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Translation as an Intertextual Dialogue: “Cold Mountain Poems” and Gary Snyder’s Geopoetics

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Abstract

In this study, I strive to explore the intriguing relations among translation, textuality, and geopoetics, thereby offering renewed ways of understanding the American poet-translator Gary Snyder's dialogical rendering of the "Cold Mountain Poems". Snyder's translation is based on the Chinese Buddhist poet Han-shan's original texts, therefore, Part One of the thesis contains the contexts of the rediscovery of classical Chinese poetry in the West and a reflection of the Chinese literary tradition. Part Two involves my investigation of the cultural background when Han-shan's texts traveled to the United States, in tandem with the intertextual network of references that Snyder has built in his poetry, as they lead to and are augmented by my observations of Snyder's antidualistic Buddhist stance. For Snyder, certain boundaries are meant to be crossed. As I am working to reconsider aspects of how the "real" and "imagined" places are represented in Snyder's texts, I focus on Snyder's natural writing's potential of becoming vital, radical, fluid, transgressive, or in other words, the world-creating potential of his texts.

Practicing geopoetics as both a method and methodology generates new ways of seeing and being in the world. Poetry presents the possibility of articulating and shaping an inner geography, while translating poetry for Snyder is an ecological program, a Dharmic practice that implies specific responsibilities. It is a challenge that relates to Walter Benjamin's term "afterlife", which describes the nature of translated texts. Part Three of this study is devoted to close readings of "Cold Mountain Poems". Given that Snyder's translation offers abundant evidence of “dialogization” and open-endedness, I examine Snyder’s translation within the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin’s conceptual framework of textual dialogism and argue how a piece of writing in classical Chinese can persist beyond its originating moment in a meaningful and powerful way. I first look into Snyder’s approach to Han-shan through sympathetic co-experiencing and visualizing strategy with a Bakhtinian analysis. Then, I propose that Snyder has Americanized Han-shan’s Cold Mountain as a rewriting, which is against enclosure in a text. Julia Kristeva’s radical term of intertextuality together with Snyder’s ecopoetic vision is essential here for the discussion. I conclude by arguing that although it is not Snyder’s conscious decision (there is no evidence showing he ever read about Bakhtin), Snyder’s aesthetic impersonality throughout his poetic career has demonstrated a unique connection between the Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia and the Avatamsaka Buddhist philosophy of interpenetration, which shares the common ground with deep ecology and post-structuralism, and this explains Snyder’s ethical position. Meanwhile, the fact that Bakhtin’s concept of superaddressee reiterates the theme of hope for discursive contexts, and maybe less obviously, allows for a space where the deepest sense of what a “good translation” entails yet be redeemed.

Keywords: Gary Snyder, literary translation, Mikhail Bakhtin, intertextuality, Buddhism, geopoetics

Resumen

La presente tesis explora las relaciones intrigantes entre la traducción, la textualidad y la geopoética, así que ofrece otra forma de entender "Los poemas de la Montaña Fría" en la traducción del poeta y traductor estadounidense Gary Snyder. La traducción de Snyder se basa en los textos originales del poeta budista chino Han-shan, por lo tanto, la primera parte de la tesis consiste en el contexto del redescubrimiento de la poesía clásica china en Occidente y un reflejo de la tradición literaria china. La segunda parte versa sobre nuestra investigación del trasfondo cultural cuando los textos de Han-shan viajaron a los Estados Unidos. También procura indagar la red intertextual de referencias que Snyder ha construido en su poesía, ya que conducen a nuestras observaciones de la postura budista antidualista de Snyder. Cabe recordar que para Snyder, ciertos límites deben cruzarse. A pesar de reconsiderar aspectos de cómo se representan los lugares "reales" e "imaginarios" en los textos de Snyder, la presente tesis se centra en el potencial de la escritura natural de Snyder de convertirse en algo vital, radical, fluido, transgresor, en otras palabras, en el potencial de creación del mundo de sus textos.

La geopoética genera nuevas formas de ver y estar en el mundo. La poesía presenta la posibilidad de articular y dar forma a una geografía interior, mientras que para Snyder la traducción poética es un programa ecológico, una práctica "dhármica" que implica responsabilidades específicas. Es un reto que se relaciona con el término "vida posterior" de Walter Benjamin, que describe la naturaleza de los textos traducidos. La tercera parte consiste en la lectura detallada de “Los poemas de la Montaña Fría”. Dado que la traducción de Snyder ofrece abundante evidencia de “dialogización” y final abierto, analizamos la traducción de Snyder dentro del marco del pensamiento de dialogismo textual del teórico literario ruso Mijaíl Bajtín. Se demuestra cómo una pieza escrita en chino clásico puede persistir más allá de su lugar de origen de forma significativa y poderosa. Primero, analizamos cómo Snyder se acerca a Han-shan a través de la estrategia de visualización y coexperiencia empática, según las teorías de Bajtín. Segundo, proponemos que Snyder ha americanizado la Montaña Fría de Han-shan como una reescritura, lo cual está en contra del encierro en un texto. El término radical de intertextualidad de Julia Kristeva junto con la visión ecopoética de Snyder es esencial para el análisis. Por último, concluimos argumentando que aunque no es una decisión consciente de Snyder (no hay evidencia demuestre que alguna vez leyó sobre Bajtín), la impersonalidad estética de Snyder a lo largo de su carrera poética ha demostrado una conexión entre la noción de heteroglosia de Bajtín y la concepción budista de la interpenetración, que comparte con la ecología profunda y el postestructuralismo, y esto explica la posición ética de Snyder. Mientras tanto, el hecho de que el concepto de superdestinatario de Bajtín reitere el tema de la esperanza para los contextos discursivos, quizás de manera menos obvia, permite un espacio donde aún podría ser redimido lo que implica una “buena traducción”.

Palabras clave: Gary Snyder, traducción literaria, Mijaíl Bajtín, intertextualidad, budismo, geopoética

Dedicated to

Hao Jinlan (郝金兰), my beloved grandmother,

because she loved to study and cherished her school memories;

because she was ingenious, selfless, and so dear to me.

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To read about the Sierra Nevada of California that Snyder drew on for a sense of Han-shan’s world while surrounded by the stunning Sierra Nevada of Granada in Spain gave me some ideas not only of what it said but *where* certain meanings occurred. The synchronicity reminds me again about the interconnectedness, just as considering the course of this work’s composition, so many people deserve my profound gratitude.

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Part One: Contexts

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 An Alternative Pacific Rim Discourse

“The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989” exhibition held at the Guggenheim Museum in the spring of 2009 presents the infusion of the Eastern philosophy and aesthetics in American artists’ works. A variety of media including paintings, sculptures, installations, music, film and others were seen in the exhibition. Among the artworks, a centerpiece in the Section “Abstract Art, Calligraphy, and Metaphysics” is Brice Marden’s breakthrough work “Cold Mountain Studies 1–35 (1988–90)”. The calligraphic ink-on-paper work focuses on the spontaneous brushstroke, which is a way to approach Zen Buddhism’s ethics of direct action in the art of calligraphy alongside the East Asian tradition. The title of the series comes from the Buddhist poet Han-shan (literary means “cold, chilly mountain”) of Tang China. The Pulitzer prize-winning poet, mountaineer, and Zen Buddhist Gary Snyder was invited to give a one-time addition during the exhibition. The reading selections include his translation of “Cold Mountain Poems” originally written by Han-shan and pieces of Snyder’s original poems collected in *Riprap* and *Mountains and Rivers without End.* One goal of the exhibition is to show how a group of American art is evolved from particular subjects in Eastern tradition and has them transferred into transient experiences with something intangible remained to provoke the viewers’ consciousness. If one form of medium could not holistically present the Eastern aesthetics' influences on Western art, the varied media of attempt in this direction urge us to find the connections and the extract "pure language" in all of them.

This event involves several intriguing issues that are associated to the discussion of this study. In the past century, ever since Ezra Pound's *Cathay*, a few westerners' desire of pursuing the aesthetic and intellectual connections makes Asia a source of something "timeless and eternal". More specifically, the metaphysical non-object orientation of Chinese art appears to be a relief or responses for the western modern artists' concerns to the decay and dilemmas of today's world. Cross-cultural communications, in a certain way, could fashion a kind of dialogism, a model of the world that emphasizes an ongoing interaction that permeates both physical and symbolic boundaries. A central element of this worldview lies in the notion that entities are formed in and through their dialogic relations with "the others" rather than being pre-constituted monads, and this process is continual without ultimate closure. We could say that the artwork maintains its utopian dimension in projecting an alternative reality that depicts a discernible world. The images or texts, as varied media, present inner or outward journeys of a subject, and make possible new ways of imagining the world.

Discourse as a larger, even more open-ended structure than texts, are frameworks that embrace combinations of concepts, narratives, ideologies, and signifying practices, each relevant to certain social realms, offering a framework for understanding the world. In history, the imperialist societies tie the people in the East (the societies and peoples who inhabit Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa, etc.) under their continued political dominance and the western ways of the production of knowledge. As how Edward Said accuses in *Orientalism* (1978), the West's representation of "the East" is normally associated with mystical primitivism which needs to be "improved" by the "rational" and "modern" West. This phenomenon is also seen in how the American indigenous people were denied and neglected on their own land. Since World War II, there has been an increased use of "Pacific Rim discourse" by politicians and business leaders. The Pacific Rim becomes a buzzword that summoned as the postmodern frontier, as Timothy Gray describes, "a speed zone where technological development and financial transaction were granted free rein, a space where the distance between East and West magically collapsed" (5). Among various attitudes towards this region, no matter for those who see it as a theater of war, a growing global market or those who see it as a "realm of peace and human partnership, emphasizing the 'spiritual needs' of its 700 million citizens" (Gray 10), since the 1990s there has been a growing tendency to examine the idea of Pacific Rim with a critical eye. While some westerners have been traveling across the Pacific in the attempt to promote capital growth, imperial expansion, or "become native", there are other positive acts, in contrast with those hegemonic practices, that aim to join the Pacific citizens in forming a global community. In the age of confusion and change, Snyder has been searching for an alternative Pacific Rim discourse, making Asian cultures attractive and practical for the Americans who were at odds with the cold war attitudes.

Born in San Francisco of working-class parents in 1930, Snyder grew up in different places in Washington, Oregon, and California. No matter where he lived, he had always kept a close relation to nature as an active mountain climber. In 1951, he received a dual degree in literature and anthropology at Reed College, then after a semester of linguistics study at Indiana University, he transferred to the graduate school of the University of California at Berkeley to study oriental languages (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems,* 65). In 1956, he left the United States for Japan and spent several years as a Zen Buddhist student there. His translation of the ancient Chinese Buddhist monk Han-shan's twenty-four "Cold Mountain Poems" firstly appeared in the magazine *Evergreen Review* in 1958, which has been widely read by American college students and poetry lovers ever since (Chung, "Han Shan, Dharma Bums, and Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain" 541). His first book of poetry *Riprap* was published in 1959, followed by *Myths and Texts* (1960) and a series of other important collections of poems and essays. After twelve years of residence in Asia, Snyder returned to the United States in 1969. He built a house in the watershed of the South Yuba River in the foothill of the northern Sierra Nevada and created a self-sufficient community "Kitkitdizze". During the following decades, he has been living there while writing and teaching as a professor of English on the faculty at the University of California at Davis.

Associated with the Beat generation, Snyder has been depicted as a new "American cultural hero" in his friend Jack Kerouac's autobiographical novel *The Dharma Bums* (1958). In the book, the protagonist Japhy Ryder is based on Snyder, who appears as the narrator's climbing companion, a mountaineer, poet, and Buddhist practitioner. In Snyder's real life, apart from the profound influence from the Eastern culture, his early experience in nature continues inspiring him, while the juxtaposition of physical labor and the intellectual pursuit has been creating an organic balance in his writing. As a cultural voyager, Snyder seeks to a renewed sense of world, who believes that the Americans are obliged to keep on scanning the oceanic horizon to find new and better forms of an imagined community.

Like other sciences and arts, geography has been complicit in different regimes of dominations, from the direct imperialist appropriations of territory to more subtle redistributions of power and knowledge across an array of social institutions and spaces (Tally 37). In his essay on "Traveling Theory", Edward Said argues that geopolitics in the globalized world and the transfer of ideas in humanities encounter both "conditional acceptance" and "resistance" when traveling to a new cultural environment. Rather than simply following the structure of the European centers and non-European peripheries, the "historical transfer" also works for the "traveling texts" in an opposite direction from the East to the West. According to Said,

> Cultural and intellectual life are usually nourished and often sustained by this circulation of ideas, and whether it takes the form of acknowledged or unconscious influence, creative borrowing, or wholesale appropriation, the movement of ideas and theories from one place to another is both a fact of life and a useful enabling condition of intellectual activity. (226)

In this respect, the artwork in the exhibition of "The Third Mind" in Guggenheim, as well as Ezra Pound and Gary Snyder's absorptions of the Chinese poetics and how they transferred it into western literary classics all contribute to the "circulation of ideas" in a Saidian sense. The spatial thinking is also seen in the concept of "contact zone" proposed by Mary Louise Pratt. The contact zones reassess the nature of cultural boundaries, which in Pratt's description, are "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination—like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (4). The existence of interstitial zones and hybrid identity challenge the legitimacy of established borders, as Maurizio Ascari notes, "in the postmodern age of traveling and communication, boundaries are unceasingly dislocated and relocated, trespassed and transgressed", while "the postmodern suspicion of binarism and of fixed boundaries has also helped to radically reshape the humanist view of identity" (221). In this regard, Snyder's countercultural invocation of the regional idea and his ecological consciousness shown in his translation and original poems keep providing penetrating insights into the complex ongoing negotiation.

1.2 Translation as an Open-ended Dialogue

Among all kinds of difficulties in literary translation, translating poetry from Chinese into English is undoubtedly a tricky task. It is not merely because Chinese relies on characters instead of an alphabet to build words, or because Chinese poetic images are often expressed without verbs, but also due to the differences in philosophical and aesthetic outlooks between

China and the West. According to the study of Wai-Lim Yip (16), the success in a Chinese poem to a great extent depends on the sparseness of syntactic demands, which helps the poet to highlight independent visual events in coextensive spatial relationships. Meanwhile, as a medium for poetry, the language would not become what it is without the support of a unique aesthetic horizon. Then, the inseparability between language and worldview raises the question of how a language of rigid syntactic rules, like English, can approximate and represent the Chinese mode of presentation and its aesthetics.

In the 1928 introduction to Ezra Pound's Selected Poems, T.S. Eliot made his famous statement that "Pound is the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time" ("Introduction" in *Selected Poems,* 14). Often quoted as a praise, it also suggests the limits of Pound's pseudo-translation of classical Chinese poetry with its dazzling opacity rather than a clear window onto the East. Decades later, Gary Snyder took a different poetic journey from Pound in his translations of the twenty-four "Cold Mountain Poems". The poems were originally written by the eighth century Chinese Buddhist monk Han-shan, while Snyder's renderings dissolves Han-shan's original texts as self-contained entity, as this study argues, and makes it fluid with weaves of multiple levels of meaning.

Translation, illuminating both the cultural otherness and the epistemological otherness, in today's world context becomes a border concept for a series of intellectual and ethical issues. Language and translation open up complexities and negotiations that occupy in this fast transforming technologies and populations. As Sandra Bermann notes, language and translation operate at every juncture in tightly woven webs of economic, military, and culture power (1). The dialectics of local and global, past and present that come across the contemporary world is sometimes painful, as it is recently shown with the rise of populism and the crisis of globalization. In this context, this study attempts to explore to what extent the translation of poetry can play a creative and powerful role in reconstructing meaning across boundaries.

The etymology of translation, *trans* (across) and *latus* (the past participle of *ferre*, to carry) indicates translation's particular ability to offer insight and transport meaning. Commonly defined as "rendering from one language into another", translation can never be a complete transfer of semantic content but provide a necessary linguistic supplement that bridges cultural chasms in its imperfect or creative negotiations of difference (Bermann 6). Meanwhile, there is a tension between taking translation as a general process and as the result or product of that process. In Samuel Webber's opinion, this attitude of regarding translation as an instrument in the service of the "communication" of meaning obscures that tension by privileging the generality of the process at the expense of its singularity (66). This tendency is reinforced by the spread of "globalization", which suggests "an all-encompassing immanence in which singular differences are absorbed into a generalized whole" (Webber 66). Traced back to its history, nevertheless, translation does not only signify carrying-across but also entail a specific relation of texts to one another. As Aristotle defines a medium is a *diaphanous* interval that allows a certain transmission taking place (cited in Webber, 67). This "third" space in the interval demonstrates the understated nuances of translation studies.

The challenge for translation relates to Walter Benjamin's term "afterlife", which describes the nature of translated texts. In Edmund Chapman's interpretation, "afterlife" or "living on" is a kind of extended life for texts that is bound up with translation, rather than "merely an 'extra' life given to texts through translation" (5). Based on his reading of Benjamin and Derrida, who define language and history as the parameters within which translation takes place, Chapman emphasizes the role of textuality itself as a third parameter, and in turn, translation is essential to the structures of both language and history (4). In this respect, Snyder's textual rendering of "Cold Mountain Poems" seems to show how his translation does not play an instrumental role in communicating meaning, but rather a constitutive role in reconstructing meaning.

In his landmark paper *the name and nature of translation studies* (1972), James S. Holmes has drawn the "map" of translation studies. Among the other founding statements of this new discipline, he notices the "translation sociology" or "socio-translation studies" would be an angle to investigate in what specific time or places, which texts are translated or not, and what influences they have brought. Since then, there have been researchers who put translation in a socio-cultural background, especially the scholars from manipulation school and postcolonial studies, but still, they did not adopt the theories from Sociology systematically. Since the 1990s, more studies have started to introduce the theories from Sociology to translation studies. Pierre Bourdieu's influence on conceptualizing sociology of translation is prominent. The theory of action (*Practical Reason*, 1998) developed by Bourdieu shows a fundamental relationship between the social trajectory of the agent (*habitus*) and the objective structures (field). Remaining a central yet ambiguous concept, *habitus* refers to the ingrained habits, skills, and disposition processing through the agent's life experience, in other words, the physical embodiment of cultural capital. On the other hand, a field is a social arena of struggle over certain kinds of capital (social, economic and cultural), while illusion represents social agents' interests in participating in the game. The heuristic model of Bourdieu's sociology with its key woven-together notions of field, *habitus*, capital and illusion allows for an integration of translation practice. Bourdieu's theory is a sociology of the text, as a production in the process of being carried out. The cultural action in Bourdieu's sense is not only a sociology of the institution but also of its own agents.

The literary field, according to Bourdieu, is a "force-field" that aims at transforming or maintaining the established relation of forces: "each of the agents commits the force (the capital) that he has acquired through previous struggles to the strategies that depend for their general direction on his position in the power struggle, that is, on his specific capital" (Bourdieu 143). If a translator substitutes his or her voice for that of the author, rather than a conscious strategic choice, it is an effect of his or her special *habitus* that is acquired in the target literary field. The challenge of translation lies in the interplay between the resemblance and difference that exist in the source and target cultural context, and thus achieving the illusion could be the ultimate goal of the translator, whose work is embodied in his or her bi-cultural *habitus* that orients the foreign texts towards a new social culture.

In the meanwhile, we shall remember that theorists all have their ideological agenda. With the development of globalization and different kinds of cross-cultural encounters, the ideological tensions are increasing not only in political science or anthropology, but also in sociology, cultural studies, and linguistics. Among various definitions of ideology, according to Van Dijk, an ideology is "the set of factual and evaluative beliefs-that is the knowledge and the opinions-of a group […] in other words, a bit like the axioms of a formal system, ideologies consist of those general and abstract social beliefs and opinions (attitudes) of a group" (48-49). Rather than being limited to political spheres, this definition allows researchers to investigate modes of thinking forms of evaluating and codes of behaviors which govern a community by being regarded as the norm. Translation studies, just as technology, gender, or religion, becomes one of the sites for ideological engagement. In what sense is a translator "in-between" also raises significant questions.

In her 2006 book *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature*, Emily Apter tries to redefine the discipline of Comparative Literature in terms of translation in the post 9/11 world. The book took shape in the tragic wake of 9/11 when Apter realized the translation and global diplomacy had never been so mutually implicated. Translation has moved to the frontier as an issue of major political and cultural significance and takes on special relevance as a matter of war and peace (3). In this context, Apter rethinks translation studies in a broad theoretical framework that stresses the role played by the mistranslation in war, to reevaluate the influence of language in the formation of the literary canon, and to re-examine the aesthetic significance of experiments with nonstandard language in the age of technological literacy.

Language remains a central theme in Apter's conceptualization of *The Translation Zone*. She puts forward a critical model of language politics which would continue to focus on theoretical and aesthetic puzzles. *The Translation Zone: A New Comparative Literature* opens with twenty axioms on translation, beginning with “Nothing is translatable” and ending with “Everything is translatable”. The two opposing principles emerge as poles of translation theory. Translation happens despite the obstacles leads Apter to the comparative poetics of Alain Badiou, who sees translation as “a disaster that nonetheless enables a singular comparatism of the idea afforded an interesting paradigm, say, one based not on shared philological word-histories, but on the limitless and irreducible bounds of *poiesis*” (quoted in Apter, 9). The philosophy of Badiou has introduced an enhanced democracy of comparison. In Apter’s view, a new comparative literature with the revalued labor of the translator and the theories of translation will expand centripetally toward a genuinely planetary criticism. Speaking of Walter Benjamin’s essay on the “task of the translator”, Apter notices that Benjamin stands at an important intersection in the connection between philology and critical theory, who effects a crucial shift in translation theory through a “fidelity to the original” model towards a transcoding model, where everything is not only translatable but also in a perpetual state of in-translation. A new comparative literature based on translational pedagogies will also reactivate the psychic life of diplomacy (11).

Emily Apter’ another book *Against World Literature: On the Politics of Untranslability* (2013) continues her political critique with theoretical sophistication. One primary argument Apter has noted is that “many recent efforts to revive World Literature rely on a translatability assumption” (3), and the book “tests the hypothesis that translation and untranslatability are constitutive of world forms of literature” (16). “Untranslatable” is not only a technical problem to overcome but also a rich site for philosophical inquiry. The idea derives from a book that Apter participated in the translation into English: *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*—a book edited from the original French version *Vocabulaire europeén des philosophies: Dictionnaire des intraduisibles* (2004) written by Barbara Cassin. Writing the book in the shadow of the global financial crisis, Apter holds serious reservations about the tendencies in World Literature "toward reflective endorsement of cultural equivalence and substitutability or toward the celebration of nationally and ethnically branded 'identities'" (2). Although it is pessimistic in some way, the book has the ambitious aim to activate untranslatability as a theoretical fulcrum of comparative literature with bearing on approaches to world literature, to explore the relation between sovereign and linguistic borders, to discuss the ethical cosmological and theological dimensions of worldliness, and so on (3-4). Meanwhile, we have to consider that in the present world when the western democracies have been narrowed to sets of choices made by technocrats, what impact literary theory can have outside academia. Thus, an intriguing part of Apter's concern and effort in her radical theories is probably how to make her political ambition to have a meaningful effect in the current real world context.

This tension in translation also brings essential challenges for anthropology. The process of translation is both an intellectual concern and political agenda. In *Philosophical Investigations* (1958), Wittgenstein sees language creates the varying propositions that we use in daily expressions. "To understand a sentence means to understand a language. To understand a language means to be master of a technique" (Section 199). Wittgenstein believes that language is a form of life or frame which embeds all of those we consider as grammar, but this grammar *per se* does not capture the essence of the games of language. Here the technique goes beyond the rules *per se* but embrace the entire contexts of language, since the meaning of words cannot exist privately and independently from its context, usage and grammar. Language as image creates the varying propositions that we use to express in our language experience. Therefore, language is a form of life, an organizer of experience, a frame of contexts that bears on the speaker. The issue of difference, for Wittgenstein, must be understood as the essence of language.

Both Wittgenstein and Lyotard have noticed the the dangers of uniformity in expressions. From the postmodern point of view, Lyotard sees translation as a triangulation in which both languages resonate with one another through a third meta-structure which produces or generates similar analogies with each other (30). In *Postmodern Fables* (1991), Lyotard opens to the possibility of translation, stating that language by definition is translatable (153). Meanwhile, he maintains the position in his 1988 book *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute*, that one can never get into how the original speaker's inhabits of language and culture. For the anthropologists, the differences or particularism in cultural translation might include observations that seem incomparable. In regard to difference and particularism, Lyotard presents a more radical stance in *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute* (1988), in which he claims that only a sense of difference and heterodoxy can decrease political domination based on the homogeneity that sweeps away all other voices from the local and the particular. In a similar vein, Derrida suggests how meaning betrays us the moment we think we have captured it in his essay “Des Tour de Babel” (1985). Apart from all these modern or postmodern ideas, still, to view the translation activity in the humanistic dimension that envisioned by Immanuel Kant and other post-enlightenment thinkers, the mutual understanding represented in Snyder’s translation becomes almost “inescapable”: as a kind of meaningful metaphysical communication different from other media of art, translation requires a communal connection between the author and the translator. In this sense, classical Chinese poetry strives to convey its essence through translation and communicate to its audience from other cultures.

In the Marxist aesthetics, there is the ongoing critical discussion between content and form. In Walter Benjamin’s account, the words in a language were not only signifiers in the classic Saussurean assumption, but an inward direction to explore what words mean. It is a framework that doubts the assumption that form is primary to content (Yengoyan 41). According to Walter Benjamin, “the language of a translation can—in fact, must—let itself go, so that it gives voice to the intention to the original, not as reproduction but as harmony, as a supplement to the language in which it expresses itself, as its own kind of *intention*” (21). That is to say, translation also invokes an inside position. Coetzee (2001) notes that Walter Benjamin’s atheoretical approach to the Arcades Project is paralleled to his approach to translation, which “was committed to an internal approach linking words and meaning towards the idea” (41). The eternal conflict between translation of form or content remains a dilemma in either a Marxist or a non-Marxist approach. The challenge for translation lies in that it has to simultaneously convey both similarity and difference of meaning.

The beauty of translation lies in keeping the chaos as part of the process. Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” presents an understanding of the variability in the human condition, and thus appear relevant to these genealogies of intellectual history. Accordingly, the discussion of this thesis fits well in a Bakhtinian approach to see translation as a dialogic activity. For this Russian philosopher and literary critic, dialogue as a form of understanding human relations is never static, but forever in the process of being made or unmade. In Wittgenstein’s idea, there are no “private languages”, while for Bakhtin, the answerability implies continual communication with, and responsibility to, concrete others. Translation in this sense becomes an epistemological device that accounts for meaning in a forever on-going world. The task of translator, hence, is to enter a dialogic space of the source text and target text. In other words, to translate means to create a new utterance with many “microdialogues”. Building a bridge between language and culture, a Bakhtinian approach encourages the process of mutual understanding instead of prioritizing either the “original” or its translation. In a dialogic encounter of two cultures, each retains its open totality and both could be mutually enriched. In this light, the dialogic encounters represented in Snyder’s works have the potential to create a meaningful “interstitial contact zone” across time and the Pacific Rim, and thus illuminates the subtle nuances of translation studies.

1.3 The Spatial Turn

“Is it lack of imagination that makes us come / to imagined places, not just stay at home?" (97) Elizabeth Bishop shows her skepticism to the motives for travel writing in her signature poem "Questions of Travel". Traveling as a symbolic act implies the thrill of escape and the promise of new life, however, the conscious tension always exists in finding oneself seduced by foreign landscapes but lacking the confidence to be an inside player rather than only a spectator. Elizabeth Bishop never meant to be a travel writer, even though her years in Brazil fed her writing with keen direct observation. Gary Snyder as another canonical American poet in engagement with "other" cultures has also avoided the traditional tendency for treating foreign or indigenous landscapes as museum pieces within the colonial expansion. Since his early literary career in the middle of the twentieth century, Snyder has turned literature into an ideal field for experimental geography. In the postmodern era of "incredulity with regard to meta-narratives" (in Lyotard's well-worn phrase), Snyder's translation and original poetry plays a crucial role in breaking boundaries and exploring the spaces between established sites, which does not only represent the world but participates actively in the production of that world.

The way we imagine literature mirrors the way we see the world. As how a number of critics have viewed the past with renewed skepticism in the postwar era, the social theorists Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer explored the "dialectic of Enlightenment", by which the most highly valued ideals of the Age of Reason are seen to have barbaric and disastrous effects. Zhang Longxi recognizes that "the rise of world literature can be seen as coeval with changes in social, economic, and political spheres in an increasingly globalized world. By now we may assume that the 'world' in world literature has to be truly global or, to borrow a term recently made popular, it should be planetary, in a geographical sense" (517). World literature as a concept with deeper connotations has been flexible and changing in response to local needs and contexts.

Since the 1980s, the postmodern spatial turn as a transdisciplinary phenomenon based on the contribution of Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and David Harvey has manifested scholars' moving of focus from time and history to society and social relations. As the Marxist geographer Edward Soja (*Postmodern Geographies,* 4) points out, the dominant, time-focused discourse of the prewar era devalued and masked the underlying spatial realities. Following his postmodern analysis, Soja (*Thirdspace,* 6) sees urban spaces as Firstspace (the physical environment), Secondspace (the conceptual space), and developed his construct of Thirdspace based on Homi Bhabha's Third Space Theory, in which "all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity" (Bhabha, "The Third Space-Interview" 211). In Soja's explanation (*Postmodern Geographies,* 57), Thirdspace is "an-Other way of understanding and acting to change the human life" that is appropriate to the new scope and significance involved in "the rebalanced trialectics of spatiality-historicality-sociality". In the context of this study, Soja's theory of Thirdspace can be used as a mode of critical spatial awareness, where everything comes together: the real and the imagined, the abstract and the concrete, mind and body, the disciplined and the transdisciplinary, everyday life and unending history (*Postmodern Geographies,* 57). In the meantime, the varied layers and structures of meaning in the real and imagined space of the world, to some extent, are created and shaped, by text. The intellectual historian Dominick LaCapra characterizes text as follows:

> It may initially be seen as a situated use of language marked by a tense interaction between mutually implicated yet at times contestatory tendencies. On this view, the very opposition between what is inside and what is outside texts is rendered problematic, and nothing is seen as being purely and simply inside or outside texts. Indeed the problem becomes one of rethinking the concepts of "inside" and "outside" in relation to processes of interaction between language and the world. (26)

The textual process has a referential power in creating alternative realities. As this study suggests, in Snyder's translation of "Cold Mountain Poems", he has built a poetic "Thirdspace" between the East/West culture, between man and nature, while his later collection of poetry *Mountains and Rivers Without End* turns out to be an ecosystem by itself and a model addressing interdependent, intricate, and intimate relationships. In "The Bakhtinian Road to Ecological Insight", Michael J. McDowell acknowledges what critical approach is seen more promising for an ecological analysis. In his opinion, Bakhtin incorporates the thinking about systems and relationships embraced by the hard science, whose notions of dialogics, as well as "chronotope", and "carivalesque", provide an ideal perspective for an ecocritical project in general: "every text, as Bakhtin unfailingly tells us, is a dialogue open for further comments from other points of view. There is no conclusion"

(McDowell 387). Snyder has been acting as an active "spokesman" for nature and for "the other" inhabitants on this planet who draws attention to the issue of difference. The relationship between translation, intertextuality, and the dialogical understanding of space, then, is taken as as one focus of this study. In the later analysis of Snyder's translation of "Cold Mountain Poems" and his original poetry, I remain focused on how varied registered or modes of experience, knowledge, and imagination play out as *dialogic* literary "text" in Snyder's works , which have the potential to demonstrate the spatial turn in translation studies.

1.4 Previous Gary Snyder Criticism

Patrick Murphy concludes in *A Place for Wayfaring: The Poetry and Prose of Gary Snyder* that four areas comprise the heart of Snyder's resources for his poetry: "the cultures of inhibitory or indigenous people, particularly the Native American tribes of the Pacific West"; "The Asian cultures of China, Japan, … particularly in terms of their Buddhist practices and lifestyles", "ecology, a concern of Snyder throughout his life", and "a matter of poetics" (15-17). Snyder himself has his early statements as follows:

> As a poet, I hold the most archaic values on earth. They go back to the late Paleolithic: the fertility of the soil, the magic of animals, the power-vision in solitude, the terrifying initiation and rebirth; the love and ecstasy of the dance, the common work

> of the tribe. I try to hold both history and wilderness in mind, that my poems may approach the true measure of things and stand against the unbalance and ignorance of our times. (*Earth House Hold*, back cover)

The paper “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis” appeared in the journal *Science* in 1967 caused one of the most significant environmental polemics of the last century. In the paper, the historian Lynn White Jr. argues that the environmental degradation is the result of the “Baconian creed that scientific knowledge means technological power over nature” (1203). White traces back the roots of the disastrous ecological problems to the establishment of “a dualism of man and nature” in Christianity when God grants humanity dominion over nature in “the Book of Genesis”. Suggesting the religious remedies might be found outside the Western tradition, White praises the Beat Generation for their affinity for Zen Buddhism and their attention to the man-nature relationship, which is quite an opposite image to the Christian view.

In “Green Reading: Modern and Contemporary American Poetry and Environmental Criticism”, Lynn Keller investigates how Snyder’s living experiences in Japan and other parts of Asia between 1956 to1968 have affected him. Also, from the perspective of anthropology, Keller analyzes how Snyder’s trained interest in tribal cultures and indigenous mythologies shaped his thoughts on humanity’s place in the natural world, and his understanding of the local that is entwined in the global. Likewise, in “Fieldwork in New American Poetry: from Cosmology to Discourse”, Lytle Shaw provides access to understand Snyder’s thoughts by pointing out that his version of eco-poetics had an especially close relation to anthropology. In Shaw's idea, from the readings of early twentieth-century fieldwork, in particular, Snyder opens history to an expanded concept of *daily life* (536; italic added). This interaction ultimately helps to build bridges between New American poets and New Left revolts of the 1960s. The ecological dynamics and the forces of the place, in Snyder's idea, involve an ethical imperative to examine the historical dimension of its oral culture, especially that produced by Native Americans, or Asians as we see in his works. Rather than simply re-presenting this mythology inside poetry, Snyder prefers to collapse the distinctions between poetry, myth, ritual, and practical knowledge.

From the 1950s to 2010s, Snyder has published numerous volumes of poetry and prose. As a well-acknowledged poet in the United States, Snyder has received several important prizes, including the Pulitzer Prize in Poetry, the Guggenheim Foundation fellowship, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award, the Bollingen Prize, the Bess Hokin Prize and the Levinson Prize from Poetry, the Robert Kirsch Lifetime Achievement Award from *the Los Angeles Times*, the Ruth Lilly Poetry Prize, and the Shelley Memorial Award. Snyder was elected a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2003. He was also the recipient of the 2012 Wallace Stevens Award for lifetime achievement by the Academy of American Poets. In 1997, when Snyder won the Bollingen Poetry Prize for his achievement in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, the judges Kenneth Koch, Penelope Laurans and J. D. McClatchey gave the following comments:

> Gary Snyder, through a long and distinguished career, has been doing what he refers to in one poem as “the real work.” “The Real work” refers to writing poetry, an unprecedented kind of poetry, in which the most adventurous technique is put at the service of the great themes of nature and love. He has brought together the physical life and the inward life of the spirit to write poetry as solid and yet as constantly changing as the mountains and rivers of his American—and universal—landscape.[1]

Since the early stage in his career, Snyder has been pursuing his own agenda. He has surely experienced the period when his works were ignored or misunderstood. The early supportive response that he received was from the radical pamphlets, obscure journals or counter-culture newspapers. Gradually, his works have been recognized by a wider group of readers and drawn the attention of academia. In the past decades, the critical criticism on Gary Snyder mainly concentrates on his concern to the Native Americans, his multicultural experiences, as well as his ecological thoughts and eco-poetry. Since Bob Steuding’s *Gary Snyder* was published in 1976 after Snyder’s success of *Turtle Island*, several full-length books on Snyder have appeared. For instance, Charles Molesworth’s *Gary Snyder’s Vision* (1983) set valuable ground for understanding Snyder’s political and social thoughts. Tim Dean’s *Gary Snyder and the American Unconsciousness: Inhabiting the Ground* (1991) offers a Lacanian psychoanalytic reading of Snyder’s works in relation to the unconsciousness of the mainstream American population.

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[1] “A Brief Biography,” University of California, Davis. Dept. of English website, November 11, 2007. See at www.englishucdavis.edu/faculty/snyder/a_brief_bio.html.

The other influential works include Patrick Murphy's *Understanding Gary Snyder* (1992) and *A Place for Wayfaring: The Poetry and Prose of Gary Snyder* (2000), which are essential reader's guides to understand Snyder's works from his beginning years up to *Mountains and Rivers Without End* with close reading supplemented with biographical details. In 2004, Anthony Hunt's *Genesis, Structure, and Meaning in Gary Snyder's "Mountains and Rivers Without End"* finally come out after twenty-five years of work. In the book, Hunt traces back to the origin and genesis of the poems from the Chinese landscape painting, the Japanese Nō Play, the Buddhist thoughts, and the Native American traditions. Timothy Gray's *Gary Snyder and the Pacific Rim: Creating Countercultural community* (2006) is an interdisciplinary project, arguing that Snyder attempts to connect the East and the West as "a unified geometric construct: a rim" (xii). Tan Qionglin's *Han Shan, Chan Buddhism and Gary Snyder's Ecopoetic Way* (2009) is a work that tries to draw the three threads together into one system of ideas as it shows in the title. Reading Snyder's translation and his original poems in Buddhist poetics. Page Tovey's *The Transatlantic Eco-Romanticism of Gary Snyder* (2013) views Snyder as an heir of English Romanticism. Even though she has little analysis of Eastern religions, she does notice the essential relation between Snyder's Buddhism and Transcendentalist individualism.

The above mentioned scenario and scope of Gary Snyder criticism remains a gap to examine Snyder's translation of "Cold Mountain Poems" and his geopoetics together. From the perspectives of the Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin, I intend to explore how "Cold Mountain Poems" appears as an intertextual dialogue and creates an ethical relationship between the self and the other. The notion of textuality entails the interaction between language and the world. This study also includes the angle to see visual arts as “texts” in potential, to complement the discussion that in which ways the Buddhist philosophy evokes a reconstruction of reality, as well as how Snyder’s approach contributed to the more general reception of Han-shan among his fellow American poets and cultural agents.

1.5 Methodology

Ezra Pound’s pseudo-translation of Chinese poetry does not only make him “the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time” in T. S. Eliot’s comment but also shows that a proper approach to literary relations between China and the West requires an interdisciplinary critical model of cross-cultural interpretation. Cross-cultural interpretation as a hermeneutic activity concerns the recovery of meaning and how we conceive ourselves as engaged with interlocutors. In this account, the language philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin’s signature concept of dialogism and his exploration of the self/other relation provide a valid critical model to apply to certain intellectual challenges.

Well-known for his study entitled “Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics” (1929), Bakhtin holds the belief in a mutual relation between meaning and context, as well as the idea that language is not static but evolves dynamically. As a wide-ranging and suggestive writer, Bakhtin has influenced Western schools such as Neo-Marxism, New Criticism, structuralism, deconstruction, and historicism. Although he never wrote much on translation, his thoughts in combination with other approaches illuminate the discussion of texts' potential for translation. Snyder's translation of "Cold Mountain Poems" offers abundant evidence of "dialogization" and open-endedness to lend itself to a Bakhtinian analysis, which remains an unexplored angle for an understanding of Snyder's work. In this article, I intend to fill the gap with a close reading of Snyder's translation while consulting relevant theories on translation studies and comparative literature.

At the same time, I try to understand Snyder's encounter with the "Cold Mountain" and his alternative Pacific Rim discourse at the conjuncture of the geographical and ecological perspectives. In Bertrand Westphal's ideas, the postcolonial theory is along with the radical geography. This French literary critic puts forward the geocritical approach, arguing that a proper study of literature shall take spatiality into account. In his programmatic study *Geocriticism: Real and Fictional Spaces* (2011), Westphal sets forth the four tenets of this critical method: geocentrism, multifocalization, polysensoriality, and stratigraphic perspective. Here, I am not going into a detailed discussion of each of these principles, while in summary the goal at the heart of the geocritical method is to get a sort of dialogical understanding of the chosen place. On the other hand, literary ecology focuses on changing how people think about the environment with its strong activist bent. Since the 1960s, ecocriticism has formed part of the environmental movement. The "eco" in "ecocriticism" often remains a signal without clear reference, rather, as Waldron and Friedman indentify, ecocriticism addresses larger ontological challenges by making room for methodologies of human geography, urban ecology, and their recognition of the role of language in meaning-making (7). It is seen that ecocriticism often overstresses the thematics at the expense of the textual mechanics of representation, nontheless, in this regard, Snyder's works with its textual sophistication have much to offer ecocritics.

Geopoetics as a radical enterprise concerns the state of human being in the universe. It is a field of inquiry that is increasingly inspiring innovative modes of conceptualization and practice. Kenneth White's work *On Geopoetics* (1992) has inspired groups such as the Scottish Centre for Geopoetics, while texts such as *Geo Humanities: Art, History*, *Text at the Edge of Place*; *Envisioning Landscapes, Making Worlds: Geography and the Humanities* (Daniels et al. 2011; Dear et al. 2011), among the others, show the growing intersections between the humanities and geography. Sarah de Leeuw considers geopoetics as both a method and a methodology, since *writing*—or to a great extent oration—always expresses a philosophical and theoretical orientation to the world (Magrane et al. 9). It enables us to understand the geographical and geoecological dimension of a literary text. In the meanwhile, as Eric Magrane (9) points out, geopoetics can be "a practice of radical experimentation in making new worlds".

However, the overlaps between contemporary discussions on ecopoetics that hadn't yet been fully articulated in relation to geography (Magrane et al. 2). Regarding to where the "geo" and "eco" overlap (at an intersection of the material and the "insubstantial"), Linda Russo found the distinction that Gary Snyder makes, between "the world of culture and nature, which is actual... and the insubstantial world of political and rarefied economies" *(The Snyder Reader*, 192), to be helpful. In other words, the "actual" world of the former—where all species perform their earth-making—is eclipsed by the latter, which “passes for reality” (Magrane et al. 3). Specifically in this study, Snyder’s geopoetics concerns include place, space, landscape, power, publics, human, more-than-human relationships, and of course, language. In concrete historical circumstances, the spatial thinking in both of the geographical and ecological methods could lead to productive literary analysis. By tracing the spatial awareness and the Buddhist ecological thinking in Snyder’s works, I aim to explore the complex but illuminating relation between Snyder’s comprehension of the interrelated forms in reality and the metaphysical feature in his poetic language.

Another research method of this study is to trace back to the relevant literary history. According to Brook Thomas’s “new historicism”, “the relationship between literature and history that directly or indirectly has been influenced by poststructuralist theory” (182-183). This study attempts to put the texts to the sociocultural context where they are produced. Meanwhile, close reading and detailed analysis of the original texts will be offered throughout the thesis. Apart from the literature reviewed earlier, this research is obliged to Chung Ling’s relevant monographs including *American Poetry and Chinese Dream: Chinese Cultural Modes in Modern American Verse* (1996), *Gary Snyder and Asian Cultures: A Paradigm of How the West Fuses Oriental Traditions* (2003), *Chinese Zen and American Literature* (2009) and a few important articles of her. Her personal interactions with Snyder and other American writers who are in engagement with Zen are well-documented in the interviews, providing solid information for the discussion of the canonization of the classical Chinese poetry in English and how the Chinese cultural genes have influenced Snyder’ works.

This research looks into Snyder's poetry and prose range from his early publications in the 1950s to his latest poetry collections *This Present Moment* (2015), with special focus going to his most important collections *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems* (1959/1965), *Myths & Text* (1960), *Turtle Island* (1974), *Axe Handles* (1983), and *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (1996). Some of his other works, for example, the 1970 collection *Regarding Wave*, which contains love poems that celebrate Snyder's marriage to Masa Uehara in 1967 as an overarching theme while going into the relevant topics that Snyder has been always caring about is not discussed in this dissertation. As a refined essayist, Snyder wrote a large amount of essays that offer clues to understand his thoughts systematically. This study takes his prose collections *Earth House Hold* (1969), *The Practice of the Wild* (1990), *A Place in Space: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Watershed, New and Selected Prose* (1995), *Back on Fire* (2007) among the others as valuable first-hand references for analysis.

