Systems and Frameworks for Comparative Cross-Cultural Research
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Abstract
We explore cosmologies, typologies, frameworks, concepts and systems used for comparative, cross-cultural research into total views, worldviews, ways of life, spiritual disciplines and personal philosophies. Worldviews are in cosmic, mythic and cultural systems. The diversity and complexity of these systems parallels that of life forms, species, individuals and the communication networks of diverse cultures and ecosystems. We explore the concepts and typologies usful for comparative study of these systems with multicultural ecological frameworks for organizing systematic research into living, evolving, creative processes. *Communication Systems* are central to comparing and understanding these ecosystem processes, with their complex forms of awareness and multiple values: they go from tiny terrestrial microbe communities, to ocean dwelling cetacean whale pods and diverse human cultures and global technology systems.

Overview
We do research into natural and human systems organizing projects with two sets of basic statements: They are *Norms* and *Hypotheses*.

Norms include value principles and concepts that state how we ought to act and for what ends. Normative statements and questions deal with the *values* we honor. A basic norm in some worldviews is that, "Human beings ought to be able to realize themselves." Others are: "We ought to treat sentient beings with respect, for they are good in themselves." "All beings have values in themselves and to other beings."

Hypotheses are claims about the state of the world and conditions in its systems. Two examples are, "The Pitt River is turbulent in places," and "Living beings on Earth are evolving."

We discuss worldviews by describing their qualities, structures, norms and values. We examine their conceptions of reality, approaches to knowing, and how they relate and compare to other worldviews. Diverse *languages* enable us to describe and respond to the world in a wide variety of ways; thus, we can work together as social beings. Sentences are value assertions, or claims about the nature of the world. Spoken and written languages have a *wide variety of other uses*. Analyzing literary traditions of poetry, drama and fiction, we use character, plot, setting, and themes for *comparative studies and analyses*. We do this type of research for oral and literate narrative traditions.

For studying narrative traditions of art, music and storytelling, we use concepts and statements about the settings, functions and structures of the material, whether it is *performance-based*, how it is learned and passed on. There are thousands of languages and cultures. It is important to know details about our Native language system, such as the *Indo-European Family* of *English*.

To do comparative multicultural studies of the above diverse systems, we use basic concepts and many methods. We need *Frames of Reference* to give our language and concepts meaningful comparative contexts. Religions, social systems and political movements are a bewildering diversity of systems. How to *most usefully organize* research into them depends on our resources, needs and aims.

Religions, like Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Shinto and Shamanism, are *complete* systems with unifying values, practices and beliefs. They are whole ways of life, systems of belief and practice that give followers a sense of meaning and cosmic purpose. With effort and practice they promise to improve *life quality*. Christians will become kinder and gentler by practicing Jesus' *Way of Love.*

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Buddhists become more aware and compassionate following the *Eight-Fold Path*. (Drengson "Ways of Light" 2011/14.)

We each have unique natural, cultural and personal backgrounds. Some were raised in Western Canada and our native tongue is English. Our ancestors might be from European and First Nations origins. Our families practice different religions from our ancestors. We live in *social* setting*s* whose religious and familial elements are intertwined with *environmental*, *historical and cultural* elements. We are in and influenced by these different systems, but not determined by them. Canada was the first nation to officially endorse multiculturalism. (See Appendix 3 for documents and sources on multiculturalism and governance.)

The most recent comparative research into religions, worldviews, cultures, spiritual disciplines, and life philosophies focus on *Ways of life* that are *ecosophies, from eco sophia* which means ways of *ecological wisdom*. We explore frameworks using ecological concepts to organize global and local studies of cultures in practical relationships with Nature.

Typologies
We use *typologies* to organize study of cosmologies, worldviews, spiritual disciplines and religions. For example, in *Three Pillars of Zen* Philip Kapleau (1966) uses practice, doctrine and experience as a typology to explore Zen. Kapleau's book is a scholarly discussion of Zen, also based on extensive personal experience practicing zazen with a Zen teacher.

In *Understanding Religious Life* Frederick Streng (1985) focuses on three dimensions of religious life, the *personal*, *cultural* and *ultimate*. For him, the *core dimension* of authentic religious life is *ultimate transformation,* from unsatisfactory conditions of conflict, to a sense of harmonious completion. There are four types of *Ultimate transformation*: 1) personal apprehension of a holy presence, 2) creation of community through sacred symbols, 3) living in harmony by cosmic law, and 4) attaining freedom through spiritual disciplines.

Other features used for comparing religions are *doctrines, experiences, rituals, personalities,* and *processes of transformation*. These are major themes in *religious traditions, scriptures and practices*. There are also narratives about norms, ultimate values, the human condition, and how our lives will improve if we practice a religion's spiritual disciplines to follow its teachings.

To study and discuss multicultural political movements and social organizations, Naess uses a *four level typology* to articulate and derive total views This typology is a *global framework* for comparing and discussing the grass-roots movements for social justice, peace, and environmental responsibility: Level one is ultimate premises in worldviews; Level two is platform principles; Level three is policies; Level four is practical actions. This typology is useful for comparing grass roots movements and other local, national and international cultural and personal systems. (See Appendix 1D and *SWAN X*, 2 & 9.)

When organizing systems research for international and national political entities, Spruyt offers a five factor typology for comparative analyses. These factors are 1) Discreteness of units in the system, 2) number of major powers, 3) degree of hierarchy, 4) degree of dynamic density, and 5) polarity. (Hendrik Spruyt, Feb. 2009, "A Comparative Typology of Empires and International Systems," International Studies Association Conference, New York City.)

A somewhat different approach to *system typologies* is discussed by Michael Caley and Daiya Sawada in "Mindscapes, Creativity and Ecosophy," (*Trumpeter* 16, 1, 2000). Their threefold typology from Morris Berman (1989) is 1) neurotic compulsion, 2) inhibition and 3) smooth sublimation.

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For comparative, interdisciplinary, multicultural research, subjects and projects are organized using these types of typologies to facilitate systematic comparative analyses, discussions and observations. There is a wide range of choices in many areas and subjects for organizing, categorizing, typifying and conceptualizing fields and methods. For many projects we will use the existing work of those who have organized the material in relevant ways. (See James' 2010 political science analysis for Canada.)

From Limited to Unlimited Systems

In order to explore global systems it is critical to reflect on our own *total view* (Naess 1963). *Total views* cannot be *fully* articulated for many reasons. However, we can have a sense for the *whole of life* without fully expressing it as an *articulated life philosophy*. Some characters in novels have a whole approach to all of life. We know that there are different kinds of systems: limited or total, whole or incomplete, and limited or infinite. Systems are embedded in larger systems that have smaller systems within them. Boundaries for characterizing and mapping *any* system imply other limiting cases, qualifications, factors and borders.

Total metaphysical systems presuppose unarticulated propositions. When I explain the meaning and use of an English *word* to someone, I use my linguistic competence as a mature English speaker and writer. Languages are in larger systems of communication with the values and aims of complete, whole life systems. When we try to *fully spell out* any system and its features, there are *limitations and we reach boundaries*. When explaining something to another person, we come to places where we can explain no further. Understanding requires native wit on the part the person to whom we are explaining.

To develop research for any biological, geological, hydrological, or scientific system is a complex activity and process; what we learn modifies how we explain, answer questions and do more research. What we learn shapes how we continue. These studies are dynamic, recursive processes and activities. They are creative, self-organizing, open-ended and always changing.

The *Modern Paradigm* for the empirical sciences makes systematizing assumptions, using methods and values (see Appendix 1A). These can become *Enterprise Systems* (Naess 2005 *SWAN IV*) generating theories, specializations, techniques, information, applications, teams and businesses.

When trying to encompass a whole subject or process, we state its central characteristics. We finish an essay or thesis and then write an *abstract* or *synopsis*. Sometimes a book or essay comes to mind before we put pen on paper. Oral traditions have summarizing learning systems using places, stories, themes, memorable poetry and songs, with metaphors and other icons. Literate traditions collect vast amounts of material, and need to summarize to distill it to make it digestible, memorable and useful. There are rich varieties of methods and artifacts such as *texts, computers, software and programs to systematize projects,* clarify and articulate values, and organize knowledge as *worldviews in cosmologies*.

Worldview Clarity as a Need

In *Worldviews Skills* Jessie Sutherland (2005) explains how some conflicts between groups and individuals are lessened and even ended, by engaging in *Worldview Work*. *Worldview Work* helps us to be aware of our culture *and* personal worldviews. People might seem to conflict at the level of actions, because they misunderstand or misinterpret what others mean by their words, gestures and actions. She illustrates this with examples. When discussing environmental issues, we might debate actions, but have more need to formulate policies. On the other hand, we might be concerned about wider principles, such as ultimate norms and principles in worldviews. *Worldview Skill* increases our awareness of worldview diversity, and so we better appreciate different *Ways of Life*. We enjoy food and dinning, more, when we appreciate diverse cuisines. The same is true for arts, music, literature, worldviews, religions, cosmologies and cultures.

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Worldview Features

Complete total views and philosophies of life have three elements: 1) The context and environment, 2) norms and ultimate values, and 3) hypotheses and beliefs about the nature of ourselves and the world. We are in cultures, communities, places, natural locations and environments. Self knowledge includes awareness of our personal worldview, place, culture, and relationships. We live in concrete *places* in natural systems. We participate in and affect our *places* in the world. We become more aware of our culture and place by worldview work. We can design a personal worldview emphasizing positive actions for a high *quality of life*, harmony with others and our *place*.

Worldview personal philosophies have *ultimate value norms* and *ultimate hypotheses about the nature of the world*. There is great national and international diversity in personal philosophies, worldviews, cultures and cosmologies. Any worldview, philosophy of life, religion, *Whole Art*, culture or similar human system, can be described using the aspects mentioned, and by other characteristics relevant to our research objectives. We can focus on language and technology systems, how they reflect their places of origin and are changing.

