

Indian Journal of Modern Research and Reviews

This Journal is a member of the 'Committee on Publication Ethics'

Online ISSN: 2584-184X



Review Paper

Two-Way Linkage: The Evolution and Characteristics of Buddhist and Islamic Extremism in Sri Lanka

 Liang Zhiwen^{1*}

¹Institute of African Studies, Zhejiang Normal University, China

Corresponding Author: * Liang Zhiwen 

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14261172>

ABSTRACT

In 2009, after the end of the 26-year civil war, Sri Lanka's national security is still facing many challenges, especially the extremism dominated by the "Buddhist-Muslim" religious conflict is spreading. As the threat of Tamil separatism has removed, Buddhist extremist groups in Sri Lanka have begun to turn their attention to Muslims, exacerbating Buddhist-Islamic tensions. Buddhist extremists have further exacerbated tensions between Muslims and Buddhists by inciting hate speech and violence against Islam, fueling rising anti-Muslim sentiment. In 2019, after the Easter attacks by Islamic extremists, the Sri Lankan government took tougher measures to control the growth of extremism, but the results were not satisfactory, and religious extremism spread further. The relationship between Buddhism and Islam is mutually antagonistic and radicalized, showing a pattern of "reactive extremism". Buddhist nationalists see their religion and culture as threatened by "Islamization", while Islamic extremism is gradually hidden under social marginalization and security pressures. Both extremisms are ideologically "defensive" and perceive their culture and religion as threatened by the other. Buddhism and Islamic extremism present a two-way interaction in terms of crisis narratives, acts of violence, and international influence, reflecting the interaction and intensification of these two extremist forces.

Manuscript Info.

- ✓ ISSN No: 2584-184X
- ✓ Received: 09-09-2024
- ✓ Accepted: 23-11-2024
- ✓ Published: 29-11-2024
- ✓ MRR:2(11):2024:47-52
- ✓ ©2024, All Rights Reserved.
- ✓ Peer Review Process: Yes
- ✓ Plagiarism Checked: Yes

How To Cite

Liang Zhiwen. Two-Way Linkage: The Evolution and Characteristics of Buddhist and Islamic Extremism in Sri Lanka Indian Journal of Modern Research and Reviews: 2024;2(11):47-52.

KEYWORDS: Sri Lanka, Extremism, Buddhism, Islam.

INTRODUCTION

After the end of the Sri Lankan civil war in 2009, the original Sinhalese-Tamil conflict was gradually replaced by a more religious "Buddhist-Muslim" conflict, a shift that was the result of a combination of factors, during which Buddhist extremism and Islamic extremism also grew. This article will review the history of the Buddhist-Muslim conflict and explore the development and characteristics of Buddhist and Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka. At present, the academic research on Islamic extremism and Buddhist extremism in Sri Lanka is relatively in-depth, but there is little comprehensive discussion on the relationship between the two. Therefore, it is

necessary to review the history of the "Buddhist-Muslim" conflict after the Sri Lankan civil war and divide it into several historical stages according to important events and time nodes, to summarize the evolution characteristics of extremism in Sri Lanka and verify the views of this paper.

I. The Buddhist-Muslim Conflict and the Rise of Religious Extremism in the Early Post-Civil War Period (2009-2014)

In the initial period after the end of the Sri Lankan civil war, the country's focus was on promoting national unity and reconstruction. However, as the threat of Tamil separatism was

removed, some Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist groups began to turn their attention to other minority groups, especially Muslims. Although relations between Muslims and the Buddhist community have not yet been in sharp conflict, tensions between the two sides have quietly emerged, and religious extremism has begun to grow.

In the economic sphere, the Muslim community has distinguished itself in trade and commerce compared to other ethnic groups, and this economic success has been a source of discontent among Buddhist extremists. Some Buddhist nationalists believe that Muslim business activity has weakened local Buddhist businesses, especially in areas where Muslim business is active, such as Colombo and the Eastern Province, where tensions occasionally take the form of open criticism and skirmishes. Some Buddhist extremists claim that Muslims have gained disproportionate power in economic and social status, seeing it as a threat to Sinhalese Buddhist cultural dominance.

