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The Oldest Profession in the World?

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Sunbathing mannequins, Vientiane. Photograph by Mark Ulyseas

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## The Oldest Profession in the World?

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## The Perils and Politics of Gay Pride

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## We Are All Revolutionaries Here

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## Regional power play in Afghanistan and India's policy options

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## Palm oil or tuna: intent or results

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## Divine Bovine - The Beef about Cows in India

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## Temppeliaukio Church

Mikyoung Cha

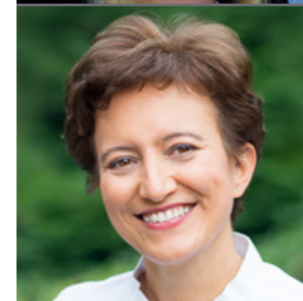
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## Experiencing Subtle Energies

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## Sutlu Nuriye : Lighter Baklava with Hazelnuts

Ozlem Warren

International cooking teacher and Turkish culinary expert Ozlem Warren is a native of Turkey, lived there and extensively travelled for 30 years. She has been teaching wholesome, delicious Turkish cookery in the US, Jordan, Istanbul and England. Her recipes have been published in the local media in England, Hurriyet and Sabah national daily newspapers in Turkey. Ozlem also took part at the "Turkish Chefs of the World", "Dunyanin Turk Seftleri" TV program aired at TRT, National Turkish TV channel and in 37 countries.

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Dr Kate Lister, Researcher at Leeds Trinity University in historical attitudes to sexuality and sex work.  
**The Oldest Profession in the World?**

‘Prostitution is the oldest profession in the world’. You heard that one before, right? This article is going to examine that claim, but before we go any further I want you to just close your eyes and imagine what a ‘prostitute’ looks like. You don’t have to describe this to anyone, it’s just for you. Picture that person in your mind and think of some words you associate with this mental image.

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I don’t know what you thought of, but I know that I did this experiment with a group of my students and set up an anonymous online poll for them to respond to. This is a sample of the results.

## What do you associate with the word ‘prostitute’?

- Dirty men
- Sex
- Sex
- Money
- Red light
- Sells her body
- Abused
- Sad

There is no evidence of selling sex among the Māori before Europeans arrived in New Zealand carrying with them syphilis and flags. Kammerer, et al. notes that, originally, the northern hill tribes of Thailand had no word for prostitution. Victorian explorers were surprised to discover that the Dyak people of Borneo had ‘no word to express that vice’. When the Christian missionary, Lorrin Andrews, translated the bible into Hawaiian in 1865, he had to invent new words to teach the islanders about the concept of sexual shame, and infidelity.

Now, it’s not that these students are particularly hostile to sex work, but these seem to be words we associate with ‘prostitute’. Maybe you were different – I hope so. The reason sex workers resist the word ‘prostitute’ is because of what we associate with it. It’s a word burdened with considerable cultural baggage, none of it positive. When we think of a ‘prostitute’, we think of someone ‘other’ to us. As this brief poll shows, we think we have a very clear idea of what a prostitute is. But what happens when we look backwards to try and find this figure? The biggest challenge facing sex worker rights activists is stigma, and all the research show us that this damaged view of the ‘prostitute’ is far from the truth, yet we persist in trying to identify this figure throughout history.

Despite the old adage, sex work is not the world’s oldest profession in the world: medicine is. Anthropologist George Peter Murdock of Yale University, researched the social customs of numerous of tribes around the world, and found that prostitution did not exist in many, so called, primitive societies but the medicine man was universal (Murdock, 1952). Others, such as Mary Breckinridge, have suggested that midwifery is the oldest profession; ‘The midwife’s calling is so ancient that the medical and nursing professions, in even their earliest traditions, are parvenus beside it’ (Breckinridge, 1927). Trying to work out what is the ‘oldest’ profession is actually something of a wild goose chase as professions, and indeed money, are quite recent inventions. Homo sapiens have been wandering around the planet for about 200,000 years and the earliest evidence of coined money dates to 640BC in Lydia, Asia Minor. Even systems of bartering goods, rather than money, depend largely on the domestication of cattle and cultivation of crops, and that dates to around 9000BC (Davies, 2002). This means that for most of human history, we have done without money. Food grows naturally all over the planet, water falls from the sky and animals are as tasty as they are lovely – we do not actually need money. Given that money is arguably the most dominating influence in how we live our lives, it is sobering to remember that the only value money actually has is that which we collectively attach to it. Ultimately, its pieces of paper and discs of metal that we have all agreed are special. We managed perfectly well without it until our ancestors thought that those gold rocks were nicer to look at than the other rocks (but, I digress).

Simply put, without money and commerce there is no need for professions. There would certainly have been roles and responsibilities within social groups (like the midwife and the medicine man), but, despite what the Flintstones taught us, paid ‘jobs’, as we would have recognised them, were not part of prehistory. This is also true of many cultures that don’t use money. There is no evidence of selling sex among the Māori before Europeans arrived in New Zealand carrying with them syphilis and flags.



Native Hawaiian missionary family, c. 1878

Kammerer, et al. notes that, originally, the northern hill tribes of Thailand had no word for prostitution. Victorian explorers were surprised to discover that the Dyak people of Borneo had ‘no word to express that vice’. When the Christian missionary, Lorrin Andrews, translated the bible into Hawaiian in 1865, he had to invent new words to teach the islanders about the concept of sexual shame, and infidelity (Kammerer et al., 1995; Ruuskanen, 1993, Sanger, 1859).

There is very little evidence of prostitution among the native Americans until the Europeans turned up to ‘civilise’ everyone. Even then, the only evidence that exists is that the invaders believed all indigenous women were promiscuous (Bakken and Farrington, 2003). The commodification of sex, and selling of sexual favours as a profession, is firmly linked to the establishment of money and economic markets. The causal effect of establishing commerce with the selling of sex was seen in a pioneering experiment by Yale economist, Keith Chen. In 2006, Chen introduced the use of currency, to a group of Capuchin monkeys, and taught them to buy grapes, jelly and apples with tokens: the female monkeys began trading sex for money almost immediately (Keith Chen, et al., 2006).

Of course, an absence of money doesn’t mean that our ancestors cavorted in a cash free Eden, having guilt free sex in a state of moral innocence – of course they traded sexual favours. We are hardwired to want sex, and that gives it its own value. Sex work may not be the oldest profession, but sex is surely one of the oldest currencies? Humans are animals after all. We like to think of ourselves as the cleverest of all the animals (we have Sudoku and university Challenge) but when it comes to instinct, we’re just horny, hungry chimps with better options. What’s more, humans aren’t the only animals that trade sex. In 2007, Michael D. Gumbert published a paper reporting that longtailed male macaques traded grooming to have sex with females (Gumert, 2007). A sort of monkey equivalent of Netflix and chill. Not only were macaques trading sex, but Gumbert observed market forces at work. The currency paid by the males was the length of time spent grooming the female before sex, and the price rose and fell with the availability of females. The more females available, the less males paid for sex, and visa versa. Availability was not the only market force witnessed, females that were highly ranked within the group commanded higher prices and were groomed for longer (Gumert, 2007).

Dr Fiona Hunter, a Cambridge University Zoologist, observed that female Adelie Penguins on Ross Island in Antarctica traded sex for rocks (Hunter, 1998). Penguins use rocks to build a platform for their nests, which keeps their eggs off the ice. So valuable are the rocks, that penguins will steal them and get into fights.

## OLDEST PROFESSION



Adelie penguins building a nest from rocks

When the females want to take rocks from male counterparts, they trade sex. Adelie Penguins chose one mate, so all this rock business is extra sneaky. The female approaches a male with the rocks she wants and engages him in a mating dance. Once they have had sex, she takes the rocks and returns to her mate (who is none the wiser). Dr Hunter recorded several incidents of females ‘cheating’ men out of their rocks by presenting themselves for mating, then stealing his rocks and running away without ever having sex (BBC, 1998). This behaviour is highly significant as it reveals that sex work might not be the result of economic and social factors. Trading sex is not even unique to humans; sex is its own currency.

Virginia Henley once wrote “we’re all whores under the skin, whether we give ourselves by calculation or by desire. It’s just that some of us demand a higher price than others” (Henley, 2009). Perhaps you’re reading this and are shouting at the screen ‘I am not a slutty penguin! I have never used sex as payment!’ But, research shows that we all trade on sex to some extent. I am not talking about wagging your genitals at rock merchants. I am talking about the bubbling, unspoken, cracklings of sexual energy that fizz between us all every day, that are routinely manipulated, exploited and used for personal gain. Fine. You’ve never found yourself a few quid short and offered to fellate a barista in return for an iced mocha and a mini muffin, but we all know the value of being sexually attractive – and very few of us are above caring about how we appear to others. If you’ve never batted your eyelids or undone that top button to get your own way; or employed the 25-year-old male model to do your taxes, when the only qualification he had was tussled hair and the calculator on his iphone (just me?) then good for you. But all the research shows us that however un PC we know it to be, we’re nicer to people we fancy, and that behaviour is guided by sexual instinct.

Professor Catherine Hakim called this ‘erotic capital’ and argued that ‘meritocracies are supposed to champion intelligence, qualifications, and experience. But physical and social attractiveness deliver substantial benefits in all social interaction... (Hakim, 2011). Numerous studies have also shown that attractive people have an easier time of it than their hotly challenged counterparts. Researchers at Duke University found that CEOs considered attractive tended to have a higher income (Graham, Harvey and Puri, 2016). Researchers at the University of British Columbia study found that people who are attractive not only make a physical impression, but people react far more strongly to their personality traits as well. They concluded “Not only do we judge books by their covers, we read the ones with beautiful covers much closer than others’ (Lorenzo, Biesanz and Human, 2010). Daniel Hamermesh has conducted research into success and attractiveness for over a decade. He found that, around the world, ugly people earn less than average incomes, while beautiful people earn more



Sexual pottery from Peru

than the average (Hamermesh, 2013). Depressing? Yes. But, this research shows us how important attraction is in human behaviour. Sexuality frames every aspect of our lives – even if we’re not consciously aware of it. The urge to survive and reproduce are the fundamental instincts driving all life on earth and we all trade on our sexuality. Is it any wonder that as soon as we invented money, just like Chen’s capuchin monkeys, we started selling sex?

