

NKARC Letter -Summer 2013 (2)

Nonkilling music CD - THE FLOOD by Anis Hamadeh launched
And

Uri Avnery's essay, In Praise of Emotions

----- Original Message -----

From: [Bill Bhaneja](#)

To: [undisclosed recipients](#)

Cc: [Anis Hamadeh](#)

Sent: Saturday, April 20, 2013 7:13 PM

Subject: NK Arts RC: THE FLOOD cd by Anis launched

Dear friends,

This week our colleague Anis released his ambitious musical project CD, THE FLOOD in Mainz, Germany. I must be one of the first ones to have listened to the entire 72 minutes of delightful music, comprising a simple story of life's joys and sorrows told in 30 songs. Congrats, Anis! I am glad that I was able to sit down and listen to the whole CD in one go to get its full impact and a proper understanding of the story and its Nonkilling finale. The CD sounds like a ready made song book for a musical having eclectic music styles woven through it --rock, blues, ballads, country, folk, calypso and even a tango conveying different moods of the narrative. I am amazed at Anis' talent and skills to compose words and musical arrangements (plus the art work of the song book) transcending any negative partisanship and bitterness, using his gentle harmonies which seek to unite rather than jar a listener. Anis is supported on the disc by a group of talented musicians. While his voice reminds one of the troubadours such as the folk singer Pete Seger, Miriam Isa, the female singer on the CD, complements him with her pure and innocent sound enacting the role of Coco in the story. There is an interesting soundscape running through the narrative by haunting flute by Lorenzo Colocci and bassist Andreas Schermer with Anis on acoustic guitar and harmonica. It is a wonderful contribution from Anis to have developed this project as "partner of the Center of Global Nonkilling" shown on the jacket cover. I felt very good about such association. A CD of great potential for a peace musical in four acts.

Though there are six free songs at www.anis-online.de/2/musik/the_flood including Nonkilling, I would however recommend all fond of music of nonkilling peace to get a copy and listen to the full CD in one go.

You are a renaissance man, Anis.

Nonkilling Kudos,

Bill

www.nonkilling.org

"Nonkilling is THE measure of human progress."

----- Original Message -----

From: [Bill Bhaneja](#)

To: avnery@actcom.co

Sent: Monday, April 22, 2013 12:34 PM

Subject: Fw: NK Arts RC: Fw: [Gu_weekly] Avnery was moved at Memorial Day אבנרי התרשם ביום הזכרון and Peace poem by Hugh Mann

Dear Uri,

Just wanted to extend my best wishes and profound thanks for your "In Praise of Emotions" article. I circulated it informally to members of our Nonkilling Arts Research Committee over the weekend. Its message has resonated well with many in the group, and it is likely being forwarded to others.

My colleague Prof. Glenn D. Paige who heads the Center for Global Nonkilling on reading your column asked me to convey to you:

"Avnery's profound truth of empathy for mutual suffering as motivation to end killing should become widely known. Can this piece be copied out and made available to transmit to CGNK colleagues? I could not see how to do it. Could we get an email for Avnery and get his or Gush Shalom permission to republish it?. Maybe ask him if he might revise just a bit to make implied nonkilling more explicit and perhaps retitle it "In Praise of Nonkilling Emotion"?"

Thought you might find Glenn's suggestion of "making implied nonkilling more explicit" of interest. I enclose below the note sent to NKARC friends with your column.

Cordial Regards,
Bill

Bill Bhaneja, Ph.D.
Vice Chair of the Council,
Center for Global Nonkilling(CGNK)
Honolulu, Hawai'i
www.nonkilling.org

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From: [Bill Bhaneja](#)

To: [undisclosed recipients](#)

Cc: [Hugh Mann](#)

Sent: Sunday, April 21, 2013 3:32 PM

Subject: NK Arts RC: Fw: [Gu_weekly] Avnery was moved at Memorial Day אבנרי התרשם ביום הזכרון and Peace poem by Hugh Mann

Dear friends,

Those of you familiar with writings of courageous Israeli pacifist Uri Avnery will not be surprised by his profound truth of empathy for mutual suffering as motivation to end killing. His article below, "In Praise of Emotion" relates to what drives me forward in our NK Arts RC - discovery of a feeling heart within us. Avnery writes about a reconciliation moment arranged by Israel and Palestine peace activists marking the Memorial Day last week in Israel, pointing to the significance of song and spirit for a change of heart and fraternization of the two adversaries. For the article by Uri Avnery, see below:

Error! Filename not specified. Uri Avnery's Column

In Praise of Emotion

20/04/13

IT WAS a moving experience. Moments that spoke not only to the mind, but also – and foremost – to the heart.

Last Sunday, on the eve of Israel's Remembrance Day for the fallen in our wars, I was invited to an event organized by the activist group Combatants for Peace and the Forum of Israeli and Palestinian Bereaved Parents.

The first surprise was that it took place at all. In the general atmosphere of discouragement of the Israeli peace camp after the recent elections, when almost no one dared even to mention the word peace, such an event was heartening.

The second surprise was its size. It took place in one of the biggest halls in the country, Hangar 10 in Tel-Aviv's fair grounds. It holds more than 2000 seats. A quarter of an hour before the starting time, attendance was depressingly sparse. Half an hour later, it was choke full. (Whatever the many virtues of the peace camp, punctuality is not among them.)

The third surprise was the composition of the audience. There were quite a lot of white-haired old-timers, including myself, but the great majority was composed of young people, at least half of them young women. Energetic, matter-of-fact youngsters, very Israeli.

I felt as if I was in a relay race. My generation passing the baton on to the next. The race continues.