At the same time, Buddhist extremist groups such as “Bodu Bala Sena” (BBS). Gradually, it began to openly spread anti-Muslim propaganda, claiming that Muslims were gradually “Islamizing” Sri Lanka by increasing its population and expanding its cultural influence. In 2013, the controversy surrounding halal certification was particularly noteworthy, with Buddhist nationalist groups such as the BBS questioning the halal certification of Muslim companies, accusing them of charging halal certification fees as a “Muslim monopoly on the market”. The BBS declared that halal certification was an imposition of Islamic teachings on non-Muslim groups and called on Sinhalese to boycott all halal food. The incident has attracted widespread attention, and while it has not provoked large-scale violence, its rhetoric has fueled the momentum of Buddhist extremism and the feeling of oppression and marginalization of the Muslim community. Although these problems have not yet led to large-scale violence, they have exacerbated interfaith suspicion and set the stage for larger conflicts to follow. At the same time, anti-Muslim sentiment among Buddhist extremists draws strength from the global discourse of fear against radical Islamist groups such as the Islamic State.

In the face of the radical claims and attacks of Buddhist extremists, a more radical reaction has begun to emerge in some parts of the Muslim community. Some Muslim communities and religious leaders have strengthened religious conservatism within their communities in order to assert their faith and cultural identity. While this radical response has not resulted in significant armed groups, it has provoked greater antagonism in some areas.

The development of Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka during this period was not as significant as that of Buddhist extremism, but there was indeed some extremist reaction within some Muslim groups against the backdrop of increasing pressure and provocation. Within the Sri Lankan Muslim community, with the spread of Islamic extremism in neighboring countries such as India and Pakistan, some conservative and radical ideas have gradually infiltrated the Sri

Lankan Muslim community. This radicalizing influence has spread to Sri Lanka mainly through the internet, foreign clerics, and religious organizations funded by Muslims abroad. Some young people in the Muslim community are gradually influenced by these ideas due to religious discrimination and political marginalization, and they tend to identify with radical Islamic teachings.

After 2012, in the Eastern Province, Colombo and other regions, some local organizations with ties to overseas Muslim organizations, such as “Sri Lanka Thawheed Jama'ath” (SLTJ), gradually expanding its impact. The SLTJ advocates pure Islamic teachings and harshly criticizes some infidels and Muslim groups that have “deviated from the right path”, and its radical rhetoric has been interpreted to a certain extent as an attempt to “Islamize”. Such organizations are funded by Middle Eastern funds and provide education in mosques and madrasas, attracting many young people. Although SLTJ does not directly advocate violence, its radical teachings and conservative ideas have drawn widespread criticism among Buddhist nationalists, as it emphasizes Muslim identity, generates a tendency to close communities, and is considered a symbol of the phenomenon of “Islamization”. In 2014, the Sri Lankan government discovered that a small number of young Muslims had been recruited into ISIS. Although the numbers are small, the phenomenon worries the government and Buddhist groups about the potential for the spread of Islamic extremism in the country.

In practice, the Sri Lankan government has taken no steps to curb the spread of extremism. The post-war government, led by President Mahinda Rajapaksa, was initially neutral on the growing tensions between Buddhists and Muslims, focusing on consolidating power and pushing for reconstruction. However, some factions in the government have shown acquiescence or even connivance towards Buddhist extremism in an attempt to gain political support from Sinhalese Buddhists, which has indirectly contributed to the growth of Buddhist extremism.

Although there were no large-scale incidents of religious violence during this period, localized incidents and anti-Muslim rhetoric were frequent, especially fueled by social media. Mosques and Muslim shops have been occasionally vandalized, and fear and marginalization in the Muslim community have grown. The 2012 mosque controversy in Dambulla is a case in point. Local Buddhist extremists claimed that the mosque was “illegal” and demanded its demolition and even organized protests to surround and vandalize the mosque. The incident became a landmark case of Buddhist extremism and exacerbated religious antagonism. Overall, there were no large-scale incidents of public violence during the period between the end of the civil war in 2009 and the anti-Muslim riots of 2014, despite the deteriorating relationship between Buddhists and Muslims and the growing influence of religious extremism.

