

ARNE NAESS

The Life and Work of Arne Naess

An Appreciative Overview BY ALAN DRENGSON

PROLOGUE

Part One of this essay concentrates on Arne Naess's life and accomplishments. It describes his spirit of free inquiry, love of nature, and commitment to nonviolence as these matured from his Norwegian origins. *Part Two* looks in depth at his comprehensive approach to the international deep ecology movement, worldviews, and philosophies of life, especially if the latter are ecosophies. (*Ecosophy* is Naess's term for personal life philosophies aiming for ecological harmony.) This article describes Naess's approach to *total views*, and how this engagement opens abundant depth, diversity, and unity to wisdom, which improves life quality. Global views should include and respect linguistic and cultural diversity, plurality of religions, and treasure the vast number of personal philosophies on Earth. Naess feels

that major interdisciplinary efforts are needed to study the ecology and evolution of human and other communication systems of cultures in their home places.

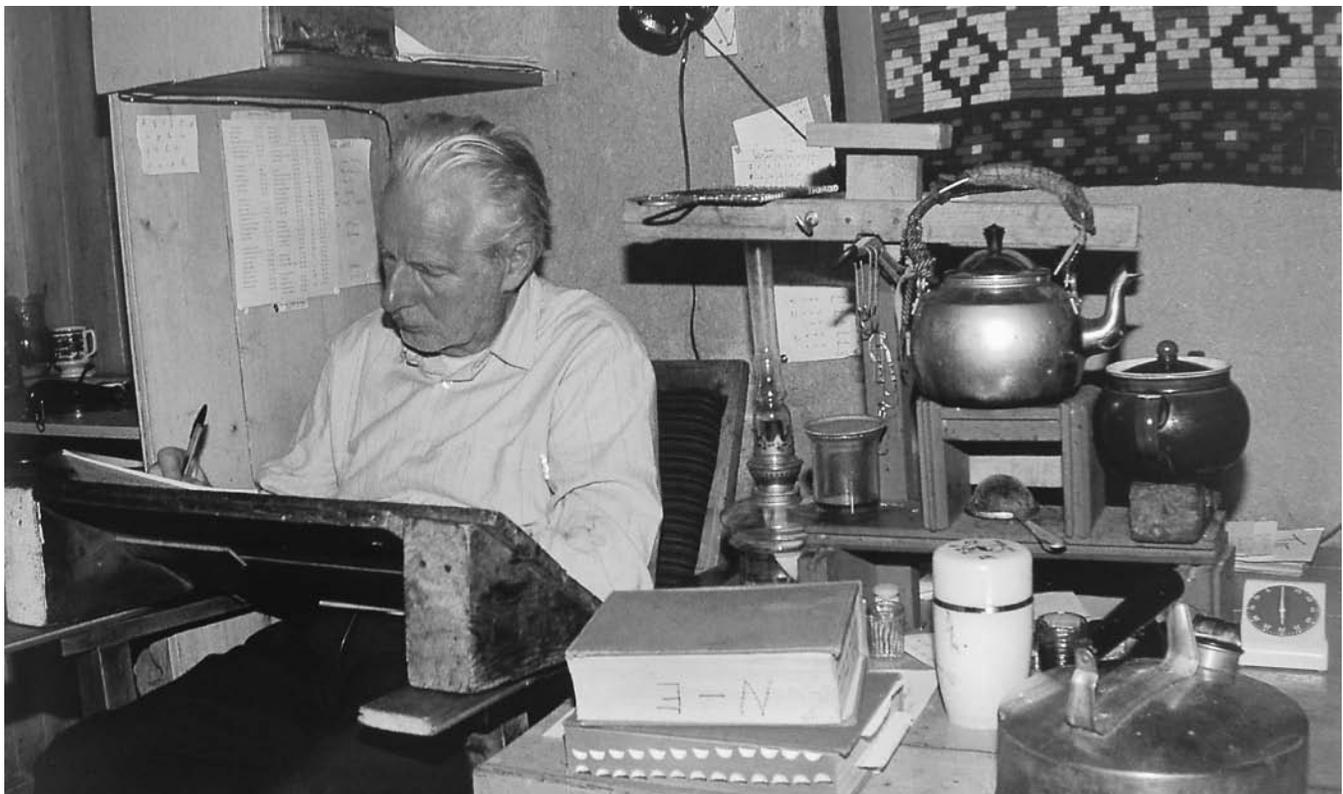
Deep ecology supporters appreciate the inherent value of all beings and of diversity. Therefore, research and communication should be inclusive and nonviolent. The ecological crisis, as driven by the Modern model of industrial progress and human population growth, threatens the integrity of planetary ecosystems with their accumulated wealth of diverse forms of life, cultures, and worldviews. No single philosophy can solve all of these problems. Global progress requires broad co-operation at the level of collective action and common principles, with innovation and unique solutions at policy and local personal levels. Naess sees the deep ecology movement as one of many international grassroots liberation movements of the twentieth cen-

tury for social justice, peace, and ecological responsibility (i.e., freedom from tyranny and inequity, freedom from war and violence, and freedom from pollution of person and destruction of home place).

For Naess, free nature is critical to cultural flourishing, community health, and personal Self-realization. Personal, cultural, ecological, and evolutionary diversity are great treasures of the Earth, probably even of Cosmic significance. There is room for a wide range of initiatives and actions to better care for and restore our shared home planet. Naess's interests range over wide areas of scholarship and personal explorations, especially in wild areas of the planet, intellect, and spirit. In his later years, he concentrated more and more on integrating his various interests and writings by means of a comprehensive, global approach using analytic, empirical, comparative,

and other methods. All of these and more are represented here organized using ecological issues and themes.

Much of Naess's focus in his professional life has been on language and communication. His approach to communication is holistic and grounded in a field naturalist's way of researching and organizing knowledge. As a philosopher Naess has looked beyond knowledge to depth of wisdom needed to live well in our world of change. He has always been first and foremost concerned to gain knowledge that will improve quality of life but lower demands and impacts on others. This is, for him, the essence of the way of non-violence. He applies this to communication as a way to resolve conflicts and problems rather than generate abstract theories. Naess also loves theoretic work, but his priorities limit time spent on such pursuits.



Arne Naess in his study room in Tvergastein, the only space that is insulated. PHOTO: JOHAN BRUN

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PART ONE: LIFE, EXPLORATION, AND INQUIRY IN NORWAY AND BEYOND

In a Norwegian survey of young people (pre-teen to twenty) an overwhelming majority said that the person they would most like to talk with was Arne Naess. In Norway, Naess is a hero and national treasure. He is well known for his social activism, writings, talks, textbooks, climbing, practical jokes, and other exploits. He is admired for his sense of humor and positive attitude toward life. A recent book of his published in Norway in 2000 had the title *Livsfilosofi (Life's Philosophy)*. It was a best seller for months and at last count had sold over 120,000 copies in Norwegian. It has since been translated and published in English.^[1]

Naess's contributions have been honored by many awards. Some of the more noteworthy are the Star of St. Olav's Order presented by the King of Norway in 2005, the Peer Gynt award in 2004 for his contributions to making Norway better known internationally; the Nordic Council Award for Nature and Environment in 2002; The Uggla Prize for Humanistic Studies from Stockholm University in 2002; a Diploma and Medal in 1998 from King Harald V of Norway for his contribution in the Intelligence Agency XU during the German occupation; the Medal of the Presidency of the Italian Republic in 1998; The Nordic Prize from the Swedish Academy in 1996; the Mountain Tradition Award by the Red Cross in 1996; the Mahatma Gandhi Prize for Non-violent Peace in 1994; the Fridtjof Nansen Award for the promotion of science in 1983; and the Sonning Prize in Denmark for contributions to European culture in 1977. He has received two honorary doctorates, one from Stockholm University in 1972 and the other from The Norwegian National University of Sports and Physical Education in 1995. He also holds honorary memberships in The Norwegian Alpine Club, awarded in 2002, and in the Norwegian Tourist Association, also in 2002.

He has taken his message of peace and harmony with the natural world to audiences in Bali, Beijing, Berkeley, Bucharest, Canton, Chendu, Devon, Dubrovnik, Hangzhou, Helsinki, Hong Kong, Japan, Jerusalem, London, Melbourne, Reykjavik, Santa Cruz, Taiwan, Tartu (Estonia), Tromsø, Vancouver and Victoria in Canada, and Warsaw. The Foundation for Deep Ecology was inspired by his work as was the Institute for Deep Ecology. The online journal the *Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy* was also founded on inspiration from Naess's work. There have been many Festschriften in his honor as well as anthologies and special issues of journals (see references at the end of this essay). Naess has been an active supporter of many charitable causes and has given much of his prize money to organizations, such as Amnesty International.

In scholarly circles, Naess is known for his work in logic, communication studies, empirical semantics, foundational studies of science, research on international conflict and peace studies (that include cross-cultural discussions of freedom and democracy), and his in-depth studies of major philosophers such as Spinoza, Gandhi, and Wittgenstein. His published scholarly writings number well over 30 books and 400 articles, and he has written about 300 articles that are unpublished. He has worked in several disciplines and established a widely respected interdisciplinary journal for the humanities and social sciences named *Inquiry*. Many of Naess's works have never appeared in English, and many of those written in English have long been unavailable. Because of the importance of his life's work and his original contributions to human society, it is the aim of the *Selected Works of Arne Naess (SWAN)* project to make a substantial and representative portion of his work available to English reading scholars and to others interested in his life and work. The ten volumes of his writings offered in *SWAN* represent central works and are organized to conclude with his most recent work detailing the way in which the analysis of

1. Naess, A., & Haukeland, P.I. (2002). *Life's Philosophy: Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.

deep ecology represents the integration of all elements of his life and work as they are relevant to the three great grassroots movements of the twentieth century: the peace, social justice, and ecology movements.^[2]

Naess is fluent in several languages and knows a great deal about many classical languages including Sanskrit, ancient Greek, and Latin. He writes in Norwegian, English, German, and French. One of his major works is a two-volume historical study of Eastern and Western Philosophies published only in Norwegian. Naess's scholarly work is impressive for its depth, breadth, and originality, and that alone has made him a recognized figure in international scholarly circles.

