



WSC Meeting in Kalimantan



Those attending the WSC meeting in Kalimantan.

I Love Kalimantan

A short update on the WSC Meeting in Kalimantan in February 2023. Text and photos by Ashwin Rajaraman...

It started in Assisi when we went for the Zone 3/4 meeting – there were some difficulties and tension around the relationship between SDIA and WSA for which we did some testing with 4 IHs, 3 SDIA Directors and a couple of WSA/WSC members.

Subsequently, the SDIA Board received an invitation from the IHs to attend the WSC Meeting in Kalimantan to continue the process and resolve the issue if possible – and that is how I ended up there, as a member of the SDIA Board.

I had been to the WSC Meeting in 2019 in Cilindak and left after 3 days – didn't feel right, observers were just supposed to listen and not ask any questions or give any comments and it felt like 'OK, you are here, but really what are you doing here anyway?!'

At the end of the 2023 WSC meeting in the closing plenary, I mentioned this and added: I like Cilindak, but I love Kalimantan. And this WSC meeting was inclusive, connected in the inner and >

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it felt like we were not only welcomed but actively encouraged to participate and contribute – I felt and saw a sea change and said as much...

So, what did we discuss? What did we achieve? And what were the important decisions? And how is Kalimantan anyway? Should we even go there for the World Congress?

The short answer is yes, everyone should try and attend the World Congress in Kalimantan – it is a beautiful place for the inner, connected and nourished with showcases for putting the Latihan into practice – two particular projects touched my heart, but more of that later in the next issue.

It was bad for the outer, sweating and pouring, hot and humid – but hey, as they say here, if you don't bother about the weather, the weather won't bother you.



The Muhammad Subuh Centre, venue for the WSC meeting in Rungan Sari.



The Opening Plenary Session inside the MSC.

Latihan to permeate and create a culture of decision making at the project level – a job entrusted to the IHs now to ensure all KCs, National Helpers and Group Helpers in the respective countries are informed and facilitated to ensure this process is adhered to and all project members are attuned to this, to work from the inner and use the latihan more and more and as much as possible.

World Congress

The World Congress will go on as scheduled tentatively between 4th and 14th Jan 2024 – we discussed and agreed on a first cut draft agenda which will be further refined during the ensuing 11 months – we visited the one major site for the WC Plenaries in Palangkaraya (Bahalap Hotel) and looked at 2 options in Rungan Sari in addition – the Borneo Football Academy and the BCU School - to complement the Hotel in Palangkaraya.

One of the significant offshoots, at least for me, was the daily morning Wings meeting, hosted by Gaye Thavisin, where we talked, discussed and worked on a Joint Wings programme for the entire duration of the WC – both at Palangkaraya and Rungan Sari, but primarily at the latter.

We presented this to the Council in terms of a

WSA and SDIA

First off the list, did we resolve the issue between SDIA and WSA? Well, yes and no. Yes, because we had a full day for this with testing and discussion and sharing and looking for ways to work together and I would say there was substantial progress though it was not fully resolved.

We agreed to treat each other with respect, forgive each other our shortcomings and work towards better communication and co-ordination and more frequent meetings with the entire council once a quarter.

An important offshoot of this process is for the



Rusdi Bustillo, Muhammad Bachrun Bustillo, Harris Madden and Kohar Parra Bustillo. All involved in the preparations for World Congress.

map, ideas, and actionable details and hopefully you will see an integrated, connected and jointly organized programme, if the ideas are accepted and implemented...

Muhammad Subuh Foundation

MSF made a presentation and some important decisions as well which I will cover in detail in the next issue but suffice to say that there was indeed joviality and friendship in their meetings as well as serious discussion on the process of appointing trustees (testing as primary criteria, with specific questions for testing), the relationship between MSF and WSA, the need for Kejiwaan to permeate working and decision making, the relationship between MSF and member Countries, state of some MSF Properties, update on PCB Project in Rungan Sari, etc.

New Website

A new website <https://subud.org> was showcased, which has been developed in WordPress by an outsourcing partner and which will now move to the IT Team for hosting and maintenance with a separate team for content creation as well. Modalities were discussed for this process which will be fine-tuned soon.

Two presentations were made on Archives by Mathew Moir who explained what has been done so far, what remains to be done and the amount of money involved and needed, in a well-made presentation with details. The new Canberra facilities would cost \$185,000.

We also discussed and had sessions on the History of Subud Project, SESI and its challenges, Youth and their aspirations and challenges, SIHA, the importance of Communication and a common Newsletter for WSA, how to involve member countries in and for WC Proposals, the Whitebook Guidelines, the need for a Shared Support Services Organization (proposed by the Wings) and WSA Finances, etc.

Kalimantan Projects

The SDIA team did what it had to – visited all the projects in and around Kalimantan – six of them in all, many with brothers and sisters who had come to attend the WSC Meeting.

We held discussions separately with each of them in addition, on their plans for the World Congress, their challenges and updates, what help if any they needed from the SDIA Network, and what they could offer to help organize the WC and what they needed to make it happen in terms of infrastructure, money, etc.

This was perhaps the highlight for the SDIA Board Members who understood not only the challenges but what was needed to make it a reality.

International Helpers

The IHs did what they usually do with aplomb and meticulous ease – on the very first day, we tested together about the purpose of the meeting, our attitude and how we should be, etc.

Several sessions followed with testing for Subud Culture, issues around declining membership, WC, SDIA and others, like the content of each of the wings over the days and one IH even doubled up as a translator for many, many sessions.

As I said before, they were good in Assisi. They were even better here. Thanks guys, really appreciate all the hard work.

Anything else?

Was it all only meetings and more meetings and nothing else? No, there was fun, entertainment almost every evening, an opening ceremony replete with choral singing by BCU School students >



A silent witness. Orang Utan on the banks of the Rungan River.

and tribal and Dayak dancing, two nights of Bapak's talks (67 TJK 5) with one more of Ibu Rahayu and live entertainment by the youth and members of the Rungan Sari Community.

In addition we had a Birthday party and forest walks and trips to see the wild orangutans on the banks of the Rungan river. And we had Ibu Ismana and Ibu Yati gracing us with their august presence as well.

When I said earlier, I loved Kalimantan, I really meant it. Like Amanecer in distant Colombia, this place connected me with the inner like no other. Rungan Sari was very unlike what I had expected it to be – I came actually with trepidation hearing stories of the weather and the place, but I was indeed pleasantly surprised and actually quite nourished by the environs and surroundings.

Yes, life is tough here and it is not an easy place – but if you want to do something with determination and effort, then this is the place to be.

And yours truly went off to Tanjung Puting for a couple of days to see wildlife and birds from where this short report is being sent, while cruising on the Sekonyer river – and still there is the Zone 1/2 Meeting to attend shortly in addition to visiting a few SDIA Projects. Stay tuned.

To see a video of celebratory dancing at the Opening Ceremony, click below:
<https://youtu.be/5eqZycEJXu4>

“ Like Amanecer in distant Colombia, this place connected me to my inner like no other...”

Issues in the Subud Organisation

From the editor, with a reflection by Sharif Horthy, a former chair of the World Subud Association...

As the forthcoming World Congress in Kalimantan approaches, naturally enough, there is a lot of discussion in Subud about things like the WSA (World Subud Association) constitution.

In the last issue of Subud voice, we referred to a document issued by the current WSA Chair, Nahum Harlap, entitled OBSERVATIONS AND PROPOSALS.

We focused on a particular issue which Nahum brings up, the relationship between the WSA and SDIA (Susila Dharma International Association). The relationship between these entities has been a subject for discussion for many years.

Not everyone agrees with everything that Nahum says, but he is to be congratulated for having produced a document which draws together the various threads and serves as a foundation for discussion.

We balanced Nahum's account of the WSA/SDIA issue by inviting a statement from Virginia Thomas who has been involved with Susila Dharma for many years.

The Aims of Subud

Nahum's document is critical in some respects of the 10 Aims of Subud. Rather than repeat everything that he said in the article in our last issue about the aims of Subud, we have attached the complete document as a click through. But for instance, he says in OBSERVATIONS AND PROPOSALS...

It is my contention that the WSA is neither intended nor is it equipped to execute 5&6, and SDIA, to which this is mostly delegated, shouldn't take it upon themselves, either. . Rather, the role of the WSA (or, in these matters, SDIA) is to support and coordinate members' initiatives.