It was Rudyard Kipling who first coined the phrase ‘the world’s oldest profession’ in the short story, On the City Wall (1898). The tale opens with the immortal line “Lalun is a member of the most ancient profession in the world”. Later that year, the Pall Mall Gazette wrote that a Mrs. Ormiston Chant had ‘implored us to stand shoulder to shoulder and destroy what Kipling has called ‘the oldest profession in the world’” (Pall Mall Gazette, 1898). The expression has since fallen into common parlance as a historical truth. But, perhaps what Kipling wrote after those words offers even more insight into what is, at least, a very ancient profession indeed; ‘In the West, people say rude things about Lalun’s profession, and write lectures about it, and distribute the lectures to young persons in order that Morality may be preserved’ (Kipling, 1898). As Kipling observed, attitudes to selling sex are not fixed but are culturally and morally determined. Researching ancient sexuality is difficult for many reasons, but particularly because historical records are always mediated through the author’s world view. What many historical texts understand as prostitution speak far more of the author’s own culture than the practices being described.

For example, the Spanish Conquistadors translated the Aztec, Náhuatl word ‘Ahuienime’ as ‘prostitute’ or ‘whore’ (Campbell 1985). But, this translation was done by Spanish Catholics and what they saw as ‘prostitution’ is not what the Aztecs saw at all. The word ‘ahuiani’ is more accurately translated as “the bringer of joy”, and has religious, spiritual connotations (López Austin 1996, Jimenez, 2004). Unable to move beyond their own cultural attitudes, Spanish texts describe the ahuienimeltin as sinful prostitutes. As Ulises Chávez Jimenez argued ‘the Spaniards did not understand the roll of the ahuienimeltin in Aztec religion, where they legitimized cosmic models that allowed a deep communion with the Gods’ (Jimenez, 2004). One of the most contentious areas of study within the history of sex work is the practice of so called ‘Sacred Prostitution’ in the ancient World (also called Temple or Cult Prostitution). It’s also an important area of study as the belief that selling sex was once a sacred exchange directly challenges many of our modern narratives around sexual services. As Mary Beard noted The myth of sacred prostitution provides ‘a model for alternative humanities paraded by our archives, available for new living, for different lives’ (Beard and Henderson, 1997).

## OLDEST PROFESSION



The Khajuraho Temples Of India

The figure of the ‘sacred whore’ or ‘sexual priestess’ is a prominent figure in many spiritualist groups today who use sex as a healing ritual. Sacred prostitution is a notoriously difficult subject to research, let alone verify. We weren’t there and all we have left are other people’s accounts. And as we’ve seen, one Aztec’s bringer of joy is another’s Catholic whore. The existence of Temple Prostitution is fiercely debated within academic study and we’re unlikely to have this resolved any time soon. All that is left to try and decipher are a handle of ancient sources and we have no way of knowing if they are factual or fictitious. If a single fragment of Harry Potter was unearthed three thousand years from now, how would historians know if Hogwarts really existed?

And it’s not just the Classical sources that are guilty of projecting their own values on to historic sexual practices, but modern commentary must also be carefully scrutinised for prejudice. Sex work is so highly stigmatised and shaped by unhelpful narratives that many historians have been unable to move beyond specific scripts; such as the sex worker as a victim, as perverse, or as a subject of titillation. Take for example, Bonnie MacLachlan’s *Sacred prostitution and Aphrodite* (1992), which attempts to address cultural and historical differences around sex work, but opens with the statement ‘prostitution is, after all, the most debased form of sex’ (MacLachlan, 1992). MacLachlan’s article works hard to understand ‘the mentality that not only permitted it, but saw it as natural’; but at no point does MacLachlan consider the ‘naturalness’ of her own attitude that sex work is ‘debased’. She simply accepts moral bias as truth. How can we ever hope to fully understand historical attitudes around sex if they are told through the persistent cultural bias that selling sex is ‘debased’? Many historians have dismissed sacred prostitution as myth, or have lumped it in with sex for commercial gain. It has even been argued (falsely) that sacred prostitution led to commercial prostitution (Lerner, 1986).

Even the term ‘sacred prostitution’ closes down, rather than opens up room for debate. As we’ve seen ‘prostitution’ is a highly loaded word and carries myriad connotations, all of which reinforce stigma. It has the effect of othering people who sell sexual services; it creates an ‘us’ and ‘them’. As Lizzie Smith argued, ‘the term “prostitute” does not simply mean a person who sells her or his sexual labour (although rarely used to describe men in sex work), but brings with it layers of “knowledge” about her worth, drug status, childhood, integrity, personal hygiene and sexual health’ (Smith, 2013). Framing ancient sexual practices within this stigmatised word is highly misleading as it transfers modern prejudices on to past institutions and distorts our reading.



Babylonian marriage market, Edwin Long (1875)

The ancient Babylonian epic, *Gilgamesh* (circa 2100 BC) tells the story of a temple prostitute called Šamhat who serves Ishtar and tames the wild man Enkidu through her sexual skills. This is one of the earliest written references to sex work ever found, but it does not claim to be anything but a story. The earliest account of sacred prostitution in a nonfiction text is the Greek Historian Herodotus’ (484–c. 425 BC) account of sixth-century neo-Babylonia.

The foulest Babylonian custom is that which compels every woman of the land to sit in the temple of Aphrodite and have intercourse with some stranger at least once in her life. Many women who are rich and proud and disdain to mingle with the rest, drive to the temple in covered carriages drawn by teams, and stand there with a great retinue of attendants. But most sit down in the sacred plot of Aphrodite, with crowns of cord on their heads; there is a great multitude of women coming and going; passages marked by line run every way through the crowd, by which the men pass and make their choice. Once a woman has taken her place there, she does not go away to her home before some stranger has cast money into her lap, and had intercourse with her outside the temple; but while he casts the money, he must say, “I invite you in the name of Mylitta”. It does not matter what sum the money is; the woman will never refuse, for that would be a sin, the money being by this act made sacred. So she follows the first man who casts it and rejects no one. After their intercourse, having discharged her sacred duty to the goddess, she goes away to her home; and thereafter there is no bribe however great that will get her. So then the women that are fair and tall are soon free to depart, but the uncomely have long to wait because they cannot fulfil the law; for some of them remain for three years, or four. There is a custom like this in some parts of Cyprus (*Histories*, 1).

Herodotus is what might be politely termed an ‘unreliable narrator’. He is a historian in much the same way as Disney is a historian. What’s more, he is clearly out to smear the reputation of the Babylonians and is projecting his own negative views around sex onto history – so, is any of this true? We don’t know. His account is not corroborated with any independent sources (not even the ancient Babylonian ones.) But, other accounts of similar customs do exist (but they well may have been rehashing of Herodotus.) Four hundred years after Herodotus, the historian Strabo describes a ritual sexual activity practised at Acilisene in Armenia. Here, people honoured the Persian goddess Anaitis by dedicating their daughters to serve her in the temple before they were given in marriage.



Devadasi at Tanjore

In *De Dea Syria*, Greek writer Lucian of Samosata (125 CE –180 CE) describes a ritual practised in Syria where women would have to have sex with a stranger in a public place as an offering of payment to the goddess Aphrodite (Lucian, *De Dea Syria*). The Augustan historian Pompeius Trogus wrote ‘There was a custom among Cyprians to send their virgins to the sea-shore before marriage on fixed days, for employment in order to get dowry-money, and to make a first-fruit offering to Aphrodite, a dedication to preserve their virtue in the future’ (Pompeius Trogus, Justin). There are several references in the Old Testament to “Qadeshes,” a word many have translated to mean female and male cult practitioners. Professor Gernot Wilhelm discovered a 3,300-year-old document that details a father selling his own daughter to the Temple of Ishtar to serve as a Harimtu. No details are given to the nature of work the girl was expected to do, but Wilhelm suggests it was sacred prostitution (Gernot, 1994). But, none of this makes establishing fact any easier.

I started this article by pointing how limiting it is to try look for modern equivalents in ancient sex practices; sex work is not the oldest profession because professions aren’t actually that old. In the same way that the loaded word ‘prostitute’ speaks to modern stigma and very specific narratives around sexual exchange, it’s not the right word to try and understand religious sexual practice. If we’re looking for a temple ‘prostitutes’, we’re looking for the wrong thing. ‘Sex worker’ also isn’t the right term either as that speaks to the professionalism of selling sexual service, rather than erotic spiritualism and worship through sex. Perhaps we need to stop trying to fit past sexual practices into prejudged categories we feel more familiar with. Take, for example, the 800-year-old Hindu tradition of the Devadasi.

Devadasi means ‘female servant of God’ and they are women who are dedicated to the Goddess Yellamma. The earliest written records of dancing temple girls called Devadasi dates to 1230 - 1240 A.D., from the time of Raja Raya III in Maharashtra (B., Sharma and Raghavacharya, 1961). A thousand-year-old inscription in Tanjor Temple lists 400 devadasis in Tanjor, 450 in Brahideswara temple and another 500 in the Sorti Somnath temple (Spring, 1997). Devadasi looked after the temples, they sang and danced in devotion to the deities. They were also courtesans and supported by wealthy patrons who sought out the Devadasi because they were sacred women. They dazzled the courts with their poetry, music and devotion to the Goddess. Classical Indian dances such as Bharatnatyam, Odissi, and Kathak are all legacies of the Devadasi. Sex was a part of their world, but it was incidental; they celebrated art, beauty, love, and the divine. When the British colonised India, they brought with them their rigid world view and were unable to see the Devadasi as anything but ‘prostitutes’.



Rahab, The Harlot of Jericho by James Tissot

We’ve seen what is associated with that word and all that was then projected on to the Devadasi. So repulsed were they by what they saw, the British set about shaming and dismantling the Devadasi institution.

In 1892, the Hindu Social Reform Association petitioned the Governor General of India and to the Governor of Madras to erase the Devadasi; ‘There exists in the Indian community a class of women community commonly known as nautch-girls. And that these women are invariably prostitutes’ (Jamanadas, 2007). The British missionaries taught India what a ‘prostitute’ was and why it was so shameful. Support for the Devadasi disappeared, they were socially shunned and stigmatised. Cut off from patrons and the temple, they tried to earn money by dancing at private events and selling sexual services. Eventually, the Devadasi was outlawed throughout India in 1988. The tradition continues in southern India, but the women are no longer respected. Now they are criminalised, stigmatised and without protection, many abuses occur and impoverished parents dedicate young daughters to the service of the Goddess. You see how powerful and damaging the word ‘prostitute’ can be?

Selling sex is not the oldest profession in the world, but it might be the oldest currency in the world. What’s more, trading on our sexuality is a basic human instinct and is witnessed in all human interactions. We’ve always had sex, always enjoyed sex and therefore always traded sex. Trading sex isn’t even unique to humans, but turning it into a profession and then judging it is certainly unique to humans. If we are to ever understand the history of selling sexual services, we need to move beyond modern stigma and unhelpful stereotypes. Sex work is a highly complex experience and always has been. If we approach the study of sex work from a position of hostility, if we do not allow sex workers to speak for themselves and shape the debate being had, all we will succeed in doing is perpetuating the prostitute mythology. Prostitution is not the oldest profession in the world, but it is a very old stigma indeed.



