

# Rising Sun

Women  
Proutists of  
North  
America

## Guiding Lights: Social Service Projects that Change the World

January 2019

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In this time of political immorality, economic chaos, and constant change, we need a fresh light to guide our way. We need inspiration, a reminder that real work starts locally, with individuals reaching out to the people they meet. So we turned to AMURTEL, a service and relief organization who works around the world with volunteers who not only help people out, but change the world as they do it.

Go to page 4 to read three amazing stories of projects run by women who have engaged their communities, and changed the lives of many, through the day by day work they do.



Mother2Mother Refugee Project in Athens, Greece.

## The Age of Mothers and Matriarchy

*Excerpts from the book Age of the Mothers and Matriarchy, The Untold Story of Western Civilization, Volume 1 by Chuck and Tom Paprocki. Copyright 2018 InnerWorld Publications.*

Long before human beings learned to express their thoughts in writing, women governed society. The warring states of men did not yet exist. The matriarchy period stretched from the dawn of our species in Africa, around 2.5 million years ago to the time the first Aryan patriarchal tribes came crashing out of the Caucasus Mountains and descended onto the fertile planes of the Indus Valley, as recently as ten thousand years ago. For hundreds of years, the books and papers of historians and other academics, and the scriptures and dogmas, written by the priests of patriarchal religions, have long ignored or denied the existence of the matriarchy, which obfuscates the contribution of women to human evolution. They could not believe, or perhaps refused to believe, that women ever governed human society. Who could possibly think that women ever stood superior to men!

*Continued on page 10*

# What is Prout?

**PROUT** is an acronym for the Progressive Utilization Theory which was propounded in 1959 by Indian philosopher Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar. PROUT presents a viable alternative to the outmoded capitalist and communist socio-economic models. Neither of these theories has adequately met the needs of humanity.

Proutists are seeking to convey the comprehensive and visionary goals of PROUT theory, which combines the wisdom of spirituality, the struggle for self reliance and the spirit of economic democracy. As women who are Proutists, in this magazine, we are attempting to focus on the particular struggles that women face in attaining self reliance in society. However, we also wish to present the complete vision of Prout as a new ideology for a new world.

Toward the goal of being inclusive, we invite Proutists and others who are interested in providing a platform for social change to submit articles, letters to the editor, poetry, blogs, and other writings to Rising Sun. We want to take the pulse of the 99 percent and to try to reflect in some small way the voice of the people.

## Key Principles of PROUT and Neo-Humanism:

**Neo-humanism** expands the humanistic love for all human beings to include love and respect for all creation - plants, animals and even inanimate objects. Neo-humanism provides a theoretical base for creating a new era of ecological balance and planetary kinship.

**Basic necessities guaranteed to all:** In order to be able to actualize their highest aspirations, people need to have their basic needs met. Access to food, shelter, clothing, education and healthcare are fundamental human rights which must be guaranteed to all.

**Balanced economy:** Prout advocates regional self-reliance, cooperatively owned and managed businesses, local control of large scale key industries, and limits on the individual accumulation of wealth.

**Women's Rights:** Prout encourages the struggle against all forms of violence and exploitation used to suppress women. Prout's goal is coordinated cooperation, with equal rights between men and women.

**Cultural Diversity:** In the spirit of universal fellowship, Prout encourages the protection and cultivation of local culture, language, history and tradition.

## Rising Sun January 2019

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Editor—Nada Khader Design—Jody Wright

Contributors: Nada Khader, Liina Laufer, Jody Wright, Joni Zweig, Nada Khader, Mirra Price, Jyoti Wind.

## Mission Statement

Women PROUTists are working together to create a world in which all people have the opportunity to develop their full potential. We educate and organize our communities to resist oppression, exploitation and discrimination. Women PROUTists support the all-round physical, economic, intellectual and spiritual development of women.

**Submissions:** We invite you to submit articles of 500-1000 words, poetry, photos, graphics and news of your projects. Deadlines are six weeks before publication—May 15th for the July 1st issue and November 15th for the January 1st issue. Send to [womenproutists@gmail.com](mailto:womenproutists@gmail.com). Content from this newsletter may be used in any Prout publication with credit given to Rising Sun. We suggest you contact the authors of articles for specific permission to use individual articles. Thank you.



## Asheville Prout Study Circle

*By Miirabaii Price*

Beginning in February, 2018, Asheville NC Proutists conducted a 9-week Prout Study Circle using *Tools to Change the World*, Study Guide Based on the Progressive Utilization Theory (Prout), Level One, co-authored by Dada Maheshvarananda and Mirra Price. In this launch of the new Prout curriculum, we had as many as six participants, and as few as two participants, besides the facilitators. Hiranmaya, Dada Maheshvarananda, and Miirabaii co-taught the sessions.

