

Nonkilling Arts Research Committee (NKARC) Letter - May 2016*

Dear NKARC members and friends,

This month's letter shows some interesting convergences between current events and the arts: Shakespeare's 400th anniversary, Centenary of April 1916 Irish Uprising, and the Vatican Conference on Just War theory etc. The following contributions you sent point to these and other events.

1. SHAKESPEARE'S UNIVERSE: A NONKILLING VIEW

It started with Prof David Crystal's press release about his new book acknowledging the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death, in which David published his discovery of a lost early quarto of *Hamlet*. It led our colleague Francisco Gomes de Matos to pen down the following ode which brought some unusual nonkilling insights on Shakespeare's works, raising the question whether Hamlet was essentially asking "To kill or not to kill?" Below are Francisco's poem and insightful comments it brought forth.

SHAKESPEARE'S UNIVERSE: A NONKILLING VIEW

by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a peace linguist, Recife, Brazil

Shakespeare's TO BE OR NOT TO BE is a universe of choices
to be or not to be experienced-expressed by a myriad human voices

In a world of contrasts we live
Opposite meanings to LIFE we give

Beyond TO BE OR NOT TO BE ?
To see or not to see

Beyond to play or not to play ?
To pray or not to play

Beyond to say or not to say?
To stay or not to stay

Beyond to kill or not to kill ?
To will or not to will

Beyond to fight or not to fight ?
To right or not to right
When Shakespeare says TO BE OR NOT TO BE
He challenges Humankind to sail the deepest sea

TO BE OR NOT TO BE

TO BE KILLING FREE OR NOT KILLING FREE ?

This is the ultimate life-supporting choice for you and me

TO BE OR NOT TO BE Killing free

Killing free let's always be !

In Shakespeare's extraordinary TO BE OR NOT TO BE

is implicit a universe of choices for all human beings to see

In a spirit of shared global citizenship let's sail the also nonkilling
Shakespearean sea!

Thoughtful responses to above poem came from Prof. Ada Aharoni and Prof. David Crystal:

Ada Aharoni: "I found your verse interesting, however, my interpretation of Hamlet's question "To Be or Not to be?" is different. Hamlet contemplates killing himself when he finds out the truth about the tragic death of his father and that his mother was an accomplice to the murder. "To Be or Not to be "in my view (as well as that of most critics), is - "should I go on existing or not?" This is the interpretation I gave to my students at Haifa University and at Pennsylvania University, when I taught a course on Shakespeare.

However, Shakespeare is on the side of life, not of death, and that is why his hero, Hamlet, decides to live. *It is evident in all of Shakespeare's tragedies and even in some of his comedies, **that he strongly condemns violence and killing! *

Look at the horrifying bloodbath at the end of Hamlet, when his final speech is a clear call to: NO MORE KILLING! The same message of Nonkilling we get in *Othello,* in *Romeo and Juliet*, in *The Tempest*, in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, etc... At the end of each of Shakespeare's tragedies the moral message of the whole play, is like in Hamlet, a strong condemnation of the futility and the pity of spilled human blood, and the sheer denial that killing can help to solve conflicts.

Shakespeare, in addition to all his great qualities, was not only a literary genius, he was also a great humanist and a wonderful teacher of literary NONKILLING!"

David Crystal: "The view that the 'to be' speech is Hamlet contemplating suicide makes no sense - notwithstanding the many actors who have played it that way (Ben Wishaw, for example, came on stage holding a bottle of pills). A couple of scenes earlier he has just made his first real decision - to see his uncle's reaction at the play. Now is not the time to be thinking about suicide, therefore. Rather, the 'to be' speech is about life and

death in general, perhaps even with a focus on Claudius, and thus is more in line with the direction you take in your poem.”

We all agree that Shakespeare nonkillingly motivated, teaches literary nonkilling. Francisco’s verse concludes making a plea for Humankind to sail the Shakespearean nonkilling sea. Ada is planning to write an article on SHAKESPEARE AND NONKILLING for NKARC later this summer.

Thank you Francisco, Ada and David.

