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THE LONG-RANGE DEEP ECOLOGY MOVEMENT
AND ARNE NAESS

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Please Note: With publication of this issue on Arne Naess and the Deep Ecology Movement, only a few focus areas remain of those we set out to cover over nine years ago. It is time for *The Trumpeter* to find a new home and editor. If you have suggestions, send them. I will edit and produce the journal until a new editor is found. Thanks to all of you who have supported and contributed to making this a successful journal journey.

In strange ways so many of our lives run in parallel paths. This is shown in the writings which gather in this issue of *The Trumpeter*. There are many common elements in the different ways of reaching out to contact the larger world of spontaneous wild nature, there to find our humanity in diverse, creative richness. Consider some common themes: turning to wild nature and the mountains for solace, for wisdom, for strength, for maturation, for spiritual comradeship, for lessons in devotion and humility; reading works by Spinoza and being inspired by his grand vision of the unity of all beings as radiant forms of an infinitely divine one, and so coming to appreciate the sacredness of diverse beings while marvelling at each's unique inherent value; hearing glorious music, for example by the romantic poets and composers which echoes the voices of Nature and place; working through the difficult transitions of self-realization to learn that we must dwell wisely even with incomplete knowledge, yet we aspire toward comprehensive understanding; reflecting on violence and its consequences and coming to embrace nonviolence with a spiritual commitment to resolving disagreements through mutual respect and collective action. There is a beautiful unity in this diversity.

One of the many insights Arne Naess has shared with other supporters of the Deep Ecology Movement clarifies the need to respect and honor all forms of diversity: ecological, biological, cultural, personal, etc. This emphasizes that ecological wisdom (ecosophy) is realized in an unlimited diversity of ways, more numerous than all existing species. Followers of the Deep Ecology Movement share a principle commitment to honor diversity and richness and the inherent worth of all beings. Arne has helped to clearly articulate our deepest shared concerns, whether our spiritual foundation is Christian, Buddhist, Moslem, Taoist, Jewish, Shamanic, Pagan, and so on. Regardless of ultimate faith, supporters of the movement all painfully feel the suffering caused by the consumptive destructiveness of modern technological societies.

In his summary overview of the grass-roots, worldwide ecology movement (*Inquiry* 1973), Arne Naess helped to crystallize the environmental community's concerns and aspiration to create something better than industrial culture. He has helped others to see the necessity for richness and diversity in ultimate premises, and how, from such diversity, there can be a collective commitment to the same key (or variants thereof) *platform principles*. From the agreed upon platform principles (which are evolving) a wide variety of practical actions can

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be undertaken. For example, a person might base their lives on a form of Christianity. If informed, such a person would understand the rudiments of ecology and natural science, and have an overview of our cultural activities against the background of natural history; thus, they would appreciate the depths of the environmental crisis. Then, they would take steps to help to lessen the crisis, while working with others to prevent problems from arising in the first place. In working toward this end, this person would come to know others who share the same concerns and long range aims, even though they had different backgrounds and ultimate philosophies. Nevertheless, they share commitment to ending the environmental crisis through deep changes; they know that we cannot go on with business-as-usual. This is the essence of the Deep Ecology Movement.

The environmental crisis can be deeply understood only by means of a comprehensive approach, which requires interdisciplinary knowledge, but also forms of understanding and wisdom which lie beyond all disciplines. A person who strives for comprehensive understanding and meaningful life-action, realizes that environmental problems are not just local or regional, but are also global ones. Their global extent raises other questions: How can the diverse human family work together to end violence, achieve social justice, world peace, *and* harmony with Nature? Arne Naess put these questions to us, and invited us to reflect on our own ultimate values. He has spoken eloquently of what many of us already knew in our hearts or perhaps only sensed.

Whether reflecting on modesty and mountain climbing, or on how to define sustainable development, or on the ecology of self, Arne's approach is one of questioning, of always digging down to get to the roots of questions and issues. This is the authentic spirit of philosophy as an ongoing inquiry into our total lives, while in pursuit of wisdom; it is the essence of Socratic philosophy.

In distinguishing between the long range Deep Ecology Movement and the short term Shallow Ecology Movement, Arne helped us clarify our thoughts, crystallize our understanding, and inspire us with confidence. He gave us the word "ecosophy", reflections upon which are endlessly enriching and empowering. The environmental movement, then, has two principle forms: one goes on with business-as-usual and introduces only very minor changes without questioning deeply into values; the other questions deeply into values and sees we cannot go on with business-as-usual, for a host of interconnected reasons.