His work since 1965 has increasingly focused on serious environmental problems including the destruction of cultural and biological diversity. These ecological writings are collected in *SWAN X*. It was he who first characterized the short term, shallow ecology movement and compared it to the long range, deep ecology movement. When Naess began his study and activism in the ecology movement, he had already been active in the peace and social justice movements for years. He has for a long time seen himself as a wandering seeker of truth, knowledge, understanding, and wisdom. Using classical Greek he says that he is a *zetetic*, one who seeks truth and knowledge but does not claim it.^[3]

When in high school, he was given a copy of Spinoza's *Ethics* in the original Latin. He began reading it with great care and attention and continued to read and study it throughout his life. By the time he was ready to graduate from secondary education and move on to higher learning he already felt a strong identification with Spinoza's *Ethics* (1995).^[4] Already he had decided that he wanted to be a philosopher. He deeply trusted Spinoza and felt that Spinoza's account of his worldview and life's philosophy had shown the way to deep inquiry and practical action that leads to commu-

nity, friendship, and joy. He has never stopped learning from Spinoza's texts. He realized in the course of his studies that Spinoza's work, even though made as precise as possible in the timeless language of Medieval Latin, cannot be given one single, definitive interpretation. As is true for many such philosophical and other texts, they are rich in interpretive possibilities. This is also true of Naess's own writings.

Early in his intellectual development he began to reflect on the relationships between persons and between nations and wondered how serious conflicts could be defused or even avoided. His concerns for peaceful accord and shared inquiry eventually came together in his first major work, published in the *SWAN* Series as *Volume I: Interpretation and Preciseness*. He had earlier read Gandhi's works and studied his non-violent campaigns for social justice in South Africa and India. Naess is committed to nonviolent communication and research.

Naess also traveled to other places in Europe while working on his graduate studies. He spent time in Vienna, where he was invited to join the discussions of the famous Vienna Circle. This group included such leading figures as Moritz Schlick, Rudolf Carnap, Otto Neurath, and Frederick Waismann. Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (1958) had influenced their discussions. What impressed Naess most about the members of the discussion circle was their open attitude to exploring any question. They engaged in philosophical activity as a collegial undertaking of joint investigation, working together to deepen understanding and knowledge, helping each other to more carefully formulate their insights and feelings.

His study and acceptance of the principles of non-violence and his embrace of the open inquiry methods of the Vienna Circle led him away from pure mathematics, logic and formal studies in spite of his intense love

2. See *The Deep Ecology of Wisdom*, *SWAN X* 3.22.

3. See *Scepticism*, *SWAN II* and *Common Sense, Truth and Knowledge*, *SWAN VIII*.

4. See *SWAN VI Freedom, Emotion and Self-Subsistence*, and *SWAN IX* and *X*.

for these subjects. His work has always had applied connections based on his practical and passionate concerns. He felt that academic philosophy in the West had become too highly abstract and esoteric, characterized by obscure terminology and only remotely connected to daily life. There was high specialization and an attitude that only experts were qualified to speak on such subjects as the nature of truth and justice. Naess believed otherwise. He noted that the debating techniques used in philosophy classes, conferences, and journals often shed little light, even though they can produce a lot of heat. From the Vienna Circle he learned the importance of doing empirical research, but he did not accept the positivistic conclusions that many in the Circle drew from this. He did not accept the attempt to reduce all experience to the contents of the five senses. His own spontaneous experiences in the natural world as an amateur naturalist and mountain climber had, from an early age, impressed the wholeness of other beings and the natural world upon him; he was impressed by the diversity and community found in the world and by its complexity and uniqueness.

Born on January 27 of 1912, Arne Dekke Eide Naess was the fourth and last child of the Ragnar and Christine Naess family originally from Bergen, Norway. Naess was born in a house in Slemdal on the outskirts of Oslo with a wild garden that blended into woods. At his birth, his siblings were Ragnar, eleven, Erling, ten, and his sister, Kiki, who was five. Because of their age differences, Arne spent many happy hours playing alone in natural settings. Before he was a year old his father died of cancer. His mother, Christine, had her hands full with many social engagements and his older siblings, but he had a nanny named Mina for whom he felt a great affection. She doted on him and was the unconditionally loving mother that we all want. When he was still quite young his mother believed that he was being spoiled by the governess and so she let her go. This created a deep sorrow within him. He says he never felt the same close connection with his own mother.

His mother had a cabin near Ustaoset, a small community high in the mountains on the train route between Oslo and Bergen. The community is on the slopes of a broad mountain plateau that is part of the Hardangervidda, the largest alpine plateau in Europe (about 8,500 square kilometers, 3,280 square miles). It goes from the southern cliffs of Mt. Hallingskarvet west to the fjords on the coast and south to the mountain plateau above the Otra River in Setesdal. This enormous mountain area is crisscrossed by trails and some roads, and dotted by cabins. It is home to thousands of wild caribou (or reindeer, as they are called in Norway). Mt. Hallingskarvet is a major landmark in the north of this area, and can be seen from great distances. It has about 40 kilometers of cliffs that form its south side. From a distance, its top looks flat, but when on its summit, in the summer when the snow is gone, you find it covered with large boulders. In the winter the boulders are under snow. To the north of Mt. Hallingskarvet are the peaks of the Jotunheimen, literally, the home of the giants. These are the highest mountains in Norway. Arne's mother would take her family to the Ustaoset cabin, going by train, a four hour trip from Oslo.

By the time he was ten, Naess had developed a strong sense of connection with the mountains and especially Mt. Hallingskarvet. He began to feel a mythopoetic connection with the mountain that became like a father to him. Eventually, in 1938, he built his own hut high on the mountain at the foot of its massive cliffs, a three hour hike uphill from the train station at Ustaoset. He called his hut and its immediate area *Tvergastein*, which roughly translated means crossed stones. Over his lifetime he has spent years at this hut. It is the place where he has done much of his most original creative writing and other work. There are endless cliffs to climb and a view with few equals for its extent and impressiveness. A book on the mountain and the hut was published in 1995 in Norwegian. A rough English translation of the title is *Hallingskarvet: How to have a long life with an old father*.

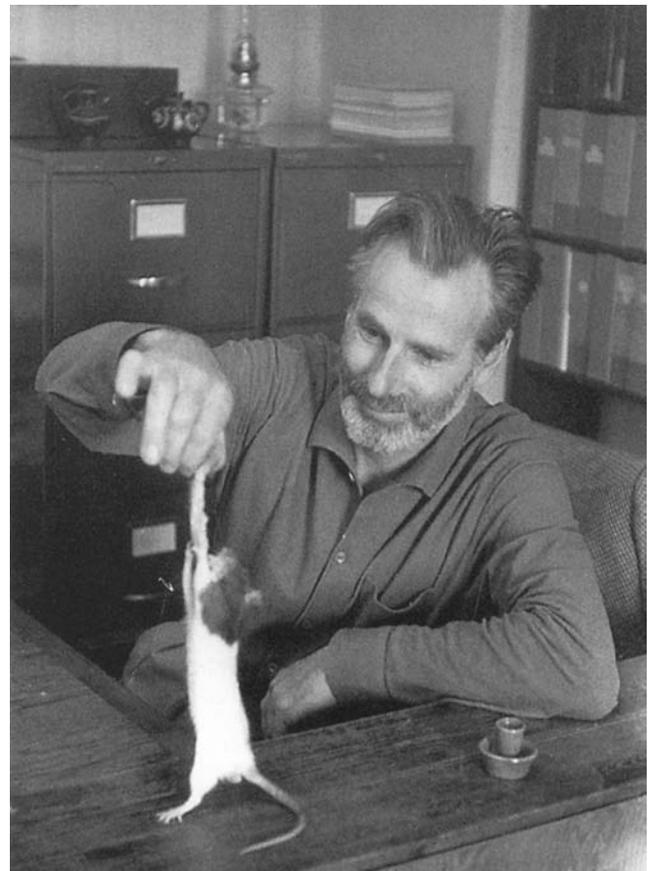
Naess has early memories of being in nature and becoming aware of its responsiveness when wading and playing in the water of the fjords near Oslo. He felt an intense sense of belonging and connection with the natural world around him. Through this spontaneous experience of the inner-responsive nature of the world and its many inhabitants, he realized that even the tiniest of beings can respond to us depending on how we act and feel about them. He felt it was wonderful to have these creatures in the water exploring his body when he remained very still, and moving away when he became active. Throughout his life, this exploratory wonder and experimental attitude has characterized his approach to the world and to many dimensional relationships.

When others in philosophy focused on what experts thought and consulted texts, Naess developed empirical methods to find out how language is actually used and what experts and non-experts think about important and deep subjects. These studies begin with his earliest work on truth in the 1930s and continued to the 1990s in his research on intrinsic values in Nature.^[5] He realized early in life that language and everything about human life is constantly changing and that no subject is ever definitively finished. He sees his own creative work and teachings as works in progress. They are part of a lifelong commitment to be always learning, just as he continued through the years to find new routes to the top of Mt. Hallingskarvet and other mountains in Norway and around the world.

After completing secondary education, Naess studied at the University of Oslo where he graduated in 1933. He completed a Master's degree in math and science. He received his PhD from the University of Oslo in 1936. While still doing graduate studies in 1934 and 1935, he spent time in Paris and Vienna. He took part in discussions of the Vienna Circle and climbed in the Alps. During this time, the Nazis were coming to power in Germany. While in Vienna, Naess

met and went into psychoanalysis with Dr. Eduard Hitschmann, one of Freud's associates. He plunged into his own psychic depths undergoing analysis for 14 months, six days a week. Dr. Hitschmann was keen for him to become a psychotherapist and arranged for him to spend time working in a psychiatric ward, where Naess developed great empathy for the patients.

Naess had decided to study in Vienna because of the mountains there, and because it was a center of philosophical and cultural activity. He went there also to study concert piano with one of the leading teachers of the day. His teacher informed him, after some time, that although he was excellent musically, he was not able to keep up with others in the classes because he would not practice more than six hours a day. Naess realized that his deeper intellectual interests lay else-



Arne playing with a rat. PHOTO: PRIVATE COLLECTION

5. See especially *SWAN VIII, IX Reason, Democracy and Science*, and *X*.

where, so he put most of his energy into philosophy and mountain climbing.

After he finished his dissertation on the *Knowledge Acquisition and the Behavior of Scientists* (1936), Naess decided to go to the University of California in Berkeley where Edward Chace Tolman was doing experimental work in learning theory by studying rats in a laboratory setting. Tolman invited Naess to join in these experimental studies and arranged for him to have his own lab with rats as subjects. Naess learned, after not many months of work, that rats have a higher tolerance than humans for multiple options. He felt empathy for the rats in cages and began to consider other empirical studies worth doing that did not involve caged animals. It is known among rat experimenters that even though the rats used in the experiments have been bred for generations to be easily handled in the lab, they still will do creative things and will revert to wild behavior if they escape from their cages.

