

**The following is an excerpt from "Eco-logic in Writing"
(first given as a talk at Naropa in 2007 and forthcoming in a new and expanded edition of *How
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by Leslie Scalapino

In a long poem of mine titled "DeLay Rose," by writing scroll-like, vertical poems whose lines 'come to' a far right margin and drop off single words or end of phrases from that side into that held-edge, an unknown, I have the intent of placing the individual's and all mass actions on one line continually and their (they're) all starting together at one line which is 'coming up' starting again and again. One's being in this wild present (war, corruption, kindness); one is in any case but may not notice it. It's (the wild present's and the line's) any events. Hasn't outside. Hasn't oneself. The line (of writing) is only *there*, on the page.

Dōgen said "Mountains walk." This is an accurate observation. One time when I observed this I was on a ferry on the Yangtze River in China seeing a vast plain of cities of millions seen at the same time with river and mountains being destroyed for a dam in a polluted soup of flowing body of water (from which a fish rose and died before our eyes after which it fell back into the river), air (from which we returned home with pneumonia), and land in rubble, people in hovels of broken bricks with garbage everywhere, lines of laborers carrying huge sacks of coal up mountains while at once spouts of poison poured from factories night and day into the land and water. I wrote a poem called "Friendship" (which title I change now to "Resting lightning that's night" because "Friendship" is too fixed as a condition that's a result also, an imagined entity of exchange, and "Resting lightning that's night" is an optical sight, temporary phenomena and *also* imagined after and *then*).

The writing of "Resting lightning that's night" is notation of one's observing mountains walk—but are they doing that even in being destroyed forever? It was grief for mountains, though the grief was not the point in the sense of the stopping place—rather, I was making (as the syntax, sense of phenomenal space, use of dashes across which are changes) a conceptual level of time and space where any phenomena is dead only then when it has died, when it's in death *then*—a person is in death at the time when they have died, only then, but at a different time which is not when they've died, they are not in death—everything keeps going.

I had a dream while we were on the ferry (we were on the ferry for days) which got into the poem that my grandmother (who I'd usually dream with her face turned to the side and my aware in the dream that she had died) now had her face toward me and I was not aware of her being dead; I was trying to get her together for lunch with a friend whom in real life I hadn't seen for nine years whose face was turned to the side and he did not go to lunch. I woke fearing he was dead. When I returned from China, out-of-the-blue he called saying: "I had a dream about you; I dreamed we were going to go to lunch, but then we didn't." I realized from this that the dream was: not that the man was dead but that my grandmother was not in death *now*—or, not in death later, when not *at* the time when she has died. (Still, she's not alive here.) My dream was an examination of Dōgen's theory of time and being, which I was reading and studying as we sailed on the Yangtze River seeing plains of action of people and natural phenomena at once. Dōgen's theory, briefly, is that all times exist separately at once, present-future-past. Similar to Einstein.

Seeing at the moment of, or at the time of, writing, what difference does one's living make? What difference does one's living make in *that* space, and in relation to spaces all existing at once there? The extended poem is the sound of middles, waterfalls falling in the vast horizontal space (which I was seeing on the Yangtze River) where smoke stacks pour jets up into it birds

flying—and the sense that people are that (are such as only 'in that'). The line goes past (falls/the falls) in space, it surpasses falling creating middles. I was in the action of comparing phenomenal space (that I was in) to my mind's space (of conceiving of this space).

birds falls horizontal in the period when birds are up—[and] one is.

people not speaking—even—when—[as] birds horizontal (now)—[or are]

[past] falls horizontal (space) is people—

—————
she is in 'the realm of death' when she died—but isn't now
—my mind is phenomena—as space in my dream—existing 'only'

—being 'on' water (past) now?—as her not being—is—one—now-
existing only

—is myself now, walking on water (past) in brown night there [on water]?—
only—at the same time—?

—'extreme' is existing only
thinking [my] the man had died was inaccurate—as the dream. It was my
grandmother wasn't (dead)

[that being happiness—as the dream being]—one isn't in death except
when one died

Though I was grieving for mountains, land, and water, whose destruction there (in China) utterly transforms the entire world (not just China)—neither grief nor writing altering this—there *is* a relation to people's action implied. Each can (do) act—at the same time—on all plains and times.