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## UDAYAN DHAR, Editor-in-Chief of [www.pink-pages.co.in](http://www.pink-pages.co.in) THE PERILS AND POLITICS OF GAY PRIDE

*Perhaps the Ongoing Controversy over Pune Pride March Hints at a Maturing LGBT Movement in India*

June is LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender) Pride month globally and the last decade has seen Indian cities participating in this celebration of diversity in a big way. Apart from the large metropolitan cities, what is truly encouraging is that smaller cities and towns across the country have started joining the movement in a way never seen before. Among them, Pune is a city that has made good progress on this front- with Pride marches, queer film festivals and panel discussions bringing together an increasingly visible and vibrant local LGBT community.

### The Troubles in Pune

It was a shock therefore, that just about a week ahead of the planned Pune Pride march there have been a volley of voices both online and offline calling for boycotting the event. The provocation has been the organising team's "guidelines" to would-be participants. These include a prohibition on dancing, beating of drums, or wearing "eccentric and flamboyant" clothes. They also have to "behave well" and not attract "unnecessary attention."

And many members of the Pune queer community are understandably upset. "If you are asking people to dress a certain way, it is similar to dictating to women how to dress modestly", said one community member. Online, people have been more candid. "#PunePride should be renamed as #DiscriminationPride", posted someone. Things have not been helped by the fact that the organizers are being perceived as conservative and uncompromising. "Why don't you organise your own Pride and do your own Nanga Naach?" was the response Bindumadhav Khide, the lead organiser posted on Facebook as a response to the controversy.

### Getting the Context Right: Pune's LGBT movement

One factor needs to be clarified right at the start - Bindumadhav has been one of the trailblazers for the LGBT rights movement in India. He was working in the United States as a Software Engineer, and about fifteen years ago, he decided to return to India to pursue a cause close to his heart - LGBT equality. Since then, he has faced multiple challenges - after all, Pune is no San Francisco or New York- or even New Delhi or Mumbai for that matter.

From hostile civic officials to financial crunches, he singlehandedly set up the Sampathik Trust and has been operating it ever since out of a small office in Budhwar Peth. It remains one of the most impactful LGBT organisations in India that has battled on multiple fronts - from HIV/AIDS prevention to sensitising the local Police on homosexuality and transgender issues. The trust has published a series of books in Marathi language that have enabled a conversation to take place even in the most conservative circles of the city. The impact is for all to see - the city has been organising successful Pride marches and festivals for the past six years now.



The challenge for the Indian LGBT rights movement is to build broad alliances across the social spectrum of India, Credit: Darvesh Singh

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For example, when gay marchers walked in support of the coal miners in Thatcherian Britain, or when two men kissed at the New York Pride march holding Indian and Pakistani flags, or when three brave Dalit men came out openly at the Delhi Pride shattering the twin taboos of caste and homosexuality.

One factor needs to be clarified right at the start - Bindumadhav has been one of the trailblazers for the LGBT rights movement in India. He was working in the United States as a Software Engineer, and about fifteen years ago, he decided to return to India to pursue a cause close to his heart - LGBT equality. Since then, he has faced multiple challenges - after all, Pune is no San Francisco or New York- or even New Delhi or Mumbai for that matter.



When has Gay Pride ever been non-political? Participants at the New York Pride parade.  
Credit: Anonymous, via Facebook

The sensitisation programs initiated by Bindumadhav and his team were apparent some years back when Pride participants were greeted with flowers by none other than the Police staff themselves. It is also true that the Pune Pride has been seen for some time within the community as an expression of the more conservative side of the movement. One blog post by a supportive community member says, "... it gives a platform to the assimilationist queer individual, be it the man who only wants to go home to his husband and eat some khichdi before plopping into bed, the woman who travels in the packed local to visit her ailing mother-in-law in the hospital while her wife goes home to have a bath and get some sleep... Not everyone wants to be the centre of political attention, or have to make a point with their presence. At least not all the time. Pune Pride represents the vast swathe of queer individuals who want life to be ordinary. Who want their gender and sexuality to be immaterial to people around them."

### The History of Gay Militancy

With the global movement for LGBT equality – with issues like same-sex marriage now dominating headlines- it often becomes hard to believe that it had its origins in the most radical expressions of queer sexuality in America. The 1960s saw gay and genderqueer Americans increasingly flock to mostly underground pubs and bars – which were seen as havens for individuals from diverse backgrounds. They soon began to identify themselves as part of a larger alternative community that was distinct in many ways from the mainstream. These bars were often the target of police raids and punitive action, but one night in June 1969 when the New York Police targeted Stonewall Inn, the patrons fought back in what became known as the Stonewall Riots- which was marked the following year with a "Pride March".

These Pride marches began to spread across North America and Europe, and became rallying points for a whole host of issues around gender and sexuality – from decriminalisation to anti-discrimination laws. Importantly, the queer movement- on account of the inherent diversity of the queer community became closely involved with causes which were not directly related to sexuality. For example, when gay marchers walked in support of the coal miners in Thatcherian Britain, or when two men kissed at the New York Pride march holding Indian and Pakistani flags, or when three brave Dalit men came out openly at the Delhi Pride shattering the twin taboos of caste and homosexuality.

Michael Warner's celebrated book, *The Trouble with Normal* is a powerful indictment of all that is wrong with the trend to 'normalize'. He argues that when gays agree to separate their sex from their identity, they are only rewarded with oppressive trends like stricter zoning of gay clubs and businesses, the 'Don't Ask/Don't Tell' policy in the military and, ironically, the 'Defense of Marriage' act. By presenting a piercing and cogent analysis of the politics of shame and the stigma of sexual identity, he offers an alternative ethical vision that proclaims "sex is as varied as the people who have it, and honesty and morality are not limited to those with a marriage license."

All this has been happening in tandem with a parallel movement within the gay community to go as "mainstream" as possible. The idea is that the LGBT community- especially gay men need to tone down their overt displays of sexuality in order to be eligible for the rights that they are asking for. This idea gained currency in the wake of the AIDS crisis in San Francisco and New York - with vociferous demands by leaders such as Larry Kramer to shut down bath-houses that were termed cess-pools of degraded behaviour and fatal diseases.

Not surprisingly, the critiques were harsh as well. Michael Warner's celebrated book, "The Trouble with Normal" is a powerful indictment of all that is wrong with the trend to 'normalize'. He argues that when gays agree to separate their sex from their identity, they are only rewarded with oppressive trends like stricter zoning of gay clubs and businesses, the 'Don't Ask/Don't Tell' policy in the military and, ironically, the 'Defense of Marriage' act. By presenting a piercing and cogent analysis of the politics of shame and the stigma of sexual identity, he offers an alternative ethical vision that proclaims "sex is as varied as the people who have it, and honesty and morality are not limited to those with a marriage license."

## The Way Ahead in Pune, and the Future of the Queer Movement in India

Coming back to the ongoing furore in Pune, it is not surprising – given the fraught history of the gay rights movement across the world - that such a controversy should emerge in the first place. The fact that such issues have rarely boiled over in the past only pointed to the limited scope of the work that has happened on this front in India so far. The different voices – those belonging to the "assimilationists" on one hand, and the "liberationists" on the other are an integral part of ongoing evolution of the global queer movement and should be seen as such.

Those calling for the boycott of Pune Pride should bear in mind that the work Bindumadhav and the Sampathik Trust have done over the years have happened within a certain cultural context, and active participation in the ongoing movement should foster the change they rightfully envision. LGBT people exist in every community, every class and every caste. The collective voice of the marginalized can not remain unheard within any democratic forum for too long.

At the same time, the Pride organisers need to urgently realise that the support given to them from most community leaders in this instance hinges on the personal credibility of Bindumadhav and the huge respect he commands on account of his work so far.

This is also a time for the LGBT community in India – still reeling under the damaging effects of the Victorian Section 377- to reflect on what are the wider goals and objectives of the movement? Do we want to create another upper crust of rich and privileged gay men (and some women), who speak English, receive the best education and have opportunity-filled corporate careers, who can then worry about "gay marriage", while our community spaces remain excluded to the vast majority who have no means to buy the expensive tickets to our city's gay clubs and have no access to our plush professional networks.

As the movement grows larger with participation of more diverse and hitherto underrepresented sections, this would not be enough to sustain its continued growth and impact. That will come only from creating inclusive spaces where people from the widest cross-section of the social and sexual spectrum come together to create meaningful change.

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Or, do we want to build a broader alliance with the multitude of passionate and freedom-loving individuals and groups – queers, women, workers, teachers, students, Dalits, Adivasis, minorities – across the length and breadth of India (and indeed South Asia), who are working to create an equitable and inclusive nation that the founding fathers of our nation - luminaries like Gandhi, Nehru and Ambedkar - had envisioned. A nation where, in the words of Tagore, every mind is without fear, and every head is held high.

Aneela Zeb Babar is a researcher and consultant working on Islam, gender, migration and popular culture. Over the past eighteen years she has been pursuing a career within the academic, research and development sector being employed with universities and non-governmental and international developmental agencies in South and South-East Asia and Australia. She has a strong track record in advocacy of development, governance, gender and cultural issues.