Another, related concern, is the current list of 10 aims encourages members to identify with some elements, closer to their hearts, rather than others, and in that, this list of aims makes it hard to see their underlying unity.

In this context I was interested to read a statement by Sharif Horthy, a former chair of the WSA, and Sharif has given permission to reproduce it here. Sharif says...

"I'm pretty sure that Bapak really intended that one day the WSA would be responsible for delivering on aims number 4 to 9 as they are currently stated in the WSA constitution. This may be hard for you & me to imagine in to-day's situation, where Subud is such a tiny organization with meagre funding and even aims 1 to 3 and 10 are a stretch. I can see that it might be tempting to streamline >

and simplify our aspirations, but I believe it would be a big mistake. Aspirations are very important.

"Take Indonesia, a remarkable country of more than 10,000 islands, 700 languages and innumerable tribes. How does it maintain its unity and its social fabric? Well, there is the national motto, 'unity in diversity' and the state philosophy Pancasila, the five pillars. Is Pancasila a true description of Indonesian society? Certainly not, but I

have witnessed many times how its shared presence in everyone's mind has a huge impact in the real world. It encourages key people to act idealistically from time to time and shames wrongdoers. How many countries could do with something like that!

"I'm pretty sure that the 10 aims in the WSA constitution were formulated by Varindra in the 80s, based on his more than 30 years of intently listening to Bapak, especially at congresses where Bapak tended to set out in detail the future of Subud as an organisation. For a time, starting in 1985, I was less involved in Subud affairs, so Garrett would be able to give you more depth on the provenance of the 10 aims. I can say however that the 10 aims certainly express the hundreds of talks I have listened to and interpreted, where Bapak lays out his strategy for making Subud known in the world through members' enterprises funding projects aimed at human welfare."

The Issue of the International Wings

In OBSERVATIONS AND PROPOSALS, Nahum also looks at issues involving the other "wings", not just Susila Dharma.

He points out that it is difficult to generalise about the wings because there are so many different kinds of relationships between the various wings and the WSA.

However, one suggestion that Nahum makes has been controversial. This is that wings such as SICA (Subud International Cultural Association) should no longer have an international chairperson, but that the energies and administration of these bodies should devolve back to national organisations. He writes...

Unfortunately, SICA, certainly on the international level, seems to have very little to do at this point and has barely been active. I think that a serious discussion about its function and future is overdue. It is highly likely that SICA, while being an independent affiliate so that it may attract external funding, has actually become a financial burden on the WSA with little justification for its continued independent existence as an affiliate - though it may still have a role to play at the national level.

I am one of those who hopes this idea does not go ahead. I see it as weakening the thrust of Subud in the world. Of course, there may be problems and issues with these bodies that should be fixed, and of course the wings are sometimes more ideas, hopes and dreams rather than present realities in what they are actually able to accomplish. Of course, they are underfunded, and they may be inadequate in other ways.

But I feel that what Sharif says above in regard to the aims, also applies to the wings. And even though in many cases, the current practice of having an international presence for the wings, seems more like a dream than a reality, nevertheless, I believe we would really be losing something should this suggestion of the devolving the wings back to only national entities be taken up.

I would apply what Sharif says above to the 10 aims, also to this issue about the international aspect of the wings. They may not yet have fulfilled their purpose but they remain inspirational and aspirational. Sharif writes...

"Here's what clinched it for me: one day in the 1980s I was working with Bapak on his correspondence, and he suddenly turned to me and said, 'One day Subud will be like the Red Cross. Wherever on earth there is some commotion or disturbance, they will call on Subud to come and make peace.' That doesn't sound like an organisation that easily gives up on its aspirations.

"It seems to me that today more than ever, with the material forces increasingly looming over >



We need to re-envision the World Subud Association as an organisation that is serious about wanting Bapak's mission to succeed, both spiritually and in the world.



humanity, we need to dust off our aspirations in Subud and re-envisage the World Subud Association as an organisation that is serious about wanting Bapak's mission to succeed, both spiritually and in the world."

To read the article that appeared in the last issue of SV, in which Nahum spoke in detail about the Aims of Subud, click: <https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Issues.pdf>

To read Nahum's complete document OBSERVATIONS AND PROPOSALS, click:

<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Nahum-Harlap-WSA-suggestions.pdf>

He welcomes direct comments: nahum.harlap@subud.org

Proposals Affecting WSA Bylaws

Muchtar Rawlings, Zone 1 & 2 Representative, (zone1and2@subud.org) writes...

Please see the proposals affecting WSA Bylaws drafted by some member countries, to be discussed and considered for the World Congress.

The proposals received from member countries are contained in the following google drive folder:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1c2JbZov95bQpJmA480MTd1gcAMltrQ6F?usp=sharing>

Please note that the content of these proposals are still under discussion and consultation with the council and amongst the Zone Representatives, however they are being circulated to member countries prior to one year before a Congress (WSA Bylaws, article 10.2)

These are being sent so all the countries can know the proposals, discuss, and share comments etc, in preparation to the World Congress.

<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/By-laws-Members-WSA-Voting.pdf>

<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Member-Proposals.pdf>

Guidelines for World Congress

The World Subud Council informs...

For the information of members and delegates, the WSC and WSA Executive have put together guidelines for the various processes to take place leading up to and during the coming World Congress, in Kalimantan, January 2024. [Click the link below:](#)

https://subudworldnews.com/userfiles/news/documents/2023/January/GUIDELINES_FOR_SUBUD_WORLD_CONGRESS_2024_-20221218v2.pdf

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But we also ask that you do not send on the .pdf of Subud Voice or the link to it to anyone else, as our financial viability depends on people subscribing.

Irwan Wyllie has joined the Subud Voice team specifically to work on the subscriptions area. He is well known in the Subud world and is currently the CEO of Australia's Susila Dharma project, Dharma CARE. He is working on group subscriptions at a reduced rate, particularly for countries in the Third World where few individuals can afford the individual subscription.

He has been contacting every national committee in the world whose contact information he could find offering them the possibility of a group subscription at a discounted rate.

If you are a group or national chair, please contact us at the email below if you think a group subscription would be helpful in your situation.

Kitka Hitula, our Webmaster, has also been a tower of strength in setting up our system and refining it as we go along.

75 people have subscribed bringing in a total of \$4500 and with some extra donations received we are now over \$5000 which is a third of our budget for the year. Still a long way to go.

[Best wishes to you all from Harris, Marcus, Kitka and Irwan \[subudvoice@gmail.com\]\(mailto:subudvoice@gmail.com\)](#)

Interview with Raymond Lee PART 2

Harris Smart concludes his interview with Raymond Lee in which they talk about his work as a translator and other activities he's involved in Jakarta...

Harris: How did you feel when you were being asked to do the interpreting for Ibu? Did you feel apprehensive, or did you feel this is something that I can do?

Raymond: Well, before being asked to do it for Ibu, I did do one trip with Bapak, I think it was his last trip to England. I was asked to accompany Bapak with Muti and Ibu Rahayu when Bapak was having a cataract operation. He gave two or three talks which were videoed.

I felt totally inadequate. I felt completely inadequate. I had the same feeling when I was asked to start translating Bapak's talks. At some point, to help the translation of the volumes, Sharif and Tuti, or someone suggested asking Raymond to join the team. I was assigned some talks and I remember, I was translating a talk about Bapak describing the creation of the Universe and the angels and the creation of man and what was going on at that point. Again, I felt the same thing, that I completely inadequate to the task, completely inadequate! How can I ever translate this? That was my sense of it.

In terms of translating for Ibu, there's always anxiety before a talk. People ask me, how do I translate for Ibu, and the answer is, I must become very, very quiet. Kind of empty. I would generally shut myself down on that day and try and avoid things that I knew would annoy me. If you notice the videos of me talking, you will see that I have my eyes closed most of the time.

I'm not trying to be super holy or something. I'm just trying to be in a totally quiet space, listening to Ibu and absorbing the talk in my feelings. I close my eyes so that I don't get distracted. The problem is that if I open my eyes and see someone in the audience twiddling with their hand phone instead of sitting listening in a latihan state, I am bound get annoyed and that annoyance will sit and simmer in my feeling and wipe out whatever I was retaining from the talk.