II. From Anti-Muslim Riots to Easter Attacks: The Intensification of Religious Extremism (2014-2019)

Buddhist extremists in Sri Lanka have fueled rising anti-Muslim sentiment by inciting hate speech and violence against Islam, further exacerbating tensions between Muslims and other ethnic groups.

Anti-Muslim riots erupted in Sri Lanka in 2014, affecting tens of thousands of people in the unrest against the Muslim community. Many Muslims and their property were attacked by Sinhalese extremists, killing at least four people and injuring 80. Hundreds of people were left homeless after attacks on homes, shops, factories, mosques and nurseries, and more than 10,000 people were displaced by the riots. and the 2018 Kandy violence, which saw violent clashes against Muslim communities in the Kandy district of Sri Lanka's Central Province. Three people were killed, more than 400 homes and shops were damaged, and mosques were damaged. In 2015, organizations such as the BBS continued to question the religious practices of Muslims, specifically targeting the way Muslim women dressed, claiming that Muslim women wearing traditional clothing such as headscarves and veils were a symbol of "refusal to integrate". Extremist groups see these religious costumes as a threat to Sri Lanka's cultural unity and are trying to impose a ban. Such rhetoric has further increased the sense of unease in the Muslim community and has also sparked opposition from some Muslims. The controversy revolves around cultural costumes, which in fact exacerbate religious antagonisms and further promote the development of Buddhist and Islamic extremism.

In November 2017, tensions between Sinhalese and Muslims erupted again in central Sri Lanka. The cause of the conflict was a traffic accident in which the Sinhalese accused Muslims of intentionally injuring Buddhists. In the aftermath of the accident, a group of local Buddhists incited Sinhalese to attack Muslim property, resulting in the burning of several Muslim shops and homes. The local government declared a curfew, but the unrest continued for several days. As a result of the incident, one person was killed and dozens were injured. And in the 2018 violence in Kandy, Buddhist extremists attacked Muslim-owned businesses and mosques. The government declared a state of emergency to control the riots.

This series of extremist acts against Muslims has not been effectively punished, and the government's failure to substantively punish organizations that incite and participate in violence out of political considerations to maintain mainstream ethnic support and appease the power of Buddhist extremist groups has led to a further decline in the trust of the Muslim community in the government and security institutions. Amnesty International noted in a report on anti-Muslim violence in Sri Lanka that when these incidents occurred, the government failed to take timely steps to protect the Muslim community, to hold perpetrators accountable, and to provide adequate judicial redress and compensation to victims. The Sri Lankan government's failure to prevent and curb violence against Muslim communities has further exacerbated the marginalization and discontent of Muslims.

This inaction not only undermines social fairness and security, but is also considered to be an important factor in stimulating the gradual radicalization of some Muslim groups.

The government's inaction and Buddhist extremism's hostility to Muslims, in turn, spurred the development of extremism among Muslims, which was one of the reasons for the 2019 Easter bombings in Sri Lanka. The Easter terrorist attacks shocked the whole world, and it was the worst terrorist attack in Sri Lanka since the civil war, with a total of 253 people killed and more than 500 injured in a single day in eight terrorist attacks. The attack was planned and carried out by the indigenous Islamic extremist group "National Thowheeth Jama'ath" (NTJ), which aims to respond to long-standing hostility and exclusion of the Muslim community, and the attack has brought Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka to the attention of the world. This incident marked the peak of religious extremism in Sri Lanka, and the religious contradictions in Sri Lanka were in an unprecedented tense situation.

III. The Persistence of Religious Extremism and Extremely Limited Reconciliation in the Aftermath of the Easter Attacks (2019-present)

In the aftermath of the Easter attacks, the international community quickly became aware of the threat of Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka. It has also sparked widespread discussion about how to deal with extremist forces and religious conflicts in the country. In the aftermath of the incident, the Sri Lankan government has taken tougher measures to control the growth of extremism, tightened its grip on the Muslim community, banned several extremist-linked organizations, and carried out mass arrests, which have been criticized for human rights abuses. At the same time, these measures have also deepened the isolation and discontent of the Muslim community to a certain extent, making future peace and reconciliation even more challenging.