2. Peace Memorials and Nonkilling

War Memorialization and ANZAC Day in New Zealand:

A very well researched chapter by Katerina Standish on the subject in one of CGNK recent books, **Nonkilling Spiritual Traditions, vol.1.** entitled: “*An Alternative to Anzac: White poppies at the Peace Pole*” (pp223-43) ,

Standish writes: “...in New Zealand the ‘selection’ process whereby the true dimensions of war are sanitized” continues—‘war’ is repackaged for public consumption (Winter, 2009: 614). And, as “not all memories are remembered,” many memories are simply forgotten, left outside of the national narrative of war, sacrifice, obligation and gratitude (ibid, 614). What is remembered is the sacrifice, the glory, the duty, what is forgotten is the suffering, the killing, and the destruction of lives. The single narrative of the war system does not include all of the stories of war; neither does it enter into a discourse of what it really means to serve, to object to serve, and to suffer from the action of war.”

Full article can be downloaded/browsed for free as follows:

<http://www.nonkilling.org/node/18#Spiritual>, chapter 12, pp. 223-43

3. Art and Nonkilling

(i). Anti-Gun Violence art installation *WASTED* by Deborah Nehmed: Aesthetically and content wise a brilliant art installation at Honolulu Museum of Art until May08, 2016.

Excerpt from Exhibition Overview: “At first encounter, the large works in Honolulu artist Deborah G. Nehmad’s installation *WASTED* appear to be abstract triptych tapestries. Upon closer examination, the patterns of holes and stitches convey a powerful, poignant symbolism, functioning as catalogues of tragedy. *WASTED* gradually reveals that nothing has changed in terms of gun violence in the United States over the past decade. The burned holes in *wasted* represent the number of children killed by guns in 2003 (left panel), 2004 (center panel) and 2005 (right panel). The holes in *wasted* (ii) represent the number of adults killed in the same years. *Wasted* (iii) records the annual average of gun fatalities from 2009 to 2013. The constellation of blue dots represents victims caught in the crosshairs of gun violence over the last 10 years....”

Click on for installation:

http://honolulumuseum.org/art/exhibitions/15450-deborah_nehmad_wasted/
<http://hawaiipublicradio.org/post/trigger-happy-america>

(ii) Paintings on Peace and Emerging Consciousness

Link to NKARC colleague Alberto Grasso's paintings below where he introduces in a 23 min video his collection about emerging consciousness of Peace (with Spanish subtitles). Click on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARrM1EXnMCU>

(iii) Peace sculpture/ Symbols of positive arts: The knotted gun sculpture is one of the most popular peace sculptor known for its presence at the UN. Its creator Swedish artist Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd has written that in 1980 while grieving, after his friend John Lennon was murdered, inspired him to design and start working on this project about non-violence. For more on the sculpture and its artist, click on:

<https://assistedthinking.wordpress.com/2008/02/25/non-violence-and-the-knotted-gun-worldwide/>

4. Journalism and Nonkilling

(i). **Vatican conference on re-evaluation of Just War theory** was held in Rome, April 12 -13. It was attended by our CGNK Sponsor Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire. Here is Maguire report on the meeting calling on Pope Francis to announce an encyclical on nonviolence rejecting just war theory.

Maguire writes: "This was indeed a historic Gathering and the participants made a brave and history- making call to Pope Francis and the Church. It calls upon Pope Francis to give strong Spiritual Leadership to the World's Christians and reject war for peace and nonviolence. We are all conscious of the growing militarization of our societies and countries and the myth being perpetrated that militarism, nuclear weapons and war, are acceptable. I hope that Pope Francis calls Catholics not to join the military and so reminds them that killing cannot be with Christ. I believe the misguided age of 'blessing wars, militarism and killing' must become abolished and the responsibility lies with Pope Francis and Religious/Spiritual Leaders to be true shepherds of Peace and Nonkilling/nonviolence following the command of Jesus to love our enemies and not kill each other.

I hope also that Pope Francis will unambiguously proclaim that 'Violence is always wrong, it is not the way of Jesus' and reject militarism thereby calling upon Catholics not to join armies and take up arms to kill people, thus becoming a true peace church. "

Also, the Final Statement entitled "An Appeal to the Catholic Church to re-commit to the Centrality of Gospel Nonviolence" is available on Pax Christi website: www.paxchristi.net

For full report, click on: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2016/04/an-appeal-for-pope-francis-to-share-with-the-world-an-encyclical-on-nonviolence-and-just-peace-and-for-the-church-to-stop-teaching-just-war-theory/>

Additionally, see comment on the Just War conference from NKARC colleague Koozma J. Tarasoff, click on: http://spirit-wrestlers.blogspot.ca/2016/04/just-war-theory-on-way-out_25.html

In connection with this landmark conference, our NKARC colleague Francisco Gomes de Matos book-ended the beginning and end of the conference with two powerful rhymed reflections:

Just war no more ! PEACE to the fore !