Furthermore, the interviews of great moment that collected mainly in *The Real Work: Interviews and Talks, 1964-1979* (1980), and *The Gary Snyder Reader: Prose, Poetry and Translation, 1952-1998* (1999) reveal the context of Snyder's poetry and thoughts. The good, plain talk with a man who has a lively and subtle mind and a wide range of knowledge and experience opens a substantial range of possibilities for far-reaching discourse. In *Goatfoot Milktongue Twinbird*, Donald Hall acknowledges that the interview had become "the dominant form by which poets made public their poetics" (ix) since World War II. For Snyder, the interview has become an occasion for dialogues generated and new directions suggested with an exploratory quality that George Quasha (485-506) calls the "dialogical" in modern poetics. On the other side, in Buddhism there has always been the question-and-answer tradition, considering the Buddhist texts and teachings were originally transmitted orally, addressing a certain question, spoken freely and spontaneously. The webs of interests and concerns in Snyder's talks leave the space for comprehension rather than being a final statement.

1.6 Sections

The dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter Two offers the cultural background of westerner's early rediscovery of Chinese poetry in the 20th century. Taking the unique phenomenon of Ezra Pound's pseudo-translation of Chinese poetry in the early 20th century as a starting point, I discuss Fenollosa's famous article "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" and Haun Saussy's critique on it. Then, I examine the relations among the Imagist Movement, Orientalism and Modernism. In comparison with Pound's handling of Chinese classic poetry, Snyder's translation of the "Cold Mountain Poems" in the mid-1950th is seen as a translation event in the real-world "polysystem", a theory approached by Itamar Even-Zohar in the 1970 that place translation in the socio-cultural context. By checking Snyder's encounter with Han-shan, this chapter shows the cultural turn in translation studies and raises the question that how far a poet-translator can reach in looking for meaning in "foreign" places.

Chapter Three traces back to the early development of Chinese literature and examines the characteristics of classical Chinese poetry. The Chinese writing system and the forms of classical poetry are analyzed, as well as the fundamental influence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism to the Chinese society, people's mind, and the literary expression. Important works and authors in the field of Sinology will be consulted as scaffolding from varied angles. To make the size of the work manageable, I do not aim for a comprehensive converge with all the issues dealing with the classic Chinese poetry, but to choose those more fundamental and relative areas with my research topic to present, with a focus on the relations between the Chinese traditional philosophy, cosmology, the Chinese language system, and the history of poetry. Particularly, I take Brice Marden's "Cold Mountain Series" as a case study to examine the Western modern artist's possible mode of expression that draws inspiration from the Chinese aesthetic tradition.

After re-examining the Chinese classics, Chapter Four contextualizes Snyder in the American literary tradition. I analyze how transcendentalism offers an earlier American precedent for associating Asian religions with a harmonious relationship with nature, and why we can say that the Beat generation follows the American tradition of writing. In the Bourdieusian's sociological lens, I explore the reception of Buddhism in the American literature through translation, and discuss how the literary field can be "a force-field" that aims at maintaining or transforming the established relation of forces and direct to a new social future.

Snyder once said in the "Craft Interview" that "translation is too tempting, and I think as an exercise it’s good, but it takes you away from yourself finally, from your own work” (*The Real Work*, 39). In fact, Snyder has never run out of water in his own well. Chapter Five reads into Snyder’s original poems in the collections *Riprap* (1959), *Myths & Texts* (1960), *Turtle Island* (1974), *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (1996), etc. to examine Snyder’s poetics of space, which is seen as an intertextual network of references mingled with his Buddhist vision and the American concepts of wilderness. As a poet who takes his role to be “spokesman” for nature and for “the other” cultures, Snyder calls the society’s attention to its ecological relations to nature and to the individual consciousness. With and through geopoetics, Snyder shows the possibility of creating new worlds.

Chapter Six reads Snyder’s translation of the twenty-four “Cold Mountain Poems” from the perspective of Bakhtin. Based on close reading and textual analysis of the originals and the translations, I investigate Snyder’s translation strategies, taking Arthur Waley and Red Pine’s versions of Han-shan’s poems as comparative references. First, I look into Snyder’s approach to Han-shan through “sympathetic co-experiencing” as a Bakhtinian way of passing boundaries. Then, I focus on Snyder’s visualizing strategy in “Cold Mountain Poems”. I propose that Snyder has Americanized Han-shan’s Cold Mountain as a rewriting that is “against enclosure in a text” (Bakhtin, “Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences” 169). Julia Kristeva’s radical term of intertextuality together with Snyder’s ecopoetic vision is useful here for the analysis. I conclude by arguing that although it is not Snyder’s conscious decision (there is no evidence showing he ever read about Bakhtin), Snyder’s aesthetic impersonality throughout his poetic career has demonstrated a unique connection between Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia and the Avatamsaka Buddhist philosophy of interpenetration, which shares the common ground with deep ecology and post-structuralism, and this explains Snyder's ethical position. The fact that Bakhtin's concept of superaddressee reiterates the theme of hope for discursive contexts, and maybe less obviously, allows for a space where the deepest sense of what a "good translation" entails yet be redeemed.

Here, I shall clarify some peculiar aspects in Chinese culture that could cause confusion throughout the dissertation. First, in the convention of Chinese names, the family name is placed in front of the given name. Second, in history, the Wade-Giles system used to be a popular "romanization" system for Chinese characters, but today it has been gradually replaced by the *pinyin* spelling. Still, for some names or terms, I use either the Wade-Giles spellings or *pinyin* depending on which version would be fit better in that case.

Chapter 2: The Rediscovery of Classical Chinese Poetry in the West

2.1 Ezra Pound's Recreation of Chinese Poetry

2.1.1 Muse from Cathay

In the past century, many English translations from Chinese have demonstrated how the supposed essence of classical Chinese poetry was held up to a parallel model for avant-garde poetry in English. It seems that the successful translation or adaptation derived from the Chinese models mixed with creative misreading have set up an invisible tradition for the western reader as a particular mode of poetic perception. On explaining why does Chinese poetry so often reads well in English dress, the English poet and literary critic Donald Davie noted in 1965 that there is a sort of illusion (but a very happy one):

> The quality of Chinese poetry is exactly that quality which our poetry, in the present century, has adopted itself specifically to secure. In particular, one of the 20th century English poetic styles, imagist *vers libre*, might have been (and in fact it partly was) devised deliberately to give the translator from the Chinese just what he wants and needs to perform intelligently. (704)

If we trace back to history, since the second half of the nineteenth century, a few French symbolist poets firstly invoked the Chinese poetry in the western literary culture. Among them, Théophile Gautier composed a number of poems with a new poetic of “hardness”, a quality that was perceived from the Chinese poetry and opposed to the prevailing didacticism in France by that time. His daughter, Judith Gautier, also produced a series of influential French adaptation or imitation of Chinese poems in her *Le Livre de Jade* (1867), but still, their works had only a tenuous relation to the supposed Chinese originals.

On the other side, by the end of the nineteenth century, a large corpus of English translations from classical Chinese poetry had already done by the professional sinologists such as James Legge and Hert Giles. Aiming at a large non-professional readership, they adopted the forms of poetic expression appropriated from the mainstream Victorian poetic treatment. Except for the names of persons, places, and a certain kind of landscape imagery still remain the immediately detectable exoticism, all the otherness and strangeness in the original Chinese have vanished in the normative English poeticism with the recognizably familiar features of rhyme, meter, and poetic diction. As J. M. Cohen comments, “the Victorians conferred on all works alike the brown varnish of antiquarianism” (10).

The early twentieth century witnessed the first burgeoning of Anglo-American interest in the classical Chinese poetry, while the translations still continued the Victorian tradition debased Pre-Paphaelite and Tennysonian line of exorcism and archaic diction. Nevertheless, everything changed radically in the second decade of the century. Enlisted into the avant-garde movement of poetic innovation, especially as a part of the Imagism advocated by Ezra Pound, classical Chinese poetry started to exert considerable influence on the development of modern English poetry and American poetic composition. As a key figure in shaping this new perception, Ezra Pound published his milestone translations *Cathay* in

1915 and deeply influenced other poets by that time: Amy Lowell had her volume *Fir-Flower Tablets* (1921) in collaboration with Florence Ayscough; the English scholar and translator Arthur Waley completed his volumes *Chinese Poems* (1916), *One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems* (1918), *More Translations from the Chinese* (1919), and *The Temple and Other Poems* (1923).

Modern American poetry had it beginning in little magazines. Among them, *Poetry: Magazine of Verse* founded by Harriet Monroe in 1912 in Chicago was a particularly important one. Harriet Monroe (1860-1936), the founder and editor of *Poetry*, played an instrumental role in the American poetry renaissance. The monthly magazine's bold new editorial policy appeared in the second issue about opening door to print the best English verse written at that time, regardless of where, by whom, or under what theory of art it is written.[2] Although Monroe had her own taste (she was not fond of "High Modernism"), still she tried to keep a balance among different literary groups or tendencies in the magazine without partiality. Committed to the independence of the editorial preference, Monroe navigated a new literary culture and discovered a series of young and unknown poets by that time by publishing their early works of, for example, H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens. It was also famous for publishing T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" for the first time and later, John Ashbery's "Self-Portrait in a Convex Mirror". It was like suddenly, the classical or academic poets left the stage for a new era of American poetry.

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[2] For more details, see Monroe, Harriet, editor, "The Open Door." Originally Published at *Poetry* 1:4, Chicago, November 1st, 1912. www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/articles/58891/the-open-door.

Against the old established classical poetry and the British tradition, the New Poetry movement modernized and Americanized the poetry in the United States. The new poets absorbed a large amount of foreign inspirations, while the influence of China was particularly significant. Before founding *Poetry*, Harriet Monroe traveled to China in 1910-1911 to visit her sister, the wife of an American ambassador, during which time Monroe did an intensive study of Chinese art. Soon upon her return to the U.S., Monroe managed to raise money and found *Poetry*, a vehicle she used to introduce the imagists and the "new poetry" to American readers. The word "imagist" firstly appeared in the United States in 1913 in Monroe's *Poetry*. Later in 1917, when she tried to define the single component that encapsulated the newness of this modernist verse, she claimed that most important of all, these poets have bowed to winds from the East. Obviously, Monroe was not the only one who recognized the influence of China. In Lytton Strachey's review of Giles's *Chinese Poetry in English Verse* in 1908, this British writer and critic, one of the founding members of the Bloomsbury Group has noticed the Chinese poems are specimens of Impressionism, while the most exquisite of the lyrics in the Greek Anthology are fundamentally epigrams. In contrast, the Chinese lyric aims at producing an impression that is so far from being final, but only as the prelude to a series of visions and feelings:

> Between these evanescent poems and the lyrics of Europe, there is the same kind of relationship as that between a scent and a taste. Our slightest songs are solid

> flesh-and-blood things compared with the hinting verses of the Chinese poets, which yet possess, like odours, for all their intangibility, the strange compelling powers of suggested reminiscence and romance. Whatever their subject, they remain ethereal. (Strachey 149-153)

Also, another prominent imagist John Gould Fletcher claims that "if French Symbolism be taken for the father of Imagism, Chinese poetry was its foster-father" (155-56). His *Visions of the Evening* was published in 1913 under the influence of classical Chinese poetry. Considering he had no knowledge of Chinese, he commented that "what had happened was that I had somehow, as a poet, guesses at the way the Orientals had constructed their poems. The parallelism of construction, casting back and forth from the observer to thing observed, is surely manifest: and the self-same quality is omnipresent in Ezra Pound's *Cathay*" (Fletcher 153).

2.1.2 Pound as Translator

Ezra Pound (1885-1972) turns out to be a major figure with original poetic intelligence among all the new poets organized around *Poetry*. His contribution to poetry started with his development of Imagism, which derived from classical Chinese and Japanese poetry, emphasizing precision, clarity and economy of language. Although remaining as one of the most controversial figures in the literary history of the twentieth century for his political stance during the World War II, Pound is undoubtedly one of the most important contributors for modern poetry. His representative works include *Ripostes* (1912), *Hugh Selwyn Mauberley* (1920) and the unfinished 120-section epic *The Cantos* (1917–1969). He also helped to discover and shape the work of contemporaries such as T. S. Eliot, James Joyce, Robert Frost and Ernest Hemingway. T. S. Eliot once commented in an introduction to *The Literary Essays of Ezra Pound* that Pound "is more responsible for the twentieth-century revolution in poetry than any other individual" (xi).

As a unique phenomenon in the early 20th century, Ezra Pound's pseudo-translation of Chinese poetry has become an invaluable resource to cultural studies, translation theory, poetics, literary transmission and reception. Without knowing much about the Chinese language, Pound managed to retranslate the poems of Li Bai (also known as Li Bo, 701-62) and other classic poets by following the notebooks of Ernest Fenollosa. The translation of those poems was collected in *Cathay* (1915). After this first success, Pound tried to introduce the Chinese "ideogram" written characters into his long poem *The Cantos* (1925).

In the 1928 introduction to Pound's *Selected Poems*, T.S. Eliot declares that "each generation must translate for itself' (14-15). On the other hand, Pound himself had a proclaimation that "a great age of literature is perhaps always a great age of translations, or follows it" ("Notes on Elizabethan Classicists" in *Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, 232). Indeed, in Pound's oeuvre, it is not easy to distinguish what is translation or adaptation, and what is his original composition. Pound's recreation of Chinese poetry reflects his experimental vision towards translation. The twentieth century witnesses remarkable evolution in the development of translation theory, while a number of significant contributions are made in the first half of the century. As George Steiner notes, just like Walter Benjamin, Ezra Pound belongs to the age of “philosophic-poetic theory” (249). Pound’s translation stimulated his poetic innovations and in turn guided his translation. In this sense, Pound’s poetics is a poetics of translation. He made an important contribution towards developing theories of relations between languages and redefined the nature of poetic translation for the past century. Pound’s *Guido’s Relations* (1934) is a key essay to understand his opinions on translation, in which he emphasized the expressive qualities of language. Pound believes that rather than the sense, the energy of language will come from clarity, rhythm, sound, and form. As one of the most famous modernists, Pound attempts to capture the energy of the Chinese ideograms with his imagist approach in his “creative” translation of Chinese poetry.

2.1.3 Fenollosa, Chinese Ideogram, and Imagism

Pound’s initial encounter with Chinese and Japanese poetry dated back in the spring of 1909 when he attended Binyon’s lectures on “Art & Thought in East & West”. Later in 1913, Pound met Mrs. Mary Fenollosa, the widow of the Orientalist Ernest Fenollosa, who afterwards sent Pound the research materials of Ernest Fenollosa on Chinese poetry, Japanese Noh drama, and Fenollosa’s draft essay on the Chinese written character. Ernest Fenollosa (1853-1908), the son of a Spanish pianist, was a Harvard-trained American art historian who studied philosophy and sociology. In 1878, Fenollosa was invited to teach in Tokyo Imperial University. He worked there as an educator in the modernization process of Japan during the Meiji Era and made a contribution to preserve traditional Japanese art. Fenollosa had an impressive collection of paintings, sculptures, and calligraphic scrolls, who was not only an avid collector of Japanese and Chinese art but also a diligent student of Chinese orthography. Deeply influenced by Eastern culture, he was converted to Buddhism. In 1900, he returned to the United States to write and lecture on Asia. In 1908, Fenollosa died of a heart attack during the time when he worked for the British Museum. His widow Mrs. Marie Fenollosa knew that Fenollosa would prefer his manuscripts to be views as "literature" rather than "philology". She entrusted Pound with her husband's materials because she believed Pound was the only person who could continue the work that Fenollosa did not have time to finish. The Irish poet W. B. Yeats and the British sinologist Arthur Waley also assisted Pound in this project. With the influence of the manuscripts, Pound managed to stimulate the growing interest in Far Eastern literature among modernist writers. Ever since Fenollosa's manuscripts "Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" was edited and published by Pound in 1919, it has been seen as one of the cardinal references in the American poetics that revisited by generations.

In these essays, Fenollosa ascribed to the Chinese written character virtues that no "phonetic tongue" could claim: "but Chinese notation is something much more than arbitrary symbols. It is based upon a vivid shorthand picture of the operations of nature"; that is to say, the Chinese method follows the natural suggestion and produces "a natural relationship between thing and sign": "in reading Chinese we do not seem to be juggling mental counters, but to be watching things work out their own fate" (Pound, *Instigations* 362-363). Fenollosa accented the Western need of ideogrammatic thinking. He gave the example of a Chinese word, *ming* or *mei*, which the ideography is the sign of the sun, together with the sign of the moon. Pointing out that it serves as verb, noun, adjective, while there is no possible confusion of the real meaning, Fenollosa commented that "the fact is that almost every written Chinese word is properly just such an underlying word, and yet it is not abstract. It is not exclusive of parts of speech, but comprehensive" (*An Ars Poetic*, 51). In Pound's 1936 preface to the new edition of the manuscripts, he stated that ideogram to the basis of a new universal language, even more basic than Ogden's Basic English and more reliable.

Back to 1915, when Pound had just received the manuscripts, Fenollosa's notion of ideogram must have struck Pound as an otherworldly confirmation of things he had been saying for years for Imagism along with Pound's experimentation with the Vorticist principles in poetry and arts in general. In *Poetry* (1913), Pound defines an image as "an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time", and was in fact "indebted to Japanese poetry" (*Imagist Poetry*, Jones 130). Japanese culture indeed played an important part in the modernist movement in arts and literature in Europe. Accordingly, Japonism refers to the appreciation of Japanese art during the late 19th century and early 20th. Numerous studies have been done on Japanese arts' influence on Impressionism and Imagism. The thoughts of the poets W. B. Yeats and Ezra Pound presented themselves as leaders of the avant-garde discovery of Japan in the early 20th century. Arthur Waley as an affiliate of the renowned Bloomsbury Group also played a key role in the English modernist interpretation of Japanese culture, whose translation of Japanese poetry cast a huge influence on Western perception on Asia.

Haiku*,* the Japanese verse of seventeen syllables derived from *waka* (Japanese song), is usually written vertically in five parts (5-7-5-7-7). Zen is the philosophy behind most of the classic haiku. In the belief of Zen, all the things in nature are equal to human beings. A detached love of life as it is without idealist or ethical attachment is also emphasized. In 1913, Pound's famous haiku-style short poem "In a Station of the Metro" appeared for the first time in the Magazine *Poetry*:

> The apparition of these faces in the crowd:
> Petals on a wet, black bough.

In his essay "Vorticism" published in *The Fortnightly Review* in 1914, Pound acknowledged his indebtedness to Japanese poetics and the art of haiku in particular. In *Haiku and Modernist Poetics* (2009), Hakutani Yoshinobu asserts that Pound takes an image not as a decorative emblem or symbol but as "a seed capable of germinating and developing into another organism" (14). Furthermore, Hakutani examines the influence of haiku to the famous Beat poets Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and Gary Snyder who tried their hands at composing haiku. More notably, their studies and practices of Buddhism and Zen inspired the whole Beat Generation, not only for the literary works they left but also because of their experiences and lifestyle of wandering in the fields and meditating on the mountains. In this regard, Chapter Four will have a further discussion.

Pound's discovery of haiku prepared his later reception of Fenollosa's theory of the Chinese ideogram. His fascination with the haiku, however, was relatively short-lived. After he came into contact with Fenollosa's Chinese notebooks, he started to perceive the major difference and make the following comment in a letter to John Quinn in 1917: "China is fundamental, Japan is not. Japan is a special interest, like Provence, or 12-13 Century Italy (apart from Dante). I don't mean to say that there aren't interesting things in Fenollosa's Japanese stuff…But China is solid" (quoted in Qian, *Orientalism and Modernism*, 13). After Pound's early fascination with the Japanese haiku, he thought he had discovered the renaissance of modernist poetry in English with a new stimulus in Chinese poetry. Fenollosa noticed a way how the prehistoric Chinese charged language with meaning and revealed a continent full of imagists. To show, to state the image directly rather than telling or describing the feeling is the wisdom in this writing workshop. Acknowledging the power of poetry, Fenollosa points out that:

> Poetry is finer than prost because it gives us more concrete truth in the same compass of words…Poetry only does consciously what the primitive races did uncounsciously. The chief work of literary men in dealing with language, and of poets especially, lies in feeling back along the ancient lines of advance… The moment we used the copula, the moment we express sunjectivces inclusions, poetry evaporates. The more

> concertedly and vividly we express the interactions of things the better the poetry. We need in poetry thousands of active words, each doing its utmost to show forth the motives and vital forces. We cannot exhibit the wealth of nature by summation, by the piling of sentences. Poetic thought works by suggestion, crowing maximum meaning into the single phrase pregnant, charged, and luminous from within. In Chinese character each word accumulated this sort of energy in itself. (*The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* 54, 57-58)

Fenollosa's idea on Chinese character and Pound's Imagism both emphasize "the accumulation of energy and meaning, and the luminosity in a single figure" (Saussay, *Fenollosa Compounded: A Discrimination* 9). The Chinese ideogram, for Fenollosa and Pound, is not the picture of a sound, but "the picture of a thing". Both Fenollosa and Pound, however, tended to ignore or play down the phonetic aspect of Chinese characters. Still, Pound did admit the dimension of Chinese sound and profess his ignorance, as he commented on Fenollosa's tables of ideograms in the 1936 reprinting edition: "when you have comprehended the visual significance, you will not have finished. There is still the other dimension. We will remain bestially ignorant of Chinese poetry so long as we insist on reading and speaking their short words instead of taking time to sing them with the observance of the sequence of vowels" (*The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry*, 43).

Meanwhile, we have to notice Fenollosa's misunderstandings. As Haun Saussy comments in his essay T*he Prestige of Writing:* 文*, letter, Picture, Image, Ideography* (2001), "as we learnt very early in our training, Fenollosa was an enthusiast: in his wonderment at the Chinese language, he vastly overestimated the number of primary pictograms in the writing system…The profession has never forgotten his error" (38). Saussy not only highlights the danger of even mentioning Fenollosa, but also reminds us that writing is most often faulted as being inadequate to represent thought or speech. The disparagement of writing is a motif possible in the tradition when it talks to writing. On this complicated issue, Chapter Three will continue discussing Saussy's critic on Fenollosa in the section about the Chinese written system.

Despite the limitations, Fenollosa and Pound made a valuable general critique of the western way of thinking and the habit of "abstraction". Attracted in the process of perception that lies behind the pictorial analogy, Pound believes that life comes in metaphor and metaphor starts toward ideogram. In other words, for Pound, the ideogram becomes a fundamental principle of poetry and indeed of a new mental economy in general.

2.1.4 Orientalism and Modernism

The complex and intriguing interchange between Ezra Pound and China also raises several interesting questions on why this leading American modernist spent his lifelong time investigating the Chinese modes of thought. For example, did Pound see "the self" or "the other" or a combination of the two in Chinese culture? Why did Modernism need a perspective of “the other” to invigorate itself? What problem does Pound’s dialogue with China present to Modernism? From the perspective of Orientalism, Pound’s relation to China also addresses certain issues about whether Edward Said’s seminal work on the 19th century British and French Orientalism also applies to Pound’s interaction with China.

In *Chinese Dreams: Pound, Brecht, Tel Quel* (2004), Eric Hayot explores three obsessive dreams about China in the 20th century. They are Ezra Pound in America, Bertolt Brecht in Germany, and the writers of the literary journal *Tel quel* in France. In regard to the means of representing otherness in the history of the West, Hayot tries to find out whether it might be possible to imagine the other or represent otherness in the history of the West. Hayot also has a discussion on Qian Zhaoming’s book *Orientalism and Modernism: The Legacy of China in Pound and Williams* (1995) and Robert Kern’s book *Orientalism, Modernism, and the American Poem* (1996). The repetition of the keywords “Orientalism” and “Modernism” again leads us to Edward Said’s work *Orientalism* (1978). Both of the two authors think the modernist’s fantastic and ill-informed treatments of China were related to the West’s imperialist design in the 18thand 19th century. Hayot argues, however, Pound’s representations of China were more complicated than such a simple, politicized understanding. T. S. Eliot supported Pound in the argument, declaring that Pound had gotten the original, which he had perfectly translated the nuances of Chinese poetry and culture into English. As to the skepticism regarding Pound’s failure in the translation of *Cathay*, Eliot responded that “Pound’s Cathay is not Chinese, and shines because it is brilliant, English poetry” (Hayot 6).

From the other perspective, in *Ideographic Modernism: China, Writing, Media* (2010), Christopher Bush presents the idea that the ideography (Chinese writing as imagined in the West) is actually a modern invention like telegraphy, phonography or cinematograph. By analyzing of works of Claudel, Pound, Kafka, Benjamin, Segalen, and Valery, among others, Christopher Bush traces the interweaving media assumed "Chinese" forms in the Western modernity. In the very beginning of the book, Bush raised the argument that the "ideograph" is conventionally understood as a form of writing that is ancient and Chinese, but actually, it is neither. Bush looks into how Western Modernism used Chinese writing to figure out modernity's simultaneous demystification and magical estrangement of language (language has been reduced to a refined, almost technical medium), and reminds us that Modernism's newly intense relationship to this dimension of language is not a matter of narrowly literary concern or only about the possible relationships between linguistics and aesthetic form, but also have important social and even political consequences.

Hayot identifies that the major problem of "Pound and China" criticism is "the ability of representation seem real while being unreal, or to be unreal while seeming real. While for Eliot this is an ontological problem, for Said it is a political and historical one", but all these "find themselves caught up in the history of "Pound and China" (12). Looking back to Pound's translation, obviously, Pound is not a model who seeks for philological accuracy as the highest goal in his translation. As he mentioned in *Cathay*, Fenollosa had hoped to his materials to be translated "as literature not as philology". Pound followed it, and tried to create a parallel structure in his over-expressed translations that often tend to replace the original.

2.2 Gary Snyder and Han-shan

2.2.1 Shaping of Thought

Four decades after the publication of *Cathay*, Gary Snyder appeared as another influential figure in American literature in relation to East Asian culture. Snyder admits that he highly valued Ezra Pound as a teacher in poetic technology, however, his own poetic journey is totally varied from Pound, which is partly due to Snyder's personality and experiences, together with the social background by his own time.

Born in 1930, Gary Snyder grew up with a close relationship to nature. When he was two years old, his family moved to countryside and started a little dairy farm near Lake City, Washington, where he spent his childhood until twelve. He recalls later that "I grew up on a small farm with cows and chickens, and with a second-growth forest right at the back fence, so I had the good fortune of seeing the human and animal as in the same realm" (*Practice of the Wild*, 5-16). This early experience in the Pacific Northwest keeps fascinating him and imprints his later works. As he described in the interview with Nicholas O'Connell, he grew up "in close contact with the fabric of nature, rather than removed from it…growing up in that fabric gave me a powerful moral perspective of respect and regard for all sentient beings and gave me a powerful sense of membership in a real world" (Quoted in O'Connel, 309). Rather than feeling scared, Snyder was attracted to the deep forest and huge mountain since he was a boy. When he saw the Glacier peak Mt. Rainier, he felt that "those unearthly glowing floating snowy summits are a promise to the spirit" (*Practice of the Wild*, 117). His range of exploration was large and his father permitted him to stay in the forest alone for one or two days knowing he had the knowledge for making fire and camping:

> When I was older, I hiked into the old-growth stands of the foothill valleys of the Cascades and the Olympics where the shade-tolerant skunk cabbage and devil's club underbrush is higher than your head and the moss carpet are a foot thick. Here there is always a deep aroma of crumbled wet organisms—fungus—and red rotten logs and a few bushes of tart red thimble berries. (*Practice of the Wild*, 117)

In 1942, his family moved to Portland, the capital city of Oregon State, but the city life never stopped his exploration of nature. He joined a professional mountain-climbing club at fifteen years old. Ever since Snyder was a teenager, climbing high mountains has created a religious transformation effect to him: "to be immersed in ice and rock and cold and upper space is to undergo an eery, rigorous initiation and transformation" (*Practice of the Wild*, 117-18). Different from the traditional western view to see nature as the target to be conquered, Snyder sees nature as an organism with deep respect and a sense of belonging. Mountain climbing, in the description of Snyder, is "a powerful teaching from for me. It was an initiation by all of the great gods of the land here. And so I began to write poems" (quoted in O'Connell, 312). Snyder got another enlightening experience when his father took him to the Seattle Art Museum:

> When I was eleven or twelve, I went into the Chinese room at the Seatle Art Museum and saw Chinese landscape paintings; they blow my mind. My shock of recognition was very simple: "It looks like the Cascades." The waterfalls, the pines, the clouds, the mist looked a lot like the northwest United States. The Chinese had an eye for the world that I saw as real in the next room were the English and European landscapes, and they meant nothing. It was no great lesson except for an instantaneous, deep respect for something in Chinese culture that always stuck in my mind and that I would come back to again years later. (*The Real Works*, 93-94)

As Synder remembers a long time after that, the several large Chinese horizontal handscrolls from pre-modern eras he saw with the titles like "Mountains and Rivers without End" seem to picture the whole world, moving through four seasons. Indeed, he was observant enough to notice "mountains and waters" is a way to refer to the totality of the process of nature, which goes well beyond dichotomies of natural and artificial, purity and pollution. Ever since this encounter, Snyder was deeply drawn to East Asian arts and developed an interest in the Orient, which he valued as an advanced civilization that emphasized its bonds to nature.

At seventeen years' old, Snyder entered Reed College and studied there for four years from 1947 to 1951, during which time he came across Ernest Fenollosa's *Epochs of Chinese* *and Japanese Art*. He also discovered Ezra Pound's translations of Chinese poetry, Arthur Waley's *Translations from the Chinese* (1919), as well as works on Confucianism, a translation of the Taoist classic *Tao Te Ching*, and Chinese and Indian Buddhist literature. Snyder later acknowledged that the Chinese poetry helped him to see nature in a different way, and freed him "from excessive attachment to wild mountains, with their almost subliminal way of presenting even the wildest hills as a place where people, also, live" (quoted in McLeod, 495).

The words and images of the Chinese artist who roamed mountains and rivers turn out to be Snyder's role models. His appreciation for East Asian art motivated his passion to create and made him decide to dedicate his life to art. At Reed College, he also started his life-long interest in Chinese calligraphy:

> As a student at Reed College I had the good fortune to study with the brilliant polymath Lloyd Reynolds, who was—among many things—a remarkable calligrapher in the Renaissance Italic mode. It was from Lloyd I learned to appreciate the pen, whether reed, turkey feather, or carefully hand-ground alloy steel tip. One of Lloyd's students was Charles Leong, a Chinese-American veteran back from World War II and studying on the GI Bill. He was already an accomplished seal carver and brush calligrapher of Chinese; with Charlie as my guide, I learned to hold the brush as well as the pen. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 153)

The nature imagery in the landscapes matches his inner moods and offers him a sense of reverence for this mystery of a real world. It helped Snyder to move beyond the dichotomy of East and West, arguing that the Chinese and Japanese poetry is valuable because it shares the sense of alienation which the Westerners feel familiar with:

> The Chinese and Japanese traditions carry within them the most sensitive, mind-deepening poetry of the natural world ever written by civilized people. Because these poets were men and women who dealt with budgets, taxes, penal systems, and the overthrow of governments. They had a heart-wrenching grasp of the contradictions that confront those who love the natural world and are yet tied to the civilized. This must be one reason why Chinese poetry is so widely appreciated by contemporary Occidentals. (*The Gary Snyder Reader*, 293)

After Snyder graduated from the Reed College with BA degree in anthropology and literature, he worked at the Warm Spring Indian Reservation as timber for a short time and started a graduate program in anthropology in the Indiana University. But after one semester he found that rather than being a scholar, he preferred to be a poet. He also decided to learn the Chinese language and study classical Chinese poetry. Then, he quit the study in Indiana, went back to San Francisco and enrolled in the Oriental language department at the University of California at Berkeley. In the term 1951 to 1952, he began the classical Chinese language study. In a few every summers since 1952, he worked as a fire lookout at the tops of

Crater Mountain and Sourdough Mountain, studying Chinese while working there. Coincidentally, that experience was recorded by Jeremy Anderson, a mountaineer who did not know Snyder by that time:

> We were surprised to find a small cable tram leading up to the summit…but even more surprising were the many pieces of cloth with strange writing on them…most surprising of all was the lookout ranger himself, barefooted and in shorts, stretched out on his cot, sipping tea from a handleless ceramic cup and studying conversational Chinese…Then he made us some green tea and we learned something about him and his home in the sky. He was a poet studying Chinese in order to translate the work of some ancient Chinese poets whose work he admired…we knew we'd met an unusual ranger, but not until I discovered and read *Earth House Hold* twenty years later did I realize I'd met the poet Gary Snyder on top of Crater Mountain in the summer of 1952. (Anderson 30-31)

In the summer of 1953, while working at the Sourdough Mountain, Snyder wrote a poem that later was collected in *Axe Handles*:

> I was studying Chinese
> Preparing for Asia
> Every night after trail crew work

From book
Jimmy Jones was a Mariposa Indian
One night by the camp fire
Drinking that coffee black
He stood there looking at my
H. G. Creel, “Those Letters Chinese?”
“Yes,”I said. He said, “Hmmmm.
My grandpa they say was Chinese.” (*Axe Handle*, 29)

The education Snyder received is more than formal, but Snyder thinks the sensitivity and awareness of body, language, and knowledge is not limited to educated people only (*Earth House Hold*, 420). An important part of his education comes from nature directly with his early experiences. As noted himself, when he was young, he had “an immediate, intuitive, deep sympathy with the natural world which was not taught by anyone. In that sense, nature is my ‘guru’” (*The Real Work*, 92).

2.2.2 Encounter with Han-shan

At Berkeley, Snyder met two important teachers. One is Chiura Obata (1885-1975), a Japanese-American artist and teacher who taught Snyder how to use “grind ink, wet the brush, unroll the / broad white space” (*Mountains and Rivers without Ends*, 9) in the class “East

Asian brush painting" in the art department that Snyder signed up for; the other one is Chen Shixiang (1912-1971), the professor in the classical Chinese language and poetry class. In 1941, Chen left China after years teaching at Beijing University and National Hunan University. He went to the United States and taught in the Harvard University and Columbia University. Since 1945 he was appointed to the faculty of the Department of Oriental Language at the University of California at Berkeley, where he taught twenty-six years until he died. In Snyder's first collection of poems *Riprap & Cold Mountain Poems*, he recalls that: "Chen was a friend and teacher. His knowledge and love of poetry and his taste for life were enormous. He quoted French poetry from memory and wrote virtually any Chinese poem of the Tang or Song canon from memory on the blackboard" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 66).

By that time Snyder had been translating a few Tang poems, and his first discovery to Han-Shan, the legendary Tang Dynasty hermit poet was dated back to the autumn of 1955, when he enrolled in a graduate seminar on Chinese poetry with a tutorial with Chen:

> Chen asked me what I would like to do for the seminar and I said I'd like to work on a Buddhist poet. He thought about it for a moment and he said, "How would you like to work with Han Shan? You'll find him particularly interesting because he writes a lot more in the colloquial than most of the poets of that time." I said 'fine'—and went to the Oriental Library in Durant Hall and checked out the text. (quoted in McNeil, 54)

Han-shan was a Chinese Buddhist poet from Tang Dynasty who retreated from city life and lived in the mountains. This legendary figure's life remained mysterious in many aspects. By that time, Han-shan was still sparsely rendered into English. Arthur Waley was the first western scholar who made an attempt to translate twenty-seven Han-shan poems and issued them in the magazine *Encounter* in 1954. Later on, Snyder's "Cold Mountain Poems" was published in *Evergreen Review* in 1958, followed by Burton Watson's translation of "100 Han-shan Poems" brought out in 1962. Among all the versions, as Chung Ling points out, Snyder's translation "enjoyed immense success among the youth" ("The Reception of Cold Mountain's Poetry in the Far East and the United States", 90). According to Snyder:

> My translations were done as work in a graduate seminar at Berkeley (where I studied 3 years in the graduate school of the Department of Oriental Languages) under Professor Chen Shih-Hsiang. They are completely accurate line-for-line translations. There are a few substitutions, i.e. "silverware and cars" for equivalent but culture-bound symbols of affluence in the T'ang dynasty; the "colloquial" tone is justified by the fact that Han-shan is writing in the colloquial of his own period, with a rough and slangy tone in spots (Quoted in Leed, 177).

Also, Snyder's version has been anthologized later in Cyril Birch's *Anthology of Chinese Literature* and in *Literature of the Eastern World*, which makes Han-shan first time stands together with other biggest figures in Chinese literary history, like Li Po (Li Bai), Tu

Fu (Du Fu)[3] and Wang Wei. Another significant event was the "Six Gallery Reading" on October 13, 1955, in San Francisco, when Snyder read his translation of the "Cold Mountain Poems" after Allen Ginsberg read his poem "Howl". The night was often referred to as the birth of the Beat Literature. Since then, Han-shan became an important and sympathetic figure for Beat Generation. Jack Kerouac's even dedicated his autobiographical novel *The Dharma Bums* (1958) to Han-shan. In this semi-fictional novel, the narrator Ray Smith is based on Kerouac, and Japhy Ryder based on Gary Snyder. In the book, there was a depiction of Ryder in comparison with Han-shan:

> Japhy Ryder (Gary Snyder): "Want me to read you parts of this Han Shan poem? Want me to tell you about Han Shan?"
>
> Ray Smith (Jack Kerouac): "Yeah."
>
> Japhy Ryder: "Han Shan you see was a Chinese scholar who got sick of the big city and world and took off to hide in the mountains."
>
> Ray Smith: "Say, that sounds like you." (Kerouac 22)

Then, Ryder cited a poem which would be published later in Snyder's translation with slight revision:

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[3] The different spellings are from the previously commonly used romanization system of Wade-Giles, and the *pinyin* system.

> Clambering up the Cold Mountain path,
>
> The Cold Mountain trail goes on and on:
>
> The long gorge choked with scree and boulders,
>
> The wide creek, the mist-blurred grass.
>
> The moss is slippery, though there's been no rain
>
> The pine sings, but there's no wind.
>
> Who can leap the world's ties
>
> And sit with me among the white clouds? (Kerouac 22)

2.2.3 Snyder's Vision of Zen

Snyder's Buddhist vision is an important part to understand his life and poetics. As he recollected later, since he was a boy he had rejected Christianity due to his love for nature:

> I was never able to accept Christianity as a child because the two or three times I went to Sunday school I raised the question about the future of animals and was told that animals didn't have souls, I wasn't able to accept that—on a common-sense practical basis. I felt that living creatures constituted some kind of community or unity, which was my own natural mystical experience. So I lost interest in religion. (Graham 59)

"Buddhism and the Possibilities of a Planetary Culture" is a remarkable essay in

Snyder's early collection *Earth House Hold* (1969). At the beginning of the essay, it shows that Buddhism holds the idea that "the universe and all creatures in it are intrinsically in a state of complete wisdom, love, and compassion, acting in natural response and mutual interdependence" (41). In the Buddhist beliefs, it is ignorance that projects fear and obstructs the effortless manifestation of the realization of this harmony. It is commonly believed that rather than paying much attention to sociological or historical problems, the central concern of Buddhist philosophy is epistemology and "psychology". As Snyder points out, even though Mahayana Buddhism has a grand vision of universal salvation, the real achievement of Buddhism has been "the development of practical systems of meditation toward the end of liberating a few dedicated individuals from psychological hang-ups and cultural conditionings" (41). Snyder's vision of Zen Buddhist came from his readings and practicing both in America and Asia. His Zen practices started with *zazen*:

> I must have been in '49 that I taught myself to sit…several translations of various texts from India and China told how to sit. And looking at a good statue and seeing that it has good posture and how the legs are crossed—it's not hard. I soon corrected my errors because you cannot sustain sitting for very long if your posture is off; it becomes painful, breath doesn't right, et cetera." (*The Real Work*, 95)

Among the Buddhist practices, Snyder was especially interested in *koan* study, which he thinks "the challenge of *koan* study—the warrior's path, almost—and maybe some inner need to do battle (“Dharma combat”)—were what drew me to do it”. Moreover, he takes the *koans* as a mine of Chinese cultural information: “Not only do they deal with fundamental riddles and knots of the elegant and pithy language of Chinese at its best, in which poetry (a couplet, a line, or even an entire poem) it employed often as part of the koan” (*The Real Work*, 98).

During his days at Reed College, he read “the Upanishads, Vedas, Bhagavad-Gita, and most of the classics of Chinese and Indian Buddhist literature”(*The Real Work*, 94). Snyder also has gone through the books of D. T. Suzuki and R. H. Blyth. Later on, during his time at Berkeley, Snyder had his “first contact with a living Buddhist tradition” at Berkeley Buddhist Church (now Temple), a Jōdo Shinshū (“True Pure Land School”) community founded as the Berkeley Young Men’s Buddhist Association in 1911. Here, Snyder enjoyed the further benefit of affiliation that contributed to the awareness of the importance of *sangha* (community) in his religious life. He recalled after forty years:

> Back in Berkeley, I became acquainted with the warm, relaxed, familial, and devotional Buddhism of traditional Asia in the atmosphere of the Berkeley Buddhist church, presided over by Reverent Kanmo Imamura and his gracious and tireless wife, Jane. Their Jodo-shin and Zen are both in the Mahayana tradition; I soaked up Mahayana sutras and traditional commentaries, Chinese and Japanese Ch’an texts, and Vajrayana writing through those years, taking delight in their scale of imagination and their fearless mytho-psychological explorations. (*Mountains and Rivers Without*

End, 154)

Jōdo Shinshū temples and branches were built by 1914 along the West Coast. In 1915 the World Buddhist Conference was held by the Buddhist Mission of North America (now known as "BCA", the Buddhist Churches of America) in San Francisco under the guidance of Rev. Kanmo Imamura (1904—1986). Since the early 1950s, Imamura organized a study group for BCA, and the Advanced Study Class met twice a month for lecturing and the publishing of the journal "Berkeley Busseï". This journal of Buddhist thought and art was run from 1939 to 1942 and resumed from 1949 to 1960 after World War II.[4] In the 1956 issue, Gary Snyder's name was listed among other graduate students at Berkeley as a study group member. This community, as we learn later, helped Snyder to break him out from his attachment of the ideal of a solitary. This reminder turned out to be an important reason for this American young man to pursue the Buddhist monastic life in Japan from 1956 to 1968.

As it is shown above, Gary Snyder took a distinct path from Ezra Pound in his exploration of Eastern culture. Different from Pound's false creative "poetic of translation", Snyder's translation of Chinese poems seems to be more direct and accurate, based on his solid knowledge in the Chinese language and his personal affiliation to nature, Eastern arts and Buddhism. The above part, nevertheless, is only a point of departure to show how Snyder began his lifelong pursuing of Asian art and built his own unique philosophy in relation with Asian culture.

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[4] For more details about this history, see Michael K. Masatsugu's research "'Beyond This World of Transiency and Impermanence': Japanese Americans, Dharma Bums, and the Making of American Buddhism during the Early Cold War Years" in *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 77, No. 3 (August 2008), pp. 423-451.

2.3 The Traveling Poems: The Cultural Turn in Translation Studies

In *A Map of Misreading*, Harold Bloom observes that "peering in the glass of vision, contemporary poets confront their too-recent giant precursors staring back at them, inducing a profound anxiety that hides itself, but cannot be evaded totally" (160). This "Anxiety of Influence" in the definition of Bloom does explain many cases among different generations of poets in the same literary tradition: "to live, the poet must *misinterpret* the father, by the crucial act of misprision, which is the re-writing of the father (19). But who, what is the poetic father? According to Bloom, it is "the voice of the other, of the *daimon*, is always speaking in one; the voice that cannot die because already it has survived death—*the dead poet* lives in one" (19).