He began to study the behavior of psychologists studying rats. As in mountain climbing, he was happy to be moving on to another route or another peak, to seek different perspectives and different ways of looking at things. During his studies of scientists he continued to think of the possibility of developing a science of science. All of these efforts are connected later to his examination of the role of different paradigms and the significant changes in orientation that can result from paradigm shifts in science, and how these in turn are embedded in larger historical and cross-cultural perspectives. From a global perspective, we live on a planet with enormous cultural, linguistic, and biological diversity. Just as he applied empirical methods and observation to the study of animals and plants in Nature, Naess applied similar methods to the study of philosophies of life and worldviews.^[6]

Naess enjoyed being in California. There were in-

venting seashores, deserts, and mountains to explore and a stimulating intellectual and artistic culture in which to engage. He was asked if he would be willing to stay as an associate professor, but simultaneously was invited to apply for a full professorship opening at the University of Oslo. He decided that it would be better, for family reasons, to return to Norway. He was offered and accepted the professorship and he served there with distinction from 1939 to 1969. He took early retirement in 1969 so that he could “live and not just function,” and to devote his remaining years and energies to active support of the long range, deep ecology movement. Since 1991 he has been working with SUM, the Center for Development and the Environment, a research Institute associated with the University of Oslo.^[7]

During his years as a Professor he had many adventures and pioneered many fields of study that were always related to issues of practical and moral importance. By the time he returned to Norway, Germany had gone to war and soon after taking his position at the University of Oslo, Norway was invaded by almost half a million German soldiers and administrators. During the five years of occupation Naess was active in nonviolent resistance to the Nazi occupation. He sees his most active work in the peace movement as the period from 1940 to 1955. After the war was over and the Germans left Norway, the Norwegians thought they might be invaded by the Soviet Union. For this reason, people active in the resistance did not divulge the many ways they resisted the Nazis until years later.

When World War II was over, large areas of Europe were under Soviet control with the presence of their large army. There were increasing tensions between East and West and the beginning of the Cold War. The founding of the United Nations and UNESCO were major efforts aimed at preventing other world wars.

6. For examples of these studies see especially *SWAN III Which World is the Real One?* and *SWAN IV The Pluralist and Possibilist Aspects of the Scientific Enterprise*.

7. The Center for Development and the Environment web address at time of publication was: www.sum.uio.no.

At the end of World War II, atomic weapons were used against the Japanese by the United States. Later the Soviets also developed atomic weapons. The Cold War was a long period of conflicts and endless wars of national liberation, characterized by suspicion and fear and the building of absurd atomic arsenals by the Soviets and the West. These eventually threatened the survival of the ecosphere and all nations. During this period much of Naess's work was motivated by his desire to defuse violent conflicts and to increase and improve contacts and communication between those who were in deep disagreement. It was this that motivated his work for UNESCO on a project that studied what experts and others thought about freedom and democracy in the Eastern and Western Blocs.^[8]

From his studies of what experts and ordinary people mean by truth, to his studies of democracy and freedom in different cultural contexts, Naess was guided by his insights into the nature of language, interpretation, and communication that were rooted in Spinozan and similar texts. Because he was multilingual and grew up in Norway, a country with highly diverse landscapes and dialects, Naess appreciated that we cannot prescriptively determine what basic terms stand for. How words get their meaning is always bound up with a context that includes a place, culture, and customs. Even today, Norway does not have one central authority that defines correct and proper use and meaning of Norwegian words. There are three different ways to write Norwegian and many alternative spellings and pronunciations of ordinary words. Despite this diversity, Norwegians manage to communicate and learn from one another.

Many of the scholars with whom Naess rubbed shoulders emphasized analysis and took a somewhat prescriptive attitude toward the role of the scholar. Naess felt that what was needed most were empirical studies of the way that words are used in their natural

setting and cultural context. This was at the heart of the Oslo School of Empirical Semantics that developed during the war years and after. Those studies led Naess and others to realize that even when specialists carefully define their terms, one cannot be certain that they stick to their own definitions. One must therefore analyze their texts in painstaking ways, as shown in *SWAN I*. From his long term studies of Spinoza's texts, he had already realized the degree to which texts are artifacts having rich possibilities for interpretation.^[9] One can see the direct relevance of this to religious conflicts. Often these conflicts turn on the way different individuals or groups interpret what they read in the Bible or other Holy writings. The original Jesus or Buddha taught in person using the direct and open spoken language of everyday life. When their sayings were written down there was already an act of interpretation involved and then as the texts were copied and recopied they diverged further from the original words. None of these texts comes with a guide on how they should be interpreted. Moreover, as Naess observes, living spoken languages are not fixed, but flow and change, like a river.

In our ordinary discourse we usually get along fine without attempting to be very precise. The conclusion is easily reached that our disagreements and misunderstandings might be capable of being resolved if we make an effort to be more clear with respect to specific concepts or words. We can find ourselves in such conflict situations when discussing subjects such as politics and religion because we often have strong feelings about them. Those we live and work with have different feelings and thoughts about many of the same phrases and so we should try to make our language more precise by explaining in the context what we mean by key terms and phrases. Naess did not follow the direction taken by Wittgenstein (1958) in his early work represented by the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* where Wittgen-

8. See especially *SWAN IX*.

9. See *SWAN VI, Freedom, Emotions and Self-subsistence*.

stein seeks to have a perfect language with complete precision. Precision is a relative matter dependent on the context and purposes of those involved, as the later Wittgenstein and Naess both realized. Naess has always had a deep respect for the abilities and talents of ordinary people. He has always thought that we are each far more capable and have more knowledge than we give ourselves credit for. Thus, it was only natural for him to develop a means for improving discussion through clarification, a method he calls *precisization*. This approach can be applied wherever language is in use and we are dealing with meanings and values that we feel strongly about.^[10]

By the time Naess became a full Professor at the University of Oslo he was already married to his first wife Else (who was also a mountaineer). They had two sons, Ragnar and Arild. While still a professor, Arne and Else divorced and Naess married Siri with whom he had a daughter named Lotte. They, too, divorced after many years and Naess married Kit-Fai, who he met in Hong Kong when there as a visiting professor. She has worked with him for over thirty years and is one of the most knowledgeable people on the organization of his collected works.

Naess's professorial duties at the University of Oslo were enormous. He did administrative work, taught classes, worked with graduate students, did research, and wrote for publication. It was his responsibility to design the tests in logic and philosophy that all university students in Norway are required to take. It was in connection with this that he developed a logic and communication course designed to help students learn to reason and argue more effectively and to recognize the common pitfalls in discussion and debate. *SWAN Volume VII: Communication and Argument* is based on the text used for this purpose. His two volume *His-*

tory of Eastern and Western Philosophy (in Norwegian) was read by students at the beginning university level. Some of his texts were read by high-school students. Eventually, the courses based on works in *SWAN Volume VII* attracted over 100,000 students. Naess's approach to teaching the course came under some criticism because he was helping his students learn how to think for themselves and how to criticize poor argumentation in popular debates by using examples from all walks of life. He encouraged even first-year students in other courses to develop and spell out their own philosophy of life and worldview.^[11]

When he began his early empirical and philosophical studies Naess thought it was possible to do value-free inquiries. However, after a great deal of effort he began to despair because he realized that this cannot be done. Even pure logic, he saw, must recognize certain norms such as consistency. After further reflection he realized that values are inextricably bound up with everything we are, feel, and do. We cannot evade responsibility for clarifying and stating what our values are and what we think about the nature of reality. This led him to study normative systems in more depth.^[12] He appreciated more fully how well his encounters with the mature philosophy of Spinoza had taught him how to have a sense for the whole of the world and life. This sense for a total view, which can only be spelled out in a fragmentary way, enabled him to enter into high level discussions with members of the Vienna Circle when he was a mere youth. They treated him as an equal, because, he believes, he had the confidence of a person with a high degree of integration in his personal philosophy.^[13] This was also, in part, a result of his long participation in Norwegian *friluftsliv* (literally, free-air-life) and in mountaineering, which deepened his whole sense of connection with the natural world and other beings.

10. See *SWAN I* and *SWAN VII Communication and Argument* for details.

11. For more on Naess's philosophy of education see *SWAN VIII* 4.6 and *SWAN IX* 5.2.

12. See *SWAN X* 7.40–44 for an overview.

13. See *SWAN IX* 5.17.

Naess's sense of wonder was awakened at an early age and was continuously fed by the adventures and discoveries he enjoyed in the world of wild Nature and in his excursions into the wild world of unexplored ideas and worldviews. Naess's philosophical development is characterized by continuous growth and evolution. From studies of minute topics and problems that involve distilling complex topics to simple formulas, to ever expanding inclusive movement toward greater wholeness and completeness of his total view, his studies reach global and cosmic levels. He compares and contrasts different cultural and scientific approaches to the world and to reality. Because of the diversity of languages, cultures, and personal experiences it is not only possible but necessary to have great *pluralism*; reality admits of many characterizations and levels of description. Each of us and our cultures are part of a larger context that itself has many complex and rich facets and is part of a larger whole. This led him to develop what he calls a gestalt ontology that recognizes and honors individual nuances of feeling, thought, and experience.^[14]

Always respecting the dignity, worth, and freedom of the individual, he has championed, encouraged, and empowered people to be their own teachers and experts. Whether in discussion or in heated debate, he always remains calm and open to considering other points of view. I remember many times when he presented material to seminars for discussion and his statements were vigorously attacked. His response was always to listen with the greatest sympathy and care, to take notes of what the critics were saying and to even agree with and thank them. In most of these circumstances the other person started softening their criticism and began trying to help Naess articulate his approach to avoid the difficulty they thought was there. Even after World War II, when those who were considered traitors were brought to judgment in Norway, Naess spoke for treating them with the utmost

consideration. As a follower of Gandhi, he emphasizes the importance of respecting the humanity of others, even when we disagree with them intensely.^[15] He has, by example, taught others in the peace, social justice, and environmental movements the importance of nonviolence in word and deed.

Naess is not an elitist or a member of the cult of the expert and specialist. He is always willing to take a humble role. One time when he was visiting our campus I invited him to observe an Aikido class I was teaching. He got there before me, and my assistant, who did not know he was the distinguished Professor Naess, asked him if he was there for the Aikido class. Naess said, "yes." My assistant handed him a broom and told him to sweep the mats. When I arrived at class, I was surprised to see Naess diligently sweeping the floor with the greatest of care and enthusiasm. I thanked him for his effort and he then sat down to observe the class. During the class my students and I gave some demonstrations and I explained the basic philosophy of Aikido which is to harmonize with a would-be opponent. In our practice we call our attacker our partner. After class Naess told me that Aikido philosophy and practice was similar to what he practiced as Gandhian boxing and tennis. These sports are not competitive in the usual sense. In Gandhian tennis, for example, if the ball is returned in a way that is impossible to play, then the point is in favor of the would-be receiver. After a moment's reflection, I could see the possibilities for enriching other games using this approach.