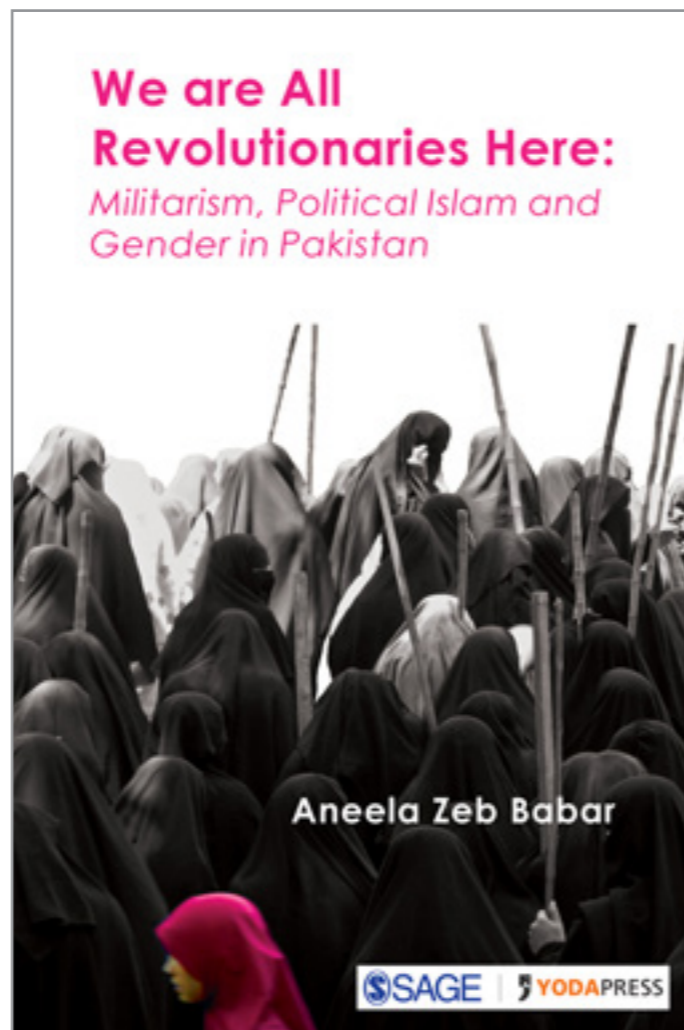
## ANEELA ZEB BABAR, RESEARCHER AND CONSULTANT WORKING ON ISLAM, GENDER, MIGRATION AND POPULAR CULTURE

### WE ARE ALL REVOLUTIONARIES HERE: MILITARISM, POLITICAL ISLAM AND GENDER IN PAKISTAN Published by [SAGE](#) Publications

Excerpt from Chapter *On Gendered Spatial and Ritual Politics in Canberra and Islamabad*.

The energy created by the 'living room lectures' and the introduction of new 'moral communities' had formed tensions as prescribed roles through - out the Canberra Pakistani community were changing. The 'transnational gendered religious networks' had also struck at what Rahman has declared as the 'secularist cliché' that religion be 'relegated internally to the position of a private creed' and ritual, as 'being something merely between a man's heart and his God' (Rahman, 1984: 227-28). The challenge of pursuing modification in practice and rituals, while not outright confronting familial structures, has been prominent in the years the *dars* congregations gained popularity. This is true for other Pakistani communities around the world as well who find themselves in the new political, economic, and cultural settings of the West.

Has the element of cyber-consciousness introduced through Al Huda's 'online congregations' contributed to the ways women now maintain and expand the transnational networks in the Pakistani diaspora? The globalisation of religious information and images through Al Huda-sponsored networks had contributed to a state of affairs where



sharing the same geographical place, or any of the controls and restrictions over the mobility of women did not matter anymore. Through advances in telecommunications, through sharing and mastering these networks, women were able to build their own coalitions and find support structures that might not have been available to them earlier under the traditional class and power divisions of the Pakistani diaspora. What is particular about these alliances is their gendered nature, and the consequent reaction in Canberra's Pakistan ever since these new groupings have gained a prominent profile emphasising that. The energy created by the 'living room lectures' and the introduction of new 'moral communities' have given rise to tensions as prescribed roles throughout the Canberra Pakistani community are seen to be changing.

What is problematic for Al Huda critics is the constant calls of Hashmi and her organisation 'to homogenize the structure, religious behaviour and responses of women's groups so to enforce a rigid Islam' without allowing any space for the diversity of cultural and ethnic belief that had characterised how Pakistani women had interacted with Islam earlier.

I found much of the Al Huda discourse worrying especially when I read about Hashmi describing the 2004 earthquake in Kashmir and NWFP as God's punishment for 'immoral activities'. According to Hashmi, 'The people in the area where the earthquake hit were involved in immoral activities, and God has said that he will punish those who do not follow his path.' Opinions such as this are problematic considering the Al Huda Foundation had turned its attention towards the education sector in the earthquake-devastated region of Northern Pakistan hoping to redress the void created by the collapse of government schools (International Crisis Group Report, 2006).

This brings me to another feature of the Al Huda discourse that made me nervous about being part of the congregation. I fear that over time Al Huda would enforce a 'uniform guide' to religious interpretation that does not allow any competing discourses. Did Hashmi's lectures becoming the 'one truth fits all' remind me of all that was troublesome about religious belonging in Pakistan during my childhood years?

Maybe it was around this time that I stopped praying in front of others, as I was getting tired of being corrected constantly. Roughly around the same time I withdrew from engaging in what Pakistanis call ‘drawing-room debates’ over my religious beliefs. I had resigned myself to the discomfoting knowledge that terms like Islam and Muslim were neither straightforward nor without controversy, so it was best I kept quiet rather than antagonise my friends’ parents. It is this that kept me hesitant to participate more actively in the women’s congregations in Canberra.

Growing up in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, my neighbourhood friends and I had discovered that we recited our evening prayers differently from each other. When I went to my grandfather who had taught me my prayers, and was the ‘wisest person about religion’ we could think of, he tried to simplify sectarian and ritual differences between us by stating the fact that ‘my neighbours are Punjabis’. That seemed adequate to my friends and myself, and their longer prayers could be slotted somewhere alongside other facts like why they could tolerate spices, could watch TV long after my bedtime, and spoke better Urdu. There were no winners or losers about who prayed correctly, and we were at peace. Maybe when they went back home, their parents might have deplored my family’s religiosity. But during the short period of religious fervour of our school years, whenever we prayed together after evening play time we were comfortable with our differences. Years afterwards, when I narrated this episode to colleagues at university, they weren’t so tolerant. Times had changed, they said, and wouldn’t it be more prudent for me to harmonise my prayers with theirs, ‘for I did want to be a good Muslim, right?’ Maybe it was around this time that I stopped praying in front of others, as I was getting tired of being corrected constantly. Roughly around the same time I withdrew from engaging in what Pakistanis call ‘drawing-room debates’ over my religious beliefs. I had resigned myself to the discomfoting knowledge that terms like Islam and Muslim were neither straightforward nor without controversy, so it was best I kept quiet rather than antagonise my friends’ parents. It is this that kept me hesitant to participate more actively in the women’s congregations in Canberra.

I was reminded of this episode when I read Rushdie’s personal debate on his relationship with Islam:

*I am not a Muslim*, that’s what you meant. No supernaturalism, no literalist orthodoxies, no formal rules for you. But Islam doesn’t have to mean blind faith. It can mean what it always meant in your family, a culture, a civilisation, as open-minded as your grandfather was, as delightedly disputatious as your father was, as intellectual and philosophical as you like. Don’t let the zealots make *Muslim* a terrifying word, I urged myself; remember when it meant *family* and *light*....I reminded myself that I had always argued that it was necessary to develop the nascent concept of the ‘secular Muslim’, who like the secular Jews, affirmed his membership of the culture while being separate from the theology.... I told myself, you can’t argue from outside the debating chamber. You’ve got to cross the threshold, go inside, the room, and then *fight* for your humanised, historicised, secularised way of being a Muslim. (Rushdie, 1991:435–36)

It made me nostalgic for a time when I too was comfortable with being Muslim, when I didn’t have to be apologetic to my neighbours about my family’s particular ‘ethnic relationship’ towards being Muslim.

My interviewees took their commitment to Islam not only as one among many moral and spiritual values, but also as something which was itself interpreted and exhibited differently in their relationship to Canberra society. However, what worries me is whether Pakistani women’s connection with Al Huda would gradually move them away from the ‘multiple dialects’ they spoke of culture, ethnicity and politics to one of a single language of belonging and interpretation. This plurality is what I fear we will miss.

However, if I was so eager to reclaim this lost relationship, wasn’t it time that I too started grappling with the contentious issues of differences within our religious faith? I am glad I started this process, for I realised quickly that for some time I had my own prejudices and stereotypes about Muslim women, the same ones that others are so familiar with. Over the months the picture I had in my mind was at odds with the actual fears and hopes, anxieties and aspirations of the Pakistani women. These women were challenging the assumptions that, if they were treated as equal members of the community, the community would risk erasure due to a loss of difference from the ‘conquering other’. Why has it been that Muslim women continue to be perceived as passive members of a monolithic community sitting morosely apart, when they could very well be active participants in multicultural cultures whose perspective they too shared in their daily lives? My interviewees took their commitment to Islam not only as one among many moral and spiritual values, but also as something which was itself interpreted and exhibited differently in their relationship to Canberra society. However, what worries me is whether Pakistani women’s connection with Al Huda would gradually move them away from the ‘multiple dialects’ they spoke of culture, ethnicity and politics to one of a single language of belonging and interpretation. This plurality is what I fear we will miss.

However, I hope one’s endeavour to explore a history of Pakistan with the Pakistani women as narrator would not only identify a different gender, but also a new generation and class of interpreters for Islam. There had been a growing need to document the experiences and instances of resistance, solidarity and agency disseminated through alternative voices, activist movements and channels in the transnational and regional forums, those that have remained sceptical of hegemonic discourse. The experience of diaspora had encouraged and facilitated the process of Pakistani women being able to address and thereby reframe the power framework of who has the authority to interpret religious texts. This could lead to a fresh medium of expression on matters to do with religious belief and diversity, not only for themselves in their personal lives, but also for others in the community.

The growth of the gendered transnational networks of religion mediated exclusively by, and focused towards and funded by, women’s contributions challenges the way the male elite have traditionally controlled religious spaces in diasporic communities. This could only happen if one applies alternative means of seeing not only the socio-political practices of diasporic communities but also how one views the religious behaviour of the women living in these communities. Though women may explain their religious involvement and social performances as moral obligations and religious responsibilities, in many ways they are challenging the authority of others to define and interpret religious duties for them.

