

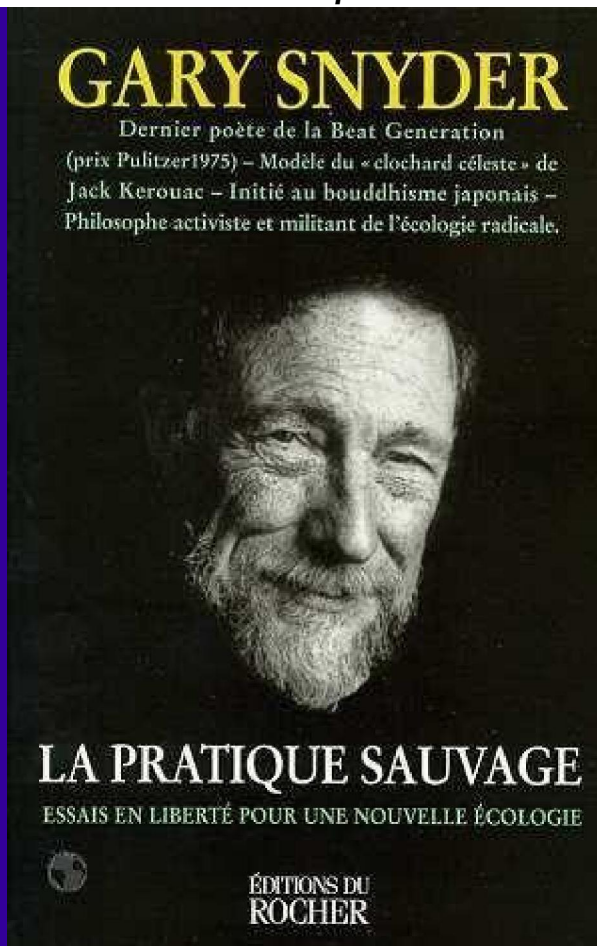
Veerle Solia

Van: Mediadoc <fa634702@skynet.be>
Verzonden: dinsdag 21 augustus 2012 16:46
Aan: Mediadoc
Onderwerp: Groene Belg 760: Re-volutie ? / Schrijvers >< Oorlog >< Natuur / Adieu Dieu / "SP.nl niet socialistisch meer"

>< **Oorlog** >< **Natuur** 760

Onafhankelijk Belgisch e-dagblad - 21/08/2012 - 12 pagina's

"Re-volutie" ? / "Writers & the War Against Nature" - Gary Snyder / Adieu Dieu Spitaels / "SP.nl niet socialistisch meer"



EDITO

Wie weet nog wat "re-volutie" betekent ?
(Zijn ze bij DWM hun leven beu ?)

"Een Iraanse atoombom graag !" zo titelt een opiniestuk op **De Wereld Morgen** op 21/08/2012. Aan het eind schrijft Eric Hulsens: " Wat denk ik nu, na een pak leatuur over Iran? **Ik denk dat je nucleaire wapens moet hebben, maar niet gebruiken.**" Hij besluit: "Iran als nucleaire tegenspeler zou op dit gebied een welkome herschikking van de machtsverhoudingen zijn."



Zo ver kan je gaan in je aversie van de Westerse wereldbemoeienissen. Dat je de vijanden ervan - want de vijanden van mijn vijanden zijn mijn vrienden - een atoombom toewenst. Zelfs als die nieuwe vrienden Iraanse ayatollahs zijn. "De Iraanse politiek wordt niet gemaakt door krankzinnige mollahs maar door ayatollahs in perfect geestelijke gezondheid" vergoelijkt Hulsens. Die geestelijk gezonde Iraanse geestelijken hebben wel de recente democratische opstand in hun land bloedig onderdrukt. Hulsens haat 'het Westen' blijkbaar zo fel dat hij het gevaar wil lopen van een wereldwijde nucleaire catastrofe: hij vermeldt immers de mogelijkheid dat "Iran om zijn geopolitieke rivalen in toom te houden, ervoor zou kunnen kiezen de verspreiding van kernwapens aan te wakkeren door de nucleaire technologie over te dragen aan bondgenoten – zowel andere landen als terroristische groepen."

De Wereld Morgen van Soete, Callewaert en Barrez publiceert niet alleen dit soort proza maar gaf er Eric Hulsens een **blog** voor. Een blog waarop Hulsens aangeeft volgende thema's te behandelen: "laïciteit, tolerantie, islam, hoofddoekdebat, islamofobie, homofobie, feminisme en mannenemancipatie, ideologiekritiek". Milieuzorg, natuurbescherming of overbevolking ontbreken in het lijstje. Droevig hoe "natuur-ont-koppeld" mijn vroegere pennevrind Eric Hulsens is. Wil iemand hem het hiernavolgende essay van Gary Snyder overmaken ? Een essay waarin Snyder vertelt hoe hij - toen hij het nieuws hoorde van de atoombommen op Japan - zwoer zich zijn leven lang in te zetten tegen de nucleaire waanzin ?!