A plea to participants in the Vatican meeting, April 12-13
by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a peace linguist, Recife, Brazil

To war Humankind seeks a wise global solution
that is well beyond a conceptual evolution

Such needed Life-improving goal to reach
To one another, what could human beings teach ?

Wars will only cease
when everywhere there will be sustainable peace

Founded on social justice economic equality and spiritual diversity
which will help ensure every global citizen of the individual/collective
right to dignity

Just war is a sad historical fact
Sustainable peace is a global-improving act

Just war, Just war
It will not be To war or not to war

Instead, sustainable peace and harmony
will become our blessed globally shared destiny

Francisco also expressed his hope as follows in verse on the need of a Papal Encyclical on Nonviolence:

An Encyclical on Nonviolence : An anticipatory approach

In his encyclical on Nonviolence, Pope Francis will be uniquely inspired :
examples of applications of Jesus` teachings will be required

In Pope Francis` Encyclical on Nonviolence, he will show how Christ`s
compassionate love and mercy can be manifested both toward all persons
and communities

and also as an internal spiritual grace

In Pope Francis' Encyclical on Nonviolence, he will show how Peace, Nonviolence, and Nonkilling are interconnected and how globally shared efforts toward a killing-free world can be effected

In Pope Francis' Encyclical on Nonviolence the theory of just war will be replaced by a theory and praxis of nurturing and sustaining peace.

(ii) April 1916 Irish Easter Uprising celebration/commemoration!?

The centenary of April 1916 Irish Uprising against the British Rule was marked last month in Ireland. The Uprising led to execution of seven Irish "freedom-fighters" who proclaimed Independence from the British rule. The "uprising" has over the years raised questions about glorification of the martyrs: Was the uprising necessary? Were the seven men executed political zealots? Were they obsessed with politics over humanity? Our CGNK colleague Irish Nobel Peace Laureate courageously put forth her views on the occasion from a Nonkilling perspective in the following piece.

Maguire writes:

"I believe the men of 1916 had a democratic right to their dreams of Irish self-determination and to work for Irish Freedom, but the violent method by which they fought for freedom was ethically and morally wrong.... Tragically, we Irish are trapped on a wheel of violence, as is indeed the human family. The men of 1916 did have a vision of a free and democratic Ireland, and most of them, James Connolly included, did not support the violence of Imperial wars, but so too was their own violent methods to win Irish freedom flawed nationalism and thus out of the cultural roots of the Christian Spiritual Irish tradition of Nonkilling/Nonviolence (by far the real heart and soul of the Irish people as we have no history of Imperialism and colonization). "

For complete article, click on: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2016/04/remembering-irelands-1916-easter-rising/>

For more, see also an interesting review by Phillip Carr-Gomm on a BBC documentary by Bob Geldof's about W.B. Yeats Irish uprising poem, "A terrible beauty is born" . Documentary's central argument is that modern Ireland has been created not just by the Easter Rising. For Philipp Carr-Gomm commentary, click on: [A Fanatic Heart: Bob Geldof on W.B. Yeats | Philip Carr-Gomm](http://www.philipcarr-gomm.com/fanatic-heart-bob-geldof-w-b-yeats/)

(iii) Nuclear Disarmament and Nuclear Age Peace Foundation: NKARC colleague NAPF founder David Krieger outlines the challenge posed by nuclear powers plans to modernize nuclear weaponry: Click on: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2016/04/nuclear-age-peace-foundation-a-voice-for-peace/>

5. Nonkilling, Meditation and Police Service

(i) In Canada, Peel Regional Officers Meditate In a Buddhist Temple:

Officers from Ontario's Peel Regional Police participate in Buddhist mindfulness meditation led by deputy abbot Bhante Saranapala. "They were very nice and they liked it and they think it should be part of their daily practice," Saranapala told The Huffington Post Canada. Saranapala said an officer approached him to organize the event.

