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An Anarchist Feminist of Myanmar's Resistance
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Amora is an anarcha-feminist from Myanmar who has been involved in political activism for several decades. She is the “co-founder” and the current “financial officer” of the “Hero Warriors”, a local defence force against the Myanmar military junta.

Hein: How did you first become involved in this revolution? Can you introduce a bit of your background? Were you politically active before the revolution?

Amora:

My journey into anarchism did not start with textbooks or academic theories. It started with the heavy, suffocating weight of patriarchy that I grew up with in my own family and environment. Back then, I did not even know what the word “anarchism” meant. For a young woman raised in a semi-rural, deeply conservative area, surviving under a military-dictated education system, these political theories felt a universe away.

But the moment I recognized that oppression for what it was—a fundamental injustice—I started a revolution right inside my own home. That spirit of rebellion took root when I was around 18.

In a conservative town where the traditional Buddhism is the norm, the concept of gender equality simply did not exist. It was an

environment where women were systematically subjugated, and men automatically claimed the moral high ground. But as the repression intensified, so did my urge to fight back. My domestic revolution quickly expanded to a rebellion against my entire surroundings. I realized that gender equality is not something you beg for; it is something you enforce through your own actions. I had to build my own worth from the ground up.

It was only after I graduated, around the age of 21, that I discovered atheism. From there, the dots naturally connected to feminism and anarchism. I began to realize that the authoritarian systems we are fighting against—the restrictions, the top-down control—all bleed from the exact same root. That realization is what made me an anarcho-feminist.

Yet, if there is one thing I despise, it is being labelled by others as a "feminist" or an "anarchist." I want to build my own identity and live in my own world by my own standards. You could say I have become an individualist. The irony of people labelling me an anarchist back then was that I had only just discovered the concept. While my core beliefs certainly aligned with anarchism, their narrow definitions should not limit my identity. I care about actions, not the "ists" and "isms."

When we look at the actions of someone who knows nothing of these political philosophies and force them under a specific ideological banner, we are just slapping a label on them.

Labelling is ultimately just another way to trap human dignity and liberty inside predefined stereotypes. And the moment we do not perfectly conform to their arbitrary standards, those same people hit us with double standards.

This interview starting from below has been adapted and polished from a live discussion between Amora and participants at an event hosted by "Magandjin-Myanmar Solidarity"—a fundraising and solidarity campaign based in Australia.

Question: How does a revolutionary rebel army organise in a de-centralised way?

for them to do certain number of push-ups or other forms of taking responsibilities for their failure to conduct their duties. It is not about punishment or breaking someone's spirit; it is about holding each other accountable to the shared principles that drive our commitment.

However, we do have one absolute red line: discrimination. We tolerate zero discriminatory acts of any kind—whether based on gender, class, or ethnicity. That is non-negotiable. Our solidarity is our greatest weapon, and ensuring equality within our ranks is the foundation of everything we do.

Note:

The Hero Warriors Local Defense Force does not yet have a collective social media presence.

In the meantime, please reach out to "Magandjin Myanmar Solidarity" for any further questions, interview coordination, or to facilitate a connection with the group.

I only served exclusively as the event's translator. Sincere gratitude is extended to the comrades in Australia who organized and executed the essential foundational work, as well as to all attendees for demonstrating their solidarity.

Amora:

We face these challenges constantly, and our response must be deeply human. For example, we had a situation where a soldier's mother fell seriously ill. He asked for permission to travel and see her, which is a massive security risk, so one of our group representatives went along with him to ensure safety and logistics.

The reality on the ground is that education and medical services are practically non-existent. The military actively targets infrastructure—the moment a proper medical clinic is established, the junta prioritizes bombing it. To adapt, we rely on decentralized, non-traditional setups. We work closely with local nurses and pharmacists to quietly piece together the essential healthcare services our people need without drawing aviation strikes.

We also accommodate families wherever we can. Recently, the wife of one of our soldiers became pregnant. We travelled to her village and gave her a choice: did she want to stay there or join the camp? She chose to join us. Even though we have strict regulations regarding camp access, we overrode the standard ban for her. We built them a small house within the camp area so they could be together. The medical care we can provide might not be the most advanced or sophisticated, but we do everything in our power to take care of our own.

Question: How do you maintain military discipline in a small militia? E.g. someone not pulling their weight or someone committing war crimes.