Uitstelgedrag

Op de **LSP-webstek** (Linkse Socialistische Partij) gaf Geert Cool me de gelegenheid het Groene Belg-dossier over **overbevolking** te publiceren. Waarna het wel werd tegengesproken door drie 'tegenstukken'. Kern van het meningsverschil tussen de LSP'ers en ondergetekende, is dat ik niet geloof dat het socialisme nog op tijd kan komen om de escalerende milieuproblemen een halt toe te roepen. We moeten nu handelen, niet wachten tot de magie van het socialisme zijn werk kan doen. De houding van de LSP'ers en andere linksen lijkt te veel op "**uitstelgedrag**". De grote problemen op de lange baan schuiven. Maar diersoorten die zijn uitgeroeid, plantensoorten die zijn verdwenen, biotopen die zijn vernietigd: je kan ze niet terugtoveren door een linkse machtsovername.

Bovendien: hoe komen we ooit tot socialisme in een wereld waarin steeds meer mensen in massasteden anonieme, asociale levens leiden ? Een steeds technologischer en daardoor ipso facto gecontroleerder wereld. **Industrieel links** heeft de massa's en de technologische vooruitgang steeds omarmd en er veel van verwacht. Tot nu toe zonder veel blijvend succes. (Op een klein en niet te dicht bevolkt eiland als Cuba - 11,5 miljoen inwoners - misschien uitgezonderd.)

In de strijd tegen een kapitalistisch systeem dat sociale opstanden onnoemelijk **wreed** onderdrukt - de historische les van de Parijse commune die door de bourgeoisie gesmoord werd in een zee van bloed - ontwikkelde zich een (Sovjet-)communisme dat zich als even keihard wou bewijzen. En onttaarde in stalinisme en later maoïsme en pol pottisme.

De enige weg vooruit: de weg achteruit

Wie vroeg en vraagt zich nog af wat het woord "**revolutie**" letterlijk betekent ? Volgens het woordenboek: "**Terugwenteling**" "Re" is Latijns voor terug. Een revolutie wil terug. **Terug naar wat ?** Naar het oorspronkelijke primitieve communisme waarover veel linkse schrijvers gefantaseerd hebben en dat recent door antropologische studies beter gekend raakte. Zo'n primitief communisme kan je bv. aantreffen bij de ongelooflijk goed aan hun sobere leefomgeving - de Kalahari-woestijn - aangepaste **San**, beter bekend als Bosjesmannen.



Bij de Amerikaanse groene anarchist John Zerzan las ik ooit dat een San sterft met wat hij geboren wordt: niets. Al het weinige dat de San gebruiken, geven ze door van generatie op generatie. Boeddhistischer kan het niet. Diogenes had de San moeten kennen. Gelukkig leven zonder iets te begeren: goddelijk. Alles delen ook. Niets verloren laten gaan. En geen San-meisjes die 'op straat' door San-jongens voor hoer worden uitgescholden. Neen mijnheer de filosoof Bleri Lleshi, zoiets doe je niet in gemeenschappen waarin iedereen iedereen kent. Ook omdat iedereen op iedereen is aangewezen in zulke kleine gemeenschappen die leven middenin een natuur die enerzijds de hen voedende biotoop is, maar die tegelijk ook genadeloos hard kan zijn.

De natuurlijke 'primitieve' wereld waarin onze voorouders een paar miljoen jaar geëvolueerd hebben, is niet het paradijs. Alhoewel bv. de San en de Amazone-Indianen er niet uit weg willen en er desnoods voor vechten om "arm" en wild te kunnen blijven leven.

Die natuurlijke wereld **is wel de enige wereld waarin we kunnen leven als soort**. De industriële wereld daarentegen kan onze overleving zelfs voor de volgende paar honderd jaren niet garanderen. Als lieden zoals Eric Hulsens het voor het zeggen krijgen, atoombombarderen we elkaar nog voor het eind van deze eeuw

een nucleaire winter in. En ook zonder atoomgekken is er genoeg 'mensenwerk' dat ons voortbestaan bedreigt: de toenemende klimaatchaos, de vernietiging van de oerwoud-longen van de Planeet, het massaal uitsterven van planten- en diersoorten (waaronder de levensnoodzakelijke bijen). Enzoverder.

Om het tij te keren kan een industrieel socialisme niet volstaan. Een radikaal ecologisch anarchosocialisme wel. Ongenuanceerd gesteld: **De enige weg vooruit is de weg achteruit.** De echte re-volutie.