Let us consider the role of nongovernmental grassroots *organizations* (*NGOs*) and political movements. Three grass roots global movements today are for *peace*, *social justice* and *environmental responsibility* (Naess 1992). These movements are international, and have grass-roots support in many nations, with diverse worldviews, religions and cultures. People support these movements, and their international and national platforms, from a wide variety of cultures, religions, worldviews and personal philosophies. There is general agreement about the platform principles in each of these three movements. They are supported by international agreements like the *Charter for Nature*, the *Geneva Accords,* and *U.N. Agreements on Human Rights*. Most UN member nations have laws, regulations and policies supporting these agreements in treaties. At the local level there is considerable diversity in personal philosophies and actions. Here is Naess' *four level typology* for comparing them is: 1. *Ultimate philosophies*, 2. *Platform principles*, 3. *Policies* and, *4. Local actions supporting these and other global, national and local social-political movements*.

NB In the Modernist paradigm the *self* is an isolated individual. Modern science and technology developed by ignoring specific places. It was assumed that humans are outside the world and can manipulate it as we want. We now know this is not true. We know our selves by knowing that which is other than our self. Self knowledge includes relationships and places. We now appreciate relational contexts and the complex, extensive communication systems in the human and the natural worlds. Sense of self depends on these systems. Genetics explores information codes below and making up whole individuals.

Emerging Paradigms, Texts and Media

Extensive media, electronic and information systems give us new kinds of oral traditions called *secondary orality* (Ong 1982). These change how we organize and pass on practices and knowledge. This shows in the "New Story" formulations of an emerging cosmology (Berry 1988). Information overload must deal with vast amounts of scientific research publication. This challenge is taken up by many scholars. Business and policy decisions are difficult with so many factors to account for and so much is known about them. What relevant, critical information do we need to make intelligent and wise decisions? How can we sensibly include the important wholes not in our usual organizing systems?

Oral traditions use powerful *icons* with replicating patterns to organize complex knowledge systems: Examples are *medicine circles, knowledge and world trees,* where the roots, branches, trunks, and leaves *are each* complex *symbols*. These *systems have models* with *exoteric and esoteric* interpretations, as in private and public, open and secret, outer and inner, shallow and deep, lower and higher, and with many

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other levels of meaning; they have many icons, like mandalas, songs, movements, cycles, dances, and katas, that repeat and link memorable revealing patterns.

Summary and Abstraction as Methods of Progress

In *Science since Babylon* John de Solla Price (1961) explains how a geometric increase in science publications led to first needing abstracts, and then to need *abstracts of abstracts*. When the usual organizing systems and methods cannot *effectively* order available information and knowledge for best use, new methods are created. Subjects can be organized using other systems of *higher conceptual order*. In print societies with vast publication capacities, materials can require further summary using new abstracting and distilling methods with new models and paradigms.

In oral traditions systematic organization uses myths, archetypes, legends, lore, stories and other icons with rich *symbolic multidimensional capacities.* These are distilled by "rules of thumb, slogans, mottos, jokes, oaths, adages, sayings, fables, poems, songs, dances, and rituals." These forms are used in oral traditions to teach, pass-on and develop *knowledge systems for Whole Arts,* as in shamanic and craft cultures.

NB Naess simplifies *total views* by distilling them into *systems of norms* with *ultimate norms* to address values, and *ultimate hypotheses* about the nature of the world and our place in it. Ultimate norms and hypotheses are at the limits of our reasoning. *Ultimate Premises* are *intuitions* we are clear and certain about. An *Ultimate Norm* in Naess's *Ecosophy T* life philosophy is *"Self-realization!"* This single ultimate norm makes his system completely surveyable. This norm also had deep meanings for him, connecting his East-West research with his love for being in Nature. He observed that when mature, we should know our ultimate values in a worldview.

Mature Values

When mature we know our ultimate values and beliefs about life, Nature and the world. We know our priorities and can express our views. We understand life with a clear sense of purpose and meaning that is comprehensive *and* practical. We are always learning since the world is creative and dynamic. Buddha's *first noble truth* is "change." This is an *intuitively known ultimate axiom* in many worldviews.

We seek and create meanings. We live in rich narrative traditions, in specific ecosystems, local places, families, tribes, and cultures in complex *natural communities*. These *whole places* are woven together by narratives entwining individuals, histories and universal meanings in multigenerational lore. We make choices within these complex cultural contexts in diverse evolving natural world places. Places are alive with multitudes of diverse creative humans and nonhumans. Dynamic processes are interrelated with *Places* in networks of larger wholes. Circles and mandalas *symbolize* wholes and their relationships with intersecting circles as cycles in larger circles up to spheres; the latter have many levels of meaning.

Ecophilosophy uses comprehensive, ecologically based concepts and paradigms to describe the interrelationships in the changing world. Its *comprehensive and deep study of ultimate philosophies uses ecological concepts, contexts and relationships*. It uses conceptual analysis, logic, semantics and diverse communication systems. It encompasses personal philosophies, worldviews, religions, sciences, spiritual Ways, *Whole Arts*, Cosmologies and Myths. *Ecophilosophy* as experimental inquiry seeks to comprehend *systems* of *ultimate* norms and hypotheses, System of systems, total views, whole limited and unlimited systems. It does multicultural comparisons with empirical and analytical methods. It is creative and holistic in studying *communication ecology*. Communication ecology is a comprehensive way to connect all beings in local, regional and global systems. Communication studies are unifying, comprehensive and illuminating. Communication systems exist throughout the human and natural world. Arne Naess, Walter Ong and Gregory Bateson were pioneers in *Communication Ecology*. (Drengson 2010a and C. A. Bowers 2010.)

Communication Ecology

In contrast to ecophiolososphers, some Analytic Philosophers were anti-system and so asked atomized, reductionist questions: What is the meaning of the word *mind*? What is the meaning of *art*? What is the meaning of *meaning*?

C*omprehensive ecological approaches* investigate *communication systems*. How does it take place in Nature and between humans? How can we communicate better? *Communication Systems* have evolved all over the world for eons. Many do not use words or language in the analysts' sense. There are many ways to communicate, with odors, chemicals, body language, movement, sound, light, electromagnetic energy, and ways we have to yet discover. Some beings use systems for odors, colors and flowers. Social insects, e.g. bees, ants and termites, live in hives communicate for reproduction, hive and nest protection, nectar and water location, and for meeting other needs. Other insects and animals have similar ordered systems. (See the 19 volume *Vienna Series in Theoretical Biology* 2002-2014, MIT Press.)

Human languages are conceptually sophisticated and grammatically elaborate systems. Written languages use complex systems of notations, symbols, signs, grammatical order, syntax, structure and semantics. Writing creates artifacts and *texts*. By studying philosophical, religious and literary works, we realize that *all texts must be interpreted*. There is no definitive interpretation for sacred writings or texts about ultimate reality and values, especially mythologies. Text based literatures use great variety of methods and coordinating frameworks.

In formal philosophical training, we read texts aloud with the teacher, who learned to interpret them from her teacher by the same engaging process. We pass on shared trans-generational skills and knowledge in these and other ways. Sometimes a text was even originally read and explained by the author to his students. The same practices are used by religious and spiritual teachers. The *Old Testament* is read with and explained to students by a *Rabbi* (meaning *teacher*). This is done for *Sanskrit* and *Latin* religious and philosophical texts to teach translation, interpretation and application.

Much that we think is intuitively obvious about map reading and symbol interpretation is culturally shaped. We might think an arrow points the direction to go, but it is used to point the direction we came from and to origins. It is used as a symbol for male. There are many other uses and meanings for the arrow symbol, and for other graphic and iconic signs, such as *Norse Runes* and *I Ching Hexagrams*.

We study texts by organizing the material in useful, logical ways. We use *typologies* suitable to our purposes, projects, methods and research aims. There are many ways to get a sense for *wholes* and for a *System of systems*. We can grasp a whole personal philosophy or a book we have read or written. We study unlimited systems and organize the material related to infinite systems using numbered, named sets and coded series. Organized systems are relative to context, place, space and time. There is no *absolute frame of reference*, except perhaps a Uni-Multi-Verse. (Cf to the Norse *aegishjalmr Rune*.) The wider a system's application, the less *concrete content* it will have and the more *abstract* its concepts tend to be. We can skillfully study Systems of systems that we can call *meta-systems*. (Put in rune?)

Meta-Systems, Skill of skills and Art of arts

There is a *Skill of skills, an Art of arts,* and *Design for design.* These all focus our attention on specific topics and inquiries. One meta-skill is suspending belief, and another is envisaging other possibilities up to meta-systems. Creating ceremonies is a social communication invention giving access to *other modes of knowing, feeling and acting* within a community. Ceremonial communities cooperate on multiple levels healing, hunting, gathering and gardening, and for solving problems of physical and spiritual dimensions. They use *intentional journeying* in shamanic ceremonial circles as ancient ways to access

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communal powers. To commune with is to *attune to, be in harmony with,* and feel and blend together. Attuning facilitates solutions to problems arising in *communities of self conscious beings.* Through reflective, receptive skills, we become aware of how experience is influenced by beliefs, judgments, conditioning, context, and setting, by the quality of attention, and by level of awareness. Reflecting on the power of reflection gives access to other levels and depths.