"I think generally people have negative impressions about the police officers, and seeing some officers trying to do mindfulness meditation, [and] being at the front row of a Buddhist temple, they think it's very positive."

Thought you would find these unusual photos from Peel Region in Ontario, Canada of interest. Click on: http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/2016/04/13/peel-police-meditation_n_9684274.html

6. Song and Nonkilling

"Argonne all gone" is an example of going beyond nonkilling lamentation to nonkilling affirmation in the Arts. Google "prairie home companion song Argonne." Written and sung by Garrison Keillor. Click on:

<http://prairiehome.org/script/argonne-lyrics-march-29-2014/>

7. Youth and Nonkilling

The following from NAPF:

"For the next few weeks, you have an opportunity to support a dedicated group of young people around the world working for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition met in Hiroshima in August 2015, bringing 300 youth together to learn more about nuclear weapons issues, meet with hibakusha – survivors of the U.S. atomic bombing – and develop collaborative projects to achieve their common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

This Youth Summit and pledge has been chosen as one of ten semi-finalists out of over 4.5 million submissions in One Billion Acts for Peace, a United Nations-supported peace initiative organized by Peace Jam. Now through May 12, you can vote once a day for the Youth Summit online at www.billionacts.org. The top five projects will receive a Hero Award in June from Rigoberta Menchu Tum, a Nobel Peace laureate from Guatemala.

The young people from the summit have been hard at work over the past months to develop a new network, called Amplify, which will be launched in early May during the Open Ended Working Group meetings at the United Nations in Geneva. The network will support young people worldwide who feel compelled to work for nuclear abolition but do not know where to begin. For more on Vote for "Generation of Change: A Youth Pledge for Nuclear Abolition" at <https://billionacts.org/hero-awards-voting>

8. Nonkilling doc and video:

Bernie Sanders and the bird: A 2 min video where a dove caught up with Democrat US Senator Bernie Sanders in Portland, Oregon during his US Presidential Election campaign. A dove lands on the lectern pointing to a sign "A future to believe in": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jc2TVLoxsDA>

NKARC colleague Nahum Laufer pointed us to under his Docs for Education series a **new doc Cry of the Owl (Himba)**, a film about a vanishing world of the Himba in the north western corner of Namibia, one of the most desolated regions of Africa. Winds of change, progress and modernism coupled with the real menace of AIDS, threaten to annihilate the ways of the Himba. For more:

http://docsforeducation.com/Cry_of_the_Owl.php and <http://docsforeducation.com/>
Erez Laufer Films, Holland st 10, Afula 18371, Israel

From Korea

JongHwa shared the news about first international film festival taking place in Gangjeon, Korea. Click on: <http://savejejunow.org/the-1st-international-peace-film-festival-in-gangjeon>

LAST WORD

Nonkilling waves of positive peace from Rashida Khanam

Nonkilling - You are Philosophic Sprits of Great Humans

Nonkilling You are Philosophic Spirits of Great Humans

Nonkilling You are Abraham Lincoln's great philosophy of humanity
- freedom of all humans;

Nonkilling You are Maya Angelou's Tapestry of different colors-

dignity and equal worth of human beings;

Nonkilling You are Martin Luther King's Civil Movement -

peace for saving humans from violence;

Nonkilling You are Gro Harlem's Politics for love -

saving the Earth;

Nonkilling You are Nelson Mandela's Political Philosophy-

harmonic human relationship;

Nonkilling You are

Gandhi's Nonviolence -

state of democracy with Arts of Love;

Nonkilling You are Petra
Kelly's power to love -

serving common good;

Nonkilling You are Glenn Paige's Nonkilling
Political Science-

security, freedom and happiness in a
Killing-free Peaceful World.

-- Rashida Khanam

(Prof. Khanam is Bangla translator of Nonkilling Global Political Science)

Profound gratitude to all who contributed or pointed to the material for
this letter. Looking forward to your contributions and comments as always.

Nonkilling Regards,
Bill

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*"Nonkilling art explores the spirit and practice of how to prevent, respond to, and to
improve individual, social, and global well-being beyond killing." - Glenn D. Paige*

== Nonkilling is THE measure of Human progress==