Groenrode groet, Jan-Pieter Everaerts

ESSAY

Oorlog tegen én voor de Natuur

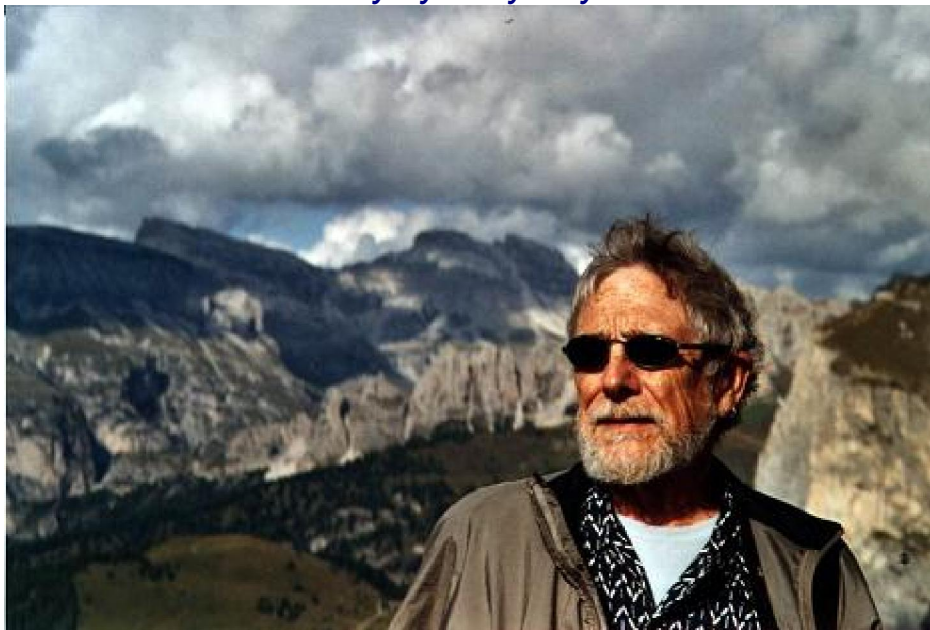
Voor de vorige Groene Belg nadenkend over de **menselijke oorlogen** wereldwijd, kwam ik op de idee, dat we **ook een oorlog tegen de natuur** aan het voeren zijn.

Zoekend op "**War on nature**" kwam ik bij het nu **volgend mooie, bekroonde essay** uit. Een tekst die stelt dat de industriële 'samenleving' inderdaad een oorlog tegen de natuur aan het voeren is. Maar er zijn mensen zoals hopelijk u en ook ik, die aan de kant van de natuur willen staan; die de oorlog met de natuurvernielers aangaan. In de strijd tegen stropers in natuurparken wereldwijd en in zee-veldslagen zoals die van The Sea Shepherd, tegen de Japanse walvisjagers, is het woord oorlog overigens letterlijk te nemen. Natuurverdedigers riskeren er letterlijk hun leven.

Maar meer dan over die strijd, gaat volgend essay over het leven in en met de natuur. Nu ik het gelezen en verwerkt heb, heb ik maar in één activiteit volop goesting: de bossen intrekken. Wat ik nu meteen ook doen zal. Boeiende lectuur gewenst. (jpe)

Writers and the War Against Nature

Essay by Gary Snyder



Buddhism, art, and environmentalism—all honor the beauty and magic of the natural world. In a powerful autobiographical essay, the poet, sage, and Zen practitioner Gary Snyder traces his lifelong commitment to the environment and calls on all creative people to rise in its defense.

I grew up in the maritime Pacific Northwest, on a farm north of Seattle where we kept a hen flock, had a small orchard, and tended dairy cows. My uncles were loggers, merchant seamen, or fishermen.

After college, where I studied anthropology, literature, and East Asian culture, I had no choice but to go back to **working in the woods and at sea**. In the late fifties I worked in the engine room on an American-flag oil tanker that hired me out of the port of Yokohama. I was a member of the National Maritime Union and had my seaman's papers, and it wasn't hard to pick up a job in almost any port of the world.

That ship kept me at sea for a continuous nine months. Two things touched me deeply on that job: one was the stars, night after night, at every latitude, including way below the equator. With my little star book and red-beam flashlight I mastered the constellations of the southern hemisphere. The other was getting to know the birds of the ocean. I loved watching the **albatross**—a few of those huge, graceful birds would always be cruising along behind our ship, trailing the wake for bits of food. I learned that a Wandering Albatross (of the southern hemisphere) might fly a million miles in one lifetime, and that it takes a pair of them almost a year to raise one chick. Night and day, they always followed us, and if they ever slept it seems it was on the wing.

Last year a study was released describing the sudden **decline** of albatross numbers worldwide. It even prompted an editorial in the *New York Times*. This sharp decline is attributed to much death by drowning. The long-line fishing boats lay out lines with bait and hooks that go miles back, dragging just below the surface. An albatross will go for the bait, get hooked, and be pulled down to drown. As many as 100,000 a year are estimated to perish in this way, enough to threaten the survival of the species if it keeps up. What have the albatross, "Distinguished strangers who have come down to us from another world," ever done to us? The editorial concludes, "The long-line fishing fleet is over-harvesting the air as well as the sea."



Out on the South Pacific in 1958, watching the soaring albatrosses from the stern of a ship, I could never have guessed that their lives would be threatened by industrial societies, turning them into "collateral damage" of the affluent appetite for *ahi* and *maguro* tuna species (my own taste, too). Yet this is just a tiny, almost insignificant example of the long reach of the globalized economy and the consumer society into the wild earth's remote places. A recent book on global logging and deforestation is titled ***Strangely Like War***. What is happening now to nature worldwide, plant life and wildlife, ocean, grassland, forest, savannah, desert—all spaces and habitat—the non-human realm of watersheds and ecosystems with all their members, can be likened to **a war against nature**.

Although human beings have interacted with nature, both cultivated and wild, for millennia, and sometimes destructively so, it was never quite like "war." It has now become disconcertingly so, and the active **defense** of nature has been joined by a few artists and writers who have entered the fight on "the wild side," along with subsistence peoples, indigenous spiritual leaders, many courageous scientists, and conservationists and environmentalists worldwide.