We can *affect and alter the ways* we experience the world by walking alone in Nature, chanting, meditation, ceremony and ritual. We can focus on the nature of focusing to be aware of awareness. We can create Systems of systems, meta-systems, a Community of communities, Communion with communions, and a Light for lights. (Drengson "Way of Light" 2011/14.) *Communication Systems* make these and more possible, including nuclear, genetic, atmospheric, ecological and cosmological research and design. These powerful research forms are multidisciplinary, multicultural, ecologically attuned, create cooperatively and communicate openly. *They optimize* aware *communication flow, attunement and communion. They are self-changing, open ended and creative.*

Whole Arts Spiritual Disciplines
Whole Arts Spiritual Disciplines are learning education systems developing self determination, creative freedom and artisan innovation. They *are urgently needed* in our society and the world. Designing and using *wise practices* are *Ways of Life* with honorable lifestyles. Gentle lifestyles benefit communities and persons. By actively studying *Spiritual Disciplines*, like *Zen* and *Aikido*, we realize that they are *living systems;* they become deeper and more elaborate as we go on. They are complete self replicating, whole systems. They reflect the nature of the world in our experience, and we see that there are "worlds within worlds." As Whole Systems they can be grasped with a unified understanding. They can be distilled in a single *kata, koan,* a hologram, holosound, hologestalt and spheres (Talbot 1991). Circles and spheres represent wholeness. Communication runs through all of these and into silence.

Science of sciences
By knowing how to do science, we can apply empirical research to any subject. We can even *study sciences scientifically,* as Naess did in the Vienna Circle in the mid 1930s. We know how to create new sciences, new languages, meta-sciences and meta-languages. These are like reflection reflecting on reflection. There is awareness and awareness of awareness; there are ways to alter, direct and let go of awareness: focused, relaxed and open-shared, narrow and focused, closed and open, limited and unlimited. It is possible to practice, design, and create *recursive systems as* study circle research spirals that self modify and adapt by creative learning. Many cultural systems of science are like this. Social insects, like bees and ants, are creative, evolving, and self learning in their systematic behavior. They have communication circles and systems, as do other social animals (wolves and orcas) and birds (ravens and crows). We study these systems in *communication ecology.* Communication and information systems are necessary and integral to evolving living systems everywhere on Earth, from the smallest to the largest organisms and systems. *Whole selves* are the smallest circle-sphere of awareness. There are many forms and stages of awareness development in the ecosystem ecologies on Earth. (See Appendix G for Stages and Forms of Self.)

Skill of skills
The *Skill of skills* is a Way to find connection and wisdom everyday in forest use, gardening, walking, family life, and so on. We are open to hear other beings' *stories.* We tune into them by *Spontaneous Attunement with a Medium* in intentional-process-activity. I call this *SAM!* My ecosophy, *Ardson's Blue Mountain Wild Way Ecosophy,* uses SAM! For receptive-process-practices in Nature I **SAM!** SAMing attunes me to a subject, being or place. SAMing opens insight, focus and flow. This is communication as *deep, resonant, whole connection* beyond languages. There are Stories of stories, Songs of songs, Dances of dances, Art of arts, and gestalt vocalizations, and movements, etc. Systems of Artisan Mastery also

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SAM! We become aware in a process as a non-conceptual, non linguistic universal awareness. We are in this *field* when not identified with specific things or beings.

Grounding Communication
The *Selected Works of Arne Naess* (*SWAN* 2005) is a ten volume, comprehensive study of *communication* It is relevant to the Modern-Postmodern debate. (See Appendix 1 outlines.) One debate issue is whether *Nature is just a social construction*. For some all narrative-cultural traditions are closed systems, with no objective *semantic grounding* in the natural world. Naess' extensive research in *empirical semantics* studied specialized and ordinary languages. They show how languages are intertwined with places, processes and practices in the natural world. Words and texts about *Nature* are cultural constructions, but grounded in real places in spontaneous experiences with other beings. We communicate with each other and with them, and are never really alone.

Some social constructionist's seem to see languages as closed cultural systems. They are like mathematics and geometry defined in dictionaries by syntactic word circles without *semantic grounding in the Natural World.* Contrary to this view, Naess shows we do break out of syntactic circles to make semantic connections with the Earth. Living languages are not closed systems. Cultures and languages are intertwined with real places in daily life. Their semantics are *Nature* and place saturated. (See e.g. Basso's 1999 *Wisdom Sits in Places*.)

The Post-Modern *Social Construction Theory* (*SCT*) seems to assume that languages are like complete, fully internal deductive systems. However, ordinary languages are neither closed nor fixed. Moreover, it is well known that even systems like plain arithmetic are neither simple nor closed. *Gödel's Theorem,* and other related work in symbolic deductive systems, shows that even *pure symbol systems* lack completeness and are creatively open. Thus, we cannot prove that *Nature* is only a social construction by proceeding from ordinary languages focusing on dictionaries and grammars in a circle of syntax. The *SCT* assumes that our ordinary languages are capable of a high degree of precision, if we carefully define our terms. But even philosophers who claimed to have done this did not succeed in maintaining consistency in the "*precisely*" defined terms. All Languages are semantically dynamic and diverse.

The natural world is shared by all humans and cultures. Our appreciations of the natural world are complex and deep. We have profound personal nonverbal experiences while being alone and immersed in wild places. Our experiences and knowledge exceed all theories and languages; we realize that all systems are open ended.

We agree with Naess and others, it is not possible to have *total systems* that are completely closed and fully spelled out; there are always *open horizons*. *When we do empirical studies of their semantics* (as Naess and others have done), we find that the basic concepts have meanings tied to real places and shared experiences. Furthermore, languages are constantly changing. (Naess *Ecology of Wisdom* 2008 p 70 ff.) In his later work, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) reached the same conclusion. (One of his favorite places was a cabin he owned in Norway, over the mountain from Naess' hut. Ludwig was from Vienna, where Naess studied piano and Wittgenstein composed music. Both were connected with the Vienna Circle.)

Spinoza's *Ethics* as a Total System
Some think that Spinoza had a complete system, exact in definitions and rigorous in deductions. When his writings are examined in their original *Medieval Latin*, Naess and others show in numerous studies, (see *SWAN VI*) that we cannot give Spinoza's philosophical system more than a *fragmentary reconstruction* in contemporary English. Moreover, Spinoza's system as in the original *Latin* is only a fragment of his *total, complete system.* To interpret philosophical and religious texts as articulated systems, we must make many assumptions. The difficulties of interpretation are even more complicated when translating from other languages into contemporary English. The problems are compounded when the originals are ancient

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or classical languages no longer in daily use. Naess focused on the problems of translation and precision of meaning. He studied communication theory to facilitate nonviolent communication, lessen conflict, and promote better understanding between people. He was also devoted to Gandhian nonviolence in his scholarly work *and* daily life. He also created and practiced Gandhian boxing.

Comprehensive Communication Surveys
The first Volume in the *Selected Works of Arne Naess (SWAN I* 2005*)* is *Interpretation and Preciseness: A Contribution to Theory of Communication*. These volumes examine systems on every level, including meta-theory, foundations of science, mathematics, logic, language-use and dictionary definitions. They show that our native, original, non-theoretical languages are not precise. They are filled with ambiguity, vagueness, poetry, and metaphor. Our native languages are learned and used from childhood. The more native languages and formula systems we know, the more we realize that *all systems* have to be explained in simple narratives using real experiences, places, logics, models and analogies. This holds even for multi-valued, nonstandard logics and their technical specializations. They all depend on basic narratives.

Precision and consistency are contextual and related to grounding languages ecologically in histories, cultures, and places in communities in Nature. Grass roots movements for *social justice*, *peace and nonviolence and ecological responsibility* have common grounds in principles agreed to at multicultural, international levels, and they are locally diverse. Local diversity of responses to the natural world is moderated by culture, language, geography, ecology and *deep personal experiences*. We *learn* how to construct concepts, ideas, theories and languages about the natural world, as *we personally know and feel it*. Its many beings, relationships and processes are present in a *shared inner and inter-responsive natural reality of communication circle networks*. Naess' life philosophy was grounded by years of being in Nature, and in urban and rural areas and places. He circled through and unified these diverse places in his deep experiences and scholarly research reflections. One story is that while in a very urbanized area of Tokyo they were stuck in traffic and Arne got out of the car and managed to find a small plant with some bugs on it that he was taking great delight in observing. (Naess, 2005, *SWAN III Which World is the Real One?*)

Some versions of *religious and scientific fundamentalism* miss the diversity and depth of traditional, multidimensional narratives in home place communities. Empirical studies show that in ordinary discourse, we usually do not mean anything *very precise* in daily conversations. When we misunderstand one another, we try to clarify with additional explanatory phrases, a process Naess calls *precization* when formalized. The more we move to formulas for universality, the more we move into *abstraction and loss of concrete experiential details*. By comparing texts from different traditions, in different languages, from classical languages no longer in use, e.g. ancient *Greek*, *Sanskrit*, and classical *Latin* (dead languages), to contemporary living and changing languages, French, German, Spanish, English, Arabic, Hindi, we realize that languages are not fixed. They are constantly changing. They are like "rivers rather than fixed temples," as Naess wrote. This is true of our daily experiences in this ever changing world.

NB Nonviolence is conducive and essential to good communication, while violence makes it difficult and can end it. *To make peace and deeply communicate, avoid being judgmental; be honest and open.* The Buddha's *first noble truth is change*. (For an overview of Naess' work on these topics see the five issue *Trumpeter Series* devoted to him in 2005 and 2006, free online in the *Journal's* Archives.)

Diversity in Local Communities and Unity in Global Systems
Naess' account of the *Deep Ecology Movement* (*DEM*) is a good example of using multicultural, interdisciplinary research. He sought to improve global communication *and* local cooperation to solve environmental and social justice problems. (See Appendix 1 E for deep ecology movement principles.) His research shows how we can have *unity* on many levels, and *diversity* in unique personal philosophies of life. (See Levels Chart Appendix 1D.) We can honor cultural diversity and avoid standardized

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uniformity. We recognize these differences and so we *emphasize* respectful, nonviolent communication. (On Gandhian nonviolence see *SWAN V.*) Naess notes debate and argument are often counterproductive to understanding, meeting of minds, and appreciating diverse personal experiences. Do not assume people with whom we disagree are not intelligent, or that they make stupid mistakes in reasoning. Do not assume that we accurately interpret what they mean by key words. History and other studies show that this is not likely to be true.

