Given the creation of the sun, the moon, and the rest of the universe, there must surely be three, not two, entities to which love applies: God, one’s fellow human beings; and the rest of creation.

In that event three commandments are required to make this clear:

- Thou shalt love God;
- Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;
- Thou shalt love the creation of God.

Now every created being and thing is brought under one umbrella, a conclusion to which Duncan Taylor leads in his paper, and to which The Trumpeter is surely dedicated.

The conclusion, happy and realistic as it is, does not completely clear up the situation because it omits reference to the question of justice, and therefore of God’s “justice.” What of those who deny love in thought, word, and deed, those who preach only justice? This raises the problem of circular definitions, made famous by Dostoievsky’s saying: “Cogito, ergo sum.”

Philosophers very soon pointed out that the reverse statement could equally make sense: “Sum, ergo cogito.”

This can clearly be written in circular form:

COGITO
SUM
ERGO ERGO
ERGO ERGO
SUM COGITO

But which comes first? Does my recognition of existence precede my ability to think; or does my ability to think make me conscious of my existence? Philosophers have not as yet reached a consensus on this question.

Now apply this to the problem of God’s love and justice. Since these are to Westerners, interconnected, we can write similarly:

LOVE
JUSTICE
ERGO ERGO
ERGO ERGO
JUSTICE LOVE

But resolution is simpler in this case. Jesus Christ spent His life and death affirming the first alternative: love includes and ultimately engulfs/transcends justice. This teaching is clear to most of us, unless we happen to be theologians or philosophers aware of all the pitfalls in these kinds of definition and argument.

God created morality, but before there was human life, there was no moral life, nor man’s soul, nor the ability to think and act, and no thing capable of moral behavior. Since God created good as well as evil for the benefit of mankind to enable human beings to praise His creation, is it surprising that, in the long run, in the last days, the good -love- should triumph?

For ecologists, the third commandment defines what Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 28 means. The phrase “dominion over the fish of the seas... upon the earth” has usually been interpreted to mean “print power” or “control over.” The definition of “dominion” as authority, sovereignty, control, is widely accepted. Today its effects when practised world-wide without

- thought to its consequences require the new interpretation given above by the Third Commandment. We are thus engaged in a mental progression from “power over” to “responsibility for” to “identification with” towards assuming responsibility, and ultimately to “a sustainable world.”

The final step is to ask, how then can God judge human beings? One answer comes form the Buddhists. When a Tibetan dies, appropriate religious and communal ceremonies are held for three days. The soul then sets out on a journey up the valley in which he or she has always lived. But, this time, it is different. Along the path lie all the temptations of life; and as the soul walks its way up, it can only avoid these temptations if it has not reached the state of nirvana. This will determine the level of reincarnation at which it will enter the cycle of life again. But the pure soul will not see the temptations and proceed on up to the col at the head of the valley where it will become part of, and rejoin, the universe from which it originally came.

The teaching is plain and simple: given the chance, human beings can, and will. It is no need for a vengeful god to vent its failures on an unruly humanity.

This Buddhist picture needs to be translated into Christian terms. At death the soul becomes aware that it is in the presence of God. For the baptized, confirmed, or “born-again” Christian this poses no problems. It is only necessary to call on the Lord Jesus Christ who has promised to act as mediator and claimant of His soul. However, for the soul which has ignored, rejected, or never heard the Christian message, the situation is different. As the door of Heaven opens, God’s light shines down on to the soul, making it aware of what it might have been, but did not become, during its lifetime; and, as the door opens further, the soul is confronted with its past actions and intensities; and it is this realization of what one might have been versus what one has been that creates what we call “hell.” No judge comes, no torture, no flames, no divine holocaust.

We are responsible not only for ourselves, not only to our fellow human beings, but also to the wonderful creation of God, neither more nor less. Without this moral base, how can anyone hope to define, much less maintain, a sustainable Earth? Trees do not need lawyers to defend them (to demand this is to accept an inadequate definition of the situation). Trees exist in their own right, just as we do, again neither more nor less. Their freedom is our freedom. We can be destroyed just as they can. The real difference is that we can destroy each other as well as trees, but trees cannot destroy each other.

