

Waymark 4

Bertha von Suttner's book "Die Waffen nieder" ("Lay Down Your Arms") was the milestone before the First World War that led to the 1908 conference in The Hague. There, with great international participation, an attempt was made to create conditions to prevent an impending war. When talking about pacifism, the life of this extraordinary woman is to be mentioned in the sense of a significant historical impact and her biography is to be recommended to every student of spiritual teaching (Wikipedia).

It may seem surprising to the reader that we place this contribution next to that of the Tibetan, who emphasized the harmfulness of fanatical pacifism.

This can be a hint for the intellectual students to judge the historical processes from different points of view. Bertha von Suttner's goal was to prevent the impending war that she foresaw. She experienced the excesses of war ideology and the slide into a war mentality that fed on misunderstood masculinity and heroism.

Once a deluded aggressor has decided to go to war, there is a danger that his dark machinations will destroy entire peoples. Preventive pacifism must be considered a failure in this situation, and pacifism no longer the means of choice. Now it is much more a matter of confronting the aggressor militarily as well, and of putting him in his place collectively.

B. von Suttner's worldwide effort to prevent war is an extraordinary achievement and, in addition, for that time and today, a beacon for the importance of the transformative impact of women, in a dim, militaristic, male-dominated world.

Bertha von Suttner was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and many of her demands and suggestions were later incorporated into international law.