So I learned that when translating for Ibu, on the day, I need to become very, very quiet inside and avoid things which are going to upset me, like the news or text messages or emails or whatever. I just avoid all that for a day, so that I can be as clear as I can when I'm translating.

Harris: Do you recall any special moments of you doing the interpreting?

Raymond: There's an infamous moment during the world congress in Christchurch when Ibu starts talking about how she had received a letter from a member in the States who had told her "Ibu, I can control the weather. If I want it to rain, it rains." I just started laughing and laughing, I couldn't stop laughing. I think it's a well-known moment. I found it so bizarre. Here's a man saying he can control the weather and saying it so sincerely. I found it so funny or silly or whatever, that I couldn't stop laughing. It took me about five minutes to stop. Everybody was wondering what I was laughing about. I think the laugh was on me though, because sometime later, long after the talk in Christchurch, I was in Ibu's house, and she started talking about her own experiences and she said, "Yes, that happened to me too."

Harris: *[laughs]* About the same incident, you mean?

Raymond: Yes. At that moment, I had this chill. I thought, oh, Ibu is serious. It seems to be that sometimes, God lends His power to a human being, to show them that God is all powerful. During Ibu's experiences, she had experiences like that - Bapak had them during his thousand days. Suddenly you can do what is impossible or inconceivable for a human being to do, but only for a very limited time. It's shown to you that yes, God is all powerful. The laugh was on me.

Harris: Okay. You've given a lot of your time to interpreting for Ibu, and that could be thought of as a service to Subud. How do you balance that against other things in your life? I know you've had some success in Indonesian TV, so is there a balance there? Do you feel sometimes a benefit



comes to you from providing that service?

Raymond: I think it's a really bad idea to do anything for Subud thinking you'll get something in return. I don't think it works like that. You cannot do it with the expectation of something in return. You see a lot of people praying to God in religion as if it is a negotiation: "I promised God that if He does this for me, I will build a mosque" or "I promised God that if He cures my cancer, I will build this."

I think it's a natural part of us to have expectations, but I don't think it's the right approach. For me, I don't think we can serve Subud. The longer I've been involved in Subud, the more I realise that Subud serves us. God serves us. So how can we serve God? I say that, because, if I think back over my life and what's happened to me since joining Subud, everything I have, everything I am, has come out of the latihan.

In terms of my being, myself, my personality, the way I think, the way I feel, the things I've done, it's all come out of being brought to life through the latihan and that is the greatest service that we can receive. And when we are doing something, be it working in Subud or working on something involving Subud or working outside Subud, we're trying to use that Life that we've been given in our life, as best we can. In terms of balance, yes, I often ask myself, should I be doing this, or should I do that? I mean, now I'm 68. The most important thing for me is working on the translations of Bapak's talks, which I'm very blessed to be able to do with Sharif and Tuti. We're all getting old.

I think we're somewhere about halfway through the translations. There's probably another ten years of work there. So, I put that first in that I do some every day or try to: a couple of hours here, a couple of hours there. I fit everything else in around that, I try to keep that at the core.

I get so much out of working on translations, it's just such a gift, and over and over again, I get an understanding or immediate response to a question I have from what I've been translating.

I'll just give you one example of that. A few years ago, this guy, Richard Dawkins, was very popular with the book called *The God Myth*, basically arguing that God doesn't exist, that humankind's delusional. That made me angry. He was getting so much attention and fame. Then I translated one of Bapak's talks where Bapak says something like, "If you search for God using the mind, the only answer you can ever achieve, if you're being honest, is that God doesn't exist." Then he adds. "And God doesn't mind." Well, if God doesn't mind that people say God doesn't exist, why should I mind.

So, if you are like Richard Dawkins, if you're using your intellect and being totally truthful and acting with integrity, the only possible answer you will reach is that God doesn't exist. So, you've succeeded, good for you. But if you want to approach it from a different angle, and surrender to a greater power, which is what Subud's all about, then, individually, we can get proof of God's existence in our feeling. You feel it and you sense it. That's just one example of the benefits I found from working on the talks and reading them.

As for balance, well, I have to make money, I have to make a living and I follow whatever seems to be working. You mentioned the TV work, it was successful for a while, but now it's dried up. Why? I don't know why. Everything I've tried since then in that field really hasn't worked. Yet the mediation work that I do now keeps growing.

I keep finding myself in positions that I would never have thought I could ever get to in the mediation world. I don't understand how it happened, but here I am: I'm on a panel for mediators for the World Bank for workplace disputes, and a UN panel for similar workplace disputes for the UN. I am now on a panel - probably the only foreigner - for the Indonesian Financial Services Authority. I don't understand why but that keeps growing, I just follow it.

We have a training institute, which rents space in Bapak's old house in Cilandak, training mediators, it's a very popular course. People keep coming. We've now trained over 2500 people in mediation. They don't all become mediators, by any means, but it's very rewarding. Sometimes people will say to me, "Oh, Raymond, this course changed my life. I've learned I should listen to my son."

Or someone else says, "Oh, this course was so helpful, because I was able to resolve a dispute in my community." It's very rewarding when we get that kind of feedback.

“ *The most important thing for me is working on the translations of Bapak's talks...* ”

“ *The mediation work that I do now also keeps growing...* ”

New Faces in Subud Australia

At the recent Subud Australia Congress there were many old, familiar faces but there were also some very interesting new ones. Here are two of them...

Jared Palpratt

I was born in Mount Isa, a mining town, on the 1st of July 1978. My old man was a fitter and turner and boiler maker. He was a rough diamond, my old man. He was what I would consider an atheist, but my mum, she is a very spiritual woman, and always sees the good in people. They both had different influences on me.

I went to school in Cairns, lived in Mount Isa, Cairns, I moved around Australia a lot. I spend some time overseas. I found anything at school easy; maths, science, all of that was easy. I went to uni and studied chemical engineering.

Then I had a major car accident when I was 17. I was put in a coma. I had 11 spinal fractures, a busted arm, and it made me ask questions about life. There's more to it than just what you see. That was a little bit of a slap up the side of the head.

It was the start of wanting to study osteopathy. I decided I wanted to do something that's going to help other people. I remember looking at the medication they were giving me and the more I looked into it, the more I'm going, "I don't think this is where it's at."

Another influence was that my old man had kidney stones, and he had a couple of heart attacks in his 40s, and the doctors said there wasn't anything they could do for him, but then he met a naturopath and he lived for another 20 years. Natural medicine helped him out, so I think that just gave me a kick in the pants to follow that natural line.

Meeting Maxwell...

I first met Maxwell Fraval through a summer school that he and some other osteopaths offered while I was studying osteopathy at university. He singled me out even before I had finished my course and offered me a job,

He has this thing where he can touch your body and he can connect with you and know all about you. It was really weird because my dad had just passed away and I wasn't answering phone calls when I got his job offer.

He'd called me and left a message. I didn't answer and then a couple of weeks later, I gave him a call, but he'd offered it to one of my mates, but as luck would have it, she didn't want to leave Melbourne.

I called him up and came to Canberra. I did some observations and he offered me a job in his clinic. He put a contract in front of me, I turned to the back page and signed it. Didn't even read it. I was like, "Yes."

In my life, I've had what you would call lots of coincidences, and I'd been talking about getting a job with Maxwell for three years, and then I got the job.

Things of a spiritual nature...

After I moved to Canberra, I would always end up talking to Maxwell and just naturally the conversation would start to turn towards things of a spiritual nature. He would always go, "Oh, yes, I'm in Subud," and I'd go, "What the bloody hell is that?"

I can remember early on, my lady and I going around to Maxwell's place, and we were there until 1:00 or 2:00 in the morning talking. He gave me an introduction about Subud to read.

I read it but I didn't want to go, "Ah, I'm Maxwell, now, I've got to join Subud." I took years of thinking and considering it. Then I went, "You know what, I'll give that a go."



Jared Palpratt.

Then I went to a couple of meetings and met a couple of good blokes there. You rock up and you meet these really good humans, and you go, "Oh, these guys have got this thing, I want a bit of that action."

“ I know that I've become a better human being...”

This is my 10th year working for Maxwell and I've been in Subud for about four years. How have I changed or developed over that period? I reflect on that a lot.

Well, for starters, I know that I'm a better human being, I'm a better father to my children. I am a better partner to my lady. I am a better osteopath.