There is a tame, and also a wild, side to the human mind. The tame side, like a farmer's field, has been disciplined and cultivated to produce a desired yield. It is useful but limited. The wild side is larger, deeper, more complex, and though it cannot be fully known, it can be explored. The explorers of the wild mind are often writers and artists. The "poetic imagination" of which William Blake so eloquently spoke is the territory of wild mind. It has landscapes and creatures within it that will surprise us; it can refresh us and scare us; it reflects the larger truth of our ancient selves, both animal and spiritual.

The French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss once said something like **"Art survives within modern civilization"**

rather like little islands of wilderness saved to show us where we came from.” Someone once said that **what makes writing good is the wildness in it**. The wildness gives heart, courage, love, spirit, danger, compassion, skill, fierceness, and sweetness—all at once—to language. From ancient times, storytellers, poets, and dramatists have presented the world in all its fullness: plants, animals, men and women, changing shape, speaking multiple languages, intermarrying, traveling to the sky and under the earth. The great myths and folktales of human magic and nature’s power were our school for ten thousand years. Whether they know it or not, even modern writers draw strength from the wild side.

How can artists and writers manage to join in the defense of the planet and wild nature? Writers and artists by their very work “bear witness.” They don’t wield financial, governmental, or military power. However, at the outset they were given, as in fairy tales, two “magic gifts.”

One is “**The Mirror of Truth**.” Whatever they hold this mirror up to is shown in its actual form, and the truth must come out. May we use that mirror well!

The second is a “**Heart of Compassion**,” which is to say the ability to feel and know the pains and delights of other people, and to weave that feeling into their art. For some this compassion can extend to all creatures and to the world itself. In a way, nature even borrows the voices of some writers and artists. Anciently, this was a shamanistic role where the singer, dancer, or storyteller embodied a force, appearing as a bear dancer or a crane dancer, and became one with a spirit or creature. Today, such a role is played by the writer who finds herself a spokesperson for non-human entities communicating to the human realm through dance or song. This could be called “speaking on behalf of nature” in the old way.

Song, story, and dance are fundamental to all later “civilized” literature. In archaic times these were unified in dramatic performance, back when drama and religious ceremony were still one. They are reunited today in the highest and greatest of performance arts: the grand scale of European opera, the height of ballet, the spare and disciplined elegance of Japanese Nô theater, the almost timeless dance-and-story of Indonesian Gamelan, the wit and hardiness of Bertold Brecht’s plays, or the fierce and stunningly beautiful intensity of Korean P’ansori performance. **Performance** is of key importance because this phenomenal world and all life is of itself “not a book, but a performance.”

For a writer or an artist to become an advocate for nature, he or she must first stumble into some **connection** to that vast world of energies and ecologies. Because I was brought up in a remote rural district, instead of having kids to play with, I had to entertain myself by exploring the forest surrounding our farm, observing the dozens of bird species and occasional deer, fox, or bobcat; sometimes hunting, sometimes gathering plants that I could sell to herb buyers for a few pennies, and camping out alone for several days at a time. Heavy logging was going on in the nearby hills. Even as a boy I was deeply troubled by the destruction of the forests and the careless way that hunting, both of waterfowl and deer, was conducted.

Climbing the Mountain



At fifteen, I got into the higher mountains of the Cascade Range in Washington State, starting with the ridges and high meadows around the snow-covered volcano called **Mt. St. Helens**, or Luwit, a 3,000-meter peak just north of the Columbia River. Here is what I discovered back then, and finally chose to write about in my recent book, *Danger on Peaks*:

Reaching the summit, I thought—West Coast snow peaks are too much! They are too far above the surrounding lands, there is a break between, they are in a different world. If you want to get a view of the world you live in, climb a little rocky mountain with a neat small peak. The big snow peaks pierce the realm of clouds and cranes, rest in the zone of five-colored banners and writhing crackling dragons in veils of ragged mist and frost-crystals, of pure transparency in blue.

Mt. St. Helens' summit is smooth and broad, a place to nap, to sit and write, watch what's higher in the sky, or do a little dance. Whatever the numbers say, snow peaks are always far higher than the highest airplanes ever get. I made my petition to the perfect shapely mountain, "Please help this life." When I tried to look over and down to the world below, there was nothing there.

And then we grouped up to descend. The afternoon snow was perfect for glissade, and leaning on our stocks we slid and skid between cracks and thumps into soft snow, dodged lava slabs, got into the open snowfield slopes, and almost flew to the soft pumice slopes below. Coming down is so fast. Still high, we walked the three-mile dirt road back to the lake.