His playfulness and curiosity are legendary. He is given to becoming transfixed in observing some tiny thing. On the way to a lecture, he became engrossed in observing an insect he had not seen before. He had to be reminded that he was to be at a lecture soon. On one of his visits to Victoria in Canada, we had a party at our house in his honor. We invited a number of environmental activists and university faculty to meet him. When we could not find him in the house,

14. For more on gestalt ontology see especially *SWAN VIII* and *X*.

15. See *SWAN V*, *Gandhi and Group Conflict*.

I searched the yard. I found him in a plum tree with our then nine-year-old daughter Anna. They were climbing around and she was asking him if he could do different things that she could do in the tree. I invited them to come inside, but they were reluctant. On another occasion, we were at a week-long conference in Boulder Colorado at the Naropa Institute. We had been in meetings all day and several of us, including Naess, decided to walk in the nearby hills. After we had gone up the trail a short distance, Naess spied some cliffs nearby. He said he needed some time alone and wanted to climb on the rocks. When we got higher on the hill, we encountered some climbers who were looking for him. They had heard Arne Naess was going to be in the area. We told them where we last saw him. They gathered up their gear and went in search for him. They wanted to climb with him and to talk with him about his climbs and passion for climbing.

Naess has climbed in mountains all over the world. He has done first ascents from small peaks to large Himalayan mountains.^[16] One time, when he was visiting California, some friends suggested they go car camping to see the Grand Canyon. He had already been to the Sierras and Death Valley. They pulled up at a beautiful spot and asked Naess if he thought this was a good place to camp. “No,” he said. They continued on and looked for something more beautiful and having even more richness. Each time they stopped, he said no. Finally, they asked him why these were not suitable. He said that they were “too spectacular!” So they asked him to choose a spot. He had them pull over in a not very impressive place. He took his pack and walked away from the road for some distance, and that was where they camped. When asked about this he explained that we should try to avoid over-using the spectacular, and also that we can find something wonderful in places that seem to be not so amazing.

His years of experience as a researcher doing interdisciplinary work made it natural for him to study

grassroots movements. His approach to studying these is to try to clarify and distill the main principles and values of the movement based on empirical and other studies. When he characterized the deep ecology movement, it was originally to try to state an outline of its main points. These eventually were distilled to what he calls the eight points or the platform principles of the deep ecology movement. He is not in favor of trying to develop one culture for the world as a whole. This is akin to the biological simplification brought about by industrial agriculture, but applied to culture and language. He has long been a spokesperson for cultural diversity and its preservation. He sees biodiversity and cultural diversity as inextricably interconnected. To develop co-operation and communication at the international level does not require that we all become members of one culture. He appreciates the creative genius of local people to solve local problems.

Given the above, it is easy to see why he does not support a certain kind of globalization when it involves forcing other cultures to adhere to Modern Western methodologies and practices. Cultural richness and personal diversity are intertwined. He sees the great range of personal diversity of worldviews and life philosophies as enriching our lives in much the same way that the biological diversity of tropical and temperate rain forests leaves us with deep feelings of wonder and joy. As a result of technological and scientific developments in the West, and their spread globally, we are witnessing an increasing threat to diversity of all kinds. This is why he supports the principle that richness and diversity are good in themselves, just as each being has intrinsic worth. He has strong feelings for the uniqueness of each individual, whether a rock, insect or person and at the same time he is able to appreciate their unities and common biological and ecological grounds.

He talks of looking into a microscope and seeing a flea die in agony in the acid solution on the slide. He felt distress at the insect’s plight. He sets an example of

16. See *SWAN X* 5.33–36.

careful treatment of others and the natural world. He celebrates the possibilities for each of us realizing our potentials and being able to act beautifully to benefit ourselves and our neighbors. He says that most of us eventually realize that some of our basic ways of knowing rest on intuitions such as “everything hangs together,” and “live and let live.” All philosophies of life consist of basic value norms and basic hypotheses about the nature of the world. When these philosophies take careful account of ecological responsibilities, they become *ecosophies*, a word he coined for ecological wisdom.

When I reflect on the distilled norms, formulas, principles, slogans, mottoes, and outlines he has written and said, I have a growing list of favorites that includes the following: Everything hangs together; Act beautifully; Anything can happen; Reality is all possibilities; Live and let live; The front of the deep ecology movement is very long and deep; From the mountains we learn modesty, their size makes us feel small and humble, and so we participate in their greatness; Seek truth but do not claim it; We all act as if we have a total view; Seek a total view but always be open to new views and perspectives; Seek the center of a conflict and treat opponents with the utmost respect; Be nonviolent in language, judgment and action; Seek whole and complete communication; Be open to making yourselves more precise and clear; Emphasize positive active feelings; Negative passive emotions decrease us and make us smaller; Question yourself deeply; None of us mean what we say with great precision; Realize yourself and help others to realize themselves; The more diversity the better; High quality of life does not depend on high material consumption; Find joy in simple things; Complexity not complication; Simple in means, rich in ends; No value-free inquiry; Inquire into your values, feelings, and judgments; All things are open to inquiry; Not positivist reduction, but whole unified experience; Our spontaneous experience is far richer than any abstractions about it; Every event has many descriptions and aspects; The quality of our experience depends on our choice of norms; Trust, don't doubt, trust and inquire; Open inquiry is not a

specialization, it is open to anyone and cuts across all disciplines; We seriously underestimate ourselves; Philosophy begins and ends in wonder.

From the observations made so far, we can summarize Naess's main interests in philosophy, science, and social science. They include behaviorist epistemology, empirical semantics and communication theory, scepticism, scientific and cultural pluralism, Gandhi and Spinoza scholarship, normative systems theory, gestalt ontology and the focus on total views. These interests and others are reflected in the titles and subtitles of the *Selected Works of Arne Naess*. These show a progressive move toward greater inclusiveness culminating in *Volume X* which connects all of Naess's research and writing projects in one volume.

Here is a complete list of the titles and subtitles of the *SWAN* Series Volumes:

- I. *Interpretation and Preciseness: A Contribution to a Theory of Communication*
- II. *Scepticism: Wonder and Joy of a Wandering Seeker*
- III. *Which World is the Real One? Inquiry into Comprehensive Systems, Cultures, and Philosophies*
- IV. *The Pluralist and Possibilist Aspect of the Scientific Enterprise: Rich Descriptions, Abundant Choices, and Open Futures*
- V. *Gandhi and Group Conflict: Explorations of Nonviolent Resistance, Satyāgraha*
- VI. *Freedom, Emotion, and Self-Subsistence: The Structure of a Central Part of Spinoza's Ethics*
- VII. *Communication and Argument: Elements of Applied Semantics*
- VIII. *Common Sense, Knowledge, and Truth: Open Inquiry in a Pluralistic World*
- IX. *Reason, Democracy, and Science: Understanding Among Conflicting Worldviews*
- X. *Deep Ecology of Wisdom: Explorations in Unities of Nature and Cultures.*

Volume X includes a comprehensive bibliography of Naess's writings. These volumes were published in

2005 in Dordrecht, The Netherlands, by Springer (formerly Kluwer).

In *Volume X*, Naess uses the deep ecology movement and his own Ecosophy T to integrate the wide range of diverse elements that go into any total view. All of his active participation in various projects and protests come together in this volume, including his future oriented papers looking to the years ahead, even to the next century, and his papers on Modernism and sustainability. He has been personally active in the peace, social justice, and environmental movements and has participated in nonviolent anti-globalization efforts and activities to protest dam building. He has contributed to conservation biology, wildlands philanthropy, green economics, ecological design, restoration ecology, sustainable forestry, wildlife and fisheries management, green business and building design, and voluntary simplicity. During his life he has given much to charitable organizations. He has also anticipated the rising slow food movement that is becoming a global movement to slow life down and retake control of our lives. Years before the slow movement surfaced publicly, he was advocating doing things more slowly, and taking time to enjoy each activity. At 92, he still cut wood for his stove with a hand saw and carried it home in his back pack.

ALWAYS INQUIRING

Whether reflecting on modesty in mountain climbing, on how to interpret the call for “sustainable development,” or investigating the ecology of self (1987), Naess’s approach is one of continuous open inquiry, of always going deeper to get to the roots of a problem or issue. Why are we using this policy? Why is this form of education not working? What are our ultimate values? What is the best forestry for this watershed? What values take priority in this development? Naess embodies the spirit of philosophy in its original sense as a loving pursuit of wisdom. It is a deep exploration of our whole lives and context in pursuit of living wisely. This is the essence of the Socratic in-

quiry to know ourselves. From his work on Pyrrhonian scepticism (*SWAN II*), and on through his discussion of total views, culminating in his positive statements on pluralism and possibilism, Naess says that he is a “philosophical vagabond” or “wandering seeker,” what the Ancient Greeks called a *zetetic* (*SWAN II* and *VIII*). His deep inquiries into science as an enterprise reflect on the actual work of scientists day to day (*SWAN IV*). He tentatively concludes that the future is not determined. Our possibilities for the future are creatively abundant. Every relationship, event, and individual can be described in a multitude of ways and each has rich possibilities. Even if we combine all that we can think or survey we could not fully characterize the subject in question. There is no one perspective that takes precedence over these many possibilities whether in science or in other fields of study. Our spontaneous experience in the world is far richer than we can ever say.

According to Naess, there is never one definitive interpretation of philosophical texts, there is never one single description of an event, or single theory of things that is the whole and only truth. Every event and all processes are complex interactions involving many changing forces and relations, internal and external. Experience and the processes around us form changing patterns or *gestalts*. The nature of reality is multidimensional and creative. This is also true for our language systems. Whether printed or spoken statements, utterances have many possible interpretations. Even scientific theories are open to interpretation. There is not a single, scientific worldview, but many. Naess favors using a *gestalt* ontology to describe our basic ways of organizing the world of our experience. He also says that every whole has *gestalts* within it that reflect the character of the whole piece. For example, the parts of a sonata have their sense and resolution in the whole piece. Our spontaneous experience is so rich and deep that it is never possible to give a complete account of it in any language, whether mathematics, science, music, or art. Art and music can come closer to our feelings, but even they cannot capture it all. As a deep ques-

tioner and seeker, Naess remains free of dogmatic and monolithic doctrines about the world. This, in part, explains why he celebrates a movement supported by diverse people with many different worldviews. It creates richness when we are all different and have different experiences. This is also related to his commitment to nonviolence, insofar as we must respect the integrity of each person and recognize that they have greater capacities for Self-realization than they might be aware. As a philosopher and person, Naess has been influenced by his cultural experience and native place.