In Ramadan, I feel like my patients benefit hugely. I am calmer. I try and talk to my children about the spiritual side of life, and I find that quite important. My lady is currently reading a couple of little things about Subud, and I'd like to get her involved, but that's another thing.

I've had some very good teachers and Maxwell is still one of my buddies. He's such a humble dude, he's such a good guy.

Josephine Uusaed

I was born in 1982 in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, and grew up with my mother and sister in a small village in the countryside. It was a very difficult time for us because not only were we going through the breakup of the Soviet Union, but also my parents' marriage came to an end. My mother was always a very hard worker, and we survived but in my memory of my childhood things are grey.

Of course, there were also beautiful moments. I spent lots of time in nature and I loved sports at school. I was quite competitive and fearless, and I remember that in basketball while I was quite small, I would really go for the ball, knocking bigger girls out of the way.

I was independent and not subject to peer pressure. I had a jacket that I loved. It was very warm and made of fur and I loved it so much that I even continued to wear it into May when the weather was already warm enough to wear summer clothes.

At 16, two of my friends and myself went to the capital to take entrance exams hoping to swap schools to be graduated in Tallinn, in the city school. We were crossing an intersection when I was approached by an Italian man who invited me to attend a modelling school run by Baltic Models where I would learn how to walk the catwalk and so on.

Naturally we wondered if this was a legitimate offer, but it so happened that a friend had been to this school who assured me that the school was legitimate, and I would be safe there.

Baltic Princess...

Then Baltic models held a competition to choose the Miss Baltic. I came Baltic Princess #1 or was it #2, I can't remember exactly, but it launched me on my modelling career.

I enjoyed my life as an international model. It gave me an opportunity to meet different cultures and go to places I had never dreamed of going. At various times I lived and worked in New York, Milan, Paris, London, Spain, Tokyo, Israel and many other places. My modelling career went from when I was 17 until I was 26.

But when I was 20, a spiritual crisis came into my life. It took the form of a terrible anxiety where I did not feel safe living in this world. I had an experience that was as if the covering was taken off my brain. I was terrified of my inner and outer life.

It caused me torture not being able to comprehend how the sun is shining, the moon is glowing, or how my body is functioning. I remember catching myself thinking of wanting to leave this life. Since that day there has not been a day not thinking of God.



Josephine Uusaed

Fortunately, I still managed to function in my work, but I was not able to tell anyone about my suffering and sorrow, neither my mother nor my friends. I didn't want to cause more trouble to my mother, nor lose my friend because of my perceived insanity. For 7 years I was in a cocoon which protected me to explore my spiritual trauma.

“ Since that day there has not been a day not thinking of God...”

Becoming an Art Therapist...

When I was 27, I was living in Hong Kong doing fashion design. For a year, I began to see an Art Therapist who guided me to explore the inside and outside the cocoon and inspired me to study Art Therapy myself, as I saw how effective it was for my healing.

Just before leaving Hong Kong and pursuing my dream to study Art Therapy in Estonia I met an Australian and we eventually came to live in Australia. It was a very beautiful marriage.

For over 10 years I devoted myself to providing therapeutic care and safety for those who are vulnerable, while leading and assisting creative, meaningful, healing art workshops.

But about four years ago I began to experience a deep need for God, and this led me to joining Subud. My life has changed since then in many aspects of my life...

I left my marriage, lost my Australian family, changed the place I live and my profession, found myself again and a deep connection to God, enhanced my creativity, resilience, and met many beautiful souls.

Recently I have received a gift for giving massage and with the guidance of the latihan I have my own intuitive form of massage. My remedial massage training, which is from the most trusted college in Perth, allowed me to gather professional knowledge and understanding about the human body, conditions, and prepared me professionally to use my Gift.

I am living in Margaret River where I am in a process of building a straw bale house in an ecovillage. It will be surrounded by a blue garden where I am imagining using my Gift in service of Others – to best assist people's healing process. ●

Resilience in Diversity

Resilience in Diversity is a new book produced by the Illawarra Women's Interfaith Network (I-WIN). Subud member, Alena Kennedy, is an active member of this group which is located in the Illawarra area south of Sydney. She compiled the book which begins with an "acknowledgement of country".

It is worth noting for people outside Australia that the word "country" has taken on a special meaning in Australia in that it refers to the spirituality of aboriginal people which is closely connected to their relationship with country, particularly with the landscape, geography and community where they were born and



Painting by Subud member, Celia Temple, included in the book. >

grew up. The acknowledgement in this book states:

Illawarra women's interfaith network (I-WIN) acknowledges the Wodi Wodi people Dharawal, the traditional owners and custodians of the land throughout the Illawarra region. We recognise all the aboriginal nations who have a continuing connection to the Illawarra and to this country sea, land and community we pay respect to elders past present and emerging.

Nyan Thit Thieu, founder of I-WIN writes...

Supporting each other in our spiritual journey

The Illawarra Women' Interfaith Network (I-WIN) is a community network that brings together women from diverse cultural, faith, work, professional and skills background. I-WIN was first launched in 2010 with 30 women from 16 different faith traditions and a wide range of cultural backgrounds.

We are a dynamic, 'Spirited' group of women who work to promote harmony, mutual understanding and respect within our diverse community. We believe that by building friendships we may dissolve barriers, break stereotypes and change assumptions and perceptions of the 'other'.

We use the words 'faith' and 'spirituality' rather than religion as we believe that this term is more inclusive of the needs of humanity. Those who have professed have no religion at all often have some form of faith or spirituality: faith in one's self or love of nature.

Diversity in nature enhances resilience for survival. Likewise, as a community, we become resilient through our friendships and mutual support. We are stronger together.

There follows a collection of artwork and texts promoting faith and spiritual values. Alena's contribution to the book includes this reflection...

*A moment of eternity
is given to one
To find its potential
And set its image
Like a stamp
Into the earth.*

The book is on sale. If you would like to obtain a copy, contact Alena Kennedy at alenasart@gmail.com

She writes... I'll finish with a quote that a seven year old child said me: "Nobody knows what God's name really is, but it is alright to call him that. It might take a hundred or a thousand years to say God's real name".

Altogether five Subud members are represented in the book: Daphne Alexopoulou, Nuraini Magnusson, Celia Temple, Dahlan Simpson and myself.

If you would like to read a talk which Alena gave about her role in the book, click here:

<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/My-Speech.pdf>



Alena Kennedy with her husband Oliver at the Subud Australia Congress.

Subud Is My Life Forever

An Interview with Amaliya Lerrigo in Kalimantan by Raquel Alcobia...

Raquel: Hi Amaliya could you describe a bit your life so far?

Amaliya: I grew up in a Subud family and I was opened in Subud in 1975. After finishing my studies, I began working in 1975, for S. Widjojo Contractors, where I worked for almost 11 years, until 1986. This experience allowed me to understand the work process which starts with Zat (the Power of God) to Afal (the end result). So I start having a lot of experience working in Subud companies.

Bapak quite often visited the S. Widjojo project and after the building was completed, Bapak got two office spaces in the building. One was in the S. Widjojo contractors office itself, and one was at BSB (Bank Susila Bhakti), so I felt grateful to meet Bapak almost every day, while I was working there.

In 1988 I joined the Wisma Subud Management Board to help manage the Wisma Subud Compound and I did this work until 2010. The work included managing the big Latihan Hall and to make arrangements for the brothers and sisters who wanted to visit Wisma Subud. It is my nature to love meeting people, so that work really fitted me well.

I've lived my life in Subud communities and now I live Kalimantan.

R; So how did you end up living in Kalimantan, and how is your life here?

A: One day Ibu Rahayu and Ibu Hardiyati visited me at home at Wisma Subud after a Yayasan Muhammad Subuh meeting (YMS), and they asked me: "Amaliya, are you willing to work in Rungan Sari to help Mustafa run PT. PCB (Pancaran Cahaya Bahagia)?"

I was surprised by Ibu's unexpected question, and I could not answer her right away. I told her: "I don't know. I'm still responsible for running the Wisma Subud compound". But she said: "I know you can do it."

After Ibu left, I told my husband about what Ibu wanted to me to do, and he just said: "It's up to you - just feel it first." I went to visit Rungan Sari for a few days, and I saw the land, the MSC (Muhammad Subuh Center), the Eco Village, and the Guest House which belongs to PCB.