Atomic Dawn



http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/08/hiroshima_64_years_ago.html

The day I first climbed Mt. St. Helens was **August 13, 1945.**

Spirit Lake was far from the cities of the valley, and news came slow. Though **the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima August 6**, and the second dropped on Nagasaki August 9, photographs didn't appear in the Portland Oregonian until August 12. Those papers must have been driven in to Spirit Lake on the 13th. Early the morning of the 14th, I walked over to the lodge to check the bulletin board. There were whole pages of the paper pinned up: photos of a blasted city from the air, the estimate of 150,000 dead in Hiroshima alone, the American scientist quoted saying "nothing will grow there again for seventy years." The morning sun on my shoulders, the fir forest smell, and the big tree shadows; my feet in thin moccasins feeling the ground, and my heart still one with the snow peak mountain at my back. Horrified, blaming scientists and politicians and the governments of the world, I swore a vow to myself something like **"By the purity and beauty and permanence of Mt. St. Helens, I swear I will fight against this cruel destructive power and those who would seek to use it, for all my life."**

The statement in that 1945 newspaper saying that nature would be blighted for decades to come outraged me almost as much as the destruction of innocent human life. I was already a youthful conservationist/environmentalist, and after that I went on to be active in the **anti-war movement** as a student, and struggled against the use and proliferation of nuclear weapons. At the time it seemed as though these efforts were naive and hopeless, but we persevered

During my university years I was studying the philosophies and religions of the world. I learned that the most important single ethical teaching of the Buddhist tradition is nonviolence toward all of nature, **ahimsa**. This seemed absolutely right to me. In the Abrahamic religions, "Thou shalt not kill" applies only to human beings. In socialist thought as well, human beings are all-important, and with the "labor theory of value" it is as though

organic nature contributes nothing of worth. Later it came to me that "green plants doing photosynthesis are the ultimate working class." Nature creates the first level of value, labor the second.

Then I read translations of Buddhist texts from India and China. The Dao De Jing and the Zhuang-zi texts helped broaden my view. I read the Lun yü—the Confucian "Analects"—and saw how the Master called for Etiquette in regard to nature, as well as human society. These studies brought me to the thought that almost all of later **"high civilization" has been a type of social organization that alienates humans from their own biological and spiritual heritage.**

While I was laboring in the forests most of **my fellow loggers were Native Americans** of the Wasco and Wishram tribes of Eastern Oregon. From them I learned that it was **possible to be a hunter and a fisherman with a deep spiritual attitude of gratitude and nonviolence.**

Eventually I re-entered college as a graduate student in East Asian languages at the University of California at Berkeley, and finally got a chance to go to East Asia. I lived for a while in a Zen practice hall in Kyoto and studied with a Zen teacher in the Rinzaï (Chinese Linji) tradition. I took the precepts under my teacher, who told me that "Of all the precepts, the First Precept is most important and contains the others: **Ahimsa, Non-harming, Cause the Least Possible Harm.**" To live with that precept is a challenge. He once said to me, "How do you not harm a fence? How would you save a ghost?"

I lived in Japan for ten years, partly in the monastery but also in my own little house, and supported myself by teaching English conversation to Japanese company people. I asked my adult students, "Why are you so intent on learning English?" They answered, "Because we intend to extend our economic influence worldwide, and English is the international language." I didn't take them seriously. Today that company, Matsushita Electric, is worldwide.

In my spare time I hiked in the local mountains, learned East Asian plants and birds, and started seriously reading scientific books on ecology and biology. All those essays analyzing food chains and food webs—this was a science, I realized, dealing with energy exchange and the natural hierarchies of various living systems. "When energy passes through a system, it tends to organize that system," someone wrote. It finally came to me that this was about "eating each other," almost as a sacrament. I wrote my first truly ecological poem, which explores the essential qualities of human foods:

The Song of the Taste



Eating the living germs of grasses

Eating the ova of large birds

the fleshy sweetness packed around

the sperm of swaying trees

The muscles of the flanks and thighs of

soft-voiced cows

the bounce in the lamb's leap

the swish in the ox's tail

Eating roots grown swell

inside the soil.

Drawing on life of living

clustered points of light spun

out of space

hidden in the grape.

Eating each other's seed

eating

ah, each other.

Kissing the lover in the mouth of bread:

lip to lip.

This innocently celebratory poem went straight to the question of conflict between the ethics of ahimsa, nonviolence, "respect for all beings," and the necessary lives of indigenous peoples and Native Americans I had known. They still practice ceremonies of gratitude, and they never present themselves as superior to other life forms. Ahimsa taken too literally leaves out the life of the world, and makes the rabbit virtuous but the hawk somehow evil. We must see the organic world as a great feast, a puja, to which we are the invited guests, and also, sooner or later, part of the meal. We can be grateful for that. We can enter into the process, but with gratitude and care, not an arrogant assumption of human privilege. This cannot come from **"thinking about" nature**; it comes from a **being within nature**.

There are plenty of people of influence and authority in the churches, in industry, the universities, and high in government who still like to describe nature as "red in tooth and claw" (a line of Alfred Tennyson's)—a fundamental misunderstanding—and use it as part of the justification for the war against nature.

I would now like to propose **some simple definitions**:

The English word **"nature"** is from Latin natura, "birth, constitution, character, course of things," and ultimately from **nasci, to be born**. It connects with the root nat, which is connected with birth, so we have nation, natal, and native. The Chinese word for nature is zi-ran, meaning "self-thus." Although in common English and American usage "nature" is sometimes used to mean "the outdoors" and set in opposition to the realm of development, the word "nature" is best used in its specific scientific sense, referring to the physical universe and its rules—the "laws of nature." In this use it is equivalent to the Greek physis. In other words, nature means "everything" The agricultural, the urban, the wild mountains and forests, and the many stars in the sky are all equally phenomena. **"Nature" is our reality.**

Cities and agricultural lands, however, are not **"wild"**. Wild is a valuable word. It is a term for the free and independent process of nature. A wilderness is place where wild process dominates and human impact is minimal. Wilderness need not be a place that was never touched by humans, but simply a place where wild process has ruled for some decades.