NAESS IN NORWAY

When I went to Norway the first time my purpose was to visit Naess to learn how he and this very old nation live in their places. I had known him for many years and had heard him say many times that a nation can have a small population and a very diverse and rich culture. This is certainly true of Norway, which has a population of close to 5 million, and is blessed by a rich ancient heritage and much free nature. Quality of life and complexity as richness do not depend on sheer numbers of people or quantities of things. I was amazed when I went to Norway by the tremendous diversity that is there, cultural, topographical, and local.

When in Oslo, Naess suggested I go to Bygdøy Island to see the Folk Art Museum, that honors the diverse local practices, arts and traditions of Norway. Its complex mountainous terrain, deep valleys, its wide range of latitudes, including a far north high above the Arctic Circle, and its fjord punctuated coastline, have led to a great diversity of local conditions and habitats. When Norway was controlled by Denmark and then Sweden for about 350 years, its own dialects and cultural traditions were kept alive in the local areas away from such urban centers as Oslo. The result is a great diversity in local patterns of speech, spelling, folk music, folk dance, building styles, ceremonial costumes, local legends, folk tales, local arts and crafts, sweater styles, jewelry design, and so on. Despite this diversity, Norway has a cultural identity and sense of national

unity that is unmistakable as you travel the country, talk with its people, and visit its cities, villages, museums, and farms.

Norway has a large expanse of land called “free nature.” Its very old farms and villages blend into this open country. Many farms are blessed with several summer farms (called *seter*) with buildings on the mountain plateaus. In villages with the traditional way of life, people take the sheep and cattle to the mountain meadows in the summer. The men do farm work on the cultivated crops, while the women and children take the cattle to the high country. Some farms have as many as three summer “*seter*,” each further away and coming to pasture conditions later in the season. In the old traditions, after the main farm work was done, the men joined the others in the high country for the rest of the summer. In the fall the people would take the herds back to the valley for the winter. In many areas, this pattern continues today. Naess has lived this seasonal mountain plateau life by going regularly to his hut Tvergastein.

This old pattern of living in two seasonal places, in the valley in winter and in the high country in the summer, contributes to rich cultural practices and traditions. It adds to the complexity and diversity of Norwegian life and culture. Because of its northern location, summers bring very long days and, in the far north, there are days when the sun does not set. In winter there are days when the sun does not rise. The long winter nights can be blessed with fantastic displays of northern lights, and in summer the sun casts glorious light on the dramatic landscapes. Norway is a land of incredible beauty, but it also has extreme conditions. It has a tremendous number of lakes, rivers, and streams and a very long sea shoreline with countless islands, harbors and fjords. It has abundant small hydroelectric plants, many placed deep inside the rocky mountains.

The pattern of seasonal migration led to the cabin tradition in Norway. Almost every person there has access to a mountain, forest or waterfront hut or cabin where they can go for weekends or longer. These huts are usually simple shelters, with minimum techno-

logical complications. Associated with the huts and the outdoors is the *friluftsliv* tradition, which literally means free-air-life. It is said that any time during a weekend over half of the people will be outside doing something in Nature such as running, walking, bicycling, skiing, ice skating, sailing, mountain climbing, swimming, or sunbathing. Norwegians strongly identify with their land and free nature. It is an advanced and sophisticated country in education and technical skills, and yet it keeps older traditions alive. Over 90 per cent of the land is privately owned (mostly in the old farms and their setters), but everyone has the right to hike and camp anywhere except within a certain distance of a home. The land is owned but the air is free and everyone is free to use these large areas of open land in the mountains and lowlands. To go to a cabin for a weekend is to return to a less complicated way of life more in touch with Nature. Many cabins I stayed in had no plumbing or electricity. They were snug and comfortable and usually had simple bunk beds with a mattress upon which to throw a sleeping bag. For cooking they had a simple wood or gas camp stove. You often have to carry water from a spring or get it from a well with a hand pump. Such cabins are all over Norway and many are available for public use. Many cabins along the roads and highways are privately owned but available for rent. Norway has extensive trail systems and many ski areas for cross-country and downhill skiing. Most cities have ski jumps and other facilities to encourage outdoor activities. The *friluftsliv* tradition has grown in recent years. There is much reflection on what it is, what it ought to be, and its significance. Naess has contributed to these discussions.

Norway was one of the poorest countries in Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century and is now one of the richest. It has a very high quality of life. It has high levels of education and most people speak three languages. Naess was deeply involved in the reform of Norwegian education in the last century and in reinvigorating Norwegian philosophy. Norway has outstanding social services and excellent public trans-

port. There is not so great a gap between the upper levels of wealth and people who are at the bottom. As I traveled in Norway, I did not see people living on the street. In my extensive travels I saw no derelict buildings or slums.

Norway has an amazing number of very old buildings, boats and ships that are in use and in fine shape. It has some of the oldest wood buildings in the world such as the Viking stave churches that are over a thousand years old. Many of the farms have barns and log houses that are four to five hundred or more years old. I traveled in Norway during the hay season one year and in some valleys I saw every form of hay harvest methods being practiced, from hand cutting and hanging on lines to dry, to several types of baling systems, and even the recent large round rolls of hay wrapped in plastic. The traditional arts and crafts are practiced in the villages. The farms are run by families who take the name of the farm and keep up its traditions. In these rural village traditions many of the arts and crafts are passed on from person to person and are not taught from texts. Norway does not have one official dialect or only one official spelling or pronunciation of Norwegian words. There are three forms representing the spoken words, and a large number of dialects. The unrelated Saami language is one of the official languages of the country, spoken mostly in the North by the Saami (or Lapp) people.

SUMMING UP BEFORE GOING ON

The above sketch offers a mere glimpse of the rich context in which Naess was born and raised. He reflects this heritage and its traditions that respect local ways and free nature. In his empirical studies of language (called empirical semantics) he found that individuals with no special training are able to reflect deeply on the meaning of such words as “freedom” and “truth.” This challenges the bias of academic scholars, who thought only they could provide exact definitions for important concepts. Naess found that, in fact, languages as spoken and written by ordinary people are very rich

and complex with considerable diversity and depth in meanings. Academic philosophers thought that they had some special insight into these matters and that they knew what so-called ordinary people think about the world and the meaning of key words. Naess found in his empirical studies that the cultural world is far richer and more open-ended than was generally thought. He thinks that we all are capable of far grander things than we usually realize. He believes that we have much more freedom and greater possibilities than we think. He sees the natural world as creative and the future as open. There is no scientific basis for denying our freedom. We are limited mainly by our own attitudes, feelings, and ideas. The more open and exploratory we become, the more we discover our own native capacity to be wandering, insightful seekers.

This willingness to undertake studies of how people actually communicate on a daily basis in different places was part of the background for Naess's work in studying the development of grassroots political movements. From the time he was young, he has practiced nonviolence. He saw how nonviolence should embrace both our actions and forms of communication. Attempts to centrally dictate how people should speak and think are not only futile but wrong. When we welcome the diversity naturally present in local places, we realize that this is not only very enriching, but it reflects the way the natural and cultural world evolves in different places with their wonderful variety of conditions, habitats, and traditions. We gain deep respect for the abilities and integrity of individual persons and local communities. This background and Naess's travels influenced his descriptions of international grassroots movements.

There are some common misunderstandings of Naess's work in relation to the deep ecology movement. These could be avoided if people knew about the background just described. When he first characterized the deep ecology movement, he already had extensive knowledge of international grassroots movements and of cross-cultural comparative studies in worldviews and

other aspects of culture, including studies in empirical semantics. He was deeply sympathetic to the rising global ecology movement that is a response of ordinary people to environmental degradation and other forms of violence against the natural world. He saw that these people did not all have the same cultural conditioning or share the same worldview, but that, as with other international movements, there were also common grounds. It was these matters that he described, based on empirical and conceptual studies, when he talked about the shallow and deep ecology movements. In Part Two of this introduction, I focus in greater depth on Naess's way of approaching and characterizing a total view by concentrating on his account of the deep ecology movement and of ecosophies, especially on his own personal philosophy of life called Ecosophy T.

PART TWO: DEEP ECOLOGY, ECOSOPHY T, AND TOTAL VIEWS—THE SHALLOW AND DEEP ECOLOGY MOVEMENTS IN DETAIL

As we have seen above, philosopher, mountaineer, and activist Arne Naess is a pioneer in cross-cultural, interdisciplinary research and especially the study of nonviolent, grassroots, socio-political movements and worldviews. International studies helped him to describe the long range, deep ecology movement as one of the three important global movements of the twentieth century: social justice, world peace, and ecological responsibility.

The phrase "deep ecology movement" was first used by Naess at the Third World Future Research Conference held in Bucharest in 1972. He discussed the historical background of the ecology movement and its connection to values respecting Nature and the inherent worth of other beings. As a mountaineer, activist, teacher, and researcher, he has climbed and travelled far and wide. He observed political and social activism in many cultures and was an activist in the peace and social justice movements. He has been a follower of

Gandhi's way of nonviolence since a young man. He has lived through wars and depressions. Norway was occupied by German armies for five years during World War II, and he was a nonviolent underground leader of resistance to this occupation. He has lived and taught in many countries, and climbed in mountain ranges all over the world. He was a leader in interdisciplinary cross-cultural research. When he traveled, he participated in local forums and international workshops. He spoke with numerous people who had extensive cross-cultural experience. He carried on scholarly research in several languages and corresponded with many scholars in other parts of the world. He studied and had first hand activist experience in the emerging grassroots ecology movement that is supported by social activists from all parts of the political spectrum and from different cultures around the world. He says he also was inspired by Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and the controversy surrounding its publication.

Naess's Bucharest talk, and the seminal paper published from it (*Inquiry* 16, 1973, now in *SWAN X* 1.2), explained the differences between the shallow and the deep ecology movements in broad terms. He noted that the distinctive aspects of the deep ecology movement are its general platform principles that recognize the inherent value of ecological and cultural diversity and of all living beings. Supporters use these principles to shape national and local environmental policies and actions. Those who work for social changes are motivated by caring for Nature, other living beings, and for humans. They recognize that we cannot go on with business as usual, or we will destroy the diversity and beauty of the world. Naess articulated central elements of deep human concern being expressed around the world. Whatever their spiritual orientation, supporters of the deep ecology movement *feel* sorrow for the widespread suffering caused by destructive practices. They feel strongly that these practices are wrong.