Amora:

Our structure is built entirely on voluntary commitment and mutual principles. We do not have orders handed down from an elite commander; instead, we operate on subtle rules and regulations that are established by full consensus.

Because everyone has a say in creating these rules, accountability is voluntary. When someone breaks a rule, the consequences are also decided and agreed upon by the group. For instance, if a comrade falls asleep while on watch duty, the consensus might be

Amora:

We organise by applying “collective responsibility” for all decisions. Also, we seriously take the consensus and make note of individual disagreements.

When it comes to “frontline”, there is no chain of command. We will have a temporary assignment of roles on operational basis, e.g. have a battle role temporarily and it will be different at every field.

Question: How is the class element play here? What is the cultural aspect of the villages and suburbs your rebel group defend?

Amora:

Even though some of us consider ourselves anarchists and libertarians, the organisation as a whole is not 100% anarchist, thus, does not apply anarchist principles especially for those who come from peasant background with low education. Those who comes from high education are more inclined to anarchist values such as de-centralisation and libertarian values such as federated organisational structure.

However, since most of the population are from the socio-economic status of low educated background – (in Myanmar, a huge class divide in middle class and poor working class, even after ignoring the elites) most revolutionary soldiers are from poor working class rural area.

Question: How does the feminist principles play out in daily practice? How do you combat patriarchy? Especially in military operations, how does feminist principles turn out in reality? And how does this work off the field?

Amora:

However, the distance between these two things is enormous, and crossing it is a very complicated task.

On one hand, the atmosphere of mutual help, support, and charity is prevalent in rural villages where people live close together. On the other hand, misogyny and patriarchy are present in this community too, and one of the main manifestations of it is a cultural taboo about the clothes of women—particularly the fact that

women's undergarments cannot be hung to dry in plain sight. And since we do not have washing machines in the villages (even to most city households of Myanmar), we are forced to hang them in the sun, which means we always have to navigate the patriarchal rules.

As it can be seen from the cultural environment of the place, we could not just go there and tell the villagers what was wrong with them. To get some respect, I needed to show them my actions rather than words. Thus, I participated in building wells, did physical work, and taught computer skills to the people there. Thanks to years of consistent work together, when the people started to perceive us as fellow comrades and not just strangers who came from somewhere else, we managed to make them see our point. From the perspective of a patriarchal society, being treated as equals is quite a significant event for a girl like me.

Nevertheless, it still is not easy to work with people like that. The distance is so wide that you simply cannot go there with a self-righteous approach. It would be completely useless to speak to them in a patronizing manner or to use progressive jargon to convince them of your point of view.

Question: Can the rebel (revolutionaries) go home? And if they can, do they feel protected by their communities when they go back?

Amora:

Most people in the city cannot go back once they join us. However, in the rural areas -if their village is nearby, they may be able to go. Some villages are controlled by the PDF (People Defense Forces) which is the main revolutionary force of the NUG (National Unity Government), thus making it safer for them to travel back and forth. So, it depends on which village they are from and the time.

Question: The role of hope – do you hope to win or is it we will not go down without a fight?

Amora:

I do not hope for something perfect. However, I hope for a better

Myanmar, where the ethnic people have their self-determination through federalism and Burmese people enjoy their democracy.

I believe that wherever there is oppression, there is a chance you will be oppressed.

Question: How can people offer solidarity from abroad? Does your organisation allow fundraising projects abroad or do you want us to support the overall revolution instead of focusing on your organisation solely?

Amora:

We can define "solidarity" here in 2 categories. One is the grassroots solidarity which includes fundraising for the humanitarian equipment such as self-defence equipment like uniforms and helmet for us.

On the state level, when it comes to diplomacy, our revolution is being defeated. China and Russia are actively supporting the military junta. So, it is important for the international community to support the revolution in Myanmar.

Question: Can fighters have relationships or is that seen as a distraction from fighting?

Amora:

No – the organisation does not condemn any kind of relationships and there is education on these issues to make sure they do not become an obstacle in the revolutionary e.g. pregnancy.

Question: Is there a regional strategy coordinated with other militias? Is this part of the day-to-day practice?

Amora:

On local level, we do a bit of battle for the villages that we settle. With regional operations, we collaborate with other groups. We are not a large organisation like PDF, so we can only operate alone. We sometimes lose comrades during our operations, which is traumatizing.

Question: In activism and revolutions, there are low stakes and burnouts. How do the revolutionaries on the ground manage their mental health and trauma and longevity over there?