

NonKilling Arts Research Committee (NKARC) Letter: Nov-Dec. 2016

(Also as attachment in Word doc)

Dear NKARC members and friends,

This year-ending Letter comprises your contributions of poetry, song, cinema, poster making, and journalism extolling nonkilling maxim of peace through peaceful means. The works point to nonkilling philosophy showing value of nonviolent communications and about our fundamental responsibility "not to kill" and "not to be killed".

1. Nonkilling Poetry

NO TALKING

By Ada Aharoni

The leaders decided:

We do not talk with the enemy

We will beat them because they attack us

We will shed their blood and break their bones

But most of all -

NO TALKING!

In the meantime, in Sderot in Israel

And in Khan Yunis in Gaza,

Blood flows and legs are blown away.

Little eight year - old Twitee

And little eighth year old Mohamed

will not play football anymore,

But most of all -

NO TALKING!

Where are the leaders who will talk?

I watch from the side and weep

With their mothers

Rivers of tears

But foremost and most of all -

NO TALKING!

Ada Aharoni is IFLAC's founder ([The International Forum for the Literature and Culture of Peace, www.iflac.wordpress.com](http://www.iflac.wordpress.com)). Her poem reminds one that when killing is stopped, possibilities nonkilling peace may emerge. In final reflection in this letter, Rashida Khanam from Bangladesh echoes a similar sentiment where she notes: "Music you are Nonkilling, when you are the lyrics of tears of grief-ridden mothers whose

heartfelt emotions on the death of their hearts(children) surge as waves of an ocean, echoing voices of spirits through a thunderous wail of "No More Killing", transcending barriers of culture, faith, and geography".

2. Nonkilling Song

A colleague forwarded the following soulful song in Punjabi by Buleh(y) Shah, a 18th century sufi who was born in present day Pakistan. An online entry on Bulley Shah and Sufi poetry describes his work: "Bulleh Shah's writings represent him as a humanist, someone providing solutions to the sociological problems of the world around him as he lives through it, describing the turbulence his motherland of Punjab was passing through, while concurrently searching for God. His poetry highlights his mystical spiritual voyage through the four stages of Sufism: Shariat (Path), Tariqat (Observance), Haqiqat (Truth) and Marfat (Union). The simplicity with which Bulleh Shah has been able to address the complex fundamental issues of life and humanity is a large part of his appeal." For more, click on: <https://sufipoetry.wordpress.com/poets/bulleh-shah/>

The Bulley Shah song "Let's Go Bulleya in search of..." is sung by Ali Zafar. For youtube rendering, click on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCHKmaOefOs>

See below loose English translation of 'Chal Bulleya' lyrics

Makke gayon gal mukdi naahi
 Sau sau Hajj kar aaiye
 Ganga gayon gal mukdi naahi
 Sau sau gotay khaiye
 Bulleh shah gal taaiyon mukdi
 Bulleh shah gal taaiyon mukdi
 "Main" nu dilon ganwaaie!

*Going to holy Mecca does not help to answer my inquiry
 Even when hundreds of Hajj pilgrimages are done
 Going to holy Ganges for washing sins does not answer my search of the ultimate
 Even if hundreds of ablutions (dives) are done
 O Bulleh Shah the ultimate is
 When from one's heart selfish "I" is gone!*

Chal Bulleya chal othe chalye jithe sare ane
 Chal Bulleya chal othe chalye jithe sare ane
 Na koi saadi zaat pachhaane
 Na koi saadi zaat pachhaane
 Na koi saanu manne
 Chal chal bulleya. Chal othay chalye..
 Jitthe saarey anney

*O Bulleh take me where everyone is blind (to religious/social discrimination)
 where no one judged by one's caste
 no one is worshiped for one's status
 Buleh let's go where everyone is blind (to religious /social discrimination)*

Padh padh ilm te faazil hoyon
 Mann apne nu padheya ee naahi
 Bhaj bhaj wadna ay mandir maseeti
 Mann apne vich wadeya ee nahi
 Bulleh Shah asmaani phadnaay
 Ghar bethe nu phadeya ee naahi

*You read a lot to become knowledgeable and educated
 But you never got to read yourself
 You ran to the temples and mosques
 But you could never enter your own heart to read your own self
 O Bulleh Shah you wanted to grab what is in the sky
 But never found what was inside you*

Chal Bulleya chal othe chalye jithe sare anne
O Bulleh Shah lets go to a place where everyone is blind (to religious/social discrimination)

Na main momin vich maseetaan
 Na main vich kufar diyan reetaan
 Na main paakaan vich paleetaan
 Na main moosa na firown
 Na main moosa na firown
 Ki jaana main Kaun Bulleya
 Ki jaana main Kaun
 Ki jaana main Kaun Bulleya
 Ki jaana main Kaun

*Am not a believer like those who go to the mosque
 Nor a pagan (infidel) follower of false idols and rites
 Not the pure amongst the impure
 Neither Moses, nor the Pharaoh
 Bulleya! I don't know who I am*

The Bulleh song "Let's Go Bulleh in search of..." is sung by Ali Zafar. For youtube rendering click on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hCHKmaOefOs>

3. Nonkilling Cinema

Three powerful films mentioned below, this month raised for me the fundamental question: Do we have right to kill? Both in terms of content and their superb craft, the protagonists in the films - a conscientious objector, a humanist lawyer, and a gun lobbyist are able to take us through their challenging journeys showing their conviction, fearlessness, and transformation standing up to systemic structures of exploitation and oppression.