A deep response to the environmental crisis in-

volves getting a "total view," to use Naess's words, which goes beyond the forms of knowledge in specialized conventional Western disciplines. A person who wants to live wisely realizes that many environmental problems are not merely technical, but are also personal and local; they have community *and* global dimensions. Their global extent poses the question: How can our diverse human family, living in so many different cultures and places, work together to end violence, improve social justice, promote world peace *and* harmony with Nature? All of these are *possible* according to Naess. As a possibilist he says: "Anything can happen." The choices we make do matter. The future is open. He invites us to engage in deep questioning and to reflect on our own motives and ultimate values. What *is* most important to us?

From his studies and travels, Naess was aware of the many ways people can abide by principles that cut across cultural boundaries, such as Gandhi's principles of nonviolence and the principles of human rights and social justice. By analyzing texts, through conversations and by empirical methods (some of which he developed), he identified two main responses to the awareness that we are disrupting the natural world.^[17] The short term, *shallow ecology movement* relies on quick, technical fixes and pursues business as usual without any deep value questioning or long range changes in practices and the system. Supporters of the long range, deep ecology movement take a broader view. They look for long term solutions, engage in deep questioning and pursue alternative patterns of action. They strive to build sustainability. We cannot go on with business as usual in the developed industrial societies. We should change our lifestyles toward higher *quality* of life, and pursue lower levels of production and consumption of natural resources. Naess says that even Norway, with all its open land of free nature, is over-developed in some ways but in others is not. He says over and over that, for many people in the world who are in dire

17. See *SWAN X* 1.1–12, *Deep Ecology of Wisdom*, for details.

straits, there must be a great effort to improve their conditions so as to meet their vital needs. However, there is not one solution that will work everywhere, but many solutions each appropriate to the place and people concerned.

Supporters of the shallow ecology movement do not question deeply but focus on short term, narrow human interests. They only tinker with the built systems, but do not question their own *fundamental* methods, values and purposes. They do not look deeply into the nature of our relationships with each other and other beings. They assume that we can do fine without making basic changes. This is the approach of our mainstream institutions. Their development models are deeply influenced by control-oriented mechanistic systems that are applied to the human and natural world. The planning and development models are based on outmoded economic philosophy that fails to include the ecological context. These models are being replaced in leading-edge work in science and philosophy, but there is a cultural lag related to vested interests and institutional inertia. The deep, long range approach is to create institutional practices that are evolving, self-organizing, and creative. This is what many people in leading edge businesses are trying to do by putting ecological and social responsibility into the values that guide their practices.

The deep questioning approach of the long range, deep ecology movement examines our basic values and lifestyles and reflects on our fundamental relations to Nature and who we are. Followers of the deep ecology movement seek ways to live less violently in *all* their relations. They realize that quality of life depends on the quality of our relations. Supporters ask how to change their activities to bring them into harmony with local ecological and human communities. They realize that we do not know how to manage the incredibly complex natural world, but must learn from the integrity and diversity that is there. When we use violent methods, such as toxic sprays to control other plants and organisms, we not only harm other beings, we also set

off long range problems that are worse than the ones we are trying to solve. Trying to control the whole of Nature is futile and also wrong. Our challenge is to manage ourselves as responsible members of an eco-sphere that includes diverse species, communities, and unique individuals who deserve our respect.

The shallow ecology movement is *anthropocentric*, that is, it has a humans-first value system. The deep ecology movement platform principles specifically emphasize respect for the intrinsic worth of all beings (from microbes to elephants and humans), and to treasure all forms of biological and cultural diversity. The shallow ecology movement is more evident in the policies of developed nations, where there is support for a mix of shallow policies with some lip service to deeper values such as biodiversity.

Cross-cultural studies and experience have helped us, as Naess says, to appreciate the diversity of world-views on Earth. At the level of international co-operation, we have created institutions such as the United Nations to enable us to work together globally, despite cultural differences. The broadly accepted principles of social justice, and the principles of nonviolent conflict resolution are part of international agreements that most of us can affirm from our diverse ultimate philosophies and religions. Nations should and do develop policies that honor broad principles agreed to in international bodies and multilateral treaties. National policies encourage certain courses of action to improve conditions in specific relationships and places. Many transition strategies are in use in different places. As Naess says, the front of the movement for ecological responsibility is very long and deep.

Just as we have made progress in human rights and nonviolent resolution of conflicts, so too, nationally and internationally, we have made progress in recognizing the serious depth of the environmental crisis. Common themes and principles have emerged in many agreements, declarations, and treaties, put forth in different local, regional, national, and international forums. These affirm some of the original deep ecology

movement platform principles that Naess and George Sessions first articulated in 1984 (which is very close to the version below) as a basis for collective and collaborative actions in our different cultural settings.^[18] In 2002, Naess articulated the platform principles as the following 8 points:

PLATFORM PRINCIPLES OF THE DEEP ECOLOGY MOVEMENT

1. All living beings have intrinsic value.
2. The richness and diversity of life has intrinsic value.
3. Except to satisfy *vital* needs, humans do not have the right to reduce this diversity and richness.
4. It would be better for humans if there were fewer of them, and much better for other living creatures.
5. Today the extent and nature of human interference in the various ecosystems is not sustainable, and the lack of sustainability is rising.
6. Decisive improvement requires considerable changes: social, economic, technological, and ideological.
7. An ideological change would essentially entail seeking a better quality of life rather than a raised standard of living.
8. Those who accept the aforementioned points are responsible for trying to contribute directly or indirectly to the realization of the necessary changes.^[19]

Let us first compare these eight points to similar documents that have been offered as a platform for action to move to sustainable and responsible lifestyles and cultural changes. The United Nations issued an Earth Charter for Nature several years ago and an independent grassroots organization has followed this initiative by developing an Earth Charter of greater depth.^[20] Here is a quote from the official pamphlet of the Earth Charter Organization:

Preamble: We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for Nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of the Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations.

Earth Our Home: Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of the Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

The Global Situation: The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the deple-

18. See Devall, B., & Sessions, G. (1985). *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*. Salt Lake City: Gibb Smith Publishers, and also Sessions, G. (Ed.). (1995). *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century: Readings in the Philosophy and Practice of the New Environmentalism*. Boston and London: Shambhala.

19. Naess, A., & Haukeland, P.I. (2002), pp. 108-109, see *SWAN X* for detailed discussions of these principles.

20. For more on this initiative see: www.earthcharter.org.

tion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. Communities are being undermined. The benefits of development are not shared equitably and the gap between rich and poor is widening. Injustice, poverty, ignorance, and violent conflict are widespread and the cause of great suffering. An unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems. The foundations of global security are threatened. These trends are perilous—but not inevitable.

The Challenges Ahead: The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for the Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life. Fundamental changes are needed in our values, institutions, and ways of living. We must realize that when basic needs have been met, human development is about being more, not having more. We have the knowledge and technology to provide for all and to reduce our impacts on the environment. The emergence of a global civil society is creating new opportunities to build a democratic and humane world. Our environmental, economic, political, social and spiritual challenges are interconnected, and together we can forge inclusive solutions.^[21]

The values and observations in these passages are mostly consistent with the platform principles of the deep ecology movement. These statements are typical of the many mission statements of countless organizations around the world. One can see many points of common agreement between the platform principles above and these statements. It should be stressed that Naess and other movement supporters do not regard the present version of the platform as final. He invites people to suggest modifications if they see fit. It must be *underscored* that this description of the deep ecology movement and

its platform is not an account of Naess's personal philosophy called Ecosophy T. The platform principles are supported by people from diverse backgrounds who are, for example, Buddhists, Shintoists, Taoists, Shamanists, Christians, and ecofeminists. They each could also have their own personal ecosophy. Naess feels that a mature person should be able to say what their values and priorities are; they should have the ability to express their own philosophy of life through actions and other means. We are more effective when we are well integrated and open to further learning.

Buddhist followers can support the platform given their spiritual teachings. They can formulate and support policies that will help to mitigate and prevent environmental degradation in their own area and place. We are empowered to take practical actions when we know others actively support these principles in their own home places. This sense of global solidarity helps us to persist in our efforts. Exactly what policies and actions we undertake depends on our personal situations, cultural contexts, and individual places. *No single solution can be applied to every place.* One size does not fit all. As Naess likes to say, "The more diversity, the better." For example, the vernacular practices of people doing eco-agriculture or eco-forestry are not mechanized standardized monocultures, but they are low impact and tailored to specific places (for examples from eco-forestry see the anthology by Drengson and Taylor, 1997). Their common ground is in principles that support a diversity of practices attuned to local places, conditions, cultures, and ecological communities. The spirit of the deep ecology movement is to fit ourselves into the values and qualities of our watersheds and specific places (localization) in long range, sustainable ways. We need broad, long range, deep vision to include many diverse stories and individual voices. We each should go deep into ourselves, our places, and Nature where we will find these fertile connections. Naess encourages each of us to realize our own potential so

21. *The Earth Charter*. 2000. The Earth Charter Initiative, p.1. Retrieved June 15, 2005 from www.earthcharter.org.

that we can contribute local and global support to the three international movements mentioned earlier.

For Naess, and others too, the platform principles of the long range, deep ecology movement do not make up an ultimate philosophy, any more than do the principles of social justice. It is a platform for multilevel co-operation to engender practical policies and positive actions by individuals and groups in diverse places and cultures. Naess calls those who endorse these platform principles *supporters* of the long range, deep ecology movement, not deep ecologists—the latter term he regards as immodest. Nor does he call people who support mainstream approaches “shallow ecologists,” believing this is demeaning. The platform principles provide a way to foster international agreement to further multicultural co-operation on behalf of the Earth and its ecological communities. Reflecting on the platform locally helps us to see how to get to the roots of the environmental crisis in our own context. We can work with others to make ecologically responsible changes in education, international institutions, trade agreements, resource use, work practices, development models, and in our personal daily lives. Policies and actions guided by these principles (as embodied, for example, in the Earth Charter), will further a local and global consensus for co-operative solutions to social and environmental problems.

In his description of the deep ecology movement Naess is careful to explain that he is describing an international grassroots movement characterized by a diversity of worldviews and including people from cultures all around the world. They are people who agree that the Earth is being damaged and that we need to act. Naess emphasizes that the principles of an international movement should not imperil individual and cultural diversity.

For Naess, these eight principles are a *working* platform for the deep ecology movement. He believes these can be acknowledged as the most general principles of

wide agreement in the international ecology movement. They are more refined than slogans, but have a similar use. They are meant to be inclusive and flexible in interpretation so as to lend themselves to support from diverse ecosophies, religions and worldviews. Thus, interpretation of the principles will vary from place to place and person to person depending on their culture and their personal worldviews or ecosophies.

