

A Trumpeter Special Series on the Contribution of Arne Naess to the Long Range, Deep Ecology Movement

Introduction

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Over ten years ago a small group met to discuss producing a series of books in English of the works of Norwegian philosopher, professor, and mountaineer Arne Naess. Naess's work has received international recognition for its breadth and depth. As we surveyed the extent of Naess's writings, we realized that publication of his complete works was beyond our means. We decided to offer ten volumes, in English, of newly edited or translated works by Naess.

The Selected Works of Arne Naess (SWAN) will be published in 2005. In honour of *SWAN* and Naess's 93rd year, and to encourage further explorations among supporters of the long range, deep ecology movement, we decided to offer a further sampling of Naess's essays in *The Trumpeter*. We also are publishing selected essays by people who have been influenced by Naess and who continue to develop themes relevant to the long range, deep ecology movement. Globalization, the impact of global warming on human cultures, human population growth, technologies such as biotechnology and the threats to biodiversity due to human activities are among the topics which require philosophical as well as scientific, political, and religious exploration.

This series of *The Trumpeter* is divided into two parts. Part One has only essays and other items by Arne Naess, emphasizing unpublished papers, speeches, and interviews during the past 25 years. We have included a few essays from the *SWAN* collection because they are important to sketch Naess's overall approach and the different paths he has explored. Many of the essays in Part One are the type of drafts that Naess comes back to again and again and lets grow and deepen through revision. These essays display Naess's process of thinking,

experiencing, revision, and further exploration. Understanding Naess's practice of living philosophy encourages other people to live, practice, and develop their own statements of their ecosophies.

Part Two of this series includes additional essays by Naess and essays written by people who have been influenced by Naess, or who consider themselves supporters of the long range, deep ecology movement.

Part One includes some of Naess's essays on such diverse topics as mountains, gestalt ontology, pluralism, worldviews and life philosophies, platform principles, grassroots movements, Gandhi and non-violent communication, Spinoza and ecology, possibilism, cultural anthropology, cosmic meaning, personal ecosophies, population growth, sustainable development, Norway and deep ecology, democracy, history, pottery, architecture, boxing, play and maturity, access to free nature, mountains, climbing, teaching biology, quality of life research, norms and their relationships, and science for sustainable societies.

Naess is a philosopher of context with global perspectives in a deep sense, starting with the search for meaning in local institutions and places and grounding empirical research in fieldwork in communities and in free nature. Philosophy for him is always an undertaking in living and seeking a total view as a maturing, whole, integrated person. He thinks such a person should clearly know what their values are and which values are given highest priority. As he eventually discovered in his decades of research, no view can ever be complete or proven consistent, but this is not incompatible with wisdom and living well with a high quality of life. Quality of life depends intimately on our awareness of who and what we are and on our feelings. Naess says he learned from Spinoza that positive feelings enlarge our sense of care and self competence while negative ones diminish us. We become more joyful when we sense ourselves and our view of life in larger, even Cosmic perspectives. Naess encourages diversity of every kind in life philosophies and worldviews. Thus he is very egalitarian. Each individual is capable of great things without following the doctrinaire philosophy of an authoritarian leader.

While Naess advocates pluralism and communication across cultural and philosophical divides, his personal roots are in Norway. We decided to conclude Part One with selections focusing on Naess's relationship with free nature in Norway, in mountains, while climbing, and his reflections on mountains, the big outside, in many areas of the Earth.

We are convinced that with gestalt ontology, diversity of empirically based semantics, and narrative richness as part of the evolutionary and historical richness of the Earth, we can move beyond the Western Modern-Postmodern impasse into the larger global narrative that includes Western cultures as only a small part of the large and diverse cultural wealth of the Earth.

Part One also includes Alan Drengson's biographical essay, "The Life and Work of Arne Naess: An Appreciative Overview" which provides a personal, historical, and cultural context of Naess's work. Naess is always concerned with context and Drengson illustrates how historical and landscape context influenced Naess's philosophical and personal development. For example, mountains are important to Naess with connections to mythological traditions in Europe and Norway. Much like Dogen who brought Zen Buddhism to Japan from China in the thirteenth century and who used mountains as metaphor and reality of being, Naess finds in his experiences in mountains and especially at Tvergastein, in the mountains of Norway, inspiration for his essays and his spiritual development.

Part One offers a detailed description of the *SWAN* volumes and a short bibliography of Naess's main works in English and books written about Naess's approach to life's philosophy.

Arne Naess has contributed enormous efforts to exploring ways to human maturity. The changes that humans face during the twenty-first century are as intense if not more intense than those faced during the twentieth century. Thus Part One can be read as a prologue to Part Two of this series where a variety of authors address ecocentrism and articulate ecosophies to guide social, economic, and political decisions during the twenty-first century.

Note: In all references to the *SWAN* volumes, the Roman numeral is the volume number, the first Arabic number is the section or chapter number, and the next Arabic number refers to a section or part of a chapter. In the essay collections, Volumes 8 to 10, the numbers refer to section and article number, for example *SWAN* X 2.1 is Volume 10: *The Deep Ecology of Wisdom*, section 2, article 1.

NB: The dates at the top of Naess's essays refer usually to when they were written, but sometimes to when they were first published. The letters following the dates refer to the chronological order of the essays within the year.