This perspective can be also used to view the phenomenon of translation. In the case of Ezra Pound, by translating the classic texts, he attempted to restore certain values and perceptions in the modern world, in his own word "revivify", "making it new" in creative translation, especially as we see in his later long and incomplete poem *Canto*. Pound liked to use the word "traducer" to refer to "translate", which comes from "traductio" in Latin with the meaning "carrying across". Although Pound reveals the restorative function of translation, for him, translation is not necessarily to modernize. The "new" in "make it new" means re-grounding of the original work with a contemporary sensibility. It is a historical moment of the translator. For Snyder, what makes him anxious is not the influences from the giant poets in the western literature, but the traditional western dichotomies, the division of human and God, the division of human and nature, as well as other parts he would not accept in the western civilization: "popular Darwinism, with its emphasis on survival of the fittest, has taken this to mean that nature is a cockpit of competitive bloodshed…This view implicitly elevates human beings to a role of moral superiority over the rest of nature"(Snyder, *A Place in Space* 71).

The changes in reading and translating Chinese poems from Ezra Pound to Gary Snyder reflect certain cultural changes in the United States in the past century. The polysystem theory approached by Itamar Even-Zohar in the 1970s is considered as an early attempt to place translation in the socio-cultural context. Another important scholar in polysystem theory, Gideon Toury proposed a methodology for descriptive translation studies in his books *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (1980) and *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995). According to his theory, the equivalence issue is displaced by the orientation of the target culture, and the "adequacy" or "acceptability" of a translation in the target language does reflect a certain historical moment in the target culture. The translator's strategy will be very much influenced and constrained by the socio-cultural status of the receiving target, or say, the "norms" constituted by the interrelated canons.

Since the 1980s, translation studies have encountered a prominent cultural turn. The volume *Translation, History and Culture* (1990) edited by Susan Bassnett and André

Lefevere marks the beginning of a culture-oriented approach in translation. In the introduction, they claim to dismiss all the varied linguistic theories on translation. The twelve essays by twelve authors explore different aspects of cross-cultural communication and succeed in showing how the authors handle the problem of ideology and power manipulation in literature and society. Bassnett and Lefevere capture the term "cultural turn" that comes from the essay of Mary Snell-Hornby (1990) as a keystone for this book. Going beyond language, they see the interaction between translation and culture on "a larger issue of context, history, and convention" (11). In his book *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992), André Lefevere follows the work of the polysystem theorists such as Even-Zohar, Toury, and views translation as a kind of "rewriting", which is determined by the factors of "patronage", "poetics", and "ideology". Recognizing the basic process of rewriting is at work in translation, historiography, anthologization, criticism and editing, Lefevere takes translation in the center of his work by acknowledging that "translation is the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting, and…it is potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin" (9).

In the meantime, postcolonialism studies in the recent years also offers stimulating ideas of routes to translation studies. Edward Said disagrees with Harold Bloom's ideas of "misreading" by pointing out that it simplifies the circulation of ideas from one culture to another:

> We have become so accustomed to bearing that all borrowings, readings, and interpretations are misreading and misinterpretations…I find such a conclusion completely unsatisfying. It implies, first of all, that the only possible alternative to slavish copying is creative misreading and that no intermediate possibility exists. Second, when it is elevated to a general principle, the idea that all reading is misreading is fundamentally an abrogation of the critic's responsibility. It is never enough for a critic taking the idea of critic seriously simply to say that interpretation is misinterpretation or that borrowings inevitably involve misreading. Quite the contrary: it seems to me perfectly possible to judge misreading (as they occur) as part of a historical transfer of ideas and theories from one setting to another. (*The World, The Text, and The Critic*, 236)

According to Said, there are particularly interesting cases of ideas and theories that move from one culture to another, for example, when the so-called Eastern ideas on transcendence were imported into Europe during the early 19th century, or when certain European ideas about society were translated into traditional Asian societies during the late 19th century. Such a movement into a new environment is never unimpeded. Necessarily, it involves processes of representation and institutionalization varied from those at the point of origin (Said, *The World, The Text, and The Critic* 226). On the other hand, the interrelated concepts of "hybridity", "cultural difference", "in-betweenness", and "the third space" employed by the postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994) allow a sophisticated but enunciative space for the discourse of the colonized culture. Pound and Snyder’s translations seem to fit in their own ambiguous area in history, in “the third space” that “challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary past, kept alive in the national tradition of the people” (Bhabha, “Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences” 156). The innate originality or purity of cultures are invalid, as Bhabha declares, this ambivalent area of discourse serves as a site that displaces “the narrative of Western written in homogeneous, serial time” that Benedict Anderson perceptively depicted in *The Imagined Communities* (156). In the process, translators might play a crucial role. The following chapters will examine Snyder’s translation and poetics in specific cultural contexts.

Chapter 3: Re-examine the Chinese Tradition

3.1 The Golden Age

As discussed in the previous chapter, Fenollosa's essay on the ideographic nature of Chinese written system turns out to be the catalyst for Pound's first experiment in translating Chinese poetry. Pound's *Cathay* (1915) among his other works later became one of the most crucial texts of in the development of Imagism and modern American poetry. The discovery of ideogram opens the visible and semantic dimensions of language, where the strokes directs and provides the world with meaning. Through the voice of Fenollosa, Pound claims that the West has to turn to the East:

> It is unfortunate that England and America have so long ignored […] oriental culture. We have misconceived the Chinese for a materialist people, for a debased and worn-out race […]. The study that faces us is not to batter down their forts or exploits their markets, but to study and come to sympathize with their humanity and their generous aspirations […]. We need their best ideals to supplement our own ideals enshrined in their art, in their literature and in the tragedies of their lives. (*The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry: An Ars Poetica*, 42)

For a long time, China remains a uniquely hard to define position for the Western world in the complex situation of cultural encounters. On the one side, China as one of the earliest ancient civilizations of the world not only covers a large geographical region in East Asia but also has been considered as highly dominate and influential in philosophy, religion, language and art to other Asian countries throughout history. On the other side, this "middle kingdom" locked itself away from the world for centuries with only a little information came out through the trade routes of the Silk Road. From the mysterious description of Marco Polo to the "deliberate fictions" of Daniel Defoe and Mark Twain, China was either depicted as a dreamy parody in Western literature, or remained unknown and exotic, keeping producing anxiety and fear rather than a healthy curiosity for many of the westerners.

Pound's multicultural sentiments and noble goals are clearly different from the traditional colonizing Western position that provides "civilization" to the rest of the world. Pound was fascinated about Confucius: "The blossoms of the apricot blow from the east to the west, / And I have tried to keep them from falling" (*The Canto*, XIII). It is slightly ironic that when Pound was "translating" the works of Confucius around 1917, when those avant-garde Chinese believed the Confucianism was dying and desired to make a change to the Chinese society by casting off the restrictive Confucian traditions. All these debates or coincidence in contradictory attitudes draws our attention to re-examine a few key issues in the tradition of Chinese culture and poetry.

Poetry, as Aristotle claims in *Poetics*, "is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular". Accordingly, the translation of poetry surely spans a field wider than that which involves the technical activity of translating. André Lefevere points out that at best it can be equated with transcoding.

Rather than a language-independent issue, it is culturally bound to a great extend. In a comparative genealogy, the factors involve power, the self-image of a culture, and to which degree a culture may be homogeneous or not (24). In a comparative genealogy, the factors involve power, the self self-image of a culture, and to which degree a culture may be homogeneous or not (24). The homogeneity of a culture is a matter of the participants in it and how we describe that culture (Lefevere 14). In the era of globalization, the "Sino-Foreign literacy relations" can be examined from different aspects. Drawing on all the differences between the Chinese and western beliefs, there is an urgency and difficulty of cross-culture dialogues.

Regarding the discourse in dialogue between the Chinese and Western poetics, the Western poetics tend to stress the substantial analysis, especially of linguistic semiotics itself in order to realize conceptual accuracy and clear reasoning, while Chinese poetics gives prominence to a type of nonverbal sense of meaning that goes beyond words, with a focus on analogous perception and sudden apprehension (Yue 263). In the process of poetic interaction, in the fusion and debate between different ethnic groups, new concepts, new propositions, new fields will be encouraged and forged, and they will enable poetics as a discipline of theoretical science to enter a new phase which is truly international. This process will also help to reveal the real faith, value, and spirit of the poetics of all ethnic groups (273).

As a homogeneous civilization that keeps continuing and renewing for more than three thousand years, China has been marked as a land with long-established tradition. It is well known that poetry played an eminent role in the history of China. This eminence is not only due to the aesthetic and social functions, but also rooted in the Chinese traditional thoughts and the quasi-sacred veneration of its ideographic writing system. Therefore, this chapter attempts to place Chinese classic poetry in an all-embracing context of Chinese cosmology—in order to not only lay the foundation for the investigation of the historical issue of Pound, but also to relocate Han-shan in his original cultural background.

The emergence of a relative integrated Chinese civilization dated back the second and first millennia B.C. It is a civilization may have emerged from the confluence of developments over wide areas rather than a radiation from one "nuclear area". According to archaeological discoveries, the fine technology of bronze casting and the formation of the well-developed writing system in China can be traced back as early as 1400 B.C. The Chinese cosmos remains a complex, having its origin in an agricultural way of life. Space is organized by a grid of cardinal points and centers, as Tuan notes, the Chinese cosmos is magnificent and stately, the product of a society that believes in orderly (bureaucratic) organization and procedures (*Cosmos and Hearth*, 17). On the other side, the development of the material culture is no wonder the basis of the production and circulation of text. Later, the invention of paper as the medium of writing and the spread of printing in the eleventh century also played a fundamental role in the circulation of written texts.

During the Zhou (also known as Chou) dynasty, a very long era that lasted around eight hundred years until the third century B.C., a sociopolitical structure was firmly established; the great thinkers rose and the classic Chinese philosophy won the minds of the rulers and the people for its brilliance. In the following two thousand years, Chinese culture continued to develop from Han through Tang, Song dynasties to the modern era. Despite the changing of dynasties, civil wars, political disruptions, the Chinese culture remained basically unimpaired and unchallenged. The main component of Chinese civilization has been Confucianism. Pervaded every aspect of Chinese society, family, arts and literature, the teachings of Confucius and Mencius have molded the Chinese national character. On the other side, Buddhism was brought to China from Central Asia in Han Dynasty. Stimulating the creativity in painting, sculpture, and literature, it can be seen as one of the biggest contributions from other foreign influences.

Poetry flourished since the early stage of the Chinese civilization, while the first group of earliest poetry was anonymous. *The Peasant's Song* (*Ji Rang Ge*) was considered one of the earliest Chinese poetry. In the five sentences, it describes the peaceful life of peasants in a day, and ends with radical and even anarchical thought: "What has some emperor to do with us?" No matter how close poetry stays with political power in the later development of Chinese history, significantly, this primitive ideal and honorable expression of democracy can be found in the following Chinese poetry again and again, from *Shih Ching* (*Shi Jing*, 诗经), a book of anonymous poetic voices collected from normal people, which turns out to be the orthodox Confucians for more than 2,500 years, to the poetry of Li Po, who represents the climax of Tang poetry.

On Encountering Sorrow (*Li Sao*, 离骚) appeared as the first non-anonymous Chinese poetry. The author Qu Yuan was an aristocrat from the Kingdom of Chu in the Warring States period of ancient China. Later on, after the extant poetry of Han dynasty, the works of Ruan Ji and Tao Qian stood out in the Chinese dark ages. Then came the golden age of Chinese poetry: the Tang dynasty. So many giant poets, for example, Li Po, Tu Fu, and Wang Wei marked their names in the history. From the 13th century on, the Chinese poetry declined with the growth of printing and the rise of the short stories, novel, theater, and the more colloquial forms. In Ming and Qing dynasties, the poets who wrote in classical forms intentionally dedicated themselves to the imitation of the Tang or Song masters instead of pursuing originality. As a result, there were fewer really outstanding poets with their original voices. On the whole, the historical changes reflect the specific aesthetic attitude and horizon of Chinese people.

The three centuries of Tang dynasty (618-907) are traditionally seen as the time that reached the high excellence and fullest flowering of Chinese poetry. With the convergence of favorable circumstances, the Tang poets devoted themselves to the intensive creative activity and fruitful experiments to explore the limits of the Chinese language. Tang was a cosmopolitan dynasty, with travelers going to India and foreign merchants coming to China. During that time, China became the hub of the Eastern world, and all roads from Asia led to Ch’ang-an, its most magnificent metropolis. It was an era of brilliant intellectual and literary activities which never surpassed by any other period in Chinese history. As Stephen Owen states in *Cambridge History of Chinese History*, since the 650th, literature was centered almost entirely in the imperial court. Economic affluence, political stability, imperial patronage, the high honors accorded poet talents in state examinations and public life all fostered the growth of Tang poetry. The writing of poetry has attracted Chinese people since ancient time, but in the Tang dynasty, it became especially popular. Poets were respected and honored by the public, and a number of them received the patronage from the court. The majority of Tang poets were government officers who had passed the literary examines, while the fame came more based on their poetic achievements rather than their administrative ability.

The Tang poetry reached its full glory during the reign of the Brilliant Emperor Xuanzong (also known as Ming Huang), who himself was a poet too. However, at the same time after reaching the apex of grandeur, the Tang Empire started to decline. The Tartar general An Lu-shan’s rebellion in 755 shattered the nation and brought it into disturbance and chaos that never fully recovered. Therefore, the year 755 was considered as the “great divide” in both Tang politics and poetry. The splendor and the following decline of the Tang period are all reflected in its poetry. According to *An Introduction to Chinese Literature* (1966), approximately 50,000 poems by around 2,300 poets have been preserved to today. In the description of Liu Wu-Chi, the Tang China, like the Elizabethan England, was virtually a nation of singing birds: “There were also numerous poets among the ranks of emperors and empresses, generals and courtiers, Taoist hermits and Buddhist monks, court ladies and singsong girls, who together contributed to the greatness of Tang poetry” (69).

Before and during the Tang Dynasty, there were writers who used literature in a particularly personal way, and actually these were the writers who continued to be read in later ages. Meanwhile, I shall notice that literature by that time was primarily a social practice. A system of classical prose genres and poetics subgenres was inherited and extended in Tang, while most of those prose genres and poetic subgenres were tied to specific occasions in life. The capacity to compose prose and verse carries functions in the civil bureaucracy as well as going to a party with friends. This literature tied to the social occasion was routine, however, it in no way precluded genius, as Stephen Owen comments, "indeed, many of the greatest pieces of the era were composed in response to a social obligation to write"(287).

To understand Tang poetry, there are two incomparable giant poets we have to mention. One is the "mad, macabre genius" Li Po (Li Bai), who was born in China's western borderlands and learned the art of swordsmanship and mastered the civil arts of poetry in a Taoist monastery in his youth. The other one is Tu Fu (Du Fu), Li Po's younger contemporary, and friend, who entitled as "the greatest poet" ever in the history of China, a devoted family man and contagious civil servant in an empire under siege. Besides them, Wang Wei (699 or 701-761) was another important Buddhsit poet that can be taken as a comparing reference to Han-shan. As Stephen Owen points out, Wang Wei represented the culture of the capital. Born in one of the most distinguished families in the empire, he had a perfect background and career, still he "made his poetic career out of a rejection of public life with an austere simplicity that was related to his Buddhist faith" (305). His collected poems demonstrate that he could write in all styles, but he tended to choose the simplicity. Through this unique plainness, he celebrated the solitude and pleasure of the rustic life.

In the Tang Empire, a majority of traditional poets adopted the southern school Chan Buddhism as a favored route to spiritual enlightenment. "The Southern School" developed by the Monk Shenhui was supported by a work commonly known as the *Platform Sutra*, a sermon delivered by the legendary monk Huineng, presumably in the late seventh century. Huineng is a seminal figure in the history of Buddhism. Known as the “Sixth Patriarch” of Chan, Huineng had been an illiterate layman, but hearing the Diamon Sutra, he suddenly attained awakening. Far more from a just biographical detail, Huineng’s illiteracy is central to the anti-scholasticism of Chan.

In any sense, Chan poetry by monk practitioners in Tang remained a separate poetic art, outside the place and chronological order. Among them, the reception of the poetry of Han-shan and his associate Shi De was a particular phenomenon. Although it was not appreciated in the later reception of Tang poetry, it was more admired in Japan and America in the 20th century, and thus, sparked again back to China. Still there remain a lot of mysteries on Han-shan about his living age, his marriage, or even he took the state examination. Just as how Huineng’s case shows, the Chan tradition had a genius for constructing quasi-historical characters.

3.2 The Three Teachings

Through the Chinese history, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have conditioned and informed as the three “teachings” (三教), which are compared as the legs of a bronze *ding*, a ceremonial vessel served as a symbol of the political power and cultural authority in ancient China. Among them, Confucianism played a more fundamental role in every aspect of the society.

Confucius (551-479B.C.) is considered as the most influential teacher, philosopher, and politician in Chinese history. His philosophy is known as Confucianism, which emphasizes morality, justice, sincerity, and the correctness of social relationships. Confucius authored and edited a huge amount of Chinese classic texts including the *Five Classics*. After his death, the aphorisms concerning his teachings were compiled in the *Analects* by his students and followers. Among the five books that Confucius used called *Five Classics*, the poetry anthology *Shi Ching* is the largest. As Seaton comments, although these books are not claimed as divine authority, they were influential in traditional Chinese culture as the Bible is in Christian societies or the Koran in Islamic. Based on the study of history and literature, Confucius used these books to teach the literacy, the self-cultivation as tools to master the arts of communication for the traditional Chinese gentlemen. In the belief of Confucius, poetry was the mode of communication par excellence, and the cultivated man, by speaking through poetry, this most powerful literary medium, will achieve *De* ("德"*)*, charisma, the most magical power to lead the community in peace and even, when necessary, in war.

Poetry held a unique place in traditional Chinese culture. As a source of affluence, prestige, even political power, it was unrivaled by any other talent or ability. In many western cultures, the literary prowess was also admired and acknowledged as a gateway along the path of social mobility, nevertheless, nowhere else approached its position like in the ancient China. The reason for this preeminence lays in the pronouncements of Confucius, Master Sage, and a special Chinese term *wen*, which in J. P. Seaton's interpretation relating to "a number of things which go beyond even the most advanced conception of literacy in the West"

(1).

Fundamentally the word *wen* (“文”) refers to decoration, which is applied to the outside of an object of civil ritual or sacred workshop, or to a cup, or a house. On the other side, *wen* also means the patterns that occur and recur in nature, for instance, the grain in the freshly cut wood, the ripple patterns in the sand of a streambed. Just as a raw wood is always more evident and more beautiful when rubbed and oiled again and again to glow with a beautiful sheen, say the Confucians, one must rub and polish one’s natural grain. The Confucians believe that human nature is good at birth. With care, it will glow with a warm sheen. We can understand *wen* from two forms. It means a kind of passive literacy of reading analytically and critically, with a joyful appreciation of the aesthetics of the written word, while it also encourages the active literacy to argue brilliantly and marshal beauty on the side of truth “in the ultimate form of human argument”. To accomplish *wen*, in its simply and ultimate sense, is to accomplish the ability to communicate fully and powerfully.

Since the teachings and interpretations of the Confucian classics became standard works of reference for candidates in the state examination, the successful scholars were appointed to offices in the government. The Confucian doctrines became the immediate concern for the clever and ambitious would-be scholar-officers to climb the bureaucratic ladder to positions of power and influence. On the other side, under the influence of the Confucian ethics, Chinese people were especially strong in their moral concern of right and wrong, which naturally found expression in the literature and gave rise to the concept of poetic justice, as much important to Chinese as to Greek. In most cases, if a literary work does not give the readers a sense of satisfaction in the triumph and vindication of the good and virtuous, it would be a blemish. In the meanwhile, if poetry was regarded as the most imaginative and loftiest of all literary forms in the West, in ancient China it was seen as a common, everyday undertaking of the intellectuals. There were numerous occasions of poetry: court celebrations, convivial feasts after a generous flow of wine, trips to scenic spots, garden parties where the peonies and chrysanthemums burst into bloom…Poetry was always the language that spoke understandingly and pleasurably to the heart.

Nevertheless, surely there were rebels from Confucianism. As Liu Wu-chi sharply indentifies, in one's personal life, "success strengthened his belief in the Confucian orthodoxy while disappointments bred in him a desire to wander astray to the other worldliness of Buddhism and Taoism" (4). Similarly, in times of peace or prosperity of a country, Confucianism triumphs, but when the country was in disorder, Buddhism and Taoism gained a large following among the people. This carved out new paths in literary fields too.

Since the advent of Buddhism in China around the middle of the first century from India, it brought profound significance not only on the religious but cut across all levels of secular life. Buddhism also had an enormous effect on philosophy, linguistics, architecture, medicine, mathematics, and nearly every other areas of human endeavor. Accordingly, in literature, these Buddhist impacts as the reflection of the human experiences showed up in the canonical and non-canonical writings ever since the new religion took root in China. As it is asserted in *The Columbia History of Chinese Literature* (2001), aside from the overt reflections of the Indian faith, there were countless subtler yet equally or perhaps even more transformative aspects brought from Buddhism, including the esthetic standards, sophisticated prosodic rules, specific genres dramatic conventions, and above all, the acceptance and affirmation of fictive, imaginary realms (172).

Between the Eastern Han dynasty and the early Tang, during the six centuries, China was engaged in “the most monumental translation project that the world had ever seen” (Chang and Owen xxv). A significant cultural encounter happened when the Chinese Buddhist monks took long journeys to India. Among them, Xuanzang was the most influential Chinese Buddhist monk who traveled to India and studied in a Buddhism academy for seventeen years in the seventh century during the early Tang. He left great legacies in numerous aspects including describing the interaction between the Chinese Buddhism and the Indian Buddhism. He is also known for his extensive, accurate, and far influential translation of the Indian Buddhist texts into Chinese. According to *The Cambridge History of Chinese Literature*, there were a vast of utterly unfamiliar and sophisticated cultural material imported and translated from South Asia, accompanied by careful reflection on the problems of translation. The pressures exerted by *Sanskirt* on the target language produced a language which today we refer to as the “Buddhist Chinese”. In this language, Buddhism was further exported to Japan and Korea. Along with this language, Chinese secular culture spread too.

Combining the straightforward vernacular and the very foreign conceptual discourse, the Buddhism Chinese encountered the native resistance and was segregated from the secular discourse. Grew out of translation, however, a new conceptual discourse became a major presence in the Chinese discursive world. Profoundly, Buddhism transformed the Chinese language, narrative, and the conceptual universe (Chang and Owen xxv). Meanwhile, the Chinese school of Mahayana Buddhism Chan (known as Zen in Japan, meaning “meditation”) had been developed since the 6th century. Dominating during the Tang and Song dynasties, it is seen as the domestication of Buddhism in China. As the modern political scholars like to talk about how Marxism was changed and domesticated in China, apart from discussing how Buddhism changed China, there is a large scholarly discourse focusing on how China changed Buddhism (Chang and Owen xxv). In Tang dynasty, while the southern school Chan Buddhism was favored by the majority of the traditional poets as an important route to spiritual enlightenment, Chan poetry written by monk practitioners remained a kind of separate poetic art outside the place and time.

On the other side, Taoism is another significant religious and philosophical tradition in China that has been pursued by a large number of flowerers including those greatest poets in the Chinese history. The origin of Taoism can be dated back to the 4th century B.C. Literally means “The Way”, *Dao* (*Tao, ‘道’*) draws on the cosmological notions from the School of Yin-Yang, and *Yi Jing* (*I Ching*, “易经”, Book of Changes), one of the oldest and the most crucial texts in Chinese culture. Taoism expounds the philosophy that the human behavior should keep in accordance with nature. The *Dao-de-jing* (*Tao Te Ching*, “道德经”, Book of the Way and Its Virtue)) of Laozi (also known as Lao Tzu, literally means “Master Lao”), together with the later writings of Zhuangzi (Chuang Tzu, “Master Zhuang”) have been taking as the milestone works of the Taoist tradition. Different from Confucianism, Taoism has no emphasis on social orders and rituals, but values the naturalness and the state of *wu wei* (“无为”, action without intention).

Chapter 42 of the Dao-de-jing tells that:

> Tao gave birth to the One:
> The One gave birth successively to two things,
> three things, up to ten thousand.
> These ten thousand creatures cannot turn their back to the shade
> without having the sun on their bellies,
> and it is on this blending of the breaths that their harmony depends. (Lao Tzu 45)

According to this cosmology of Taoism, the Tao of Origin is conceived of as the Supreme Void (“太虚”) from which emanates the One, or say, the primordial Breath (“元气”). The breach engenders the Two, embodied as Yin and Yang, the two Vital Breaths. These two interact, engender and give life to the Ten Thousand Things. But at the same time, there are Three between the Two and the Ten Thousand Things, which would represent the combination of the Vital Breaths (Yin-Yang) with the Breath of the Median Void (Zhong-qi) along with the strict Taoist tradition. Coming from the Supreme Void, this Median Void is necessary for retaining the dynamic and harmonious function of the Yin and Yang. In his interdisciplinary work *Chinese Poetic Writing* (2017), François Cheng explains that this ternary relationship demonstrates the Chinese thought is not dualistic but ternary. Void-Full, Yin-Yang, and Heaven-Earth-Man constitute the three relational and hierarchical axes around which Chinese cosmology is organized. Using means of signs, the Chinese poetic language proposes to explore the mystery of the Universe, while has not neglected to structure itself along these three axes on its different levels.

It is worth noticing that Buddhism and Taoism sharing certain spirits in common and there are people following both of them. Meanwhile, the philosophy of Buddhism and Taoism differ sophisticatedly. In *Poetics of Emptiness: Transformations of Asian Thought in American Poetry* (2010), Jonathan Stalling traces the intertextual paths and explores the different sides of the enigmatic concept "emptiness" in Buddhist and Taoist poetics. By noticing that Buddhism changes everything and Daoism changed nothing, Stalling gives a playful distinction between Buddhism and Daoism. *Sonata* as a key term in Buddhism is normally translated as "emptiness" in English and 空 (*kong*) in Chinese. It can be understood as "not-self", a state that nothing possesses essential, autonomous, enduring identity. On the other hand, the central term in Taoism can be translated as "way". According to the two central texts *Dao-de-jing* (*Tao Te Ching*) and *Zhuangzi*, *Dao* "is empty of any dependence upon a structuring principle". One can say that the *Dao* is not dependent on others for its existence, but rather, it arises of its self naturally. In Stalling's interppretation, this points to a fundamental difference between Taoist and Buddhist notions of the ultimate reality. As he recalls, "most forms of Buddhist emptiness point precisely to the dependent origination (non-self-arising) of phenomena (all things are caused), whereas Taoist emptiness springs from a belief that everything arises naturally from itself (21).To put it in another way, Taoist ontology stress the absolute autonomy of things (*ziran*), which cannot be objectively cognized but must be related to through housing their mysterious unfolding within the emptied chamber of the fasted mind, while Buddhist discourses generally agree that things cannot be objectified, but often place more emphasis on the inherent dependency of all things (*taran)* as a way of understanding emptiness generally and the emptiness of self specifically (23).

Stalling also reminds us how Buddhism with its emphasis on the enigmatic concept of "emptiness" used to be reduced to the "cult of nothingness" by some Western commentators, for example, Roger-Pol Droit. In their eyes, Buddhism appeared as a worship of nothingness, "a delusional and impossible religion based upon 'the annihilation of any thinking principle…a daze where consciousness is dissolved…a negation of the will…a desire for a death without return" (Stalling 9). Stalling attributes this misunderstanding to the logic of the binary in western philosophy and metaphysics, the dichotomous constructs in the Christian theology like being/ non-being, existence/nonexistence, or even the more binary of fullness/emptiness. Although the early reception in the West of Buddhist notions of emptiness as a nearly complete incomprehensibility, later it "would blossom into full-blown cultural fixation" in the twentieth century: "a break with the belief in ontological stability itself, and furthermore as a move toward releasing the teleological ends of many core American values", as we can read in W. H. Auden's prophetic line, "poetry makes nothing happen" (29). The Buddhist-inspired anti-teleological indeterminacy challenges many core

American values. Stephan Fredman observes that “if American culture bases so many of its ideals upon the furtherance of individual self-interests—lauding the person who can ‘take charge’ and promoting the ‘pursuit of happiness’ and the American Dream of getting ahead—Buddhism stresses letting-be, nonattachment, the cessation of desire, and the illusory nature of the ‘self’” (Fredmen 203). In the very sense, the poetics of emptiness is a response to the western idea or the fear of nothingness/nihilism (Stalling 26).

3.3 The Chinese Writing System and the Forms of Classical Poetry

The vehicle that makes all the powerful communication possible is the Chinese writing system. Ever since the signs incised upon the bones of oxen, upon the shells of tortoises, or upon the bronze vessels, no matter those signs are sacred or mundane, they manifest as tracings, emblems, visualized rhythms, and fixed attitudes. Each sign is independent of sound and invariable, forms a unity of itself that maintains the potential of its own sovereignty and thus the potential to endure. The Chinese writing system, from its very beginning, has refused to only support for the spoken language, while “its development has been characterized by a constant struggle to assure for itself both autonomy and freedom of combination” (Cheng 11).

The alphabet writing system in all the western languages uses letters to represent the sounds of spoken words, while in the Chinese writing system, the characters carry meaning independent from sound, and many of them carry pronunciation and meaning at the same time. Consequently, like Cheng argues in the *Chinese Poetic Writing*, apparent from its very origin is a contradictory and dialectical relationship between represented sounds and a physical presence, between the requirement of linearity and the desire for a spatial evasion. Then, he casts the question: whether is it appropriate to speak of a "senseless defiance" on the part of the Chinese for thus maintaining this "contradiction" for the past four thousand years? In his opinion, whether or not, it is a matter of a most astonishing risk: through the maintenance of this writing system, "the Chinese have made a most singular wager, the great beneficiary of which has been the poet" (11). Most Chinese authors use one character to press the meaning, especially in classical poetry. However, Chinese has never been a monosyllabic language as many well-intentioned authors have said. There are fewer one-syllable words in spoken Chinese than in English, but "since the Chinese writing system consists of single-syllable characters, each of which does have a meaning, any writer who wants to communicate the meaning of a two or three syllable spoken word with a single character can do so" (Seaton 3). Still, as J.P. Seaton notices, "most written Chinese was close being monosyllabic toward verbal economy also sent a premium on extreme grammatical simplicity" (3).

On the other hand, with the growing consensus, the attempt to preserve the view to see Chinese written characters as ideographic in contemporary discourse seems confusing. Indeed, Chinese written characters are ideographic, but they are partly phonetic too, rather than totally "pictorial". The willful misreading of Fenollosa, Pound among other Western scholars, philosophers and poets seems rather common. Despite the popular misunderstanding, there are basically three categories of characters in Chinese: pictographs, ideography, and a more complicated type: the phonetic/signific compound. The pictographs only consist fewer than 15 percent of the characters, but as Seaton points out, “when one appears in a line of poetry, it announces its presence directly to the right brain, where visual images are processed, as well as to the left brain, where *language* is processed”. The reader may perhaps experience the thing represented directly, for a moment at least. In contrast, the alphabetic words “enter the left brain as spoken words, without raising a flicker in visual cortex” (Seaton 4). As to the ideography, generally, there are two types. The more simple type provides an abstract picture of an idea, while the more complex ideographs are constructed by juxtaposing two or more pictorial elements. For instance, a moon beside a sun (明) means “bright”. A human beside number two (仁) suggests “kindness” or “benevolence” in the philosophical sense of Confucius.

The vast majority of Chinese characters are the phonetic/signific compounds (different scholars have used different terminology). It means that a part of the character indicates the pronunciation while the other part gives a clue of the meaning. The part for the significance is sometimes more powerful since the pronunciation of the character is more easily to change in history, while the part for significance is more fixed as mnemonic devices. For example, nearly all the characters contain the element of fish is a particular variety of aquatic life. Meanwhile, it is important to mention that in most cases the contemporary Chinese readers pay little attention to the possible manipulation of the formation of the characters when they read newspaper, history or an academic paper. Most of the classical

Chinese poems don't carry any character "tricks" neither. Meaning, the content of the best poets' hearts and minds is more concerned with effort.

As a matter of fact, the picture does have long had its place in Chinese epigraphy. Xu Shen (30-124 A.D.), the great Chinese etymologist, in the preface to his dictionary *Shuo wen jie zi*, put *xiang xing* (象形, the "imaging and shaping") near the top of his list of character-formation techniques. Following Xu Shen's lead, the later philologists suppose from the comparative evidence that a primitive picture-writing as the ancestor of the by now highly conventionalized characters. However, as Saussy argues, Hegel (in his *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences*) could easily dismiss the Chinese language as a backward medium of thought, since he sensibly points out that most of the things worth thinking about are not representable in pictures. Fenollosa turns the discussion into a new direction by taking the root meaning of any Chinese character to be the verb. For Fenollosa, all nature is really a vast interplay of verbs instead of nouns, and one can recover the vital energy of the primitive verbs. Fenollosa also reintroduces syntax as an image of nature: it is semantic or meaningful, following the same principles as the ideogram, and makes its particular uncluttered excellence.

Saussy recounts that Fenollosa's primitivism may strike us as naïve and misguided, but we must admit that it is in the service of a linguistic critical project. For Fenollosa, "the primitive man is the benchmark of perceptual accuracy because he sees naively, sees things as they are without the fog of culture, theology, or artifice" (41). In this nostalgia reconstruction, the authors of Chinese writing similarly endowed with the gift of simplicity.

Fenollosa's epistemic standard with the bad habits of ethnographic and colonial exoticism: the Chinese, just like their written language, are first of all alien. Saussy even identifies there's a double exoticism: "a European nostalgia complicated by a Japanese one": Fenollosa had come to Chinese through Japanese teachers, and in Japanese phonetic writing coexists with ideographic writing (9).

By recognizing there is an enthusiasm since Chinese writing became known in Europe and it has often been taken as the model of a kind of perfected writing, Saussy reinforces that although this enthusiasm may appear outlandish to the "native" Chinese writing system users, the foreign or indigenous perceptions of Chinese writing "are at variance or even that the tales told of Chinese script do not stand up to linguistic scrutiny" ("The Prestige of Writing", 35). That is to say, to all the intercultural interpretation, there is an inventive element, a fit between its observations and the intellectual need of its proponents. That is to say, the proper way to analyze an intellectual tangle of this is not to hold it to the standard of specialist univocity but to situate it ethnographically among the conceptions it answers or echoes (36).

Another important issue is that classical Chinese poetry was composed in forms. As Tony Barnstone notes, the strict inherited patterns were much like the structured Victorian forms that Pound wanted to abandon:

> In the first decades of this century, Chinese poetry was a powerful weapon in the battle against Victorian form, and thus it was brought over into English in forms resembling free verse that helped to invent. Rhyme and accentual meter were quietly

> dropped from the equation because—unlike Chinese use of parallelism, caesure, minimalism, implication, and clarity of image—they weren't useful in the battle for new poetic form (Barnstone, "The Poem Behind" 74)

It is always customary to talk about forms when it comes to a poetry anthology. To be a poet in ancient time also means you have to follow the technical rules. For instance, in the west, poets used to write in heroic couplets, sonnets, or free verse. In classical Chinese poetry, there are five most important forms developed since late Zhou (the fourth century B.C.). The point in common is that they all share the end rhyme on the even-numbered lines, while the thyme on the first line is optional. Among them, the most important form was *Shih*, except for the four-character verse in the more ancient book of poetry *Shih Ching*, *Shih* normally contains five or seven character lines, with five or seven words in each line, while normally there is a pause before the final three characters in the line. Brevity was the soul for Chinese poetry. Within the limited scope, the fine workmanship became really sophisticated for excellence, and every word shall be weighed carefully for artistic effect.

The eight-line *lu-shih* ("regulated shih") was technically most demanding. Nevertheless, the strict rules of the *lu-shih* made it even easier to write good verse. There were so many great Tang poets and after followed all the rules and still expressed clearly and creatively what weighs on the heart and mind. Probably, there was peer pressure making them feel compelled to prove they could. Except for China's greatest humanist poet Tu Fu's reputation in *lu-shih,* even the wild Li Po, who was regarded as the spirit of the poetry incarnate, was absolute mastery of this form. Han-shan's poems are composed originally in this form too.

Music was another essential assent of Chinese poetry. The musicality of the language itself can be a vehicle of poetry—let alone numerous poets are refined musicians too. From the phonic point of view, the Chinese language is monosyllabic, favored by the ideograms which tend to have a minimal sound. According to François Cheng, when each sound has autonomy and a resonance weighted with deep significance, this autonomy, in turn, permits an extremely dense rhythm. The poems were used to be read aloud. However, now this kind of poetry recitation has become a lost art (7). In the English translation of classical Chinese poems, including Snyder's translation of "Cold Mountain Poems", the original rhythm is either lost or replaced by another rhythm in English chose by the translator.

3.4 *Shan-shui* and *Qi*

Fenollosa values the vital energy in nature, while in the Chinese tradition, nature remains the strain of nostalgia for a self-contained but satisfying lifestyle. Rather than a "wilderness", nature is more like a habitat where people not only practice meditation, strive for a vision, but grow vegetables, drink wine with friends, play with grandchildren. The Chinese poets returned the Neolithic villages, following the model for a better life in the Taoist classics. Those secret societies, as Snyder suggests, are from the dream of pre-feudal or post-revolutionary society.

Snyder encountered Chinese poems in translation at 19 years old. He admits they freed him from excessive attachment to wild mountains. The Chinese poets' conception of nature has a deep influence on Snyder. In 1978, Snyder published his selection of essays "'Wild' in China" that deals with the environmental and cultural history in China. Together with "Walls within Walls" (1983) and "The Brush" (1999), the three are identified as Snyder's "The Great Clod Project". The whole project was never completed, but these works reveal Snyder's deep pastoral nostalgia in Chinese poetry and Chinese culture. In the first mini-essay in this series, "Hsieh's Shoes", Snyder depicts a flourishing back to nature movement from the ruling gentry class which started during the Six Dynasties period (222-589) in the history of China, and this Chinese sense of nature later becomes the root of the artistic representations of nature in the dynasties of Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279).

Snyder takes the poet Xie Lingyun (Hshieh Ling-yun) as a perfect example of the "aesthetics of nature" in the Six Dynasties Period (220-589). Xie Lingyun (385-433) was born in an aristocratic family, but when his family moved south, he "grew up in a biome that would have been considered exotic and barbarous by Confucius" ("'Wild' in China", 288). After he was banished to a minor position in a remote south coast town, Xie abandoned his ambivalent pursuit of success career in politics, resigned from the administration totally, and move to the hills southeast of present-day Hangzhou. Xie was a lover of mountains. His fascination with steep hills and dense woods of South China took him to long climbs and trail-cutting explorations which can last for one month long. He gained "power" in the hills. Remaining as a puzzle, Xie was a would-be Taoist, an early follower of Buddhist who wrote an essay expounding "instant enlightenment" when Buddhism was a new thing by that time that was limited in upper-class circles. Xie camped in the heights alone, walked all night in the moonlight, and "these years and energies lie behind what we now take to be the Chinese sense of nature as reflected in art" ("'Wild' in China", 289).

In Snyder's idea, Xie's poems in *shih* (lyric) manifest the quiet intensity that becomes the definitive quality of the Chinese *shih* tradition when it reached the greatest creative Tang and Song dynasty phases. Also, Snyder discusses why a "Chinese nature poem" can be so effective: they are not really about scenery or landscapes, but in a condition which the literary critic and writer Lu Ji (261-303) called "calm transparency". Lu Ji says that poetry starts with a lament for fleeting life, the regard for the great virtuous deeds of the people past, and the necessity of making "maps" for future. In the Chinese poetic tradition, the human emotions are always revealed. A still official can be frail and vulnerable. Mountains and rivers become the visible expression of cosmic principles, and the cosmic principles go back into silence, no-being, emptiness. Meanwhile, Chinese poetry steps out of narrow human-centred affairs into "a big-spirited world of a long time, long views, and natural processes; and comes back to a brief moment in a small house by a fence" ("'Wild' in China", 294).

In the geographical sense, mountains and waters form each other, thus the compound "mountains and waters" (*shan-shui*) in Chinese is the commonly used straightforward term for landscape. Accordingly, landscape painting is literally referred to as "mountains and waters pictures". The dialectic and dynamic rock and water can be always found in the Chinese feel of the land. Snyder has been fascinated by the Chinese landscape painting ever since he first met them in the Cleveland Museum of Art in his early youth. Synder recalls a long time after that, the several large Chinese horizontal hand scrolls from pre-modern eras he saw with the titles like "Mountains and Rivers Without End" seem to picture the whole world, moving through four seasons. Indeed, he is observant enough to notice "mountains and waters" is a way to represent the totality of nature. For Snyder, mountains and rivers "are a dyad that together make wholeness possible" (*Practice of the Wild*, 108). As a way to refer to the totality of the process of nature, mountains and waters" goes beyond the dichotomies of natural and artificial, the purity and pollution. Obviously, it is not a coincidence that later Snyder takes the Chinese handscroll paintings as a structural model in his most important collection *Mountains and Rivers without End*.

In his essay "The Brush", Snyder discusses the concept of *qi* (ch'i), a rich and sophisticated term in archaic East Asian animism, which can be translated as breath, indwelling energy, and spirit. Zong Bing (Tsung Ping, 375-443), the Chinese artist and musician who left the earliest text on landscape painting developed a philosophy of landscape painting that stood for centuries to come: "landscapes exist in the material world yet soar in the realms of the spirit…the Saint interprets the Way as Law through his spiritual insight, and so the wise man comes to an understanding of it. Landscape pays homage to the Way through Form, and so the virtuous man comes to delight in it" ("The Brush", 314). Later on, the artist and theorist Xie He (Hsieh Ho, 479-502) established the "six principles of Chinese painting" in his book *The Record of the Classification of Old Painters*, declaring the first principle is "spirit resonance and living moment". The representation of the *qi* of things shows in the early Chinese decorative art where artists tried to catch and trace the lines of energy flow in the floating mist, running water, rock formation, moving clouds, growing plant, and various effects of light.

The concept of *qi* is rooted in Chinese tradition since the pre-Buddhism era, which links to Taoism and the "spirit of Heaven and Earth" in Confucianism. As Snyder explains, the dyadic symbolism of mountains and waters in Chinese culture and folk Buddhism, mountains, with the mythic associations of height, verticality, spirit, hardness, resistance, transcendence, and masculinity, are exemplars of the "yang": bright, dry, hard, and male. Waters are "yin": wet, dark, soft, feminine, with associations of fluid-but-strong, soulful, life-giving, shape-shifting. Mountains and waters are a dyad united in the flow of *qi*, which together make the wholeness possible.

In *Philosophical Meditations on Zen Buddhism* (1998), Dale Wright comments that cultivating a sense of the whole functions to "place each individual part in greater and more coherent perspective, and thus to transform one's experience of what is present and at hand" (quoted in Mark Gonnerman, 3). In the Huayan Buddhist philosophy, in Indra's net every jewel can show the reflections of all the other jewels, and these reflections will be multiplied and remultiplied endlessly. This dynamic ongoing interaction generates a number of implications. Considering Snyder's Buddhist education took place in the Rinzai temple of Huayan school in Kyoto, it is not surprising that the *Avatamsaka* images and ideas keep running through Snyder's works all the time. The philosophy enables the understanding of a worldview where direct experience "of rocks or bushes or people" might intimate awareness of the Whole. In the regard, the non-Buddhist British mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead has also declared the simple location is not the primary way in which the things are involved in space and time: “in a certain sense, everything is everywhere at all time. For every location involves an aspect of itself in every other location. Thus every spatio-temporal standpoint mirrors the world” (Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, 91).