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But all the time the door is open and the opportunity to turn to God is there, and one by one the “lost” souls finally turn in. The question is, will the power of God itself be inconceivable to affirm that the power of the Creator is limited and that His love cannot ultimately bring in the worst sinner to repentance. Only one is left - Satan, the embodiment of evil.

- Every 12 year old child knows what will happen then. Since God has the largest and best computer, all that He has to do is to press the delete key, and Satan will vanish. No, just as the computer goes blank and your text is lost, so the whole notion of good and evil, and of the human race created to demonstrate the power of good, will become part of, and rejoin, the universe from which it originally came.

What about the charge that environmentalists are misanthropes? Are proponents of the philosophy supporting the deep ecology movement “anti-rational,” “airy mystics?” These charges are unfounded - they are based on an untested, unproven, and non-scientific ecological credentials.

But to equate ecocentrism with misanthropy, as Bookchin and others “we” advocates often do, is a complete misunderstanding. As a graduate student of ecology philosophers argue that if you really love humans you must love and defend the biosphere that is their only home.

Chico Mendes, the Brazilian peasant who was murdered because he organized rubber tappers and other forest people to nonviolently oppose the cutting of the rainforests upon which their lives depend, was not a “tree hugger,” but a genuine “tree hugger,” willing to give his life for the forest. This is a misunderstanding of Chico Mendes. His real wisdom was to recognize that one cannot be a “people hugger” without being a “tree hugger,” and vice versa. We can protect the environment only by finding ways for people everywhere to earn a living in an ecologically-sustainable fashion; we can love and serve people only if we protect the whole ecological community that sustains them. On an endangered Earth, anthropocentrism can be misanthropic, it promotes further ecological degradation.

DEEP ECOLOGY AND ITS CRITICS: A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

Bruce A. Byers

Are environmentalists “anti-human,” “reactionary misanthropes?” Are proponents of the philosophy supporting the deep ecology movement “anti-rational,” “airy mystics?” These charges are unfounded - they are based on an untested, unproven, and non-scientific ecological credentials.

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Why must we be ecocentric in order to love and protect humans? One answer flows naturally from the Buddhist view of “dependent co-arising” or “dependent origination” (paticca-samuppada in the ancient Pali language of the Buddhist canon). This was first taught to the Acastasaka Sutta, the Net of Indra. Because of the net-like, interdependent structure of reality - what Thich Nhat Hanh calls “interbeing” - what we do to the natural world, we ultimately do to ourselves.
Ecology and evolution prove concrete evidence of the interdependence or "interbeing" of ecological communities so clearly expressed in Buddhism. Nutrient cycles show this clearly. For example, nutrients cycle from the air in to release the energy from their food, and in the process create and release carbon dioxide; plants use carbon dioxide in the process of photosynthesis, and release oxygen as a waste product. So there is complementarity, interdependence, between plants and animals. Food chains and food webs, metaphors for the flow of energy, show this interdependence so clearly.

A food-web diagram of a species-rich ecosystem like a tropical forest or coral reef provides a beautiful image of the Net of Indra. An eco-system is made up of many species, each of which is dependent on the others in the net. If we took seriously the idea that ecocentrism was the way to understand nature, we would protect the jobs of loggers in the Pacific Northwest and the economies of the logging communities they support, not to mention supplying the needs of the rest of us for affordable building materials, paper, and other forest products? By making certain that logging is an ecologically sustainable economic activity - otherwise we would condemn loggers, just as we condemn the children to the economic collapse of their means of livelihood. Developing forestry practices that are ecologically sustainable in the long term probably requires that we protect the last stands of forests that are sustainable. These ancient forests are also a repository of genetically diverse trees, which could allow future forests to adapt to changes in climate, or outbreaks of new pests or diseases. People employed by the "forest products industry" take it as a matter of faith that tree logging is a moral and rational choice, based on too narrow a view of reality. The distinction between intrinsic and instrumental value blurs when the view of "self" is widened from an "ego-self" to an "eco-self."

What of Bookchin's second major charge against the deep ecology movement and supporters, that it is "irrational" and "anti-rational"? He calls supporters of the deep ecology movement "airy mystics," using that term to derogate the derogatory sense of vague or obscure thinking or belief, with no solid foundation, and charges that they are anti-rational, anti-scientific, and anti-technological. Bookchin writes: "Mystical ecologists, like many of today's religious revivalists, view reason with suspicion and emphasize the importance of ... irrational and intuitive approaches... Spirituality and rationality, which mystical ecologists invariably perceive in crude, redolent and simplistic terms, are pitted against each other as angels and demons."