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## SHANTHIE MARIET D'SOUZA, PRESIDENT & FOUNDER OF [WWW.MANTRAYA.ORG](http://WWW.MANTRAYA.ORG) REGIONAL POWER PLAY IN AFGHANISTAN AND INDIA'S POLICY OPTIONS

### Abstract

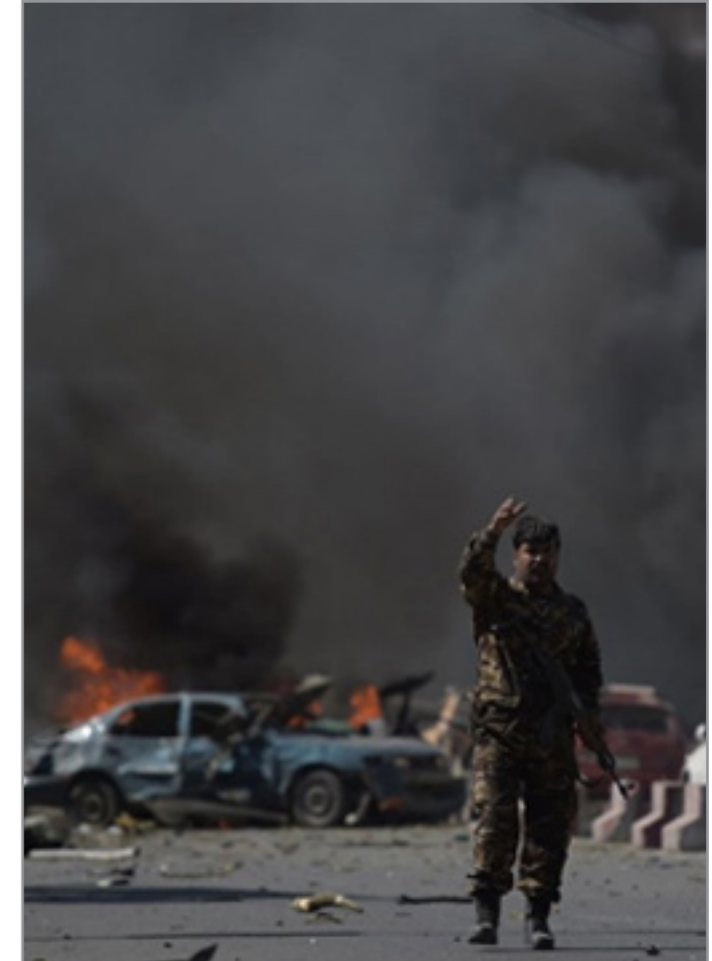
*A regional power realignment is taking place in Afghanistan. As countries jockey for influence in shaping the end-game in Afghanistan, India seems to be a lone bystander being sidelined even by its traditional allies - Russia and Iran. A new great power rivalry between the U.S. and Russia is evident not just in Syria and other places, but also in Afghanistan. As there are attempts at regional block formation, should India join these blocks or should it maintain its independent policy? Can an India-U.S. alliance help stabilise Afghanistan or lead to further intensification of regional power competition? The rapidly changing geopolitical realities and increased spectre of violence is something that New Delhi cannot ignore.*

On 31 May, a truck bomb exploded in central Kabul killing nearly 100 people and injuring hundreds others. The continuing ghastly violence serves as a reminder of the difficulties the country has encountered in its search for a semblance of peace and stability. It is convenient to blame the Afghan security forces for their supposed inability to put to halt to such attacks. The larger issues, however, are the increased regional power competition and the international community's ad hoc strategies with regard to the end state in Afghanistan.

### Renewed Global Rivalry and Regional reconfiguration

The Trump administration mulls over an appropriate Afghan strategy. For the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. John Nicholson, the war with the Taliban is a stalemate. He has said several thousand more troops are needed to turn the tide of Afghan war. Even after the May 2017 Brussels summit, President Trump as well as the NATO countries are undecided on the requests for more troops. Meanwhile, Russia, a mute spectator in the 16 years of the U.S.-led war on terror in Afghanistan, is filling in the vacuum. This includes engaging the Taliban and leading a new diplomatic effort to shape Afghanistan's future. Much of this coincides with the Kremlin's attempt to wield greater international influence at the U.S.' expense elsewhere, including intervening in the war in Syria and attempting to broker new Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. The renewed Russian interest in Afghanistan

is perceived as a function of "American retrenchment". The perception has intensified as President Trump since taking office has rarely mentioned Afghanistan. Amidst such Russian maneuvers, the U.S. military targeted an Islamic State (IS) cave complex in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar province with the 22,000-pound "mother of all bombs" (MOAB), the largest non-nuclear weapon ever used in combat on 14 April, 2017. It came a day before Russia was to host multi-nation talks on prospects for Afghan security and national reconciliation, the third such initiative since the December 2016 trilateral talks involving Russia, China, and Pakistan. Eleven countries – including Afghanistan, China, Iran, Pakistan, India, and former Soviet Central Asian states—met in Moscow. The U.S. skipped the talks, terming them a "unilateral Russian attempt to assert influence in the region." China, on the other hand, while assisting the Afghan government through security cooperation, has maintained links with the Taliban. It recently conducted joint law enforcement operations with the Afghan forces to fight terrorism. Beijing has also played host to the Taliban who visited China days after a trilateral meeting of senior diplomats from China, Pakistan and Russia in Moscow that supported lifting of international sanctions on the Taliban leaders.



Site of the 31 May 2017 explosion in Kabul,  
Photo courtesy: Washington Post

New Delhi has not capitalised this good will into tangible outcomes. Neither has New Delhi increased the scale of its assistance in such areas as governance and institution building to prevent the back sliding of the Afghan state apparatus. In discussions with Foreign Service officials in New Delhi, it is evident that Afghanistan is seen as a distant, volatile theatre that is of 'secondary interest' and are wary of an 'over-stretch'.

Reports from the field indicate that the Taliban in return has granted China the green light to restart a US\$3 billion mining project in MesAyanak which has been mired in controversies since 2008. Iran too has maintained contacts with Taliban and at the same time supported to the Afghan government.

### Non-state actors and 'hedging strategy'

The advent of the Islamic State (IS-Khorasan or IS-K) in Afghanistan, with its local battles against Taliban for territorial domination has further complicated the security situation since 2014. Compared to the U.S. estimate of minimal IS strength (1,000 combatants), the Russian estimate is 3,500. Amidst reports of infighting having fractured the Taliban and weakened its leadership, efforts to undermine the IS-K has emboldened it and strengthened its negotiating potential. This has led to regional countries reaching out to the Taliban in order to establish /maintain linkages with a more 'nationalistic' Taliban that can be contained within the borders of Afghanistan and act as an effective counter to the transnational IS. Interestingly, efforts at decimating the IS-K are directed at making the Taliban more acceptable for peace negotiations. Russia has also promoted easing global sanctions on Taliban leaders who prove cooperative. The IS threat, thus, is part of a larger 'hedging strategy' on Afghanistan driving renewed Russian, Chinese and Iranian interest in the region. The emergence of Russia- China- Pakistan alliance has dramatically changed the equations on the ground for India.

### India's interests and policy options

India hence finds itself in a queer position. Being the largest regional donor with pledges more than US \$ 2 billion in various infrastructure and capacity building programs, India's development assistance has accrued tremendous good will among the Afghans. During my visits to provinces in Afghanistan (Kandahar, Nangarhar, Badkshan, Bamyán, Balkh, Herat since 2007), Afghans have expressed gratitude and desire for more of India's assistance.

However, New Delhi has not capitalised this good will into tangible outcomes. Neither has New Delhi increased the scale of its assistance in such areas as governance and institution building to prevent the back sliding of the Afghan state apparatus. In discussions with Foreign Service officials in New Delhi, it is evident that Afghanistan is seen as a distant, volatile theatre that is of 'secondary interest' and are wary of an 'over-stretch'.

Being sidelined from its traditional alliance, New Delhi has the option of either joining the U.S. or maintain its independent position. President Trump's senior military and foreign policy advisers have recently proposed a major shift in strategy in Afghanistan. The new plan, which still needs the approval of the president, calls for expanding the U.S. military footprint (surge) as part of a broader effort to push an increasingly confident and resurgent Taliban back to the negotiating table.

In the security sector, New Delhi's minimalistic approach has not helped strengthen the Afghan security forces to face the onslaught of the insurgency. This is viewed by the military elite in Afghanistan as reneging on the commitments made by India in the Strategic Partnership Agreement of October 2014, the first agreement signed by India in the neighbourhood.

As there is a scramble among major countries to embrace the Taliban, New Delhi exercise caution in participating in externally mediated peace processes. A number of pro-talks advocates and international commentators are not averse to granting concessions like ceding territory with an asymmetric federalism arrangement to the Taliban, such propositions are acceptable neither to the Afghans nor the Taliban. While some Indian commentators have joined the chorus of talking the Taliban, any such attempt violates India's core objective of building a strong and stable Afghanistan that acts as a bulwark against the return of extremist forces. Beyond elite buy-in, New Delhi will have to work towards mobilizing the grass root participation in the state building process to preserve the fragile gains of the last decade.

Time, however, is in short supply in Afghanistan. In the regional reconfiguration of powers, New Delhi will have to signal its intent to be a reliable friend and important power in the region. During my discussions with senior government officials in Kabul it is evident that they expect that India plays a role commensurate with major power status in the region. The present reticence has sent mixed signals. In April 2017, I spoke with Dr. Shaida Mohammad Abdali, Afghanistan's ambassador to India in New Delhi. Ambassador Abdali expressed his desire to see India playing an important role in bringing peace and stability in the country. Neither can India be a lone bystander, nor can it fritter away the goodwill gained among the Afghan people by not taking a more proactive policy, Abdali said.

Being sidelined from its traditional alliance, New Delhi has the option of either joining the U.S. or maintain its independent position. President Trump's senior military and foreign policy advisers have recently proposed a major shift in strategy in Afghanistan. The new plan, which still needs the approval of the president, calls for expanding the U.S. military footprint (surge) as part of a broader effort to push an increasingly confident and resurgent Taliban back to the negotiating table. However, mere addition of troop numbers without a fundamental change in strategy will not help achieve such objectives nor stabilise Afghanistan. New Delhi needs to take a clear position in partnering with the US or any other regional power/block in addressing the causes of instability in Afghanistan, particularly when Afghans look up to India to play that leadership role.

Khare is an award winning author of twenty one volumes of non-fiction, fiction, translation and poetry. Executive Editor of Heritage India, the International Culture Journal, a Director of The Rewachand Bhojwani Academy and Visiting Professor to the Dept Of English, Pune University. Recently he was given The Residency Award by The Sahitya Akademi (India's National Academy of Letters) for his contribution to Indian Literature and the Human Rights Award for his efforts to preserve and celebrate marginal and minority cultures. Founding Contributor of Live Encounters Magazine (2010).

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## RANDHIR KHARE REMEMBER AND RESIST

May 1974. Seventy-seven-year-old Iwakichi Kobayashi visited the NHK television studios in Hiroshima carrying with him a picture he had drawn titled 'At about 4 p.m., August 6, 1945, near Yorozyo Bridge'. It showed, in simple strokes, the havoc caused by the bomb. "Even now I cannot erase the scene from my memory. Before my death I wanted to draw it and leave it for others," he said.

This single drawing inspired the television station to launch a programme, 'Let Us Leave For Posterity Pictures of the Atomic Bomb Drawn by Citizens'.

The response to the request for pictures was met by a deluge of entries. Half came by mail and the other half brought by hand...mostly by old people who could hardly walk. The pictures were drawn with pencils, crayons, water colours, magic pens, coloured pens and India ink. Almost any kind of paper was used – drawing paper, backs of calendars, advertisement bills, paper used for sliding doors, the backs of scribbled paper used by children.

Nearly three decades later, memory was still fresh and strong. It defied the very force of forgetfulness and triumphed.

