

Nonkilling Arts Research Committee January 2015 Letter

Dear friends,

Welcome to 2015 ! Let's hope it will be a more peaceful year than previous one.

It's time to put our nonkilling creativity to useful purposes. When I volunteered to be the coordinator of the Nonkilling Arts Research Committee (NKARC) in April 2012, I wasn't sure about the scope of its task, content needed, and how long will it last. It has been over 32 months and I have sent your way more than 25 epistles on nonkilling explorations/possibilities of various art forms. I was given a list of 25 NKARC members by colleague Joam Evans Pim, Director, Center for Global Nonkilling, only 2 names from that list asked to be dropped, only one due to a difference in understanding of Nonkilling. Currently NKARC e-list has over 100 names which also include formal and informal links with like-minded groups such as Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, Transcend, International Forum for the Culture of Peace, Teesri Duniya Theatre, SGI Toda Institute, ABAC, Metta Centre, Common Wonders.com and many others. Earlier letters were explorations on nonkilling aesthetics in fiction, non-fiction, poetry, media, theatre, cinema, video, art, and dance etc.; in the summer of 2013 however due to receipt of interesting material from you I started bringing out the Letter in its present form.

The first invite letter I sent in April 2012 attempted to describe the essence of Nonkilling Arts as follows:

A nonkilling literature brings out a profound reverence for human life as each individual is seen as unique and indispensable. It brings out a pure hearted unconditional love in us and others- a love which brings hope, happiness and encouragement. It is a literature which filter things out and is left with the essence of what has to be treasured most - Life. It is in cognition of such truth through observation, understanding and evaluation of reality, its meaning and value, the work leads to creation of value. What does a piece of literature big or small has contributed to creating value becomes an important question. In summation, Nonkilling creativity is neither about lament nor anger but the artist through his /her work tapping into something deeper and universal than we are used to in our usual analysis and judgments. Truth telling, shared humanity and value creation form key aspects of a healing process and transformative inspiration through a reverence for Life, as our alpha to omega is defined by life.

The material received from you over the past month for this month's letter echoes reverence for life and universal human values that transcend national and material boundaries. It covers Nonkilling Thought, Nonkilling Cinema, Nonkilling poetry, Nonkilling Media and Nonkilling Video.

1. Nonkilling Thought:

The contribution you sent from Shalom Newsletter November 2014, on pp2-4 is entitled, "**Live in Infinite Expectation of the Dawn - The Common Message of Thoreau and Yom Kippur**". Even though we are much beyond the season of Yom Kippur, the short essay by Richard

Middleton Kaplan shows beauty and optimism of American pacifist Henry Thoreau's universalist thoughts heralding possibilities of a new world grounded in our virtues.

Kaplan writes: "How, then, does Thoreau the Transcendentalist think we can elevate our lives? By living in "infinite expectation of the dawn." And how exactly does one do that? By redefining dawn. "The day is a perpetual morning," Thoreau says, and "It matters not what the clocks say or the attitudes and labors of men. Morning is when I am awake and there is a dawn in me." Morning is the "awakening hour," but dawn doesn't occur only at sunrise. It is when I say it is, and I have the potential to experience a new dawn within me at any moment of any day." See the attachment for full text.

Our NKARC colleague Hugh Mann sends the following in the spirit of the New Year "with apprehension and comprehension":

THE TIME IS OUT OF JOINT (HAMLET)

"Mankind memorializes time. We celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays. We also commemorate decades, centuries, and millennia. The end of the 19th century is called fin de siècle, and the end of the 20th century is called Y2K. With Y2K, we worried about our computers and expected a messiah. But instead, we got a witches' brew of terrorism, war, corruption, bankruptcy, and natural disasters. Noetically, poetically, and prophetically, the first two decades of the 21st century have unceremoniously ushered in the pandemonium millennium. Now, more than ever before, time must be realized, not just memorialized."

2. Nonkilling Cinema:

You sent suggestions for two powerful films and why they should be part of nonkilling cinema. Two reasons: soldiers as humans do not want to kill other humans; in wars it is only because of war propaganda machine soldiers are driven to kill, later encountering deep remorse for having killed a fellow human. These days their regrets often manifest in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and suicides.

Nonkilling Cinema 1: The Christmas Truce

Last year we heard much about the commemorations of the First World War Centennial. Over the Christmas, stories about The Christmas Truce and fraternizing about enemy soldiers were sent in the form of a movie which shows the longing for No More Killing through Christmas truce and ceasefires in that bloody war. The intro to the film *The Christmas Tree* circulated by Forbidden Knowledge TV states:

"The Christmas Truce is the amazing but true story about the series of widespread but unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front, during World War I, around Christmas 1914. In the week leading up to the holiday, German and British soldiers crossed trenches to exchange seasonal greetings and talk. In areas, men from both sides ventured into no man's land on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to mingle and exchange food and souvenirs.

There were joint burial ceremonies and prisoner swaps, while several meetings ended in carol-

singing. Men played games of football with one another, giving one of the most enduring images of the truce.