Each person's language use is unique and can be seen as a *sub-dialect*. When studying dialects spoken by small populations, as in rural Norway or Canada e.g., or in extended families and clans, there are great differences between urban areas like Oslo and Toronto, and rural areas like Alta and Valle and Vancouver Island. When more aware of these differences, the less dogmatic we are about language use. When we ask other people to explain what "God" and "Holy Spirit" mean to them, they offer a variety of answers. There is no ultimate arbiter for *the meanin*g of these words and concepts. They are not eternal Platonic forms with universal meanings. Speaking freely and free speech include being able to speak poetically and imprecisely to express our ideas and feelings *nonviolently* in our own unique ways. Communication requires nonviolence, mutual respect and especially patience.

Empirical Semantics
Naess did in-depth studies of ordinary people's views on *freedom*, *truth*, and *democracy*. He compared their views with those of the experts. He found that *collectively, ordinary people* had as sophisticated views and more breadth than *recognized experts*. Moreover, the experts did not agree among themselves. By extensive *empirical studies of semantics,* he found that there is considerable diversity in vocabulary, meaning, and expression. The ten *SWAN* volumes show how to study communication empirically, non-judgmentally, in deep, holistic ways. We need to put communication in evolutionary, ecological, regional, home places. Every locality and place has beings with unique origins and stories. Naess was called "the Stone's Philosopher" because he said each stone tells a story. His mountain hut is named "Tvergastein" meaning "crossed stones." He considered changing his name to "Arne Tvergastein" for this place he loved and most identified with.

Communication communities exist throughout the natural *and* human worlds. These creative systems are constantly changing and evolving. Thus, we should doubt claims to possess the truth only on the basis of a narrow personal, group or specialist's language. We always should seek the truth, but never claim it. We should respect others in communication and not assume we know their views better than they do. When overly critical, we tend to forget how vague and incomplete are our own language and life philosophy. It is one among millions in English. Articulating a worldview is very challenging.

Suppose we have a total, whole system of personal philosophy with a high level of open minded maturity. Articulating this whole view is very difficult. So we do not assume we know how *all* people of a certain family, clan, tribe, religion, race, culture or nation will act, what they feel and believe. Even in what appear to be uniform groups, there is great diversity in individual feelings, thoughts and meanings of words. Our *spontaneous experiences in Nature* are vast, deep, rich, and beyond full articulation in *any* language. Language as communication systems arise from natural semantic connections with distinctions in social and personal experiences and practices. Even advanced cosmologies use the narrative resources of natural languages, with their impressive story-telling powers. Cosmologies are creative philosophical-artistic undertakings using more storied, mythic resources than specialized sciences. Thus, Thomas Berry (1988) calls an emerging Western cosmology he favors "*The New Story*."

We humbly acknowledge and respect the challenges to our level of awareness, when we converse with others and read and interpret their texts. Great philosophy texts (like Plato's *Republic* and Spinoza's *Ethics*) have no complete, definitive interpretation, even by their authors. Plato and Spinoza have been interpreted and reinterpreted over and over throughout the centuries. Their texts are incredibly *rich* with a

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wealth of interpretations. Naess modestly called his work on Spinoza *"part of a reconstruction"*. He felt that he got at only a portion of Spinoza's *whole system* that Spinoza wrote about in his scholar's Latin. Naess studied Spinoza's Latin texts for over 80 years.

Meta-Systems, Global Research and Ecophilosophy

There are systematic and unsystematic ways to explore, use and learn about communication, worldviews, cultures and Nature. Comprehensive *and* detailed approaches appreciate the diversity of individuals, languages, cultures, ecological and biological systems. *Ecophilosophy, as a comprehensive approach,* appreciates the diversity of multidimensional, systematic ways for comparing *total views*. It explores and appreciates diverse cultures, worldviews and cosmologies. There are many ways and methods to organize study and discussion of these systems. There are Systems of systems, ways to organize these in meta-systems, using different types of co-ordinates. Studying social and religious systems, we organize subjects in fields with specified *concepts, frameworks*, *typologies and methods*.

Coordinate systems are relative, but not arbitrary. Systems are organized by location, time and space. There is a wide variety of spatial-temporal forms for ordering and organizing systems for change: For example, as stages, phases, progressive, regressive, cyclical, dialectical, linear and in many other ways. Coordinate systems can be shifted to other forms of order and organization through space-time scales of higher and lower, and inner and outer. There is *great diversity* of space-time concepts in different cultures, languages, philosophies and worldviews. (*SWAN* goes into many of these.)

There are multitudes of ways and methods for organizing *cosmologies, philosophies, histories and philosophies of history*, along with other well known ways to systematize cultural narratives for different subjects, problems and interests. To study *religions*, we compare their temporal and eternal values, their sacred and historical features, using typologies focusing on spiritual disciplines, practices, belief systems, doctrines, and transformative experiences. Consider Eliade's (1969) work on the *sacred and profane*. *Life Philosophies* are discussed by focusing on ultimate norms and hypotheses. When describing global, grass-roots movements Naess' fourfold multicultural typology is useful: 1) Philosophies with ultimate hypotheses and norms, 2) platform principles that unite and guide global discussions and political actions, 3) policy formulations for specific jurisdictions, and 4) practical actions by people in local places.

When researching and discussing these many *kinds of systems*, we start where convenient and sensible (Einsteinian relativism is generalized). There are many relevant, useful forms of order readily available. In the West, when we examine *place in depth*, we find these categories used: *hydrological*, *geological*, *metrological*, *physical*, *chemical*, and *biological systems*. These are in larger global ecosystems that are atmospheric, marine and terrestrial systems. The ecological communities and ecosystems around us are in larger regional, continental and planetary ecosystems.

 At the level of whole organisms, e.g. a bee, horse, person, and a planet, there are many organizational gestalts and systems. Each *whole being*, say an insect, is composed of many sub-systems, such as respiratory, perceptual, reproductive, neural, digestive, hormonal, etc. Beings and insects are interconnected with many types of systems outside, e.g. ecological, communal, familial, aquatic, atmospheric, energetic processes in solar systems. The root word for "planet" means a "star wanderer." (See the *Vienna Series in Theoretical Biology* for advanced studies of communication systems. This *Series* shifts from physics to bio-ecology for knowledge paradigms of the natural world.)

Natural Communication Systems

We research human languages using holocentric, ecological methods and approaches *as* within *natural communication systems*. We note that each word in local English is in regional dialects within larger *language systems*. They are in larger *communication systems*, used by specific cultures, and large

numbers of people, in different global places. The family home of English (Richler 2006) is the complex *Indo-European Language Family* spoken by over 50 percent of the human world.

We know that nonhumans have language and communication systems, and also that Communication is ever present in non-human systems. Systems of communication, information ordering, processing, storage and mutation are *holocentric* in living ecosystems. They are within other structures, functions and processes as mentioned. They are like *holograms* and *holographs* (Talbot 1991). Within each entity there are reflections of these other systems moving in either direction, to larger and outer, or smaller with inner, and in our cells are codes for information.

Languages are in complex families with grammars, words, idioms and dialects, and reflect this complexity, richness, breadth and depth, as in speciation, genetic complexity and diversity that exists all through the natural world. In oral traditions human singers and poets have extensive repertoires recalled and carried on in *performances,* using similar kinds of natural and cultural systems including the many arts. These are *internalized and accessed* with associational symmetry systems. Poetic examples of this (holonic) quality are Indra's web, worlds within worlds, and Leibniz's monadology. His holonic units of awareness (*monads*) mirror the whole universe, each from its own point of view. Recent work in fractal geometry is relevant and it adds to the richness of these models.

Layers of System Systems
Global and regional ecosystems have multiple layers of systems, forms of information storage and exchange, making up larger and smaller communication system elements. Language families have local, familial, and personal dialects. There is layering and complexity in modern technological societies; older oral traditions are intermixed with more recent literate, and now electronic, digital communication-information systems in the web and access to the Cloud. These systems are not place-specific, or defined in terms of places, as *is* true for many systems in *Oral Traditions*. They are intergenerational, international, and with the Cloud, even extraterrestrial. Advanced technological social and knowledge systems have layers of stories, myths, traditions and lore, some thousands or more years old. These different cultural origins are reflected in the diverse sources of our words in global multicultural languages like English. English has multitudes of dialects, (e.g. "Chinglesh, Mojave, Cajun, Latino, Chicano, Cockeney, Hinglish, etc.) idioms and words from many other languages (Richler 2006). English ancestors generations ago spoke dialects that we no longer know (e.g. look at *Olde English texts*).

We explore the world around in great detail and depth using larger systems of relationships. Everywhere in Nature, and human societies, there are communication systems, including craft, scientific, artistic, and spiritual. Information, orientation, complexity and more are exchanged and shared by beings on all levels and beyond, from genetic to communal, local to national and global exchanges. Humans are not isolated from these systems. Our languages and cultures develop and interact with them. There are recognized international laws pertaining to information and knowledge; treaty, statutory and natural. In natural old growth forests, there are many systems of *exchange and response* involving diverse types of information reception and interaction. Trees, insects and *microrhizal* fungi are part of inner responsive ecosystem community webs and networks. These are multidimensional, complex, diverse, creative and ever changing processes.