Unrelated actions. Actions and these as mind phenomena change the space. *Anyway.*

not association but space changed
—black humps rainless—only

—————
birds—wakes

cubicles tenements sides pouring factory chemicals from spout—falls— .
brown small thorax fills— not being in oneself— or in them— falls strand
[and] flat water
only living having to die as being that isn't at the same time— one's brown
small thorax— is falls horizontal? There
only
what difference do mountains make?—

—————
'at' night not carrying
one's walking 'brown' night— (walking on water)— people crawling in lines
up
what's the relation to its existing [at the same time]?

—————
'can't face' — (in present is 'at the
same time') the lines of people crawling on coal
carrying— isn't 'facing' the night (?)
land spouts of mills as the same
land— 'not' — on— 1.2 billion— 'facing'
space
one doesn't overwhelm— brown tenements thorax
night's lightning— 'facing'?

—————
Perhaps the start of a sense of 'eco-logical writing,' for myself, is the phrase "my mind is
phenomena," mind (as its phenomena/subjects and as its body), not the same as land but
alongside it. Writing enables the making of that spatial relation (of land and mind-phenomena, the
two placed beside each other). It's a relation that's going on in every instant but writing can also
'make' it (future) by altering space, allowing one to see one's own (also) *joyful* movement in

space (making that) as well as being one's movement and seeing others' movements as joyful.

The text is the altered space, some times one's to walk 3-D in it at jetting evening.

buttocks into evening walking at—/separate—evening
the flaps of the orchids at evening— not running— thighs
—then—[not at the same time]— 'walk'

Writing "Resting lightning that's night" eventually caused another dream (a dream is an action outside the writing but produced by it) in which the dream produces an outside action: seeing that's being forest (thus not from oneself, not with eyes), forest that's at once white and green (two different colors that are at once the same, impossibility of existing together but they do *in the dream*).

The poem is always just mind phenomena and never (as it is separate as language) touches or exchanges with land or one's physical action in space—except making this as part of its mind phenomena.

"white green"— 'no' — occur in one in dream in a forest
walking—there not to be any— separation between 'that' — being in forest—
there
only— but the dream is "whitish" rim, 'no eyes' — there — isn't in one
— is in the dream. — pair only — are 'that' . — "white green" night — is.

the two huge realms — not in one — occur

In *It's go in/quiet illumined grass/land*, I placed land and freezing sky (so a line having a far right margin, set on my computer, reaching the page's edge wherever it does slipped off onto the next line in actual-space of page held on that far further-than-normal edge of page) *beside* my mind-phenomena, on the far right edge of the page's margin (gesture of my doing that and of perceptual faculties, sight, thoughts) the intention was to place and hold 'one whole person' beside the whole

day or a night, there. No conflicts or psychology exist on that line! As I went along I thought of various events in climate and day and was making as it happens a juxtaposition of heaven and hell, the poem beginning to show the two were/are part of the same space. Philip Whalen was still alive but was ill; he was on the edge of death then yet returned to health for a year and a half (before dying). I got into the state of illusion, in writing my poem, of trying to hold him (by the poem) in life. He also 'got into' the poem noted as having the characteristic of just placing his mind (his nature and mind-habits) in or beside/by land-sky the-outside-heaven and just his being *that*: a quality of peaceful, clear without turmoil. As one's 'being,' just place it there, just be *that* (in a state of choosing just 'being in' illumined grass land).

silver half freezing in day
elation the
outside
of the outside sky walking
rose

silver half freezing in day
moon's elation
of the outside rose, his seeing
on both
'sides'
seeing someone else at all and the
half freezing
elation of the outside so that's even
with one
continually over and over one/person

he will
also now person dying? Is not
compared to
space they're in outside silver freezing
half
moon day now both walking rose
instant
running— wall— wall

A person dying passes out of *that* (*there!* the) frame of seeing. That person being in place (phenomenal) when alive also intersects with other times at once. The poem makes plateaus seen conceptually.