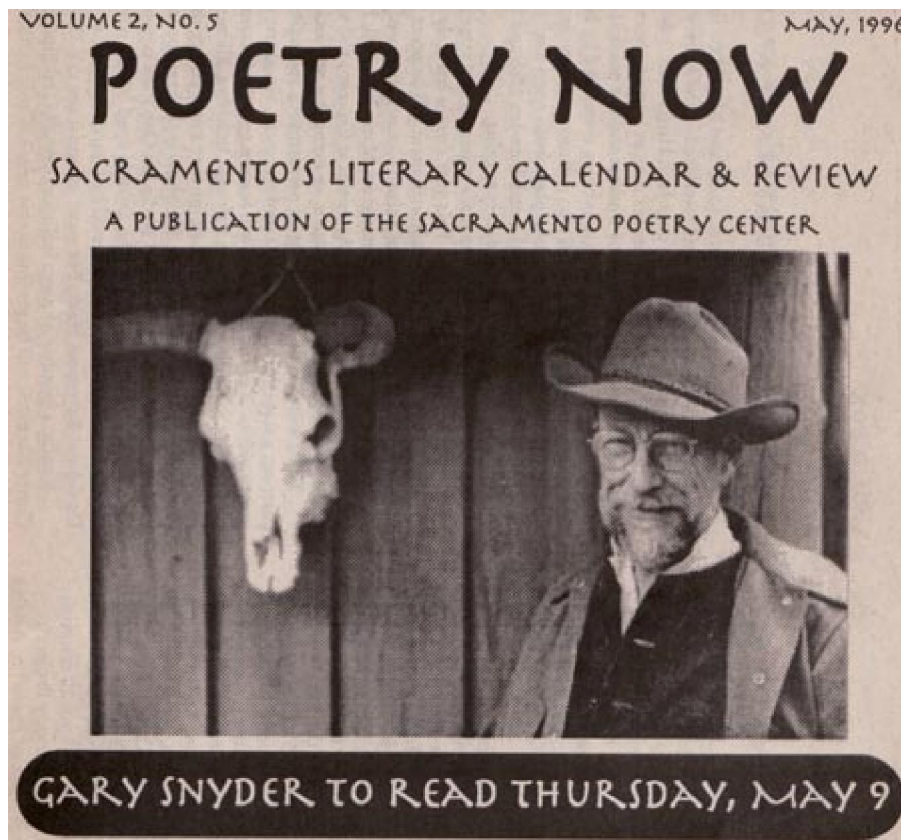
The wild is self-creating, self-maintaining, self-propagating, self-reliant, and self-actualizing, and it has no "self." It is perhaps the same as what East Asian philosophers call the Dao. The human mind, imagination, and even natural human language can also thus be called wild. The human body itself, with its circulation, respiration, and digestion, is wild. In these senses, "wild" is a word for the intrinsic, non-theistic, forever-changing **natural order**.

Ecology, another key word, has the Greek **oikos** as its main root, with the simple meaning of "household." It referred originally to the study of **biological interrelationships** and the **flow of energy** through organisms and inorganic matter. In recent years it has become a popular synonym for "outdoor nature." I prefer to use it closer to the original meaning, with an emphasis on the dynamics of relationship in wild natural process. (I presented these definitions more fully in my 1990 book, [The Practice of the Wild](#).)

The field of ecological study embraces questions of population rise and fall, plant and animal succession, predator-prey relationships, competition and cooperation, feeding levels, and the flow of energy through ecosystems—and this is just the beginning. I have learned a great deal in my work on the forest issues of western North America over the last few years from people in the field of "Forest Ecology" (sometimes with the help of my older son, Kai Snyder, who is in this field). I have come to better understand the dynamism of natural systems, the continuous role of disturbance, and the unremitting effects of climatic fluctuations. The "human ecology" aspect of the ecological sciences helps us understand the role that human beings have played as members of wild nature, and how the interconnectedness of the entire planet requires that we take care of this place that we live in, and which lives in us. It tells us what **"sustainable"** means, and that modern humans must again become members of the organic world.

The organic life of the planet has maintained itself, constantly changing, and has gone through and recovered from several enormous catastrophic events over hundreds of millions of years. Now we are realizing that the human impact on air, water, wildlife, soil, and plant life is so extreme that there are species becoming extinct, water dangerous even to touch, mountains with mudslides but no trees, and soil that won't grow food without the continuous subsidy provided by petroleum. As we learned over time to positively work for peace to head off the

possibilities of war, so now **we must work for sustainable biological practices and a faith that includes wild nature** if we are to reverse the prospect of continually dwindling resources and rising human populations.