Dōgen Kigen was a 13th century Japanese Buddhist priest, poet, philosopher that Snyder admires very much. Dōgen used to travel to China and stay there for five years to seek out a more authentic Buddhism. After his return to Japan, he began to promote the meditation practice of zazen and found the influential Sōtō school of Zen in Japan. At the beginning of the essay “Blue Mountains Constantly Walking”, Synder quoted the opening paragraph of Dōgen Kigen’s far influential essay *Sansuikyo* (literally translated as “Mountains and Waters Sutra”), which was written in the autumn of the year 1240:

> The Mountains and rivers of this moment are the actualization of the way of the ancient Buddhas. Each, abiding in its own phenomenal expression, realizes completeness. Because mountains and waters have been active since before the eon of emptiness, they are alive at this moment. Because they have been the self since before form arose, they are liberated and realized. (“Blue Mountain Constantly Walking”, 200)

As Snyder explains, “mountains” in East Asia are usually associated with wilderness. By contrast, the lowlands including cities, villages, markets, and palaces, are thought of as “dusty world” full of competition, lust, greed, and intoxication. People who would flee from such a world and seek purity build the hermitages in the hills and follow the practices that will bring them realization and healthy life. Those hermitages gradually became the temple complexes and religious sects. The “mountains” stay independent from the control of the central government, which serves as a haven of political and spiritual freedom. Moreover, as Dōgen writes:

> Many rulers have visited mountains to pay homage to wise people or ask for instructions from great sages….at such time the rulers treat the sages as teachers, disregarding the protocol of the usual world. The imperial power has no authority over the wise people in the mountains. (“Blue Mountain Constantly Walking”, 202)

Dōgen used to say that “you should know that even though all things are liberated and not tied to anything, they abide in their own phenomenal expression” (“Mountains and Water Sutra”, 102). Snyder points out that “Mountains and Waters Sutras” is called a sutra not to assert that “mountains and rivers of this moment” is a text, a system of symbols, a referential world of mirrors. Rather, “this world in its actual existence is a complete presentation, an enactment” that stands for nothing. At the end of “Mountains and Waters Sutras”, Dōgen finishes his meditation saying “when you investigate mountains thoroughly, this is the work of the mountains. Such mountains and waters of themselves become wise persons and sages" (quoted in Snyder, "Blue Mountain Constantly Walking", 213)

The classical nature poems and landscape paintings were popular among the elites of pre-modern China, who were "urbane, bookish, secular, arty, and supremely confident" in Snyder's description ("The Brush", 313). The Imperial Government kept a ritualized relationship with the Great Nature, while the most important rituals were conducted by the Emperor himself in solitude. Meanwhile, nature and its landscape remain as realms of selfless beauty, purity, and order, in vivid contrast to the brutal entanglements and corruption of politics that no active Chinese official could avoid. The gap between the ideal humane Confucian theory and the actual practice of administering a country is the price an intellectual paid for the prestige and affluence. Then, mountains and rivers become a reminder of the vivid world where the clear waters, patient rocks, lively coiling clouds soar above human fickleness.

3.5 The Entwining of Language and Vision

The West's encounter with the East started with the material artworks rather than the intellection about China. The complex visuality of concrete and empirical art marks out the limits that what is possible to bring across the border from one culture to another. Considering language is the medium of knowledge, as Andy J. Patton argues, what it is meant by "China" is, in part, a way of doing things visually (2). Along with this line of argument, here I am exploring the entwining of the language of vision in the Chinese art forms of poetry, landscape painting, and calligraphy, as well as their reflections in the Western contemporary art. Particularly, I take Brice Marden's "Cold Mountain series" as Snyder's contemporary reference to examine the crossover and experiments of Chinese classical poetry and visual arts from the other side of the Pacific.

For Fenollosa, the Chinese system mirrors the world by describing man's immediate reality to an extent the phonetic writing cannot—although he also admits that the Chinese written system is not spacious enough to keep all the complex ideas together. Flemming Olsen points out that Fenollosa caught the concepts of motion, nature, action, reality, and language in his essay, which reflects the Zeitgeist (27). Nature, in the idea of Fenollosa, is primordial entity possessed of a dynamic force, characterized by motion, a storehouse of power. The Chinese ideography appeals him for the fact that it does not depend on syntax but represents a succession of constituents and progression. Chinese words normally neither differentiate between nouns and verbs, meanwhile wit metaphor functions as the great revealer since the graphic symbol throws a 'nimbus of meaning' (quoted in Olsen, 24). Therefore, the strength of Chinese poetry lies in the fact that it illuminates "vivid shorthand actions and processes in nature", while the true "recognition of that" in Western poetry is the transitive verb (Olsen 28).

In traditional Chinese aesthetic tradition, poetry, calligraphy and painting are considered as the "three perfections", in which words and images became mutually inclusive, technically and aesthetically alike. In Chinese culture, poetry, landscape painting, and calligraphy are all united in the spirit of *qi*, and realized by using brush and ink. The essence of the "arts of the brush" makes it possible that a great poet at the same time is a great painter, as we can see, for example, in the case of the Tang poet Wang Wei. The Ming poet and painter Tang Yin says: "I've found a painter's brush that also writes poem" (Tang 310). This mixture is especially seen in calligraphy, a text presented as visual art. In contrast, the Western tradition tends to separate the two realms. However, with the development of Abstract Expressionism since the late 1940s, in the U.S. the tendency of keeping language from appearing in the visual field has experienced a series of challenges and experiments, as it is presented in Mark Tobey's "white writing" abstract paintings, Jack Pollock's all-covering paintings and Franz Kline's black and white gestural paintings.

The poet and painter Henri Michaux seems to be the first one who employs calligraphy in forms "like language" since 1948. Later, he made this idea explicit in *Ideograms in China* (1975). However, as Patton points out, his work only imitates the appearance of language instead of actually presenting a text. Among different practices, Marden's gestural abstract paintings in the "Cold Mountain series" demonstrate a meaningful experiment of a visual object and a literary object derived from his study of a number of Chinese calligraphers from different periods in history. The "Cold Mountain series" consists of a total of six large paintings inspired by Han-shan's poems with the belief that the artist has a particular responsibility to create works that can transcend prettiness and reach or at least suggest meaning. Marden understands painting as an act of "transformative", as he says in an interview in 1991 addressing his "Cold Mountain series":

> It’s like air and dross. A painting, you know, it's all dirty material. But it's about transformation. Taking that earth, that heavy earthen kind of thing, turning it into air and light. The transformation, you know, that's what it’s about. Working on these paintings there's always an idea which is an ideal. It’s always impossible...But I think every time, maybe, I just get closer to some impossible thing... (Interview with Pat Steir) [5]

Through the dynamic shift in the transformation, Marden turns the minimalist energetic gesture of lines and subtle colors to something beyond the dichotomy, trying to “get closer to some impossible thing”. The old rivalry between text and image is shown to be false, since they could just provide another way of addressing the spatiotemporal expressions. The interplay among language, text and images, or text as images was not only important for Ezra Pound, but a distinguishing feature of the European avant-garde, for example, as it can be dated back when Apollinaire’s calligrammes “idéogrammes lyriques” began to appear in Paris. For Brice Marden, Chinese paintings and drawings are “evolved in a kind of inspired state…there’s usually somebody in the picture undergoing some sort of experience, or on a pilgrimage towards an experience” (Richardson 52).

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[5] “Brice Marden/Cold Mountain/An Interview with Brice Marden by Pat Steir”, adapted by Lynne Cooke from the interview in Brice Marden Recent Drawings and Etchings. New York: Matthew Marks Gallery, 1991. See at: www.diaart.org/exhibs/marden/coldmountain/interview.html.

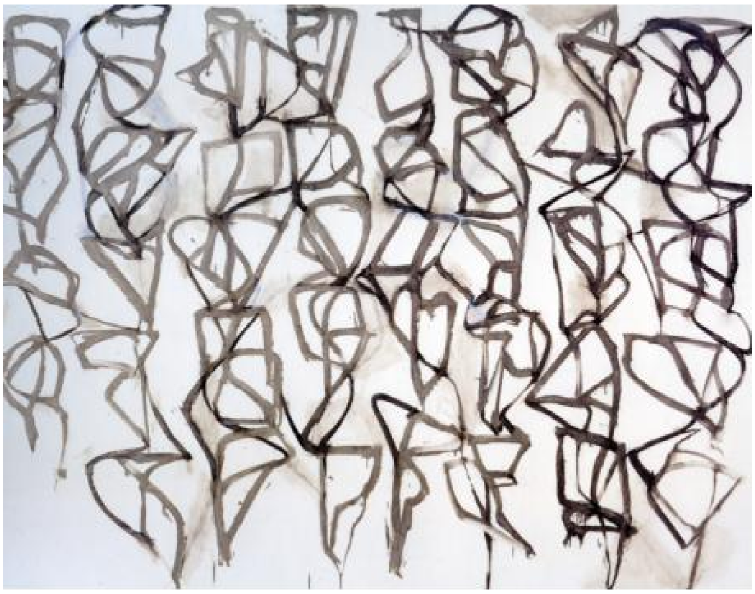
3.6 "Cold Mountain Series" as Paintings

When Marden studied at Yale University in the early 1960s, the Abstract Expressionism was more taken as a guiding artist force with a few new reactions starting to appear. By that time, the prevailing modernist movement encourages to depict "that which was unique and irreducible" within every individual medium (Greenberg 112). Since the late 1960s and 1970s, Marden has worked from the Abstract Expressionism into the Minimalism, and then formed his unique aesthetics that challenges modernism's goal of objectivity with a healthy level of subjectivity and intuitive sensibility. As Kertess notices, this subjectivity in Marden's paintings makes his work different from Minimalism's paradigm that involves "a purely secular, often mechanical, neutrality and impersonality" (18). With the subjectivity shines through the experiences it alludes to, Marden has been building his own rules in his personality "while others tended to follow a preordained logic" (Kertess 18-19). Along with the 1970s, Marden has been experimenting with variations on plane division, extending his procession from the color grey to broader color investigations. Marden elegantly moves to the spiritual realms, showing his interest in historical context. For example, the title of his large-scale painting *Thira* means "door" in Greek, in which work he positions "himself into the history of culture": "the vertical planes of landscape color become architecture become language become symbol become shifting painted space, and back again to the beginning" (Kertess 30-31). Later, Marden's study of the stained glass windows that reflecting light in transparent ebbs in Basel Cathedral becomes his starting point to "let his usual opacity wane to transparency so that the colors seem to float on and across the surface instead of rooting firmly in it” (Melton 46), and that lies the foundation for his Cold Mountain project that began in 1985. In the monography written for the “Brice Marden—Cold Mountain” exhibition, Brenda Richardson has confirmed the window studies’ contribution to the Cold Mountain paintings:

> Cathedral windows tell stories to the faithful, whether communicated in narrative subjects or more abstractly through the intuitive forms impelled by the artist’s convictions. Intuitive transmission from master to pupil is the fundamental medium of Buddhist teaching, and as with calligraphy, it is intuitive transmission that comprises the “language of abstract art”. (Richardson 50)

Calligraphy is a Chinese fine art that combines the personal artistic preference of the control of stroke, the structure design of every character with the tradition of this art form, the meaning of the words, and the whole compositional effect. Richardson has noted that the “intuition transmission” in calligraphy relates to the tension between subjective marks and objective form. The “Masters of Japanese Calligraphy” exhibition in New York in 1984 confirms Marden’s exploring of “writerly drawing and painting”, and from there “Marden moved to its source, Chinese calligraphy” (Kertess 41). Then, to comprehend better the literary aspect of calligraphy, Marden starts to read classical Chinese poetry from Ezra Pound’s translation of Li Po, Kenneth Rexroth’s translation of Tu Fu to Red Pine’s edition of Cold Mountain poems (with the English-Chinese original poems printed side-by-side). These encounters contributed to Marden's creation of a synthesis of his intuition, objectivity and painting's conventions that occupied in his later "Cold Mountain series" (see Figures 1-6).

Fig. 1[6]



Cold Mountain 1 (Path) 1988-89

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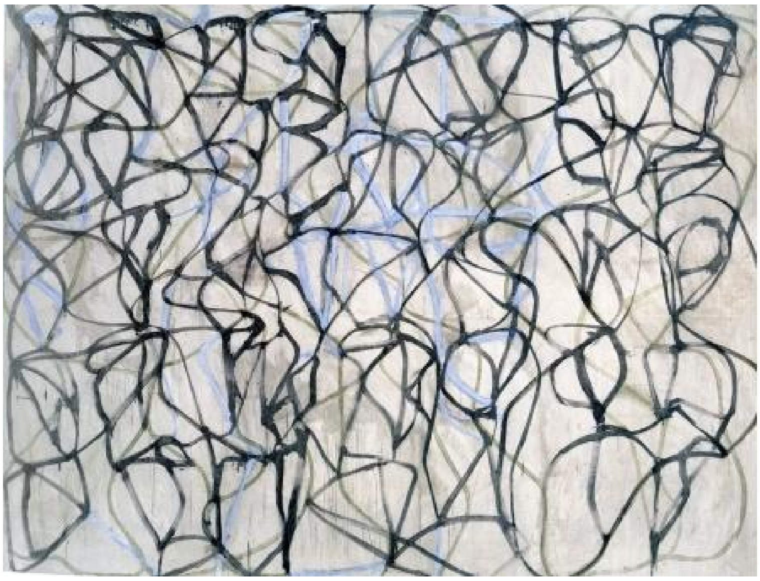
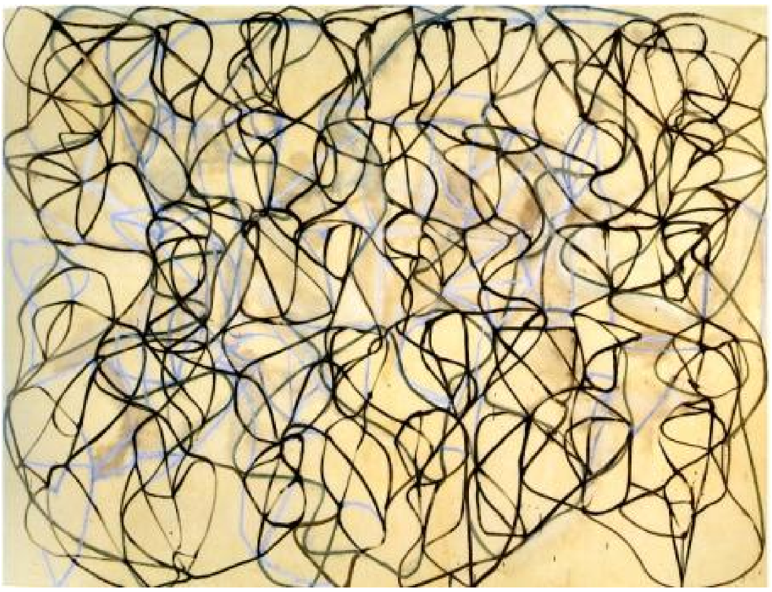
[6] Figure 1-6 in Richardson, Brenda. Brice Marden-Cold Mountain. Texas: Houston Fine Art Press, 1992. The original works are oil on line, 108 X 144 inches.

Fig.2



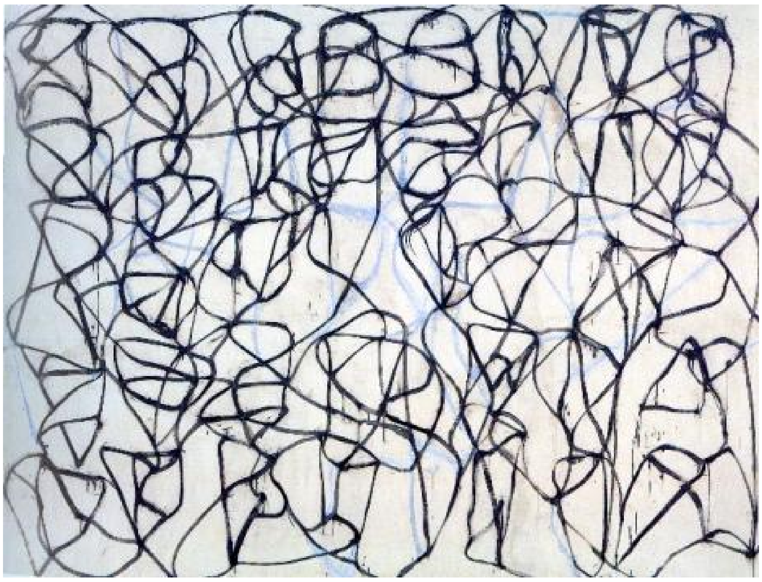
Cold Mountain 2, 1989-91

Fig. 3



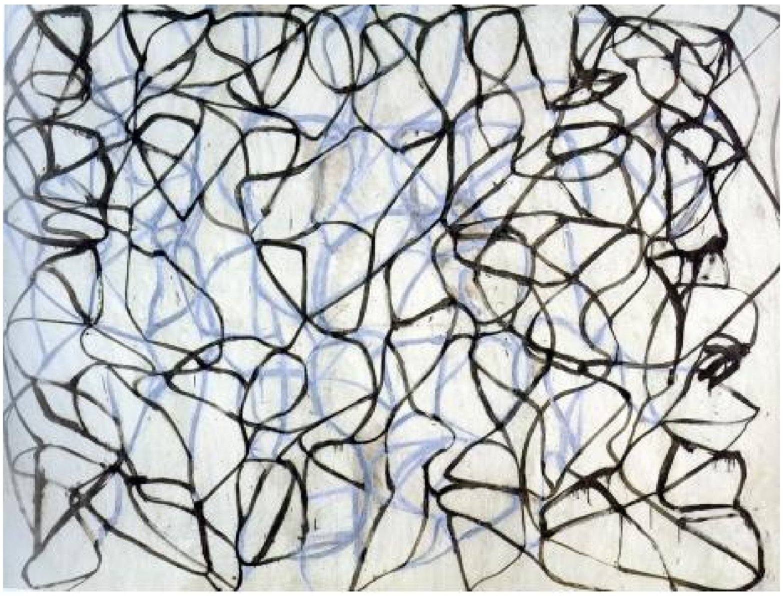
Cold Mountain 3, 1989-91

Fig. 4



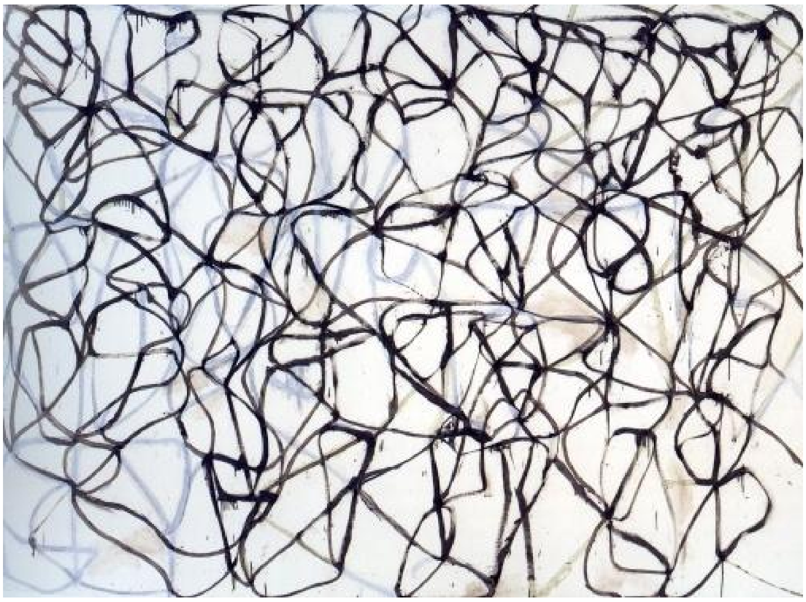
Cold Mountain 4, 1989-91

Fig. 5



Cold Mountain 5 (Open), 1989-91

Fig. 6



Cold Mountain 6 (Bridge), 1989-91

Made from 1988 to 1990, Marden's "Cold Mountain series" consist of six grand pieces of oil and wax painting with the calligraphically outlines of swirling grey lines. Comparing to his earlier paintings that normally accord to human heights, in the "Cold Mountain series" Marden desires to get away from human references and proceed to the natural realm in a nine-by-twelve single canvas. The large strokes and the varied motions in the grander expanses ask for the whole body movement. The whole process looks like dancing, challenging the physical stamina. The lines are almost impossible to trace, while the shades of grey vacillate between light, dark, and medium background of subtle browns, blues and greens. The six paintings share a constrained color palette, yet still, look and feel different. The constraints and limited color palette suggest a spiritual connection, in Stomberg's words, as "freedom in the aesthetic monasticism of severely limited forms and colors” (Stomberg 41). As Melton remarks, it is appropriate to allude it to Han-shan’s acetic mountain lifestyle and his simple, constrained poetry (43). Meanwhile, Marden once declares in an interview that the series does not directly correspond to Han-shan’s poems: “It’s not a form of writing. I’m not trying to make a language. I think of Chinese calligraphy as simply the way I see it, not knowing the language...But if someone translates a piece for me, and I hear the relationships I am affected by that” (Interview with Pat Steir). Rather, they are Marden’s emotional responses to the visualization of Cold Mountain Poems with the English translation, as Melton concludes, “a blending of intellectual meaning with intuitive reaction” (42). The open reference possibility attributes to the beauty of the series. The waving lines and figures entwined in sensual energy indicate life’s journey and the coexistence of human and nature. Possessing light and translucence, the metaphoric lines in the “Cold Mountain series” signify the unpredictable life journeys and hint pathways to Enlightenment.

The attendant cultural arguments in reading classical Chinese poetry enables the “emptiness” to enter the western literary tradition. In Jonathan Stalling’s interpretation, Ernest Fenollsa synthesizes his poetics of emptiness based upon his understanding of the aggregative nature of Chinese character, the indeterminacies of Chinese grammar, and the correlative cosmology of Chinese prosody (13), while Snyder ground his poetics on his interest in regional landscapes that complicate the notion of individuality in the diffusion of culture (Gray 103). In Marden’s case, the Chinese sources bring renewed inspirations that separate him from reality, finding his metaphysical language through ideal form with the acknowledgement of personal experience.

All these meaningful metaphysical communications, including the art of translation, requires the intellectual and artistic connection between the author and the receiver, and particularly in the cases discussed in this research, reflects the American writers and artists' responses to the dilemmas of their time and social contexts. The refreshing perspectives drawn from classical Chinese poetry emphasize more on the spiritual realm rather than the material. As how Brenda Richardson comments on the Chinese landscape paintings, it is "not about objective reality" but "about the relationship between man and nature, about man in nature, and "most importantly" about nature's power to effect spiritual transformation of man" (Richardson 48). This artistic standpoint also leads to the existential questions about what it means to be human.

Part Two： The Traveling Texts

Chapter 4: The Traveling Eastern Sensibility

4.1 Transcendentalism and Nature

As it is shown in Walter Whitman's Asia-themed poems, Ezra Pound and Amy Lowell's Imagism, as well as Ralph Waldo Emerson's obsession with Hindu religion and the Beat poets' mysticism, the Eastern legacy has been seen posing a deep influence on the American poetry. At a certain point in literary history, Fenollosa played a significant role of bridging the poetics of the East and the West, whose essay "The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry" is taken as a foundational text for American Modernism. Fenollosa as a follower of Emersonian Transcendentalism claims that Chinese characters are so close to nature that one can see the magical working of the universal grammar in the language. Inspired by Fenollosa, Pound proposes to "treat things directly in poetry" (*Literary Essays of Ezra Pound*, 3). With the smack of Orient as a trigger for poetic imagination, these principles of Imagism lie at the heart of the Modernist poetry. In order to contextualize Snyder in the American literary field, this chapter looks into how transcendentalism offered an earlier American precedent for relating Asian religions to a harmonious relationship with nature, together with an examination of the reception of Buddhism in the United States in a Bourdieusian sociological lens.

In the 1950s, apart from translating the "Cold Mountains Poems", Snyder also engaged in composing his early groups of poems that later collected in *Riprap* (1959) and

Myths & Texts (1960). A Snyder poem is instantly recognizable, which tends to be an idiosyncratic combination of the plain speech of William Carlos Williams and the intensely free-floating visual images of Ezra Pound. It also echoes the West Coast landscape poetry of Robinson Jeffers and Kenneth Rexroth, as well as the orality of his fellow Beats (*The Paris Review*, 321). Even though Snyder grew up with the hard and resilient elitism and coolness of the twentieth-century poetry, as he admits in the afterword of the 2009 new edition of *Riprap*, when it came to writing out of his own experience, most of Modernism did not fit, except for the steer toward Chinese and Japanese (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 65).

Snyder is probably the first American poet since Thoreau, who makes his life a possible model of the way one ought to live. As Richard Gray comments in *A History of American Poetry*, in Snyder's eyes enlightenment remains perpetually available and a fresh start can always be made (323). "The sun is but a morning star"—Snyder adapted this last line of Thoreau's *Walden* to "the morning star is not a star' as the first line in his poetry collection *Myth & Texts* (407). For Snyder, every day could be a new opportunity to recover the nobility of life. This spirit is related to the transcendentalist tradition. As a philosophical movement developed in the late 1820s and 1830s in the Eastern United States, transcendentalism holds the core belief in the inherent goodness of people and nature, together with the power of individual and personal freedom. Emerged from the English and German Romanticism and influenced by the Hindu philosophy of the spirituality and mind, transcendentalism emphasizes subjective intuition over objective empiricism. Although Transcendentalism is a notoriously difficult term to define, Lawrence Buell as a pioneer of ecocriticism summarizes that transcendentalism is fundamentally an intuitionism, emphasizing the belief that *Truth* can be intuitively perceived by higher *Reason*. This intuition precedes and invigorates all the religious awareness. It can penetrate various forms of world religions, extracting from their essence (3). The transcendentalists frequently referred to Hindu and Confucian doctrines, which offered an early American precedent for relating Asian religions to a close relationship with nature.

Arthur Versluis concluded in his book *American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions* (1993) that the transcendentalist movement was a product of Unitarianism, Puritanism, and other currents of Western thought. Meanwhile, it was of contact with the world religions, especially Hinduism and Buddhism, which was largely seen in the light of "universal progress". Virtually, nearly all the transcendentalists were fascinated by Asian religions. Walter Harding, the recognized scholar of Henry David Thoreau, asserts that "it is obvious to any serious student of Thoreau that a sympathy with, and knowledge of, the great works of Oriental literature permeates his writings" (98). This is also applicable for Emerson and many other intellectuals associated with the transcendentalist movement.

Before the American transcendentalists discovered the Orient, the German Romantics including Herder, Goethe, the Schlegels, and Novalis had drawn to an idealized Orient in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Also, the transcendentalists' discovery of the Orient was presaged by their Platonist and Neoplatonist readings. A number of modern scholars have observed that those Platonist and Neoplatonist works share certain correspondences with Vedantic and Buddhist teachings. As Versluis argues, the Neoplatonic and Hermetic thought did act as preparation for both the romantic and the transcendentalist fascination with "Oriental religions" (Versluis 7).

Versluis also notes that it is not new that "Orient" has been used to reflect European ideologies. Although in *Orientalism* Edward Said discusses more particularly on the Middle Eastern religious and cultural traditions, he also mentions how Europeans tended to distort Asian. Said write about America as follows:

> The American experience of the Orient prior to that exceptional moment [World War II] was limited. Cultural isolatos like Melville were interested in it; cynics like Mark Twain visited and wrote about it; the American Transcendentalists saw affinities between Indian thought and their own; a few theological and Biblical students studied the Biblical Oriental languages; there were occasional diplomatic and military encounters with Barbary pirates and the like, the odd naval expedition to the Far Orient, and of course the ubiquitous missionary to the Orient. But there was no deeply invested tradition of Orientalism, and consequently in the United States knowledge of the Orient never passed through the refining the reticulation and reconstructing processes, whose beginning was in philological study, that it went through in Europe. Furthermore, the imaginative investment was never made either, perhaps because the American frontier, the one that counted, was the westward one. (Said, *Orientalism* 290)

In the 19th and early 20th century, there was not much about academic Orientalism in America. However, Versluis draws attention that the American Transcendentalism was “more than a matter of Transcendentalists’ merely seeing an affinity between their own thought and that of Asian religions” (*American Transcendentalism and Asian Religions*, 4). As a religious and literary phenomenon at the same time, Transcendentalism represents serious attempts to grapple with the Asian religious traditions of a general intellectual movement. Even though paralleled and affected by the European Orientalism, American Transcendentalism did no duplicates of their European colleagues, rather, it manifested a serious and continuing interest in the world, in spite of Said’s dismissal. The history of American Transcendentalism is a history of interpretation and of transformation, and somehow of an intellectual colonialism. In Versluis’s observation, the transcendentalists interpreted Asian religious texts according to their own bent: “Emerson and Thoreau abstracted, Johnson and Frothingham universalized, and others Christianized” (4).

Before the mid-nineteenth century, most Americans were quite unaware of other developed religious traditions other than the Judeo-Christian, however, with the publication of materials on Buddhism, Hinduism, and even Taoism, and all the influx of new information about Oriental religions, the Judeo-Christian tradition was necessarily placed as just one among a number of religious traditions. Moreover, when scientific theories like those of Darwin were gaining credence, the religious faith had been shaken as never before.

According to the British philosopher of history Arnold Toynbee, of all the historical changes in the West, the meeting of Buddhism and the Occident is the most important one.[7] No matter how true this may be, Transcendentalism not merely anticipated but was also part of that meeting. The mingling of the ancient traditions in the modern world, the meeting of East and West, forms a larger part of history if our era is considered in light of larger movements and societal patterns. In this sense, Transcendentalism did represent significant tendencies in the West in its meetings with the Orient.

In *A New Theory for American Poetry: Democracy, the Environment, and the Future of Imagination* (2004), Angus Fletcher argues that the finest poetry is nature-based, environmentally shaped, and descriptive in aim. Drawing on Whitman's claim that "the whole theory and nature of poetry needs inspiration from science if it is to achieve a truly democratic vista", Fletcher holds an optimistic attitude among the gloomy forecast of the death of poetry and the decline of humanity. Despite the cliché to see the American poets as the rebellious or happy children of the European romanticism, Fletcher presents a different lineage for American poetry by focusing on the radical American vision of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walter Whitman. Based on the fundamentals of grammar, art, and Complexity Theory (a uniquely germane notion for studying chaotic phenomena in literature), Fletcher identifies that the finest nature-based poetry enables poets like John Ashbery and other contemporaries to find a mysterious pragmatism (190). Fletcher also explains why he focuses on poetry instead of the prose discourse of environment. In his opinion, although the literature of prose naturalism is especially rich and culturally influential (for example, the works of Thoreau or Darwin), poetry takes environmentalist concerns to a higher level. Different from most prose discourse, poetry expresses closer involvements and thus pertains the way our human beings respond to the environment matters (3).

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[7] For more details, see Rick Fields, *How the Swans Came to the Lake: A Narrative History of Buddhism in America*. New York: Random House, 1981.

Ecology may appear to depersonalize social thought, but “ecology is nevertheless the sadly correct concept for initiating adequate global analysis” (Fletcher 205). Complexity Theory deals with theories of nature. Particularly, the meditative disciplines play a central part in Oriental mysticism more than the West. Similar to poetry, meditative disciplines involve “the most intimate transactions between a direct sense of self and an oblique sense of the world” (Fletcher 193). Using detached images to block the intrusions of thinking, meditation offers us a method of diagnosing the moment, precisely responsive and open to the drift of thought, hoping to catch the signs when they emerge from the flow of consciousness. This may remind us the Beat Generation’s desire for capturing the moment, which will be discussed in the following section.

4.2 The Beat Generation

4.2.1 Live the Moment

Many of American’s literary movements are characterized as “Renaissance” or “Generation”, for example, the Lost Generation, the Beat Generation, the San Francisco Renaissance, or the Harlem Renaissance. Regarding this phenomenon, Michael Soto points out that “both generational and renaissance rhetoric inform a transnational, polyethnic discourse concerned with articulating a cultural nationalist aesthetic stance and with archiving the emergence of American literature" (10). The Beat Generation as a remarkable social phenomenon in the 1950s seemed suddenly has invented rebellion. Richard Gray argues, nevertheless, it actually belongs to a great tradition in American literature which identifies poetry with prophecy.

In *A history of American Poetry* (2015), Richard Gray analyzes the connotations of the term "Beat Generation", which seems to have been coined by Jack Kerouac, one of the most famous members of the group. In the musical sense, "beat" indicates keeping the beat, more specifically, the jazz beat. Bebop, swing, beat poetry can be seen as "typewriter-jazz". On the other hand, in a psychological, social, and vaguely political sense, "beat" associates with the "beaten" condition of the outsider. The beat writers reject the codes and disciplines of the "square" society, and they cherish the stance of being dispossessed and alienated. As Allen Ginsberg puts it in his poem "Howl", echoing a whole line of poets from Blake to Whitman and Dickinson, "the madman is holy as you my soul are holy". In a spiritual sense, "beat" connotes "beatitude", which relates to supreme blessedness, innocence, or rapture of what Ginsberg described as "angel-headed hipster burning for the ancient heavenly connection" (quoted from one of the opening lines of "Howl").

To achieve the relationship with the moment, the Beats challenged cultural norms and earned themselves the name of outsiders or rebels who believe in "live in the now", "be present", and "seize the moment". Erik Mortenson put the Beat writers in an early postmodern context in his 2014 book *Capturing the Beat Moment: Cultural Politics and the*

Poetics of Presence. The Beat writings were a product of their time: the Beats arrive in every new present "with a burden of history (both individual and social) that complicates the ways in which they attempt to utilize the present" (3). On this basis, Mortenson argues that the Beat's desire to "capture immediacy" provides valuable insights into how meaning is constantly produced. Capturing immediacy involves "focusing attention on desire and action as they spontaneously respond to the material conditions of each passing moment", which allows the Beats to "establish an authentic connection to the world that forms the basis for a poetics of presence—a writing that transcribes the flux of experience as it wells up in each successive instant" (1).

4.2.2 The Subversive Nature

An inaccurate stereotyped understanding of the Beats writers has always existed. For example, Greg Garrard knocked the Beat Generation, as well as Snyder (who is not an exact member but associated with Beat Generation) in his 2004 edition of *Ecocriticism* by repeating the idea that Snyder's poetry involves a degree of "Beat Generation hedonism". Again, in the book's second edition in 2012, Garrard made another even more alarming remark that "much of Snyder's poetry is marred by earnest eco-poetics and hectoring propaganda" (90). Chad Weiner finds this observation problematic for two reasons. First, it ignores the fascinating deep connection between the Beat Generation and the transcendentalist movement, which deserves further research. Second, Garrard's comment betrayed his unfamiliarity with the wider work of the Beat writers. Regarding this misunderstanding, Weiner appeals to eco-criticism to reconsider the works of Gary Snyder and the Beat writers, who share a poetic voice, an eternal longing and beatific sense of humility. On this issue, Rod Philips also made an effort to question the prevailing view to see the Beat literature as "an urban phenomenon" and asserted that nature and ecological concerns have long been a part of Beat writings. All after, as Weiner comments, if everything is really linked to everything else, it seems that no literary text, indeed no artistic production would lie outside the range of eco-criticism (165).

In the mid-1950s, when Snyder began his career as a poet, the American social culture was dominated by the dualism between the "Free World" and communism in the Cold War context. As Edgar Hoover writes of "Western civilization" in the 1950s, the Communist East threatens the West's "very existence" (1958). Behind it was also embroiled with the dualistic logic between nature/civilization, East/West, while the connotation that "the East" had been aligned with the natural and "the West" aligned with the civilized. This anxiety about the communist infiltration and us/they mentality spread from the anti-communist crusaders epitomized by Hoover and Senator Joseph McCarthy to American citizens. As the historian Ellen Schrecker notes, the "vision of the Communist menace extended far beyond the Communist party to almost any group that challenged the established social, economic, or racial order" (Schrecker 14). Regarding this "dualistic view of the world" in Schrecker's description, in the mid 1950s Gary Snyder and his contemporaries in San Francisco employed "nature" and "the East" as part of their critiques of the narrow, conservative ideal of the

American way of life propagated by the American government.

The legendary “Six Poets at Six Gallery” public reading has been seen as the defining moment of Beat oppositionalism. The ceremony was held on October 7, 1955, at Six Gallery in San Francisco. It was organized by Kenneth Rexroth, while Michael McClure, Philip Whalen, Allen Ginsberg, while Gary Snyder read poems among the others; Jack Kerouac was present in the audience. The reading drew an audience of about 150 young men and women. In that evening, Michael McClure read “Point Lobos: Animism” and “For the Death of 100 Whales”, followed by Philip Whalen reading “Plus Ca Change”. Then, Allen Ginsberg read for the first time an early draft of his poem “Howl”, the defining poetic statement of Beat opposition to Cold War culture, and created a stir among the audience. The poem’s future publisher, Lawrence Ferlinghetti was among the bohemian audience. He recognized its potential immediately and requested the manuscript. The event attracted the interest of a larger public. When the copies of Ginsberg’s “Howl” were confiscated by the San Francisco police for the reason “the words and sense of the writing are obscene”, in turn, it gained the Beat Generation national fame and inspired unprecedented cultural and social change.

The challenging stance and the Beat writers’ engagement with Eastern culture drew the attention of the government. After the Six Gallery reading, many writers were viewed with suspicion by government agencies. For instance, Ginsberg believed that in the early 1950s, the CIA prevented Kerouac’s works from being published (Raskin xii-xiii). As to Snyder, he had been watched by the FBI since 1948. In February 1955, Snyder’s application for traveling to Japan was rejected with a letter from the State Department stating that it was alleged that he was a communist (Suiter 85).

In spite of the State Department's allegations against Snyder in the dualistic mindset of the McCarthy era, none of the Six Gallery writers was actually communists. However, those political radicals did have heterogenous political views and refused the strict dichotomy between communism and the Free World. As remarked by McClure later, Ginsberg's political position at the time was marked as "Socialism", Snyder's as "Buddhist anarchism", Whalen's less overt politicism as a "gentleness of consciousness and conscience" and his own as a "biological and anti-political anarchist stance''(*Scratching the Beat Surface*, 13). In McClure's description, Kenneth Rexroth was an anarchist throughout his life, while Jack Kerouac was much more conservative politically despite his bohemian lifestyle. McClure also wrote of the poets' shared dissatisfaction with the political climate of America at the time:

> We were locked in the Cold War […] We hated the war and the inhumanity and coldness. The country had the feeling of martial law. An undeclared military state had leapt out of Daddy Warbucks' tanks and sprawled over the landscape. […] There were certain of us (whether we were fearful or brave) who could not help speaking out—we had to speak. We knew we were poets and we had to speak out as poets. (*Scratching the Beat Surface*, 12-13)

It is worth noting that all the poems read at the Six Gallery were nature poems of one kind or another. Michael McClure asserts that there is a relationship between the Beat Generation's interest in nature and its politics: "Much of what the Beat Generation is about is nature—the landscape of nature in the case of Gary Snyder, the mind as nature in the case of Allen Ginsberg" and for McClure, the Beat interest in nature is to "held together with their radical political or antipolitical stance" (*Scratching the Beat Surface*, 11). In McClure's understanding, Ginsberg's reading of "Howl" describes how the "human voice and body" being "hurled against the harsh wall of America". The anti-Cartesian and anti-Christian arguments of deep ecology imply a politically radical, countercultural spirit.

At the Six Gallery, after Ginsberg read *Howl*, Snyder read selected sections of what later become the poems in his collection *Myths & Texts* and recited his most famous early poem "A Berry Feast" by the end of the evening. Just as McClure and Ginsberg, Snyder used degradation to mount his critique of American society. As Suiter points out, "A Berry Feast" shared Ginsberg's spirit of protest against Cold War American culture, although the West Coast setting was different from the Eastern cities depicted in "Howl": "Snyder conjured Ginsberg's Moloch in his Pacific Rim manifestation: the one whose yellow-snouted Caterpillars had leveled the groves of Cybele to build the suburbs" (Suiter 155). Snyder's poem indicates that no matter how much Americans see themselves as separate from nature or above nature, they never really are.

4.3 From Zen lunatics to "Elite Buddhism"

4.3.1 Mahayana Buddhism and Zen

In his essay "Buddhism and Anarchism", Snyder describes the significant aspects of Buddhism having "nation-shaking implications", and more specifically, how meditation "wipes out mountains of junk being pumped into the mind by the mass media and supermarket universities" (*Earth House Hold*, 91). The Beat generation's encounter with Buddhism grew with the dynamic development of American Buddhism. Tracing back to history, Buddhism was created around 2500 years ago when Buddha Siddhartha Gautama (566-486 BC) left his rich royal family at the age of 29 in search of enlightenment. Siddhartha seated beneath the Bodhi tree (the tree of awakening), reflected on his experience of life, deeply absorbed in meditation with self-denial and discipline until he attained enlightened. He became the "awakened one" and liberated from all the pain and suffering. Then, he set on the journey of teaching people ways of living that will set them free from the cycle of life and death. In Buddhism, there is no belief in a personal god, rather, it believes in the three marks of existence (*tilakhana*): impermanence, suffering, and non-self (in the East Asian Buddhist tradition the three seals are: impermanence, non-self, and nirvana). The three marks are used to distinguish the Buddhist beliefs and non-Buddhist beliefs, while the path to Enlightenment gains through the practice of morality, meditation and wisdom.

The Buddhist ideology does not encourage worshiping Buddha in a physical form. Rather than a religion in its narrow sense, Buddhism goes beyond religion and become a philosophy and way of life. Derived from the word "budhi" (wake up), the word Buddhism indicates that it is "a philosophy of awakening or enlightenment", a path of spiritual development and practice that offers people insight to the true nature of life. Meditation, as an important practice of Buddhism, serves as the means to develop one's "awareness, kindness, and wisdom", at the same time teaches one to make a friend with his or her inner self and all beings in this impermanent world.

Mahayana, literally means the "Great Vehicle", together with Theravada, are the two existing branches in Buddhism. According to a research, in 2010, among all the Buddhist practitioners in the world, 53% followed Mahayana, compared to 36% for Theravada and 6% for Vajrayana (Johnson and Grim 36). As the largest major tradition in Buddhism existing today, Mahayana Buddhism sets its goal in seeking complete enlightenment of all sentient beings. The name "Great Vehicle" indicates it is a universal way to carry all beings to nirvana for the ultimate salvation rather than only seeking one's own self-salvation.

As a school of Mahayana Buddhism, Zen was originated in China during the Tang dynasty as the Chan school (*Chánzong*). Derived from the middle age Chinese word 禪 (*Chán*) and its Japanese pronunciation "Zen",[8] the term Zen traces its roots in the Sanskrit word "Dhyana" (meditative absorption). It is also influenced by Taoist philosophy, especially Neo-Daoist thought of China. The teachings of Zen follows the sources of Mahayana thought, especially Yogachara, the Tathagatagarbha Sutras, and Huayan. It emphasizes rigorous meditation-practice, self-control, and perceiving the true nature of things.

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[8] This dissertation uses the terms Chan/Zen depending on the context.

Particularly, Zen focuses on personal awakening instead of the Bodhisattva ideal. That is to say, it de-emphasizes the knowledge from doctrines and sutras, but emphases the personal expression of direct insight and understanding through zazen and interaction with an accomplished master. Instead of following the tradition of sacred texts, Zen Buddhism is known as a mind-to-mind transmission which starts with the Buddha and continues in the face-to-face encounter between master and student. According to Chinese legend, Zen tenets are summarized in the four-line stanza attributed to Bodhidharma, the transmitter of Zen Buddhism who lived during the 5th or 6th century, as follows:

> A special transmission outside the scriptures
> Not founded upon words and letters;
> By pointing directly to [one's] mind
> It lets one see into [one's own true] nature and [thus] attain
> Buddhahood.(Dumoulin, Heisig and Knitter 85)

Zen Buddhism today is a result of many contingent factors and changes in history. In different historical periods, some Zen sects became more influential while some others disappeared. During the Tang Dynasty, Zen Buddhism was divided into several lineages. Among them, the two most important ones were the Linjin sect, which emphasizes "sudden awakening" and the use of koan, and the Cao Dong sect, the one advocates "just sitting" meditation and a gradual path to enlightenment. In the 12th century, the Japanese Buddhist priest Myoan Eisai (1141-1215) traveled to China and brought back the Zen Buddhism and green tea back to Japan. Upon his arrival, he established the Linjin lineage. Until then, Zen was transmitted as a separate school of Buddhism from China to Japan. Today, there are three traditional sects of Zen Buddhism in Japan: the Soto (Cao Dong) as the largest sect, the Rinzai (Lin Ji) as the middle sect, and Obaku (Huang Bo) as the smallest sect.

4.3.2 Buddhism's Landing in the United States

As a missionary religion, Buddhism spread from India throughout Asia. In the middle of the first century, Buddhism reached China through northwest Central Asia. In the sixth century, it spread to Japan by way of Korea which by that time under the deep influence of China. Until the middle of the 19th century, the translated Buddhist scriptures and serious study of Buddhism appeared in the West, while in the 20th century, Buddhism has gained more adherents in Europe, America and Australia. During the Transcendentalist and Theosophical Movement in the 19th century, the American transcendentalists absorbed certain aspects of Buddhism in their pursuit of intuition experience and rejection of American materialism. The "Japan Craze"—the American enthusiasm of the Japanese culture in the late 19th century also offered an aesthetic alternative to Eastern culture for Americans.