We studied the Five Fundamental Principles of Prout, Balanced Economy, Cooperatives, Minimum Necessities of Life, Dharma, Wealth Cap, and Yama-Niyama as well as learning Activist Tools for Social Change like Telling Our Stories, using Winning Words, journaling, public speaking, starting cooperatives, creating consciousness-raising groups, and One-on-One Interviews. At the beginning of each session, we conducted discussions on different social issues, including poverty, unemployment, holistic health, depression and chronic stress, wealth inequality, debt, unpacking privilege, critical study, pollution and climate change, and crime.

Facilitators wished to make the Prout Study Circle as participant-centered as possible. Each study circle session included much discussion and group work to make the content relevant for participants. We encouraged members to keep a journal in which they wrote questions about the readings and course content. We incorporated homework, which included extra readings and viewing videos on topics covered in each week's session. Outside projects were assigned in which participants interacted with people outside the group to ask their opinions about the social issues and Prout solutions we were studying together.

Several participants expressed their desire to continue to learn about Prout and to be part of a Prout project to help the local community, possibly a cooperative. *Tools to Change the World* and a companion Facilitation Guide will be available soon in a printed version and as a pdf on several Prout websites. You, too, could start your own study group wherever you live around the globe. Contact Miirabaii at [miirabaii@prout-global.org](mailto:miirabaii@prout-global.org) to obtain your copy of the study guide. Let's all sprout Prout!

### Contact Us!

Online at: [www.proutwomen.org](http://www.proutwomen.org)

Facebook: [Women Proutists of North America](#)

Women Proutists of North America  
PO Box 733

Northampton MA 01061

Call us at: 413-585-0763

Email: [womenproutists@gmail.com](mailto:womenproutists@gmail.com)



# Book Review: Meetings With My Master

By Nada Khader

In her recently released memoir, Nancy Niita Gannon takes us to a world of monks and nuns and Tantric Guru, far away from the humdrum of our 9-to-5 lives in the West.

She shares with us her extraordinary encounters with the founder of Prout (Progressive Utilization Theory), Prabhat Ranjan Sarkar, who in his role as Spiritual Guide, was known as Shrii Shrii Anandamurti.

Gannon was an idealistic young American who grew up in the 1960s and was seeking to fulfill a deeper purpose in her life. In her own words, she “had thought mostly in terms of social change. Now I believed changing myself was as important, and I had learned a mystical means for it” through her initiation into the spiritual practices of Ananda Marga.

Her memoirs take us to India as she shares with us her new disciplined life style as a yoga nun with a structured daily spiritual practice. She also takes us with her as she travels to Far East Asia to work in the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Australia.

Perhaps the most precious moments in her book are the meetings with her Master, Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, first as part of a crowd of people and then more intimately with her personal contact with Him.

Gannon’s experiences remind us that if we find the courage to follow our heart, the intelligence and love of the universe will create possibilities for us to fulfill our deepest longings in spite of the most difficult of circumstances. The editorial team of Riding Sun highly recommends this book to our readership as we enter what promises to be a challenging new year.

*Niiti Gaggon is the author of four neo-humanistic books for children: Annie the Ant, Manny the Mouse, The Wise Woman of the Mountain, The Magic Bucket, and Captain Grimy. Her books are available on Amazon.com.*



## New Day

The delicate pink rays of sun  
call the new day to begin.  
Today the menu is the full gamut  
of human emotions once again.

There will be those who foster good will.  
There will be those who advocate war.  
There will be boundaries breached,  
and those who fight back and win.

There will be joy and the essence of light  
beaming from the open-hearted  
and there will be darkness and shades of  
black  
at every turn.

And we will live this new day  
with hope and fortitude  
that it is our day to make things better  
as we surrender also  
into what is.

We call this new day to begin.

- Jyoti Wind

[www.jyotiwindaastrology.com](http://www.jyotiwindaastrology.com)

# Proutists Need to Work to End FGM

By Nada Khader

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a deeply harmful practice that is rooted in ancient patriarchal culture and involves the cutting of varying amounts of female genitalia as a form of social control. Over two hundred million women and girls in the world today have been subjected to this form of torture. Unfortunately, immigrants who come to the United States bring this practice with them. A federal judge has recently ruled that a federal ban on FGM is unconstitutional because he says "Congress has overstepped its bounds by legislating to prohibit FGM" because FGM is a local criminal activity that states need to regulate and not the federal government. The judge in Michigan issued this ruling in response to a case last year that involves two doctors and four parents who have been accused of subjecting girls to FGM. Read the full article here: [Judge rules federal ban on FGM unconstitutional](#)

In more positive news on this topic, a recent study examining this practice in African countries has found a huge decline in girls under fourteen years of age being subjected to this practice, in large part due to the diligent efforts of local women on the ground educating their communities about the need to end FGM. The study suggests that in 1995, 71% of girls were sub-



jected to FGM in these countries, whereas in 2016 they only found 8% of girls had been subjected to FGM. However, the authors of the research do admit that communities may be under-reporting the numbers of girls subjected to genital cutting due to external pressures to end this practice. [Huge Fall in FGM Rates](#)

From our perspective as Women Proutists, our respect for the diversity of cultural expressions stops at the point where a practice is clearly harmful and violates a person's basic rights such as the practice of FGM. We support the work of front line advocates who have raised our awareness on this topic, such as the women involved with Equality Now, who have been working tirelessly to pass laws outlawing the practice. Currently in the United States, only 27 states have passed laws criminalizing FGM. We have more work to do to ensure that it is not legal in any state to expose girls to this form of torture.