Arne Naess has helped us to understand that supporters of the Deep Ecology Movement do not have to all have the same ultimate premises. He does not claim that his own ultimate philosophical foundations are ones which others must accept. When he articulates his own ultimate grounds for support of the Deep Ecology Movement (and also his support for Gandhian nonviolent action — for they are the same), he calls the result *Ecosophy T*.

The "T" here is the first letter for the name of his hut in the mountains of Norway. The hut's name is the Norwegian word for the rocks in the area which

contain distinctive crystal patterns. This title emphasizes that Ecosophy T is for him and his mountain place, but it may help some others, who like his articulations. The mountains became as a father to Arne, when as a child he lost his own dad. For many of us whose fathers were gone (to war or depression perhaps) the mountains became surrogates. Many of us share a spiritual kinship with mountains. Mountains call us to explore wilderness and ourselves. This is an important journey of self-development for many of us living in the modern period.

In so many ways Arne has led in this journey. He plunged into his own inner depths through psychotherapy between the world wars. Out of these and other depth journeys he has become a quintessential supporter of the Deep Ecology Movement. He exemplifies the creative, spontaneous, playful and spirited energy of Nature itself, in his positive optimism and encouragement of others. He sets a marvelous example for us with his search for clarity and willingness to take intellectual and other risks; by his courage to remain steadfast and cheerful, no matter what the circumstances seem; in his avoidance of violent language. Thus, we devote this issue as a tribute to him. His work gave us the word "ecosophy" in our title and helped us to define our principle mission: to reflect and communicate the richness and diversity of character and culture emerging through active commitment to the *platform principles* of the worldwide, Deep Ecology Movement. Here is a recent statement of these principles:

The Platform Principles of the Deep Ecology Movement

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy *vital* human needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.
5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating *life quality* (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big & great.
8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes. (Quoted from: *Deep Ecology*, by Bill Devall and George Sessions, Gibb Smith, Salt Lake City, 1985, p. 70).

It needs to be emphasized that these are proposed *platform* principles for the Deep Ecology Movement. In publishing them, Naess and Sessions hoped others would consider these 8 principles as a working, but not definitive, platform for the Movement, and certainly not as a total philosophy with ultimate metaphysical postulates. They and other Philosophical supporters of the Deep Ecology Movement have gone on to articulate their own ecosophies.

Warwick Fox has suggested that all those philosophers (which includes Arne), whose ultimate premises are linked to an active extension of identification with a larger ecological Self be called *transpersonal ecologists*. This is partly because the emphasis on Self-realization logically entails exploration of all levels of awareness, from the prepersonal (sentient and reactive), to the personal (cognitive and deliberative) to the transpersonal (wise and responsive). In extending our sense of identification and care, and in expanding our capacity to love, we flourish and realize ourselves in harmony with others. We come to understand that our own Self-realization is interconnected with the Self-realization of all other beings. We cannot flourish and realize ourselves if we destroy their homes, and interfere with their possibilities of self-realization. This way of thinking, experiencing, and acting in the world through extension of identification, expansion of care, and transcendence of ego, is a deepening, transformative, developmental process. It is ongoing maturation. Many philosophical supporters of the Deep Ecology Movement in this issue have followed this approach to ecosophy.

Humans can fail to realize the transpersonal ecological Self, 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 even extended healing and support. A principle value imperative for transpersonal ecology is "Self-realization for all beings." This is an imperative which Arne has gracefully articulated in his Ecosophy T. As a moral imperative it underscores the necessity of nonviolence, love, gentleness, appreciation, respect, humility, and gratitude; it inspires actions toward others which encourage their own flourishing and Self-realization. As self-reflective agents humans must make choices based on trying to understand their lives in a complete

way. This is difficult and we can get stuck. We might confuse a better *quality* of life with a higher standard of living, measured quantitatively by money, material possessions, and power. However, these different quantities represent only a series of translations of one single value, which not only lacks richness and diversity, but is just an instrumental value, not a good in itself. This depth reflection is an inquiry into our ultimate foundations and basis for life. This is the realm of the sacred spiritual dimension; daily life; choice; focus; love; and learning.

May this issue stimulate readers to articulate their own ultimate premises and undertake *positive* actions which flow from a commitment to the platform principles of the worldwide, long range, Deep Ecology Movement.

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