It is generally believed that the World's Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893 marked the date when Buddhism landed in America. This event was a part of the World's Columbia Exposition. Two Asian Buddhist masters were invited to give speeches:

Kogaku Soyen Shaku (1839-1919), a Japanese Zen Buddhist master of the Rinzai school, and Anaga-rika Dharmapala (1864-1933), a Sri Lankan Buddhist revivalist and writer (Coleman 58).This conference cast a far influence for the introduction of Buddhism into America in the following half-century.

Suzuki Teitaro Daisetz (T. D. Suzuki, 1870-1966) turns out to be one of the most important media for Zen's landing in America. During World's Parliament of Religious in 1893, he worked as a young interpreter for Soyen Shaku. Later in 1905, when Soyen Shaku did another speech in the United States, T. D. Suzuki translated his speech script into English and published it in Chicago in 1906 with the title *Sermons of a Buddhist Abbot* (Dumoulin, *Zen Buddhism: a History, Japan* 417). Another influential figure was Shigetsu Sasaki (Sokei-an, 1882-1945). He was one of Soyen Shaku's two students for company during his missionary trip to the United States in 1906. When Soyen Shaku returned to Japan, Sasaki kept on traveling and working in the States. After getting familiar with the American culture, he went back to Japan, studied Zen and became a monk. Later, he returned to the United States again and founded the Buddhist Society of America in 1930, which later changed its name to the First Zen Institute of America.

Another student that Soyen Shaku brought to the United States is Nyogen Senzaki (1876-1958). He had a Japanese-American student Albert Fairchild Saijo (1926-2011), a poet who became associated with the Beat Generation later. It was Saijo who taught Gary Snyder, Philip Walen and Lew Welch to zazen (seated meditation) as Senzaki taught him (Meltzer 342). Also, Saijo had a published collection of poems that he wrote in collaboration with Jack

Kerouac and Lew Welch: *Trip Trap: Haiku on the Road* (1959). The haiku style English poems wrote about their driving trip from San Francisco to New York. In fact, Snyder's early Zen experience was related to Shigetsu Sasaki as well. In 1956, Snyder was able to go to the Shokoku-ji Templein Kyoto to study Zen thanks to the help from Ruth Fuller Sasaki (1892-1967), the wife of Shigetsu Sasaki, who took on the work of a sub-branch of the First Zen Institute of America in Kyoto after Shigetsu Sasaki died in 1945. Since Snyder used to work at the First Zen Institute of America to translate the Buddhist classics into English, he got the opportunity to study in Japan.

Until the late 1950s, Buddhism started to gain widespread adherents in the United States with the influence of the Beat avant-garde writers such as Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac. In this literary movement, Buddhism intersected with American popular culture. The Beat writers transformed the discourse of Buddhism in an artistic direction instead of a religious one. In 1958, Jack Kerouac published *The Dharma Bums*, which marked an evident link between Beat writers and Buddhism. Buddhism has provided an alternative way of living for the American mainstream culture, which offers another angle to see the disillusioned American culture from an Eastern perspective.

4.3.3 The Cultural Background When Buddhism Arrived

Just like those Zen Buddhists, the transcendentalist writers, for example, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, paid a lot of attention to nature and everyday experience.

Charles Crittenden comments that “the object of our everyday experience is just there, being what they are and not what our concept makes them into. This principle is conceived as having epistemological, ontological, and ethical dimensions and to cut across standard western philosophical divisions” (51). Thoreau’s *Walden* becomes so admired among the Beat writers, as it can be proved in the description of the Beat writer Robert M. Pirsig’s autobiographical novel *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (1974): “a copy of Thoreau’s Walden…can be read a hundred times without exhaustion…sometimes we have spent a whole evening reading and talking and discovered we have only covered two or three pages” (41).

American Transcendentalism as a kind of idealism does share certain beliefs in common with Buddhism, while the earliest English translation of the Buddhist script appeared in the magazine *The Dial* in 1884. It was a chief publication of the transcendentalists by that time, where Elizabeth Palmer Peabody (1804-1894) published her translation of *Lotus Sutra* from French into English. Decades later, when Buddhism really landed in America, there are certain favorable factors in the local context. After the two World Wars, the Christian religion of many western intellectuals, especially for many writers, collapsed. As James William Coleman points out, “year by year, the religious scene is becoming more fragmented, and Christianity’s ideological hegemony more precarious. Over the centuries, Christianity itself has fragmented into hundreds of different denominations and traditions” (218). At the same time, the continuing onslaught of scientific rationalism has shaken the faith from the root. “The sixties marked the demise of the Protestant epoch in

American history and the loss of cultural consensus fostering increased tolerance for plurality of religious outlook"—according to Kenneth K. Tanaka—"the Vatican II (1962—1965) contributed the spirit of ecumenism and progressive measures that had, among other results, far-reaching impact on the general openness toward other, particularly Eastern religious" (297).

The Vietnam War (1955-1975) shows how the materialism and greed led the United States into a reprehensible unjust war. For those American who desperately hope to end the war, Buddhism with its emphasis on peace, non-violence shows a way to cure the social and cultural problem of the United States. As a result of the anti-war movement, Buddhism became more influential in America. On the other hand, with more Asian immigrants arrived in the United States, the Buddhist population grows larger. Moreover, as Jan Nattier notes, "because a number of North American Buddhists are prominent figures in the arts, literature, and media, Buddhism has acquired visibility and a level of influence far out of proportion to the actual number of its adheres" (184).

As an important American ideological tradition, Individualism used to play a positive part in the development of the country; however, in the 20th century, it reached an ethical dilemma. In the opinion of Charles Hartshorne, "in the West the favorite theory of motivation has been that self-interest is the universal principle, and intersects in others only a special case or corollary of sufficiently enlightened self-interest"(2). In the late 20th century, with the improvement of the educational level and the living standard in American society, many people began to question the problem of Individualism. In the Bible there is "love thy neighbor as yourself', however, Hartshorne points out that "no matter how enlightened, self-interest is not ultimate, and no self-interest theory should be taken literally as such. What is to be taken more nearly literally is the injunction, 'love your neighbor as yourself', how can this be done if one love is simply identity and the other simply non-identity? " (5)

Regarding the problems of Individualism, Mahayana Buddhism offers possible solutions with its belief of non-self. According to the American sociologist Robert Bellah, "in many ways Asian spiritual provided a more thorough contrast to the rejected utilitarian individualism than did biblical religion. To external achievement it posed inner experience; to the exploitation, harmony with nature…" (341). In fact, many Americans tend to accept Buddhism from their western point of view, rather than understanding the original Buddhist concepts: "our animal self-centeredness tends to bias us in favor of theories that erect self-regard into a rational necessity or criterion of rightness. Here, too, Buddhism is helpful. Its thinkers tried mightily and with brilliant theorizing to overcome this animal limitation. We should strive to learn from them" (Hartshorne 12).

The "American Dream" culminated in the 1950s and early 1960s. In the postwar world, the United States occupied an almost unprecedented political position and economic hegemony. It was a time when the dream of wealth and comfort seemed a thin reach for all the Americans—at least for all white Americans. Nevertheless, the materialist values of consumer culture are rife with psychological contradictions. The counter-culture movement since the 1960s as an anti-establishment subculture phenomenon also contributed to the blossom of Zen Buddhism in America. In the wake of "civil rights struggles, race riots, and a deep domestic rending of values precipitated by the Vietnam War", the Zen community were mainly populated with "people with left-leaning political and social thoughts, beats, hippies, students; in other words, the disaffected of American society" (Jaffe 166). For those rebellious spirits, Zen provides exactly the beliefs they have been looking for outside their own cultural system, with its exoticism, "its emphasis on inner freedom, its rapport with nature, and its valuation of artistic expression" (Ellwood 148). Many of them finally realized that quitting school, running away from home, having casual sex, or taking drugs as ways to against the mainstream middle-class and Christian value system had missed the spiritual sense of rebellion anymore, for it lacks the psychological and philosophical justification it once had. Then, they turned themselves to the Asian regions as "a quiet revolution" that "lacking the fanfare of LSD use or political activism in the sixties. Yet it is no less significant and it will probably reach a larger numerical scale than either of those movements" (Pope Jr. Harrison 12). The followed are monologues from two drug takers who quit drugs by practicing Asian religion:

> When I was in college, I was taking drugs all the time, every single day, and my mind just got dulled to it, you know? I was so deep into the whole thing that I couldn't even recognize the bad influences that drugs had on my thinking…now that I've been meditating for a year and haven't taken drugs, everything's different. It's as if my body and mind are cleaned out… (quoed in Pope Jr. Harrison 41)

> Two or three times a week for more than two years. As I said before, I was really serious about it. And during all that time, I practically never had another bad trip. A few bad moments here and there, perhaps, but generally all good trips…Because I wanted to gain a permanent kind of vision from it, to get some sort of permanent understanding. But I always came down. I could never capture the feeling I had from acid on a permanent basis. And so, obviously, I started looking more and more to the East. I read everything I could get my hands on—Ouspensky, Meher Baba, the Gita, the Tao Te Ching, and the Bible, too…one day I realized that I had found the path in the form of Kriya Yoga. And that day stopped taking LSD. (quoted in Pope Jr. Harrison 129)

The salient feature of entheogen in American Buddhism is memorial. Many Americans who were attracted to Buddhism claimed that the Buddha-way is a natural extension or progression of their psychedelic experiences, while “many leave open the possibility of renewing their acquaintance with entheogenic plants or substances in the future” (Schelling 231). When the veterans of the psychedelic world started looking for something more stable than their chemically induced trips, many of them turned to the disciplined world of Zen (Coleman 66-67). Meanwhile, they have learned “accept what you are”. The American poet Margaret Gibson recalls that “in the Protestant tradition in which I was raised, these words meant accept myself as errant, sinful, deficient in light, in need of searing revelation. How strange then, to come upon meditation, simply sitting, a practice of concentration and a profound humility that say "*accept who you are*" and means I am, you are, a great being already" (Johnson and Grim 86). Furthermore, they began to believe that "cultivating peace through meditation was seen as a more effective way to achieve peace than by taking part in increasingly strident antiwar demonstrations" (Fields 200).

4.3.4 The Media of Dissemination

Many American writers learned about Buddhism through the works of the Japanese Scholar D. T. Suzuki in the 1950s and 1960s. D. T. Suzuki interpreted and transmitted Zen to the West in a way that is more accessible for the westerners. His most influential books include *Essays in Zen Buddhism* (1927), *Manual of Zen Buddhism* (1943), *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism* (1949) (with the preface written by the famous psychologist Carl Jung), and *Studies in Zen Buddhism* (1955). He also translated a large amount of important Buddhism scripts into English and built the formation of a "minimal" canon of Zen. Through his work, Zen suddenly acceded to full visibility.

The poet, composer, and performance artist Jack Mac Low recollects that Buddhism has exerted an important influence on his life and work since the early 1950s when he encountered the writing of D. T. Suzuki. Another American poet, Snyder's ex-wife, Joanne Kyger also said in the mid-1950s when she was still in the college, she read the works of Wittgenstein and D. T. Suzuki in the meanwhile, by which time she had an "intellectual, metaphysical interest in Buddhism" (Meltzer 126). In the mid-1950s, Buddhism started to come into the lives of many young artists through D. T. Suzuki's essays on Zen. Axiomatically, a Zen point of view was soon taken for granted as the natural mindset of the artists, which combined with a certain kind of clear seeing, a light touch, and a faith came up with their works.

The young artists tended to take the "simplicity and spontaneity" experiences as Zen. However, D. T. Suzuki did not agree with the so-called "Beat Zen" by pointing out that Zen is not to against "conventionalism", but a "disciplinary practice". D. T. Suzuki offered a lot of Westerners with their first introduction to Zen, while on the other side, another influential philosopher Alan Watts (1915-1973) interpreted and popularized Eastern philosophy with a larger Western audience. By presenting esoteric Eastern ideas in a way that was interesting and understandable to Western readers, Watts's works were read even more widely. In the essay "Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen" (1959), he distinguishes Beat Zen as "the young generation's bohemian lifestyle", Square Zen as "copied the elaborate forms of the Japanese religious establishments", while pointing out that the real Zen is not to against "convention", or adopt the foreign convention, but "the liberation of the mind from conventional thought" (Coleman 63).

There were also other important Zen teachers in the United States. For example, Shunryu Suzuki (1904-1971), whose Zen was so varied from what most American ever imagined Zen to be. In Coleman's comment, "perhaps it was just the unique quality of the man, but there is probably no other figure who has as great an influence on the growth of American Buddhism" (69-70). The Beat poet Diane Di Prima described her first time meeting

Shunryu Suzuki in 1962:

> Meeting Suzuki Roshi for the first time I met some rock bottom place in myself. I have often said that if Suzuki had been an apple picker a welder, I would have promptly taken up either of those arts. I sat because he sat. To know his mind. It was the first time in my twenty-eight years that I had encountered another human being and felt trust. It blew my tough, sophisticated young-artist's mind. (quoted in Johnson and Paulenich, 56-57)

At the same time, Nattier points out that one must have sufficient money and leisure time to import a form of Buddhism from Asia successfully. Considering for many people, even buying a book on Buddhism is an undreamed-of luxury, a trip to Japan for Buddhist practice of many years would be out of the question. It is not surprising to see that once such a group has been founded, it attracts most members of Buddhist groups in this category are of middle-class background or above. Furthermore, they are "overwhelmingly (though not exclusively) of European ancestry, and their religious interests are focused on meditation" (Nattier 189). That is to say, to a large extent, in America it is Buddhism of the privileged, who are attracted by the strenuous and sometimes expensive meditation.

4.4 Snyder's Engagement with Zen

As a byproduct of the Buddhist boom in the United States, since the 1950s, quite a few young Americans traveled to Japanese Buddhist temples and studied there. Gary Snyder was definitely one of them, who finally turned his offshore gaze to the East into intangible intercultural experiences. In 1956, Snyder received a scholarship from First Zen Institute of America in Kyoto. On May 5, three days before his twenty-six birthday, he boarded the freighter Anita Maru in San Francisco and headed Japan. In his twelve years Buddhist pilgrimage in Kyoto, Snyder studied Buddhist philosophy and translated the Chinese and Japanese poetry and prose into English.

Upon his arrival in Japan, this learned young man who was eager and serious about his study of Asian culture encountered a culture shock. On the one side, the postwar poverty made the Kyoto Zen life ostentatious in the eye of this once anthropologically astute Reed-educated graduate. On the night of his arrival he wrote:

> O man—poorness and small houses. So that elegant dinner at Ryosen-an tonight is—in my head—how can I do this on those poor folks backs—poverty is so real and I am not comforted living above it, being my responsibility too—I mean, I don't know if I can accept living in these fancy terms.[9]

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[9] Gary Snyder, *Personal Journals: 1947-1995*. 45 manuscript volumes. Kitkitdizze Library, 21 May, 1956.

The first months in Kyoto were not so smooth. Snyder's open letters published in the *Evergreen Review* and *Chicago Review* together with the personal letters demonstrate this American West mountain man's early frustration with the Japanese society, while his first collection of poems *Riprap* published in 1956 shows his searching for an appropriate lyric register. Also, real life in the monastery was different from his expectation. Like many people who experienced a culture shock, before he was entirely versed himself in the Asian culture, he soothed himself in the memories of "a supposed better situation in his homeland". From the very beginning, he wrote in his journal that: "I am a free man: in no fancy Buddhist sense perhaps, but in the old American individual sense—and I learned it not out of books but from the old guys who have been working hard and been broke all their lives" (June 5). He even thought his American comrades were probably the truer Buddhist: "the center of Buddhism in this world is quietly moving to San Francisco where it's most alive—these Japanese folks will be left behind and they won't recognize it when they see it" (May 23); "The Orient is a hard place to be a good Buddhist—all their temples and shrines and priests are distracting" (June 23).[10] Sharing the similar rebellious spirit with Han-shan, in the first stage Snyder remained skeptical and vigilant of Buddhism in its rigid institutional guise, nevertheless, Snyder did not give up exploring the essence of Buddhism seriously.

In his first year in Kyoto, he lived in Shokolu-ji as a personal attendant to Miura Isshu Roshi, who introduced him to study with Oda Sesso Roshi (1901-1966), the head abbot of

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[10] Snyder's Journal, 1956-58, GSP I 84:3, cited in Thomas Harmsworth's "Gary Snyder's Green Dharma", 2009, p. 93.

Daitoku-ji by that time. Later, Snyder moved to Daitoku-ji and became a disciple of Oda Sesso. Snyder describes the life and study in this monastery as follows:

> We sat cross-legged in meditation a minimum of five hours a day. In the breaks everyone did physical works—gardening, pickling, firewood cutting, cleaning the baths, taking turns in the kitchen. There are interviews with the teacher, Oda Sesso Roshi, at least twice a day. At that moment we were expected to make a presentation of our grasp of the koan that had been assigned to us…sleep was short, the food meager, the rooms spare and unheated, but this…was as true in the worker's or farmer's worlds as it was in the monastery. (*The Real Work*, 97)

When Snyder practiced Zen Buddhism in Kyoto, he closely followed the Rinzai (Lin Ji) sect. Zen Buddhist training depends on recognizing that no "self" could exist in a completely isolated manner from the surrounding world and thus "generating the ability for reflective self-awareness and self-mastery. By engaging in the practice and absorbing the essence of Zen Buddhist tenets, Snyder once wrote a letter to Allen Ginsberg on November 22th, 1962, talking about "taming dragons":

> Then I had an interesting progression of thoughts about dragons: a vision of writing, powerful talon-fisting being... Then I recollected the painting on the ceiling of Zen lecture-halls, a great twist dragon gripping the pearl of wisdom in one claw—and

> realized that he wasn’t gripping that pearl, he was held by it—Buddhism controlling the dragon—and saw motto of Zen temple as “WE TAME DRAGONS.[11]

The image of the dragon conveys a significant dimension of Rinzai Zen Buddhist practice, which could help people to overcome fear, anger, and sufferings. The fear and anger often arise when the will is frustrated, but through the Buddhist training in Japan, Snyder has learned that zazen could help to obviate a frustrated will and remain open to the actually existing world. In other words, Zen Buddhist advocates people to let go of his or her own expectations and simply participates in ever-unfolding, immediate situations with joy and gratitude instead of fear and anger. By delving into the essence of Zen Buddhism, Snyder gradually awakened in his Buddhist pilgrimage and acculturated deeper in the Asian culture.

The life in Japan was combined with both physical and mental challenge, and Snyder was particularly interested in koan study. Explaining why he chose Rinzai rather than Soto Zen, he said that “the challenge of koan study—the warrior’s path, almost—and maybe some inner need to do battle (“Dharma combat”) was what drew me to it”; “The koans are a mine of Chinese cultural information. Not only do they deal with fundamental riddles and knots of the elegant and pithy language of Chinese at its best, in which poetry (a couplet, a line, or even an entire poem) is employed often as part of the koan” (*The Real Work*, 98).

Snyder has been reading Zen sutras while practicing meditation since he was very young, who believes the spiritual legacy of Chinese culture is essentially Chan Buddhism. As it is recorded in his diary on July 9, 1952, when he worked at the Granite creek Guard station, he has been reading the sutras of the Chan master Hui Neng. He writes about this experience as follows:

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[11] 22 November 1962, letter from Snyer to Allen Ginsberg, in *The Selected Letters of Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder, 1956-1991*, p. 49.

> A ramshackle little cabin built by Frank Beebe the miner
> Two days walk to here from roadhead.
> arts of the Japanese: moon-watching
> insect-hearing
> Reading the sutra of Hui Neng.
>
> one does not need universities and libraries
> one need be alive to what is about
>
> saying "I don't care" (*The Gary Snyder Reader*, 6)

Zazan, or meditation, as an essential practice of Chan, in Snyder's understanding is like still hunting: "You sit down and shut up and don't move, and then the things in your mind begin to come out of their holes and start doing their running around and singing and so forth, and if you just let that happen, you make contact with it" (*The Real Work*, 34). He takes meditation not as a rest or retreat from the turmoil of the stream or the impurity of the world, but as a way of being the stream. In this way, “meditation may take one out of the world, but it also puts one totally into it. Poems are a bit like this too. The experience of a poem gives both distance and involvement: one is closer and farther at the same time”.[12] Even though Snyder did not take meditation as a method of poetry writing, he did believe “the exercise, the practice, of sitting gives me unquestionably an ease of access to the territories of my mind—and a capacity for reexperience—for calling and revisualizing things with almost living accuracy” (*The Real Work*, 33).

Physical labor work has always been important to Snyder too. It is an essential part of Chan practice since Po-chang established the first Chan monastery in Tang dynasty. Snyder mentioned in an interview that he has got familiar with the basic rule “a day without work, a day without food” when he translated the record of the life of the Chan master of Huaihai of the Po-chang Mountain (*The Real Work*, 104). The recovery of the ordinary life lies in the very core of Chan, which later becomes a significant subject in Snyder’s poetry: “Whatever work I’ve done, whatever job I’ve had, has fed right into my poetry, and it’s all in there” (Allen, *On Bread & Poetry* 9).

Meanwhile, Snyder never limited himself for Zen, in a personal interview with Chung Ling in 2005, he said: “I always was interested in studying all the different schools of Buddhism, and did not limit myself to strictly Zen View. I read sutras and early history of Chan in China. I acquainted myself respecting all of them, and seeing the spread of practices, or philosophies in the Buddhist world as slightly different approaches and different perspectives for different personalities, different cultures, and different types of people" (Chung, *Chinese Zen and American Literature* 78).

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[12] Gary Snyder, 1991, *Just One Breath: The Practice of Poetry and Meditation* (Tricycle, Fall 1991). See at www.tricycle.org/magazine/just-one-breath/.

From 1956 to 1968, during Snyder's stay in Japan, he traveled back to the United States several times and played an active role in the countercultural activities. Different from many young Americans who traveled to Japanese monasteries, Snyder never obliterated to change his original identity, but acted as an "intercultural conduit crisscrossing Asia and America". After living on and off in Japan for twelve years, Snyder finally returned to California in 1968 with a Guggenheim Fellowship. He built the Kitkitdizze in the Sierra Nevada with his friends and settled down there on the San Juan Ridge. Snyder did bring the Zen lifestyle back to the wild nature in California. By that time the *Dharma Bums* has published and Snyder got many young followers. Snyder invited some of them and some of his friends to build his cottage together. There were around ten people working together and practicing Zen. Bruce Boyd, Snyder's friend and the foreman of the construction, described those days:

> It wasn't often that I got up for zazen at 5:00—perhaps because of lots of responsibility for the work, or the tiring combination of learning while doing, or the youth of all of us, or the enormous imperative I felt to finish the house before winter set in. I was there to build a house. Yet, sitting zazen, listening to Gary and visitors talk on Buddhism, that talked of our daily lives in the woods—read aloud, while

> sitting by a campfire under an open sky, were the perks. A whole new world consisting of equal measures of communal camp life. Zen, Blue Sky, stars, forest…and building from the very ground up, by hand, with stone, cedar, and pine logs. So I tried to make it to zazen even if I did bring all the problems of work with me. (Boyd 115)

In other words, the Zen that Snyder brought back to States is casual and relaxed, as a mix of life, work and art, which is more close to the Ancient Chinese Chan. In 1982, Snyder updated this place to a Zen centre, a Buddhist community in the Diamond Sangha tradition called "The Ring of Bone Zendo". The zendo takes its name from a poem by Lew Welch, a friend of Snyder and a poet associated with the Beat generation, who disappeared in the forest nearby in 1971:

> I saw myself
> a ring of bone
> in the clear stream
> of all of it
>
> and vowed,
> always to be open to it
> that all of it
> might flow through

> and then heard
> "ring of bone" where
> ring is what a
>
> bell does. (Welch 91)

All the efforts of Snyder's not only test the compatibility of the Asian culture landing in America, but also challenge the tolerability of the American culture. More significantly, Snyder's far-flung experiences in the transpacific areas have promoted America's involvement in a larger Asian-Pacific community looms on the horizon and demonstrated his American contemporaries new conceptions of cultural space.

Chapter 5: The Intertextual Network of References: Gary Snyder's Geopoetics

5.1 The Interconnectedness in Snyder's Ecopoetry

5.1.1 Riprap: Interdependent Originality

According to Terry Eagleton's definition, intertextuality is the textual context of a literary, since there is no such thing as literary "originality", neither such thing has the "first" literary work: all literature is "intertextual" (119). This chapter looks into the construction of Snyder's geopoetics and the intertextuality issue involved. Snyder has acknowledged that it was Ezra Pound who has introduced him to Chinese poetry, then he has started to study classical Chinese. After writing a number of poems, when he was twenty-four years' old he was ready to put poetry aside and turned his thinking toward linguistics, the Whorfian hypothesis, North American oral literature, and Buddhism. Moreover, his employment skills were largely outdoors:

> So in the summer of 1955 after a year of Oriental languages graduate school, I signed on with the Yosemite National Park as a trail crew laborer. They soon had me working in the upper reaches of the Piute Creek drainage, a land of smooth white granite and gnarly juniper and pine. It all carries the visible memory of the ice age. The bedrock is so brilliant that it shines back at the crystal night stars. In a curious mind of renunciation and long day's hard work with shovel, pick, dynamite, and boulder, my language relaxed into itself. I began to be able to meditate, nights, after

> work, and I found myself writing some poems that surprised me. (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 65)

The *Riprap* collection opens with a group of poems about the transparency of mountains of work in Sierra Nevada and finishes with some poems written in his Zen study in Kyoto and at sea of Pacific and Persian Gulf. The first edition of *Riprap* (500 copies) was printed in a tiny shop close to the Daitoku-ji Zen Temple, fold and bound in East Asian style (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 65). Later on, when the American edition was about to be born, Snyder and his editor of Grey Fox Press decided to add his translation of "Cold Mountain Poems" into it. Snyder also asserts that "there is no doubt that my readings of Chinese poems, with their monosyllabic step by step placement, their crispness—and the clatter of mule hooves—all fed this style" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems,* 66). Snyder attempts to set the surface simplicity of *Riprap* with unsetting depth. As it is noticed by himself, instead of adopting the passionate or gaudy language, Snyder composes the plain poems in the risk of invisibility (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 66), but it points to his favorite direction: the Buddhist enlightenment in ordinary life. This relationship between meditation, work, and poetry writing shows in Snyder's early collection of poems in *Riprap* (1959). "Riprap", as Snyder explains in the preface of the volume, means "a cobble of stone laid on steep, slick rock to make a trail for horses in the mountains". The twenty-one poems in this collection were written not only under the influence of Han-shan's Buddhist philosophy but also under Snyder's experiences of picking up and placing the granite stones in tight cobble patterns on hard slabs in the trail-crew work in the Sierra Nevada in the 1950s.

The collection registered those moments. Snyder's early "riprap" aesthetic appears to be at odds with the romantic, raw, and impassioned didacticism expressed in the spontaneous free verse often associated with Beat poetry. His emphasis here rests solidly on the side of the meticulously wrought work of the careful craftsman. Again, in Snyder's understanding, "the title Riprap celebrates the work of hands, the placing of rock, and my first glimpse of the image of the whole universe as interconnected, interpenetrating, mutually reflecting, and mutually embracing" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 65).

The interconnection in Snyder's poetry relates to an important Buddhist concept "Dependent Origination". In Buddhism, there are Four Noble Truths in the essence of the Buddha's teaching: "the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering, the truth of the extinction of suffering, and the truth of the path that leads to the extinction of suffering". All the voluminous Buddhist texts lie on the basis of the Four Noble Truths, which confirm that life is about suffering, the reason that causes the suffering, and how to get rid of the suffering and reach nirvana. Meanwhile, the Four Noble Truths is based on a fundamental principle of "dependent origination". As a core teaching of Buddhism, the theory of "dependent origination" offers an insight into the chain of existence. It emphasizes that everything is interconnected and affect each other. A common illustration to show the understanding of this principle is the Twelve Links in the outer rim of the Bhavachakra (Wheel of Life) (Analayo 1096). It means that all the phenomena arise through causes, conditions, and mutually dependent relations. Nothing can exist without interdependent relationships. Among various angles of interpretations, this simple but profound thought becomes a basis of the Buddhist outlook on Nature, providing strong rationality in the modern world. This kind of connection runs through the whole collection. For example, the sixth poem “Above Pate Valley” in *Riprap* shows Snyder’s comprehension of this concept:

> We finished clearing the last
> Section of trail by noon,
> High on the ridge-side
> Two thousand feet above the creek—
> Reached the pass, went on
> Beyond the white pine groves,
> Granite shoulders, to a small
> Green meadow watered by the snow,
> Edged with Aspen-sun
> Straight high and blazing
> But the air was cool.
> Ate a cold fried trout in the
> Trembling shadows. I spied
> A glitter, and found a flake
> Black volcanic glass—obsidian—
> By a flower. Hands and knees

Pushing the Bear grass, thousands
Of arrowhead leavings over a
Hundred yards. Not one good
Head, just razor flakes
On a hill snowed all but summer,
A land of fat summer deer,
They came to camp. On their
Own trails. I followed my own
Trail here. Picked up the cold-drill,
Pick, single jack, and sack
Of dynamite.
Ten thousand years. (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 11)

The poem depicts the ordinary working, resting scenes and the environment above the Pate Valley. Following Snyder's sight of view, readers see the landscape unfolding: high on the ridge, the last section of the trail that they have just finished building reached the pass high above the creek and went beyond the white pine groves. It was a shining sunny day, the poet sit in the trembling shadows of a tree, ate a cold fried trout in the cool air. Suddenly, he saw a glitter and discovered a flake of black volcanic glass by a flower, then thousands of broken arrowhead leavings on "a hill snowed all but summer". It opens the geographical epoch of the Indian relics. The mosaic cosmic conditions including the trail, the ridge, the creek, the white pine groves, the granite shoulders, the small green meadow, the aspen tree, the sun, the cold fried trout, the black volcanic glass, the flower, the bear grass, the arrowhead leavings, the hill, the fat summer deer are all interdependent. Ten thousand years become a twinkle in history. The poet here is following his certain trail. By the end of the poem, he picked up "the cold-drill, pick, single jack and sack of dynamite", reaching the moment of Buddhist enlightenment in the last line. Until this moment, all the co-arise conditions depicted earlier in the poem function in their own ways and contribute to a holistic spiritual experience.

The Buddhist enlightenment could happen everywhere in ordinary daily life. In this sense, William Blake's famous line "to see a world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower" in his poem "Auguries of innocence" has the taste of a Chan poem. Snyder recognizes the value of perceiving dependent origination in daily life: "The Buddha once said… if you can understand this blade of rice, you can understand the laws of interdependence and origination. If you can understand the laws of interdependence and origination, you can understand the Dharma. If you understand the Dharma, you know the Buddha" (*The Real Work*, 35). This relation is seen in the first poem "Mid-August at Sourdough Mountain Lookout" of the collection as well:

Down valley a smoke haze
Three days heat, after five days rain
Pitch glows on the fir-cones

Across rocks and meadows
Swarms of new flies.

I cannot remember things I once read
A few friends, but they are in cities.
Drinking cold snow-water from a tin cup
Looking down for miles
Through high still air. (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 3)

In this short poem, Snyder intimates the framework of the typical eight-line poems in classical Chinese poetry, even though he adapts and breaks the lines to reflect the natural rhythms of the English language. The title of the poem, as most of the traditional Chinese poetry, reveals the time and occasion for composition. Again, following the classical Chinese poetry convention, the first section of the poem provides with setting (looking down on the valley; commenting on the weather) while giving details about the environment (glare of pitch against the cones, swarms of flies). On the whole, the first section describes the natural environment at Sourdough Mountain Lookout. The valley, haze, heat, rain, pitch, fir-cones, rocks, meadows, new flies seem to be wild insentient objects, but together form a dynamic vivid scene in mid-August.

Then, in the second section, the human images start to appear: reading, friends in the cities/the dust world, the poet himself drinking “cold snow-water from a tin cup”. The natural and human images seem to be independent but co-exist with each other, like the poet and his friends, who seem to stay separate and remote with each other yet share a certain kind of connection and nostalgia. The poet stays at a paradoxical position on the lookout. It liberates him but also isolates him from human society. In the last two lines, the poet is "looking down for miles / through high still air", mingles the two worlds in transient interdependent and permanent samsara.

Another poem in *Riprap*, "Kyoto: March" belongs to the group of poems that Snyder wrote in Japan. It shows a sort of dialectic in progress between nature and humanity, between Snyder's Chinese antecedents and his own poetic voice:

A few light flakes of snow
Fall in the feeble sun;
Birds sing in the cold,
A warbler by the wall.
  The plum Buds tight and chill soon bloom.
The moon begins first Fourth, a faint slice west
At nightfall. Jupiter half-way
High at the end of night
            Meditation. The dove cry Twangs like a bow.
  At dawn Mt. Hiei dusted white
On top; in the clear air

Folds of all the gullied green
Hills around the town are sharp,
Breath stings. Beneath the roofs
Of frosty houses
Lovers part, from tangle warm
Of gentle bodies under quilt
And crack the icy water to the face
And wake and feed the children
And grandchildren that they love. (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems,* 22)

Here, the poet keeps himself out of the poem as a selective observer in early spring Kyoto. The balanced description of natural objects shows a certain Eastern poetic style and the influence derived from the traditional Chinese painting. All are lovely in harmony. Then, Snyder moves from outside to inside. He encounters people waking in the morning and breaks the original rhythm deliberately. A run-on sentence works as a montage camera to record how people rise from the warm bed and join the bustling family-centered lives. The silent picture becomes dynamic. The poetic scenery and human activities co-exist organically. It is an interesting moment in Snyder's early poetry, which to some extent centers on men's responses to the environment. It later becomes one of his important themes.

5.1.2 Ecology in Buddhism

The Ecocriticism Reader (1996) as a landmark in the growing field of ecocriticism presents major statements that stress the interconnectedness of human subjectivity and the larger order of nature. According to the biologist Barry Commoner, the first law of ecology is that "everything is connected to everything else" (quoted in Glotfelty, xix). Snyder is surely subscribed to this idea. In Snyder's belief, wilderness is a diversity of living and nonliving beings flourishing according to their own sorts of order, a place where the wild potential is fully expressed: "when an ecosystem is fully functioning, all the members are present at the assembly" (*The Practice of the Wild*, 12). Therefore, to speak of wildness is to speak of wholeness.

In Snyder's opinion, nowadays no one can indulge in the ignorance of the nature of contemporary politics and social orders. The "free world" in the propaganda is economically dependent on a fantastic system of stimulation of greed that cannot be fulfilled. The giant appetites created by modern societies foul the environment on this planet and distort true human potentials. In this sense, the voluntary and joyous poverty of Buddhism becomes a positive force in a radical social change. Through the practice of meditation, one can wipe out the "junk being pumped into the mind by the mass media" and concentrate on "the ground" beneath one's feet. Considering the mercy of the West tends to be the social revolution while the mercy of the East has been "individual insight into the basic self/void" (*Earth House Hold*, 92), Snyder suggests that we need both and we should "work on one's own responsibility, but willing to work with a group" (*Earth House Hold*, 92). Taking the diversity of ecosystems as manifestations of Mind, Snyder connects the accomplishments of some of the elder societies with the state of Sangha, as well as Buddha and Dharma. Snyder takes the idea of "planetary culture" as a wonderful revolutionary aspect of Buddadharma. He also promotes the tolerant small societies which have a deep respect and love for the nature and mind of the universe: the societies maybe imperfect, but authentic.

The Practice of the Wild: Essays is a collection of Snyder published in 1991. The nine essays range from Snyder's thoughts on politics, environmental issues to art and spiritual explorations. In "The Etiquette of Freedom", Snyder investigates and clarifies a series of important concepts. First, he traces back the origin of the words "nature", "wild", and "wilderness". The word "nature" is from the Latin *natura,* with the meaning "birth, natal, character, course of things". It gets two slightly different meanings. The broader meaning is "the material world or its collective objects and phenomena", which plus the human intention and action. It means nothing in New York City is unnatural, even including the toxic wastes or atomic energy. The other meaning is "outdoors": the physical world apart from the features or products of human will and civilization—the meaning Snyder prefers to use in the discussion.

Snyder doubts that the definition of "wild" is largely from the human standpoint. But actually, the definition could involve the free agents and endowments of animals, the self-propagating and self-maintaining of plants, the original and potential of land, the primary cultures and societies which resist economic and political domination by civilization and maintain a sustainable relation to the local ecosystem. It should also involve the "proud and free" individuals, fiercely resisting any oppression, outrageous behaviours, and the artless, spontaneous, unconditioned, expressive, openly sexual, ecstatic behaviours. The Chinese word for nature, *zi-ran* (in Japanese *shizen*) means "self-thus". It is a bland and general word. The word for *wild* in Chinese is *ye* (in Japanese *ya*), which basically means "open country". Snyder finds that most of the senses lie very close to the previously discussed Chinese definition of *Dao*, which literary means the *way* of Great Nature. As it is concluded by Snyder, *Dao* is "excluding analysis, beyond categories, self-organizing, self-informing, playful, surprising, impermanent, insubstantial, independent, complete, orderly, unmediated, freely manifesting, self-authenticating, self-willed, complex, quite simple" (*The Practice of the Wild*, 172). It is being empty and real at the same time, close to the Buddhist term *Dharma*, with its original senses of forming and firming.

Snyder also reminds us that if we think human beings got "smarter" than animals for inventing the first language and then society, it would be a mistake. Human beings are mammal primates, our bodies are wild. Seeing language as a mind-body system which coevolved with our nerves and needs, Snyder takes it as a complexity that eludes our rational intellectual capacities. In Snyder's view, the language teaching in schools is cultivating a few favorite features and culturally defined elite forms which may help people to apply for a job or produce a professional paper, but the real language is learned in the house and field, rather than at school. The *virtu*, the power, remains on the side of the wild. Moreover, the so-called order in government and social organization is a set of forms that have been appropriated from the operating principles in nature by the calculating mind. Long before the age of legal codes and books, the social order has been found through nature.

5.1.3 Huayan School and Interpenetration

In 1974, Snyder published *Turtle Island*, a collection that won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1975. "Turtle Island" is the native American name for the continent which became the North America or the United States thousands of years later, a name "based on many creation myths of the people who have been living here for millenia[sic]" (Introductory Note of *Turtle Island*). As the title suggests, Snyder attempts to argue that we should identify the patch of land defined by the natural rather than the political boundaries. In Snyder's description, the collection is a "tentative cross-fertilization of Buddhist ideas of interpenetration (the Avatamsaka philosophy) and the elegant ecological thinking of the Odum brothers, Howard and Eugene".[13] Snyder's combination of Buddhism and scientific ecology echoes the salient feature of Buddhist Modernism.

Jonathan Stalling proposes in his book *Poetics of Emptiness* (2010) that Snyder has created "a poetics of emptiness that leaves language itself behind" (40). Although the interplay of Buddhism and ecology is not Stalling's primary concern, he acknowledges that Snyder's application of Zen is in line with the position held by D. T. Suzuki and other Zen teachers in his period who accommodated existing Western values. Stalling argues that, however, Snyder's Buddhism stays "too closely fitted to the existing Romantic values

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[13] 6 April 1974, GSP II 2:54. The covering letter Gary Snyder sent to the publisher New Directions, quoted in Thomas Harmsworth's *Gary Snyder's Green Dharma*, p. 120.

(monism)" (42). In this aspect, the historian of religion David McMahan probably offers a more accurate term, who calls Western Buddhism "Buddhist Modernism" as a legitimate "new form of Buddhism that is the result of a process of modernization, westernization, reinterpretation, image-making, revitalization, and reform" (5).

In Snyder's understanding, Zen works towards "an ecologically and culturally enlightened state of affairs", which seems to be just one religion within a list including Gnostics, Teilhard de Chardin Catholics, Taoism, Witches, Yogins, Shamans, Alchemists, etc. Tovey argues that Snyder shared an Emersonian stance, who believes that Zen had to "be alive and made new" and that "orthodox transmission" was "bullshit" (Tovey 10). In Harmsworth's interpretation, Snyder exhibits religious perennialism, which Michael McMahan recognizes as a point of contact between Buddhist Modernism and Transcendentalism (102). McMahan believes this idea follows Suzuki, who "takes Zen literature out of its social, ritual and ethical context and reframes it in terms of a language of metaphysics derived from German Romantic idealism, English Romanticism, and American Transcendentalism" (McMahan 124). Moreover, he points out that "the view of Buddhism as one of a number of ways to a metaphysical absolute that transcended any and all tradition-specific religions was an initial and crucial move in the entrance of Buddhism into the discourses of modernity" (McMahan 71-72). Snyder's perennialist attitude towards Zen, in Harmsworth's (101) comment, is a broader synthesis of Zen with Transcendentalist themes such as discourse of alienation and anti-institutionalism.

Among different schools in Mahayana Buddhism, apart from Chan/Zen, Snyder is deeply drawn into the Huayan (or Hua-yen, Avatamsaka, “Flower Garland”) philosophy. The Huayan school flourished first in China during the Tang Dynasty. During the Song Dynasty, Huayan metaphysics were nearly all assimilated by the Chan School, while the former, in Snyder’s words, is “the intellectual statement of Zen”(*Earth House Hold*, 34-35). Based on its worldview, as detailed in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, its doctrine seeks to cultivate wisdom in the empathetic resonance with all forms of life, while the theoretical emphasis of the Huayan tradition “is not the formation but the existing situation of the world” (Wei 89). A most fundamental and prominent feature of the Huayan philosophy is called “perfect interfusion” (Wei 89). In the Huayan belief, all levels of reality are interrelated and interpenetrated. Snyder shows his understanding of Huayan in an early journal entry on June 1956 that published in *Earth House Hold*: “the connecting truths hidden in Zen, Avatamsaka and Tantra” are all “closely historically related”. He also argues that all the three schools promote an attitude of selflessness. In Snyder’s explanation:

> Avatamsaka Buddhist philosophy sees the world as a vast interrelated network in which all objects and creatures are necessary and illuminated. From the “human” standpoint we cannot live in those terms unless all beings see with the same enlightened eyes…. it is clear that the empirically observable interconnectedness of mature is but a corner of the vast “jeweled net: which moves from without to within. (*Earth House Hold*, 91-92)

Interpenetration is a fundamental ancient doctrine of Huayan. In the worldview of Huayan, there are four realms: the realm of phenomenona, the realm of principle, the realm of non-obstruction between principle and phenomena, and the realm of non-obstruction between phenomena and phenomena. The four realms mark different levels understanding of the world: the first one is the mundane understanding, while the others go beyond the fake surface and manifest Buddhist wisdom. In other words, they exist in a paradoxically interdependent relationship, which coordinate with the Mahayana maxim of "form is emptiness and emptiness is form". By eliminating the dualistic preoccupation, people can set themselves free and see things from limitations of space and time.

Eugene P. Odum is one of the most influential ecologists in the post World War II period, who Snyder has been referred to as early as 1970 as one of his scientific sources. According to Eugene P. Odum, a key concept in Ecology is that "all units of the ecosystem are mutually dependent. This is a good point to keep in mind when we are tempted to extol the importance of some group of organisms in which we happen to be especially interested" (*Fundamentals of Ecology*, 79). Moreover, he notes that humankind is "a part of 'complex' biological cycles' dependent on the food web of eating and being eaten" (*Fundamentals of Ecology*, 12). In his widely influential paper "The Strategy of Ecosystem Development" (1969), Odum asserts that the "one problem, one solution approach" is no longer adequate, and must be replaced by some form of ecosystem analysis which considers man as a part of, rather than apart from the environment: "society needs, and must find as quickly as possible, a way to deal with the landscape as a whole so that manipulative skills (that is, technology) will not run too far ahead of our understanding of the impact of change" (267). For Snyder, this holistic thinking resonates with the Huayan philosophy of interconnectedness. In this light, *Turtle Island* indeed is the result of a cross-fertilization of ecological thought with Buddhist ideas of interpenetration.