Mikio Inoue, one of the contributors, remembered, "It was when I crossed Miyuki Bridge that I saw Professor Takenaka, standing at the foot of the bridge. He was almost naked, wearing nothing but shorts and he had a ball of rice in his right hand...the northern area was covered by red fire burning against the sky.

"His naked figure, standing there before the flames with that ball of rice, looked to me as a symbol of the modest hopes of human beings."

This is merely an example of some of the powerful memories that had arrived at the television station, frozen forever on paper. Later, they were collected into a book and published. I found a battered copy of the book at a sale in Delhi's Darya Ganj in the 80's.

The city at that time, I remember, was picking up its shattered pieces and trying to put them together as sensibly as possible after the riots. I was a new arrival. In fact, I had landed in the city the day Mrs Gandhi was assassinated and the riots had exploded. That day, we were driving along one of the main arterial roads of the Capital when we arrived at a major traffic intersection. A red light – so we stopped. Then it happened. We were ambushed by a mob of at least two hundred people that poured out from the pavements and turned itself into one giant howling mass. The driver sank his head on the steering wheel and began to shiver. Our car was not the target. Instead, it was the auto rickshaw next to us, driven by an old sardar. He sat stoically in his seat waiting for the end. And it came suddenly and brutally. All that we heard was a pitiful scream as the frenzied mob surrounded him. His bloodstained turban shot into the air above their heads...floating down like a festive streamer. Two days later, the dhobi's son flew into the house to announce that he had stoned a 'killer Sikh'. Then he proceeded to give me a graphic description of how he had mangled the man's bicycle out of shape after that. His friends narrated other exploits.



Pic © Mark Ulyseas

He sat stoically in his seat waiting for the end. And it came suddenly and brutally. All that we heard was a pitiful scream as the frenzied mob surrounded him. His bloodstained turban shot into the air above their heads...floating down like a festive streamer. Two days later, the dhobi's son flew into the house to announce that he had stoned a 'killer Sikh'.

A few years on, I found myself in Punjab, on assignment, to develop an anti terrorism awareness campaign for the State Government. This meant that I would have to travel throughout terrorist torn areas to expose myself to what people were really experiencing. I remember that day in the city of Amritsar. Fear hung in the air over people's heads...in the marketplaces, the main streets and homes. Traffic policemen were sandbagged up to their necks, arms waving absurdly over their heads to conduct traffic. Anyway, there I was in a tense and frightened city that afternoon, sitting in the dilapidated studio of a local photographer. The man specialised in photographing victims of terrorist violence. It was lucrative, he told me. One just had to remain calm, no other investment. As a result of his ingenuity, the hole-in-the-wall studio was doing far better than the fancier and better equipped ones in the city. Even fear could not make him close down his studio. In fact, he claimed that terrorists were also his clients. 'Aarey, they come here and get themselves photographed. I can tell that they are terrorists. All of us know.'

As for me, I knew instantly that I was in the presence of an unwitting witness. A Memory Man of sorts.

While I was there at his studio, a young 'activist' wearing the trade mark white khadi sari and carrying the trade mark jhola walked in, hauling in behind her a photographer on an invisible leash. The fellow was a veritable walking advertisement for Nikon...the brand name on a wristband, on a jungle green commando beret, on his shoulder bag, on his camera strap and on the camera case (which hid the camera).

'We are from Delhi,' said the Khadi one with an air of 'power' in her voice. 'We produce innumerable pamphlets and papers which we circulate in thousands.'

Memory Man had got used to such preambles. He was interested in talking business. 'So you want photographs of corpses. Well, I have a range. People of all ages...babies, children, young people, men, women, lots of photographs of only heads. You see most papers here have only space for faces so I tend to take more photographs of faces.'

'Oh,' said the khadi one, sounding disappointed.

Milan Kundera has put it eloquently in *The Book Of Laughter And Forgetting*. 'The struggle of man against power,' he says, 'is the struggle of memory against forgetting.'

'But I also have others,' he continued. 'You name the place and the killing and the date, I'll give you what I have. But you must be as specific as possible. For example the Lalru killings and such like.'

'Okay,' she muttered, 'there's a bomb blast one. I saw it in one of the papers. It has one burnt leg in it...next to that a bunny rabbit.'

'A bunny rabbit?' he asked, scratching his head. 'Oh yes, yes. A tame rabbit of a household during the blast. Yes I have it.'

'Excellent. How much for a cabinet size?' she asked.

'Fifty rupees.'

'That's far too much. A little less please. See, we'll be taking a regular supply of photographs of victims from you. Surely you can give us a concession. Please.'

'I'm sorry. This is my business. What will happen when the killing stops?'

The khadi one looked at the Nikon man. The Nikon man looked at his Nikon safely tucked away, for consolation. Then he nodded. The deal was transacted. They left.

'What does that man do with his camera?' Memory Man asked.

'It's probably new and he doesn't want to damage it,' I replied.

'Maybe there's no camera inside the case,' the man grinned. 'I have known of such things to happen.'

Later, I presented the anti terrorism awareness campaign concept to the cream of Rajiv Gandhi's kitchen cabinet, using a blind man's stick (that's all that the department could muster) to point out specific displays arranged on a wall. I cringed when a department officer first turned up with the stick.

To never forget, to keep the wounds open, to bear witness so that others never forget, keep their wounds open...resist the whitewashers...this, I am beginning to feel, is a desperate need.

“I speak for no one but myself because I think I know myself a little better than others know me.”

‘Sorry I can’t use that stick. It’s a blind man’s stick, can’t you see,’ I said to the harassed man.

‘Well what to do Sir, this is all I could find. But don’t worry, there’s no bell on it so no one will know.’

Bell or no bell, I used the stick for a while then gave up on it. After the presentation, one of the kitchen cabinet chefs said to me with an air of confidentiality, ‘that was good, effective. But then I can see that Goebbels needs Hitler as much as Hitler needs Goebbels.’

‘I don’t understand,’ I replied.

‘It’s a two way deal,’ he said, with a wink.

I felt as if I was walking around inside Kafka’s head, lost in a Bhool Bhoolaiya.

Lest I confuse you any further, dear reader, I’ll shut out these memories for a while. Just for a while, because all these memories are important to me. They keep my wounds open, keep me hurting, remind me that I’m alive, that I’m human. This charges me as a writer to go on resisting. If I allow these wounds to heal, I’d be giving in to forgetfulness, constantly wiping my slate clean and instead see history as merely a bundle of facts that exist –and it wouldn’t make a difference to me if those who wanted to meddled with those facts as and when required. I’d be one more of the mesmerised numbers who have become victims of those in power. A mere pawn in the deadly game of profit and loss. I’d be telling myself that the Gujarat pogrom has never happened, that caste wars and communal violence don’t exist, that the environment is not being pillaged, that indigenous, traditional and marginal people are not being displaced, that minority faiths, religious practices and places of worship are not at risk of being destroyed, forcibly adopted or brutally mutated, that everywhere I look I can see unity in diversity, that the raga of equality and free enterprise is playing full blast, that India is truly shining. I’d be preoccupied with myself and the security and progress of my own world. In other words, I’d be a progressive Lotus Eater. An abetting victim of political, social, cultural and religious whitewashers. Milan Kundera has put it eloquently in *The Book Of Laughter And Forgetting*. ‘The struggle of man against power,’ he says, ‘is the struggle of memory against forgetting.’

Jonathan Schell persists in a similar vein by saying, ‘...of all the crimes against the future, extinction is the greatest. It is the murder of the future. And because this murder cancels all those who might recollect it even as it destroys its immediate victims, the obligation to ‘never forget’ is displaced back onto us, the living. It is we – the ones who will either commit this crime or prevent it – who must bear witness, must remember...’

To never forget, to keep the wounds open, to bear witness so that others never forget, keep their wounds open...resist the whitewashers...this, I am beginning to feel, is a desperate need. By saying this, I am also aware that I’d have a pack of purists who’ll pounce on me and take me apart, and ask me what right have I to demand that a writer play this role or that role or write like this or write like that...who do I think I am? God?

No, fortunately not. I speak for no one but myself because I think I know myself a little better than others know me. Most of the writing I am exposed to today does not reflect life as it really is. Its merely a presentation of cherries picked off a salad heap which contains chunks of fruits in varying stages of decomposition. I am not looking for opinions, I am virtually drowned in them. Nor am I looking for smart-ass jugglery of words which amount to verbal masturbation. Instead, I’m looking for stories, real stories. Stories of witnesses. Stories that come from all over the sub-continent. Stories that tell me about how people really struggle, how they live, their hopes, their loves, their innate genius, their songs, their folk lore, their amazing capacity to survive. Stories that tell me about how those in power have time and again perpetrated bigotry, communal hatred, suppression of all kinds and have been party to the annihilation of human lives. Stories that prevent my wounds from healing. Stories that keep memory alive...and help me to resist power.

The poet Horst Bienek, in *Time and Memory*, says,

‘All that moves  
can be changed  
but not what is frozen  
in our memory  
this is meant to endure.’



Photograph Orangutang\_SergeyUryadnikov2\_Shutterstock.jpg/Margi Prideaux

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Margi Prideaux is an international wildlife policy writer, negotiator and academic. She has worked within the conservation movement for 27 years. You can follow her on facebook or twitter @WildPolitics. Her books, including *Global Environmental Governance*, *Civil Society and Wildlife* and *Birdsong After the Storm*, can be seen at [www.wildpolitics.co/books](http://www.wildpolitics.co/books)

## DR MARGI PRIDEAUX

International wildlife policy writer, negotiator and academic.

### PALM OIL OR TUNA: INTENT OR RESULTS

Palm oil giants have been burning tropical rainforest, opening up massive peat swamps and installing extensive networks of canals across Indonesian and Malaysian rainforests for decades. These activities are the largest sources of carbon pollution in the world today. The World Resources Institute estimated that the 2015 Indonesian fires produced more carbon pollution than the emissions from the whole of US economic activity over the same period– bumping Indonesia from the sixth-largest emitter in 2015, up to the fourth-largest in just six weeks.

Even when palm oil plantations are established without fire clearing, they still devastate vast areas of land to make way for one single crop—a crop that supports nothing but itself.

Palm oil is used in the manufacture of pre-packaged food, cosmetics, cleaning products, hair care, soaps and personal care items. It's also used to produce biodiesel. Indonesia already provides 52 percent of the world's palm oil supply. In 2014, almost 11 million hectares of oil palm plantations – owned by Indonesian, Malaysian and Singaporean companies – were exporting 33 million tons of palm oil, reaping revenues of US\$18.4 billion. The figure is even higher now. The conservation solution to this devastating growth has been to regulate through market choice. The poster child for this option is the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) that exists 'to transform markets to make sustainable palm oil the norm'.