(i) Hacksaw Bridge by Mel Gibson (2016), 131 min.

Very seldom you come across a movie where its main protagonist describes himself as a "conscientious co-operator" rather than a conscientious objector and stoically shows a soldier's courage of his pacifist convictions in the midst of battle ground. The movie is a true story of WWII American Army medic Desmond T. Doss who served during the Battle of Okinawa, he refuses to kill people and becomes the first Conscientious Objector in American history to be awarded the Medal of Honor. For short trailer of this nonkilling film, click on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2-1hz1juBI>

(ii) Paths of Glory by Stanley Kubrick (1957) 88 min black and white

Paths of Glory is an anti-war classic. It is based on a true story of four French soldiers, executed in 1915 during World War I under General Geraud Reveilhac for their refusal to follow orders on the battle ground. The story is about the execution of innocent men selected at random setting them as example to strengthen French senior officers' resolve to fight. I was surprised that this was one of the earliest films of Stanley Kubrick who made another anti-war classic in 1964, Dr. Stranglove - a biting black comedy about an insane general who triggers a path to nuclear holocaust. Will keep it for another letter. For trailer to Paths of Glory, click:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmdA60X-f_A

(iii) Miss Sloane by John Madden (2016), 132 min

A timely thriller, the movie is about pervasive gun culture and power of US gun lobby. Over 30,000 deaths result from homicides in USA annually from gun killings. Miss Sloane is about the high-stakes world of political power-brokers where its protagonist Elizabeth Sloane is the most sought after formidable lobbyist. Known for her track record of success, she has always done whatever is required to win, but when she takes on the most powerful opponent of her career, she finds that winning sometimes can come at too high a price. For short trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5k8KaMdPYTY> . The movie brought memories of the massacre of 20 Kindergarten children four years ago when a heavily armed young man opened fire inside a Connecticut elementary school leaving 27 dead. There was a nation wide conversation on the issue of background checks for selling guns, even Variety brought out a special issue on the topic of use of violence in movies worldwide including Hollywood (mentioned in Jan-Feb 2013 NKARC letter).

4. Nonkilling Poster Making

NKARC colleague Francisco Gomes de Matos sent the following class room project on production of Peace Posters he recently put together for learners of English. As Betty Reardon commenting on his piece noted: "Looks to be an engaging and fun activity. I wonder what kind of debriefing, toward what learning objectives follows the activity and what conceptual framing precedes it?" Thought some of you might find this excellent project for promoting peace as class room activity of interest.

Peace-poster production practice for learners of English : A suggested classroom activity by Francisco Gomes de Matos, a peace linguist, Recife, Brazil

Activity goal : Engaging a classroom group in a purposeful production of peace posters under Instructor supervision

- Steps:
1. Instructor greets classroom group and asks learners to form mini-groups (MGs)
 2. A large-size copy of the poster *The Right to Peace* is shown and a small-size copy thereof is given to each learner
(Poster by Professor Francisco Gomes de Matos is also downloadable on the ABA Global Education website: www.estudenaaba.com
Click on Media, then on posters, on English and find the poster)
 3. MGs read the poster in-depth, looking for key concepts, recurring themes, types of rhymes used
 4. MGs assemble conceptually-related rhymes
 5. Each MG is challenged to create a poster, inspired by the learners' findings
 6. Enough time is given each MG for the creative production of poster
 7. Instructor supervises each MG poster-production. (There might be a co-supervisor)
 8. Each MG presents the created poster to the classroom group. A presentation script is used: Goal + PEACE-focus + Vocabulary used +
Feedback on Peace-poster-production experience
 9. Other MGs ask questions of the presenting MG
 10. All created posters are displayed at the School's Creative Corner for PEACE
 11. The peace-poster exhibition is photographed and videotapes for additional uses (in meetings with learners' parents or presentations in other schools in the local community).
 12. Peace-poster production Supervisor(s) write an article on the experience for publication in a Peace Education journal

5. Nonkilling Journalism

(a) **Budgeting the Good War** by Bob Koehler

Even though NKARC colleague Bob Koehler's cautionary article about American exceptionalism and power of military industrial complex was written during recent US Presidential Election campaign period, the concerns it raises are more relevant now than ever. Bob writes:

"World War II has been going on for seven decades now and has no intention of ever stopping . . . of its own volition. But this year's rocking electoral craziness - not just Hurricane Donald, but the unexpected staying power of the Bernie Sanders campaign - may well be the harbinger of transcendence. Apparently there's another force in the universe capable of standing up to the American, indeed, the global, military-industrial status quo.