ECOSOPHY IN MORE DEPTH

Many supporters of the deep ecology movement have articulated personal ecosophies very similar to Naess's. His original account of *ecosophy* characterizes it as follows:

By an *ecosophy* I mean a philosophy of ecological harmony or equilibrium. A philosophy as a kind of *sofia* wisdom, is openly normative, it contains *both* norms, rules, postulates, value priority announcements *and* hypotheses concerning the state of affairs in our universe. Wisdom is policy wisdom, prescription, not only scientific description and prediction.

The details of an ecosophy will show many variations due to significant differences concerning not only the “facts” of pollution, resources, population, etc., but also value priorities. Today, however, the seven points listed provide one unified framework for ecosophical systems.^[22]

Elaborating on this account in a later work he writes:

We study ecophilosophy, but to approach practical situations involving ourselves, we aim to develop our own ecosophies. In this book I introduce one ecosophy, arbitrarily called Ecosophy T. You are not expected to agree with all of its values and paths of derivation, but to learn the means for developing your own systems or guides, say, Ecosophies X,

22. Naess, A. (1973). The shallow and the long range deep ecology movement: A summary. *Inquiry*, 16, 95–100. In SWAN X 1.2.

Y, or Z. Saying “your own” does not imply that the ecosophy is in any way an original creation by yourself. It is enough that it is a kind of total view which you feel at home with, “where you philosophically belong.” Along with one’s own life, it is always changing.

. . . Etymologically, the word “ecosophy” combines *oikos* and *sophia*, “household” and “wisdom.” As in “ecology,” “eco-” has an appreciably broader meaning than the immediate family, household, and community. “Earth household” is closer to the mark. So an ecosophy becomes *a philosophical world-view or system inspired by the conditions of life in the ecosphere*. It should then be able to serve as an individual’s philosophical grounding for an acceptance of the principles or platform of deep ecology as outlined.^[23]

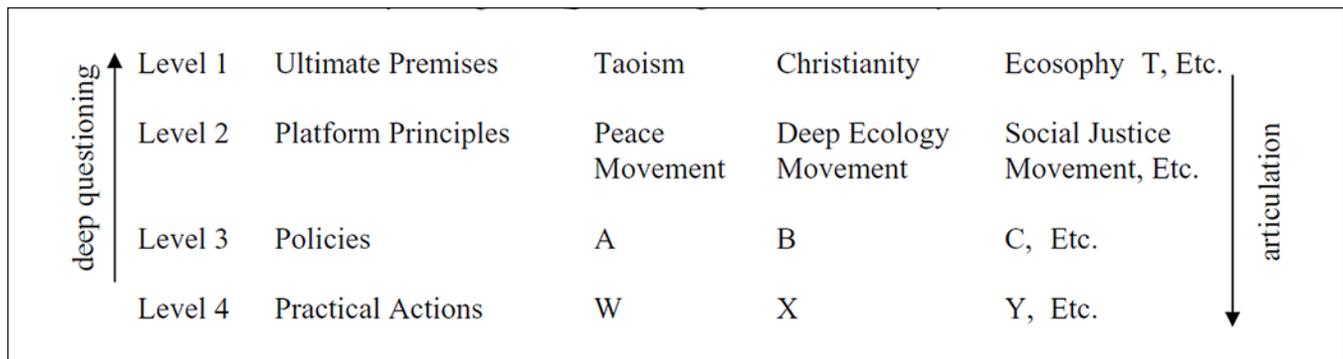
Putting these observations together, then, we can say, as we noted earlier, that Naess distinguishes between ultimate philosophies or worldviews, platform principles that unite people with different ultimate views, policy formulations applied in specific national or jurisdictional contexts, and statements about practi-

cal actions taken by specific individuals in local places. He offers a three dimensional apron diagram (in *SWAN X 1.9*) to explain these levels, that I simplify with a two-dimensional chart (see figure 1).

Naess notes that, in our global discussions, we engage in all these four general levels of articulation and derivation. He says that we recognize these four basic levels of discourse when we talk about values and actions in relation to the environmental crisis and global grassroots movements. He and others have articulated principles that unite the international movements for social justice, peace, and environmental responsibility. He says that these four levels of discourse are found in international, national, and local discussions: *1* is ultimate philosophies with ultimate value norms; *2* includes systems of broad principles, such as platform principles of a movement; *3* involves policy and other guiding formulations; and *4* includes statements about practical actions.^[24]

As already mentioned, Naess calls his own personal (Level 1) ultimate philosophy *Ecosophy T*. Ecosophies are not platforms for a political movement or policies, but are personal philosophies of life in a worldview. The international deep ecology movement is characterized in terms of platform principles (Level 2). The platform of

FIGURE 1. FOUR LEVELS AS A WAY TO ORGANIZE QUESTIONING AND ARTICULATION OF TOTAL VIEWS



23. Naess, A. (1989). *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle: Outline of an Ecosophy*. (D. Rothenberg, Trans. and Revision). Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 37–38.

24. For more on Naess and policy issues, see Glasser, H. (1996). “Naess’s Deep Ecology Approach and Environmental Policy,” *Inquiry*, 39, 157–187.

this international movement does not constitute a religion or an ultimate philosophy. It invites support from people with diverse ultimate philosophies and religions (Level 1) to seek global solutions.^[25]

The platform principles stated above exemplify Level 2 articulation. These principles can be derived from a wide variety of worldviews and religions, just as the globally agreed upon principles of social justice and peace are supported from a wide variety of different level 1 ultimate philosophies. There is great diversity in the ecology movement at levels 1, 3, and 4, but common agreement at level 2. Naess is glad that supporters of the deep ecology movement have different ultimate philosophies.^[26] He does not urge others to accept his ultimate ecological philosophy. In his view, the more diversity and complexity in the world, the greater and richer we all are. A personal philosophy of life fully lived can be unique to each person, a thing of beauty and joy. Many of us love to know about them and to study them.

As already noted, Naess articulates his own ultimate grounds for supporting the deep ecology movement (and also for Gandhian nonviolent action) in *Ecosophy T*. “T” refers to *Tvergastein*, the name of his wood and stone hut in the mountains of Norway. T is also the first letter of the Norwegian word “*Tolkning*” which means *interpretation*, a core concept in Naess’s philosophy of communication and empirical semantics (*SWAN I* and *VII*). *Ecosophy T* was developed in his unique mountain place high on Mt. Hallingskarvet in Norway, a place of arctic extremes. This mountain is Naess’s surrogate parent for the father he lost before he was a year old. It has some of the oldest rocks in Europe. Hallingskarvet is his spiritual home, where he worked out the details of his ecosophy based on

the norm “*Self-realization!*” which he interprets in Gandhian and Spinozan ways, thereby bringing together East and West. It includes *practices of extending our care*. Naess’s way of systematizing his philosophy is to state it in terms of ultimate value norms and hypotheses about the world. He then organizes these in chains of derivation. Here is how he presents these in *Ecology, Community and Lifestyle*.^[27]

Formulation of the most basic norms [N] and hypotheses [H]

N1: Self-realization!

H1: The higher the Self-realization attained by anyone, the broader and deeper the identification with others.

H2: The higher the level of Self-realization attained by anyone, the more its further increase depends upon the Self-realization of others.

H3: Complete Self-realization of anyone depends on that of all.

N2: Self-realization for all living beings!^[28]

Later in the same chapter he offers the following:

Norms and hypotheses originating in ecology

H4: Diversity of life increases Self-realization potentials.

N3: Diversity of life!

H5: Complexity of life increases Self-realization potentials.

N4: Complexity!

H6: Life resources of the Earth are limited.

H7: Symbiosis maximizes Self-realization potentials under conditions of limited resources.

N5: Symbiosis!^[29]

25. See Drengson, A., & Inoue, Y., 1995, pp. 10–12, and also *SWAN X* 1.9.

26. Naess, A. (1989).

27. *Ibid.*, see also *SWAN X*.

28. Naess, A. (1989), p. 197.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 199.

Naess uses the exclamation point to emphasize and mark that a statement is a value norm. As a norm, it entails that we ought to do something. In the case of the norm “Self-realization!” we should strive to realize ourselves and help others to realize themselves. In the case of “Diversity!” we should honor and support diversity on every level in any way we can, and so on. Using norms and hypotheses he articulates in systematic outline form the basic elements of his personal ecosophy.

Naess’s ecosophy as a life philosophy and worldview is influenced by Gandhi’s teachings on Self-realization and nonviolence. It is also related to the Mahayana Buddhist distinction between the small ego self and the expansive Self of Buddha nature. In the Mahayana teachings one vows to work for the enlightenment of all beings. It is recognized that we are all interdependent.^[30] Naess is also influenced by many aspects of Spinoza’s philosophy, including his nonhierarchical view of all beings and his account of active and passive emotions.^[31] Active emotions, such as love and compassion, expand our sense of self and awareness, whereas passive emotions such as hatred and jealousy decrease us. They make us feel smaller. Spinoza says we are as large as our active love. For him, emotions are more like actions we can undertake, and active positive emotions increase our power and enjoyment for life. Naess says that our sense of identification can, through care, extend to include our ecological Self. This is facilitated by giving our full attention to the things and beings in our surroundings. His ecosophy is deeply influenced by the Norwegian love of the natural world as exemplified in the *friluftsliv* movement involving outdoor activities in free nature, that he has practiced for his whole life. His life at Tvergastein is *friluftsliv*.

AT HOME IN THE MOUNTAINS

To be with Naess at Tvergastein is to share in details of his personal ecosophy that you would miss when

you visit him in Oslo. He talks of different things in the two different places. When I was with him I could sense profound differences in mood and vitality. Being on the mountain at Tvergastein gives him power and energy. I felt that he spoke for the mountain in a perfectly natural way, reflecting what he has learned from it over the years. Some of the many things noticed: The way he sparingly uses water and fuel; the Spartan diet and uncluttered, simple surroundings; the stories that emerge as we walk in different places away from the hut; the tales about the plant life around the hut, as we walk near it; the story of the attempt to build the first higher smaller hut (the Eagle’s Nest) that ended in disaster—told in sight of that place; the story of the dream that led to building the Eagle’s Nest, which is a smaller cabin that is now perched high above Tvergastein on the edge of the escarpment cliffs of Mt. Hallingskarvet; the fantastic view from Naess’s desk in the library of the hut looking south over the Hardangervidda, the largest mountain plateau in Norway, which still has large herds of wild reindeer; the tiny and beautiful wild flowers that grow around the hut in which he takes such delight; the joy he gets from appreciating how each rock he picks up is a unique individual with its own story to tell, these and so many other things are part of Naess’s living Ecosophy T, with Tvergastein as their home place.