As a market mechanism, I am confident the Roundtable has an impact. But, this market solution presumes that the consumption of vast quantities of palm oil is still a good thing, regardless of the biodiversity that is lost to its production. And, it turns a blind eye to the subjugation of communities, including their non-human members, who have lived for thousands of years where palm oil plantations wish to expand. The human cost of this battle is tragic, but there is another innocent caught in cross-fire – the gentle 'person of the forest' – Sumatran orangutans who be extinct in the next few decades, and Bornean orangutans soon after that.

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Consumers are being urged to buy MSC (Marine Stewardship Council) certified fish, and RSPO certified palm oil products, with the impression that the sustainability threshold has already been achieved. In most cases, the sustainability branding speaks of intent, not actual results. The consumer is being fed a half truth.

Another market mechanism is quickly building its prominence on our supermarket shelves. This is the coveted blue tick of the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) that has been building up market certification mechanisms over many of the world's tuna fisheries.

There has been some recent promotions surrounding one of the better tuna fisheries in the Western Central Pacific. I've been watching this fishery for awhile, and have read the annual assessor reports as they've been published. Pacific Island countries are globally recognised as leaders in tuna management and conservation. But, this does not mean that distant water fleets are not over-harvesting the fishery. Under the MSC conditions evidence that the harvest strategy is responsive to the stocks is not available. To meet the MSC standards, a fishery must be able to 'demonstrate that it does not put at risk population levels of species caught incidentally (bycatch), yet a number of these certified fisheries still catch silky shark and oceanic whitetip sharks, dolphins, turtles and whale sharks. There is a strong focus on building the capacity of local enterprises to process the fish. On the surface this is great, and I commend it. What is not visible is if powerful multinational companies abide by the rules, or find ways around them, damaging the local efforts.

## Intent or results?

My scepticism sounds like I am undermining something inherently good. That's not my aim. I salute the conservationist seeking to push palm oil towards less damaging practice. I admire the Pacific Island countries for taking up the MSC challenge, and for standing in front, as the world-leaders they are.

My doubt is if the sustainability goals are being achieved or if they remain a dream. And this is the crux of my problem.

Consumers are being urged to buy MSC certified fish, and RSPO certified palm oil products, with the impression that the sustainability threshold has already been achieved. In most cases, the sustainability branding speaks of intent, not actual results. The consumer is being fed a half truth.



<https://pixabay.com/en/tuna-fish-tuna-fish-catch-scales-954073/>

In the case of tuna caught in the Western Central Pacific, despite the pole and line method, there is still bycatch. Because so many other regions are fishing the same stock, no-one is sure if the removal of fish are sustainable. And, the Pacific Islands are still in the early stages of establishing their processing capacity. The intent is good, but they are not there yet.

For Roundtable certified palm oil, vast areas of land have still been cleared. A huge debt of biodiversity has been wiped out. Through the certification, companies have made a commitment to do better and risk the revoking of their certification if they don't. But, the timeline involved is often long, and the potential for significant damage in the interim remains high.

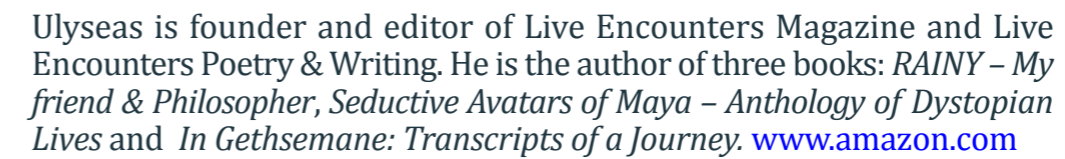
Yet, too often the market is congratulated for this intent and not held to account for its action. The market can be a powerful tool, but market mechanisms are not perfect, and the simplified messages promoted to consumers are often misleading.

Is palm oil harvested under the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil genuinely sustainable? No, it is not. It is still a mono-crop that has displaced many species and destroyed vast areas of habitat. Is it better that the free for all that existed before? Yes, it probably is. Although there are serious problems with some of the inherent assumptions in the certification process.

Is MSC certified tuna better than the other tuna fisheries? Yes, absolutely. And by a significant margin. But, the management is still not perfect, and there is some distance the travel before it lives up to the blue-tick.

What people need to understand is that these market mechanisms speak to intent, not necessarily results. Many tuna species are still seriously overfished, and removing vast quantities of these important animals still has impacts on marine ecosystems. Orangutans and many hundreds of other species are still at the brink because their habitat is gone.

The wild world needs us to do better. The market is not the answer.



The present hysteria about the sanctity of ruminating four legged critters, cows, appears to be a mish-mash of politics, creative interpretation of beliefs and regional power play. It is fuelled by a new found righteous indignation. Animal and human rights have no place in this debate. It would appear that the cow has suddenly been elevated to divinity. Innocent people falsely accused of eating the meat of cows or trading in them have been lynched by thugs purporting to represent Hinduism. Will the relatives of these murdered folk receive justice from the state? Or will the killings be viewed as divine retribution?

**Number of People of religion eating beef/buffalo meat** Source: NSSO Rounds 55, 61, 68

	1999-2000	2004-05	2011-12
Hinduism	18,997,777	14,411,054	12,561,61
Islam	48,056,882	53,687,670	63,499,403
Christianity	6,946,656	7,418,979	6,546,099
Sikhism	83,488	75,428	2,457
Jainism	23,433	-	1,000
Buddhism	548,100	823,456	609,875
Zoroastrianism	1,551	1,418	0
Others	368,068	384,912	284,562

Further, according to data, there is regional variation in consumption of buffalo/beef among Hindus. Southern States have the maximum number of Hindus eating beef/buffalo meat — the highest in A.P. (32.8 lakh) followed by Tamil Nadu (31.4 lakh), Kerala (15.5 lakh) and Karnataka (9 lakh) **The Hindu, December 02, 2016.**

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/%E2%80%98More-Indians-eating-beef-buffalo-meat%E2%80%99/article16085248.ece>

## BEEF ABOUT COWS

It is a blessing to be a bovine in India. However, not all bovines are sacred. Especially the millions of stray cattle that continue to roam the streets of India. You can see them wandering around defecating and munching on plastic bags at garbage dumps or garbage mindlessly discarded by civic conscious citizens anywhere and everywhere... and fornicating in public, giving birth and then being milked at night by their owners...the contaminated milk being sold to unsuspecting customers.

“When the holy cow is alive, it is divine. We are less than the cows. The moment that animal dies, it ceases to be sacred. Then, those who worshipped it while it was alive will not touch it. They are desperate to get rid of it. You would think that if something was sacred, it would remain sacred always. But no. At that point, they remember us. Everybody comes down to earth in death.” - [Dalit](#), [Hindu untouchable](#)  
*The Dalits traditionally perform such work as they are the lowest caste in the hierarchy of the system in India.* The Hindu [LINK](#)

It is a blessing to be a bovine in India. However, not all bovines are sacred. Especially the millions of stray cattle (cows) that continue to roam the streets of India. You can see them wandering around defecating, munching on plastic bags at garbage dumps or garbage mindlessly discarded by civic conscious citizens anywhere and everywhere...fornicating in public, giving birth and then being milked at night by their owners...the contaminated milk being sold to unsuspecting customers. One doesn't see stray buffaloes roaming the streets. I suppose buffaloes are of high commercial value whilst cows are merely divinity on four legs. And while we are on the subject of the divinity of cows let us include the other animals – dogs, rats, snakes, monkeys, elephants, whales, dolphins etc. what about their divine right?

It is a common sight to see injured cows hobbling around in pain - the result of vehicles having run over them, the result of being beaten by persons or from dog bites. Religion is not a bar towards sublime cruelty to animals. Buffaloes may be killed, eaten and their body parts used to make various products. Cows, however, are a good sauce to spice religious fundamentalism to tackle, perhaps, the perceived rising influence of other religions. Otherwise why will state governments ban cow slaughter?

In hindsight this ban is commendable. Why bother with the hundreds of millions of Indians living from hand to mouth. Why bother with caste politics...a proven system of inbuilt racism for millennia, which is perpetrated with religious zeal? Why bother about youngsters being killed by their own parents for marrying outside one's caste? Why bother with the utterances of a former High Court judge who claims that peacocks don't have sex because it is written in the Hindu religious texts, and that peahens get pregnant by swallowing the tears of peacocks. The same judge had recommended life imprisonment for the killing of a cow and further suggested that the bovine should be declared the national animal. One supposes that the life of a tiger is now of secondary importance.

This is the paradox that is India. A country that has given the world Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. A country whose contribution to science and technology is second to none. Yet it remains prisoner to an asinine medieval-like inheritance that defies common sense. Certain Hindus are using the cow as an excuse to enforce an ideology on the populace that will in all likelihood create schisms where there were none and alarmingly become the *new normal* for killing, on pretext, anyone deemed to have hurt the bovine and (by default) the religious sentiments of over one billion Hindus.

MARK ULYSEAS



Cow lying dead on the road. It died after eating a discarded plastic bag filled with organic waste. Pic © Mark Ulyseas

For these people I have a message: The term Hindu/Hinduism does not refer to a religion. It is a geographical term. The followers of the Sanātana Dharma (Hindus?) believe in a perennial philosophy far removed from the present day casteism, bigotry and religious chauvinism; A philosophy that teaches one that all life is sacred and how to live in harmony with all living things; A philosophy central to the well spring of life itself.

Sanātana Dharma gives reverence to individual spiritual experience over any formal religious doctrine. Wherever the Universal Truth is manifest, there is Sanātana Dharma — whether it is in a field of religion, art or science, or in the life of a person or community. Wherever the Universal Truth is not recognized, or is scaled down and limited to a particular group, book or person, even if done so in the name of God, there Sanātana Dharma ceases to function, whatever the activity is called. [LINK](#)

Most Indians are concerned about basic food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, clean drinking water, paved roads, transport, law and order, education and toilet facilities. The life and times of a bovine does not feature in their hopes and dreams. Just ask those in far flung villages across the country, subsistence farmers and the millions existing on the periphery of modern society. They are devout, god fearing and follow the rituals of their ancestors/faith and do not impose such beliefs on others. And they carry themselves with great dignity. These people are the true representatives of a civilisation called India. And not those who seek to distort the universal principles of the Sanātana Dharma.

The present beef about cows is not the real issue. This much abused benign bovine is being used as a hammer to impose the diktat of those seeking to recreate an India that did not exist. But will exist, perhaps, if the slaughter (with political connivance) of those Indians accused of eating beef or trading in the bovine continues to grow unchecked across the country.

