

The Dragon's Lady: Aung San Suu Kyi's Pursuit of Democracy

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493 Words

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As with many themes, taking a stand lends itself well to many different historical events. In the beginning of the process, I considered topics from the Congolese Civil Wars to Aldo Leopold's contributions to conservation. However, as a student fascinated with Asian history and the effects of colonialism, Aung San Suu Kyi's attempt to bring democracy to Myanmar was the most logical topic choice.

I began my research process with general sources about her life. One of the most helpful was the Oxford Burma Alliance. I appreciated this source because it thoroughly explained the context surrounding the military regime, which is an integral part of understanding Aung San Suu Kyi. Additionally, the speeches that I found gave me remarkable insight into the challenges she faced, as well as her character overall. Finally, delving deep into the archives of the Chicago Tribune and the Irrawaddy Magazine, I was able to locate historical articles and images, which allowed me to gain a complex knowledge of Aung San Suu Kyi's life and struggles.

Once I did basic research on her, I began delving deeper into the events that shaped her life, namely the assassination of her father and the 8888 Uprising. I also devoted extra time to examining the nature of British colonialism in Burma because it directly led to the dictatorship that Aung San Suu Kyi dedicated her life to fighting against.

After some deliberating, I decided on doing a website, largely due to the enormous amount of visual media that I found. I started off by taking notes on each source, then wrote the text of the website. From there, I added images and quotes to the website. Quotes, I found, were vital to the website because they contributed an additional level of information about Aung San Suu Kyi that could not be conveyed through secondary sources. Furthermore, images were an integral part of the website, especially when I was trying to convey emotions, which was difficult to do with words. In order to fully experience the website, I recommend checking the Site Instructions page first, which contains information about navigation and citations. Since this topic is not centered on the United States, finding primary sources was a common challenge that I faced, but Suu Kyi's British background ensured that I found plenty.

Aung San Suu Kyi directly relates to the idea of taking a stand in history. She faced many challenges during her lifetime from Burma's junta, who tried to limit her speech by imprisoning her. Even while she was imprisoned, she repeatedly spoke out against injustices, with enormous personal sacrifice. However, the most important realization that I made during the research process was that Aung San Suu Kyi is not a model of human rights. Under her watch, Myanmar has neglected its Muslim minority, enacting regulations designed to discriminate and dehumanize. For this reason, Aung San Suu Kyi represents both the enormous progress and the continued need for growth in Myanmar.

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