# Demonstrations in France are all about Protecting Purchasing Power

The yellow vest demonstrators in France have broad support from across the political spectrum from the left to the far right. Polls are suggesting that over 70% of the population supports these protesters. What started out as a protest against an additional fuel tax charge (diesel fuel which is used by most French drivers is currently the equivalent of \$6.47 a gallon), has now become a broader protest against growing wealth and income inequality and a significant decline in purchasing power as captured in the photo below (Pouvoir D'Achat means purchasing power in French). A key principle of Proutist economics is to always support an increase in the purchasing capacity of the lowest income groups in any society to make sure that the economic needs of all people are being met. Middle and lower income people in France are furious that the government has repealed a tax on the wealthy and is instead contemplating further taxes to increase the cost of living for everyone else.

There is a widespread sentiment that the "middle class" is being decimated.





# AMURTEL Greece: Support for Refugee Mothers



AMURTEL is an international, grassroots organization managed by women. In Greece, we are committed to assisting refugee mothers and babies to have the best possible perinatal care, despite the challenging lives they face.

“Emergencies affect women and men differently. So can our humanitarian response.” – United Nations Population Fund

During and after disasters, women often show symptoms of stress, depression, lingering shock and grief. Research shows us that pregnant and postpartum women are especially vulnerable.

We aim to provide safe, all-female environments for women to care for themselves, for each other and for their children. AMURTEL strives to reinforce a woman’s confidence and mothering skills, bolster her and her infant’s physical and mental health, and provide information and resources.

“Breastfeeding practices need to be protected during emergencies; infants who are not breastfed are at a manifold higher risk of morbidity and mortality than breastfed children.” - World Health Organization, Responding to Nutrition Gaps in Jordan in the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

Our local and international staff and volunteers are midwives, doulas, breastfeeding specialists, concerned mothers and pro-active women. Woman-to-woman care is the hallmark of the support given by AMURTEL.

AMURTEL Greece is responding to the refugee crisis by providing antenatal and postnatal care, programs for infant and young child feeding, and safe spaces for mothers and babies to gather. Here is their story in the words of director Didi Ananda Utama:

## Our Story

In 2015, when the waves of refugees started rolling onto Greek shores, some of us wondered what it would be like if we were mothers-to-be or mothers of infants in this terribly uprooted and fragile situation.

We knew that 20% of women of childbearing age in any given situation are likely to be pregnant and that birth outcomes are far more complicated in disaster situations. We knew that these mothers and infants could not access regular health checks, proper food or shelter, or family support that they would have had at home. We knew that infants in these situations are at enormously greater risk of acute and ultimately chronic health problems. We knew that breastfeeding is one of the most crucial protections an infant can have but that too many mothers misguidedly abandon it in favor of formula feeding. We knew that formula fed infants, due to the lack of proper facilities for accurate, hygienic bottle feeding, have drastically increased incidences of respiratory and gastrointestinal infections.

We had to do something. Gathering volunteers from local midwives, doulas and breastfeeding specialists, we dusted off our relief skills and set to work. For five months the AMURTEL team, together with LaLeche League volunteers, visited the camps in Athens regularly to assess and assist. It rapidly became clear that pregnant women and mothers with infants were not getting the care they needed. None of the camp medical units had midwives or doctors trained in OB/GYN. None at that time had Mother-Baby Areas, support for breastfeeding or help with safe formula feeding. Going from family to family, we did what we could on an individual basis. We saw woman after woman who was dazed, shell-shocked from the trauma of the trip, worried and afraid for the welfare of their children. Our



days were filled with sitting with them, talking, reassuring, having the midwife do a pregnancy exam, supporting their infant feeding habits and giving assistance in whatever ways we could.

We needed a base for our work but the managers at the camp were strained and pushed to the limit. Just the mention of a space for a Mother-Baby Area was thrust aside as being impossible, not at this time, not a priority. When soon after this the northern borders closed and the port turned into a camp, we migrated there and set up in a small but manageable old caravan. It was not the Mother-Baby Area we would have hoped for but it was a start.

Six months passed and by the time the port camp closed at the end of July, our base had extended into a second caravan and a tented area between the two. Mothers came to be examined by midwives, assisted by breastfeeding specialists, and greeted by the volunteers handing them supplemental food or carrying water for them to bathe their babies. They smiled when they saw us, gave us hugs and thanks though, to be truthful, it seemed we did so little. Mostly we were simply there. They could count on that and in times of shifting, unstable ground, that may have meant a lot.