In those days, the facilities and infrastructure were not very good there, and there was no internet, not much transport, and unreliable electricity. Even food like milk, butter, bread etc. was not available.

I had lived in Jakarta for many years where everything was easy to get, and now I had to move to Central Kalimantan in a time where the province of Central Kalimantan was still behind the other provinces in Indonesia...

So for two years I went back and forth between Wisma Subud and Rungan Sari, but finally, I gave up living in Jakarta because I could not run two places at the same time. That is why for the past 15 years I have been living in Rungan Sari, which is like a magnet; because even when I was in Jakarta, my mind was in Kalimantan. Now my husband and I live permanently in Rungan Sari, and it has become our home base.

I can feel the difference between living in Jakarta and Rungan Sari. Even if I 'm busy with many guests for PCB/ Eco Village or MSC, I feel calm and happy, and that is the difference between living in Wisma Subud and Rungan Sari.

My house now is far from any neighbours, located just outside the Rungan Sari compound and close to the Muhammad Subuh Centre and the Eco Village. Here in Kalimantan, I can develop my hobbies which are; gardening, cooking, and coming up with ideas for the many events requested by the clients of the Eco Village.

At my age, it is especially nice to live in a quiet place. Every morning I love listening to the bird calls, walking in the forest and talking to the trees. It is good therapy for stress, and even a monkey visited once!

Our staff works from 7:00 am (when it is fresher) until 4:00 pm with a two-hour break. They are good and loyal workers for many years now.

When my husband Wayne had a health problem, we had to spend six months in the USA, because he could hardly walk and he had to use a walker all the time. Once we decided to go back home to Rungan Sari, a week later he was able to walk, and his legs got stronger enough to walk without the walker. It was like a miracle.



Gathering at the Ecovillage. Amaliya is the second one on the right.

“ I felt grateful to meet Bapak almost every day...”



The Ecovillage getting ready for an event.

During the time we have been living here in Kalimantan, we have seen many improvements in the health and medical services that are available. We have Subud doctors here - a husband and wife. Dr Faridz is a Urologist and his wife Dr Niken in an internist, who both lived in Rungan Sari for a few months and then they moved into town (Palangka Raya) to work in two of the city Hospitals.

R: What are your wishes for Rungan Sari's future?

A: My hope is that after the World Congress in Kalimantan, our brothers and sisters will be inspired to move here, or at least build a house or visit us more often. For many years Bapak encouraged us to build a Subud community here in Central Kalimantan.

“It is clear that what we are undertaking in Kalimantan is very, very large. The task we face is very big indeed. In order to start this great work, Bapak is preparing from now a place where people can live in Kalimantan.

“When Bapak was there Bapak travelled by speedboat, so Bapak was out in the wind for quite a while. And, as you may know, if people in Indonesia are out in the wind, they immediately get masuk angin, a kind of illness which feels like you've got flu. Bapak admits that here in Jakarta, even if Bapak just takes his jacket off for a while, he's liable to catch masuk angin.

“But up there in Kalimantan, even though Bapak travelled in a speedboat for several hours, Bapak was fine, Bapak didn't feel any of those symptoms of having flu or being unwell. And that goes to prove what Bapak has said sometimes before that the air of a place is not unhealthy in and of itself, but because of the human beings there who make it unhealthy. Code Number: 81 JKT 1 Provisional Translation; For Subud Members Only; © 2007 the World Subud Association. All rights reserved. Originally from *The Zone One News* Volume II, Number 1 June 1981.



The Pendopo at the Muhammad Subuh Centre.



Collage of Rungan Sari images. (Copyright)



Bapak with his wife, Ibu Mas Tuti, on the river in Kalimantan.

Observing Ramadan

Ramadan 2023 in Australia will begin in the evening of Wednesday 22 March and ends in the evening of Thursday, 20 April. Times may vary from place to place so you are advised to enquire with local Islamic authorities. Observing Ramadan is not compulsory for Subud members, but some choose to do it and have found it beneficial. In the Subud library can be found many talks by Bapak and Ibu Rahayu about the benefits of doing the fast. www.subudlibrary.net

Newer members in Subud who have not done the Ramadan fast before are advised to talk with older members who have had the experience of doing the fast in a Subud context.

“ Observing Ramadan is not compulsory for Subud members, but some choose to do it and have found it beneficial...”

Information about observing Ramadan compiled from explanations given by Bapak, Mas Sudarto and Mas Prio

Eve of Ramadan: The way to observe Ramadan is to take a full bath, including hair washing, and also cutting the hair and the nails, the evening before the fast. Then, after you are clean, to state your wish to observe Ramadan as a sincere expression of your worship of Almighty God. Then stay up at night, preferably spending the night together with other Subud brothers and sisters, in the home of a member who is also observing Ramadan.

Around three o'clock in the morning, you should take breakfast and you should brush your teeth no later than 4:30 in the morning, and after this, no more smoking, not even gargling till 6:30 PM or 7:00 PM - along about sunset. (The local mosque can clarify as to the hour for breaking the fast.)

To break the fast, start slowly by drinking warm tea and a light snack; you can eat your dinner about half an hour or an hour later. Bapak also recommends no sexual union during the whole month of Ramadan. It is also beneficial to sleep as little as possible during Ramadan, not only on Nights of Power.

During the month of Ramadan: it is not permitted to have sexual intercourse, and our fasting must also include abstention from the following:

- a) We must not use our ears to listen to gossip, quarrels or bad words.
- b) We must not use our mouth to say anything wrong or unkind.
- c) We must not use the emotions to reach the emotions or passions of others.
- d) We must not use our eyes in a way that is not good or nice.
- e) We must not use the heart or mind to imagine/think about unhappy things, fantasies or unrealities.
- f) We must not eat or drink or smoke anything between dawn and sunset each day.

During the month of Ramadan, we have to fast thirty days, and during the thirty days of fasting we go through three important periods:

The first ten days (ending evening of 9th day Ramadan): This is a period of putting the passion in an inactive state. During this period we are made aware that our passions become weaker and weaker day by day, and on the 9th day of fasting, it is felt that our passion is completely inactive.

The second ten days (ending evening of 19th day Ramadan): This is a period of becoming aware that in general our attitude and actions are guided by our inner-self and the guidance day by day becomes stronger and stronger and on the 19th day of fasting our actions are as if in a complete latihan state, but in harmony with our daily activities.

The last ten days (ending evening of 30th Ramadan): This is a period of receiving the lailatu 'lkadar (the Nights of Power), and this is sent by God on the 21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th and 29th days of fasting. This lailatu 'lkadar is not something that falls from above, but it forms a certain power, which can change our state.

Most of the Subud members who fasted felt, after completing the fasting, that there were changes to their inner. Mostly, their spirit to worship became stronger and stronger and also the intention of doing 'prihatin' became stronger and stronger.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Ismail Fido writes...

Dear Harris, It was interesting reading the exchange between Anthony Bright Paul and Léonard Lasalle about "Belief in God" in the January 2023 issue of "Subud Voice".

All the old Jesuits who taught me are long dead. I think they would have said the proof of any purported beliefs you had would be in the way you lived your life.

In that regard, I found Dachlan Cartwright's article on the late Harlinah Longcroft most illuminating. I met Harlinah in the 1970s in Cilandak. I found her a kind, accepting person with a great sense of humour. She was totally unpompous. She had no airs nor graces and did not put herself forward as "a big person in Subud" which she could easily have done.

In many ways Subud reminds me of Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales".

It has a wide cross-section of humanity in it. In my time I have met many of them.

“ *In many ways, Subud reminds me of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* ”



The Canterbury Pilgrims by Thomas Stothard 1755-1834.

Those who have impressed me most possess both humility and integrity. These are characteristics that you cannot fake. Ultimately people will see you as you are.

These days people are much concerned about the growth, or nongrowth of Subud in certain areas such as where I live in Brisbane.

My gut feeling is that Subud won't really take off until we really return to what Bapak was on about. The best mentors for young people are those who "got the message". I think, if you get this message and live according to it, people will inquire and come in. Then it is up to the Helpers to nurture them. It's not rocket science!

Cheers, Ismail

The editor responds...

Hi Ismail, Thank you for your email. I am glad that you have found these articles in Subud Voice worthwhile. I too have often used the metaphor of the Canterbury Tales as a symbol for Subud.

