



**Your on the  
Street Reporter**



**Uyless Black**

**“Peaceful” Buddhists**

# Religion

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## Your on the Street Reporter “Peaceful” Buddhists

**July 15, 2013 and August 27, 2014**

What comes to your mind when you hear or read the word Buddha? My image of Buddha was formed courtesy of watching Saturday afternoon movies during my childhood; images that still carry weight in these older years, I continue to visualize a happy and rotund fellow, looking benignly to what I assumed were admiring congregations in his church. Something like my Southern Baptist preacher’s look, only less malevolent. Unlike Reverend Watts of the First Baptist Church, Buddha came across as contentedly serene. I imagined then and for most of my life I continued to imagine a peaceful countenance about this icon, one that is revered by 488 million people, representing the fourth largest-practiced religion in the world.<sup>1</sup>

But true to the Disproportionate Ratio of Life, a minority in a population of well-wishers often sullies the good intent of its majority. Thus, this minority gets the headlines. The well-wishers stand by the media sidelines.



In Mandalay, Myanmar (Burma), the Buddhist monk who is known as Wirathu, has declared, “[Muslims] are breeding so fast, and they are stealing our women, raping them. They would like to occupy our country, but I won’t let them. We must keep Myanmar Buddhist.” He is not a happy Buddhist, certainly not similar to Buddha, as seen here.<sup>2</sup>

Wirathu further declares, “Taking care of our own religion and race is more important than democracy.” He states that the United States President Barack Obama had “been tainted by black Muslim blood.”

Wirathu and his “peaceful” Buddhist monks have gone about setting the religious scales in their favor. They have destroyed Muslim mosques, burned up Muslim quarters, and killed Muslims. He has chosen Muslims because they make up a sizable portion of the population in [the former] Burma. The other 135 ethnic/religious groups in the country have been largely left alone, unless they happen to be in the vicinity of a Muslim population. If so, they suffer collateral damage from the “pacifist” Buddhists’ cleansing operations.

Wirathu has taken the title of the Burmese bin Laden. The peaceful image of a gentle Buddha, one who said, “Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule,” is not part of the agenda of these Buddhists.<sup>3</sup>

The monk Wirathu is an angry man, yet he does not possess the common-sense wisdom to follow the teachings of the founder of his religion, who counseled: “Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned.”<sup>4</sup>

I wonder if Wirathu has bothered to study his spiritual leader’s teachings? If so, Wirathu has a short memory. I might be wrong, but I predict a bad ending for Wirathu. Let’s revisit his habitat later and see how he fares with his philosophy. For now:

Hello! Here is my friend, the balladeer.

<sup>1</sup> Hannah Beech, “The Face of Buddhist Terror,” *Time*, July 1, 2013, 42-45. Unless otherwise noted, direct quotes and statistics are sourced from this article.

<sup>2</sup> Courtesy of Google. Key in Wirathu.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/b/buddha.html#j2TvVM5d5pW7pKzx.99>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

- “Bob, what’s up?”
- “More angst, that’s my specialty, and that’s pretty much what you’re talking about. So, I’ll put it into a song.”
- “Cool, I could use some help. My readers need a break.”
- “Yeah, so here goes. Do you know the old song ‘On the Road to Mandalay?’ After all, it’s the locale of your diatribe. “
- “Sure, it goes like this:”



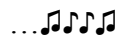
Come you back to Mandalay,  
where the flying fishes play.  
And the dawn comes up like thunder,  
out of China cross the bay.

Ship me somewhere east of Suez,  
where the best is like the worst.  
Where there ain't no Ten Commandments,  
and a cat can raise a thirst.


'Cause those crazy bells are callin'  
and it's there that I would be.  
By the old Moulmein Pagoda,  
looking lazy at the sea.

Looking lazy at the sea,  
come you back to Mandalay,  
where the old flotilla lay.

On the road to Mandalay,  
where the flyin' fishes play.  
And the dawn comes up like thunder,  
Out of China cross the bay.



Bob, “Not bad. But being a protest sort of person, let’s make some changes. Here goes!”

Strum, strum, strum...  
Come you back to Mandalay,  
where the hanging Muslims sway.  
And our kills rise up like thunder,  
out of Burma near the bay.

Ship the Muslims back to Suez,  
where their worst is like the worst.  
I don’t know the Ten Commandments,  
and forgiveness is a curse.

'Cause our killing bells are callin'  
and it's there that we should be

By the old Moulmein Pagoda,  
killing Muslims on the sea!

I'm forgetting Buddha's way.  
Muslims, stay away from Mandalay.  
For our kills come up like thunder,  
out of Burma near the bay.  
...♪♪♪♪

- "That pretty much tells it all, Bob."
- "Yep. I must go."
- "Bye, Bob."
- "Bye, U."

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## July 27, 2014

Wirathu now has a Facebook page. Among his subjects, he posts alleged acts of Muslims against non-Muslim women. One allegation (the rape of a Buddhist woman) against a tea shop owner had this result:

On July 1, after the monk shared the blog post, a mob of hundreds of Buddhists gathered outside the tea shop, throwing rocks and stones, eyewitnesses said. They cited the rape as a cause for gathering there and demanding the owner of the tea shop surface, witnesses say.

Police managed to disperse the crowd later that night, according to eyewitnesses and authorities, but mobs returned to the streets of downtown Mandalay the next day, killing a Buddhist man and later, a Muslim man. The riots left at least 12 others injured and prompted authorities to impose a curfew from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. in the city.<sup>5</sup>

No charges had yet been filed against the tea shop owner. Wirathu had this to say from his monastery in Mandalay, "My Facebook page only shares the right information, nothing exaggerated."<sup>6</sup>

Critics state it is not the place of a monk to investigate rapes, which results in mob law. In this incident, the mob consisted of Buddha adherents. In other reports in this series, the mob consisted of followers of Islam. Since I began writing "Your on the Street Reporter" columns in 2005, I have not come across any reports of Christians or Jews forming a mob and going after Muslims or Buddhists.

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<sup>5</sup> <http://blogs.wsj.com/searealtime/2014/07/11/myanmars-firebrand-monk-wirathu-defends-use-of-facebook/>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.