In the Environmental Studies Program at the Naropa Institute we emphasize that science is a human natural process, and that its foundation is the fresh experience of observation of nature, unhindered by preconceptions. This experience is so important that we provide the last release in the life of a particular student. They are a natural ecological laboratory in which forest ecologists can study, and perhaps come to understand (which they do not now), the complex processes and the forest's systems sustainable. These ancient forests are also a repository of genetically diverse trees, which could allow future forests to adapt to changes in climate, or outbreaks of new pests or diseases. People employed by the "forest products industry" take it as a matter of faith that tree logging is a moral and rational choice, based on too narrow a view of reality. The distinction between intrinsic and instrumental value blurs when the view of "self" is widened from an "ego-self" to an "eco-self."

The first transmission of Zen is said to have occurred when the Buddha, before saying a word, held up a flower and twirled it. His disciple Maha-Kasyapa smiled. "This is the symbol of the first transmission of Zen and of deep ecology principles, as well as of Zen. Flower!" The pure, mindful experience of nature leads naturally to a personal, emotional relationship with nature. Some people might describe this kind of relationship as "mystical" or "spiritual." In attempting to use the concept of mysticism or deep direct experience, however, we must choose and use words carefully. We should be careful to say that direct experience (flower!) is purely natural, not "supernatural," "spiritual," or "mystical" in any dualistic sense of those words.

But Bookchin's charges alert us to a potential danger: If not done carefully, "Earth spirituality," "Earth prayers," "vision quests," and the like can take us away from the direct experience of nature.

A personal experience reminds me of this problem. Last summer there was a partial solar eclipse while I was living. During the eclipse, I noticed that each individual "dappled" shade of an old cotton wood was shaped like the crescent of the partially-eclipsed sun. I realized then that I had never noticed that "ordinary" sun dapples are perfectly round images of the sun. I had never really been aware of sun dapples until that moment! It was a fresh and delightful "aha" experience, connecting me with Earth and sky, and the moment present. During the eclipse my eight-year-old daughter had been with a group of children on a sort of environmental retreat, camping in the woods in a tepee. The leader knew of the eclipse, and had planned to help the children project the sun's image so they could watch directly. When my daughter returned, I was surprised to find that they had forgotten all about it! "Oh," said the adult leader, "we were too busy setting up a medicine wheel and saying Earth prayers: we completely forgot about the eclipse!"

To the extent that "Earth rituals," "Gaian spirituality," and "eco-theology" take us into our own words, concepts, and heads, and distract us from direct experience of Earth, they aid and abet anthropocentrism. To the extent that they reinforce a dualistic view of spirit versus matter, mind versus nature, or reason versus intuition, they are also anthropocentric projections onto non-dual reality. Done with sensitivity, however "Earth prayers" can remind us of our connection with Earth. Bookchin's charge of "airy mysticism" may be true for some who take non-dual expressions of what he calls "Gaian consciousness and eco-theology." But these have little in common with recognized supporters of the deep ecology movement.

"Mystical ecology." Bookchin's term for deep ecology, is a contradiction in terms. Ecology is the science of ecosystems, and cannot be "mystical" in its presumptive sense of irrational belief. Nor is the deep ecology movement "mystical" in that sense. The deep ecology movement is supported by philosophers who begin with the fundamental facts and principles of ecological science (facts such as interdependence and diversity) and then proceed to ask "deeper" questions than the scientific methods can answer. They begin with a philosophical and spiritual (non-scientific) action. Ecological facts become fundamental values or norms for these philosophers supporting the platform principles of the deep ecology movement. So in no sense are they anti-rational or anti-scientific - quite the contrary. For those of us who strive to live our lives as part of an ecological community - a whole Earth "sangha" - to use the Buddhist phrase for community or fellowship - it is import to challenge the critics who claim that the deep ecology movement is "irrational" and "anti-scientific". Experiential or, even cooperative relationships within ecological communities. Predators and their prey are clearly shaped interdependent and sometimes even cooperative relationships within ecological communities. Insect-eating birds are responsible for the beautiful camouflage of moths; and moth camouflage is responsible for the sharp vision of birds. Paradoxes and their hosts also can co-evolve relationships of mutual dependence; relationships that begin as harmful to the host and beneficial to the parasite seem often to evolve into relationships that are mutually beneficial. Lichens, reef-building corals, and the nitrogen-fixing bacteria that live in the root-nodules of legumes may all be examples of this coevolution of cooperation. The mitochondria found in the cells of all plants and animals - humans included - may be examples also.