Living communication systems are creatively adaptive and in flux. This is true everywhere we look: in the oceans, on land, in the deserts, in the soils, in forests, and in the atmosphere. Freedom facilitates creative language use, as do the creative adaptations of social systems. Ravens and crows have tribes, family lineages and dialects. They learn from each other and creatively solve problems, so do chimps, wolves, rats, dolphins and whales. There is multi-inter-species learning, creativity and communication. Knowledge and skills are everywhere in Nature; all beings change as they live. Knowledge and skills interact and change in creative species of knowledge and multiculturally.

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Creative Communication is Revolutionary

Organisms change their behavior in response to the changing information and knowledge they perceive, share and process. Altering behavior modifies communication systems with our own kind and other organisms. Information is in structured chemicals, mutated genes, electronic impulses, modified sounds, refracted lights, and in many other symbols and signs used as gestalt messages by senders and receivers.

The human world has thousands of languages, and myriad cultures and social systems. (On languages see Nettle and Romaine 2000.) This diversity is in response to diverse changing conditions, histories, experiences and environments. It is related to individual diversity and specific histories in the great variety of diverse, complex places. Creative response is an inherent capacity of all living beings in an ever changing world. Species and beings adapt and modify their behavior, organization and physical characteristics (consider e.g. sumo wrestlers and cuttlefish). They have far greater capacities than the Modern-Postmodern worldview paradigms assume. (See Appendix 1 A, B and C for comparative outlines.)

First Nations, like the *Norse Vikings* and the *BC Haida*, are place-based and Nature-grounded; they are aware that these capacities exist throughout the natural world. (See Gary Snyders 1977 *The Old Ways*.) Once organisms can modify their ways of communicating *and* behaving, they enter a remarkably new form of change that some call *recursive* and that has multiple synergistic effects. Communication diversity is dynamic, with vast new forms of evolutionary change; it is radical in its potentials, as evidenced by the vast numbers of human languages and cultures that we know exist. Language capacities open cognitive functions to higher degrees and muti-levels. Play, imitation and imagination are part of creative evolutionary forces working on *all levels*: Physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual.

Cosmologies, Spiritual Paths, worldviews and personal philosophies are part of the rich diversity of human variety (families, clans, tribes, nations, etc.) in diverse cultures and individual lives. There are vast numbers of ways to categorize and study these complex systems, depending on our needs and objectives. To navigate and journey, we need concepts, reference points, co-ordinate systems, landmarks, and a sense of direction related to the conceptual and cultural grounds we are mapping and traversing. When travelling in Nature in wild lands, we use many of the same *types of systems* for organizing order to find our way, as we travel from one place to another, even when just wandering.

In Shamanic journeying, for example, we travel from the middle world to the lower world, from the lower world back to the middle world and then to the upper world. There are many coordinate systems and methods used in shamanic cultures for three world journeying. These are organized using *world trees*, *medicine circles, power animals and six cardinal directions (and others too)*. Comparative communication research makes it easier to know and appreciate this diversity of all types and kinds.

NB The first principle of the Deep Ecology Movement is that "all living beings have intrinsic worth and are good for their own sake". The second is that "diversity and richness of life are good for their own sake". "The more diversity the better!" Naess liked to say. (See Appendix 1 E for the 8 Principles of the Deep Ecology Movement.)

Learning Systems are Evolutionary

Cultural systems endure by continuously adapting to the changing conditions in the world around and within them. When sustainable they are flexible, creative and open ended. People continuously learn and creatively respond by making and living in language-culture systems called *Civilizations*. We can compare Toynbee's *civilization* to Jaspers' more modest *life philosophies* and *worldviews*.

The multitudes of specialized languages and conceptual systems have a wide range of purposes. Our culture has theoretical physics, with specialized, highly abstract symbol systems, powerful technologies,

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advanced logic and mathematics. There are many other highly specialized ways to organize thinking, feeling and mapping the world to respond to, act on, and with it.

Art, literature and music are diverse systems adding greater depth and breadth to qualitative complexity and richness. We need a comprehensive, deep sense of the whole world and of our self in all relationships. Complex cultural systems are part of ecological processes with the same kinds and links of dynamic creative complexity as in natural ecosystems. When in adaptive harmony with local places, they sustain flowing *ecosophies*; when they are not, they become maladaptive.

NB There were ancient civilizations that failed because their agriculture and forestry destroyed their crop lands and forest ecosystems. We should avoid the deceptively cheap, debt-laden fossil energy systems that destroy the diversity, health and resilience of living natural ecosystems. Ecosystem values are rich beyond all economic measures and are necessary for thriving humans, plants and animals.

Complex Wholes for Understanding
We study physical, biological, social and cultural systems, using basic concepts, classifications, typologies, taxonomies, and coordinate systems. We view these systems and their elements in static ways, and in using different types of change, such as aesthetic, evolutionary and transformational. Narrowing our focus to specialized fields, we feel we can encompass and explain just about everything, but we leave out so much. In specialized fields it is tempting to think that this is the right way to understand the world. All significant things about it and our lives *seem* to be distilled into the formulas of its specialized professional languages.

All languages, including specialized ones, are in larger communication systems within diverse cultural and natural systems in the world of *Nature*. It is best to study these whole systems ecologically, in their interrelationships, functions and processes, within their global ecosystems and local places. It is invaluable to see them in planetary contexts, locations, landscapes, biospheres and local places. We appreciate that the diversity in our Planet's Ecosystems is of Cosmic significance, as Naess and others have said (*Trumpeter* 21, 1 p. 49ff).

The Earth's solar system is in the *Milky Way Galaxy*. The Galaxy is in a cluster of galaxies. Contemporary cultures see this reality in many dimensions, in physics string theory has 10. Cultural and spiritual depth are in layers of values, knowledge and insights, including a wide range of moral, emotional, sensual, aesthetic and spiritual qualities and values. Our old myths, Indo-Germanic-Nordic-Celtic, recognized *nine levels of reality* that humans can travel in and learn from. Shamans in the old traditions were healers and journeyers, like the archetypal Norse god *Odin*, the *iconic wandering seeker of crazy wisdom*. Naess' Pyrrhonian skepticism (*SWAN II*) was inspired by ancient philosophers like *Sextus Empiricus*, but is also found it in Norse mythology in archetypal stories about Odin and other gods, who represent unique energies, active knowing forms, creation processes, and kinds of feelings.

Ecophilosophers and other multicultural scholars do not claim to have *the only right ontology and ethics to explain and value everything*. They avoid monolithic static doctrines and sterile language. Naess, and other ecophilosophers, use comprehensive comparative research and opt for *pluralism with multicultural perspectives*. We see how and why monisms and monocultures are unwise. They do not take into account and honor the ecological, biological, cultural, spiritual, and linguistic diversity in the world. (Drengson "Communication Ecology of Arne Naess," 2010a.) We cannot personally sample this depth in *all of its fantastic diversity*. We rely on the work of countless others to appreciate this rich, pluralistic, multidimensional, complex, diverse multicultural reality of life on Earth. We appreciate the inexhaustible depth and mystery of the world as we participate in it. We can state only in fragmented ways our comprehensive understanding as our total view in this amazingly rich world. We realize from a rough outline of our life philosophy, that it cannot be a complete, closed, fixed system, if it is to be alive. The

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living present is an ageless time-full dynamic reality. Life's music is closer to jazz in spirit, as it spontaneously improvises as it changes.

Life and the world are always changing, as observed by Heraclitus, Buddha and Lao Tzu. When we are *vital* and creative, we are always learning and being born. We cannot have a complete, closed total system as the only ruling, valid account for the whole world. This is an illusion, as Kant, Naess and others have shown. *Instead we are blessed by a living world that is always flowering* and never finished! It is ever pregnant with unlimited possibilities for *creative responses and beautiful actions*. We organize our experiences and thoughts using many forms of *rich* order, conceptual networks, value levels and multiple gestalts, depending on context, qualities, purposes, interests and aims. We emphasize increasing joy and happiness, benefiting others, including living beings in the natural world. This lifelong commitment increases and promotes joy and happiness; our ways of life are "modest in means and rich in ends," as Naess showed in his life and when communing with other beings. He acted and lived beautifully, with joy, harmony, grace and gentleness. We each can give positive energy to others, including the beings we meet daily.

Synoptic Narratives

Systems and theories cannot give us a complete, exhaustive, account of the whole world and our deep spontaneous experiences. Reflecting on natural and cultural diversity, we know there are multitudes of ways to organize our lives, studies, views, life and world reflections. There are multiple ways to select and define basic concepts, design classification systems, create methodologies for the sciences and arts. There are many wise ways to design worldviews, *Arts, Spiritual Disciplines* and artisan technologies. Reality exceeds our worldviews and cultural systems described by any theory, paradigm, or model. We can compare it to the actual topographic complexity of the land, which cannot be matched in any of our maps and other Symbolic representations, not even in so-called "virtual reality."

The profound open-ended creative nature of the world in all its systems, gives rise to a great richness of ways to relate and act to personally design, and create technologies, *Whole Arts,* philosophies and *beautiful actions*. Our lives are blessed with great freedom; there are rich possibilities for creative actions in every moment. We do not need lots of stuff, to celebrate the great variety of cosmologies, ontologies, logics, languages, art forms, ceremonies, kinds of music, cultures, histories, sciences, life forms, arts, cuisines, dances, life-styles and communication systems. We celebrate non-conceptual unity experiences with deep feelings of spontaneous connection in the whole world. (See my *Wild Way Home* 2010b and "Ways of Light," 2011/14 for some whole-making practices.)

Typologies for conceptual, cultural, and communication systems evolve and are characterized by rich, diverse practices, methods and values. Languages structure experiential reality using stories within narrative traditions, where there are Stories of stories within a story. No single language or story has priority over all others. We cannot show our personal or professional terminology and view is superior to all others. It is one among a vast number of possibilities, like wild flowers and insects. Empirical studies, that Naess and others have done, show that imprecision is also free creativity in our terminology and languages. This makes it difficult to exactly translate and interpret texts even from the sciences. Research into interpretation of texts, especially philosophical and religious ones, helps us to see that there is no single definitive interpretation possible. This is a great thing for creativity and freedom!