Snyder has been frequently referring to the key terms in Huayan Sutra since his early career. For example, in the "Lookout's Journal" on July 17, 1953, he writes that "keep looking across to Crater Mountain and get funny feeling I am up there looking out, right now, because there are no calendars in the mountains—shifting of light & cloud, perfection of chaos, magnificent jiji mu-ge/interlacing interaction" (*Earth House Hold*, 16). Here, Snyder used the Japanese pronunciation of "Jiji mu-ge", which refers to the Chinese Buddhist term "shi shi wu ai" with the literal meaning non-obstructive interrelationships between beings. Avatamsaka Buddhist philosophy sees the world as a vast interrelated network, in which all objects and creatures are necessary and illuminated (*Earth House Hold*, 91-92). In Snyder's interpretation, the Huayan philosophy tells us no self-realization is without the Whole Self, and the whole self is the whole things (*The Old Ways: Six Essays*, 64). Taking interpenetration as an exciting idea, Snyder confirms that "to experience the interdependencies of things, the complex webs and networks by which everything moves, which I think are the most beautiful awareness" (*The Real Work*, 35).

5.1.4 Re-inhabination on Turtle Island

Physical geography, like the human mind, in Snyder's works is always an almost timeless essence. Here, I shall distinguish space and place, the two important concepts in the humanist geography, with the underlying theory of phenomenology that tries to discover the essential features of direct and indirect experiences. According to the humanist geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, "space" is more or less abstract, which can be described as a location that has no social connections for a human being, and no value has been added to this space (*Space and Place* 6). Comparatively, "place" is a location created by human experiences. A place can be seen as space that has a meaning, while the meaning can be given in an direct and intimate way (through senses as vision smell, sense and hearing), or an indirect and conceptual way (mediated by symbols, arts, etc.) (Tuan, *Space and Place* 6). Another geographer Edward Relph holds a similar view and points out that the two concepts are not separated: "so space and place are dialectically structured in human environmental experience, since our understanding of space is related to the places we inhabit, which in turn derive meaning from their spatial context"(Seamon and Sowers 44). The ecological dynamics and the forces of the place, in Snyder's idea, involves an ethical imperative to examine the historical dimension of its oral culture, especially that produced by Native Americans. Viewing through an Indigenous Pacific lens, indigenous methodologies center critical and creative practices within native ecologies, languages, stories, genealogies, customs, values, traditions, aesthetics, and epistemologies. As Craig Santos Perez argues, pacific methodologies center the cultural, linguistic, historical, social, and political themes and contexts of Pacific Islands and islanders:

"these methodologies also foreground the ongoing impact of colonialism and the struggle for cultural revitalization and political decolonization" (Magrane et al. 9).

In 1968, Snyder repatriated to America from Japan with his Japanese wife Masa Uehara and their new born son Kai. Two years later, he settled down with his family in "Kitkitdizze", a land he had purchased with friends in the foothill of Sierra Nevada in 1967. Set at the root on San Juan Ridge, Nevada City, California, it was firstly a self built home and later grew to a small community with people who have similar ideal for lifestyle. "Kitkitdizze" refers to "Mountain Misery" in the indigenous American language. It exemplifies a sustainable lifestyle rooted in the Buddhist value of interpenetration and modern ecological ethics. The life at Kitkitdizze was reflected in the volume *Turtle Island*. To some extent, both Kitkitdizze and "Turtle Island" are Snyder's explorations for an alternative way of living, a cultural therapy with a special sense of place. As Snyder writes in the introductory note of *Turtle Island*, it is a collection of poetry about place and re-inhabitation:

> The poems speak of place, and the energy pathways that sustain life. Each living being is a swirl in the flow, a formal turbulence, a "song." The land, the planet itself, is also a living being—at another pace. Anglos, Black people, Chicanos, and other beached up on these shores all share such views at the deepest levels of their old cultural traditions—African, Asian or European. Hark again to those roots, to see out ancient solidarity, and then to the work of being together on Turtle Island. (*Turtle Island*, vii)

Turtle Island is a handbook about how to live. One of the clearest articulation could be the lines in "For the Children": "stay together / learn the flowers / go light" (86). The first poem of the collection "Anasazi" depicts how the Ancient Pueblo Native Americans set home in their environment and become a part of it:

Anasazi

Anasazi
Anasazi

tucked up in clefts in the cliffs
growing strict fields of corn and beans
sinking deeper and deeper in earth
up to your hips in Gods
your head all turned to eagle-down
& lightning for knees and elbows
your eyes full of pollen

the smell of bats
the flavor of sandstone

grit on the tongue.

women
birthing
at the foot of ladders in the dark.

trickling streams in hidden canyons
under the cold rolling desert

corn-basket   wide-eyes
red baby
rock lip home,

Anasazi (*Turtle Island*, 3)

"Anasazi" is eponymous for "ancient ones" in the Navajo native language. The Anasazi people constructed hundred-room villages in the cliffs and caves in the steep sides of the mountains mainly in Mesa Verde of Colorado with their excellent skills of stone masonry. It is a poem and song of the "real places", a celebration for eagles, pollen, different geographical features, and humans who imagined themselves rooted in the earth. It is an archeological layering of historical phases, with the "stratigraphic" depth in Westphal's term, to stress how a given place is composed at different moments in its history. Snyder's writing shows interactions among nonhuman nature, human dweller, and cultural institutions, suggesting our relationship to space is sometimes not only a choice but a matter of culture. Snyder describes the picture with rejection to history and the full engagement to the present in his 1967 essay "Poetry and the Primitive: Notes Poetry as an Ecological Survival Technique": "having fewer tools, no concern with history, a living oral tradition rather than an accumulated library, no overriding social goals, and considerable freedom of sexual and inner life, such people live vastly in the present" (*Earth House Hold,* 117). Meanwhile, Snyder does not hesitate to align with modern science: "science, as far as it is capable of looking 'on beauty bare' is on our side. Part of our being modern is the very fact of our awareness that we are one with our beginnings—contemporary with all periods—members of all cultures. The seeds of every social structure or custom are in the mind" (*Earth House Hold*, 126).

"Poetry and the Primitive" also shows Snyder's shift from the full rejection of history to its reformulation. The poet believes that to live in the "mythological present" in close relation to nature and in basic, but disciplined body/mind states indicates "a wider-ranging imagination and a closer subjective knowledge of one's own physical properties than is usually available to men living impotently and inadequately in history" (Snyder, *Earth House Hold* 118). Snyder's revised concept for history, history of a thick present is underwritten by a turn to anthropology—including Boa's and Kroeber's works on the Pacific Northwest. As a student who double-majored in English and anthropology at Reed College, Snyder quoted from Malinowski, Frazer, Boas, and Kroeber in his undergraduate thesis. He once mentioned anthropology as “probably the most intellectually exciting field in the university” (Snyder, *The Real Work* 58). Snyder’s creation of the Kitkitdizze Community, seen in this way, is an attempt to “get a sense of that region” under Kroeber’s thoughts on the Native American tribes of California.

With the belief “out relation to natural world takes place in a *place*”, Snyder criticizes that “tens of millions of people in North America who were physically born here but who are not actually living here intellectually, imaginatively, or morally” (*Practice of the Wild*, 42-43). Instead, Snyder would like to think of “a new definition of humanism and a new definition of democracy that would include the nonhuman” (*Turtle Island*, 48). In another poem, he points out that “The USA slowly lost its mandate / In the middle and later twentieth century/It never gave the mountains and rivers, / Trees and animals, / A vote” (*Turtle Island*, 106). Accordingly, Snyder borrows the Buddhist term “sangha” (religious community) and proposes a new term “great earth sangha”:

> The mercy of the West has been social revolution; the mercy of the East has been individual insight into the basic self/void. We need both. They are both contained in the traditional three aspects of the Dharma path: wisdom (parjna), meditation (dhyana), and morality (sila). Wisdom is intuitive knowledge of the mind of love and clarity that lies beneath one’s ego-driven anxieties and aggressions. Meditation is going into the mind to see this for yourself—over and over again, until it becomes the

> mind you live in. morality is bringing it back out in the way you live, through personal example and responsible action, ultimately toward the true community (sangha) of "all beings". (*Earth House Hold*, 92)

David Barnhill notices that bioregionalism is "a new, extended form of Buddhist community" for Snyder (191). In Snyder's definition of bioregionalism, the most important point is that human nature is empty, and that we are each personally not a simple ego but a system: "each of us is a system, of many selves, many memories, of many desires, many intentions, many lovers, many futures, and in understanding ourselves to be systems, we understand that there is no hierarchy of dominance in ourselves" (quoted in Cleary, 16). Realizing the arbitrariness of ourselves makes it possible not wish to constitute an external versions of authority. Accordingly, bioregionalism aims to harmonize human cultural and social structures with natural systems. That is to say, "human systems should be informed by, be aware of, be corrected by, natural systems" (Cleary 13).

The concept of re-inhabitation is reinforced in *Turtle Island*. As an important practice in bioregionalism, re-inhabitation refers to "the tiny number of persons who come out of the industrial societies (having collected or squandered fruits of eight thousand years of civilization) and then start to turn back to the land, back to place. This comes for some with the rational and scientific realization of interconnectedness and planetary limits" (*A Place in Space*, 191). However, Snyder believes the actual demands of a life committed to a place and living somewhat by the sunshine green-plant energy that is connecting in that spot, are "so physically and intellectually intense that it is a moral and spiritual choice as well" (*A Place in Space*, 191). Committed to a life-based in place, the reinhabitary peoples make common cause with the lifestyles of the original inhabitary people, and "people who work together in a place become a community, and a community, in time, grows a culture" (*A Place in Space*, 250). It is an ecosystem-based culture, whose life and economies are centered in terms of natural regions and watersheds.

Just as the experiment in Kitkitdizze, Snyder proposes three main aspects that lie at the core of the practice of re-inhabitation: "feeling gratitude to it all; taking responsibility for your own acts; keeping contact with the sources of the energy that flow into your own life (namely dirt, water, flesh)" (*A Place in Space*, 188). The ecological crisis on Turtle Island draws Snyder's attention, who relates it to another important issue of knowing the history of nature. The tension between rehabitants and occupying forces reveals the certain ecology crisis on Turtle Island, as it tells in "What Happened Here Before":

> And human people came with basket hats and nets
> Winter houses underground
> Yew bows painted green,
> Feasts and dances for the boys and girls
> Songs and stories in the smoky dark.
> ……
> Then came the while man: tossed up trees and

Boulders with big hoses,

Going after that old gravel and the gold.

Horses, apple-orchards, card-games,

Pistol-shooting, churches, county jail.

……

now,

we sit here near the diggings

in the forest, by our fire, and watch

the moon and planets and the shooting starts—

my son ask, who are we?

drying apples picked from homestead trees

drying berries, curing meat,

shooting arrows at a bale of straw,

military jet head northeast, roaring, every dawn,

my son ask, who are they?

WE SHALL SEE

WHO KNOWS

HOW TO BE

Bluejay screeches from a pine (*Turtle Island*, 80-81)

Tracing back the natural history of the West Coast of the continent to 300 million years ago, Snyder demonstrates human's insignificance in an infinitely expanded space and time. Later, the early inhabitants of Native American people started to live there at 40,000 years ago, while the white man arrived only 125 years ago. In another collection of poems *Mountains and Rivers without End* (1996), Snyder comments on the term "white man" as "not a racial designation, but a name for a certain set of mind. When we all become born-again natives of Turtle Island, then the 'white man' will be gone" (80). The history of bioregion reminds the readers of the insignificance of human beings and our true relationship with the land.

Lawrence Buell points out that "the environmental crisis involves a crisis of the imagination, the amelioration of which depends on finding better ways of imagining nature and humanity's relation to it" (*Environmental Imagination*, 2). Snyder recognizes that "at the root of the problem where our civilization goes wrong is the mistaken notion that nature is something less than authentic, that nature is not as alive as man is, or as intelligent, that in a sense it is dead, and that animals are of so low an order of intelligence and feeling, we need not take their feelings into account" (*Turtle Island*, 107). His son's question "Who are we?" leads to Snyder's concern to the over-technologized modern world. Snyder's first-hand experience in wild nature and how he witnessed nature was destroyed causes his compassion for all the members in the natural world and deep criticism for the destructive civilization. It is shown in "Mother Earth: Her Whales":

……

The whales turn and glisten, plunge
    and sound and rise again,
Hanging over subtly darkening deeps
Flowing like breathing planets
    in the sparking whorls of
    living light—

And Japan quibbles for words on
what kinds of whales they can kill?
A once-great Buddhist nation
        Dribbles methyl mercury
  Like gonorrhea
        in the sea.

……

How can the head-heavy power-hungry politic scientist
Government two-world Capitalist-Imperialist
Third-world Communist paper-shuffling male
Non-farmer jet-set bureaucrats
Speak for the green of the leaf? Speak for the soil?
…… (*Turtle Island*, 47-49)

In this poem, Snyder condemns directly to Japan, that "once-great Buddhist nation," for "quibble[ing] for words on / what kinds of whales they can kill". With the rise in economy, Japan becomes a modern polluting nation with the western influence, as asserted by Bert Almon: "The technological abuses of Western civilization are envied by the non-Western nations: the instrumental approach—pragmatism and exploitation—is shared by many developing as well as developed nations" (87).

As it will be further discussed in the following chapter, the diminution of the subjective "I" is a common practice in classical Chinese poetry and Zen Buddhism. Partly influenced by this tradition, Snyder uses the strategy of effacing the narrative subject in several poems in *Turtle Island*. For example, in "Second Shaman Song", there is no subjective "I" appears until the last line, which "conveys as rigorous a relinquishment of homocentrism as one could expect a human lyric to achieve" in Lawrence Buell's argument (*Environmental Imagination*, 167). This aesthetics of relinquishment indicates that giving up individual autonomy itself, to forgo the illusion of mental and even bodily apartness from one's environment" (*Environmental Imagination*, 144). Another example is the poem "The Real Work":

sea-lions and birds,
sun through fog
flaps up and lolling,
looks you dead in the eye.
sun haze;
a long tanker riding light and high.

sharp wave choppy line—
interface tide flows—
seagulls sit on the meeting
eating;
we slide by white-stained cliffs.

the real work.
washing and sighing,
sliding by. (*Turtle Island*, 32)

In this poem, the subjective "I" gives way to the impersonal "you" and an amorphous "we". Significantly, the personal pronoun "we" is plural rather than a singular first-person pronoun, which indicates that Snyder's poetic vision of ecological interdependence. The sun is rolling, the ranker is rolling, the seagulls are eating. The world is functioning perfectly by themselves rather than being organized around a central subjective "I". Snyder's subjectivity does not occupy in a central position. In this way, Snyder constructs his utopia in poetry. In the essay "Four Changes", he depicts an ideal picture of inhabitation: "what we envision is a planet on which the human population lives harmoniously and dynamically by employing various sophisticated and unobstructive technologies in a world environment which is "left natural" (*Turtle Island*, 99-100).

5.1.5 "Poet as Prophet"

Aligned with the activist spirit in his 1961 essay "Buddhist Anarchism", Snyder criticized the Vietnam War waged by the government of the United States. The spirit of the engaged Buddhism is clearly shown in *Turtle Island*. In the poem "The Call of the Wild", Snyder condemns the American involvement in Vietnam, which destroyed animals and plants:

> So they bomb and they bomb
> Day after day, across the planet
> Blinding sparrows

Breaking the ear-drums of owls
Splintering trunks fo cherries
Twining and looping
Deer intestines
In the shaken, dusty rocks.
All these Americans up in special cities in the sky
Dumping poisons and explosives
Across Asia first,
And next North America,

A war against earth.
When it’s done there’ll be
no place
a coyete could hide. (*Turtle Island*, 22)

The issue of “how to be” is central to *Turtle Island*. In his prose “Energy is Eternal Delight”—the title quoted from William Blake—Snyder states that:

> The return to marginal farmland on the part of longhairs is not some nostalgic replay of the nineteenth century. Here is a generation of white people finally ready to learn from the Elders. How to live on the continent as though our children, and on down,

> for many ages, will still be here (not on the moon). Loving and protecting this soil, these trees, these wolves. Natives of Turtle Island. (*Turtle Island*, 105)

However, the "didacticism" in *Turtle Island* has also drawn criticism. Charles Altieri questions Snyder's stances as "prophet". He argues that "how the mind can compose itself to attend to numinous qualities of experience" or get engaged in "more abstract meditations on the role of the mind" (763, 771). For Altieri, *Turtle Island* leaves "an impression of self-righteousness", and this self-righteousness is "completely absent from Snyder as a person" (763, 775). Similarly, Lars Nordstrom criticized that "Snyder is so used to being a spokesman, being right, that that's what he is doing; he's not being a poet anymore" (197). Another American poet Jonathan Bate also mentions the polemicism in Snyder's poetry. Mainly focusing on Snyder' poem "Mother Earth: Her Whales", Bate criticizes that in spite of the worthy sentiments, it fails as an "ecopoem" because "it has been written as a set of opinions, not as an attempt to transform into language an experience of dwelling upon the earth" (199-201). Bate's question of "What are poets for?" touches the very function of poets and their poetry.

Regarding the criticism, Timothy Gray defends Snyder by acknowledging that the sense of self-rightousness is offset by Snyder's humor "with a sense of detachment, and slightly ironic fashion" (281). Taking multiple points of view into account, he promotes the idea of inclusiveness and manages to avoid excessive rhetorical posturing. As it is exemplified in poems like "Why Log Truck Drivers Get Up Earlier Than Students of Zen" or

"I Went into the Maverick Bar", Snyder reaches out to establish friendly contact with constituencies that most Bay Area radicals tended to dismiss (282). On the other hand, Snyder himself sees the role of poet related to his ecological vision of the idea "transformation":

> We have it within our deepest powers not only to change our "selves" but to change our culture. If man is to remain on earth he must transform the five-millennia-long urbanizing civilization tradition into a new ecological-sensitive harmony-oriented wild-minded scientific-spiritual culture… Civilization, which has made us so successful a species, has overshot itself and now threatens us with its inertia. There also is some evidence that civilized life isn't good for the human gene pool. To achieve the Changes we must change the very foundations of our minds. (*Turtle Island*, 99)

Snyder senses the urge to transform the inconsiderate human-centered culture into the bioregional centered culture. For this transformation, a poet might function as being a spokesperson or prophet with his or her poetry. As John Elder points out, more poets playing the prophetic role in the age of ecological crisis:

> The attentiveness to nature distinguishing today's American poetry often expresses itself as hostility toward Western civilization. Poet's vivid and informed response to

> the earth can also foster a revitalized sense of tradition, however, a vision of human culture in harmony with the rest of the natural order. Thus, poetry comes to resemble Hebrew prophecy in its quality of alienated authority. A solitary voice from the mountains calls upon the community to renew itself… (Elder 1)

In response to the question of whether poetry would “change anything”, Snyder believes that due to the fact that whether a poet’s sensibilities are turned into other voices than simply the social or human voice. It works like an early warning system that “hears the trees and the air and the clouds and the watersheds beginning to groan and complain a little bit” (*The Real Work*, 71). On this basis, the poet might process the power to project a healing vision: “what proceeds on that is, for the poet, in particular, a sense of the need to look archetype image and symbol blocks and see if the blocks are working. Poetry effects change by fiddling with the archetype and getting at people’s dreams about a century before it actually affects historical change” (*The Real Work*, 71).

With this thought, several poems in *Turtle Island* share the geographical “place-consciousness”. For instance, in the poem “Tomorrow’s Song”, an ideal place “Turtle Island” appears after the collapse of the nightmarish USA as a dystopia. It is a bioregion where “we need no fossil fuel / get power within/grow strong on less”. It is a community where humans “grasp the tools and move in rhythm side by side /… / sit still like cats or snakes or stones / as whole and holding as / the blue black sky (77). Meanwhile, Lawrence Buell observes, the place-consciousness in literature is “a utopian project that realizes itself…not as a fait accompli but as an incompletion undertaken in awareness that place is something we are always in the process of finding, and always perforce creating in some degree as we find it" (*Environmental Imagination*, 260). Considering this utopian project is never completed, those who write about place face a perpetual challenge that how they present the world in language.

From another perspective, Geng Jiyong notices that Snyder's desire to be a spokesman for nature in the intellectual arena is based on his belief that a certain kind of "knowledge" can be communicated among the competent readers (79). According to the biological theory, "biomass", the evolutionary data stored in all biological life, is a sort of "intelligence". In Eugene Odum's interpretation, this "intelligence" is not exactly the accurate word. Rather, it is the life-biomass, which stores information. Living matter is stored information in the cells and in the genes…That is a different order of information, the information of the universe we all live in, and the information that has been flowing for millions of years (*Turtle Island*, 107-108). Through poetry, a poet acts as a shaman in interspecies communication. This new model of poetry is developed in Snyder's eco-poetics:

> We're just starting, in the last ten years here, to begin to make songs that will speak for plants, mountains, animals and children. When you see your first deer of the day you sing your salute to the deer, for your first-wing blackbird—I saw one this morning! Such poetics will be created by us as we reinhabit this land with people who know they belong to it; for whom "primitive" is not a word that means past, but

> primary, and future. They will be created as we learn to see, region by region, how we live specifically (plant life!) in each place. The poems will leap out past the automobiles and TV sets of today into the vastness of the Milky Way (visible only when the electricity is turned down), to richen and humanize the scientific cosmologies. These poesies to come will help us learn to be people of knowledge in this universe in community with the other people—non-human included—brothers and sisters. (*The Old Ways*, 42-43)

5.2 Myths & Texts: "Poetry a Riprap on the Slick of Metaphysics"

Snyder sees his poetry falling into two classes: the lyrical poems which are shorter and easier to understand, for example, the poems in *Riprap* and *The Back Country*, while the other type deals with myths, symbols, and ideas, like in *Myths and Texts* and *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (*The Real Work*, 20), which are considered as Snyder's most difficult works. *Myths and Texts* (1960) is actually Snyder's very early volume of poetry. The forty-eight short poems are weaved together under three subtitles: "Logging", "Hunting", and "Burning", intertwined myths and cultural practices found in Native American, Indian, Chinese and Japanese tradition and poetics.

The volume was completed when Snyder was not yet twenty-six years old. Surprisingly, in this volume already appear the themes that Snyder has been exploring in his whole career. The poems are inspired by Snyder's college thesis on Haida mythology, the

Asian tradition he has learned at Berkeley, as well as the landscape and rhythm that Snyder has experienced and transformed. They are also based on Snyder's understanding on a huge amount of materials of European and American literature, mythic allusions, oral history, journal logs, fragments of dialogue, which shows "a precocious mind's ability to receive, collate, and synthesize a wide array of cultural and physical data" (Timothy Gray 67).

In Poem 19, Snyder articulates his attempt of "hatching a new myth" of his own, however, Snyder never claims to be the only author. Rather than a singular journey, it is a plural project indebted to the various agents whose movements have traced the geographic boundaries of the Pacific Rim culture area through centuries. This geographic structure strives to withstand the destructive forces of the mighty civilization. As it shows in the first poem "Logging 1":

The morning star is not a star
Two seedling fir, one died
Io, Io,
Girdled in wisteria
Would with ivy
"The May Queen
Is the survival of
A pre-human
Rutting season"

The year spins
Pleiades sing to their rest
                    at San Francisco
                    dream
                    dream
Green comes out of the ground
Birds squabble
Young girls run mad with the pine bough,

Io (*Myths & Texts*, 1)

The first line "The morning star is not a star" on the one hand suggests that the morning star / Venus is also the name of a plant, while on the other hand, it echoes to Thoreau's famous line in *Walden* ("The Sun is but a morning star") in the beginning line of the volume. With the famous label of "the true heir to Thoreau" made by Richard Howard, Snyder's journal indeed shows that he did use to bring *Walden* to the Sourdough Mountain lookout station. Snyder follows the tradition derived from the Romantic thought in the late eighteenth century that notably carried on by Thoreau. Poetry, as "the seat of the soul", opens the space where the inner world and the outer world touch and interpenetrate each other.

Like Thoreau, who was one of the early literary Orientalists in the United States, Snyder takes the wilderness as space that he can get the enlightenment no matter it is located in the West or the East. Then, Snyder employs pre-modern and pre-human European images to present a picture in interpenetration and set a dreamy yet realistic tone for the whole collection, where the voice of the universe reflects itself and the interdependence of the outer and inner nature.

> Sea-foam washing the limpets and barnacles
> Rattling the gravel beach
> Salmon up creek, bear on the bank,
> Wild ducks over the mountains weaving
> In a long south flight, the land of
> Sea and fir tree with the pine-dry
> Sage-flat country to the east.
> Han Shan could have lived here,
> & no scissorbill stooge of the
> Emperor would have come trying to steal
> His last poor shred of sense
> On the wooded coast, eating oysters
> Looking off toward China and Japan
> "If you're gonna work these woods
> Don't want nothing
> That can't be left out in the rain—" (*Myths & Text,* 13-14)

Han-shan does appear in this early poem of Snyder, during which time Snyder just started translating "Cold Mountain Poems" around 1955. In this poem, Snyder tried to imagine Han-shan living in the seaside place depicted in the poem. Or, Han-shan is invited to have this dialogue in Snyder's imagination. Standing at the shoreline, Snyder sees how the salmon, bear, wild ducks are moving to survive. "Eating oysters / Looking off toward China and Japan", Snyder gazes across the Pacific, as a prophecy for his future years living in East Asia. "Don't want nothing / That can't be left out in the rain" reaches enlightenment by the end in the image of "left out in the rain", the phrase Snyder used for the title of his another collection of poems that published in 1986. In accordance with the Huayan philosophy, Snyder's meditative poetry functions as a double mirror, showing "multiple reflections in multiple mirrors" as it is in accord with the Huayan philosophy, in which you "see yourself going this way and you see yourself going that way" ("Interview" in *Towards a New American Poetics*, 35).

Poem 8 in "Burning" is inspired by the enlightenment experience of the environmental philosopher John Muir, who is known as "Father of the national parks" and "John of the Mountains". Muir was climbing Mt. Ritter in California when he came across a point of dead stop, a dilemma point where he could not move up or down. Adapting this crisis from Muir's prose in *The Mountains of California* (51) to a poem, Snyder revisits that moment and depicts a state of enlightened consciousness:

About half-way

To the top, I was suddenly brought to

A dead stop, with arms outspread

Clinging close to the face of the rock

Unable to move hand or foot

Either up or down. My doom

Appeared fixed. I MUST fall.

There would be a moment of

Bewilderment, and then,

A lifeless rumble down the cliff

To the glacier below.

My mind seemed to fill with a

Stifling smoke.This terrible eclipse

Lasted only a moment, when life blazed

Forth again with preternatural clearness.

I seemed suddenly to become possessed

Of a new sense. My trembling muscles

Became firm again, every rift and flaw in

The rock was seen as through a microscope,

My limbs moved with a positiveness and precision

With which I seemed to have
Nothing at all to do. (*Myths & Texts*, 44)

In the void of space beyond the cliff, Muir experiences the sudden enlightenment or the state of *wu wei* (无为, the action of nonaction) in the Daoist doctrine. This poem reminds both Patrick Murphy and Timothy Gray of Laozi: "The most submissive thing in the world can ride roughshod over the hardest things in the world—that which is without substance entering that which has no crevices. That is why I know the benefit of resorting to no action." (Chapter 43 of *Dao De Jin*, quoted in Timothy Gray, 91). "Suddenly everything was just like jazz"—It is a moment described in *the Dharma Bums* by Jack Kerouac, when Japhy Ryder gives instructions to the greenhorn climber Ray Smiths:

> It happened in one insane second or so: I looked up and saw Japhy *running down the mountain* in huge twenty-foot leaps, running, leaping, landing with a great drive of his booted heels, bouncing five feet or so, running, then taking another long crazy yelling yodelaying sail down the sides of the world and in that flash I realized *it's impossible to fall off mountains you fool*. (Kerouac 85)

From another perspective, this is also a moment of *jian xing* (见性, seeing one's nature), an instant of seeing into self-nature. In Bob Steuding's explanation, "he became for a moment one-minded, and his senses became preternaturally acute. He could act spontaneously, without thought: for a time, he was beyond culture, beyond the entanglements of language" (87). For Snyder, poetry would approach phenomena with a disciplined clarity, as he significantly perceived that in Poem 13 in "Burning": "poetry a riprap on the slick rock of metaphysics". In this sense, the phenomenological quality of riprap poetry makes it possible to build metaphysical connections between the East and the West, along with a path leading to the Pacific Rim enlightenment.

Metaphysics concerns generic features of reality "as such", while in a narrower definition, transcendental metaphysics claims are unrestricted existential statements that purport to be true in every conceivable state of affairs.[14] The term carries different connotations. For some thinkers, "metaphysical" or "transcendental" has to do with supernatural realities or speculative thought unconnected to experience (Kevin Schilbrack 35), however, for Snyder "metaphysics" refers to the generic features of this world rather than some other worlds. The final poem in the whole volume, the Poem 17 of "Burning" presents a forest fire and a rainstorm:

the text

Sourdough mountain called a fire in:

Up Thunder Creek, high on a ridge.

Hiked eighteen hours, finally found

---

[14] The definition is taken from Charles Hartshorne. For a fuller statement, see his "What Metaphysics Is" and "Unrestricted Existential Statements," in *Creative Synthesis and Philosophic Method* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1970).

A snag and a hundred feet around on fire:

All afternoon and into night

Digging the fire line

Falling the burning snag

In fanned sparks down like shooting stars

Over the dry woods, starting spot-fires

Flaring in wind up Skagit valley

From the sound.

Toward morning it rained.

We slept in mud and ashes,

Woke at dawn, the fire was out,

The sky was clear, we saw

The last glimmer of the morning star.

the myth

Fire up Thunder Creek and the mountain—

troy's burning!

The cloud mutters

The mountains are your mind.

The woods bristle there,

Dogs barking and children shrieking

Rise from below.

Rain falls for centuries

Soaking the loose rocks in space

Sweet rain, the fire’s out

The black snag glistens in the rain

& the last wisp of smoke floats up

Into the absolute cold

Into the spiral whorls of fire

The storms of the Milky Way

“Buddha incense in an empty world”

Black pit cold and light-year

Flame tongue of the dragon

Licks the sun

The sun is but a morning star

Crater Mt. L.O. 1952—Marin-an 1956

end of myths & texts (*Myth & Texts*, 53-54)

Snyder makes the last poem in two parts. The narration in the “text” part keeps the neat, precise and calm tone, like the firefighters’ daily talk, while the “myth” part presents an apocalyptic vortex scene like the final Day of Judgment. “The cloud mutters / The mountains are your mind": meditation is the inner expedition in the mind, holding the sword of spiritual discipline, "cuts down the evil weeds". Snyder writes in Poem 6: "where the sword is kept sharp / the VOID / gnashes its teeth" (*Myths & Texts*, 42). The void lies in the mind in its perfect purity. Suddenly, the downpour soaks everywhere, which might remind the readers of the "Dharma Rain" in the Lotus Sutra, a cosmic release saving all the beings on the earth. The "Buddha incense" is the Thoreauvian smoke, as Thoreau writes, "Go thou my incense upward from this hearth, / And ask the gods to pardon this clear flame".[15] It announces the arrival of a new day like a "messenger of Dawn".

The poem reminds readers of the cyclical nature of the universe. Cautiously, in the very end of the poem, Snyder returns to the image mentioned in the the beginning poem: "the morning star is not a star" and closes *Myths & Texts* with "the sun is but a morning star", the exact sentence how Thoreau ends *Walden* with. Deflating the mythic ambitions that Snyder has just built up, it is this hasty return to scientific empiricism. Established by events, figures and images of the myth, *Myths & Texts* offers access to the intense example of human life in the vast series of interrelationships across the Pacific Rim.

5.3 "Axe Handle": Mind is Manifesting Mind

Snyder's shaping of his texts' meaning is often seen in connection with other texts in cultural transmission. In *Axe Handles*, the poetry collection published in 1983, Snyder had a discussion on intertexuality and its allusion. The eponymous title of the first poem and the entire collection appears as one of Snyder's favorite metaphors. As Snyder mentions in the afterword of the 2009 edition of *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poem*, his teacher Chen Shih-hsiang's translation of Lu Chi's Wen Fu, the "Prose-poem on Writing"inspires him about "when making an axe handle, the pattern is not far off" as it applies to poetry (Mind is manifesting mind) (66).

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[15] "Smoke" by Henry David Thoreau, originally published in April 1843 *Dial*, see at www.poets.org/poem/smoke-0.

"Axe Handle" is a proverb comes from the Chinese ancient literary critic Lu Ji (or Lu Chi, 261-303), who lived during the late Three Kingdoms period and Jin Dynasty. His book of literary criticism and principles of composition *Wen Fu* ("On Literature") turns out to be the most articulate treatises on Chinese poetics. Regarding its far influence to the whole Chinese literary history, it is only equaled by the sixth-century *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* by Liu Xie (Liu Hsieh).[16] Snyder firstly learned the proverb from his teacher Chen Shih-hsiang in Berkeley, who was the first one to translate *Wen Fu* from Chinese to English. The term "Axe Handle" was originally found in a poem of *Shi Ching* (《诗·豳风·伐柯》): By cutting wood with an axe / The model is indeed near at hand ("伐柯伐柯，其则不远。"). Later, Lu Ji reuses the proverb in *Wen Fu* and elaborate it to the principle of composition. Snyder gives his accurate explanation to this proverb in the first poem "Axe Handles" in the collection:

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[16] As Lu Xun, the leading writer and literary critic of modern Chinese literature, noted: "The East has Liu Xie'S [Liu Yanhe] *Literary Mind*, and the West has Aristotle's *Poetics*". See "Tiji yi pian," in *Lu Xun quanji* (Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1981), vol.8, p.18.

One afternoon the last week in April

Showing Kai how to throw a hatchet

One-half turn and it sticks in a stump.

He recalls the hatchet-head

Without a handle, in the shop

And go gets it, and wants it for his own.

A broken-off axe handle behind the door

Is long enough for a hatchet,

We cut it to length and take it

With the hatchet head

And working hatchet, to the wood block.

There I begin to shape the old handle

With the hatchet, and the phrase

First learned from Ezra Pound

Rings in my ears!

"When making an axe handle

the pattern is not far off."[17]

And I say this to Kai

"Look: We'll shape the handle

---

[17] The italics in this poem are mine.

By checking the handle
Of the axe we cut with—"
And he sees. And I hear it again:
It's in Lu Ji's *Wên Fu*, fourth century
A.D. Essay on Literature"-—in the
Preface: "In making the handle
Of an axe
By cutting wood with an axe
The model is indeed near at hand.
My teacher Shih-hsiang Chen
Translated that and taught it years ago
And I see: Pound was an axe,
Chen was an axe, I am an axe
And my son a handle, soon
To be shaping again, model
And tool, craft of culture,
How we go on. (1)

The poem depicts the moment when Snyder realizes the position of Pound, his teacher Chen, himself, and his son in the cultural transmission. In the light of this enlightenment, the transmission of craft and wit in Snyder's poetry is not only seen in the dimension of space but also in time, going back and forth in history, taking various paths. Indeed, the model and base of Snyder's poetics lie everywhere: in the traditions of transmission, in the Chinese and Japanese poetic traditions, in the worldwide and ancient sense of the earth. Meanwhile, McLean observes that Snyder's early work like *Riprap* pays attention to phenomena in order to "discover poetic form in that reality was sharpened by the meditative teachings of Japanese and Chinese poets leading to mind before language" (*The Real Work*, xii). In his decades of years of Zen practices, one discipline is to take one "to anything direct-rocks or bushes or people" (*Earth House Hold*, 34). It was directed toward getting down to a flat surface reality, to break what William Carlos Williams called the "complicated ritualistic forms designed to separate the work from reality" (*The Real Work*, xii). To reach the "absolute bottom transparency", Snyder's meditative poetry goes to two directions. One direction is "toward a short lyric that pushed up against an edge of silence", which poems become "like the 'objects' of modern physics,…at once product and process". The other direction is the longer poems derived from "everyday world but then spirals up from that area, working on more mythological and archetypal levels" (*The Real Work*, xii-xiii). Both kinds of efforts are unified in Snyder's understanding of the "real work", while poetry, in Snyder's belief, "does as much as and no more than anything else. It's all real" (*The Real Work*, 82).

The 1981 poem "The Canyon Wren" in *Axe Handle* is a particular example to show the reconciliation of concrete and symbolic poetic and the fusion of West/East that Snyder has been experienced as a Pacific Rim voyager. In this poem, Snyder deconstructs the nature/human dualism. The poem describes a rafting trip in the Stanislaus River of Sierra

Nevada, seeing the American landscape in the classical Chinese lens. Snyder quoted the Chinese Song dynasty Buddhist poet Su shi (also known as Su Tung-p'o) , who used to depict the similar scenery in his famous poem "Hundred Pace Rapids" in the 11th century:

> Shooting the Hundred-Pace Rapids
> Su Shih saw, for a moment,
> it all stand still
> "I stare at the water:
> it moves with unspeakable slowness" (*Axe Handles*, 11)

In Su Shi's original poem, he traveled from Xu Zhou in southern China to the foreign country Korea in an instant with his mind, and returned seven hundred years ago back to the Tang dynasty to visit the bronze camel in Lo Yang palace:

> 我生乘化日夜逝，坐觉一念逾新罗。
> 纷纷争夺醉梦里，岂信荆棘埋铜驼。
> 觉来俯仰失千劫，回视此水殊委蛇。

> I give in to the change that advances day and night;
> Sit, and in a moment of thought fly beyond Silla.
> Men in drunken dreams wrangle and steal,

Never believing that thorns will bury the bronze camels.

In this reverie I lose a thousand kalpas;

I stare at the water: it moves with unspeakable slowness. (Burton Watson, *Selected Poems of Su Tung-p'o* 75-6)

In Chung Ling's interpretation, "space and time in Snyder's poem do not expand as much as those in Su Shi's […] for the space covers only a short stretch of the Stanislaus River in the Sierra Nevada and the time returns a little over one hundred years to the period of the Gold Rush" ("Allusions in Gary Snyder's 'The Canyon Wren'", 84-5). Besides, according to the ending note of "The Canyon Wren", Snyder and his friends planned their rafting trip to see the stretch of the Stanislaus "before it goes under the rising waters of the New Mellones Dam" (*Axe Handles*, 112). Whereas Su's poem indicates the impermanence of human civilization, Snyder emphasizes the natural landscape deeply influenced by human factors. Following Su Shi's quotation, Snyder cites the lines of the thirteenth-century Japanese Zen Buddhist Master Dōgen Zenji in *Mountains and Rivers Sutra*:

Dōgen, writing at midnight,

"mountains flow

"water is the palace of the dragon

  it does not flow away". (*Axe Handles*, 111)

In the juxtaposition of the lines of Su and Dōgen, Snyder indicates that all beings do not see mountains and waters in the same way. While dragons see water as a palace or pavilion, Su's vision of water moving with "unspeakable slowness" signifies an extra-human mode of perception. In Snyder's understanding, looking through "a window into the nonhuman" is a characteristic of classical Chinese poetry.

Approaching the end of the poem, Snyder describes the scene of "we beach up at China Camp / Between piles of stone / Stacked there by black-haired miners,/cook in the dark / sleep all night long by the stream" (*Axe Handles*, 111). Here, the "China Camp" refers to the mining town built during the California Gold Rush, where the Chinese workers, the "black-haired miners" used to work in the mid-nineteenth century. This pedestrian yet tangible meeting of East and West does not stand for an idealized Eastern attitude towards nature. Nevertheless, it is a remarkable moment for the reconciliation of humanity and nature, which Snyder learned from classical Chinese poetry: "They helped me to 'see' fields, farms, tangles of brush, the azaleas in the back of an old brick apartment. They freed me from excessive attachment to wild mountains, with their way of suggesting that even the wildest hills are places where people, also, live"(*The Gary Snyder Reader*, 535). Snyder once quotes his own translation of Wang Wei's "Deer Camp", which depicts "human sounds" in wilderness landscape of "empty mountains":

Empty mountains:
    no one to be seen.

Yet—hear—
  human sounds and echos.
Returning sunlight
  enters the dark woods;
Again shining
  on the green moss, above.(*The Gary Snyder Reader*, 535)

By the end of the poem, Snyder and his friends listen to the songs of the Canyon Wren, which has been with them the whole voyage. Dedicated to Snyder's friends James and Carol Katz, the poem goes:

These songs that are here and gone,
Here and gone,
To purify our ears. (*Axe Handles*, 111)

The songs not only include the song of the Canyon Wren and other birds but also include the sound of the "churning whitewater" and songs of the Chinese mines echoing in history. "Purify our ears" brings to mind the ending of the Poem 12 of "Cold Mountain Poems", when Han-shan writes "I'll sleep by the creek and purify my ears". However, different from Han-shan's isolating himself from the "dust world" society, Snyder's purification takes into account the non-human factors as well as the human factors.

Dedicating the poem to Snyder's friends James and Carol Katz, the rivers runners who explored the twists and turns of the river cut in nine-million-year old latites layers together, Snyder wrote the poem in the dark at China Camp, before the whole area goes under the rising waters of the new Dam."The Canyon Wren" is a poem set in a certain social context, a poem that mingles the natural and human realms together. That is to say, Snyder is going beyond the dichotomy and antithesis between human and natural worlds. It marks a significant characteristic in Snyder's poetics that he has been developing in the past decades and finally fully presents in his most important work *Mountains and Rivers without End*.

5.4 Mountains and Rivers Without End

5.4.1 Chronical of a Poetry Project Foretold

In 1996, Snyder finally published the poetry collection *Mountains and Rivers Without End* in its entirety, his life project that began in April 1956. This capstone work is an ambitious epic that weaves together East Asian landscape painting, Nō Drama, Northern American mythology, ecological concerns and ethical reflections, reaching the peak of Snyder's poetic career. Long ago before its publication, this "chronical of a poetry project foretold" has been mentioned in *The Dharma Bums*, when Jack Kerouac introduces it in the voice of Japhy Ryder, the character based on Snyder:

> Know what I'm gonna do? I'll do a new long poem called "Rivers and Mountains

> Without End" and just write it on and on on a scroll and unfold on and on with new surprises and always what went before forgotten, see, like a river, or like one of the real long Chinese silk paintings that show two little men hiking in an endless landscape of gnarled old trees and mountains so high they merge with the upper silk void. I'll spend three thousand years writing it, it'll be packed full of information on soil conversation, the Tennessee Valley Authority, astronomy, geology, Hsuan Tsung's travels, Chinese painting theory, reforestation, Oceanic ecology and food chains. (Kerouac 157)

The genesis of *Mountains and Rivers without End* occurred on April 8, 1956, when Snyder was participating the painter Saburo Hasegawa's tea ceremony in his San Francisco apartment to celebrate Shakyamuni Buddha's birthday. That day, Snyder started to see the "yogic implications" that mountains as representation of "a tough spirit or willed self-discipline" and rivers as a projection of "generous and loving spirit of concern for all beings" (afterword of *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 155). This epic work is meant to be energized by these elemental forces.

Mountains and rivers as a pair of key images in the collection play a fundamental role to represent Snyder's idea that "Mountains and Waters are a dyad that together make wholeness possible" (*The Practice of the Wild*, 108). As it is discussed in Chapter Three, the notion of Emptiness is essential in Buddhism. It stands for the transcendent wisdom that things coexist in an interdependent constellation where things appear and change all the time.

"Streams and mountains never stay the same", this line shows up many times in the volume, indicating that everything will flow. No matter they are rivers, glaciers, clouds, rain, or snow, it is just different conditions of the water. In Snyder's interpretation:

> Even a "place" has a kind of fluidity: it passes through space and time—"ceremonial time" in John Hanson Mitchell's phrase. A place will have been conifers, then beech and elm. It will have been half riverbed, it will have been scratched and plowed by ice. And then it will be cultivated, paved, sprays, dammed, graded, built up. But each is only for a while, and that will be just another set of lines on the palimpsest. (*The Practice of the Wild*, 27)

Mountains and Rivers Without End is a collection of poems but also a long poem by itself, or, in Snyder's own words, "one central long interconnected work in progress, with small poems being written peripheral to that" (*The Real Work*, 143). It attempts to depict the chaotic universe in the state of interpenetration, while Snyder's vision of cosmic is based on the Buddhist practices, the East Asian art, the Native American legacies, as well as the various landscapes that Snyder has seen along his poetic journey in America and Asia from the 1950s to the 1990s. The volume is written in a time of tremendous change, while Snyder's initial impulse with which he opened the project, his curiosity, respect, and affection for the whole nature help him to keep in the right direction. The whole volume is organized in the pattern of a typical Chinese handscroll landscape painting. The thirty-nine poems are arranged in four sections, with each one presenting a part of the landscape of mindscape, either in lyrical or prosaic manner.