Slowly, slowly this force is organizing itself and taking human shape. This isn't a simple process. After all, the game of empire - the game called war, the game of domination - has been coalescing political power for several thousand years now." For full Koehler article, click on: <http://commonwonders.com/budgeting-the-good-war-for-75-years/>

(b) **International Women's Boat to Gaza** by Mairead Maguire (reposted from Transcend news)

Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire is CGNK Honorary Sponsor. Her article on recent International Women's Boat to Gaza points to a novel way of civil society protest throwing light on the humanitarian crisis in Gaza that has been going on for decades. As Mairead describes: "When we reached Ashdod, Israel, after six hours sailing, we were processed by Israeli security and searched, taken to Prison and released two days later. All the women on board the Zaytouna, now have a ten-year deportation order. As this is my 4th time being given a 10-year deportation order, it will be 40 years before I can return to Israel or get into Palestine. This thought reminds me that there are over 7 million Palestinian people who cannot return to their country, and this is why it is so important to campaign for the right to return for the Palestinian people....." For full article, click: <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2016/10/international-womens-boat-to-gaza/>

Interesting to see media impact of this grass roots nonviolent political action, click on: <https://wbg.freedomflotilla.org/media-room/media-impacts>

(c) **"PAKISTAN: Exception swims in a sea of executions"**

In line with July NKARC letter on the capital punishment in the Philippines by Prof. Abueva, colleague Sohail forwarded the following report (August 04, 2016) of the Asian Human Rights Commission on capital punishment in Pakistan (and Saudi Arabia). Entitled, "PAKISTAN: Exception swims in a sea of executions", it states: "the government of Pakistan has itself continued with the executions of over 411 people in the last 19 months, i.e. 22 executions each month since the moratorium was lifted on 27 December 2014. The government is well aware that these persons being executed are victims of unfair trial, the worst forms of investigation, custodial torture for confession, substandard prosecution, and the insensitive and poor performance of the lower judiciary. But, the government, under the pressure from security establishment, does not

want to review its policy on executions, and it has to complete the executions of about 8,000 persons who are in death row since the moratorium was imposed in the year 2009....

... According to Reprieve, Pakistan has gone from a non-executing state to executing over 400 people in little over 18 months; this is truly shocking. The Pakistani government seems indifferent to the plight of the many prisoners who should not even be on death row: those arrested as children, or those suffering from severe physical or mental illnesses. " For full report, click on <http://www.ahrchk.org/ruleoflawasia.net/news.php?id=AHRC-STM-116-2016>

(The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) works towards the radical rethinking and fundamental redesigning of justice institutions in order to protect and promote human rights in Asia. Established in 1984, the Hong Kong based organisation is a Laureate of the Right Livelihood Award, 2014)

(d) **NO MORE! END Violence Against Women Now! NO MAS! NO MAS!** Partner Tour to highlight violence against women in Colombia and Canada", news from Kairos Times Canada: "The United Nations has declared the period between November 25, the International Day to End Violence against Women and December 10, International Human Rights day, as 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. From Nov. 23 to Dec. 4, Isabel Caidedo Polanco of the Organización Femenina Popular (OFP), a Colombian grassroots women's rights organization and KAIROS partner, will participate in a KAIROS sponsored educational tour in Canada. ** Learn more (<http://kairoscanada.us5.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=fea30f3893d409c9fd74ebf82&id=18141ebcaa&e=01c742f24e>)

6. Youtube video on Courage

Courage is said to be the first virtue needed, the rest follows in transforming our human values into action. NKARC colleague Mony Dojeiji, based on her experience as a peace walker, speaks about meaning of courage in her latest youtube. She and her partner Alberto Grasso walked 5000 km from Rome to Jerusalem in their search for a city of peace. For 11 min youtube video, click: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sFBW1Zc_y-E&index=1&t=15s&list=PLAGZVg274dayrXEuG9bFR9IDZYmFAnBb_

7. Last Word

In last NKARC letter, we had an interesting conversation between Glenn Paige and Olivier Urbain on Music and Nonkilling, a conversation triggered by an email from Rashida Khanam. In this letter, Rashida closes the conversation with a reflection on the subject, pointing to intricate relationship between the two.

Nonkilling Music

"Music you are Nonkilling, when you are the great joyous

emotion striving for philosophic purpose of life- extracting Ideas of beauty's beauty in rhythms, words, lyrics, pitch and sound.

Music you are Nonkilling, when you help to broaden the mind bit by bit visualizing the cosmic trait of Universe overcoming selfish-self through attaining goodness of heart.

Music you are Nonkilling, when you are the inspirational action and enthusiasm of a courageous heart saving humanity from war, racism, religious fanaticism, and violence.

Music you are Nonkilling, when you are the lyrics of tears of grief-ridden mothers whose heartfelt emotions on the death of their hearts(children) surge as waves of an ocean, echoing voices of spirits through a thunderous wail of "No More Killing", transcending barriers of culture, faith, and geography".

Music you are Nonkilling, when you are the great power of mind to imbue hearts with Nonkilling love, melting all consonant dissonance in oneness of Love making the world a Nonkilling one!"

-- Rashida Khanam

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My deep gratitude to all who contributed or pointed to the material for this letter.

Looking forward to your further inspirations 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 Culture crosses all the lines." - Glenn D. Paige

== Nonkilling is THE measure of Human progress==