Our narrative traditions are filled with myths and stories using similes, metaphors, analogies, and vague poetic terms. These are distilled in lore, wisdom sayings and Holy Scriptures. This diversity is a rich source for untold stories of great depth and wealth that we can explore and enjoy for lifetimes. We never hear the same story twice. This is a source for creative freedom to adaptively change with original responses and actions. Art, Ceremony and Spiritual Ways can be beautiful, joyful celebrations of a creative life with rich diversity in ceremonies, arts and styles. The Fine Arts include all the forms and

genres we can name, such as sculpture, painting, poetry, drama, dance, song, etc. An ultimate jazz it has been my pleasure to participate in was a performance-audience activity led by Bobby McFerrin and his groups=; an amazing example of improvisation and skill. The art of jazz at the highest level beyond "Take Five."

We learn from dictionary makers (e.g. the *OED*) how to do empirical linguistic research. We each have personal ideas, feelings and understandings for words we share and use every day. By not imposing and defending "the one and only right way," we realize there are great creative possibilities open to each of us. The world unfolds in every direction and dimension, from quantity and intensity, to higher qualities and greater depth. The horizons and possibilities for free, creative actions and expressions are almost unlimited. We realize this as we support nonviolent communication. There are untold riches everywhere to feel and look. There are "Worlds within worlds!" as Buddhists say. We joyfully reflect on these lines from William Blake: "To see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour." "He who kisses the joy as it flies, lives in eternity's sun rise."

Shared Connections
Our shared connections exceed what we can realize as isolated selves. As Gandhi, Naess and others have shown, *we are interdependent and free*! Humans are joyful in loving families and happy communities. We can *personally* contribute to the happiness of others, including animal and plant friends. Naess and Gandhi showed how nonviolent approaches to language and communication empower us compared to prescriptive, monolithic dogmatic views. *Love and nonviolence are Holy Ways.* They "Judge not, lest ye be judged" and sadly limited by these judgments. (Jesus, "Sermon on the Mount," Mathew 5-7, see my unpublished "Ways of Light" 2011/14.)

We can create a philosophy of life open with rich creative possibilities. We welcome and enjoy the diversity and depth of all kinds of wealth in the world, its multicultural heritages in arts, sciences and languages. In internal reflections *and* stillness *we find receptive unity and wholeness*. Non-conceptual, reflective awareness opens, for when we are still *and* receptive boundaries fall away. From non-identification we identify with an ecological Self, starting from our unique self, place and community. Our sense of *Ecological Self* extends as we mature. We have a sense of unity with the planet. Whole selves are cosmic-micro-cultures. (See "8 Stages of Self" Illus. 7 *Wild Way Home*, p 250 and Appendix I G in this essay.)

Great Freedoms
Open awareness is great freedom*,* when non-judgmental. In every direction and all dimensions, when we are fully open*,* there are Worlds within worlds, Systems within systems, Languages within languages, Words within words, and Stories within stories. There are Systems of Mastery for unlocking and comparing global, regional and local place systems. There are diverse ways to unity. Unity is not single-minded loss of awareness; it is microcosmic harmony with diverse chords, rich melodies, diverse solos and multi-voice symphonies. Freedom is found through our ability to assume different forms of identity and to identify with other persons and beings. This is a profound ability that changes creative response to different levels and kinds.

Life in Circles, Spirals and Spheres: Ends are Beginnings

Worldviews, Spiritual Ways and personal philosophies are fruitfully studied using typologies, logic, moral and aesthetic values, sense of reality, views of knowledge and sources of ultimate meaning. Ninian Smart (1983) divides *Cosmological Research* into "The *West*, *Marxisms*, *Islamic Crescent*, *Old Asia*, *Latin South* and *Black Africa*." He explores religions and worldviews in the world by using *experiential*, *mythic*, *doctrinal*, *ethical*, *ritual*, and *social dimensions*. Karl Jaspers (1962) divides his study of life

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philosophies and philosophers into *paradigmatic individuals,* such as Lao Tzu, Jesus, and Socrates, and *seminal thinkers* like Aristotle and Kant. These are a few ways to appreciate the merits of worldviews and personal philosophies. They bring out different aspects of multicultural, trans-disciplinary research for global understanding *and* local wisdom.

The more global studies and explorations we do, the more we will learn about ourselves, our shared humanity and our relatives in the natural world. We become more self-aware, and more aware of our common humanity. We articulate a personal philosophy of life by answering these questions: 1) What kind of world is this and how does it work? 2) What is the nature of your *Self* and how do you fit into the world? What will complete or actualize your self nature? 3) What do *you feel* is of most value and how can it be achieved? 4) What can you contribute to improving the human and natural worlds, starting with yourself and close relationships? How can your philosophy of life improve the *quality* of your local human and ecological relationships? Articulate your philosophy of life by telling, or writing about it, to a friend. Design an ecosophy, a Way of ecological wisdom and harmony in tune with Nature. Name your Ecosophy for your home place. Apply your *ecosophy to* design your house and garden by harmonious principles and practices. Naess called his Life Philosophy *Ecosophy T,* for *Tvergastein*, his mountain hut where it was inspired and experimentally worked on. He did experimental philosophy.

Self aware humans can identify with countless other beings and people in the world. Our sense of self goes through natural evolutionary processes as we mature. We grow higher, wider and deeper and we become more expansive and inclusive. When mature, we let go of ego boundaries to identify with fish, whales, birds and bears. We can imaginatively identify with a tree, butterfly or planet. This *capacity for multiple identifications* is in core shamanic practices and the unity teachings of Jesus, as in the *Gospel of Mary* and in some Gnostic versions of His teachings. (See my "Ways of Light" 2011/14.) It is at the *heart* of Hindu, Zen, Taoist and Shinto *wisdom practices*. Each moment is a beginning and an end. Naess and Einstein both said that "imagination is crucial" to understanding the world and *Cosmos*.

By non-selfishly loving others, we can give of our self and receive creative gifts of great freedom and fulfillment. *We connect with the creative energetic powers of Nature and the Ultimate Source*. We possess and grasp nothing and yet enjoy everything. This is a gift of open awareness. We are within and beyond all systems conveyed in language, thought and culture. Internalizing a Whole Art, we distill it into core principles and practices organized as Spiritual Disciplines: These essential forms embody Whole Arts in holographic Ways. The essence of a Whole Art can be expressed in a single kata, koan and other iconic symbol or form. We grasp its patterns as a gestalt mosaic hologram. The mosaic embodies it holocentrically. Its wholeness reflects its parts in their internal *and* external relationships. We welcome and embrace pluralism *and* multicentrism. In this *Infinite Universe* every place is a vital center. Each holocenter reflects the others, as the *Indra's Web* metaphor reveals. (On Whole Arts see my *Wild Way Home* 2010b, on multicentrism see Weston 2006, on pluralism see Naess 2005 *SWAN IV*.)

Note: This essay does not discuss the problems and complexities of deception, miscommunication and faulty reasoning. It emphasizes the philosophical and semantic challenges to a meeting of minds in global systems research (GSR). It is a modest overview of ecological frameworks used for comparative, synoptic multicultural studies. Naess goes into many of these other dimensions as do others. (On self-deception and other knowledge challenges see *Denial* by Varki and Brower 2013. See *SWAN VII Communication and Argument: Elements of Applied Semantics;* for more see the references below.)

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Appendix 1: Comparative Research Outlines, Charts and Illustrations
Contents: A. Modernism B. Postmodernism C. Ecological Paradigms D. Levels Chart E. DEM Principles F. Modern Technocrat Paradigm compared to Planetary Person Ecosophies G. Stages and Forms of Self H. Circle of Self Stages I. Powers of Self and Community J. Self as Center for Medicine Circle K. Worldviews and Cosmologies

Western and Multicultural Paradigms Related to Nature

A. Modern Paradigms
1. Reality is not personal, has no inherent value and is ordered by natural laws.
2. We can control Nature by knowing and using these laws.
3. Specialized empirical science is the only way to know these laws.
4. Humans can live well by applying this objective knowledge to practical matters.
5. Theoretical and practical knowledge enables us to master Nature with technology.

B. Postmodern Reaction to Modernism
1. Reality is neither personal nor orderly.
2. All approaches to knowing the natural world are relative.
3. Nature has no inherent values transcending human subjectivity and culture.
4. Humans might not understand Nature, but technological skill gives us power.
5. There is no meaning or value in life other than what we create.

C. Ecological Paradigms
1. Reality is personal *and* ordered.
2. Order is partly created by multitudes of beings, striving to realize themselves in multi-dimensional relationships.
3. The powers of Nature are in us (and other beings) and we can act wisely through integrating and unifying our powers of sensing, knowing, feeling and acting.
4. Nature is filled with diverse intrinsic values to be discovered and ways to create new ones.
5. Completion and fulfillment are by deepening ourselves through authentic dwelling in harmony with Nature and each other, as in living an *ecosophy (from ecos plus sophia meaning ecological wisdom)*.

D. Four Levels of Discourse & Articulation, Worldviews & Movements

Cross Cultural Typology: Four Levels of Questioning and Articulation		
Level 1	Life Philosophies, with Ultimate premises of norms and hypotheses	Taoism, Christianity, Buddhism, Ecosophy T, etc.
Level 2	Movement Platform Principles For example, the DEM 8 points	Peace Movement, Deep Ecology Movement, Social Justice Movement, etc.
Level 3	Policies	PO_1, PO_2, PO_3, etc.
Level 4	Practical Actions	PA_1, PA_2, PA_3, etc.