We saw women going into premature labor and having babies in strange, unfamiliar environments where no one in the hospital even spoke their language. Women miscarried and going through the grief of losing a child without family around them, living in a small, hot tent put up on a concrete floor amongst thousands of strangers. Women coming for pregnancy tests, some hoping against hope for a positive result, some desperately not wanting to have a child in this crisis situation. Women worried because their one and two-year-olds had so little to eat, the camp menu not providing anything particular for this age group. Women delighted to be told that their instincts



Acarya Ananda Uttama trained and worked as a midwife in the USA before becoming a yogic nun dedicated to serving humanity. She has been a Neo-humanistic Education teacher and trainer in Greece, and provided perinatal support and education through her parenting center in Athens. As the refugee situation in Greece became critical, she and her team turned their attention to providing basic survival services to mothers and babies in need.

More information about Mother2Mother can be found at: <http://greece.amurtel.org/>

Make donations at:  
<http://amurtel.org/get-involved/donate/>

about continuing breastfeeding were the best for them and their child. Women who, having believed the myth that stress decreases breastmilk, talked with our counselors and found themselves having plenty of milk and their infant no longer seeming endlessly hungry.

We saw women who came again and again, day after day with smiles and thanks. The graciousness of these women humbles me all the time. I wonder often if we, as privileged westerners, would be so kind and gracious if the roles were reversed.

Now we have set up a Mother-Baby Area in downtown Athens where our services are available not only to the more than 4000 refugees in urban accommodations but also to those in the camps around Athens. The future of the 57,000 asylum seekers stranded in Greece is still unfolding. Some will be able to migrate north legally, many will go illegally, and many will be in this country for a long time. But one thing is sure. Babies will still keep being born, mothers will still keep needing support, and so our work goes on.



## AMURTEL Romania: Services & Homes for Needy Children

*The Romanian branch of AMURTEL, Asociatia de Ajutor AMURTEL Romania, was founded in 1995 by a group of local and international women volunteers. After analyzing the needs in post-communist Romania, AMURTEL specialized in the areas of inclusive education for children with special needs, and social services for abandoned children and youth.*

### **Familia AMURTEL**

Familia AMURTEL has operated as a children's home since 1992, offering a loving, creative, and healing home to children in need of temporary or permanent housing and nutritional and educational resources. The home is located in Panatau, a small peaceful rural village in the Eastern Carpathian Mountains, and was designed to offer an alternative to the often overcrowded and negligent Communist state institutions.

Since its beginning, the home has welcomed 32 children. Gopi (or "Mommy", as the children call her), has retired after working for twenty years on the project, but continues to offer support indirectly, by providing work opportunities for the young adults at a hotel she opened nearby, along with financial support and guidance to the board. In 2015, commemorating the project's 20th anniversary, she said in her opening speech: "The beginning was magical. For me, the whole project, so far, is something magical. It started with an idea, we had nothing but inspiration."

After raising a full family of children to adulthood, Familia AMURTEL has taken in another group of eight children in the last year, and a small group of youth continues to live there.

### **Vistara Social Integration Project**

The Vistara Social Integration Project supports young people who have reached the age of 18 and have grown up in the house, but who still need support in the process of transition to an independent adult life. It is a process of integration, divided into gradual stages, which includes transitional experiences of work and housing. For this, AMURTEL uses an apartment in Bucharest, as well as a house near the children's home that cares for adults who grew at home, and who have some mental deficiency. "Through small successes, they gain confidence and become better prepared for the future," reports the AMURTEL Romania website.

### **Sunrise Kindergarten**

The kindergarten, inaugurated in 1991, serves 35 children from 2 to 6 years of age. Using a neohumanistic education curriculum, the school proposes to children, during the year, projects in three main areas: "I discover the world", which encourages curiosity and exploration of the natural world and the man-made world; "I love everything," which encourages love, empathy and connection, as well as ecological and pro-diversity attitudes; and "I can help," which encourages children to find ways to contribute and participate in the community.

### **Fountain of Hope Afterschool Program**

The Fountain of Hope After-school Center, which opened in September 2007, supports about 30 students in their homework, as well as offering artistic activities, sports, foreign language instruction, non-formal learning and vegetarian eating. The idea is for children to dis-





cover that learning can be fun and complete their studies. Another focus is the development of citizen awareness and active community participation: students engage in volunteer activities that benefit the environment and the neighborhood.

### Morning Star Holistic Center

The Morning Star Holistic Center, inaugurated in 2014, offers a varied range of courses: stress management, yoga, meditation, tai chi, qigong, African drumming, vegetarian cuisine and detox programs. The center was created because Didi wanted AMURTEL to be a reference for yoga in Romania. Yoga is just beginning to take root and flourish in Romania as the contact with Western Europe increases, where it is already very popular. The revenue earned from the courses is used for AMURTEL's administration expenses.