BUT THE outstanding feature of the event was, of course, its content. Israelis and Palestinians were mourning together for their

In Praise of Emotion

"Around Us the Storm is Raging..."
In Their Shoes
Idiocracy
The Speech that was Not Delivered To the Victor, the Spoils
"Ich bin ein Bil'iner!"
The Third Intifada?
Peace and Watermelons
'Equal burden' - a disaster for the IDF
The Zuabis
Can Two Walk Together?
Woe to the Victor
A Move to the Center
Who to vote for?
Welcome, Chuck
Weird Elections
A Person Called Nobody
The Sea and the River
Cold Revenge
More...

dead sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, victims of the conflict and wars, occupation and resistance (a.k.a. terror.)

An Arab villager spoke quietly of his daughter, killed by a soldier on her way to school. A Jewish mother spoke of her soldier son, killed in one of the wars. All in a subdued voice. Without pathos. Some spoke Hebrew, some Arabic.

They spoke of their first reaction after their loss, the feelings of hatred, the thirst for revenge. And then the slow change of heart. The understanding that the parents on the other side, the Enemy, felt exactly like them, that their loss, their mourning, their bereavement was exactly as their own.

For years now, bereaved parents of both sides have been meeting regularly to find solace in each other's company. Among all the peace groups acting in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they are, perhaps, the most heart-lifting.

IT WAS not easy for the Arab partners to get to this meeting. At first, they were denied permission by the army to enter Israel. Gabi Lasky, the indomitable advocate of many peace groups (including Gush Shalom), had to threaten with an application to the Supreme Court, just to obtain a limited concession: 45 Palestinians from the West Bank were allowed to attend.

(It is a routine measure of the occupation: before every Jewish holiday the West Bank is completely cut off from Israel – except for the settlers, of course. This is how most Palestinians become acquainted with Jewish holidays.)

What was so special about the event was that the Israeli-Arab fraternization took place on a purely human level, without political speeches, without the slogans which have become, frankly, a bit stale.

For two hours, we were all engulfed by human emotions, by a profound feeling for each other. And it felt good.

I AM writing this to make a point that I feel very strongly about: the importance of emotions in the struggle for peace.

I am not a very emotional person myself. But I am acutely conscious of the place of emotions in the political struggle. I am proud of having coined the phrase “In politics, it is irrational to ignore the irrational.” Or, if you prefer, “in politics, it is rational to accept the irrational.”

This is a major weakness of the Israeli peace movement. It is exceedingly rational – indeed, perhaps too rational. We can easily prove that Israel needs peace, that without peace we are doomed to become an apartheid state, if not worse.

All over the world, leftists are more sober than rightists. When the leftists are propounding a logical argument for peace, reconciliation with former enemies, social equality and help for the disadvantaged, the rightists answer with a volley of emotional and irrational slogans.

But masses of people are not moved by logic. They are moved by their feelings.

One expression of feelings – and a generator of feelings – is the language of songs. One can gauge the intensity of a movement by its melodies. Who can imagine the marches of Martin Luther King without “We shall overcome”? Who can think about the Irish struggle without its many beautiful songs? Or the October revolution without its host of rousing melodies?

The Israeli peace movement has produced one single song: a sad appeal of the dead to the living. Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated within minutes of singing it, its blood-stained text found on his body. But all the many writers and composers of the peace movement have

not produced one single rousing anthem – while the hate-mongers can draw on a wealth of religious and nationalist hymns.

IT IS said that one does not have to like one's adversary in order to make peace with them. One makes peace with the enemy, as we all have declaimed hundreds of times. The enemy is the person you hate.

I have never quite believed in that, and the older I get, the less I do.

True, one cannot expect millions of people on both sides to love each other. But the core of peace-makers, the pioneers, cannot fulfill their tasks if there is not an element of mutual sympathy between them.

A certain type of Israeli peace activist does not accept this truism. Sometimes one has the feeling that they truly want peace – but not really with the Arabs. They love peace, because they love themselves. They stand before a mirror and tell themselves: Look how wonderful I am! How humane! How moral!

I remember how much animosity I aroused in certain progressive circles when I created our peace symbol: the crossed flags of Israel and Palestine. When one of us raised this emblem at a Peace Now demonstration in the late eighties, it caused a scandal. He was rudely asked to leave, and the movement publicly apologized.

To give an impetus to a real peace movement, you have to imbue it with the spirit of empathy for the other side. You must have a feeling for their humanity, their culture, their narrative, their aspirations, their fears, their hopes. And that applies, of course, to both sides.

Nothing can be more damaging to the chances of peace than the activity of fanatical pro-Israelis and pro-Palestinians abroad, who think that they are helping their preferred side by demonizing the other. You don't make peace

with demons.

FRATERNIZATION BETWEEN Palestinians and Israelis is a must. No peace movement can succeed without it.

And here we came to a painful paradox: the more this fraternization is needed, the less there is.

During the last few years, there has been a growing estrangement between the two sides. Yasser Arafat was very conscious of the need for contact, and did much to further it. (I constantly urged him to do more.) Since his death, this effort has receded.

On the Israeli side, peace efforts have become less and less popular. Fraternization takes place every week in Bil'in and on many other battlefields, but the major peace organizations are not too eager to meet.

Perhaps, Avnery should have titled his piece, "In Praise of 'Nonkilling' Emotions". Let me end this email with a poignant expression about our birth and death from our physician-poet colleague Hugh Mann. He writes:

"In the spirit of tracking the soul, I offer the following:

BON VOYAGE 1

Birth is when the soul
ignites and brightens the light
that delights our sight.*

*till we start to fight.

BON VOYAGE 2

Death is when the soul
gives up the fight and takes flight
but stays out of sight.*

Hugh, the spiritual tradition I come from, the Soul (Atma) never perishes.

Thank you Uri, Thank you Hugh.

In Nonkilling Peace,

Bill

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