Once, years ago, I went with Mansur Geiger on one of his mining trips to Kalimantan. We travelled far upriver, first by a sort of public ferry, and then by canoes with motors to the upper stretches. I had bought a book to read, filched I think from the Wisma Subud library. It was by the American writer Vance Bourjaily who is probably little remembered these days except by me.

He was a contemporary of Norman Mailer and wrote some good books including one called *Playing Tonight in Canterbury* in which the metaphor of the Canterbury Tales is used to tell the story of a theatre production coming together.

It was a very good book to read in Kalimantan. I even read it in the canoes travelling upriver so my copy became rather damp and turning up at the edges, but it was a great read. Particularly in the context of the Kalimantan adventure.

Of course, it was great to be in England where you can be with someone and they point to a ridge and they say, "Along there is where the Canterbury Pilgrims walked".

A note on the illustration. The enterprising engraver and publisher Robert Cromek commissioned this painting from William Blake's friend Thomas all Stothard. Cromek put it on display and charged visitors a shilling to see it. He also collected subscriptions for the forthcoming print of the painting.

Cheers, Harris.

Eden

Harris Smart writes...

Australian painter, Dervis Pavlovic, had a recent exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery in Lismore, northern New South Wales. It was an extremely impressive one-man show with 39 large paintings created over three years. Each individual work by Dervis packs a powerful punch and it really created a buzz to see so many works gathered together.

Of all the paintings included in the exhibition, one of my favourites was the one entitled *Eden* (next page). Dervis's paintings often engage with social, political and spiritual issues, often in ways that are highly original, even surprising and startling. This is part of the power of his work, the way he combines traditional; old masterly painting technique with insights into the contemporary world and its issues.



In the case of *Eden*, what we have is a reworking of the traditional image of Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden. We are used to seeing images of this idea rendered as if it happened in Europe involving blonde-haired, blue-eyed Europeans.

But as we know, if we really want to look at the beginnings of humankind, we originated in Africa and our original ancestors would more have resembled what we usually think of as "primitive" people. Thus, Dervis has turned the traditional European concept on its head and presented us with this image based on the landscape and humanity of Papua New Guinea.

In a conversation with Dervis, he told me, "When I did this painting I was not only thinking about where we have come from, Adam and Eve and the Garden of Eden and all that, I was also thinking about where we are going, which seems mostly towards a series of catastrophes. Climate change, war, the breakdown of social cohesion, all these things seem like disasters already happening.

"How will life be when the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse, Pestilence and all the rest, come riding through? After the nuclear holocaust, vast areas of the world will be reduced to radioactive desert, and the food supply chain will collapse, and the only survivors will be the people who can still find food growing wild in the forest. So, in this way the cycle of human history will be complete. When you look at this painting, maybe you're not looking at the past, maybe you're looking at the future." ●

Grace in the World

Lucas Horton writes...

Everyday I try to go for a walk, whatever the weather. I am fortunate to live in a small town in rural Ireland. The town is big enough to have most of the shops that you need for life including many take-aways, cafés, churches, bars and even a small hotel. The town is small enough that I can walk out of it into a country park which nestles on the edge of town.

Every day is different. I go for walks not just for health reasons and to keep active, but there is something about connecting to nature that reconnects one to what is 'real'.

As soon as I consciously notice and connect with my surroundings I feel that I am re-connecting with Grace. And what is Grace? The best that I can describe it is that there is a hum or a vibration >

outside that connects with a vibration on the inside that says, 'Look this is special' 'This is life living itself'. Life exuding life. Life with life.

“ *There is Grace in this world if we are alert enough to see it...* ”

Yesterday I decided to walk through the town first on my way to the park. It had been raining and everything had a freshly washed feel about it. I walked past a café that was recently opened, they do a nice line in light lunches, pastries and good coffee. The owners have made an effort to make the place inviting.

There is a table in the window that I often use as a place to meet clients, but yesterday I was just walking past and there were two ladies at the table animatedly chatting away, but on the chair closest to the window a little girl sat, probably a daughter to one of the ladies.

Actually, she was on her knees, elbows on the table, looking out the window whilst the ladies were distracted with each other in their meeting.

I remember the look on the child's face. She was smiling, full of enthusiasm, full of positivity and our eyes met. Her at 5, me 73, both travellers, kindred spirits, recognising something in each other at opposite ends of our respective journeys.

The moment passed, and without breaking stride I continued on my walk. There was a light breeze and I decided to go round Black Island, which is a forest walk on an island in the lake.

We go through an avenue of trees, the leaves are rustling, the branches gently waving and shaking the leaves on the autumn breeze, the sunlight dappling through the canopy, with the bridge to the island in the distance. An entrancing spectacle. I felt the same feeling of connection to Grace that I had with the little girl.

A connection, a recognition, we may live here but our roots are elsewhere in a more majestic place. There is recognition and in recognition there is connection, a reconnection.

There is Grace in this world if we are alert enough to see it. Grace is there as a tree is being itself, or a little girl being herself and for the few moments when I remember who I am, it is me being Lucas.

It feels like that part of me which is in the control of God is looking out for other beings and reconnecting there with that God part in the outer world, the girl, the trees, a beetle walking across the path, that part of me connecting with that part of the other. Grace is the bliss of that reconnection. We, human beings, are the nominated agents for this. For Grace to connect through us to all that there is. Through all that there is, so that all can come to be connected to Grace, the trees, the hills, the animals, all of creation in the whole universe.

This is the purpose of our existence; this is our task. ●

Between the Guns – Children as a Zone of Peace

Varindra Tarzie Vittachi

A review by Lawrence Brazier...

A recent addition to the WSA Archives is an early book by Varindra Tarzie Vittachi. If memory serves, Bapak maintained that despite his wonderful Reporter/Assignment books, *Between the Guns – Children as a Zone of Peace* was Varindra's best book, which perhaps attests to a quote from Bapak: "We deal in reality."

There could hardly have been a better, more sympathetic writer of forewords than Richard Attenborough who was knighted in 1976 and became a Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF in 1987.

Varindra was widely known as a vigorous journalist and above all a humanist who wore his heart and his beliefs on his sleeve. Attenborough wrote of Varindra "(there are)...few who are as patently good, honest and true as this noble Sri Lankan."

As Deputy Executive Director of External Relations of the United Nations Children's Fund from 1980 to 1988, Varindra was able to document the work undertaken by UNICEF in the war zones, initially in El Salvador, and continuing in Uganda, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, and Liberia.

“ *Varindra was a vigorous journalist, a humanist who wore his heart on his sleeve...* ”

It was the late Nils Hedin, former head of the Swedish Save the Children Fund, who advocated that children are "above and beyond politics" and that they should be made a conflict-free zone in >

times of war. Governments and rebel forces were implored to agree to “days and zones of tranquility” for children.

This was partly achieved, and UNICEF was able to enter war zones and immunize against the six vaccinable diseases that were claiming the lives of innumerable children each year. Susila Dharma Congo tells us that despite the passing of years, to this day in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) one out of six children dies before the age of five, mainly from easily preventable illnesses.

Children possibly represent our last opportunity to “feel” with sensitivity our spiritual states. Many of us have become hard and thus unfeeling. We see with closed eyes, hear with deaf ears. Could it also possibly be that we have sunk so low that we need an extremity of situation to feel anything at all? Moreover, is it too late?

It is common knowledge that a child dies of malnutrition somewhere in the world, every few seconds. At the time of writing, Richard Attenborough relates in those days of the “15 million refugee children who are euphemistically called unaccompanied minors”. We read the words, register the facts, and move on. I apologize, here, to those who do more than just move on. There are people who care.

Too late?

Perhaps it has been too late for thousands of years. If we consider that Moses was obliged to tell people that it was wrong to kill, to steal, to lie, and all the rest, it means that they were already only reachable through their minds. All inner feeling was lost or petrified.

As far as we are concerned, does a shudder pass through us when confronted by the news reports of wretchedness in remote places? Does repulsion swirl across what we are pleased to call our minds?

Niels Thedin, the head of the Swedish Save the Children organization, wanted children everywhere to be regarded as a “conflict free zone”. When he made his proposal to UNICEF Niels Hedin was a dying man, but his dream did not die with him. The head of UNICEF was then Jim Grant, and he undertook the task of making Thedin’s dream a reality.