Read more about AMURTEL Romania Projects at: [www.amurtel.ro](http://www.amurtel.ro)

Make donations at: <http://amurtel.ro/en/donate-now/>

Thanks to the Dharma for All Journal for contributing to this article. <https://journal.d4all.org/>

Acharya Ananda Devapriya has been an acharya (yogic nun) of Ananda Marga since 2001. She works in Romania coordinating all of these AMURTEL Romania projects. She says: I found my spiritual path, or perhaps better to say – it found me – in Chicago in October of 1995. Something had been calling me from within for some time – a restlessness, and yet a knowing – that I needed to find what I was meant to do. I spent my evenings and weekends exploring various spiritual paths – Zen, Hare Krsna, an American guru – finding deep connections in each place, yet something was missing. I kept asking in each darshan or seminar “There are so many different paths - how will I know which is the right path?” In desperation, I closed my eyes, and internally addressed God, “I have no idea what name to give you, which way you want to guide me – so please show me the way – but don’t give me subtle hints, just shine a very bright light on the path so I will know.” That same evening, I found a poster reading “Self-Realization and Social Service”. It immediately sent a rush of electricity through me – this was it! For months I had been agonizing whether to sign up for a volunteer program like Peace Corps or Greenpeace – or rather retreat to a yogic ashram and go deep into spirituality.... There it was – no conflict – both of the two things I valued most – together!

## Contact Us!

Online at: [www.proutwomen.org](http://www.proutwomen.org)  
 Women Proutists of North America  
 PO Box 733  
 Northampton MA 01061

Call us at: 828-274-1683  
 Email: [womenproutists@gmail.com](mailto:womenproutists@gmail.com)  
 Facebook: Women Proutists of North America

# AMURTEL Haiti: Homes & Educa- tion for All Ages

AMURTEL has had a presence in Haiti for over 25 years, partnering with local people to provide a children's home, schools, clinics, literacy programs, reforestation initiatives, microcredit finance, and women's leadership programs. The area around the AMURTEL center in Bourdon, Port au Prince, was especially hit hard by the earthquake in 2010; for so many who were already struggling with overwhelming poverty, the loss of family members, homes, and jobs was especially devastating.

## Bourdon area of Port-au-Prince

The Children's Home in the Bourdon area of Port-au-Prince offers a family for 24 children. Director Didi Jivaprema is a musician and recording artist and the children love to play the drums and sing every day. Six of the children were awarded scholarships to a prestigious music school in Port-au-Prince. The music students come home from school each day and teach their siblings what they have learned playing in the orchestra and in music classes. That has just earned an additional 10 scholarships for the older children for the upcoming year.

Flooding several times a week has made this home and school building unreliable, and besides it is crowded – with just a couple bedrooms for the 24 children. Land has been purchased for a full children's home about 90 minutes away and plans are in the works for the new compound.

A longtime AMSAI school in the same building has 475 students from pre-k to grade 2. AMSAI schools use a curriculum and educational philosophy based on Neo-Humanism – a philosophy that propagates love for all creation. The philosophy seeks to acknowledge the spiritual, mental, and physical aspects of a child through the methods of creative arts, supportive sharing circles, and yoga asanas. This educational philosophy is employed as a way of fostering compassionate caretakers and leaders in our future society.

In Port-au-Prince, AMURTEL works in five locations with 200 women and 1500 teens who are living in camp-like homes. The programs offer microcredit, education, and empowerment to families who were displaced by earthquakes and poverty.

## Banan Area in The SE of Haiti

AMURTEL has worked for years in the Banan Area, which is in the SE of Haiti, near the border with the Do-



Music is a part of daily family life for the 24 children in the Children's Home. This has led to multiple scholarships at the local music school.

minican Republic. This is a very deeply impoverished area, where refugees were forced across the border from the Dominican Republic.

AMURTEL has a large AMSAI school with 780 children. Since the school was built for 300, money has been raised for 10 more classrooms. Their next goal is a high school for girls with a dormitory so that the students can attend during the week and go home on weekends. After that – their dream is of a women's college offering training for jobs that are desperately needed by the local economy: teaching, nursing, web design, and agriculture for hot dry climates are fields being considered. It will be the first college in this very poor area.

1000 teen girls participate in AMURTEL-inspired Girls Empowerment programs. The teens set their own priorities and learning to make their own choices. It offers the teens opportunities for developing leadership and social skills, gaining an economic footing for their future. That helps teenagers avoid early pregnancy, stay in school, and focus on their education and career development.

Starting with 20 women just over 5 years ago, AMURTEL created a finance-based organization with much planning and research into best practices. MIKFAB (Micro Kredi Fanm-yo Viktim AMURTEL) invites participating women to work in groups of six so each can support the others. It provides training in business skills and non-violent communication to assist the women in being successful in their endeavors. The women's groups meet together once a week, supporting each other as they face challenges in their endeavors to develop financial security for themselves and their families.