The only *blessed* creatures in India are people who believe in the sanctity of all living things and follow this in their daily lives. But they are a fast dwindling species, a species overwhelmed by an insidious form of religious fervour cloaked in spurious nationalism. What a tragedy.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om



Reports suggest more than 500 cows have died in the Hingonia Bovine Animal Rehabilitation Centre in Jaipur. (Express Photo by Rohit Jain Paras) Indian Express, August 2016. [LINK](#)

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## TEMPPELIAUKIO CHURCH

PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
MIKYOUNG CHA

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Temppeliaukio Church, *Temppeliaukion kirkko*, is a Lutheran church in Helsinki, Finland. It is also known as Church of the Rock and Rock Church. It has been beautifully carved directly into rock. The roof is a dome lined with copper while an ice-age crevice is the altarpiece.

A pervasive spiritual presence embraces this magnificent creation to God.



A



B



C



D



E



F



G

Candess M. Campbell, PhD is the author of the #1 Best-selling book on Amazon, *12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine and Live Intuitively: Journal the Wisdom of your Soul*. She is an internationally known Author, Speaker, Intuitive Coach and Mentor and Psychic Medium. She specializes in assisting others to regain their own personal power, develop their intuition and live a life of abundance, happiness, and joy. She specializes in DNA Activation and Karmic Clearing with a group of Ascended Masters called [The Lords of Karma](#), who have been guiding her since she was young. Her business, *Vesta Enterprises* is committed to assisting others to become self-aware and to make positive changes in a safe environment that increases their personal power and enjoyment of life. Dr. Campbell's life work is bridging spirituality and mainstream beliefs to promote and foster healing at all levels. [www.candesscampbell.com](http://www.candesscampbell.com)



## Stress

Emotional signs and symptoms of stress include

- irritability,
- angry outbursts,
- hostility,
- depression,
- jealousy,
- restlessness,
- withdrawal,
- anxiousness,
- diminished initiative,
- hyper-vigilance,
- feeling that things are not real,
- lack of interest in things you used to enjoy,
- crying outbursts,
- being critical of others,
- self-deprecation,
- nightmares,
- impatience,
- lack of hope,
- narrowed focus,
- obsessive rumination,
- lack of self-esteem,
- insomnia,

and either overeating or loss of appetite.

**I have provided you with the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. It is a standard test developed initially in 1967 by two psychiatrists, Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe. This test was published as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). Using Life Change Units (LCU), they were able to correlate the relationship between stress and illness in participants.**

Many people think about stress as being specific to negative happenings in their lives, but stress actually occurs from both negative and positive situations. In fact, your energy system picks up a great amount of stress without you even being aware. What's wonderful, however, is that your body is amazing at moving back into balance.

You may remember a time when something happened suddenly and unexpectedly, and you immediately went into a heightened state of awareness. Your body is set up with a protective mechanism toward "fight" or "flight." This reaction creates an outpouring of adrenaline and other hormones into your blood stream, which produces a number of protective changes in your body. This flood provides you with the energy and strength to either fight or flee from the situation. Here, your heart rate increases, allowing more blood flow to your muscles, brain, and heart. Your breathing also increases to a faster pace in order to take in more oxygen, and your muscles tense in preparation for action. You become mentally alert, and your senses become more aware so that you can assess the situation and act quickly. In addition to this, your blood sugar, fats, and cholesterol increase for extra energy. There is a rise in your platelets and blood clotting ability, which prevents hemorrhaging in case of injury.

Most of the time though, you don't have this fight-or-flight response. Instead, there is a steady stream of stressors that increase and decrease as the day goes on. You become accustomed to the stress and then see it as normal, and all the while it is taking a toll on your body. You may find you compare yourself to others and then think that you don't have it so bad, or that your stress is worse than others, which creates more stress. If this makes you wonder about your own stress level I have provided you with the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale. It is a standard test developed initially in 1967 by two psychiatrists, Thomas Holmes and Richard Rahe. This test was published as the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS). Using Life Change Units (LCU), they were able to correlate the relationship between stress and illness in participants. In 1970, Rahe implemented another test, which assessed the reliability of the stress scale as a predictor of illness.

**Take a moment to evaluate your stress level with this test - [Life Events Stress Scale](#).** Having taken the stress test, you may be surprised by the results. If you find you do not have many of the stressors listed but still struggle with stress, understand that although we share a human experience, we all experience life differently.

In addition to understanding what stresses you, you may also experience physical symptoms of stress such as increased heart rate, pounding heart, elevated blood pressure, sweaty palms, headache, trembling, twitching, stuttering, sleep disturbances, fatigue, shallow breathing, dry mouth, cold hands, itching, being easily startled, chronic pain, susceptibility to illness, and tightness in the chest, neck, jaw, and back muscles.

You know your body more than anyone else. Taking an inventory of yourself can be life changing!

Emotional signs and symptoms of stress include irritability, angry outbursts, hostility, depression, jealousy, restlessness, withdrawal, anxiousness, diminished initiative, hyper-vigilance, feeling that things are not real, lack of interest in things you used to enjoy, crying outbursts, being critical of others, self-deprecation, nightmares, impatience, lack of hope, narrowed focus, obsessive rumination, lack of self-esteem, insomnia, and either overeating or loss of appetite.

In addition to taking the Holmes and Rahe Stress test mentioned earlier, before you make changes, figure out on a scale from 1–10 how stressed you feel in your life. Do this with 1 being little or no stress, 5 being a medium level of stress (or being stressed about half the time during the week), and 10 being a high level of stress (or being stressed daily). Make a note of your stress score in your journal so you can test yourself again after using some of the tools outlined for you.

#### **Ways in which you can reduce stress:**

01. Compartmentalize your life—focus on one thing at a time.
02. Set realistic goals and break projects down into manageable pieces.
03. Know your limits and prioritize.
04. Eat healthy and avoid sugary snacks.
05. Decrease or alleviate caffeine altogether.
06. Move your body.
07. Get enough sleep—7 or 8 hours a night is recommended.
08. Decrease or alleviate alcohol altogether.
09. Get massage or receive healthy touch.
10. Become a non-smoker.
11. Practice relaxation.
12. Share with friends.
13. Journal.
14. Create play in your life!
15. Listen to your body and your emotions.

This is just a beginning for you to start reducing stress in your life. Often when you change your behaviors, you do not notice a difference at first. You may want to put this list on the refrigerator or a mirror and practice for six months to see how your life changes. Then assess your stress level on a scale from 1–10 again and see how much you have improved. You know your body more than anyone else. Taking an inventory of yourself can be life changing! A short video that teaches you to ground your energy and relax is at [Link](#). You can do this daily to teach your body to relax. For more information [12 Weeks to Self-Healing: Transforming Pain through Energy Medicine](#).

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## SUTLU NURIYE

### LIGHTER BAKLAVA WITH HAZELNUTS IN MILKY SYRUP

Sutlu Nuriye is a delicious Turkish dessert; similar to baklava but lighter with its milk based syrup. Crushed hazelnuts are used in the filling here and works wonderfully with the milky syrup, which gives Sutlu Nuriye a whitish look. Sutlu Nuriye is lighter, creamier than baklava and really easy to make at home, using filo pastry sheets. They have been a huge hit with the children, as well as adults in our home, great for entertaining.

Sutlu Nuriye believed to be created due to the supply shortage in 1980s. Rather than the expensive pistachios, a baklava producer used hazelnuts and flavored with milk for lighter syrup. The result has been today's popular Sutlu Nuriye, a delicious, lighter version of the regular baklava.

You can prepare Sutlu Nuriye a day ahead of time and keep it in a cool place; always serve at room temperature. I hope you enjoy this soft, light, melt-in-the mouth Sutlu Nuriye, a variation of baklava in milky syrup. Turkish coffee or Turkish tea, cay aside complements Sutlu Nuriye very well.

*Afiyet Olsun,*

*Ozlem*



Pour in the luke warm milky syrup over cooled cooked filo pastry and let the pastry to soak the milky syrup for 35- 40 minutes. Pic © Ozlem Warren

**Serves: 30 pieces**

### Ingredients:

- 270 gr x 2 packs of filo pastry sheets (12 filo sheets in total; each sheet 480 mm x 255 mm each)
- 200 gr/4 oz. /a little less than 1 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 340 gr/ 12 oz. chopped/crushed hazelnuts
- For the syrup:
- 16 fl. oz. / 2 cups water
- 12 fl oz. / 1 ½ cup whole milk
- 270 gr/ 1½ cup sugar

### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 180 C/ 350 F
2. Take out the fresh filo pastry sheets from the fridge and bring to room temperature 20 minutes prior using. To thaw frozen filo sheets, it is best to place them in the fridge the night before or bring it to room temperature 2 hours before using.
3. Grease the baking dish with the melted butter.
4. Place two filo pastry sheets to the baking dish (trim the sheets at the edges if necessary to fit into your baking dish) and brush with the melted butter.
5. Place 2 more filo pastry sheets and brush with the melted butter. Place another two sheets over them and brush with melted butter.



Light, melt-in-the mouth Sutlu Nuriye, a variation of baklava in milky syrup. Pic © Ozlem Warren

6. Crush the hazelnuts in a food processor, carefully pulsing a just few times or chop by hand (take care for the hazelnuts not go too small pieces or fine).
7. Spread the chopped hazelnuts evenly on the 6th sheet of buttered filo pastry.
8. Lay two more sheets of filo pastry and brush with melted butter. Repeat this 2 more times, buttering every two sheets, until you reach 12th sheet.
9. Brush the 12th sheet of filo pastry with butter and ease the sheets into the corners and trim the edges if necessary.
10. Then using a sharp knife, cut right through all the layers to form small square pieces. It should make about 30 pieces in total.
11. Bake the pastry in the preheated oven (180 C/ 350 F) for 25 minutes, until golden at top.
12. While the pastry is baking, prepare your syrup.
13. Put the sugar into a heavy pan, pour in water and bring to the boil, stirring all the time. Once the sugar is dissolved, lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.
14. Pour in the milk to the pan, give a good stir to the syrup and turn the heat off. Leave the pan aside to cool down; the syrup needs to be luke warm to pour over cooked filo pastry.
15. Once the filo pastry is cooked and golden at top, take out of the oven and leave it aside to cool down for 15 minutes.
16. Slowly pour in the luke warm milky syrup over cooled cooked filo pastry and let the pastry to soak the milky syrup for 35- 40 minutes.
17. Once milky syrup is absorbed by the pastry, take out the Sutlu Nuriye squares and serve at room temperature.
18. You can prepare Sutlu Nuriye a day ahead of time and keep in a cool place, covered.

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