and their program for Ray of Hope Schools. Given our long involvement with Burma, I think this would have been what Judith wanted.

I also would like to give you some support for your alternative University. Judith had always hoped to offer a training in Rebirthing or Enlightenment intensives at your ashram, but it was not meant to be. I therefore would like to make the following offering, if you agree:

- We will donate € 6000.00 (approximately B 250,000) directly to the University for your free disposition.
- I would also like to suggest organising once a year a 1-week Zen meditation retreat at the Ashram with a sensei coming from Paris for this purpose. I would personally finance his flight ticket but would ask the Ashram to organize the retreat and to take care of sensei's accommodation. During the retreat, people would have to be fed and for that they would pay a modest contribution themselves. The teacher's name is João Rodrigues Sensei (<https://www.dana-sangha.org/Eng/?Teachers>). He is Portuguese, has studied Zen in Japan and has received formal transmission in the Zendo here in Paris. His first contact with Buddhism occurred in Siam/Thailand. See bio attached. I had mentioned this idea to Pracha last year and he seemed interested.

Dear Sulak, I hope this suggestion will find your approval. Judith and I always had the greatest respect and



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BANGKOK
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Tel. 0-2253-0288-9 Fax. 0-2253-0290

No.Pol.32/2021

3 March 2021

Subject: **Buddhist Heritage of Gandhara-Pakistan, an article by a renowned archaeologist of Pakistan**

Dear Khun Somboon,

I fondly recall my productive meeting with yourself and your colleagues during December last year. The meeting afforded us an opportunity to exchange notes regarding nature's protection and environmental preservation, the work being done by the local and international organizations, and the dedication required to face the challenge.

2. I also appreciate the vision of the International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB), for enhanced inter-faith harmony through dialogue among different communities, and the strategy to identify mutual faith-based teachings in terms of environment protection. The capacity to publish its literature and to re-translate useful information into Thai language, makes the INEB a unique organization.

3. As we agreed during our discussion that Embassy will provide some literature on 'Gandhara Heritage of Pakistan' to be printed in the Network's Magazine, the 'Seeds of Peace', I am enclosing an article 'Buddhist Heritage of Gandhara-Pakistan' by Prof. Dr. Muhammad Ashraf Khan, a scholarly archaeologist from Pakistan.

4. Prof. Ashraf has earned the respect and trust of his peers and is well-known for his research and in-depth knowledge of Gandhara heritage. An academic by profession, Dr. Ashraf has also assisted the Government of Pakistan in preservation of the Buddhist heritage by serving at key positions. He has served on the Board of Endowment Fund for Cultural Heritage, and as Member Advisory Committee on Heritage, created under the patronage of Government of Pakistan. He was the President of Archaeological Association of Pakistan as well as the Director of Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations.

5. I hope the article will make its place in the INEB's Magazine or may be published as a separate Booklet.

6. I also look forward to continued engagement and enhanced collaboration between the Embassy and the INEB.

Best Regards

(Asim Iftikhar Ahmad)

Mr. Somboon Chungprampee

Executive Secretary

International Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB),

Bangkok.

admiration for the wonderful work you have relentlessly done. I am sorry that I am not able to contribute more at this stage, but maybe a little help and further the course, too.

With all my best wishes,
and take care of your health
yours Stefan [Collings]

Dear Sulak:

Your New Year Card took months to get to us. The sad news is that Ian [Ian Mayo-Smith] passed away in January at the age of 96. He lived a long and fruitful life I attach his obituary.

Our life was a wonderful partnership and very blessed in the hundreds of friends we made in many countries. We gave and got given.

Ian and I had as you know a very special attachment to Siam/Thailand. Sadly, for the last 5 years of his life he was no longer able to undertake long distance travel. We moved to Florida to escape the cold and taxes of Connecticut and also the travel. Last year we bought our own condo. Ian often talked about you and our special friendship.

Covid has made it impossible to do any travel but I hope that sometime next year I will be able to go to Kenya and possibly visit Siam/Thailand. I continue to miss Ian's wisdom, humor, and companionship. Life moves on and no one knows for how long. I shall try to follow the wisdom in your message:

"We vow to live an awakened life, to practice smiling and conscious breathing, and to study teachings authentically transmitted. Diligently we shall live in mindfulness."

Om shanti.

Krishna Mayo-Smith

Dear Sulak and Nin,

Your card is helping me to smile and practice conscious breathing even though the US has made so many errors and wrong judgements.

Biden is a big improvement over Trump who was and remains atrocious and dangerous. Biden has a good feeling at heart and he and his wife remind me of FDR and Eleanor. They are working diligently to restore some sanity at home. Whether their foreign policies will help us to mend relations with other nations and peoples I don't know yet. Do we even deserve that?