The program has been so successful and popular that 1000 women in the Banan area now work with the MIKFAB self-help groups..

### Some stories:

Jeannine is 29 years old and has two children. She lives with her children and a few siblings in a small shelter in the camp Sitwon 1. She ran a small business before the earthquake in January of 2010, but lost all of her merchandise and had no capital to start over. She would not have been able to start again without the small loan from AMURTEL; in her case 8,000 HTG (about 200 USD). The loan allowed her to buy enough stock to open a small drinks stand, where she sells Tampico, the local juice, and various local sodas. As she stands beside the small fridge where she started her business, run right out of her single room house, she explains how without the loan she wouldn't have been able to power the fridge or buy the initial supply of beverages. With the income she generates from her small business, she helps support her extended family and sends her children to school.

Venise is 31 years old and lives across the ravine from Jeannine in Sitwon II. She also lives in a small shelter with her two young children, watching over her stand of goods outside at which she sells everything from canned milk and rice to cooking oil. She has only participated in the program once – for a loan of 8,000 HTG (200 USD) – and explains that without it she would not have been able to recreate the business she had before the earthquake. Like many other MIKFAB participants, Venise has experience supporting her family by selling small products, and needed the economical push and support of an external loan. In addition, the training provided by the animators (facilitators) alongside the loan program (including seminars regarding financial management and non-violent communication) helped

Acarya Ananda Jiivaprema, the director of these AMURTEL homes, schools, and women's programs is a small, humble and caring yogic nun who local people have called "the Mother Theresa of Port-au-Prince". Originally from the Canary Islands, Didi has worked in Port-au-Prince since 1997. In 2006 she expanded her AMURTEL work to the border area. You can find her music at [Innersong.org](http://Innersong.org) and make donations to the Haiti projects through [www.amurtel.org](http://www.amurtel.org).

change her perspective on her children. She learned to look at events through their eyes, and consider how the earthquake might be affecting them, in ways different than it affected her.

Our coordinator, Ilda, shared one of the most moving stories I've heard so far:

"It came to one group's attention there was a woman being badly abused by her husband in an area outside their village. They went enmass to confront the man, calling him out on his violent behavior, and threatening him with dire consequences if he didn't stop beating his wife. He was shocked at the confrontation and agreed to their demands, which included signing a statement that he would no longer beat her. After the group left, he turned to his wife, who was not part of the Self-Help program, and encouraged her to join. He said to her, "These women are so strong and so powerful now, even though you aren't part of their group, they came here and stood up for you. You too should join with them and fight for other women." She in turn was so shocked and encouraged by this turn around that she went down to the village and asked to join. She is now an active part of the program and reports there is no longer abuse in her home."



# Recipe Corner

A regular column  
by Liina Laufer



Here are two delicious eggless, whole grain cakes that can be served in loafs, frosted in layers, or dribbled with a sauce (such as apple, lemon, or caramel sauce). They are adapted from recipes in *Cooking for Consciousness* by Joy McClure and Kendall Layne, which can still be found on Amazon and in used bookstores.

## Applesauce Cake

2 C applesauce  
¾ C honey  
¼ C oil  
1 t pumpkin pie spice  
1 t vanilla  
1 t lemon zest  
2 t baking soda  
½ t salt  
3 C whole wheat pastry flour  
1 cup chopped dates  
½ cup chopped almond

## Gingerbread

¾ C honey  
¾ C oil  
1 C molasses  
1 2/3 C sour milk or this yogurt  
½ t salt  
1 t ginger  
1 ½ t cloves  
1 ½ t cinnamon  
1 ½ t baking soda  
4 C whole wheat pastry flour

Beat together liquids. Mix the dry ingredients then gradually add the liquid, beating well.

Oil an 8X12 inch pan, 2 loaf pans, 2 circular layer pans, or a spring form pan with a hole in the center. Pour in the batter, smooth the top, and bake at 350 degrees for 40-60 minutes, until a toothpick or knife comes out clean. Cool before removing from pan.

# The Age of Mothers and Matriarchy

Continued from page 1

Yet, the simple truth is that as long as we remain blinded by the myth of male superiority and female inferiority, we will not be able to create a better world for our children and grandchildren. It will not be an easy task to change the world because the myth of uninterrupted male superiority is now so deeply encoded in the subconscious programming of modern society. The myth has made us mentally ill, and like most mentally ill people, we live in a state of constant denial concerning the seriousness of our illness.

## The Time of the Matriarchy

Scientists place the origins of our genus (homo) about 2.5 million years ago and the origin of our species (sapiens) about two hundred thousand years ago.<sup>4</sup> The oldest discovered human skulls found in Africa are dated about one hundred and sixty thousand years ago.<sup>5</sup> Around fifty thousand years ago, we were already modern human beings having language, tools, trade and science and pursuing other cultural developments.<sup>6</sup> Written history, by contrast, only began about five thousand years ago.