In Thailand, various NGO groups, Buddhist monks and academics believe that Buddhist values are a positive force in nature conservation. This paper will examine several case studies where Buddhist values are being revitalized in an effort to conserve natural ecosystems and to enhance self-reliance for rural villagers.

The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on the Buddhist perception of nature in order to determine the role of Buddhist doctrine and practice in the conservation of natural resources. The Nong Nooch groups, Buddhist monks and academics believe that Buddhist values are a positive force in nature conservation. This paper will examine several case studies where Buddhist values are being revitalized in an effort to conserve natural ecosystems and to enhance self-reliance for rural villagers.

The world grows smaller and smaller, more and more interdependent. Our life must be centered on a sense of Universal Responsibility not only nation to nation and human to human, but also human to other forms of life. (His Holiness, The Dalai Lama)

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Ecology and evolution provide concrete evidence of the interdependence or "interbeing" of ecological communities so clearly illustrated by the flow of energy through ecosystems, also illustrate this interdependence. For example, animals take in oxygen from the air in order to release carbon dioxide; plants use carbon dioxide in the process of photosynthesis, and release oxygen as a waste product. So there is complementarity, interdependence, between plants and animals. Food chains and food webs, metaphors for the flow of energy and information through ecosystems, so clearly demonstrate this interdependence. A food-web diagram of a species-rich ecosystem like a tropical forest or coral reef provides a beautiful image of the Net of Being.

Evolution shows the shared interdependence and sometimes even cooperative relationships within ecological communities. Predators and their prey are clearly shaped by these evolutionary forces. Wolves and mountain lions, for example, are responsible for the fleshtime and grace of deer; and deer themselves are responsible for the fecundity and stealth of their predators. Insect-eating birds are responsible for the beautiful camouflage of moths; and moth camouflage is responsible for the sharp vision of birds. Predators and their hosts also can co-evolve relationships of mutual dependence; relationships that begin as harmful to the host and beneficial to the parasite seem often to evolve into relationships that are mutually beneficial. Lichens, relationships of mutual dependence; relationships that begin as parasitic and end up as beneficial, are examples of this co-evolution.

Insect-eating birds are responsible for the beautiful camouflage of moths. Parasites and their hosts also can co-evolve relationships of mutual dependence. Relationships that begin as harmful to the host and beneficial to the parasite seem often to evolve into relationships that are mutually beneficial. Lichens, relationships of mutual dependence; relationships that begin as parasitic and end up as beneficial, are examples of this co-evolution.

In the Environmental Studies Program at the Naropa Institute we emphasize that science is a human natural process, and that its foundation is the fresh experience of observation, nature, untainted by preconceptions. This experiential foundation is shared with the arts. The well-known Writing and Poetics Program at Naropa, for example, is distinguished by an attempt to "investigate the creative process involved in the act of writing, and to analyze the nature and effects of the creative process." They are natural ecological laboratory in which for ecologists can study, and perhaps come to understand (which they do not now), the complex processes by which forests sustain life. These ancient forests are also a repository of genetically diverse trees, which could allow future forests to adapt to changes in climate, or combat the spread of new pests or diseases. People employed by the "forest products industry" take it as a matter of faith that trees are the "soul of the forest," and will protect the health of their traditional, sustainable subsistence economy based on hunting caribou, birds, seals, and other sea mammals, and fishing.

These examples may give the impression that I am arguing for preserving other species and the "land-community" because of their instrumental value to people - to provide renewable food or forest resources, for recreation or political power. But Bookchin's charges us to answer a potential danger: If we do not care about the earth, it will care for itself, and for us.