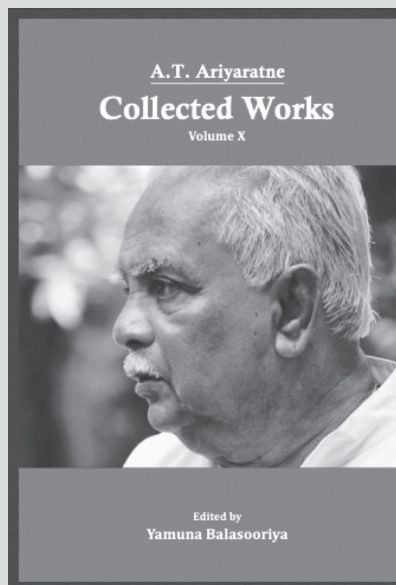
Ken's days into corona virus work, on the online medical text up to date and also renewing manuscripts on the virus for 4 medical journals. He longs to get back to music, playing and singing and he wants us to go back to Bellagio! Where we met you – what a fortunate occasion. It has been a blessing so far us to know you.

We both send much love.

Peggy McIntosh

P.S. It is a pleasure to see your family members on your Happy New Year card.

Recommended Reading



Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne's writings are now available in digital format. His experience over the years from the time of Sarvodaya's informal

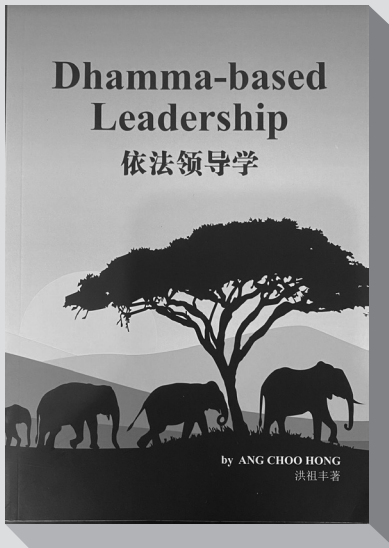
The Collected Writings of Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne in Digital Format

beginnings through its formalization as a movement in 1958 and their work with rural villagers over the years has been put down in writing as observations, lessons learnt, and recommendations for the future.

"In his own way, Dr. Ariyaratne is the progenitor of a different kind of revolution. It is constructive. It is non-violent. It is based on fraternity. It is economic as well as spiritual. It is addressed to the untended rural poor. It is a classless revolution in that it eschews hate and seeks to change the condition of the deprived and the attitudes of the affluent. It is both modern and traditional. Above all, it

maintains that human progress is possible even under extreme duress. This is, indeed, a notion of revolution different from those of both Karl Marx and Mahatma Gandhi - a revolution that draws on some of their intellectual capital, but seeks to create something fresh for our time." - Professor Ralph Buultjens, in his introduction to the fourth volume of the *Collected Works* by Dr. Ari

Read the full collection of his books in digital format here - <https://sarvodayausa.org/writings-of-a-t-ariyaratne/>



Forward

I met Mr Ang Choo Hong in Nagpur in 2016 where he presented his paper on leadership. I am happy that his paper has evolved into the publication of this book. Mr Ang is a prominent Buddhist personality and a respected leader in the Malaysian Buddhist community. His experience and knowledge is testimony to his Dhamma-based leadership and his willingness to share this wisdom here.

As Mr Ang rightly pointed out in this book, that Buddhist leadership began with the Buddha when he inspired his five friends through his personality, conduct and teachings which are encapsulated in the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*. These five friends became the first disciples of the Buddha, all of whom went on to inspire more people.

This inspiration continues today where many Buddhist leaders who have stood out and have become personifications of the Dhamma-based leadership. Leaders such as Venerable Chen Yen whose organization in Taiwan, Tzu Chi International, has helped the lives of so many who were suffering. Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh,

Dhamma-based Leadership

a well-known Buddhist monk and peace activist from Vietnam who inspired many to journey into mindfulness and the practice of nonviolence. His Holiness the Dalai Lama won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 is a strong advocate for peace and freedom. While his country continues to be ruled and suppressed by the Government of China, he has never shown nor encouraged any aggression towards the Chinese. This is the strength of his Dhamma-based leadership.

In Taiwan, Bhikkhuni Chao-Hwei is another role model for leadership. This firm and compassionate leader is a vocal environmentalist, conservationist, and social reformer. She has led successful referendums and campaigns against gambling, fought for gender equality that has gained international recognition. She has inspired many to rethink the practice of Buddhism in our modern communities.