It was the females of our species, in their role as mothers, who ushered us out of animality and into humanity. Therefore, we can say that the matriarchy, however primitive, originated about 2.5 million years ago. This corresponds roughly to the beginning of the Paleolithic Age, when humans first started using stone artifacts, and roughly covers ninety-five percent<sup>7</sup> of human pre-history. For this reason, the Paleolithic Age is also called the Stone Age.

We can estimate that the golden age of matriarchy began in earnest toward the end of the Mid-Paleolithic Age and the onset of the Upper Pleistocene Age about fifty thousand years ago and lasted to about ten thousand years ago with the dawn of patriarchy.

During the transition of the human clan out of the hominid primal horde, it was the women, in their role as mothers, who established the rules regarding human relationship. Their authority developed naturally out of the mother's role as caregiver. During the primate and hominid stages of development, the mothers, in cooperation with each other, protected the young and developed communication methods (eye signals, vocal sounds, body postures, etc.) to teach them the skills necessary to survive in the group. Except for the alpha male, who had sexual access to females, adult males were peripheral to the group structure. This behavior on the part of



*A petroglyph drawn by the Chincha people more than 4000 years ago. Photo by Mahajoy Laufer.*

mothers existed around 2.5 million years ago and continued to exist up until the beginning of patriarchy some ten thousand years ago.

The existence of matriarchy is now well-established, regardless of the great investment that male-dominated organizations have made historically to deny its existence,

## The Clan

During the golden age of matriarchy, women moved freely as warriors, traders, ambassadors, and priestesses. In their role as priestesses, they evolved the knowledge of the natural cycles, including the lunar and solar calendars. They attributed control of these cycles to the Great Goddess, who changed her form according to the seasons. In the spring She was the Virgin, in the summer and fall, the Mother, in the late fall and winter, the Crone. The concept of the Great Goddess evolved from the need to understand the annual agricultural cycle of life and death and the need to ensure that the fertility of the land was sufficient to feed the people each year. During this period of mother-rule, human beings developed their first great agricultural civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Indus Valley. The people believed that great civilizations existed by virtue of the grace and bounty of the Great Goddess.

During the matriarchy, all religious rituals centered on the mystery of life and death. Just as the crops were born each spring, the mothers had the ability to bring life to existence out of their own bodies. The knowledge related to this mysterious act made them magical. With the development of religion, based upon the giving of life, they became more than women or mothers. They had become goddesses. As goddesses, they could control what happened on this earth.

## The Moon and the Mystery of Motherhood

Since the dawn of human consciousness, the central mystery for women had been the act of creating human life within themselves. The fact that a woman could produce another life out of her own body has always been central to the worldview of women. Solving the mystery of how this happens and how all life happens was the central preoccupation of the matriarchy.

By exploring the cause of human birth, initially women all over the world came to believe that pregnancy resulted from a particular union of a woman's blood with a spirit. No one at the time had any idea men's sperm had a role in the creation of a child. Primitive people found themselves surrounded by life forms that they believed had similar intelligence to them and were capable of anything. Every rock, plant, tree, animal, etc. had a spirit or life force within it, and these spirits could be benevolent or malevolent at any moment. In fact, Julian Jaynes, the author of *The Origins of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, informs us that even the voices of women and men heard in their minds were not attributed to themselves but to outside spirits. The voice of the spirit in one's mind could be from an animal or plant, a dead ancestor, or eventually a goddess or god. It did not matter. Spirits could take any form they chose.

Women came to correlate their own wombs with the caves of Mother Earth. They believed that the mystery of life on earth could be understood, and even controlled by understanding the mystery of these caves. They believed that the processes activated within the womb of Mother Earth caused life to be born on the surface. Not only the birth of life, but also the activities of life were determined in the caves of Mother earth. If the women could solve the secret of the caves, they could also control life on the surface. With such thoughts, the women develop rituals, which they called magic, to gain control of the secrets of Mother Earth. Herein lies the meaning of cave art. It was not men who created cave art; it was the women who created it in their attempt to understand and control the activities of life. The ability to have a successful hunt or to have successful relationships with other clans, with the life forms that fed them or wished them evil, with the Goddess, or with each other were influenced by the mothers' pictures on the walls of caves.

To the ancient matriarchs, the caves held the deepest mysteries. Throughout the entire known world, early goddess worship took place in caves.

*This article contains excerpts from the book *Age of the Mothers and Matriarchy, The Untold Story of Western Civilization, Volume 1* by Chuck and Tom Paprocki. Copyright 2018 InnerWorld Publications. Available through Amazon.com*



# North American Prout Activities



ABOVE: Members of Prout USA and Yoga Justice gathered for a weekend in October at Ananda Viplava in upstate New York, to explore how to be more effective in our social change work.