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A personal experience reminds me of this problem. Last summer there was a partial solar eclipse when I was living in the eclipse. I noticed that each individual "dapple" of sun-dappled shade of an old cottonwood was shaped like the crescent of the partially-eclipsed sun. I realized then that I had never noticed that "ordinary" sun-dapples are perfectly round images of the sun. I had never really been aware of sun dapples until that moment! It was a fresh and delightful "aha" experience, connecting me with Earth and place, and the present moment.

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To the extent that "Earth rituals" "Gaian spirituality," and "eco-theology" take us into our own words, concepts, and ideas, and distract us from direct experience of Earth, they aid and abet anthropocentrism. To the extent that they reinforce a dualistic view of spirit versus matter, mind versus nature, or reason versus intuition, they are also anthropocentric projections on non-dual reality. Done with sensitivity, however "Earth prayers" can remind us of our connection with Earth. Bookchin's charge of "anti-scientific" and "anti-rational" may be true for those who begin with the fundamental facts and principles of earth ecology, but not for those who begin with the fundamental facts and principles of ecological science (facts such as interdependence and diversity) and then proceed to ask "deeper" questions than the scientific method can answer. Ecological facts become fundamental values or norms for these philosophers supporting the platform principles of the deep ecology movement. So in no sense are they anti-rational or anti-scientific - quite the contrary.

For those of us who strive to live our lives as part of an ecological community - a whole Earth "sangha" to use the Buddhist phrase for community or fellowship - it is important to challenge the critics who claim that the deep ecology movement is "mystical," and to distinguish between mystical (eco)centric compassion is based on an ethic of interbeing; this-this worldly groundlessness fits well both with science, and with Buddhist emphasis on non-duality and direct experience.

Notes
1. I use the term for philosophers supporting the deep ecology movement synonymously with "transpersonal ecology," an alternative name for this philosophy. See Bruce A. Byerly, "Bookchin's New Mythology," in Wolfax Fox in Toward A Transpersonal Ecology (Shambala: Boston & London, 1980).
2. Bookchin has been bringing these charges of misanthropy against deep ecology since 1987, and they have been addressed by a number of proponents of deep ecology. Interested readers should see Warwick Fox Toward A Transpersonal Ecology and references cited therein.
3. Quoted from a brochure describing the Writing and Poetics Program at Naropa.

About the Author: Bruce A. Byerly has a Ph.D. in Ecology and Evolution at the University of California, Berkeley. He was with the New Environmental Studies Program at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, a program that combines science, art, and philosophy in an integrated curriculum and emphasizes the ecocentric perspective of the deep ecology movement. The Naropa Institute is a non-sectarian college with a Buddhist-inspired educational philosophy of contemplative education.

The pure, mindful experience of nature leads naturally to the recognition that "Earth" is a symbol of the first transmission of ecology to the modern world. Even the Buddha, before saying a word, held up a flower and twirled it. His disciple Mahakasyapa smiled. The Buddha knew that the flower could stand as a symbol of the first transmission of ecology and of deep ecology principles, as well as of Zen. "Flower" is a universal symbol. It is a universal symbol, not of a particular "mystical" or "spiritual." In adopting a "mystical" or "spiritual" or "transpersonal" perspective we are careful to say that direct experience (flower!) is purely natural, not "supernatural," "mystical" or "spiritual" in any dualistic sense of those words.

The world grows smaller and smaller, more and more interdependent, and our life must be characterized by a sense of Universal Responsibility not only nation to nation and human to human, but also human to other forms of life. "Buddhism is the application of the mind," the Dalai Lama.

The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on the Buddhist perception of nature in order to determine the role of Buddhist doctrine and practice in the conservation of natural resources. The 108 VG groups, Buddhist monks and academics believe that Buddhist values are a positive force in nature conservation. This paper will examine several case studies where Buddhist values are being revitalized in an effort to conserve natural ecosystems and to increase self-reliance for rural villagers.

The foundation of Thai society is Buddhism and this holds for the farmers who make up the majority of the population. Buddhism is an integral part of life in Thailand. The exact date Buddhism was introduced in Thailand has been determined, but evidence indicates that it has been around at least since the 13th century. Buddhism and Hinduism together have had influence in Thailand. Buddhism was transmitted to Thailand not as a

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