In June of the same year following the incident, the Government of Sri Lanka would set up a special committee to promote reconciliation among religions, promote harmony in society as a whole and avoid all forms of extreme polarization. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe said the committee would include all religious communities in Sri Lanka and that every citizen has the right to freedom of belief, despite the fact that Buddhism is given priority to some extent in the country's constitution. In 2021, many religious leaders gathered in Sri Lanka to commemorate the second anniversary of the 2019 Easter suicide bombings and pray for an end to religious extremism. Malcolm Ranjith, Archbishop of Colombo, spoke at St. Anthony's Shrine with Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim leaders. The ceremony consisted of prayers and a two-minute silence in memory of the deceased. However, in terms of practical results, it has not led to a significant improvement in religious relations. Moreover, the Sri Lankan government's response has focused on security rather than reconciliation, and extremist sentiment has not been effectively alleviated by

the government's forceful approach, although there have been no large-scale incidents of violence since then.

The government's response to extremism tends to favor Buddhist nationalism, and many policies that are not directly targeted at Muslims are perceived as discriminatory by Muslim groups with the support of Buddhist extremism. For example, the security measures imposed by the government in the aftermath of the Easter bombings are seen as "collective punishment" by Muslims, while Buddhist extremist groups support it. Such policy biases have exacerbated mistrust between the two sides and allowed the two extremisms to further consolidate and spread within their respective communities.

The attacks also show that there is a clear interplay between Buddhist extremism and Islamic extremism. The extremist claims and activities of Buddhist nationalists continue to exacerbate the sense of compulsion among the Muslim community, especially after the violent incidents such as the anti-Muslim riots that began in 2014, many Muslims began to unite more closely, reinforcing religious conservatism within the community. This reaction has further angered Buddhist extremists into believing that Muslims "refuse to assimilate" into Sri Lanka's mainstream culture, leading to a vicious circle. And during the COVID-19 pandemic, policies such as forced cremation of Muslims who died from the virus have led to further tensions, which are seen as ignoring Muslim burial practices, which often bury their bodies. Despite World Health Organization guidelines allowing for safe burials, the Sri Lankan government claims that cremation is to prevent groundwater contamination, a policy that has been strongly opposed and protested by the Muslim community due to its lack of scientific basis. Not only are Muslims unable to follow religious customs to see off their loved ones, but they are also forced to bear the cost of cremation, further adding to the harmful nature of the policy. Despite repeated calls from the Muslim community, rights organizations, and the international community to change the policy, it was only in February 2021, a year after the policy was implemented, that the Sri Lankan government finally lifted the mandatory cremation rule and allowed religiously appropriate burials.

In 2021, some Buddhist extremist groups promoted the "One Country, One Law" campaign, which aims to abolish the marriage and family law system that allows Muslim communities to follow Islamic law. The initiative, supported by some politicians, was seen as a means of strengthening national unity, but the Muslim community saw it as a weakening of religious autonomy. Since 2022, as Sri Lanka's economic crisis has intensified, Buddhist extremist groups have taken advantage of the public's discontent to further promote the "Muslim threat theory", arguing that Muslim businessmen and entrepreneurs are taking advantage of the economic crisis to make huge profits, and inciting Buddhists to distrust the Muslim community. In 2023, some Buddhist nationalist groups launched a campaign to "protect Sinhalese culture", accusing Muslim religious practices of "encroaching" local Buddhist culture. This type of rhetoric is particularly

prevalent in rural areas, where some towns and villages have begun to exclude Muslim traders and prohibit Muslim groups from buying land. This "cultural preservation" movement has sparked discriminatory policies against Muslims in some areas, further exacerbating interreligious tensions.

Some organizations, represented by SLTJ, continue to promote religious education within Muslim communities in predominantly Muslim-populated areas, emphasizing religious identity. Although SLTJ denies advocating violence, its extreme religious stance has drawn the attention of some Muslim youth. Buddhist extremists perceive SLTJ's activities as a symbol of "Islamization" which intensifies the tension between the two groups. In April 2024, Sri Lanka issued a special gazette notice banning 11 Islamist extremist organizations, including SLTJ, under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA).