The peaceful behavior was not ubiquitous; fighting continued in some sectors, while in others the sides settled on little more than arrangements to recover bodies. The following year, a few units arranged ceasefires, but the truces were not nearly as widespread as in 1914; this was, in part, due to strongly-worded orders from the high commands of both sides prohibiting fraternization. Soldiers were no longer amenable to truce by 1916. The war had become increasingly bitter after devastating human losses suffered during the battles of the Somme and Verdun, and the incorporation of poison gas.

The truces were not unique to the Christmas period, and reflected a growing mood of "live and let live", where infantry in close proximity would stop overtly aggressive behavior, and often engage in small-scale fraternisation, engaging in conversation or bartering for cigarettes. In some sectors, there would be occasional ceasefires to allow soldiers to go between the lines and recover wounded or dead comrades, while in others, there would be a tacit agreement not to shoot while men rested, exercised, or worked in full view of the enemy.

The Christmas truces were particularly significant, due to the number of men involved and the level of their participation - even in very peaceful sectors, dozens of men openly congregating in daylight was remarkable - and are often seen as a symbolic moment of peace and humanity amidst one of the most violent wars in human history."

Video Total: (55 mins), click on the link below for the film:

Peace in No Mans Land: The Christmas Truce

<http://www.ForbiddenKnowledgeTV.com/page/26901.html> "

P.S. Alexandra Bruce, publisher of ForbiddenKnowledgeTV.com wants to share video with your friends and colleagues.

Nonkilling Cinema 2: The Ghosts of Jeju

This is another of the undersold stories we need to know about. This is about a protest against building of a new military base in South Korea where during the Korean war, massacre of innocent civilian took place. Take a few minutes a look at the website, if you haven't seen it. Please find below the email from its film-maker Regis Tremblay:

From: Regis Tremblay <tremregi@gmail.com>

Subject: Thanks to you, The Ghosts of Jeju has gone world-wide

<http://www.theghostsofjeju.net/ghosts-jeju-world-wide/>

People in 14 countries that I know have seen The Ghosts of Jeju, and translations into the following languages are being completed: Japanese, French, Spanish and Russian. The Korean version with subtitles has been screened around South Korea for several months now.

Please contribute to help me spread the word and to enable me to make the follow-up next year.

In Peace and Solidarity,

Regis

Regis Tremblay
Independent Filmmaker
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Woolwich, Maine 04579
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3. Nonkilling poems:

The following five poems by Rana Ehtisham Rabbani are interconnected as they tell us the stories about tears caused by killings and antidote provided by unconditional love and through an unstoppable process of thoughtful mindfulness. In one of his poems NKARC colleague Ehtisham writes:

“Walls of thoughts have proved to be
Walls of sand without cement
They disappear upon awareness of realities
As happened in case of color discrimination
Named as awakening or changed in brain cells
Occurred through Evolution in DNA
Unstoppable process”

Nationalism - A Passion - A Myth

Nationalism is soul and spirit of a Nation
Love of motherland, Nation is a natural instinct
Do love your Nation, make effort for its progress
But not at the cost of resources of others
Undue adherence
Provoke feelings and emotions
Of being super and superior
Which results in crossing the limits of passion
Harming others in many ways
Mainly because of prejudice, Hatred, Arrogance, Greed

Create conflicts, disputes, wars,
For usurping resources, end in killing
A condemnable act, negative path
Respect require
Empathy, compassion, sharing
Humility within ambit of Nationalism
Love thyself, love others too
Love will return to you
Over boundaries and barriers
Love begets peace, a Virtue

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Killings - A Shame for Generation

Since birth
Humankind undergoing evolutionary process
Evolution in DNA
Rays and waves
Through Transition and Transformation
Progressively in Generations
In ancient time, no discrimination of relationship
Husband, wife - sons and daughters, brothers and sisters
Life was rugged and harsh
Grass eating to cannibalism
Killing was a cruel phenomenon
21st century, era of enlightenment
Awakening of realities
Genocide, Massacre, Holocaust, Killings
Are under strong condemnation
Misdeeds of an older generation, killing
Is cause of shame for new generation
Tendering apology for no fault of theirs
Understanding of all are same, is growing fast
New generation blessed with more positivity and virtue
Wisdom demands, stoppage of killings, a negative omen, an Evil
Instead killings, a Box of shame
Give new generations, a gift of safety, security and survival
For which they feel proud of older generation

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Walls and Fences

Walls and Fences
Are constructed as barriers
For safety from harm
To stop some force

Which may cause harm in physical form
This can be human kind, animals of natural causes,
There are walls and fences
Raised in thoughts on many grounds
Ethnic, Faith, Religion, Caste Creed.
Linguistic, color, region, Gender, Rich, Poor
Old phenomenon and Dogmas
Developed by disliking others
Exploited by some for interest or greed
All false and fallacious, self created
Composition of human kind is the same
Minerals, salts, chemicals
In body shape and blood chemistry
Walls of thoughts have proved to be
Walls of sand without cement
They disappear upon awareness of realities
As happened in case of color discrimination
Named as awakening or changed in brain cells
Occurred through Evolution in DNA
Unstoppable process... Nature
Dismantle and remove,
All walls and fences, superfluous
For the Good, well being and wellness
Of all human beings, Regardless
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Feel Tears