Since qualification for the state of refugee is to cross a border, Varindra quotes an anonymous poet who wrote, “National boundaries are wounds on the skin of Mother Earth”, and that as long as artificial human divisions, such as economic blocs and nation states exist, we will continue to live by divisive values.

This leads to misguided patriotism, when the only appropriate kind would be what Perez de Cuellar, the former Secretary General of the United Nations called “Earth Patriotism”.

Jim Grant continued to campaign for attention given to the plights and rights of children. In 1984 a meeting between President Duarte of El Salvador, Jim Grant and Perez de Cuellar led to the call for “Days of tranquility for the sake of children”.

This gave rise to the “Corridors of Peace and Zones of Tranquility”, which were eventually brought about in Africa and the Middle East where children were caught between warring forces.

We see now...

We see now how Varindra became the frustrated anti-meetings man when considering “paper-clip-counting bureaucrats” and he relates of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, which was “picked over, comma for comma, for ten years before being sent to the United Nations for approval”.

Varindra relates of his own spiritual ethos and the inner and outer dimension of human relationships. (Human) Rights are the coarse physical expression of a finer inner sense – through which our feeling for our obligations to children become apparent.

Jim Grant continued to plea for immunization of the world’s children by 1990, although as far >



Varindra at the Subud World Congress in Japan.

back as 1974 the World Assembly of Health Ministers from 120 countries had already resolved to attain that target.

Columbia was chosen as the first campaign venue. President Cuartas was sympathetic, the infrastructure and social order at the time were relatively accommodating, and great success was achieved.

This in turn prompted President Duarte of El Salvador to ask for a similar undertaking in his own country. But El Salvador represented a “negative” because it was a puppet state under the US, and the US was anything but sympathetic to Third World issues and had even named the United Nations as “that cesspool”.

Again, it was all about children and their apparent uselessness for a political agenda. Varindra quotes Maurice Pate, the founding director of UNICEF: “Have you ever looked into the eyes of a child and discovered any politics there?”

President Duarte and his opponents Archbishop Damas and the guerillas negotiated but there was no real consensus. Unanimity would mean a war interspersed with interludes of peace, albeit brief ones. It was not just that political agendas were to be compromised – but all the more the stuff of showing weakness, as the president said, “...how would it look if we asked for peace first?”

“ *The tragedy is that we seem to have improved our ‘Human Condition’ not a jot...* ”

Undaunted...

Undaunted, Grant proposed to get the rebels to act unilaterally, and through negotiation he achieved what was to be known as the day of *tranquillidad*. The vaccination campaign was assured.

The Zones of Tranquility, Corridors of Tranquility and Corridors of Tranquility became the terms that were eventually used in Africa and the Middle East. Varindra relates of Uganda, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Liberia, Angola, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, the Philippines and subsequently the horrors of the war in former Yugoslavia.

UNICEF was constantly present and the stories of the endeavors on behalf of children are given in Varindra’s inimitable prose.

The tragedy here is that this book, published in 1993, may not be new, but we seem to have improved our “Human Condition” not a jot further, which makes it as relevant today as the years preceding its publication date. This book needs to be read by the world’s population, and especially the world’s leaders, in its entirety. It is a devastating document.

By chance I found a copy of the book for around \$20, but prices are pretty hefty at other outlets. Subud members can access the book gratis through the WSA Archives, initially through registration, or emailing Daniela Moneta at admin@wsaarchives.org

Peace Be Upon Us

Iljas Baker’s book of poems *Peace Be Upon Us* has now been officially released by Lote Tree Press, Cambridge, UK and is available from most booksellers (including Amazon) in hardback and paperback editions. Hopefully there will at some stage be a Kindle edition.

Apart from Ruslan Moore’s Al-Baz translations of the writings of Hazrat ‘Abdl al-Qādir al-Jīlānī - *Peace Be Upon Us* - may be the first book published by a Muslim publisher that openly and positively refers to Subud. Iljas’s book also gives a brief description of Subud in a glossary, contains a poem about Bapak mentioning his full name, and contains numerous poems inspired by the Latihan.

Iljas has stated that in mentioning Subud and Bapak in the book his intention was not to promote Subud, but simply to bear witness to the importance of the Latihan in his life. Here is part of the book’s Preface.

“I came to Islam through practicing the latihan kejiwaan (spiritual exercise) of Subud, which I still practice and value for its role in my spiritual development. The spiritual exercise shaped my understanding of the need for and the role of Islam in my life and gradually opened up to me experiences of the ḥaqīqa (truth/reality) of Islam.

“For me, Islam, as expressed particularly in the Qur’ān and in those aḥādīth that don’t contradict the >

Qur'ān, is guidance and support for living the present life while preparing for the life after death. This involves, above all, worshipping our Creator and the full expression of this worship goes beyond ritual worship and shari'a compliance to an engagement in the quest to realize the status of al-insān al-kāmil (the perfected human).

“Such a quest in the present era might seem fanciful, but the hope for abundant Divine assistance makes it otherwise. This quest informs a number of the poems presented here as does my fondness for East Asian poetry.”

Although many of the poems contain Islamic references it is hoped readers, including Subud members, will be able to go beyond the surface meaning and find something that resonates inwardly and in this way appreciate the poems in the spirit they were intended.

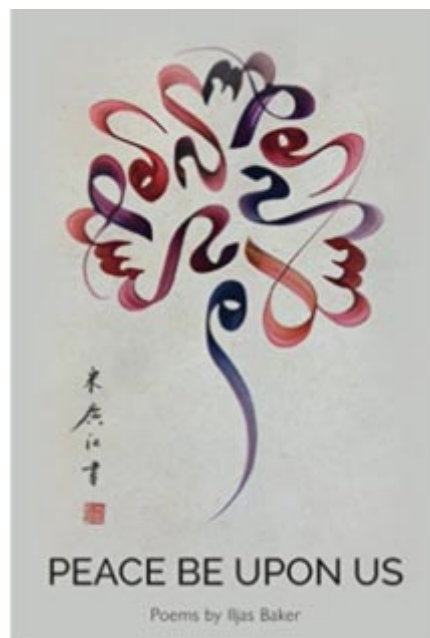
The following text is from the inside fold of the cover:

“In this sublime book Iljas Baker gives us a glimpse - in poetic form - of his spiritual journey through Buddhism, the spiritual exercise of Subud and Islam. Many of the poems use Chinese and Japanese poetical forms, especially Haiku, Haibun and Tanka, but express somewhat uniquely an Islamic rather than a Buddhist worldview.

“The presence of some examples of the world-famous calligrapher Haji Noor Deen's Chinese interpretations of Islamic calligraphy adds a beautiful and complementary graphic element to the subtle marriage of East Asian literary forms and Islamic spirit to be found in this book.

“Iljas's poems and poetic artistry demonstrate the universality of Truth which, being Absolute, can and must manifest in every culture and in every art form, and both penetrate and embrace human life from the most mundane to the most exalted.”

Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Founder and President of Cordoba House



The image on the cover of the book is the Arabic word “salaam” written in Chinese-Arabic style (Sini style) calligraphy by master calligrapher Haji Noor Deen Guangjiang, who was born in Shangdong, China. The book contains a few more examples of Haji Deen Noor's beautiful work.

Swimming in Stories

Rosanna Hille's new book

Rosanna Hille, who served as Chair of the Susila Dharma International Association (SDIA) from 1993 to 2001, as SDIA Executive Director from 2001 to 2005, and again as Chair in 2007, has written a book. In the introduction, she writes...

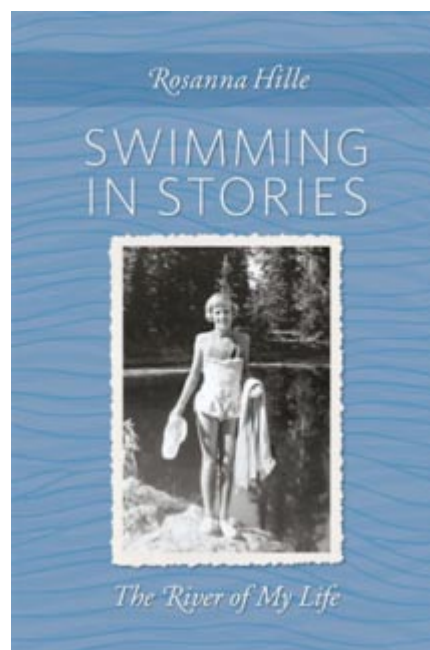
I was swimming in stories written over different periods of my life – memories, adventures, letters, journals, poems – but they were all disconnected from each other. I needed to channel these diverse streams into a single river of stories that described my life.