"What we need most is human beings who love the world"

One can ask what might it take to have an agriculture that does not degrade the soils, a fishery that does not deplete the ocean, a forestry that keeps watersheds and ecosystems intact, population policies that respect human sexuality and personality while holding numbers down, and energy policies that do not set off fierce little wars. **These are the key questions.**

Many of our leaders assume that the track we're on will go forever and nobody will learn much: **politics as usual**. It's the same old engineering, business, and bureaucracy message, with its lank rhetoric of data and management. Or, when the talk turns to "sustainability," the focus is on a limited ecological-engineering model that might guarantee a specific resource for a while longer (like grass, water, or trees) but lacks the vision to imagine the health of the whole planet. **The ethical position** that would accord intrinsic value to non-human nature, and would see human beings as involved in moral as well as practical choices in regard to the natural world, makes all the difference.

"As ...a dewdrop, a bubble, a cloud, a flash of lightning, view all created things." Thus ends the Diamond Sutra, reminding us of irreducible impermanence. Sustainability cannot mean some kind of permanence. A waggish commentary says, "Sustainability is a physical impossibility. But it is a very nice sentiment." The quest for permanence has always led us astray—whether building stone castles, Great Walls, pyramids for the kings, great navies, giant cathedrals to ease us toward heaven, or Cold War-scale weapons systems guaranteeing "mutually assured destruction." We must live with change, like a bird on the wing, and doing so, let all the other beings live on, too. **Not permanence, but "living in harmony with the Way."**

The albatross, all sixteen species of them, are companions with us on earth, sailing on their own way, of no use to us humans, and we should be of no use to them. They can be friends at a distance, **fellow creatures** in the stream of evolution. This is fundamental etiquette. Legislation from the governments regarding fisheries in the sea or deforestation in the mountains would help enormously.

So, back to those key questions, what would it take? We know that science and the arts can be allies. We need far more women in politics. We need a religious view that embraces nature and does not fear science; business leaders who know and accept ecological and spiritual limits; political leaders who have spent time working in schools, factories, or farms and who still write poems. We need intellectual and academic leaders who have

studied both history and ecology, and like to dance and cook. We need poets and novelists who pay no attention to literary critics. **But what we ultimately need most is human beings who love the world.**

One time in Alaska a young Koyukon Indian college student asked me, "If we humans have made such good use of **animals**, eating them, singing about them, drawing them, riding them, and dreaming about them, **what do they get back from us?**"

I thought it an excellent question, directly on the point of etiquette and propriety, and putting it from the animals' side. I told her, "The Ainu say that the deer, salmon, and bear like our music and are fascinated by our languages. So we sing to the fish or the game, speak words to them, say grace. We do ceremonies and rituals. **Performance** is currency in the deep world's gift economy." The "deep world" is of course the thousand million-year-old world of rock, soil, water, air, and all living beings, all acting through their roles. "Currency" is what you pay your debt with. We all receive, every day, the gifts of the Deep World, from the air we breathe to the food we eat. How do we repay that gift? Performance. "A song for your supper."

I went on to tell her that I felt that non-human nature is basically well-inclined toward humanity and only wishes modern people were more reciprocal, not so bloody. The animals are drawn to us, they see us as good musicians, and they think we have cute ears. The human contribution to the planetary ecology might be **our entertaining eccentricity**, our skills as musicians and performers, our awe-inspiring dignity as ritualists and solemn ceremonialists—because that is what seems to delight the watching wild world.

Gift economy, what's that? That might be another perspective on the meaning of ecology. We are living, so to speak, in the midst of a great potluck feast to which we are all the invited guests, and we also are eventually the meal. The Ainu of Hokkaido, when they had venison for dinner, sang songs aloud to the deer spirits who were hanging about waiting for the performance. The deer visit human beings so that they might hear some songs. In Buddhist spiritual ecology, **the first thing to give up is your ego**. The ancient Vedic philosophers said that the gods like sacrifices, but of all sacrifices, that which they most appreciate is your ego. This critical little point is the foundation of yogic and Buddhist askesis. Zen philosopher Dogen famously said, "We study the self to forget the self. When you forget the self, you become one with the ten thousand things." (There is only one offering that is greater than the ego, and that is "**enlightenment**" itself.)

The being who is willing to give away her enlightenment is called a bodhisattva. In some of the Polynesian societies the Big Person, the most respected and powerful figure in the village, was the one who had nothing—whatever gift came to him or her was promptly given away again. This is the real heart of a gift economy, the economy that would save, not devour, the world. (Gandhi once said, "**For greed, all of nature is insufficient.**") **Art** takes nothing from the world; it is **a gift and an exchange. It leaves the world nourished.**

Poems, novels, and plays, with their great deep minds of story, awaken the Heart of Compassion. And so they confound the economic markets, rattle the empires, and open us up to the actually existing human and non-human world. **Performance** is art in motion; in the moment; both enactment and embodiment. This is exactly what **nature** herself is.

Soaring just over the sea-foam

riding the wind of the endless waves

albatross, out there, way

away, a far cry

down from the sky

This essay was originally presented at the Daesan Foundation's International Literary Festival conference entitled "**Writers Working for Peace**" and was nominated for the Pushcart Prize in **2006**.



Gary Snyder is a longtime practitioner of Zen Buddhism, a key member of the Beat generation of poets and writers, and a powerful voice in defense of the environment. He teaches at the University of California, Davis.