Q =Questioning, Inquiry   **A** = Answering, Articulation (See *Naess' Apron diagram SWAN X*, 9)

E. Deep Ecology Movement Platform Principles

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. (Responsible reproduction!)
5. 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 change: 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.
   (Naess, 2002, pp. 108-109)

F. Technocratic Paradigm Compared to Creative Planetary Person Ecosophies

Technocratic Paradigm Compared to Planetary Person Ecosophies		
	Technocratic Paradigm	**Planetary Personal Ecosophies**
1.	Machine metaphor, control	Organic metaphor, free actions
2.	Reductionist, specialist	Holistic, generalist
3.	Linear	Multidimensional, multicultural
4.	Nature as instrument, passive	Intrinsic values, creative
5.	Observer outside nature	Participant observer
6.	Causal-mechanistic models	Acausal-stochastic also
7.	Consciousness epiphenomenal	Consciousness irreducible
8.	Dead matter	Living energy
9.	Growth	Developing states of intrinsic worth
10.	Quantitative	Qualitative
11.	Non-dialectical	Dialectical
12.	Discrete things	Fields, processes
13.	Knowledge as power	Understanding and Wisdom
14.	No spiritual dimensions	Spiritual practices and disciplines
15.	Technology as power-over	Appropriate vernacular technologies
16.	Having	Being
17.	Mechanistic explanations	Ecological description & spontaneity
18.	Mastery of Nature	Self-mastery & actualization
19.	External relations	Internal also
20.	Subject/object separation	S/O reciprocity
21.	Centralization and hierarchy	Decentralization and networks
22.	Design as technique	Design as whole art
23.	Specialist	Whole person generalist

24.	Training for technical skills	Balanced education
25.	Anthropocentric	Ecocentric
26.	Corporation and association	Community and friendship
27.	Competition	Cooperation
28.	Uniformity & monocultures	Diversity & pluralism
29.	Artifact Earth	Living Earth & self organizing
30.	Science & philosophy as theory	Science & philosophy as activities
31.	Limited perspectives	Multiple open possibilities
32.	Captive of unconscious myths	Creative freedom with myths
33.	No sacred ground or place	Sacred grounds and places
34.	Ideal person: technocrat	Ecomonk, planetary person
35.	Narrowly historical	Transhistorical
36.	Surface ego self	Deep rich, unified Self

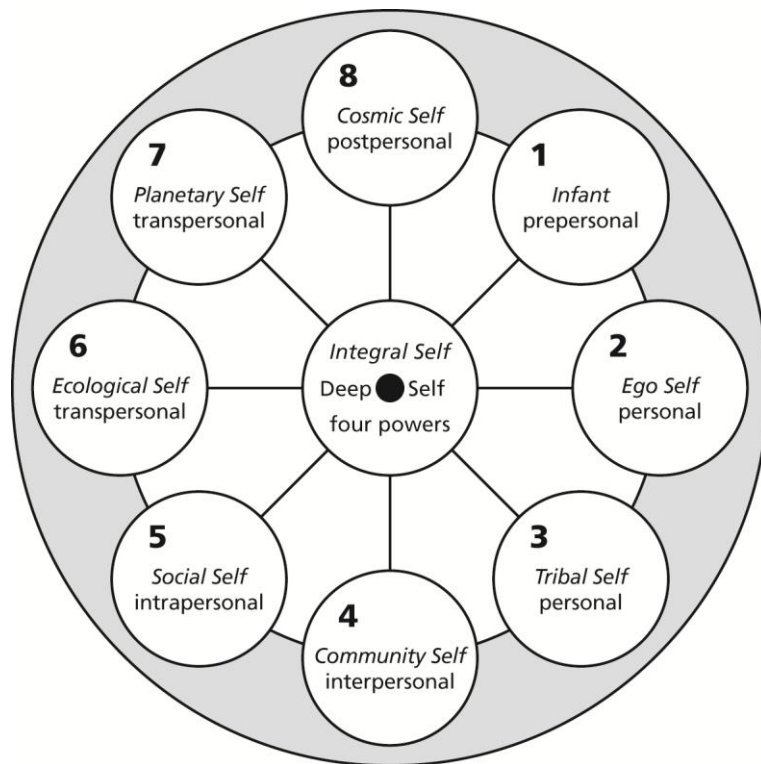## G. Stages and Forms of Self Identification

Here are eight categories for forms and stages of self identification and change. Our deep center has four powers: *senses, feelings, cognition and spiritual*. Unattached awareness is a *core light* we share with all beings. From this center we explore the world at different stages as akin to forms of identification. As children we feel beauty is sacred. We are a center of expanding circles of awareness as in medicine circles with six directions (E. W. N. S. and up and down). (See *Illustration H* below.)

1. *Infant stage,* prepersonal because the infant does not have a clearly developed sense of self as distinct from its maternal matrix;

2. *Ego Self*, beginning of personal stages, which is observable in many children before they are even a year old, but not well developed until seven or eight;

3. *Tribal Self*, personal stage, with a sense of self that is connected with a group that has a clear sense of itself as distinct from other groups, often defines itself in opposition to the other groups, as evident in teenage gangs;

4. *Community Self,* personal, developing into a more communal sense of self identified with one's extended family and larger community including home and neighborhood with a sense of responsibility for others in the community;

5. *Social Self*, personal, a person's sense of responsibility and participation in their society goes beyond their community and region to embrace a much larger sense of belonging and responsibility to entities such as nations, and can also be pan-national as in feeling like a European, for example;

6. *Ecological Self*, transpersonal, transcending focus on only human persons. In all of the self identifications above a person might not feel deep connections with their ecological community and could focus mostly on human relatives and associations, but here we enter a sense of transpersonal connections with feelings of responsibility and concern for our ecological community with its many living beings and energetic life processes;

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7. *Planetary Self*, transpersonal, sense of self goes beyond our ecological community and bioregion to embrace the whole Earth Household and we recognize that we are all within a vast diverse system and must be responsible members of the whole Earth assembly of beings;

8. *Cosmic Self*, post-personal, in that we are no longer focused only on our Earthly home but feel connection with the whole cosmic system. The cosmic self is sometimes called *cosmic consciousness* for its universal sense of unity and harmony with the whole of creation. All values and possibilities are felt expressed in a time transcending sense of the eternal presence of awareness permeating all of reality. This is *Buddha Nature* for Buddhists, *Christos* for early Christians, and *Atman* in Hindu traditions. In all traditions this is beyond languages and dichotomies. This is the highest sense of perfection and harmony humans realize. Some say that all beings can participate in this perfection and strive to realize it in their own ways. Anyone can realize this *Self* and it happens to persons in completely spontaneous ways. We can glimpse it in almost any other stage. There are many systems that cultivate our spiritual nature to progress toward this full realization. (*Wild Way Home*, Drengson 2010 pp 248 ff.)

H. Developmental Stages and Forms of Identification as Circle of Self

Developmental Stages and Forms of Self Identification

Our natural state is open and flowing like an infant. As we go through stages and forms we take on appropriate self structures that we partially shed when moving into other forms and stages. The spheres have permeable boundaries. The lines between them represent relationships and processes. Universal Energy spirals move into and out of the self circle into and from the larger milieu.

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The Adam and Eve story is completed by the Gospel eschatology. It tells of the birth of an infant in a state of perfection represented by Eden. As complements man and woman must realize their distinct nature from their origin by choices from a wide range of values. This development is aware responsibility, the time of historical persons told in biographies. We perfect ourselves by our own efforts. Eventually, we realize our distinctiveness as historical persons, which Jesus and Mary represent. He becomes the *archetypal* historical person as egoic consciousness. He perfects this historical presence by following and teaching a way of life transcending war and conflict. This *way of love* unifies male and female energies as complements. We enter a transcendental awareness transforming temporal consciousness into the *Christos,* the universal Self awareness always present everywhere. *It is eternal and all are perfect in it*. Each place in the universe is this center of reality, for the Cosmos is eternal and infinite. In the crucifixion the vertical line of the cross points to the cosmic dimensions and is anchored in the Earth. The cross vertical represents the eternal. Jesus' hands are on the horizontal representing flowing historical time. Jesus as ego self is sacrificed and so the *Christos* is realized and eternal perfection is manifest. Each person has this possibility for Jesus is human and his spirit is "born of woman" as receptive.

NB The deification of people realizing cosmic consciousness is a common mistake and can side track our own spiritual practices. We can be caught up in compensatory cravings and strivings that do not bring great joy and completion. Jesus and Siddhartha are not gods; what they realized is open to all. They taught that *each of us has the light of the Christos and the Buddha within*. Buddha said to his comrades, "Be a light unto yourselves." (Drengson, *Wild Way Home* 2010b, pp 250-251.)