LEFT: A July Prout USA Utilization Training Camp at Ananda Viplava in upstate New York explored publicity, social media, public speaking, local activism and other forms of outreach. Participants came from as far away as Brazil and Costa Rica.

RIGHT: At the Utilization Training Camp, Proutists met with a local politician to get a feeling for possibilities of social activism in municipal politics. Tiffany Garriga advocates for residents of her community, helping ensure their needs get the attention they deserve.

If you would like to be kept abreast of Prout activities in the USA, go to:

[www.proutusa.org](http://www.proutusa.org)  
[www.proutwomen.org](http://www.proutwomen.org)







Participants of the Maine Economic Democracy Conference explored the meaning of economic democracy, took workshops exploring it, and enjoyed a locally grown and prepared lunch from a socially responsible caterer.

## Maine Economic Democracy Conference

By Acharya Maheshvaranda

A landmark conference on Economic Democracy took place at the University of Maine in Augusta on November 10, 2018. Two Proutists, Alex Jackimovicz and Shri Verrill formed the Alliance for Economic Democracy ([www.aedmaine.org](http://www.aedmaine.org)) two years ago that organized this event with 27 co-sponsors. The theme was “Our Community, Our Economy: Economic Democracy for Maine.” Seventy people participated in the all-day program with keynote talks and workshops about cooperatives, the biopsychology of cooperation, healthcare, decentralized energy, food sovereignty, financing economic democracy, indigenous rights, fair trade, cooperative housing and land care, ecology-based economy and timebanking.

In his opening remarks, Alex said, “I want to acknowledge who I see in the room today: practitioners of the new economy, representatives of people’s movements—healthcare, food sovereignty, decentralized energy generation, cooperatives. All of you are deeply committed to community values, and to a more just and sustainable world. Some of you serve at the intersection of social and economic justice activism and the new economy. You all, and your work inspire me very much. We’re all here to share collectively, to discuss what Economic Democracy is, and how we can apply it.”



## Upcoming Global Prout Convention

Interested in learning more about Prout and networking with other Proutists from around the world?

Attend the annual Global Prout Convention in Copenhagen, Denmark, July 20th through July 26th. It is preceded by a women's convening July 17th through 19th. Details on the content of the 2019 convening will be forthcoming.

Those interested can explore the website: [www.proutconvention.dk](http://www.proutconvention.dk)



## Prout at the 2018 World Social Forum

The World Social Forum took place in Salvador (BA) from March 13 to 17, 2018. Three Brazilian PROUT activists, gave lectures during the event. The following is an interview with Luís Fernando Zen, one of the presentors.

### **D4all Journal: What was Prout's role in the WSF?**

**Luís Fernando Zen:** The forum was a meeting place for people interested in social change in this country. The lectures were intended to present Prout as an alternative form of social organization. Capitalism knows that it is not working, and people who are interested in social matters end up not finding other alternatives in current theories such as communism or socialism. So the lectures were very practical, talking about what is already happening in Prout in the world, and what changes Prout proposes that can gradually transform the present system to another, more human system. It was a gathering of resistance. This was the motto of this forum, which was different from others whose idea was "another world is possible". This was something like "transformation through resistance," because the forces of the left have been weakened. It's a grassroots effort.

### **D4all Journal: What is already happening in Prout, in practice, in the world?**

**Luís Fernando Zen:** For example, Prout talks about economic democracy, and where does that happen in practice today? In authentic self-managed associations and cooperatives. It is the workers themselves who decide the future of the enterprise. And when this happens on a larger scale — for example, in a community with many associations and cooperatives — it means that people are being taught to deliberate about their local economy. Thus, they are enabled to participate in local forums and in municipal councils that decide economic concerns in the municipality.

We have already had a participatory budget in several prefectures in Brazil. It began in Rio Grande do Sul and spread to other cities in the country. But when the government is voted out, another enters that doesn't support such measures, and places that once had them no longer do. I participated in the installation of a participatory budget in the City Hall of Teresópolis in the state of Rio de Janeiro for a year. It didn't last long. The mayor lost the election and we left. The debates were insightful, each side marshaling their arguments to sway the community's voters to their proposal. It was a very special moment, seeing economic democracy at work. For this is what it preaches: when you take away the decision-making power over public resources from the politician, it passes to the citizen. Thus, you take away the power that corrupt politicians have nowadays.

Another practical example is the idea of socio-economic territories, which should seek to be self-sustainable, making sure that production and the local economy are geared to meeting the needs of the population, not producing for export, for example. An example of this, which has not evolved much due to political disputes here in Brazil, were the citizenship territories. The federal government separated some territories that had more need and began to think about special public policies for them. The role of the politician in Prout is to support these initiatives.

The goal of Prout's global movement, which is based in Denmark, is to make Prout known in the next five years. How are people going to accept Prout as an option when most people haven't heard of it?

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