Besides the Chinese landscape paintings, Snyder also adopts the structure and principles of the Japanese Nō play in a loose but creative way to indicate his cultural and poetic visions. Originated in the fourteenth century in medieval Japan, Nō play was derived from the performance sangaku that was introduced from China in Tang dynasty (the Nara period in Japan) and later developed by the Nō masters Kannami (1333-1348) and his son Zeami (1363-1443). With its emphasis on the rhythmic accompaniment and movement, the sing, the dance, the mime, and texts in the narration all together create striking dramatic effects on the highly stylish stage.

In *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, Snyder draws inspiration from the typical *jo-ha-kyū* structure (introduction, the development, the climax and the rapid finale) in Nō play. From the four sections of the collection, one can observe the traditional Nō structure (Yamazato 113). Some very important poems in the collection also serve as correspondences in Nō play. For instance, in Section I, the *jo* part, the opening poem “Endless Streams and Mountains” equals to *shidai* (the entrance song) for the whole collection. Then, “Old Bones” serves as *nanori* (usually follows *shidai*, a character’s self-introduction). “Night Highway 99” can be seen as a travel song *michiyuki* (follows *nanori*, which depicts both the visiting places and the process of one’s journey). As Yamazato points out, the rest of the poems in this section constitute the expository *ha* part, except for the last poem “The Blue Sky,” which works as *kyū*. On another level, the traveling poems in Section I is an opening song for the whole book, while in the *ha* part (Sections II and III) his narratives spiral into and out the significant themes that he has been exploring in the past decades in Turtle Island and other dimensions along the Pacific Rim. Finally, it comes to Section IV, the *kyū* part, reaching its climax in the poem "The Mountain Spirit", and finishing with "Finding the Space in the Heart", an ending dance for this section and the whole volume (Yamazato 112-113).

Going back to Section I to examine more details, it shows that Snyder draws inspirations from the two art forms in China and Japan at the same time, and thus creates a unique structure of his own. As Snyder explains in an interview: "the Noh play is certainly a key structural sense of it with the scroll itself an analogous structuring moving through the landscapes, different seasons, and different realms, but coming to a kind of ambiguous end sometimes" (*The Real Work*, 50). Section I depicts Snyder's trail moving up and down along the American West Coast, especially the area between Seattle and San Francisco, by which time he was still preparing for his first trip to Japan. It opens with "Endless Streams and Mountains" (*Ch'i Shan Wu Chin*) as an ekphrastic poem for the whole magnum, which draws the Song Dynasty hand scroll that Snyder used to see in the Cleveland Museum of Art .

Fig. 7 [18]

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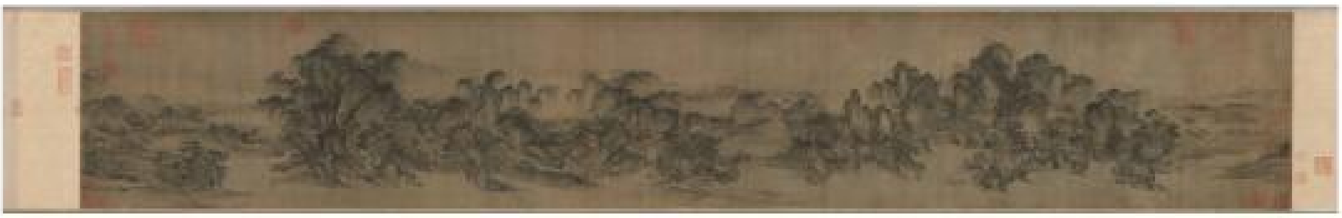
[18] Image: 35.1 x 213 cm (13 13/16 x 83 7/8 in.); Overall: 35.1 x 1103.8 cm (13 13/16 x 434 9/16 in.) Gift of the Hanna Fund 1953.126. See at www.clevelandart.org/art/1953.126.



Streams and Mountains without End
溪山無盡，1100-1150
China, late Northern Song dynasty (960-1127) - Jin dynasty(1115-1234)
Handscroll, ink and slight color on silk

The poem begins:

> Clearing the mind and sliding in
>
> to that created space,
>
> a web of waters streaming over rocks,
>
> air misty but not raining,
>
> seeing this land from the boat on a lake
>
> or a broad slow river,
>
> coasting by. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End* 5)

In “Questions of Travel”, Elizabeth Bishop writes:

But if the streams and clouds keep traveling, traveling,
the mountains look like the hulls of capsized ships,
slime-hung and barnacled. (Bishop, *Questions of Travel* 96)

Bishop's song of streams and mountains in her prosaic language shows a certain idle lament and her stylish hesitation. In comparison, Snyder's streams and mountains draw a distinct time-space dimension. At the very beginning of this long poem, Snyder reminds his readers that he is constructing a "created space". By "clearing the mind", an act similar to meditation, it is possible to slide in the landscape of the painting "Endless Streams and Mountains". Ekphrasis, a Greek rhetoric term with the meaning "to tell in full", is a verbal representation of visual information. An ekphrastic poem usually draws inspiration from visual arts, especially paintings. Snyder explains in the note for this poem that "East Asian landscape paintings invite commentary. In a way the painting is not fully realized until several centuries of poems have been added" (Snyder, *Mountains and Rivers Without End* 159). In such a dialogic manner, Snyder brings this painting back to life again. This long poem starts with "clearing the mind and sliding in / to that created space": the "imagined space" suggests a poetic impersonality, indicating that our relations to the natural realm may take precedence over interpersonal relations, while artworks can be the origin of the vocation.

5.4.2 “All Art and Song is Sacred to the Real”

Metaphysics concerns generic features of reality “as such”. Every poem in the thirty-nine poems in *Mountains and Rivers without End* is a snapshot of a slice of reality in this fragmented world. In the negotiation of metaphysical mysteries and daily experiences along the shoreline, the Pacific Rim manifests itself as a “text”, a bioregion conductive, also as a “myth”, a visionary ancient realm. As previously analyzed, Snyder writes in *Myths and Texts* that “poetry a riprap on the slick rock of metaphysics” (*The Gary Snyder Reader,* 420); for him, poetry would approach phenomena with a disciplined clarity, and leads us to a foothold in an immense and mysterious universe. Art may represent the quality of the relationship between the depicted parts and the whole. In this respect, Mark Gonnerman maintains the idea that “art is an expression of that judgment or skill—intuition born of discipline, craft—which freezes the flow of ongoing activity and exposes an order that lingers in chaos” (11). These mechanisms and fictional representations of place, in Westphal’s use of possible worlds theory (the philosophical discussion of alternative worlds and the way things might be), can change our view towards a place and have powerful performative functions in changing the actual world. In “Macaques in the Sky”, the last poem of Section II of *Mountains and Rivers without End*, Snyder records a trip that he had with his friends in the jungle of Taiwan, where they saw a clear spot of a family of monkeys:

> Then—wha!—she leaps out in the air
> the baby dangling from her belly,

they float there,

—she fetches up along another limb—
and settles in

Her
arching like the Milky Way,
mother of the heavens,
crossing realm to realm
full of stars (*Mountains and Rivers without End*, 116; italics added)

The analogy of us and the dangling monkey baby shows a typical analogical imagination of Snyder's poetics of space. "Crossing realm to realm" signifies an attempt to transcend boundaries metaphysically from real to imagined place. Snyder used to read Susanne K. Langer's book *Philosophy in a New Key: Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art* (1942) carefully when he was at Reed College. Langer dedicated this book to her teacher Alfred North Whitehead, who advocated the idea of a provisional realism throughout his corpus in which nature is conceived as a complex of prehensile unification in his book *Science and the Modern World*:

> Space and time exhibit the general scheme of interlocked relations of these prehensions. You cannot tear any one of them out of its context. Yet each one of them within its context has all the reality that attaches to the whole complex. Conversely, the totality has the same reality as each prehension; for each prehension unifies the modalities to be ascribed, from its standpoint, to every part of the whole. A prehension is a process of unifying….Thus nature is a structure of evolving processes. The reality is the process. It is nonsense to ask if the colour red is real. The colour red is an ingredient in the process of realization. The realities of nature are the prehensions in nature, that is to say, the events in nature. (Whitehead 105–06)

In her book, Susanne K. Langer bases her ideas on Philip Wegener's observation that the common-sense language is a "repository of faded metaphors" and argues that "if ritual is the cradle of language, metaphor is the law of its life"; it is the force that "makes it essentially relational, intellectual, forever showing up new, abstractable forms in reality, forever laying down a deposit of old, abstracted concepts in an increasing treasure of general words" (141). Snyder's analogical imagination in "Macaques in the Sky" demonstrates Whitehead's belief in nature "conceived as a complex of prehensile unification" as well as Langer's argument of the common-sense language's role in representing abstractable forms in reality. These ideas do share an intrinsic connection with the enigmatic concept of "emptiness" in Buddhist philosophy. As one of the key terms in Buddhism, emptiness (*sonata*) can be understood as "non-self", a state that nothing possesses essential, autonomous, enduring identity. Rather than a “cult of nothingness” as a popular misunderstanding, this concept goes beyond the dichotomous constructs in Christian theology like being/non-being, good/evil, or fullness/emptiness. Emptiness in Buddhist discourse points precisely to the dependent origination (non-self-arising) of phenomena (all things are caused) and places more emphasis on the inherent dependency of all things. As we observe how Soja’s radical inclusive concept of Thirdspace leans towards a monadic mysticism that goes beyond dualism and opens to additional otherness, to a continuing expansion of spatial knowledge (Soja, *Thirdspace* 61), the structure and the meaning of the words in *Mountains and Rivers without End* are not limited by the poet’s “self” but depend on an interrelated and ever-changing net of the wholeness of language, myth, knowledge among the other powerful factors and symbolic transformations.

Theodore Adorno states in *Aesthetic Theory* that “wholly man-made, the work of art is radically opposed to nature, which appears not to be so made” (quoted in Jonathan Bate, 120). It is normally believed that art reveals a certain unconscious realm. Pierre Bourdieu called it as “habitus”: “the system of structured, structuring dispositions” that is inherited by individuals and passed on historically, as well as procedures to follow, paths to take, schemes of perception—that tends “to guarantee the ‘correctness’ of practices and their constancy over time” (54). Meanwhile, Chinese art in general, as the contemporary Marxist and Kantian aesthetic thinker Li Zehou sums up, “is not discrete situations, things or phenomena, but rather the natural universal law, order, and logic (28). In this regard, Snyder indicates his attitude in the epigraph of *Mountains and Rivers Without End* by quoting from the Zen master Dōgen's essay "Painting of a Rice Cake":

> An ancient Buddha said "A painted rice cake does not satisfy hunger." Dōgen comments:
>
> "There are few who have even seen this 'painting of a rice cake' and none of them has thoroughly understood it.
>
> "The paints for painting rice cakes are the same as those used for painting mountains and waters.
>
> "If you say the painting is not real, then the material phenomenal world is not real, the Dharma is not real.
>
> "Unsurpassed enlightenment is a painting. The entire phenomenal universe and the empty sky are nothing but a painting.
>
> "Since this is so, there is no remedy for satisfying hunger other than a painted rice cake. Without painted hunger you never become a true person." (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, xvii)

From this epigraph, Leonard Scigaj claims that the philosophy of art Snyder put forward in *Mountains and Rivers Without End* is opposite to the postmodern view of "text as a hermetically sealed ground" (126), but at the same time, Snyder refuses a naïve faith in realism or mimesis. Instead, Snyder tends to accept that art can approach nature obliquely, represent the non-dualistic world with filters and distortions. "The Mountain Spirit" in

Section IV is the climactic poem in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. The poem describes the wild landscape with geographical language, following a pattern of dialogue:

A voice says

"You had a bit of fame once in the city
for poems of mountains,
    here it's real."

What?

"Yes. Like the lines

    Walking on walking
    under foot earth turns

But what do you know of minerals and stone.
For a creature to speak of all that scale of time—what for?
Still, I'd like to hear that poem."

            I answer back,

> “—Tonight is the night of the shooting stars,
> Mirfak the brilliant star of Perseus
>   crosses the ridge at midnight
>
> I’ll read it then.”
>
>   Who am I talking to? I think,
> walk back to camp. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*,141–42)

The mountain spirit, the voice of the wilderness seems to confront the speaker’s ability to describe the mountain scenery that he is not familiar with. Snyder himself used to doubt: “Some years back, in San Francisco, there was a poet who made his reputation largely on the basis of a poem he had written about the Mountain Spirit, even though he had not actually visited the mountains very much himself” (cited in Hunt *Genesis, Structure, and Meaning in Gary Snyder’s Mountains and Rivers Without End,* 253). Later on, the mysterious mountain spirit comments positively:

> The Mountain Spirit whispers back:
> “All art and song
> is sacred to the real.
> As such.” (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 146)

This aphorism or kōan-like riddle comes from the mountain spirit herself in a whisper. Art is neither the product of logical thought nor the aesthetic knowledge the same as rational knowledge. In this sense, an aesthetic can be only felt, grasped in action, rather than stated. The Chinese literary scholar Qian Zhongshu notices that "painting, in its delineation of scenery, does not assign the highest value to skill and detail. Poetry, in its description of affairs, does not give priority to full articulation. In both, it is desirable to leave something out" (106). By emphasizing the performative dimension of the art practices, the mountain spirit sanctifies all art and song independent from any hierarchy of aesthetic forms. More importantly, the sacred and the real are mutually imbricated, which in the view of Tim Dean, suggests that "the sacred is not metaphysical but materially present in the physical world" (61). That is to say, it would be a pointless attempt to transcend the material in search of the spiritual. Snyder tends to adopt an antidualistic perspective in accordance with the Zen Buddhist philosophy, who has noticed that the dualism of nature and art is also an illusion.

Part Three: Close Reading with Bakhtin

Chapter 6: Revisiting "Cold Mountain Poems"

6.1 Sympathetic Co-experiencing

Snyder's translation of the Chinese Buddhist monk Han-shan's idiosyncratic poetry "Cold Mountain Poems" first appeared in the magazine *Evergreen Review* in 1958. By that time, there was no English translation of Han-shan's poetry other than Arthur Waley's "27 Poems by Han-shan", which was printed in the 1954 issue of *Encounter*. Snyder's version was followed by a prolific series of different translations which included Burton Watson's *Cold Mountain: 100 Poems by the T'ang Poet Han-shan* (1962), Jim Hardesty and Arthur Tobias's *The View from Cold Mountain: Translations from the Chinese of Han Shan* (1976), Hervé Collet and Cheng Wing Fan's *Han Shan: 108 poèmes* (1985), and Peter Hobson's *Poems of Hanshan* (2003). The complete translation of Han-shan's surviving poems include Robert G. Henricks's *The Poetry of Han-shan: A Complete, Annotated Translation of Cold Mountain* (1990), and Red Pine's *The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain* (2000). Among them, Snyder's "Cold Mountain Poems" appears to be one of the most influential versions: they were first anthologized in Cyril Birch's *Anthology of Chinese Literature* (1965) as well as in David Damrosch and David Pike's *The Longman Anthology of World Literature* (2009). In the last fifty years, Han-shan has been widely read and has become an icon for counter-culture youth (Chung, "Han Shan, Dharma Bums, and Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain" 542). His style of writing that adapted in Snyder or other later translators' versions have also been imitated by a few American poets (Chung, "Han Shan, Dharma Bums, and Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain" 563). This special cross-cultural phenomenon across time and the Pacific Rim poses important questions about translating a radical form of cultural and literary otherness within the general discipline of world literature.

Han-shan, a Buddhist poet who lived in the Tang dynasty, around 627-650 AD, remains a mysterious figure in Chinese literary history.[19] Han-shan is not only a pen name, but also the name of a small mountain southeastern China where he lived allegedly (Chung, "Han Shan, Dharma Bums, and Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain" 541). His outlook is Taoist and Buddhist, and he has been known among Buddhists and Taoists since his collections have been published in Tang Dynasty. The poems of Han-shan remained out of the classical Chinese canon, however, mainly because he uses a type of language which is rough and colloquial, far from refinement, and the content of many of his poems are about popular Buddhist ideas (Chung, "Han Shan, Dharma Bums, and Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain" 547). Nevertheless, more than twelve hundred years later, this Chinese recluse poet who loved mountains appealed strongly to Snyder, who discovered Han-shan when he took a graduate seminar course on classical Chinese poetry taught by Chen Shih Hsiang at the University of California, Berkeley (Suiter 161). The rich mountain experiences in Han-shan's poetry enhanced Snyder's sense for the scene. In the unpublished preface to "Cold Mountain Poems," Snyder writes, "the purely physical side of this intensity—the constant imagery of cold, height, harshness, isolation, mountains—is available to anyone today: I have spent much time in high mountains, and feel at home in the land of Han Shan" (Leed 179).

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[19] A traditional belief is to historically consider Han-shan as a real man. The scholar Hu Shi dates him ca. 700-780. See Jacob Leed "Gary Snyder: An Unpublished Preface", p.180.

In his early essay "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity", Bakhtin points out that the aesthetic activity is rooted in the relation between the self (the author) and the other (the hero). The discussions of this relation have been seen scattered throughout Bakhtin's career. In his late fragments from the 1970s, Bakhtin claims that "I hear voices in everything and dialogic relations among them" (Bakhtin, "Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences" 169). In other words, what is essential in dialogism is that there is no utterance without relation to other utterances. For Bakhtin, a literary work is a site for the dialogic interaction of multiple voices. "Dialogue" here does not only refer to the ordinary verbal interaction between two individuals but the "open-endedness" of the world in a tension-filled environment:

> I cannot manage without another, I cannot become myself without another; I must find myself in another by finding another in myself (in mutual reflection and mutual acceptance). Justification cannot be *self*-justification, recognition cannot be *self*-recognition. I receive my name from others, and it exists for others (self-nomination is imposture). Even love toward one's own self is impossible. (Bakhtin, "Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book" 287-88)

In Snyder's description, Han-shan was "a mountain madman in an old Chinese line of ragged hermits" (Snyder, *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems* 35). This is probably different from the Han-shan in real history, whose thoughts are more integrated like most literati in classical China, who never roamed around as "bum", based on the information that one can gather (Chung, "Han Shan, Dharma Bums, and Charles Frazier's Cold Mountain" 549). Although in contrast, the fundamental ideas and levels of meaning in the original work are conveyed with a particular sense of lucidity in Snyder's remolding of the American Han-shan. A certain dialogic relation does exist in the encounter between Han-shan and Snyder. The negotiation of differences in Snyder translation seems to echo Walter Benjamin's claim that the translation and the "original" text that are "recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are parts of a vessel" (Benjamin 81). To understand the success of the reception of Snyder's translation in the United States, apart from other social and cultural background, it is first necessary to recognize that Snyder and Han-shan share similarities and a kind of spiritual affinity, as Snyder himself acknowledges:

> I was able to do fresh, accurate translations of Han-shan because I was able to envision Han-shan's world, because I had much experience in the mountains and there are many images in Han-shan which are direct images of mountain scenery and mountain terrain and mountain weather that if a person had not felt those himself physically, he would not be able to get the same feel into the translation—it would be more abstract. I think that was part of the success of those translations—a meeting of sensations. (quoted in Chung, "Whose Mountain is This? Gary Snyder's Translation of Han Shan" 94)

This sympathetic co-experience, in Bakhtin's observation, is "a fundamentally and essentially new valuation, a utilization of my own architectonic exposition in being outside another's inner life" ("Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity", 103). We can only be outside of other's experience rather than our own experience, but boundaries are still passable. Bakhtin claims that aesthetic activity proper begins at the point when we *return* into ourselves, "when we *return* to our own place outside the suffering person, and start to form and consummate the material we derived from projecting ourselves into the other and experiencing him from within himself" (Bakhtin, "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity" 26). With a sympathetic co-experience, Snyder enriches his literary ontology to enter Han-shan's world and make it re-presented. To live means to participate in dialogue. In dialogue, a person participates wholly and throughout life, and one can invest the "entire self in discourse and this discourse enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium" (Bakhtin, "Toward a Reworking of the Dostoevsky Book" 193). This self/other relationship embedded in the interaction of Snyder and Han-shan does not exist in a vacuum but in historically and socially grounded languages, which depend on real individuals known as authors, and the ties between writing and the world.

6.2 Visualizing Cold Mountain

In a letter to his friend, the linguist Dell Hymes in 1976, Snyder explained his method of translation as follows:

> I get the verbal meaning into mind as clearly as I can, but then make an enormous effort of visualization, to "see" what the poem says, nonlinguistically, like a movie in my mind, and to feel it. If I can do this then I write the scene down in English. It is not a translation of the words, it is the same poem in a different language, allowing for the peculiar distortions of my own vision—but keeping it straight as possible. If I can do this to a poem the translation is uniformly successful, and is generally well received by scholars and critics. If I can't do this, I can still translate the words, and it may be well received, but it doesn't feel like I should. (Snyder, *The Real Work* 178)

As Yue Daiyun (267) points out, the Western poetics tends to stress substantial analysis, using linguistic semiotics for conceptual accuracy and clear reasoning, while the Chinese poetics gives prominence to a type of nonverbal sense of meaning that goes beyond words, with a focus on analogous perception and sudden apprehension.[20] Chinese relies heavily on visual elements, and its poetic images are built upon concise phrases. Chinese poetry, hence, challenges the translator to provide enough syntax to connect the characters.

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[20] As discussed in the earier chapter, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have conditioned and informed as the three "teachings" through Chinese history. Yue Daiyun notes that more than a century before Aristotle, Confucius had offered a wide range of poetics concepts and defined the meaning of literature by emphasizing its relationship with ethics and society. On the other hand, the Daoist spirit of "dilution and letting things take their own course" is combined with the Buddhist doctrines of "emergence from nothingness and solitude", which together form an important source of traditional Chinese poetics. People's comprehension of the space is often expressed in the "super-linguistic imagery" of the poem, as Yue notices, the unique Chinese poetic milieu "took the interconnectedness between heaven and man as well as communion with nature as its loftiest state, and the symbolic space created by language, and at the same time transcending language itself, as the focus of its research" (267). For more discussion, see Yue Daiyun "The Question of Discourse in the Dialog Between Chinese and Western Poetics" in *China and the West at the Crossroad: Essays on Comparative Literature and Culture*, p. 265-274.

Most of Han-shan's poems consist of eight lines, while each line contains five characters. If those characters are literally translated into English, it would often read as a series of nouns. Accordingly, Snyder's translation carries strong and clear visual elements that offer his readers twenty-four mental snapshots of Cold Mountain. Snyder's method stands out in the following comparison with Bill Porter (under his pen name Red Pine)'s version:

可笑寒山道，而无车马踪。
联溪难记曲，迭嶂不知重。
泣露千般草，吟风一样松。
此时迷径处，形问影何从。

Snyder: Poem 1

The path[21] to Han-shan's place is laughable,
A path, but no sign of cart or horse.
Converging gorges—hard to trace their twists
Jumbled cliffs—unbelievably rugged.
A thousand grasses bend with dew,
A hill of pines hums in the wind.
And now I've lost the shortcut home,
Body asking shadow, how do you keep up? (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 39)

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[21] The italics here and hereafter in the poems are mine for emphasis.

Pine: Poem 3

The Cold Mountain Road is strange
no tracks of cart or horse
hard to recall which merging stream
or tell which piled-up ridge
a myriad plants weep with dew
the pines all sigh the same
here where the trail disappears
form asks shadow where to (37)

In this opening poem, Snyder starts every sentence in the first six lines by presenting his readers with a series of accurate and neat images: “a path”, “converging gorges”, “jumbled cliffs”, “a thousand grasses bend with dew” and “a hill of pines”. The final two lines move from concrete descriptions of nature to inner reflections, indicating the connection between nature and abstract concepts. By comparison, Pine pays more attention to the rhythm but softens the images. While in the original Chinese the third to the sixth lines start with nouns (i.e. images), Pine moves a few nouns (“merging stream”, “piled-up ridge”) to the end of the sentences. Pine also adds detailed translation notes for most of the 307 poems in his complete translations of Han-shan’s surviving poems. For Poem 3, he writes a note of 182 words that offers background information about his traveling experiences in the area where

Han-shan used to live and explains how the two references are indebted to another ancient Chinese poet, Tao Yuan-ming. Different from Snyder's "visualizing" method and literal rendering of the Chinese syntax, Pine adopts the translation strategy that following a regular unidirectional linguistic model to move the messages from Chinese to English.

In his 1923 essay "The Task of the Translator", Walter Benjamin puts forward the remarkable concept of "pure language", which can be achieved through "literal rendering":

> A real translation is transparent; it does not cover the original, does not block its light, but allows the pure language, as though reinforced by its own medium, to shine upon the original all the more fully. This may be achieved, above all, by a literal rendering of the syntax which proves words rather than sentences to be the primary element of the translator. (81)

As mentioned earlier, the strength of Chinese poetry lies in the fact that it illuminates "vivid shorthand actions and processes in nature" (Olsen 28). In the above example, Snyder's emphasis on the visual is characterized by the Poundian idea of images, which stresses simplicity and clarity of expression in the symbolic representation of images. Compared with Pine's version, it is a more literal rendering that stresses words rather than sentences. In the meanwhile, it is "transparent" in a readable way without grammatical oddities that Benjamin has made a case for. The economy, or elegance shown in Snyder's translation is not only a feature of classical Chinese, but has almost always been regarded as a mark of superior literary style in English too.

On the other hand, Snyder's experiences as a regular mountain-dweller and his ecological mindset make the visualizing strategy achievable. From the perspective of Bakhtin, translation is the product of a dialogic triangulation between the source text, the translator, and the target text audience (Kumar and Malshe 116). The shaping and objectifying of the other's emotional content, in Bakhtin's idea, is accomplished through the intentional and consistent use of the "surplus of vision", which means "a visual advantage I possess in relation to the other by virtue of my external position in the process of empathizing" (Bakhtin, "Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity" 12). Snyder refers what he has experienced to Han-shan as a necessary condition for a productive projection in Han-shan's world. This surplus of vision allows him to center Han-shan as the other and leaves space open for both aesthetical and ethical choices. The surplus of spatio-temporal objectivity is necessitated by its externality. With his ecological mindset, Snyder keeps a distance from the mainstream American culture. In this manner, the visualizing process in his translation becomes possible. In Bakhtin's idea, only with the outside perspective can one see "the clear blue sky against whose background their suffering external image takes on meaning" ("Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity", 53). Given that Snyder understands Han-shan's words in a dynamic process with his "surplus of vision," the visualization frees him from temporal and spatial constraints. As he recognized in an unpublished preface to "Cold Mountain Poems", this strategy allows him to "make an intellectual and imaginative jump into the mind and world of the poet" (Leed 179). By actively entering into Han-shan's world, new understanding comes into existence. Through the dynamic conception of images with the visualizing strategy and the literal rendering of the Chinese syntax, Snyder shows the possibility of approaching an intellectual and emotional complex in his historical encounter with Han-shan.

6.3 “Against the Enclosure in a Text”: Translation as Rewriting

Having discussed Snyder’s visualizing strategy and how it makes the “jump” of meaning possible, this section explores the issue of “translation” and intertextuaity, arguing Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” is a type of rewriting that rejects the enclosure of meaning. Chapman argues that “all texts, not just those usually called ‘translations’, are involved in a continuous process of translation. Therefore, “‘afterlife’ names a condition of textuality as such” (6). In a similar vein, Bakhtin believes that a text contains no absolute, fixed meaning, and his critical strategy deals with “rescuing” a given text from the sedimented dominant meaning. It challenges ideological closure by opening up the text to an abundance of different reading that “strives to expose and develop all the semantic possibilities embedded within a given point of view” (Bakhtin, “The Hero, and the Position of the Author with Regard to the Hero, in Dostoevsky’s Art” 69). In Bakhtin’s late notes under the title “Towards a Methodology for the Human Sciences”, he claims that he is “against enclosure in a text” (169). Bakhtin regards dialogic texts as being always contemporary and semantically infinite, which are open to new discourses, new social circumstances and contexts.

Out of her study of Bakhtin, the literary critic Julia Kristeva proposes a more radical version of “intertextuality”: “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. Kristeva sees any text as inevitably related to other texts in a matrix of plural and provisional meaning, and the notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity (“Word, Dialogue and Novel”, 37). The notion of any subjectivity is dissolved, as Kristeva claims, the one who writes is the same as the one who reads. Since one’s interlocutor is a text, one is no more than a text reading itself as it rewrites itself (“Word, Dialogue and Novel”, 56-57). Playing with the paradoxes, Kristeva makes writing become multiple in its very constitution.

Bakhtin tends to see a text as a part of the broader social, cultural, and historical textuality, while Kristeva views a text as independent of historical location. Nevertheless, for both of them, “translated text” is constantly being rewritten. André Lefevere recognizes that translation is the most obviously recognizable type of rewriting: “it is potentially the most influential because it is able to project the image of an author and/or those works beyond the boundaries of their culture of origin” (Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and The Manipulation of Literary Fame* 9). Snyder’s translation becomes such a property of negotiation and rewriting. For example, in Poem 2:

重岩我卜居，鸟道绝人迹。
庭际何所有，白云抱幽石。
住兹凡几年，屡见春冬易。
寄语钟鼎家，虚名定无益。

In a tangle of cliffs I chose a place—
Bird-paths, but no trails for men.
What's beyond the yard?
White clouds clinging to vague rocks.
Now I've lived here—how many years—
Again and again, spring and winter pass.
Go tell families with silverware and cars
"what's the use of all that noise and money?" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 40)

Red Pine: Poem 1
Towering cliffs were the home I chose
bird trails beyond human tracks
what does my yard contain
white clouds clinging to dark rocks
every year I've lived here
I've seen the seasons change
all you owners of tripods and bells
what good are empty names (37)

Snyder's last two lines are bold adaptations from the original, considering Han-shan lived in an age without cars. In his letter to Herb Fackler, Snyder explains that in his accurate line-for-line translations, "there are a few substitutions, i.e. 'silverware and cars' for equivalent but culture-bound symbols of affluence in the T'ang dynasty" (Leed 177). He also mentioned the 'colloquial' tone is justified by the fact that Han-shan is writing in the colloquial of his own period, with a rough and slangy tone in spots" (Leed 177). Comparing with Pine's choice of words which follow the original, Snyder's spontaneous alternative version conveys his understanding of the Buddhist ideas through Han-shan's poem in the contemporary context. More significantly, his translation turns out to be a direct attack on American consumerism in the 1950s. Here, Snyder seemes to undertake the task of a poet, rather than the task of a translator, who constructs the last two lines in his immersion in the movement of language, instead of the fixed language of the original poem in Chinese. In Octavio Paz's understanding on translating poetry, this kind of creative reconstruction process "is dismantling the elements of the texts, freeing the signs into circulation, then returning them to language" (quoted in Bassnett, 66). Snyder is such a translator, who visualizes the original poem and composes another group of poems creatively. Using "silverware and cars" as culture-bound substitutions of wealth in the Tang dynasty, Snyder brings his translation close to home by setting Han-shan in the mountains of California rather than Han-shan's own Cold Mountain. Considering the other parts of this poem follow Han-shan's original lines, it is still a translation rather than another poem inspired by Han-shan. Providing a liberating way to look at translating, it answers the vexed question of whether a translation is an inferior copy of the original.

The example of “silverware and cars” demonstrates how Snyder has engaged the social, historical context in his translation. In the preface to “Cold Mountain Poems”, Snyder invites his readers to imagine Han-shan and his sidekick Shih-de in a contemporary American setting: “they became Immortals and sometimes run onto them today in the skidrows, orchards, hobo jungles, and logging camps of America” (Snyder, Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems 35). These “immortals” are like Kerouac’s Dharma bums, or “marginalized figures, members of a sub- or counter-culture and representatives of an oppositional politics” in the words of Kern (236). They manage to transcend the limits of time and space and live vividly in Snyder’s American West Coast language. Bakhtin attempts to find a means of describing the continued life of writing in history through the “re-accentuation” within the historical process (Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” 421). A dialogue with an “other”, or with Han-shan in the case of Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” must convey information of some sort. If we check the term again, “dialogization” designates the condition of subjects as users of language who are involved in symbolic exchanges with other speakers (LaCapra 312). The textual process cannot be confined within the bindings of the book, rather, it has a powerful referential function in creating alternative realities with the world in which we live. In this account, Snyder’s translation of “Cold Mountain Poems” shows how the historical life of a classic becomes an uninterrupted process of social and ideological re-accentuation. Rather than a barrier, the historical distance between Han-shan and Snyder becomes an opportunity, offering a new space in which the unrealized possibilities of Han-shan’s words are made to speak.

Meanwhile, Snyder not only Americanizes Han-shan's voice, but also Americanizes the landscapes depicted in the poem. The landscape in "Cold Mountain Poems" is seen as a mixture of East and West, not merely due to Snyder's visualizing strategy but also attributed to his choice of words and direct colloquial West Coast American diction, which introduces American elements into the ostensible Chinese setting of the poems.

杳杳寒山道，落落冷涧滨。
啾啾常有鸟，寂寂更无人。
淅淅风吹面，纷纷雪积身。
朝朝不见日，岁岁不知春。

Snyder: Poem 9
Rough and dark - the Cold Mountain trail,
Sharp cobbles - the *icy* creek bank.
Yammering, chirping - always birds
Bleak, alone, not even a lone hiker.
Whip, whip - the wind *slaps my face*
Whirled and tumbled - snow piles on my back.
Morning after morning I don't see the sun
Year after year, not a sign of spring. (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 47)

Pine: Poem 35

The trail to Cold Mountain is *faint*

the banks of *Cold* Stream are a jungle

birds constantly chatter away

I hear no sound of people

gusts of wind *lash my face*

flurries of snow bury my body

day after day no sun

year after year no spring (59)

Han-shan's original mountain is rewritten with the mountain landscapes of the American West Coast in Snyder's English translation. For instance, the words that Snyder choose in Poem 9 are tougher and sharper than the original Chinese: "杳" in Chinese means dark, deep and far away, while Snyder translates it as "rough and dark"; "落落", which in Chinese describes a scene with many stones, becomes Snyder's "sharp cobbles"; "冷涧", the "cold creek", comes to be the colder "icy creek". "风吹面", with the literal meaning "wind blows the face", becomes "slap my face" in Snyder's exaggeration. "纷纷", as a depiction of heavy snow falling, turns out to be "whirled and tumbled" snow in Snyder's Cold Mountain. In other words, a few geological features described in Snyder's "Cold Mountain Poems" never existed in Han-shan's mountains.

Comparatively, Pine uses the words and phrases “faint”, “cold”, “lash my face” and “flurries of snow”, which are closer to the original text. This difference may stem from the fact that Snyder relates Cold Mountain to his own mountain experience and his attitudes towards nature and wilderness. He writes in *The Practice of the Wild* that:

> The wilderness pilgrim’s step-by-step breath-by-breath walk up a trail, into those snowfields, carrying all on the back, is so ancient a set of gestures as to bring a profound sense of body-mind joy. […] The point is to make intimate contact with the real world, real self. *Sacred* refers to that which helps take us (not only human beings) out of our little selves into the whole mountains-and-rivers mandala universe. Inspiration, exaltation, and insight do not end when one steps outside the doors of the church. The wilderness as a temple is only a beginning. (93-94)

The voice and landscape in Snyder’s translation is a mixture of Han-shan’s mindset and Snyder’s experience of the West Coast of America. In Kristeva’s use of Bakhtin to develop the notion of “intertextuality”, the production of meaning is the result of purely textual operations independent of historical location and leads to a peculiar notion of liberation against the singular meanings and certainties of bourgeois culture. In her essay “The Bounded Text”, Kristeva (36) writes of intertextuality as “a permutation of texts”, by which she means that “in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another”. As such, dialogic texts are always in a state of creativity and productiveness. They pose a threat to any unitary, authoritarian, and hierarchical conception of society, art, and life (Graham Allen 27). As a transcultural ecopoet, Snyder has never been limited to Han-shan's original texts. To understand his translation as dialogic texts, we have to take Snyder's ecopoetic vision into consideration. Snyder (*A Place in Space*, 174) holds the idea that "'wild' alludes to a process of self-organization that generates systems and organisms". For him, "nature's writing has the potential of becoming the most vital, radical, fluid, transgressive, pansexual, subductive, and morally challenging kind of the most terrible things of our time—the destruction of species and their habitats, the elimination of some living beings forever" (Snyder, *A Place in Space* 171). To some extent, Snyder's reading and rewriting of Han-shan are independent from historical background and become a literary system, where the absorption and transformation of Han-shan's words is seen as intertextual and self-organized at the same time, vital and organic with its full potential.

Kristeva's idea of intertexuality also reflects the common ground between post-structuralism and deep ecology. The American physicist, systems theorist and deep ecologist Fritjof Capra explains in The Tao of Physics that the world is "a complicated web of relations between the various parts of the whole" (Capra 71). In Campbell's interpretation, deep ecology and post-structuralism both criticize the traditional sense of a separate, independent, authoritative center of value or meaning: both substitute the idea of networks (Campbell 1996: 131). This idea of wholeness and interconnectedness echoes the Buddhist philosophy of interpenetration, which will be discussed in the following section. Snyder's rewriting of Han-shan's original texts is seen as conditioned by a postmodern sensitivity. By breaking historical distance and the frontier between art and land, Snyder's literary representations yielded new ways of seeing the world that we inhabit, and also the text, today.

6.4 Interpenetration: Impersonality and Snyder's Geopoetics

Yet in discussing Snyder's translation, which is sometimes a transparent mirroring of Han-shan's source text, for instance, by keeping the original Chinese syntax without verbs, while sometimes it is a complete rewriting (i.e. the "silverware and cars" example), in both cases, I am more interested, here, in understanding the aspect of Snyder's translation that involves what Bakhtin calls "outsideness", rather than in summarizing the suppositions about his language use as a translator. Seeing translation as a "dialogic" activity helps us to be aware of the tension and potential in Snyder's renderings of "Cold Mountain Poems". Rather than a secondary activity, translation is a process that involves "active understanding" of both intralingual and interlingual subtleties. The Bakhtinian notion of "outsideness" is significant for translation, since the creative understanding depends on "a translator's ability to situate the self in the position of 'the other' and then return to his or her initial position to fulfill the task" (Kumar and Malher 116). By comparison, "passive understanding" is monologic that allows only one singular perspective to exist. It makes translation impossible, "as it erases the difference between the self and the other" (Kumar and Malher 116). In Bakhtin's terms, "the word, directed toward its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group" ("Discourse in the Novel", 276). Bakhtin sees every cultural act as living essentially on the boundaries. The critical construction of his theory of dialogue provides a significant perspective for translation studies: translation requires a "live-entering" into the territory of the other.

Snyder has been engaged in defending the rights of the voiceless "others" throughout his literary career. In 1996, Snyder finally published his original poetry collection *Mountains and Rivers without End* in its entirety, the ambitious project that began in April 1956. This collection marks the culmination of Snyder's career as a poet and offers clues on comprehending Snyder's thoughts. Continuing the discussion of the previous chapter, the Snyderian art shown in his early work "Cold Mountain Poems" reaches a new level in the thirty-nine poems in the volume, in which the poet's singular voice is often missing but replaced by a kind of collective utterance. The poems in this collection call society's attention on how their ignorance has pushed other cultures, for instance, the Native Americans, to the margins and lost their voices. To some extent, Snyder's display of poetic impersonality is coherent with the modernist theory derived from Yeats, Eliot, Joyce, and Pound among others.

The poetic impersonality recalls T. S. Eliot's famous statement in his essay "Tradition and Individual Talent" that "poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality"("Tradition and the Individual Talent", 21). Emphasizing the consciousness of history, Eliot argues that poetry should be essentially “impersonal”, and a poet shall make “self-sacrifice” to a special awareness of the past and become a medium of expression. In other words, poetry turns into a form of “speaking through”. This cultural role of the modern poet, or the premodern shaman, is in accord with Snyder’s understanding of a poet’s role as a “spokesman”. Snyder (*The Real Work*, 57) sees T. S. Eliot as “a very elegant ritualist of key occidental myth-symbols with considerable grasp of what they were about”. He further expressed his opinion in an interview:

> The power of a great poem is not that we felt that person expressed himself well. We don’t think that. What we think is, “How deeply *I* am touched”. That’s our level of response. And so a great poet does not express his or her self, he expresses all of our selves. And to express all of ourselves, you have to go beyond your own self. Like *Dōgen*, the Zen master, said, “We study the self to forget the self. And when you forget the self, you become one with all things.” And that’s why poetry’s not self-expression in those small self terms. (Snyder, *The Real Work* 65)

The whispers of “the others” offer a structural principle and form certain dialogic relations in *Mountains and Rivers Without End.* Snyder explains how Chinese hand-scroll painting calls for responses in the note that he writes for the opening poem “Streams and Mountains Without End”: “the painting is not fully realized until several centuries of poems have been added” (Snyder, *Mountains and Rivers Without End* 161). In this way, texts mature over time with comments, replies and influences. Crossing boundaries is an attempt to see what the other reality is. In the collection, Snyder frames particular images and ideas together and makes it a book of responses from “the others”. With the poet’s identity becoming subordinated and opening to the realm of otherness, the poetic impersonality has shown a different view and tendency of literature.

It is noticeable that in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, there are many cases that the poet’s singular voice is missing but replaced by a kind of collective utterances. Speaking of the creation of *Mountains and Rivers Without End* in the 1973 “Craft Interview”, Snyder says “there’s a lot of still relatively intractable material that I’m wrestling with, trying to punch it all up and drive it into the corral, and it takes time, because they keep sneaking back…” (*The Real Work*, 43). Shortly after that, in another interview with *New York Quarterly*, Snyder again admits *Mountains and Rivers Without End* is a rather complex project, which he hasn’t entirely visualized it, and not even trying to, since he assumes when he gets into the last lap of it, the work will eventually come clear (*The Real Work*, 50). Indeed, poems in this collection were showing up at the rate of about one a year, while at the same time Snyder was writing other poems in a more lyrical mode (*Mountains and Rivers Without End,* 156).

The poems in *Mountains and Rivers Without End* are autobiographical and intimate, yet they appear less personal. Drawing the conclusion of Tim Dean’s research, becoming a “U.S. subject” necessarily entails denying the history of the landscape and its expropriation from the Native Americans. This unconsciousness of “wishing not to know” leads to a commitment to the ignorance concerning ones' relationship with the land. Following this negative motivation, nature and other civilizations tend to be pushed to the marginal area and lose their voices. In this circumstance, poetry, significantly, has always got involved gaining access to the realm of otherness powerfully. The Mexican poet Octavo Paz used to describe this strange phenomenon:

> All poets in the moment, long or short, of poetry, if they are really poets, hear the other voice. It is their own, someone else's, no one else's, no one's, and everyone's. Nothing distinguished a poet from other men and women but those moments—rare yet frequent—in which, being themselves, they are other. (191)

This "unconsciousness in the discourse of the Other" shows as a transindividual dynamic in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*. An example could be the prose-poem "The Elwha River" in Section I, which is based on a dream Snyder had on 21 December 1958. In the dream, Snyder is a pregnant girl, waiting for her boyfriend by the roadside of Elwha River. He does not show up, and the girl goes to school and writes an essay assignment on "What I Just Did", in which she describes she was waiting by the river, but "the real river" is different from the river that she depicts in the essay. Then, Snyder's voice appears:

> As I write this now I must remind myself that there is another Elwha, the actual Olympic peninsula river, which is not the river I took pains to recollect as real in the

> dream. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 32)

The multiple distortions of the river are reflected in the girl's varied consciousness, which is a product of Snyder's subconscious. It relates to the symbolism of "multiple mirrors", which is another important metaphor in Huayan Buddhism. In Snyder's explanation:

> "Double mirror waver" is a structure point. Mutually reflected mirrors. Like, you see yourself many times reflected in a barber's shop. […] It's a key image in *Avatamsaka* [Hua-yen] philosophy, Buddhist interdependence philosophy. Multiple reflections in multiple mirrors, that's what the universe is like. (Snyder, "Interview" with Ekbert Faas 135)

This symbolism is also found in the 1961 poem "Bubbs Creek Haircut", which follows "The Elwha River". The poem opens with the scene that Snyder is having a haircut in a Barber-shop in San Francisco in preparation for his mountain trip to Sierras. The poem starts with the description of the barber-shop's environment:

> High ceilinged and the double mirrors, the
>   calendar a splendid alpine scene—scab barber—
> in a stained white barber gown, alone, sat down, old man

a summer fog gray San Fransicso day
I walked right in. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 33)

The splendid alpine scene showing in the calendar hanging in an urban barber-shop forms a juxtaposition of the mountain scene in an urban setting, an analogy reflected by "double mirrors". In the following part of the poem, Snyder keeps moving from the city and wild areas, which demonstrates the interpenetration between the two. According to the research of Anthony Hunt, in several poems in *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, "the city becomes interconnected with the wild". However, the poems were written before the mid-1980s incline "toward rejection" of the city, and the ones written after that period seem to "have come to terms with the city landscape" (Hunt, "Singing the Dyads" 19). By the end, Snyder closes the poem with someone else's voice, the barber saying: "Your Bubbs Creek haircut, boy". By letting others have the last word in the poem, this representative example shows the implicit ethical tendency of Snyder's poetic impersonality.