H. Forms and Powers of Self, Community and Nature

(Drengson 2010b *WWH* p 219)

1. Powers of Self	2. Forms of Relationship	3.Requirements of Community	4. Community Theme-sets	5. Principles of Ecology
Physical body	Prepersonal-subjective	Mutual place	Productive (economic)	Everything goes and is someplace
Feelings and emotions	Intrapersonal - personal	Mutual trust	Aesthetic (artistic)	Nature knows best
Cognitive - intellectual	Interpersonal - objective	Mutual aid	Theoretical and formal knowledge (scientific)	No free lunch
Spiritual, integrative, unitive	Transpersonal-universal	Reciprocal values	Spiritual transformation (religious)	All things are interrelated (on all levels)

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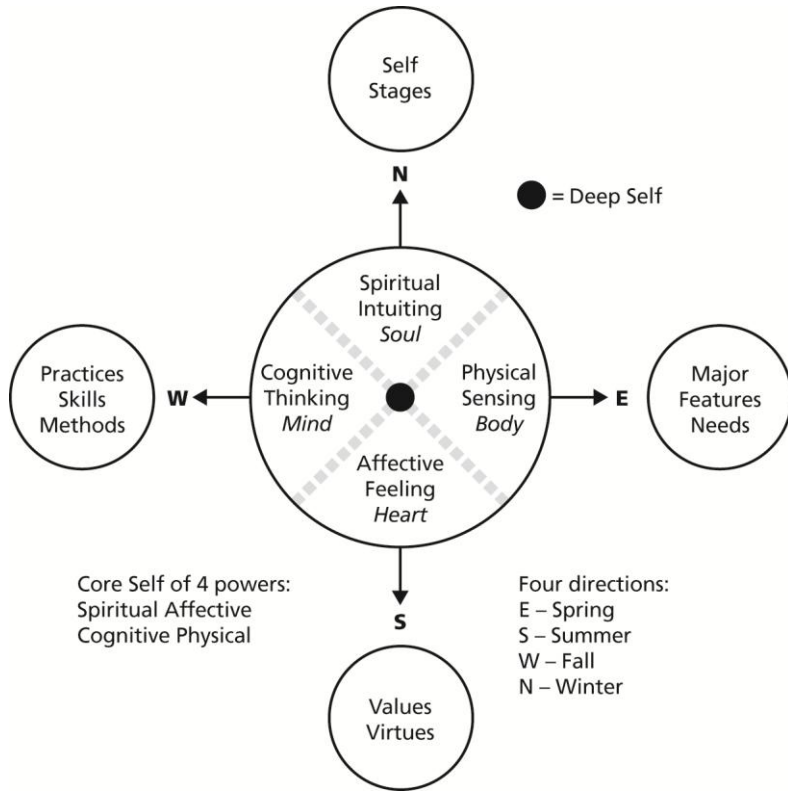
I. Medicine Circle as Self Constellation (Drengson 2010b p 254)

Humans are spiritual beings, *as are all sentient beings*. This was well said by Jane Smiley (2000/2001) in an interview at the end of *Horse Heaven*. The interviewer observed:

"RF: It seems as though the line between horse and human in your novels is even more blurred in your day-to-day experience."

JS said: "I prefer to think of it like this: Everybody is essentially a spiritual being who is temporarily settled in a horse or a human or a dog—whatever. Our essential communication with another being is spiritual communication, which is filtered through one body to another despite differences in shape or form. With a horse, for example, there's a connection that takes place on a very arcane, spiritual level—not in the realm of motions or actions or intentions. We meet in the realm of attention. The job of the horse-trainer or lover or parent or novelist is to remove the various obstacles to spiritual connection in order to meet the other being in the realm of true attention." (This is the last exchange in the Reader's Guide at the end of the book.)

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J. Worldviews and Cosmologies (See Smart's typology on p 16 above in this essay.)

Appendix 2: Resources and References

Here are resources for subjects discussed in this essay. They connect with diversity of cultures, places and personal identities related to diverse cosmologies, religions, worldviews, personal philosophies, systems of practice and *Whole Arts*. Aikido and the *Wild Way* are two Whole Arts I practice. The complex and diverse systems of oral traditions that continue throughout the world are richly adapted to diverse ecological places and ecosophies. Their narrative, creative and ceremonial approaches address the wide range of challenges humans face. These cosmological, cultural and spiritual systems provide diverse *Ways* to find meaning, community and participation in creative acts from day to day. These systems are participatory, recursive, self-organizing and ever changing. They are creative as is life. Each *ecosophy* is an achievement based on continuing commitment. The references are divided into **A** for Articles & websites, and **B** for Books.

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Appendix 3: Codes, Laws, Constitutions, and Charters f**or Comparative Multicultural Research**

For purposes of multicultural interdisciplinary inquiry here are some online documents. They can be compared using typologies such as: *government structure, laws, duties* and *rights*. This is not an exhaustive list, but has some earliest and more recent documents on *governance*. Many of these documents have been very influential. They are in English not in the original languages. They reflect considerable cultural diversity. Many provide a framework for a multicultural, multinational federation. Some ancient codes are still in use in some places, even elements of Hammurabi's Code. Many of these Codes and Systems existed long before writing. They reflect older oral traditions of practice and performance that continue in many places.

Hammurabi's Code of Law (one of the oldest surviving written codes of law) from Babylon about 1760 BCE.

Law Code of Gortyn (Crete) ca. 450 BCE (From inscriptions on columns.)

Athenian Constitution as Studied by Aristotle about 340 BCE, translated by Frederic G. Kenyon. Aristotle studied similar documents from 158 cities. Also see the original document.

Japanese Constitution written down around 697 AD but derived from much older documents called the *Nihongi: Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times*. There are postwar constitutional documents for Japan, but I have used this one for an example of more ancient precepts.

Magna Carta, originally written in England in Latin in 1215, is a document setting out the relationships between the Barons, the crown and other divisions of British society and its relations to other domains in the British Isles.

Britian adopted a Bill of Rights in 1689. The British Constitution is an unwritten body of laws and traditions. There is a common law system, a system of legislation, and a body of court decisions.

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Iroquois Great Law of Peace is a document from about 1000-1400 AD based on wampum record systems and oral traditions. It sets forth the governing principles and systems of law of the Iroquois people and their federation of tribes as a nation. These representative forms of governing are thought to have influenced Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin and others in writing the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.

U. S. Declaration of Independence July 4, 1776.

The *U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights* was set forth by the original states on Sept 17, 1787 and ratified by the states by 1789.

British North American Act, 1867. This act was for the Union of Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and the Government thereof, enacted 29 March 1867. This document governed Canada until the *Canadian Charter and the Constitution Act of 1982*.

Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms enacted in 1982. Canada was already officially bilingual.

The *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* was introduced in 1985 and enacted in 1988.

French Constitutional system of government evolved from the French Revolution (1789-1799) until today with many versions of its Constitution, and one of the recent ones with its amendments was in force by 1958. The First Republic was formed in 1792.

Constitution of India adopted 26 January 1950. Full document is online.

Constitution of the Russian Federation ratified on December 12, 1993. This is an exceptionally long and complex document that lists the nations involved, and states that this is a multinational document. The Federation involves many different languages and cultures.

Constitution of the People's Republic of China adopted on December 4, 1982. Online versions include more recent updates to 2004.

Constitution of Norway was adopted on May 17, 1814 while Norway was under the rule of the King of Sweden. Although Norway is one of the oldest countries in Europe, first unified in 859 AD, it was later ruled by Demark and then Sweden for almost 400 years. When freed from Sweden in 1905, the Norwegians elected to call their country a Kingdom and reinstall a monarchy with a Parliamentary system. It is unusual in this respect. Its system is similar to England's, but different, since Norway is a chosen constitutional monarchy.

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Springer in 2005. He is the coeditor of 5 anthologies: *Philosophy of Society*; *Deep Ecology Movement; Ecoforestry: The Art and Science of Sustainable Forest Use; Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess;* and *Wild Foresting: Practicing Nature's Wisdom*. He is founding editor in 1983 of the now online journal *The Trumpeter: Journal of Ecosophy* and later founded the *Ecoforestry Journal*. He leads workshops in the *Wild Way*. He presented in the *Massey Symposium* at the University of Toronto's Massey College in March 2005. In spring 2008 he was a Visiting Professor at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby BC in Canadian Studies and taught "Multiculturalism, Sense of Place and Personal Identity." This essay was originally drafted in relation to this course and early drafts were locally circulated. Email: alandren@uvic.ca. Some of his articles are at: www.ecostery.org and http://trumpeter.athabascau.ca.

This essay is in an ongoing project of these published and unpublished essays: **1)** "Systems and Frameworks for Comparative Multicultural Research," 2014 (unpublished); **2)** "Shifting Paradigms: From Technocrat to Planetary Person," 1980 in *Environmental Ethics*, revised and now in *Anthropology of Consciousness* 2011; **3)** "Communication Ecology of Arne Naess," in *Trumpeter* 2010 26, 2; **4)** "Being with Animals," in *Kinship with Animals* 1998; **5)** "Ecological Crisis, the Planetary Deep Ecology Movement, and Western Spiritual Culture," U of Toronto Massy presentation in 2005; **6)** "Emotions, Judgments and Life Quality," in *Trumpeter* 22, 1 2005; **7)** "The Wildway," in *Trumpeter* 20, 1 2003, and also in *Coming of Age* 2004; **8)** "Ways of Light," 2011-2014 unpublished; **9)** "Designing Personal Philosophies and Harmonious Dwelling Places," 2010, unpublished, an earlier version of this is on the Ecostery Website; **10)** "Getting Deeper into Home Places by Extended Peak Experiences," unpublished 2009; **11)** "Novels, Philosophical Studies and Eco-criticism," in *Indian Journal of Ecocriticism* 2, 2009, pp 10-21; **12)** "Arne Naess, the Deep Ecology Movement and Personal Philosophies," in *Indian Journal of Ecocriticism* 2008; **13)** "The Relevance of Humanities to Environmental Studies," in *Journal of Thought* 13, 1978, pp. 196-204; **14)** "ES From the Early Years: Impressionistic Reflections," 2013 is on the UVic ES website and now in *Restoration Earth 1* (1), 26-33, 2011. Three coauthored published essays are related to this project: **15)** "The Deep Ecology Movement: Origins, Development and Future," with Bill Devall, in *The Trumpeter* 26, 2, 2010; **16)** "Wild Foresting: For Flourishing Communities of all Beings," with Duncan Taylor, in *Wild Foresting* 2009; a revised version entitled "Wild Foresters: Practicing Nature's Wisdom" is now in *The Trumpeter* 29, 1, 2013, 15-38; **17)** "Gestalts, Refrains, and Philosophical Pluralism: A Response to Toadvine," with Tim Quick (now Green), in *Environmental Philosophy,* 2007.

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