Since 2019, the relationship between Buddhists and Muslims in Sri Lanka has become increasingly fragile, with extremist sentiments escalating between the two groups. Events such as the Easter bombings, the forced cremation policy during the pandemic, and mutual accusations amid the economic crisis have made the confrontation between Buddhist and Islamic extremism more public and institutionalized. The interaction between Buddhism and Islam exhibits a pattern of "reactive extremism," where both sides amplify their ideological stances in response to perceived threats. Buddhist nationalists view Islamic culture as a challenge to their dominant position and claim a need to "protect Buddhist culture" from erosion. In contrast, under societal marginalization and security pressures, Islamic extremists have become more clandestine, emphasizing religious purity and advocating for the protection of Islamic culture and traditions. This cultural defense mentality further intensifies hostility between the two religions.

In summary, Buddhist and Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka display a mutually reinforcing dynamic, with opposition and mistrust between the two groups intensifying under the influence of economic, cultural, and policy-related factors. Extremist sentiments on both sides are characterized by a reactive and defensive stance, impacting each other through cultural preservation, online dissemination, and economic competition. This interaction further undermines social cohesion and interreligious trust, creating latent risks for future conflicts.

CONCLUSION

The "two-way linkage" characteristics of extremism in Sri Lanka

Looking back at the history of Sri Lanka, the situation of religious extremism in Sri Lanka is complex, and Buddhism and Islamic extremism show the characteristics of two-way interaction in many aspects, reflecting the interaction and intensification of these two extremist forces. The following analyzes the characteristics of the "two-way linkage" between Buddhism and Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka from three aspects: crisis narrative, violence and international impact.

Both Buddhist and Islamic extremism in Sri Lanka use crisis narratives to mobilize their followers, framing their situations as a “survival crisis” and “cultural crisis” that intensify and mutually reinforce each other. Sinhalese Buddhist nationalists assert that “Sri Lanka is a Buddhist nation” and claim that the Muslim community poses a “threat” to Buddhist security, economy, and culture. This narrative portrays Muslims as “outsiders” and “disruptors,” inciting Buddhists to adopt a hostile stance toward Muslims under the banner of “defending religion and nation”. As anti-Muslim sentiment and violence increase, Muslim extremists also start to employ a “persecution” narrative to rally their communities. They argue that exclusionary policies by Buddhists and the government are depriving Muslims of their rights and security, calling on Muslims to “self-defend”. This narrative attracts some Muslims, particularly younger people, to join extremist organizations, seeking “justice” through retaliatory violence. These crisis narratives from both Buddhist and Islamic extremism reinforce each other, escalating conflicts between the two groups. The Sinhalese nationalists’ portrayal of a “Muslim threat” and the Muslims’ “survival crisis” narratives combine to create a lasting atmosphere of religious hostility in Sri Lanka.

At the same time, the violent acts of Buddhist extremism and Islamic extremism also have obvious characteristics of “two-way linkage”. The violence on both sides has fueled social unrest and religious antagonism. For example, in the 2014 anti-Muslim riots, Buddhist extremist groups launched attacks on Muslim communities, attacking mosques and shops. On the one hand, such violence has hit the living and economic foundations of Muslims, and on the other hand, it has also stimulated the revolt of some Muslim groups. Eventually, Muslim extremists retaliated through violence, and the 2019 Easter bombings were a representative example of Muslim extremists retaliating against Buddhist extremists. The attack targeted churches and hotels, resulting in a large number of innocent casualties and further increasing the fear among Buddhists, thus fueling Buddhists’ hostile attitude towards Muslims and subsequent anti-Muslim actions. This creates a circular chain of violence, with the violent activities of Buddhist and Islamic extremists triggering each other, creating a vicious circle. The violence of each party provides a pretext for the other to retaliate, and social conflict is intensified in constant acts of revenge. The violent interaction between the two sides has torn apart Sri Lankan society as a whole and undermined the foundations of multi-ethnic coexistence.

In addition, the development of religious extremism in Sri Lanka is also influenced by international forces, and Buddhism and Islamic extremism are supported or followed by different countries and organizations, which reinforces the antagonism between the two sides. Some Buddhist extremist organizations are recognized by other Buddhist countries or Buddhist forces and provide moral support. Some nationalists in these countries view Sri Lanka as a Buddhist protectorate and believe that Buddhist dominance should be guaranteed. This international support has given greater political confidence to

Buddhist extremism in Sri Lanka to adopt a more radical policy of exclusion from Muslims. For example, the links between Buddhist extremists in Sri Lanka and Myanmar, especially in dealing with the Muslim community. Ultra-nationalist groups in Sri Lanka such as BBS and the 969 Movement in Myanmar share a similar tenet of “protecting Buddhism”, seeing Muslims as a threat. Leaders of these groups, such as Ashin Wirathu in Myanmar and Galagoda Aththe Gnanasara in Sri Lanka, have also met publicly to discuss how to “unite Buddhists globally” against the threat of radical Islamist forces.