Bron: http://www.shambhalasun.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3148&Itemid=247

Writers and the War Against Nature, Gary Snyder, **Shambhala Sun**, November 2007.

DECES

Décès Guy Spitaels (1931-2012)

Encore une confirmation qu'il n'existe pas des dieux

Ook heengegaan: Meles Zenawi (autoritair premier, Ethiopië; 1955-2012)

LEZERSREACTIE

SP.Nederland Gidsland ? (DGB 758)

Dit moet jou interesseren jp:

<http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4328/Opinie/article/detail/3303050/2012/08/19/De-SP-is-niet-socialistisch-meer.dhtml>

Salut Mileen

Hieronder het (licht ingekorte: zie (...)) opiniestuk door Jouke de Vries, hoogleraar bestuurskunde aan de Universiteit Leiden. De auteur is duidelijk van rechtse signatuur want hij gooit het socialisme heel gemakkelijk op de vuilnisbak van de geschiedenis.

De SP is niet socialistisch meer

De partij van Emile Roemer scoort goed in de polls. Waarom? Er zijn veel redenen te bedenken. Eén daarvan: de SP is opgeschoven naar het midden. (...)

Door de verbazingwekkende groei van de SP zit ik met een aantal vragen. Als in het verleden de PvdA - ook behorend tot de socialistische familie - dreigde te winnen, dan was het land onmiddellijk van slag en waarschuwden ondernemers voor het rode gevaar en de aandelenkoersen daalden onmiddellijk. Nu blijft onrust uit, terwijl de naam van de partij toch verwijst naar een ideologie uit het verleden die theoretisch aantrekkelijk was, maar in de praktijk heeft gefaald.

Hoe kan het dat een partij die verwijst naar een systeem dat bijna overal ter wereld is afgeschreven in de Nederlandse democratie nu zulke hoge ogen gooit? **Verskillende hypothesen zijn mogelijk:**

1. De kiezers hebben duidelijk in de gaten dat de SP de opgebouwde rechten van de verzorgingsstaat verdedigt. Daarin komt zij overeen met een deel van de agenda van de PVV en het is heel wel mogelijk dat teleurgestelde aanhangers van de PVV naar de SP overlopen. Voor de kiezers is duidelijk dat de SP het neoliberale beleid van de afgelopen decennia bekritiseert en het heil niet verwacht van ongeremde marktwerking en deregulering.

2. De SP spreekt tot de verbeelding omdat de partij een zekere soberheid uitstraalt die doet denken aan de oude PvdA onder leiding van Drees. (...)

Deze eerste twee veronderstellingen gaan er nog van uit dat de kiezers op de hoogte zijn van de standpunten van de partij. Het is echter de vraag of dat zo is. Er wordt tegenwoordig nog wel gestemd, maar de partijpolitiek lijkt er steeds minder toe te doen. Dit leidt tot de volgende veronderstellingen.

3. De term socialisme heeft voor de meeste kiezers geen verband meer met het verleden en nauwelijks nog betekenis. Voor veel kiezers doet ideologie steeds minder ter zake. De SP bestaat voor hen uit vriendelijke mensen die helemaal niet uit zijn op de socialisatie van de productiemiddelen. **Hoewel de partij socialistisch wordt genoemd dekt deze vlag de lading allang niet meer.**

4. Het gaat in de politiek steeds meer om personen. Roemer doet het uitstekend in de media. Hij is een politiek natuurtalent. Hij voelt de maatschappelijke ontwikkelingen aan, formuleert helder en is ad rem. Of Roemer wel beleidsinhoudelijk sterk is en alle dossiers beheerst, doet minder ter zake in dit tijdperk.

5. De virtuele winst van de SP zou te maken kunnen hebben met de scheiding tussen stad en platteland, of scherper: de scheiding tussen de Randstad en de rest van het land. De SP-politici hebben dezelfde nuchtere en vriendelijke uitstraling als onze olympische helden die ook allemaal uit de periferie afkomstig zijn. In zekere zin lijkt de gemoedelijke uitstraling van Roemer op die van Epke Zonderland en is hij, net als de atleet Churandy Martina, permanent blij.

De SP is aantrekkelijk voor zeer veel kiezers omdat de partij door een proces van normalisering heengaat. **De partij is geen bedreiging meer** voor de bestaande machthebbers en neemt genoeg met kleine beleidswijzigingen. De SP aanvaardt bijvoorbeeld het koningshuis, en Europa omdat dat een realiteit is. Er wordt door de SP geen hindernis naar andere partijen opgeworpen en er wordt geen radicaal maatschappelijk alternatief gepresenteerd.

De SP is geen werkelijk socialistische partij meer, maar is een sociaal-democratische partij geworden. Zij kan zich echter niet zo noemen omdat die naam al eerder door de PvdA is geclaimd."

Eerste bedenking: dit had veel scherper gekund. In het maandblad De Linkse Socialist van de gelijknamige partij LSP verscheen een tijd geleden een kritiek op de SP die - als ik het me goed herinner - allerlei gemeentelijke compromissen van de SP.nl op de korrel nam. Dat gaf veel meer te bedenken, dan wat de Vries hier aan algemeenheden bij elkaar schreef. (jpe)

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