Over the long years, Naess has developed a very deep and extensive identification with this whole place. He knows its geology, history, and its relationships to Norway’s highest mountains, which are immediately to the North, the Jotunheimen. All of this is interwoven with his love of the mountains and his extensive climbing experience in Norway, and around the world. This is his home place with which he has a deep identification. We discussed this process of wider and deeper identification while I was visiting him at his hut. He mentioned that he did not mean anything

30. See *SWAN VIII* and *IX*.

31. *SWAN VI*.

technical by this use of “identification.” He has seen this same process at work among people living in different cultures and places. In his writings he refers to this process as developing from a healthy well-integrated ego to a social self and then beyond that to what he calls the metaphysical self. In his ecology writings he uses the words “ecological Self” to refer to the metaphysical self.^[32]

Having an extended sense of identification leads us to say that we defend our home place as part of our selves. We identify with the ecological community that it is part of, and we feel that the beings in our community are our companions and friends with whom we have symbiotic relations. To develop this sense of extended self is a natural process of maturing, and it does not destroy our ego but helps to moderate earlier tendencies to be self-centered in the narrow sense. When we care for our place and others, we come to identify with their needs and wellbeing, and we have a greatly enhanced and larger sense of community and interde-

pendence. Our wellbeing and that of our community are closely aligned. Thus, Naess says, we naturally and spontaneously care for our place and seek to protect it. For this we do not need a moral axiology, set of rules or enforcements held over us to force us to act. We are able to act beautifully with expansive grace, gratitude, and generosity. This brings us deep knowledge of others and a great sense of joy that can expand indefinitely. This gives us a higher quality of life, one that does not depend on material consumption. It enables us to have a fine and joyful life by living in a very simple and appreciative way, in harmony with others and Nature.

Warwick Fox^[33] suggests that those, including Naess, whose ultimate premises call for an extended sense of identification with an ecological Self be called *transpersonal ecologists*, but Naess would say that they have transpersonal ecosophies. Fox says that the emphasis on *Self*-realization leads to exploring all levels of awareness, from the pre-personal (sentient and reactive), to the personal (cognitive and deliberative) to



Tvergastein, Arne's cottage on the slope of Hallingskarvet. PHOTO: JOHAN BRUN

32. Naess, A. (1987).

33. Fox, W. (1990). *Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism*. Boston: Shambhala.

the transpersonal (wise and reciprocally responsive). In extending our sense of identification and care, and in opening our capacity to love, we flourish and realize ourselves in harmony with others. We come to understand, as Naess says, that our own Self-realization is interconnected with the Self-realization of others, including other beings. We cannot flourish and realize ourselves, if we destroy their homes, and interfere with their possibilities for Self-realization.

Naess's way of thinking, experiencing, and acting in the world with an extended sense of self-identification, and expansion of care to the small details of daily life, transcending small ego self, is a deepening, transformative process that he humbly calls becoming more mature. Some other supporters of the deep ecology movement use this same type of extension of identification in approaching their own ecosophy. When they translate this into their own practices there are some subtle differences from Naess's version, and that is good. You can get a sense for this practice by asking yourself "What is the most expansive sense of self-identification that I care for?" Some people readily feel that they identify with their place and land. This is true for many people in tribal cultures. In contrast, the self in Modernism is confined to the individualistic lone ego. It does not identify with the land, tribe or wild beings, but with a small conditioned sense of historical self. Naess invites and shows us how to also explore our greater, deeper ecological Self.

Deep ecology movement supporters, as noted earlier, have articulated ultimate philosophies based on such religious worldviews as Buddhism, Confucianism, Shinto, Hinduism, Islam, Neo-Paganism and Shamanism. Many have said their interpretation of these spiritual traditions emphasizes humility, love for others, and respectful treatment of *all beings*. Mahayana Buddhism, Shinto, and Taoism *explicitly* stress respect for other beings and emphasize that we should live in harmony with and in gratitude to them and Nature. All beings have Buddha nature, *Kami* are all through nature, and so on. We are dependent on all our rela-

tions, not just our human ones, for who we are and for our long term survival.

If a person has no religious or tribal background, then, as Naess suggests, they can create their own ultimate philosophy based on ecocentric principles, values, and norms. They can call their own personal philosophy "Ecosophy X," where for X they can use whatever name feels best to them. It could be a descriptive name, or a name from their place. A person could work in their own place where an ecosophy is learned, practiced, and shared. It then becomes a place with increasing ecological harmony and wisdom, and it can be given a special name, for example, we could call it our *ecostery*. We work in a particular place to live our unique ecosophy, and as we do, our homes become harmonious dwelling places. We never stop learning or adapting in this process, as Naess shows in his experimental approach to Ecosophy T, and the way he lives at Tvergastein under the extreme conditions found there. He uses many of the same gentle conserving methods when he is in the city.

The old Norwegian farms all have a name that is retained for generations, giving the farm a meaningful identity. The people who look after these farms identify with them, and they take the name of the farm: When adult people move to these farms, they often take the name of the farm as their surname, even today. These farms have a character, a transgenerational life with meaning. They are in many ways multigenerational places with their own identity and life. In a similar way, we can imbue our own home place with such meaning through a variety of daily practices. Naess seriously considered changing his surname so that he would be called Arne Tvergastein.

A person can fail to identify with their ecological community, when they identify too narrowly with an insecure, small ego-self. Sometimes expanding awareness beyond ego requires painful self-examination and criticism, sometimes therapy, perhaps extended healing and support. A principal norm for a transpersonal ecosophy could be Naess's N2 (Norm Two) "Self-real-

ization for all living beings!” Used as an ultimate norm it leads to nonviolence, humility, and gratitude. We encourage others to flourish and realize themselves.

As self-reflective ecosophers, we make choices for a better *quality* of life, instead of merely going for a higher standard of living as measured by money, things, fame, and power. How can we realize higher quality of values while using less material and energy? An inquiry into our ultimate values and beliefs about the nature of our wild energies leads us to seek the sacred, spiritual dimensions of daily life, with many options for expanding our understanding, compassion, and range of positive actions and active feelings. This shift leads to a different *quality of experience*. Ecophilosophy explores the rich complexity of qualitative appreciations found not only in human communities in concert with others, but also in places of wild free nature.

MANY DIVERSE ECOSOPHIES

Naess invites us to create our own ecosophies inspired by commitment to the deep ecology platform principles. We do not have to wait for the experts and mainstream organizations in order to act on our own. We each can do something of long-term importance on a regular basis starting today. Many people and groups are developing their personal ecosophy as their way to live richly in harmony with others and the natural world. There is a diversity of ecosophies that reflects the individual and ecological diversity of the self-organizing creative powers found in people and beings everywhere. We are more effective when we have a sense of wholeness through an integrated total view.

Many people have coincidentally developed ecosophies very similar to Naess’s, based on the practice of *extended identification, increased awareness, and care for their ecological Self*. For example, Matthew Fox’s version of *Creation Spirituality* (which has a long histo-

ry as a minority tradition in Christianity and should not be confused with Creationism) can be seen as a transpersonal ecosophy using Christian practices of love and humility to find the spirit of Christ revealed in the ongoing creation of the world.^[34] *Christ* is interpreted as referring to this creative power that we can feel, participate in, and should revere. This gives us an expansive communal sense of Self over-flowing with the spirit of compassion. It gives us joy and light. It is closely related to an early Gnostic Christian spiritual tradition called The Way of Light. Divinity is found everywhere, within and without.

We can learn from the wisdom of our home places (as Naess shows in his life at Tvergastein) and from the many beings who inhabit them. The comprehensive and inclusive value systems compatible with the platform can help us to see that all cultures have a mutual interest in caring for the Earth with all its diversity. We want it to continue for its own sake and because we love it. Most people want to flourish and realize themselves in harmony with other beings and cultures, not at the expense and suffering of others. It is possible to develop common understandings that enable us to work together with civility to achieve harmony with other creatures and beings. The deep ecology platform principles can help us to move in this direction. *Respect for diversity* (the second principle) can lead us in time to recognize how ecological wisdom grows out of specific actions in unique places and contexts. Thus, in developing their ecosophies, supporters of the deep ecology movement stress place-specific, ecological wisdom, and vernacular technology practices.^[35] *No one philosophy and technology is applicable to the whole planet*. Our diversity is a celebration of the unique creativity of life and its many beings.

Ecological wisdom, as Naess makes clear, is not just knowledge and information. It involves intuition

34. Fox, M. (1991). *Creative Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the Peoples of the Earth*. San Francisco: HarperCollins.

35. Drenson, A. (1995). *The Practice of Technology: Exploring Technology, Ecophilosophy, and Spiritual Disciplines for Vital Links*. Albany: SUNY Press.

and insight that energizes our spirits, minds, feelings, and senses with unified understanding. It gives us an embodied *sense* for our ecos and place. Since we are always learning more about ourselves, other beings, relationships, places and contexts, our sensibilities are constantly modified by new discoveries; our actions are thus guided by awareness of our ignorance and limitations. Precautionary principles are wisely applied. Abstract knowledge is not sufficient for a full life. Aspects of Nature and the Cosmos will always be a mystery to us. Living our ecosophy is a deep, long term commitment to our home place; our narrative traditions and practical activities are within and include its ecological communities. We do not try to place ourselves in the position of trying to control the world. We do not abstract ourselves from the living world around us.

One way to realize ecosophy is to live day by day with *increasing mindfulness* so as to harmonize all our relationships to other humans, to the animals, plants, rivers, and rocks. How we do this will vary from person to person and place to place. We should “live and let live,” as Naess likes to say. Modifying our lifestyles a little at a time, day by day, can make for major changes over the long term. There are many meditations, ceremonies, celebrations, rituals, and other practices that can help us to deepen our respect for, and to help us

commune with, the wild energies of Nature and the spirits of our places. We can become inspired to act beautifully, doing more than our share and giving back more to the Earth than we take. Our own quality of life deepens when we give and share. We each receive gifts from the Earth that enable us to live, and we each can give gifts back to the Earth so that others can thrive.

Through these and many other practices, our sense of self matures from ego-centered to realize a more inclusive sense of ecological Self as we identify with our ecological community. This more mature self-identification generates deeper respect for other beings and Nature as we open more of the dimensions of valuing awareness. Mindful practice brings our ecosophy alive from moment to moment. Love and care live only in the present. This opens our awareness to the deep past and our concern for the distant future for many generations. Ecosophies have Earth-based values of their home places that are a common ground for people to meet and learn from each other. Diverse ecosophies add to ecological complexity, create greater richness and result in a higher quality of life. Through them we can enjoy friendship with each other, companionship with other beings, community and the joy of living deeply and well. That is Naess’s sense of unity and diversity in his total view.

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