I was also curious. I wanted to take a closer look at where I came from, what my influences were, what decisions I made that shaped my life, and how those decisions worked out for me. Drawing on years of private writing where I found my young voice, as well as creative writing classes and writing by others, especially my father, I dove into my past seeking answers.

I am grateful for my life, rich in spirituality, family, community, travel, service and creativity, on this sacred earth we all share.

For information about how to obtain the book in hard copy or e-book versions:

<https://vedahille.com/rosanna-hille-swimming-in-stories/> Click here to see a flyer about the book:
<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/SiS-Ad.pdf>



In Memory of Sanderson Topham

Harris Smart writes...

I was saddened to hear of the death of Sanderson Rasjid Topham on January 23 this year.

I got to know him some years ago when he visited Australia several times. It was distressing to read that he suffered for many years with mixed dementia.

As well as being a dedicated Subud member, he needs to be remembered as a significant figure in the world of blues guitar. When he was only 15 years of age he became the lead guitarist with the Yardbirds, a blues influenced band which emerged around the same time as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones.

Unfortunately, when the band began to tour, Sanderson's father insisted that he leave the band and study at art school. He was replaced in the Yardbirds by Eric Clapton, widely regarded as the greatest of all the British blues players.

It was my privilege to once play a little bit of blues with Sanderson.

As a fitting tribute to Sanderson, we are republishing an article we first published some years ago. It is an interview with Sanderson by Matt Warnock which first appeared in the magazine *Guitar International*...

<https://www.subudvoice.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Topham.pdf>

And to hear him play with a reformed Yardbirds...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fG37AmA3CQc>



Top Topham in the Yardbirds at 15.

Star Dust

Marcus Bolt writes...

Sanderson and I were neighbours for a few years at Loudwater Farm. I recall our sitting in the garden, smoking, chewing the fat on many an evening. I even jammed with him a few times, but felt although not in his league musically, he was happy to indulge me.

For a few months Sanderson hired Robert Saunders and me to help him paint a series of murals at a wealthy businessman's house in St Albans. We'd set off every morning, paint all day and be delivered back late evening, exhausted. I learnt so much from Sanderson, who was a master muralist as well as a musician.

Sanderson eventually left Loudwater and we kept in touch via phone and emails. Then, one day in 2014, he told me about going on tour with the reformed Yardbirds (just 2 of the originals in the line up; drummer, Jim McCarty and himself). Also on the tour were the reformed Zombies and The Animals (although Chris White, who I was at Art School with, and Eric Burden would not be performing, having developed their own careers).

I was living in Bristol at the time, and Sanderson mentioned they were playing at the Colston Hall and sent me four complimentary tickets.



Sanderson performing with the reformed Yardbirds, Bristol 2014.

Now, as it said in the pre-show publicity: “Relive the musical revolution of 1964 as the chart-topping stars of the 1960s, including The Zombies, The Animals, The Yardbirds, Spencer Davis and Maggie Bell, perform some of their greatest hits around the UK. The line-up have collectively, over 50 years, delivered 37 hit records and held chart-topping positions for more than 300 weeks. Get ready for an unforgettable night of a celebration of Rhythm and Blues with artists who have shaped music for generations to come...” who wouldn’t want to see that show?!

My wife and I went along that evening with my brother and sister-in-law. The hall, with a seating capacity of over 2,000, was packed and what surprised me was the age range – from 15 to 90, I estimated. It was a truly great evening with superb music appreciated by an enthusiastic audience.

As we were leaving through the vast foyer, we saw that Sanderson and Jim McCarty were at a table near the entrance signing souvenir programmes.

We got close hoping to catch Sanderson’s eye so we could wave goodbye and at least mouth our thankyou.

When he saw us, he leapt to his feet, came straight across and gave us each big hug. Very Sanderson, that.

But what was extraordinary was the reaction from the crowd circulating around the tables and moving towards the entrance; as we left the hall they seemed to step back from us staring deferentially as though we were celebrities as well.

It made me realise that a little ‘star dust’ had been sprinkled on us because we had publicly shared a moment of intimacy with Sanderson the star... a strange but unforgettable experience. ●

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S

A New Book from former SICA Chair, Latifah Taormina

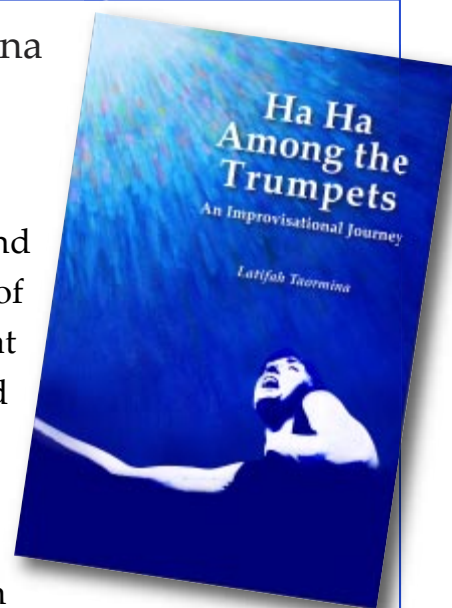
Ha Ha Among the Trumpets

An Improvisational Journey

Names like Howard Hesseman, Alan Arkin, Bill Graham, and even Caspar Weinberger illuminate this incredible chronicle of The Committee, San Francisco’s improvisational company that not only gave rise to many Hollywood stars, but also pioneered long-form improvisation.

Ha Ha Among the Trumpets chronicles the incredible journey of newly married Second City alums, Alan and Jessica Myerson (later Latifah Taormina) who built their own company from scratch in San Francisco in the early 1960s while exploring a new spiritual practice called Subud. The fascinating story of this company is told against the historical backdrop of the Kennedy assassination, Bloody Sunday, Selma, the early feminist movement, and the beginning of the anti-war movement.

Taormina’s spiritual quest ultimately takes her beyond her marriage, which is tested by the competing claims of politics, work, family, and the author’s emerging sense of her own identity. She moves to Wisma Subud, Indonesia, where, using her stagecraft skills, she teaches drama at the Jakarta International School. It’s an astonishing story. *Mary Adams*
Paperback, 380 pages. Available from www.lulu.com (On the home page, click ‘Bookstore’, type *Ha Ha Among the Trumpets* into the search box then follow the onscreen prompts to order and pay.)



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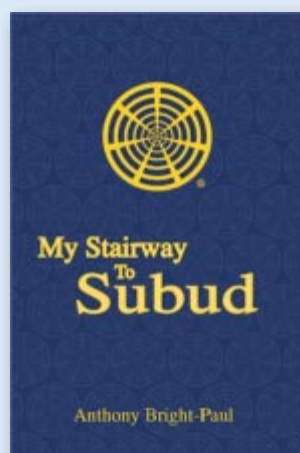
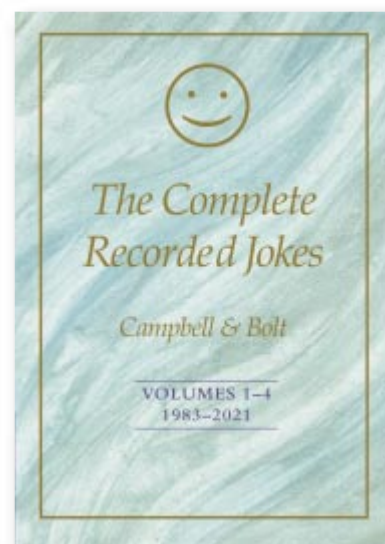
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Anthony Bright-Paul gives an acutely observed account of the Gurdjieff methods as performed and practised at Coombe Springs with John Bennett, and a first-hand account of both the euphoria and the upheaval caused by the arrival of Pak Subuh who brought with him the latihan kejiwaan, the spiritual training of Subud.

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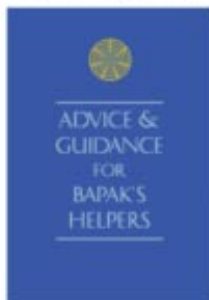
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