Due to the global influence of international Islamic extremist organizations, some Sri Lankan Muslim extremists are subject to ideological infiltration and financial support from these organizations. The organization behind the 2019 Easter bombings had links to a number of international extremist groups, indicating the infiltration of international extremist influence among Sri Lanka’s Muslim community. Another example of the influence of international extremism is the October 2024 threat of a terrorist attack against Israelis in Sri Lanka’s Arugam Bay region, which led to the arrest of three suspects suspected of planning attacks against Israeli citizens in Sri Lankan tourist destinations.

Overall, the Government of Sri Lanka continues to face many challenges in improving the rights of minorities and promoting religious reconciliation. Slow policy progress and the continuation of extremism have led to persistent religious and inter-ethnic tensions in the country. To achieve true ethnic and religious reconciliation, Sri Lanka still needs to undergo deep reforms in the areas of rights protection, justice and social inclusion, and seek substantive changes.

REFERENCES

1. Vanniasinkam N, Pathiraja K, Faslan M, et al. Interreligious conflict in four districts in Sri Lanka. Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies; 2018.
2. Morrison C. Buddhist extremism, anti-Muslim violence and civil war legacies in Sri Lanka. *Asian Ethnicity*. 2020;21(1):137-59.
3. Orjuela C. Countering Buddhist radicalisation: emerging peace movements in Myanmar and Sri Lanka. *Third World Q*. 2020;41(1):133-50.
4. Du M, Ma Z. An Analysis of the Dynamics of "New Ethno-Religion" Conflict in Sri Lanka. *World Nation*. 2020;(4):37-45. [Chinese: 杜敏, 马志霞. 斯里兰卡 “新民族-宗教” 冲突动因论析. *世界民族*. 2020;(4):37-45.]
5. Guan Y. Religious nationalism in Sri Lanka. *Int Stud Ref*. 2021;(06):23-28. [Chinese: 管银凤. 斯里兰卡宗教民族主义. *国际研究参考*. 2021;(06):23-28.]
6. Sri Lanka warned about possible terror attack against Israeli nationals, 3 arrested [Internet]. Connected to India News; 2024 Oct 25 [cited 2024 Nov 22]. Available from: <https://www.connectedtoindia.com/sri-lanka-warned->

- [about-possible-terror-attack-against-israeli-nationals-3-arrested/](#).
7. Forced cremations in Sri Lanka [Internet]. Amnesty International; 2020 Dec 10 [cited 2024 Nov 22]. Available from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/12/forced-cremations-in-sri-lanka/>.
 8. Sri Lanka proscribes 11 extremist organizations to fight against terrorism [Internet]. Times Online; 2021 Apr 14 [cited 2024 Nov 22]. Available from: <https://www.sundaytimes.lk/online/news-online/Sri-Lanka-proscribes-11-extremist-organizations-to-fight-against-terrorism/2-1132969>.
 9. Sri Lanka: 'Forced' cremation of COVID victims' bodies must stop - UN rights experts [Internet]. The United Nations; 2021 Jan 25 [cited 2024 Nov 22]. Available from: <https://www.ungeneva.org/en/news-media/news/2021/01/65683/sri-lanka-forced-cremation-covid-victims-bodies-must-stop-un-rights>.
 10. Sri Lanka 2023 International Religious Freedom Report. U.S. Department of State; 2023.
 11. Mujahidin MS. Extremism and Islamophobia Against the Muslim Minority in Sri Lanka. *Am J Islam Soc.* 2023;40(1-2):213-41.
 12. From Burning Houses To Burning Bodies, Anti-Muslim Violence, Discrimination And Harassment In Sri Lanka. Amnesty International; 2021.

Creative Commons (CC) License

This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. This license permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.