Dhamma leadership goes beyond the ordained monk and nuns. Many lay Buddhists, too, have demonstrated inspirational leadership across the world. One such person was Nikkyō Niwano. He was the founder of Risshō Kōsei Kai and is remembered for his interfaith work and his calls for global peace and disarmament. He helped to found the World Conference of Religions for Peace in 1970, which is now known as Religions for Peace. He initiated the Niwano Peace Foundation that awards the prestigious annual Niwano Peace Prize (considered the Asian Nobel Peace Prize) to those

devoting themselves to interreligious co-operation in the cause of peace.

Mr Ang has also mentioned in his book of being inspired by Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar. He was the first Minister of Law and Justice and Chief Architect of the Constitution of India. More importantly, he was known as a social reformer who inspired the Dalit Buddhist movement and campaigned against social discrimination towards the untouchables. His work continues to inspire many people today. Many other leaders have contributed so much to the society we will need many more books just to document them all.

While this book presents a good and systematic description of the principles and strategies of Dhamma-based leadership, its content could be more generous with stories of real-life experiences including the works of some the leaders mentioned above, as well as others who have in their own ways made a difference to the lives of others.

Overall, this is a good effort to document and present a Dhamma-based approach to leadership. I hope the readers of this book will be inspired to lead in building a better world with *Metta* (loving-kindness) and *Karuna* (compassion).

Sulak Sivaraksa

International Network of Engaged Buddhists (This is the forward to the forthcoming book *Dhamma-based Leadership* by Ang Choo Hong.)



Join the festival through the QR code
with your phone camera
(Zoom ID: 810-6672-1152)

Host:
Buddhist Solidarity for Gender Equality
(Women of Wisdom Association, Korea Buddhist University
Federation, Korea Youth Buddhist Association,
Buddhist Environment Solidarity, Namu Counseling Center for
Women's Rights, Institute for Religion and Gender Research,
Ara May, Buddhist Solidarity for Reform, The Lay Buddhist As-
sociation for Righteousness)

Organization:
Institute for Religion and Gender Research

Sponsor: Buddhist Academy

Making a Donation:
Beneficiary: Buddhist Solidarity for Gender Equality
Bank Account No: Woori Bank 1006-003-441200

Inquiry: 02-733-1366
bsge2017pr@gmail.com

Website: cse.daum.net/bsge

Facebook: facebook.com/bsge2017

MahaMaya is an online cultural festival praising and celebrating MahaMaya, a great woman and mother of the Buddha, and one of the fifty-three enlightened masters whom Seonjae Dongja, the young seeker of the Truth, met.

The 5th MahaMaya Festival

A special Quiz Contest will be held where you can learn about MahaMaya and win a gift.
Please use the QR code located in the left of this poster to enter. Enjoy the festival and win a gift!

Saturday 29th May 2021, 2-4PM.

How to join the festival : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81066721152>

- Participation is available through the above website link.
- Join the festival through the QR code with your phone camera (Zoom ID: 810-6672-1152)

- The festival can be viewed through videos uploaded to the "Seongbul YeonDae TV" Youtube channel.
- Real-time participation is possible through the hosts' facebook.

Program

- Hosted by HyunJin Kim (Representative of Ara Maji), and JiYeon Lim (Representative of The Lay Buddhist Association for Righteousness)
- English Interpretation: MinHee Kim (Interpreter)

Part 1.

- Opening Speech & Congratulatory Videos
- Six Dharma Offerings-Tea Offering
by HyungJum Kim (Head of Jukhyang Traditional Tea Culture Research Center)
- Dedication of a Poem
by Youngran Kim (Head of Namu Counseling Center for Women's Right)
- A Book Talk Show on "Queen Maya in Korean History"
(Speakers: The two co-writers of the book "The Buddha had a Mother.")
 - 1) "Faith in Queen Maya in Korean History"
by MyungSook KimShin (Lecturer, Seoul National University of Science and Technology)
 - 2) "Queen Maya in Buddhist Paintings of the Joseon Dynasty"
by SeungHee Go (Member of the Seoul Metropolitan Government Cultural Assets Committee)

Moderator (Bogyeon Ok, Head of Institute for Religion and Gender Research)

Part 2.

- Celebration Performance- "Playing In the Warm Embrace of MahaMaya, the Mother of Being."
 - 1) Dance Performance: Ilhwa Park (Head of Park Ilhwa Meditative Dance Center)
MoonHee Jo (Member of Dan-Hyang Performing Art Company)
 - 2) Sound Performance: Subin Park (Head of Ansan Office, The Korean Pansori Preservation Association)
BongGyo Lee (Performer of Namsadang Nori, the 3rd Korean Important Intangible Cultural Asset)

Part 3.

- Quiz Contest: How much do you know about Queen Maya? (Lucky Draw for Gifts)

5th MAHAMAYA FESTIVAL