The transformative subject also appears in the ending poem of Section II, "The Hump-backed Flute Player". Located in the central place of *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, the poem portrays the walking flute-player who is known as Kokop'ele. The figure is widely found in ancient rock art in the Southwest and into Mexico. The poem shows a radical otherness, in which the speaker absorbs information across extensive space and time in an impersonal, shamanistic mode. In the fourth part Snyder writes:

Ghost bison, ghost bears, ghost bighorns, ghost lynx, ghost
pronghorns, ghost panthers, ghost marmots, ghost owls: swirling
and gathering, sweeping down,

Then the white man will be gone.
butterflies on slopes of grass and aspen—
thunderheads the deep blue of Krishna
rise on rainbows
and falling shining rain
each drop—
tiny people gliding slanting down:
        a little buddha seated in each pearl —
and join the million waving grass-seed-buddhas
on the ground. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 80–81)

Summoning the ghosts of native and the spirits of the dead, Snyder calls on the "voices" other than his own. With a certain ongoing process, "Then the white man will be gone". Snyder adds a note for this: "'White man' here is not a racial designation, but a name for a certain set of mind. When we all become born-again natives of Turtle Island, then the 'white man' will be gone" (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 161). It signifies a different mental state which Snyder aspires to transform in his poetry. According to Snyder:

> In Canyon de Chelley on the north wall up by a cave is the hump-backed flute player lying on his back, playing his flute. Across the flat sandy canyon wash, wading a stream and breaking through the ice, on the south wall, the pecked-out pictures of some mountain sheep with curling horns. They stood in the icy shadow of the south wall two hundred feet away; I sat with my shirt off in the sun facing south, with the hump-backed flute player just above my head. They whispered. I whispered. Back and forth across the canyon, clearly heard. (*Mountains and Rivers Without End*, 80)

As Tim Dean points out, the speaker whispering "[b]ack and forth across the canyon" forms a model of the structure of *Mountains and Rivers Without End* as a whole, comprising "a complex set of calls and responses between different voices, cultures, and nonhuman beings" (58). Also, by summoning to be a poet, the flute-player gains a symbolic power. Moreover, in this poem there are tensions created by the Buddhist images from time to time, for example "a little Buddha seated in each pearl", "When we all become born-again natives of Turtle Island", however, other than Buddhism, this poem implied shamanism, an alternative religious framework that Snyder has been experimenting since the early 1950s for grasping the poetic impersonality in Snyder's spiritual and aesthetic commitment. Along with history, the shamans conduct religious practices to heal the individuals or the community through performative utterances and ritualized song. To gain the healing power of the song, the shaman has to become a host for the parasitical spirit of otherness to possess him or her.

T. S. Eliot emphasizes the consciousness of history for poetry writing and understanding, who argues that poetry should be essentially “impersonal”, and a poet should be “self-sacrifice” to a special awareness of the past and become a medium of expression. Therefore, true art is a greater ability to synthesize and combine, which is an ability comes from comprehensive knowledge other than personal life. Criticizing the poetic originality, Eliot asserts that “we shall often find that not only the best, but the most individual parts of [the poet’s] work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously” (“Tradition and the Individual Talent”, 152). Ralph Waldo Emerson, in a similar vein, perceived the poet’s representative function in his mid-nineteenth century idealist cultural-political sense:

> He stands among partial men for the complete man, and apprises not of his wealth, but of the commonwealth… The poet is the person in whom these powers are in balance, the man without impediment, who sees and handles that which others dream of, traverses the whole scale of experience, and is representative of man, in virtue of being the largest power to receive and to impart. (448)

The idea of the poet represents all of us seems to be questionable, which might lead to the issue of cultural imperialism. However, it seems not to be a problem in Snyder’s case. Geary Hobson defends him as follows:

> The poems contain great vitality and are, I believe, sincere efforts on Snyder's behalf to incorporate an essential part of American Indian philosophy into his work. Importantly, nowhere does Snyder refer to himself as a "shaman." But, along came the bastard children of Snyder who began to imitate him, especially in the Shaman Songs section, and not being content with that, began to call themselves shamans—which, as I understand it, Snyder still refuses to do. (Hobson 105)

Concerning to the similar critiques, Tim Dean argues that it is a kind of ethnic essentialism: "if one were to adhere to the stricture of writing primarily from experience, all literature would be reduced to an autobiographical function, and nobody would be able to write authoritatively about temporally distant cultures" ("The Other's Voice", 490). Instead, Snyder employs the aesthetic impersonality to open himself to the realms of otherness. Pacific environmental ethics revolves around ideas of reverence, respect, and sustainability (Magrane et al. 5). Indigenous Pacific conceptions of geography, accordingly, teach us that earth is the sacred source of all life, and all being are interconnected in a complex kinship network, as Snyder's translation along with his poetry comes to demonstrate. In "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking", Walt Whitman writes that "a thousand warbling echoes have started to life within me, never to die" (139). The whispers and antiphonies offer a structural principle for *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, echoing "Cold Mountain Poems" with a dialogic outlook of Bahktin: the whole collection is like the "warbling echoes" in Whitman's words.

6.5 “Language is a Self-organizing Phenomenon”

A dialogue with an “other”, or with Han-shan in the case of Snyder’s “Cold Mountain Poems” must convey information of some sort. In Bakhtin’s idea, “the word, directed toward its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgments and accents, weaves in an out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group” (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 276). “Heteroglossia” refers to the objective condition of language marked by a plurality of perspectives and value-laden, ideological practices that are in challenging contact with one another (LaCapra 312). The dialogized heteroglossia in “Cold Mountain Poems” creates the space for critical and self-critical distance in language use, because “it disrupts myth in the sense of an absolute fusion or bonding of a use of words to a concrete ideological meaning” (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 369).

Internal dialogization introduces otherness or alterity into the self. However, Bakhtin never authorize the free rewriting of the discourses of the past in terms of present interests. For Snyder, language becomes a site that contesting and contested discourse of different groups and periods of history engage one another as sociolinguistic forces. Both translation and poetry writing can be a highly existential process, while the dimension of life sometimes is not external of the texts. As it is mentioned earlier, the multiple references actively address the issue of how the text resists the “closure” of definitive interpretation. Snyder’s poetic language turns out to be an ecosystem by itself. In other words, Snyder enables a re-articulation of "context" inside texts, while somehow he energizes his use of language in "Cold Mountain Poems".

The grammatical strategies in "Cold Mountain Poems" indicate the interlocutor's shift of attention to visionary experience. The meditative mind perceives itself. This rejection of dualities directs to the conundrums of difference and sameness. The layers of meaning suggested in Snyder's "real work" break the barriers between self and environment, the West and the East, and thus clear the mind. As a poet, Snyder contributed to return poetry to life. In the belief that poetry and life are interwoven, Snyder comments the value and function of poetry to society as follows:

> The value and function of poetry can be said in very few words. One side of it is *in-time*, the other is *out of time*. The in-time side of it is to tune us in to *mother* nature and *human* nature so that we live in *time*, in our societies in a way and on a path in which all things can come to fruition equally and together in harmony. A path of beauty. And the out-of-time function of poetry is to return us to our own true original nature at this instant forever… and so poetry is our life. It's not that poetry has an effect on it, or a function in it or a value for it. It is our life as much as eating and speaking is our life. (T*he Real Work*, 73)

In *Toward a Philosophical of the Act* (1993), Bakhtin mediates on the implications of the disjuncture between immediate experience and a posteriori symbolic representations of this experience. In Michael Holquist's interpretation, Bakhtin's primary interest at that formative stage in his intellectual development was to "get back to the naked immediacy of experience as it is felt from within the utmost particularity of a specific life, the molten lava of events as they happen" (Holquist, "Foreword" x). Life must be understood as a continuous series of singular acts, and each act, or "event", must be grasped on its own terms, as an "experiential and sensuous given" (*Toward a Philosophical of the Act*, 4). Clearly, the abstract cognition is a significant facet of human life, but meanwhile, the limits of such formal rationalities must be acknowledged, as how Jurgen Habermas would put it, "theoretical reason would threaten to colonize and displace the centrality of everyday life" (Gardiner 47). The history of Western thought, as Bakhtin notices, has been marked periodically by perspectives that have rejected the validity of bodily, lived experience in favor of abstruse theoretical constructions—Platonism being the archetypal example. Bakhtin constantly stresses the dense particularity of lived experience, the presence of what Roland Barthes called the "grain of the voice", the trace of the flesh-and-blood personality that lies behind every utterance.

Dialogism comes with this ambivalent, sensuous materiality of human existence. While Snyder's beliefs in "the real work" and "eating each other" coincide with Bakhtin's concept of "carnival", which focuses on the traces of otherness in the most insignificant of utterances in everyday life. The carnival sense of the world "is opposed to that one-sided and gloomy official seriousness which is dogmatic and hostile to evolution and change, which seeks to absolutize a given condition of existence or a given social order" (*Characteristics of Genre and Plot Composition in Dostoevsky's Works*, 160). In Bakhtin's eyes, the primary "function" of literary expressions of the carnivalesque is being "to liberate from the prevailing point of view of the world" (*Rabelais and His World*, 34). As Michael Gardiner points out, "alterity" in the context of the carnivalesque turns out to be less a matter of the intersection of different visual field or verbal exchanges than the bodily intertwining of self and other. That includes the "other" of nature, as how Snyder's works are filled with, within what Merleau-Ponty calls the overarching "flesh of the world". According to "the encounter of man with the world, which takes place inside the open, biting, rending, chewing mouth, is one of the most ancient, and most important objects of human thoughts and imagery. Here man tastes the world, introduces it into his body, makes it a part of himself", argues Bakhtin, whereby the "limits between man and the world are erased" (*Rabelais and His World*, 281). These details are germane to geopoetics, which in Sarah de Leeuw's idea (7), poetry anchored in geography not only because poetry focuses on soil or dirt of the earth, but also because poetry writes peopled-places too: it demands a conversation about who is writing it or who is being written out. For this reason we shall bear in mind: geopoetics is not disembodied.

At the same time, we have to notice the influence of Zen to Snyder's literary rendering. The sophisticated relation between Zen and language exists since the beginning of Buddhism in the fifth century B.C. When Sakyamuni Buddha conveyed his dharma speech at Vulture's peak, he did not open his mouth. Among all the assembled listeners, Mahakasyapa smiled after a period of silence. On the high platform, Sakyamuni Buddha saw the smile and said he had transmitted his true dharma to Mahakasyapa. Then, Mahakasyapa became the first patriarch who inherited Buddha's teachings without written texts. In this manner, the dharma teachings handed down to bodhidharma, the twenty-eighth patriarch who came to China and established the first Chan School in China in the sixth century. "Words, words, words—fluttering drizzle and snow. / Silence, silence, silence—a roaring thunderbolt" (quoted in Johnson and Paulenich, 3) The sayings of Japanese Zen masters demonstrate Zen's principle of emphasizing the inexpressible inner experience rather than language and words.

Satori, in the definition of S. T. Suzuki, is "an experience which no amount of explanation or argument can make communicable to others unless the latter themselves had it previously" (92). This "ultimate fact of experience must not be enslaved by any artificial or schematic laws of thought" (55). In other words, "anything that has the semblance of an external authority is rejected by Zen" (44). Obviously, Snyder agrees with this principle of Zen, as he states in an interview:

> …because the universe is empty, and infinite, and eternal. Because of that, weeds are precious, mice are precious. And the other hearts of Buddhist experience is something that can't be talked about. Sometimes it can be hinted at or approached in some poems.
>
> It's an inner order of experience that is not available to language. Language has no

> words to talk about it. When you put it into words you lose it; so it's better not to talk about it.
>
> The true poem is walking that edge between what can be said and that which cannot be said can still be very exciting, but the farther it is from the razor's edge the less it has of the real magic. It can be very well done but the ones that make your hair stand on edge are the one that are right on the line. And then some of them fall too much in the realm of what can't be said. (*The Real Work*, 21)

Furthermore, Snyder perceives until that point, they fall out the realm of poetry and become meditation themes like koans, or magical incantations, or mantras. Readers might need to spend hundreds of hours to get the message out. Then, the experience becomes a special practice more profound than a reader usually gets from a normal poem. Snyder points out that *Haiku* has this quality, to some extent when "the words stop but the meaning goes on" (*The Real Work*, 22).

Even though Snyder notices the limits of language, still he argues that "the act of expressing clarifies your understanding of it" (Snyder, *Coyete Mind: An Interview with Gary Snyder* 166). In this light, Geng Jiyong argues that Snyder uses language with the concrete style of particulars, as he privileges "rocks and trees" over ideas or abstraction (87). With this privilege for orality over writing, for Snyder, the poem becomes "a kind of script: for the oral performance of the poet" (*Coyete Mind*, 168).

Under the minimal surface texture of Snyder's poetry lies the flow of poetic energy through an intellectual structure, which is coordinating with the features of Buddhist Modernism and ecopoetics. Except for the landmark collections *Riprap*, *Turtle Island*, and *Myths and Texts* that have been discussed earlier, Snyder's attempt is also shown in his other volumes alongside his poetic journey, marking different stages in his life. For example, *The Back Country* (1970) collection, with its "Far West" and "Far East" sections, contains the poems set in Western America, Kyoto and his trip to India in 1961-1962. Snyder draws the small "knots" in different geographical dimension, which turns out to be "flat, concrete surface of 'things', without bringing anything of imagination or intellect to bear on it".[22]

"Tiny energy" is an interesting topic explored in Snyder's 1986 collection *Left Out in the Rain: New Poems 1947-1985* is. It draws inspiration from Howard Odum's belief that the "information exchange" facilitated by human language can be seen as energy pathways:

> The transmission of information is an important part of any complex system. A plant manager makes his company respond on the basis of a stock market report. A cell makes its biochemical machinery respond on the basis of codes received from its genes. An ecosystem makes its power flows respond on the basis of its memory storage, some of which are biological and some of which may be physical or in libraries, in records, in rocks, or in wood structure. (H.T. Odum, *Environment, Power, and Society* 172)

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[22] Quoted in Scott McLean (1980, xvii.), from Statement of Snyder at the Berkeley Poetry Conference.

It offers Snyder a theoretical foundation for his ecopoetics. As he writes in his journal in 1972-1973 after reading Odum's statements, "Language as an energy system > poesy"; "A poem is alternative fuel for creative probes on the part of the society-network. / A poem is a net- - / a matrix- -" (Harmsworth 136). Later, in the "Paris Review" interview, when he replies Weiberger's question that if he believes language is more a part of nature than a part of culture, Snyder restates his idea that "language is, to a great extent, biological. And this is not a radical point of view" (*The Gary Snyder Reader*, 329). For Snyder, "language is a self-organizing phenomenon" (*The Gary Snyder Reader*, 329).

Snyder's concern has been, as Luis Ellicott Yglesias puts it, "archaic in the primal sense—a going into the deep past not to escape or to weep with loud lamentation, but to see whether with the help of the earth-lore that is 'all forgotten' it might be possible to open life to a more livable future" (26). The world view of the primitive man, relates to the "world, in its nakedness, which is fundamental for all of us—birth, love, death; the sheer fact of being alive" (*Earth House Hold*, 118). When the reverence and care to life are lost, apart from its rich bequests, one of the Western civilization's legacies, the destructive alienation from the "ground of its own being" starts to work (*Turtle Island*, 106). In the Afterword of the 2009 edition of *Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, Snyder says that he would have gone to do more Chinese poetry translation had he stayed with the academy; however, his feet led him toward the zendo. This makes it understandable that why he chose the idea of poetry of minimal surface texture, in Snyder's own words, it is a kind of poetry "with its complexities hidden at the bottom of the pool, under the bank, a dark old lurking, no fancy flavor is ancient" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 66). Snyder believes that what is "haunting" in those best of Scottish-English ballads and is at the heart of the Chinese *shi* (lyric) aesthetic. He also cited Tu Fu, that "the ideas of a poet should be noble and simple". On the other hand, Zen says, "unformed people delight in the gaudy, and in novelty. Cooked people delight in the ordinary" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 66). Regarding those poets who claim that their poems are composed to present the world through the prism of language, Snyder admits their project is worthy, but he also recognizes that "there is also the work of seeing the world *without* any prism of language, and to bring that seeing into language" (67). The latter, in his understanding, has been the direction of most Chinese and Japanese poetry.

Snyder shows his technique as a good craftsman of "riprapping" for constructing words in poetic structure. For instance, the poem "riprap" shows a specific rhythm. In Snyder's "Statement on Poetics" for Donald M. Allen's anthology *The New American Poetry: 1945-1960*, he explains as follows:

> I've just recently realized that the rhythm of my poems follows the rhythm of the physical work I'm doing and life I'm leading at any given time—which makes the music in my head which creates the line…"Riprap" is really a class of poems I wrote under the influence of the geology of the Sierra Nevada and the daily trail-crew work of picking up and placing granite stones in tight cobble patterns on hard slabs. "What are you doing?" I asked old Roy Marchbanks. —"Riprapping" he said. His selection

> of natural rocks was perfect – the result looked like dressed stone fitting to hair-edge cracks. Walking, climbing, placing with the hands. I tried writing poems of tough, simple, short words, with the complexity far beneath the surface texture. In part the line was influenced by the five-and-seven-character line Chinese poems I'd been reading, which work like sharp blows on the mind. (quoted in Donald Allen, *The New American Poetry* 36)

Seeing "words" like "rocks", Snyder lays down words in a breath-paced way. Like Han-shan, Snyder tends to use language in a natural and colloquial, yet extremely accurate and sharp manner. Snyder writes in one of his early works in *Riprap* that poems and people are like "lost ponies / with dragging saddles" in "an endless four-dimensional Game of Go" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems,* 32). This is a Buddhist perspective, while the "riprap of things" reveals and reassures the perfect interpenetration in the "reality realms". Through the hard labor, a word becomes "granite: ingrained / with torment linked hot" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 32). It achieves the Buddhist enlightenment on how the change happens in interpenetration: "all change, in thought / As well as things" (*Riprap and Cold Mountain Poems*, 32). The dialogized heteroglossia and the bodily intertwining of self and other permit the dynamics and vitality of language. Comes from a productive process in a perpetual state of flux, Snyder's poetic language becomes an ecosystem that is permeable and always open to questions.

6.6 Translation and a Thirdspace of Exchange

Snyder's interest in Buddhism led him to Han-shan. Snyder sees the aesthetics of Chinese poetry has been very much involved with Chan/Zen, while noticing that classical Chinese poetry offers human beings "a window into the nonhuman" (Snyder, *A Place in Space*, 92). This relates to the Buddhist doctrine of "non-self", which basically means that the permanent self, soul, or essence does not exist in living beings. Snyder once explained this point using the Buddhist language: "if a Bodhisattva [enlightened being] retains the thought of an ego, a person, a being, or a soul, he is no more a Bodhisattva" (*Earth House Hold*, 10). It somehow echoes Bakhtin's idea that "the word is never your own word, but always in part the word of another, for whom in turn the word is never their own" (Dentith 93). As Simon Dentith (93) observes, "if torn from the social location in which dialogue occurs, Bakhtin too can be made to sound as though we all speak in a hall of mirrors". Here, I suggest that this hall of mirrors is significantly associated with Snyder's engagement with the concept of "interpenetration" in Huayan Buddhism.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, Snyder is deeply drawn into the Huayan philosophy among different schools in Mahayana Buddhism. As a fundamental ancient doctrine of Huayan, interpenetration is related to the idea that "countless dharmas (all phenomena in the world) are representations of the wisdom of Buddha without exception" and "they exist in a state of mutual dependence, interfusion and balance without any contradiction or conflict" (Wei 189). Huayan philosophy sees the world as a vast interrelated network in which all objects and creatures are necessary and illuminated in empathetic resonance. A significant metaphor to illustrate the abstract theory, “Indra’s net”, first appeared in the third-century script of the Avatamsaka Sutra and was later developed by the Huayan School in the sixth and eighth centuries. It is a sign of the interrelationship among all beings, as Thomas Cleary explains, “the net of Indra is a net of jewels: not only does each jewel reflect all the other jewels but the reflections of all the jewels in each jewel also contain the reflections of all the other jewels, ad infinitum” (37). In other words, the “infinity of infinities” stands for the interidentification and interpenetration of all things.

The Buddhist hermeneutic tradition is different from western hermeneutics, however, it does share the fundamental temporal structure of the hermeneutic task. Reading, writing, and speaking as communicative deeds succeed by “presupposing a horizon capable of rendering determinate a set of essentially indeterminate signs” (Garfield 234). Jay L. Garfield also points out that “meaning” enters the knots of Indra’s net only from the infinite distance marked by each cord. The metaphors of the hall of mirrors and Indra’s net share intrinsic connections to Bakhtin’s notion of “heteroglossia”, which means the coexistence of different varieties in one single language and the crossing of “specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meaning and values” (Bakhtin, “Discourse in the Novel” 421). The hybrid utterances in *Mountains and Rivers Without End* demonstrate that language can reflect the varying ways of conceptualizing and experiencing the world, while in “Cold Mountain Poems”, Snyder has built a net where Han-shan’s voice is intermingled in one way or another with Snyder’s voice.

In his essay “The Problem of the Text”, Bakhtin identifies two poles of the text. The first pole consists of a language system: everything repeatable and reproducible. The second pole “inheres in the text itself, but is revealed only in a particular situation and in a chain of texts” (“The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences”, 105). This pole is realized by means of pure context, which is “linked with other text (unrepeatable) by special dialogic (and dialectical, when detached from the author) relations” (“The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences”, 105). The concepts of heteroglossia and dialogization enable a rearticulation of “context”. For Bakhtin, the study of literature is not only about language, but implies decontexualization of language and life. Dialogism comes with this ambivalent, sensuous materiality of human existence. Similarly, the metaphor of “Indra’s net” in Buddhist philosophy indicates that all beings are all emerging in this present moment. It points to the Buddha’s path. In the Mahayana tradition, all concrete things are impermanent. The human body is subject to birth and decay, while the attachment to self leads to suffering. Snydian poetics promises a novel way of conceptualising in a critical fashion by placing stress on the subtleties of human dialogue and the phenomenological “depth” of the self/other relation.

This study suggests Snyder’s translation as a dialogical text is able to act as a third party that is independent from the source culture and the target culture. In one of Bakhtin’s last essays, he announces a third participant into the concept of dialogue, the “superaddressee”, who is “a constitutive aspect of the whole utterance” (“The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences”, 126). Different from the utterance (the first party) and the addressee (the second party), the author of the utterance presupposes a higher superaddressee as the third party, whose "absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in a distant historical time" ("The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences", 126). Bakhtin describes this third participant as an ideal listener that exists in the mind of the speaker, who listens sympathetically and understands justly. Instead of hollowing out the very concept of dialogue, this third participant offers Bakhtin a way to avoid ethical relativism. Holquist notices that "if there is something like a God concept in Bakhtin, it is surely the superaddresee" ("Introduction", xviii). Yet, Bakhtin cautiously warns that this third party "is not any mystical or metaphysical being" ("The Problem of the Text in Linguistics, Philology, and the Human Sciences", 126). Bakhtin himself is against limiting the superaddressee to a strictly theological interpretation, but provides a list of other likely superaddressees (the people, the court of history, science, etc.). In Frank Farmer's interpretation (201), Bakhtin's third party is better considered as a rhetorical figure than a transcendental one. Although it is not an expression of an ideological belief, as Morson and Emerson (135-136) argue, this new player can be considered as a metalinguistic fact that embodies the principle of hope.

If "superaddressee" represents Bakhtin's unspoken awareness that invites us to think in which conditions the dialogue is shaped, this study involves a consideration of how "Cold Mountain Poems" becomes a translation with its autonomy, an ultimate other with a metaphysical ambiance. The way contexts are "always already" inside the texts of "Cold Mountain Poems" signals a dimension of language in translation studies. Like Bakhtin, Snyder rejects the formalist views of meaning as totally text-bound, and the vulgar Marxist view of meaning as the product of extratextual factors, but instead, considers meaning as an absolute potential in an absolute future. Meanwhile, linking Bakhtin and Buddhist thought together enables us to understand the most penetrating aspect of dialogization, alterity, and interconnectedness that is shown in Snyder's works. With the tension of resistance and affinity that is shown in "Cold Mountain Poems", Snyder has created a best possible "third space" for linguistic and cultural encounters, where Han-shan and Snyder both give a part of their utterances to express a proper lifestyle. In this contact zone, Snyder's poetic self is not isolated but constituted in the dialogue with "the other", whose identity is never completed but constantly in the process of creation.

As a transcultural eco-poet who subscribes to Buddhist philosophy, Snyder turns "Cold Mountain Poems" into a third space of exchange, a web of references, and a hall of mirrors within which one can see oneself reflected in others. Translation in a Bakhtinian sense, turns out to be an aesthetic event that implies the dialogic interaction of two autonomous consciousnesses. The discussion throws light on the pessimistic view which sees translation as a near-impossible task by considering it as a difficult yet still possible art. Robert Frost once remarked that "poetry is what gets lost in translation" (Undermeyer 18), however, in Snyder's case, poetry could be what gets created in translation. The dialogism in his poetry translation goes beyond the anthropologists' object of understanding an alien culture from within, but makes a new space come into existence.

Both Bakhtin and Snyder are morally and aesthetically allergic to monism.

Transculturalism demands us to see ourselves in the other and also recognize an otherness in ourselves. Snyder's encounter with Han-shan retains those moments of recognition and solidarity in their historically specific situations. In the development of the dialogue in "Cold Mountain Poems", there are boundless masses of forgotten contextual meaning, but at certain moments of the dialogue's subsequent development in translation, they are recalled and invigorated in renewed form. As Bakhtin writes in one of his last fragments, "nothing is absolutely dead: every meaning will have its homecoming festival" ("Toward a Methodology for the Human Sciences", 169-170).

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This study is innovative in reviewing the issue of translatability in the frameworks of dialogism and geopoectics. As how Mikhail Bakhtin continues to oscillate between phenomenologist and sociological concepts, in this interdisciplinary study, I have explored the expanded concept of text in Snyder's works and the ethical cosmological dimensions of worldliness. The elaboration of the social intellectual context provides access to an understanding of the canonization of Snyder's "Cold Mountain Poems", while the textual analysis through the lens of Dialogism promises the methodological sophistication and rigor in investigating the process of the transfer of meaning. Still, a few interesting topics have not been covered in this study, for example, the gender issue in understanding Snyder's poetry, or the rhythm of Snyder's translations, which can be reserved for future research.

In Johann Wolfgang Goethe's opinion, the goal of translation is "to achieve perfect identity with the original so that the one does not exist instead of the other but in the other's place" (61). Goethe calls this urbane, denationalized prose a "third type of text for which the taste of the masses had to be developed" (61). The translation of Han-shan's poetry overseas, in addressing the themes of the internationalization of culture and global translatability, becomes a phenomenon that opens up the vision of regarding "the other" as a source of poetic inspiration. Snyder goes out of the homogeneous, cultural-bound course of history, unlocks Han-shan's language and welcomes a new transcultural understanding of the symbolic relationship of Chinese texts with other cultures in a larger, worldly context.

This research also shows the potential for the application of Bakhtin's perspective in translation studies. Bakhtin's dialogic framework offers a conceptual base for the interpretation of different cultural phenomena and the "dialogic tension" in the self/other dynamics. Specifically, reading Bakhtin and the Buddhist philosophy of "interpenetration" together illuminates how Snyder has moved from the initial literary or aesthetic point of departure in translation to philosophical issues of ethics and alterity. In "Cold Mountain Poems", Han-shan and Snyder's voices sometimes are mixed together as kindred spirits: Han-shan becomes Snyder or vice-versa. The recognition of difference and affinity, the profound orientation towards the other characterize an ethical experience.

The conceptual shift, in turn, sensitizes the importance of socialcultural critique in a Bakhtian sense. With respect to the concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia, what animates Bakhtin's approach here is the intention to critique varied theoretical and aesthetic positions. Different from the traditional way of using dialogism for analyzing the multi-voiced quality of the novel, this research has experimentally adopted it in investigating the time-space referents contained in the voices in the original texts and the translation. Taking this position, a renewed space is created for poetry. As the postmodern spatial turn since the 1980s has come to demonstrate, this new space is an adherence to a sophisticated dialectical view of the modernity and its potential emancipatory qualities.

Westphal uses the term "real world" to stress how he views the "real" places being shaped by fictional textual representations, while in Snyder's idea, the creation of poetry is "the real work", which is "what we really do": "to make the world as real as it is, and to find ourselves as real as we are within it". In Snyder's explanation, "the real work" means to "take the struggle on without the least hope of doing any good. To check the destruction of the interesting and necessary diversity of life on the planet so that the dance can go on a little better for a little longer" (Snyder, *The Real Work* 81-82). Snyder dramatizes a clear attentive mind in his poetry, and the open-endedness of the texts produces introspection in understanding these poems. In this way, readers confront multiple interpretations as his or her self is observing and erasing each other.

Ezra Pound believes that Chinese poetry is highly translatable, because he sees the Chinese language is based on images and therefore it is capable of adjusting itself in a precise and dynamic way. Pound wants to make the original and the translation constitute a symbolic continuity. In other words, he intends to project a poetry in which the visible, phonic and semantic dimensions of a language converge in a complex ideogram that will offer the world with meaning. The symbolic image of light is one of Pound's favorite metaphors. In *Canto* CXVI, this epiphanic light was returned as a major metaphor for his entire life. Coming out of his individual projections of Chinese poetry, the polished poems of Pound have fallen out of the range of translation. Pound might have pushed the "blossoms of the apricot" from the East to the West", but in his "modern ethnography of the Far East" (Huang Yunte 92), his own voice is made loud and strong but the Chinese culture remains quiet and absent.

The literary field is a "force-field" in Bourdieu's sense, while in the case of Snyder, translation is not merely a practice that confirms the norms through the deliberate use of specific strategies, but an effect of his special *habitus* that is acquired in the target literary field. As a translator, Snyder has re-established the relation of forces and benefited from the symbolic capital invested in the original work. Taking a different stance from Ezra Pound, Snyder as a precocious author has been trying to "uncover the inner structure and actual boundaries of the mind" since his early career, what he called as "the real work of modern man" (*Earth House Hold*, 127). This is partly a response to the anthropologist Stanley Diamond's statement about the "sickness of civilization consists…in its failure to incorporate (and only then) to move beyond the limits of the primitive" (129). Passing from literary and social modes to the natural world, Snyder approaches a realm that goes beyond the perception from the literary world.

There is also a Western attitude, in which the Eastern culture is ostensibly celebrated. However, one should realize the Eastern religious reverent attitude to nature does not always lead to ecologically responsible action. Snyder does manage to avoid simplifying and distorting the Eastern culture. In *Myths & Texts*, he writes about the logging of the Chinese ancient forest; in *Turtle Island*, he condemns Japan's whale hunting activity. Snyder incorporates the Western traditions like the transcendentalist emphasis on direct religious experience, the universal religion and scientific ecology into his Buddhist ecological vision (Harmsworth 251), thus providing an antidote to dualism in his synthesis of Eastern and Western traditions.

The relation between the world and human existence is a recurrent theme in Snyder's poetry. Over decades, Snyder's interpretation of Dogen's Buddha nature has been according with the Mahayana tradition of anti-dualism. The metaphysical truth of impermanence offers solution to the problem of birth and time. Since all beings are impermanent, one is not "struck" permanently in a state of suffering. The very impermanence of things makes Buddhahood possible. As Kevin Schilbrack remarks, the Buddha-nature is also "a metaphysical characteristic of reality as such, always and everywhere present" (45). Metaphysics offers the key to the question of why should one be selfless and nonattached. The answer is because everything is impermanent thus the attachment to self is inauthentic. Meanwhile, there is a resistance implied as the second level of meaning in "the real work". Snyder rejects the human tendency to abstract experience over the concrete process that creates alternative ways of experiencing nature. Thereby, he dismisses the substitution of culture for nature, and he calls civilization "a lack of faith, human laziness, a willingness to accept the perceptions and decisions of others in place of your own" (*Earth House Hold*, 126).

Snyder's countercultural stance in his writing and his life style represents a radical critique of western civilization. In his revolutionary effort, Snyder sees Karl Marx as the source of a compelling theoretical model and of "useful insights" (Snyder and Wood 201). He also admits that "it's an easy step from the dialectic of Marx and Hegel to an interest in the dialectic of early Taoism" (*Earth House Hold*, 114). However, as Allen Johnson points out, since Marxism develops new abstractions instead of creating an unabstracted consciousness in which political ends become secondary to environmental needs (81), the industrialized state in the Marxism's ideal is not efficacious for Snyder, who hopes to "check the destruction of the interesting and necessary diversity of life on the planet" (*The Old Ways*, 20-21). Snyder's "real work" thus is a movement toward an alignment of human "norms of behavior and ethical rules” with the heavenly manifestation of reality, of the general state of affairs, the Dharmic “cosmic law” (Allen Johnson 82). The radical effort with its idealism seems to be Snyder’s vehicle for spiritual and political liberation.

Snyder’s lifetime fashion is not only seen in his early and capstone poems, but also in his recent works. His 2004 poetry collection *Danger on the Peaks* contains a section entitled “Daily Life” that proves how Snyder extends this range by embracing mundane human activity with the moments of transcendence. In the final section “After Bamiyan”, the poet’s concern goes to the destruction of the World Trade Center and the giant stone Buddhas at Bamiyan. The collection has a personal cast about his family matters (his sister’s death, his wife’s illness, his own ageing), while there are also manifestations of human violence, suffering and the need for compassion. On the other side, Snyder’s juxtaposition of natural and urban scenes present varied viewpoints and resist simple dualism with a Buddhist sensibility that is often pronounced in his later works. The “human-centered view” is often replaced by the presence of the non-human, a bigger resilient reality of the natural world. For example, in the poem “Really the Real”, Snyder recollects a scene he saw while driving back nearby the Cosumnes River, when thousands of sandhill cranes landing in flooded farmland: “in the wetlands, in the ongoing elder what you might call, / *really* the real world” (*Danger on Peaks*, 51). Snyder’s subversive attitude suggests how he understands and accepts the natural process, embracing the changing reality. In the last poem “Enjoy the Day”, we see how Snyder learns to accept and react to the natural worlds’ surprises: “New Friends and dear sweet old tree ghosts. / Here we are again. / Enjoy the day” (*Danger on Peaks*, 22).

In *This Present Moment* (2015), Snyder's latest volume of poetry published two decades after finishing *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, we still see Snyder's exploration of what being human means by weaving together mythologies from various cultures—this time not only around the Pacific Rim, but also Greek and Roman. In this new collection, Snyder chews over history, anthropology, politics, and religion. The serious Imagism and heavy fragments leaves implications to readers in the face of struggle or destruction, but in turn gives the work its power and marks Snyder's personal style. The title of the collection seems like something of Snyder's personal mantra. The brief poem goes: "this present moment / that lives on / to become / long ago" (*This Present Moment*, 67). It shows a poignant sense of life's preciousness. There are no permanent beings. All beings, including mountains and rivers, rocks, trees, birds, fish, mammals, humans are all emerging in this present moment.[23] It points to the Buddha's path. In the Mahayana tradition, all concrete things are impermanent. The problem of birth and death, or the problem of time is one of the most important problems of all Buddhists. Human body is subject to birth and decay, while the attachment to self leads to suffering. The Zen master Dogen says "you should being time thus" ("The Time-Being", 128). By using being-time as a verb, he shows that the world is impermanent, and the self may choose whether or not to realize this. The Snydian poetics promises a novel way of conceptual in a critical fashion by placing stress on the subtleties of human dialogue and the phenomenological "depth" of the self/other relation, the inherent creativity and potentiality that inhere in everyday life, thus limits the dangers of an abstract rationality.

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[23] Cf. Andrew Schelling, "Gary Snyder's Tracks", see at www. ricycle.org/magazine/gary-snyders-tracks/.

Regarding the permeability of the boundaries between the self and the world, there is the common ground between deep ecology and post-structuralism, as analyzed in the earlier chapter. This idea on wholeness echoes the Buddhist philosophy of interpenetration and contests the language of subject/object dualism. An experiential approach means constantly evolving, so that a place is not only a construct but a construct in progress. By means of his geopoetics, Snyder seeks to express an sensitive and renewed contact with the world. The philosophy of interpenetration evokes a meditative state for Snyder to transcend reality and embrace an ultimate state of awareness in the interaction between language and the world. Questions of textual mechanics, aesthetic value, and Snyder's world view are considered in the light of their referential relations with the real-world context. The ecologically oriented epistemology enables Snyder to avoid the textualist abstraction of the structuralists. In turn, in Westphal's geocritical dimension, Snyder's practices on the world-creating potential of poetry has the most to contribute to ecocriticism by showing new modes of representation to that vision.

Richards Gray asserts in *A History of American Poetry* that liberation is the impulse at the heart of all Snyder's works (321). Snyder modestly views his works as simply inhabiting "on the mythopoetic level of understanding the interface of society, ecology and language" (Snyder, *The Gary Snyder Reader* 322). The lucidity in Snyder's poems does not only rely on the normal tensions of language but derives from his devotion to Zen Buddhism, which reflects his needs to fill the intricate layers of emptiness where "human tenderness scuttled reasoning into immediate, spontaneous attention to living things" (Gray 321). His point of attention speaks to the fundamental issues of our lives, while the "mythological present" that is seen in his representations of the Asian aesthetics, the primitive culture in North America, or the transcendental imagined realms, in my opinion, goes beyond the basic level of everyday life and represents a symbolic power implied in the "contact zone", where boundaries of asymmetrical relations between man and nature, between different cultures are transgressed.

"Topography displays no favorites; North's as near as West / More delicate than the historians' are the map-makers' colors", writes Elizabeth Bishop by the end of the poem "The Map" (*North & South*, 3). With Bishop's detached assertion and her metaphor of traveling as a reference for the symbolic geography in the history of American poetry, Snyder's geopoetics goes to another direction in observing the world with a Buddhist ecological perspective and keeps breaking boundaries in his search for enlightenment. In tandem with the passages from Mahayana Buddhist philosophy, which sees the world as a vast interrelated network, Snyder has created a transcendental "Thirdspace" in the translation of "Cold Mountain Poems" and his other poems, where the proliferation of the eco-ideological view ends the hegemony of a unitary language and world view in an overall system of geographic, historical, cultural and other knowledge.

The notion of textuality makes explicit the questions of "the relationships among uses of language, other signifying practices, the various modes of human activity that are bound up with processes of signification" (LaCapra 27). The problem of translation entails both losses and gains in “meaning”, while painting, calligraphy, dancing, music as expressive symbolic media are “texts” in potential, or say, signifying practices in a broader sense that contain the concepts of “inside” and “outside” in the interaction between language and the world and the reconstruction of a “reality”. The Asian art evokes a meditative state which transcends reality, espouses metaphysical language through ideal forms, and inspires the artists to enter an ultimate state of awareness. As Brenda Richardson recognizes, the Chinese landscape painting “is not about objective reality” but “about the relationship between man and nature, about man in nature, and more importantly “about nature’s power to effect spiritual transformation of man” (48). The translation process shares certain similarities with these meaningful metaphysical communications too. In reading Snyder’s translation, poetry and life, the East/West line does not seem to exist, just as in Brice Marden’s calligraphic works, the Eastern and Western philosophies and techniques are woven together in the canvas lines. The final product is even hard to define.

Practicing geopoetics generates new ways of seeing and being in the world. In turn, these news ways will hopefully inspire and encourage new modes of geopoetics. Poetry presents the possibility of articulating and shaping an inner geography, while translating poetry for Snyder is an ecological program, a Dharmic practice that implies specific responsibilities. In Snyder’s translation, the “afterlife” of the original texts in Walter Benjamin’s sense is designed to maximize the awareness of nature and a broader concept of space on daily, political and spiritual planes. The “Cold Mountain” symbolizes the Snyder’s geopoectics. In Snyder’s translation and his later poetic journey, a contact zone has been built in accord with his experimental geography, which remains the openness for intertextual dialogues in hope to project “multiple reflections in multiple mirrors”. It is a dynamic and endless process, like how Snyder describes the Chinese calligraphy as an art of time and space in “Finding the Space in the Heart”, the last poem in *Mountains and Rivers Without End* (154): when “the wet black brush / tip drawn to a point / lifts away”, “the space goes on”.

Conclusión

El análisis aquí propuesto adquiere un nivel de complejidad adicional ya que, la traducción de Snyder en “Los poemas de la Montaña Fría” busca interponer la conciencia de la naturaleza y un concepto más amplio del espacio en los planos cotidiano, político y espiritual. La “Montaña Fría” simboliza un tipo de geopoética que Snyder ha escrito. En la traducción de Snyder y su propio itinerario poético, se ha construido una zona de contacto de acuerdo con su geografía experimental, que sigue siendo una puerta a diálogos intertextuales con la esperanza de proyectar “múltiples reflejos en múltiples espejos”, que parece un proceso dinámico e interminable.

Como un ecopoeta transcultural que suscribe la filosofía budista, Snyder convierte “Los poemas de la Montaña Fría” en un tercer espacio de intercambio, una red de referencias y un salón de espejos en el que uno puede verse reflejado en los demás. La discusión arroja luz sobre la visión pesimista que ve la traducción como una tarea casi imposible al considerarla como un arte difícil pero aún posible. En el caso de Snyder, la poesía podría ser lo que se crea en la traducción. El dialogismo en su traducción poética va más allá del concepto de “empatía”, o el objeto de los antropólogos de comprender una cultura ajena desde adentro, haciendo surgir un nuevo espacio.

Por otro lado, esta investigación muestra el potencial para la aplicación de la perspectiva de Bajtín en los estudios de traducción. Específicamente, leer al mismo tiempo a Bajtín y la filosofía budista de la “interpenetración” ilumina cómo Snyder ha pasado del punto de partida literario o estético inicial en la traducción a cuestiones filosóficas de ética y alteridad. En "Los poemas de la Montaña Fría", las voces de Han-shan y Snyder a veces se mezclan: Han-shan se convierte en Snyder, o viceversa. El reconocimiento de la diferencia, la afinidad, y la profunda orientación hacia el otro caracterizan una experiencia ética.

Tanto Bajtín como Snyder son moral y estéticamente alérgicos al monismo. La transculturalidad exige que nos veamos a nosotros en los otros y que reconozcamos una alteridad en nosotros mismos. El compromiso de Snyder con Han-shan, en este sentido, retiene esos momentos de reconocimiento y solidaridad involucrados en los diálogos que los sumergieron en sus situaciones históricamente específicas. Hay momentos con las masas ilimitadas de significado contextual olvidado, pero también hay momentos del desarrollo posterior al diálogo a lo largo de los cuales "Los poemas de la Montaña Fría" son recordados y fortalecidos en formas y contextos renovados.

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