

# MANIFESTO

Nanao Sakaki

Hokkaido island will be an independent country.  
Because the sea of Okhotsk, the mother ocean  
dyes your heart pure indigo.  
Because the primeval forest of Shiretoko peninsula  
dyes your heart pure green.  
Because the snow-covered Sarobetsu wasteland  
dyes your heart pure white.

Hokkaido island will be an independent country.  
Because yeddo spruces soar in clouds.  
Because giant angelica flowers flame up in summer.  
Because there are countless edible plants and mushrooms.

Hokkaido island will be an independent country.  
Because you could see irreplaceable wild beings -  
grizzly bears, Blakiston's fish owls,  
black woodpeckers and Parnassus butterflies.

Hokkaido island will be an independent country  
Because you can meet wonderful human animals -  
fishermen, farmers, mountain men, hobos,  
musicians, artists, poets.

Hokkaido island will be an independent country  
Because you can love delightful birds -  
kids, women and men.

This island is made as a garland  
No nuclear power plants  
No agri-chemicals  
No big corporations  
No authorities  
No arms.

We call this island Moshiri, the Peaceful Land -  
after the Ainu's name

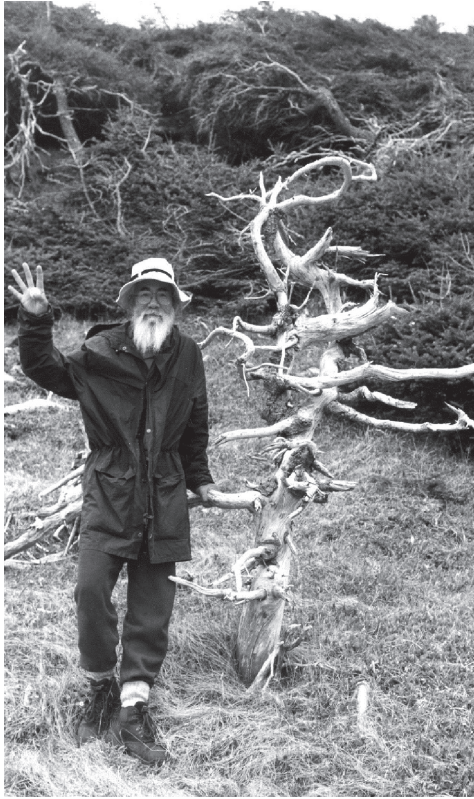
Now together with  
Alaska, Tierra del Fuego, New Guinea, Yunnan and Siberia  
let's start a Pacific Basin union.

And together with  
Andromeda nebula, Orion constellation and  
Magellanic clouds

let's start a Federation  
for the Universe.

September 1986 / 1991

From Nanao Sakaki's *How to Live on the Planet Earth*; reprinted with permission. See also the Gulf of Maine Poetry Blog's 'Nanao, Gary Snyder and Albert Saijo CD'.



*Nanao Sakaki, Gros Morne National Park, Newfoundland, Canada, 1994. Photograph by Elizabeth Leonard.*

**Nanao Sakaki** (1923–2008) was a wandering Japanese poet sage of the 20th century. His travels took him from Yaponesia to Europe, from Hokkaido to Australian Aboriginal lands, from China to the United States, from Prague to Pompei, from base camp at Mt Everest to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, from the Mexican desert to icebergs off Newfoundland. Gary Snyder said about his work: ‘You can put these poems in your shoes and walk a thousand miles...’. Nanao left his poems behind him, and they have been published in collections in many countries, including Japan, the United States, Australia, Italy, Finland and the Czech Republic. He lived his life a ninja desert rat, a 7th son. Nanao planned, for his 100th birthday, to climb Mt. Olympus on Mars, the highest peak in the solar system, and then to ‘work hard for a new solar system as a grain of stardust in the Milky Way’. —Gary Lawless, Damariscotta Lake, Maine.