Being a human kind
With a heart and mind
Filled with Love Respect
Empathy, Compassion and Kindness

Feel tears of Victims family
Family is part of Global family
All are connected
Some way or the other
Tears can be saved
Dismantling the walls of
Prejudice Hatred and Arrogance
Causing disparities
Resulting Violence and Killings
Feel tears of sufferers,
Orphans, Widows, Parents
If unable to hear the cries
Humankinds are
All brothers and sisters

Of one origin, off shoots
Fell them as family
Feel tears as if yours
Vow and vie for stoppage of killing
The most heinous Crime on Earth
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Most Precious

Not gold nor diamond
Gem or jewel
Villa or palace
Yacht or ship
Horse or automobile
Aeroplane or space shuttle
Weapons or Nukes
Most precious of all
On earth
Human life, all gender
President or commoner
Citizen of a nation, of the globe
Children, men, women, all ages
World leaders are enlightened and awakened
Blessed with Wisdom, Positivity
Are bound
To manage a system
For the safety, security, survival
To protect the human life through co-existence
No difference and distinction
Pride and Honor for them
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RANA EHTISHAM RABBANI

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Member Law Research Committee Center for Global Non-killing
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4. Nonkilling Media:

Bob Koehler's weekly column is insightful for its courageous alternative reporting on violence and social injustice within his own country of the United States, longing for a Nonkilling America. His two opinion pieces here dealt with the issue of race last month between blacks and whites on confrontation between black citizens and militarized police force.

In his op-ed The Militarized Divide, Bob writes:

“The national divide is solid and four-square. Actual human beings congregate only on one side of it, or the other. If Eric Garner is a nuisance and Michael Brown is a thug and Trayvon Martin is a suspicious-looking kid in a hoodie who didn’t belong in that neighborhood . then, whoosh, all their humanity vanishes and “upholding the law” justifies every action against them, including killing them. The cries of grief from their families are just irritating noises. The outrage about it is insubordination.

Either we’re united by our common humanity or we live in a broken world, a nation hellishly divided against itself, a roiling stew of privilege and squalor. And no one in such a world is free — that is to say, fully himself or herself, fully human. Fear rules. Hatred rules.”

For full article, click on:

<http://commonwonders.com/ourselves/the-militarized-divide/>

Bob Koehler’s second piece is entitled, “Refusing to Wage War”, those killed have been reversed, in this case it is two innocent New York City police officers shot by a crazy black man. Bob writes:

“Now is a moment for empathy and deep listening.”

The words are from a statement issued by #BlackLivesMatter, a grassroots movement emerging this year over the spate of police killings of young men of color. The murder of the officers is part of the same tragedy. Black lives matter. Blue lives matter. All lives matter. Any thinking that embraces less than this is part of the problem, not the solution.”

For complete op-ed, click on:

<http://commonwonders.com/ourselves/refusing-to-wage-war/>

Robert Koehler is an award-winning, Chicago-based journalist and nationally syndicated writer. His book, **Courage Grows Strong at the Wound** (Xenos Press), is available. Contact him at koehlercw@gmail.com <koehlercw@gmail.com> or visit his website at commonwonders.com <<http://commonwonders.com>>.*

Peshawar: The massacres of innocent children have their own way of challenging our consciences whether it be killings in Gaza last year or in Peshawar last month. The Peshawar massacre brought out the following comment. Muneer Ahmad Ali quoting a Muslim scholar Hazrat Mirza Gulam Ahmad writes: "Religion is worth the name only so long as it is in consonance with reason. If it fails to satisfy that requisite, if it has to make up for its discomfiture in argument by handling the sword, it needs no other argument for its falsification. The sword it

wields cuts its own throat before reaching each others." This insight can be applicable to any faith, group or nation.

5. Nonkilling You Tube videos:

If you think most of what you read was dismal, as an antidote you will find the two short youtube videos below of interest:

Video 1: It is an interview with Nigerian author and a Nobel Literature laureate Wole Soyinko who tells us how to build on working our common humanity. Click on the link:

<http://www.france24.com/en/20141222-interview-wole-soyinka-nigerian-author-nobel-literature-laureate-nigeria-boko-haram/>

Video 2: It is part of a video educational series with 14 million hits, holding mirror to our inner biases and prejudices and our refusal to be piegenholed as a bigot/racist by others.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=ynYwTU7z6BI

I found both above links inspiring...

My deep gratitude in putting together of this letter to Glenn Paige, Hugh Mann, Patrick Gallivan, Alexandra Bruce, Regis Tremblay, Ehtisham Rabbani, Bob Koehler, Joam Evans Pim, and Jan Slakov.

Best Wishes for a Nonkilling 2015,

Bill

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"Nonkilling is THE measure of human progress"